

## Model of Electronic Structure and Superconductivity in Orbitally Ordered FeSe

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We provide a band structure with low-energy properties consistent with recent photoemission and quantum oscillation measurements on FeSe, assuming mean-field-like site- and/or bond-centered ferro-orbital ordering at the structural transition. We show how the resulting model provides a consistent explanation of the temperature dependence of the measured Knight shift and the spin-relaxation rate. Furthermore, the superconducting gap structure obtained from spin-fluctuation theory exhibits nodes on the electron pockets, consistent with the  $V$ -shaped density of states obtained by tunneling spectroscopy on this material, and the temperature dependence of the London penetration depth.

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The electronic properties and the nature of the interactions that drive the low-energy physics and the ordered phases of iron-based superconductors (FeSC) continue to pose an outstanding problem in modern condensed matter physics. The diversity of the properties among the different families of FeSC and their complex multiorbital band structure have hindered the understanding of the electronic states in these materials, as well as the mechanism of superconductivity.

A material that stands out is the structurally simplest compound, FeSe, which exhibits a tetragonal to orthorhombic structural phase transition at  $T_S \sim 90$  K without concomitant spin density wave order and becomes superconducting below  $T_c \sim 9$  K. Below  $T_S$ , the material exhibits strong electronic anisotropy, and the absence of tetragonal symmetry-breaking spin density wave order makes FeSe ideal for studying the origin and consequences of nematicity, i.e., the breaking of rotational symmetry while preserving translational symmetry. For example, an early scanning tunneling microscopy study of FeSe films on a SiC substrate found highly elongated vortices and impurity states and an associated nodal superconducting gap [1], but until recently similar experiments on crystals were hampered by sample quality. Other remarkable properties of FeSe include the significant enhancement of the superconducting critical temperature  $T_c$  both under pressure [2] and for monolayers of FeSe grown on SrTiO<sub>3</sub> surfaces [3–5].

Recently, the study of bulk FeSe crystals has been revitalized by the growth of very clean samples [6] amenable to the study of low-energy properties by, e.g., nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR), transport, scanning tunneling microscopy, angular resolved photoemission spectroscopy (ARPES), and quantum oscillation (QO) experiments. Even though a consensus on the electronic bands has not yet been reached by ARPES [7–13], recent studies found that the Fermi surface (FS) above  $T_S$  consists

of two small hole cylinders of mainly  $d_{xz}/d_{yz}$  character around the  $\Gamma$ - $Z$  line. The hole bands are split by a sizable spin-orbit (SO) coupling of  $\lambda_{\text{Fe}} \approx 20$  meV above the structural transition, and the hole FS evolves into a single elongated hole cylinder below  $T_S$  [10]. ARPES also finds an electron pocket at the  $M$  point of mainly  $d_{xz}/d_{yz}$  character. Importantly, the expected  $d_{xz}/d_{yz}$  degeneracy at  $M$  is lifted by  $\sim 50$  meV, constituting strong evidence for orbital order in FeSe. We emphasize that these results for the electronic structure are very different from those obtained within density-functional theory (DFT) calculations [8,14]. For example, ARPES finds that the electronic bands in FeSe are renormalized compared to DFT calculations by a factor of  $\sim 3$  for the  $d_{xz}/d_{yz}$  bands and  $\sim 9$  for the  $d_{xy}$  band [8,10]. QOs performed at low  $T$  in magnetic fields large enough to suppress superconductivity are consistent with the ARPES data in observing small, largely 2D pockets, even though the amount of dispersion along  $k_z$  remains unsettled [10,15].

Recent <sup>77</sup>Se NMR measurements on FeSe have reported a clear splitting of the NMR line shape setting in at  $T_S$ , with an order parameterlike  $T$  dependence below  $T_S$  [16]. At high  $T$ , the spin-lattice relaxation rate is, however, unaffected by the structural transition, and it only exhibits a clear upturn at low  $T$  closer to the superconducting  $T_c$  [16,17]. These recent experiments have been interpreted as evidence for orbitally driven nematic behavior in FeSe, but despite the apparent weakness of (momentum summed) spin fluctuations near  $T_S$ , the spin-nematic picture may still apply. One possibility is that, unlike other FeSCs, fluctuations in FeSe with different wave vectors compete to frustrate long-range magnetic order [18].

Finally, we note that the resulting Fermi energy of the bands of FeSe seen by ARPES are remarkably small, comparable to the superconducting gap, which suggests the possibility that FeSe may be close to BEC/BCS crossover and may thus exhibit unusual thermodynamic

properties and magnetic field effects [19]. Thus, for multiple reasons, it is important to perform new theoretical studies of this intriguing material and to obtain a minimal model capturing its main electronic properties.

Here, we perform a theoretical study of the consequences of orbital order in a band relevant to FeSe. Starting from the DFT-generated band for FeSe obtained by Eschrig *et al.* [14], we apply band renormalization of  $H_{\text{TB}} = H_0/z$  (where  $z = 6$  is renormalization factor and  $H_0$  is the unrenormalized tight-binding Hamiltonian) and additional shifts to the hopping integrals [see the Supplemental Material [20] for details] to generate a new tight-binding model. We find that a band consistent with ARPES and QO is only possible in the presence of an orbital splitting setting in at  $T_S$ , and a  $T$  independent SO coupling. Further, we explain the recent Knight shift and the spin-relaxation rate measurements, and we study how a spin-fluctuation-mediated pairing can lead to a nodal gap structure in agreement with the measured density of states (DOS) and penetration depth  $\lambda$  of FeSe.

The bare Hamiltonian used in this study is given by

$$H = H_{\text{TB}} + H_{\text{OO}}, \quad (1)$$

$$H_{\text{TB}} = \sum_{\mathbf{k}, \mu, \nu, \sigma} t_{\mu\nu}(\mathbf{k}) c_{\mu\sigma}^\dagger(\mathbf{k}) c_{\nu\sigma}(\mathbf{k}), \quad (2)$$

$$H_{\text{OO}} = \Delta_s(T) \sum_{\mathbf{k}\sigma} [n_{xz\sigma}(\mathbf{k}) - n_{yz\sigma}(\mathbf{k})]. \quad (3)$$

Here  $(\mu, \nu)$  are orbital indices,  $t_{\mu\nu}(\mathbf{k})$  are the hopping integrals, and  $n_{\mu\sigma}(\mathbf{k}) = c_{\mu\sigma}^\dagger(\mathbf{k}) c_{\mu\sigma}(\mathbf{k})$ . All details of the hopping integrals are provided in the Supplemental Material [20] for both a five-orbital and a ten-orbital model. In the orbitally ordered state,  $H_{\text{OO}}$  contributes and  $\Delta_s(T)$  is assumed to exhibit a mean-field  $T$  dependence with a maximum amplitude  $\Delta_s(T = 0) = 50$  meV, see Fig. 1(b), inset. For simplicity, we focus in the main part of this Letter on a pure site-centered OO, but the consequences of an additional bond-centered OO of the form  $\Delta_b(T) \sum_{\mathbf{k}\sigma} [\cos(k_x) - \cos(k_y)] [n_{xz\sigma}(\mathbf{k}) + n_{yz\sigma}(\mathbf{k})]$  have also been studied; the results can be found in the Supplemental Material [20]. It has been reported by ARPES that the band splitting of the  $d_{xz}/d_{yz}$  bands at the  $M$  point in the orbitally ordered state does indeed show a mean-field behavior and saturates at low  $T$  with a band splitting of  $\sim 50$  meV [7,9,11,13]. Finally, we have included a SO term,  $H_{\text{SO}} = \lambda_{\text{Fe}} \sum_i \sum_{x,y,z} L_i^\alpha S_i^\alpha$ , which causes a band splitting of 20 meV in the tetragonal high  $T$  phase [21,22].

**Band structure.**—As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, the band structure and the resulting FS of our model is in nearly quantitative agreement with the experiments. Below  $T_S$ , the hole band at the  $\Gamma$  point is split by a 50 meV orbital order (at  $T = 10$  K) and the bottom of the band lies  $\sim 20$  meV below

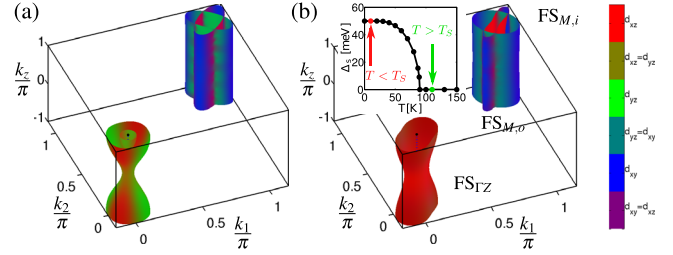


FIG. 1 (color online). (a) Fermi surface (FS) above  $T_S$  with SO coupling, and (b) FS at low  $T$  with an additional orbital splitting of 50 meV consisting of a  $\Gamma$  centered FS ( $\text{FS}_{\Gamma Z}$ ) cylinder and an inner and outer FS centered around the  $M$  point ( $\text{FS}_{M,i}$  and  $\text{FS}_{M,o}$ ). The inset shows the  $T$  dependence of the orbital splitting  $\Delta_s(T)$ ; the two colored (gray) dots represent the  $T$  chosen for the two displayed FSs.

the chemical potential. Similarly, a dispersionless  $d_{xy}$  band is present at an energy of  $\sim -50$  meV at the  $\Gamma$  point. At the  $M$  point, the electron pockets consist of quasi-2D cylinders where the outer pocket, with dominant  $d_{xy}$  character, encloses an inner  $d_{xz}/d_{yz}$  electron pocket. The inner electron band at the  $M$  point has an orbital splitting of 50 meV and almost grazes the Fermi level. These low  $T$  band structure values are in good agreement with the ARPES results [7,9–11,13].

Similar agreement with ARPES is achieved for  $T > T_S$  where the orbital order is absent. There, the hole pockets consist of a quasi-2D outer circular cylinder and an inner hole pocket near the  $Z$  point, as seen in Fig. 1(a). The band also exhibits overall agreement with the orbital content observed in the polarized ARPES experiments [10]. At high  $T$ , the hole pocket at the zone center and the inner electron pocket at the  $M$  point contain both  $d_{xz}$  and  $d_{yz}$  character, and the outer electron pocket is predominantly of  $d_{xy}$  character. Similar orbital content of the Fermi pockets has also been seen in the ARPES measurements [9–12]. At low  $T$ , the orbital content of the hole cylinder is dominated by  $d_{xz}$  character ( $d_{yz}$  for the other twin). For a pure on-site ferro orbital order, both the hole and the inner electron cylinders have dominant  $d_{xz}$  orbital character [see Fig. 1(b)], whereas in the presence of an additional bond centered orbital order the electron cylinder can have the opposite  $d_{yz}$  orbital character [20]. For the electron pocket at low  $T$ , the inner pocket contains both  $d_{xz}$  and  $d_{yz}$  orbital character whereas the outer pocket at low  $T$  has orbital content dominated by the  $d_{xy}$  orbital. Although the orbital content of the electron pockets agrees well with the experiments [10–12], the outer  $d_{xy}$  electron pocket is difficult to observe in ARPES due to matrix element effects.

**Quantum oscillations.**—The extremal FS areas in FeSe at low  $T$  as well as their  $k_z$  dispersion have been studied by QO measurements [10,15,23]. These experiments have found four well separated QO frequencies, and arguments have been put forward that the QO frequencies correspond to one electron and one hole quasi-2D FS cylinder [15], as

well the possibility of a single quasi-2D hole cylinder and two almost dispersionless electron cylinders [10]. Although the former possibility cannot be ruled out, in this study we have pursued the latter possibility, which is supported by the weak  $k_z$  dispersion observed for the electron cylinders [10].

Starting from the ten-orbital tight-binding Hamiltonian and including the effects of SO coupling, we calculate the eigenenergies  $\xi_i(\mathbf{k})$  on a grid in the Brillouin zone (BZ) and obtain the extremal areas  $F$  of the FS for cuts on planes perpendicular to the external magnetic field using a numerical method [24,25]. The direction of the magnetic field is then parametrized by the angle  $\theta$  between the crystallographic  $c$  axis and the field direction. For  $\theta = 0$ , the electron pockets have extremal areas of  $F \sim 588$  T for the  $d_{xy}$  pocket and  $F \sim 102$  T for the smaller  $d_{xz}/d_{yz}$  pocket, as seen in Fig. 2(b). The hole Fermi cylinder is elongated due to the effect of orbital ordering with a maximum area of  $F \sim 691$  T for  $k_z = \pi$  and a minimum area of  $F \sim 260$  T at  $k_z = 0$ . Overall, the experimentally observed binding energies for the  $d_{xz}/d_{yz}$  and  $d_{xy}$  bands, the 3D FS structure of both hole and electron pockets, and the extremal orbit areas as well as their  $k_z$  dispersion are in good agreement with our calculations. We have also calculated the Sommerfeld coefficient from the

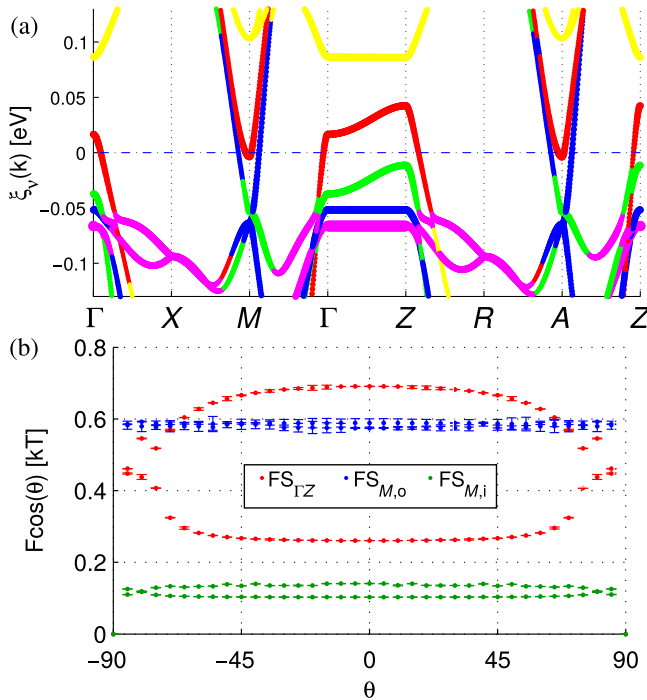


FIG. 2 (color online). (a) Band structure of the ten-orbital model at low  $T$  with orbital order and SO coupling, yielding the QO frequencies as a function of the magnetic field angle  $\theta$  shown in (b), where the error bars indicate the numerical uncertainty in the determination of the extremal orbits. The orbital character in the band plot is indicated by the colors red ( $d_{xz}$ ), green ( $d_{yz}$ ), blue ( $d_{xy}$ ), yellow ( $d_{x^2-y^2}$ ), and purple ( $d_{3z^2-r^2}$ ).

effective masses extracted from our quantum oscillation calculation. Using the numerically calculated effective masses together with the prescription given in Ref. [10], we find a Sommerfeld coefficient of  $4.5$  mJ/mol K<sup>2</sup>, in reasonable agreement with the experimental value of  $\sim 5.3$ – $5.7$  mJ/mol K<sup>2</sup> [17,26,27].

*Nuclear magnetic resonance.*—Next, we test our electronic model of FeSe to see if it can also reproduce the NMR experiments [16,17]. For computational simplicity, in the following we apply the five-orbital model that shows good agreement with the ten-orbital model [20] and ignore the effect of SO coupling, which causes only small quantitative changes to the observables discussed in the remainder of this Letter. The NMR Knight shift is proportional to the homogeneous susceptibility,  $K = A_{hf}\chi_{\text{RPA}}(\mathbf{q} = 0) + K_{\text{chem}}$ , where we have approximated the spin susceptibility by its standard RPA form,  $A_{hf}$  is the hyperfine form factor, and  $K_{\text{chem}}$  is a  $T$  independent chemical shift which we have ignored for the purposes of this study. For the following calculations, we include local Coulomb interactions via the standard Hubbard-Hund Hamiltonian [28] parametrized by the Hubbard interaction  $U_z$  ( $z$  is the band renormalization) and the Hund's exchange  $J$  [20], calculate the orbitally resolved noninteracting susceptibility, and include interactions within RPA [29].

In the paramagnetic state, the form factor is a diagonal matrix with components  $(A_{hf}^{xx}, A_{hf}^{yy}, A_{hf}^{zz})$  where the coordinates point along the Fe-Fe direction representing the magnetic field orientation of the NMR experiment. The form factor maintains the symmetry of the underlying lattice such that for the high  $T$  tetragonal phase,  $A_{hf}^{xx} = A_{hf}^{yy} \neq A_{hf}^{zz}$ , whereas the orbital ordered orthorhombic phase has  $A_{hf}^{xx} \neq A_{hf}^{yy} \neq A_{hf}^{zz}$ . This anisotropy leads to a split Knight shift frequency below  $T_S$  in twinned samples of FeSe [16,17].

As shown by Baek *et al.*, [16], the Knight shift splitting exhibits a  $T$  dependence proportional to the mean-field orbital order parameter. Therefore, we model the form factor by the expression  $A_{hf} = \alpha \pm g(T)$ , where  $g(T) = \beta \Delta_s(T)$ ,  $(\alpha, \beta)$  are fitting parameters, and  $\pm$  refers to the two orthorhombic domains  $l_1$  and  $l_2$ . The calculated Knight shift as a function of  $T$  is shown in Fig. 3(a). At high  $T$  above  $T_S$ , the Knight shift increases with  $T$  similar to the experiments, in contrast to the DFT-generated nonrenormalized bands [20]. Below  $T_S$ , for a particular magnetic field direction, the Knight shift shows a minimum value around  $T \sim 60$  K similar to the experimental results. Below  $T \sim 60$  K, we find a slight enhancement of the Knight shift signal. Although the measured Knight shift saturates and does not show this enhancement for both orthorhombic domains, this may be simply related to a deviation of the splitting from mean-field behavior found experimentally at the lowest  $T$  [16].

In order to study the evolution of the spin fluctuations, we have also calculated the spin-lattice relaxation rate



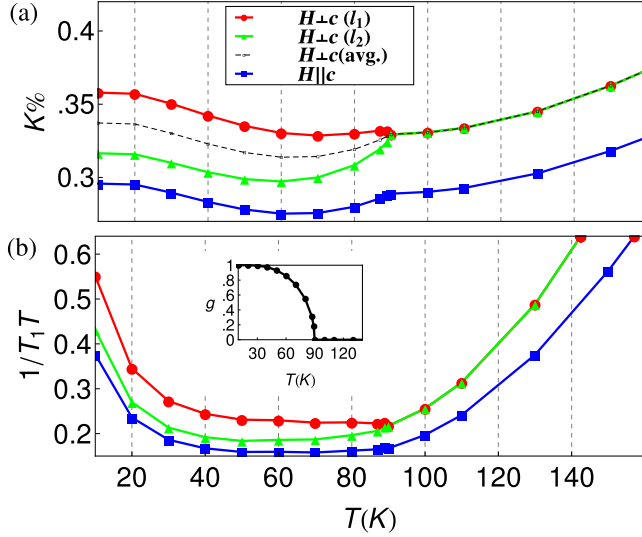


FIG. 3 (color online). (a) NMR Knight shift versus  $T$ . The hyperfine form factor has been taken as  $A_{hf}^{l_1/l_2} = 0.6[0.57 \pm 0.035g(T)]$  for  $H \perp c$  and  $A_{hf}^c = 0.6 \times 0.5$  for  $H \parallel c$ . (b) Spin-lattice relaxation rate versus  $T$  with  $A_{hf}^{l_1/l_2} = 0.57 \pm 0.035g(T)$  for  $H \perp c$  and  $A_{hf} = 0.5$  for  $H \parallel c$ . Red curve  $H \perp c$  (domain  $l_1$ ), green curve  $H \perp c$  (domain  $l_2$ ), black curve  $H \perp c$  (domain average), and blue curve  $H \parallel c$ .

$$\frac{1}{T_1 T} = \lim_{\omega_0 \rightarrow 0} \frac{\gamma_N^2}{2N} k_B \sum_{\mathbf{q}, \alpha\beta} |A_{hf}^{\alpha\beta}(\mathbf{q})|^2 \frac{\text{Im}\{\chi_{\text{RPA}}^{\alpha\beta}(\mathbf{q}, \omega_0)\}}{\hbar\omega_0}. \quad (4)$$

NMR experiments probing the  $^{77}\text{Se}$  atoms in FeSe exhibit a  $q$  dependent hyperfine form factor in the paramagnetic state given by  $A_{hf}^{\alpha\beta}(\mathbf{q}) = A_{hf}^{\alpha\beta} \cos(q_x/2) \cos(q_y/2)$ , assuming that the Se ion interacts with its four nearest Fe neighbors only. Since  $^{77}\text{Se}$  is a spin 1/2 ion, quadrupole-type coupling to local lattice distortions do not contribute to the relaxation rate. As seen from the form factor, spin fluctuations at the edges of the Brillouin zone will be filtered out. The result of the calculation for  $1/T_1 T$  for interaction parameters  $Uz = 1.8$  eV and  $Jz = 0.1Uz$  is shown in Fig. 3(b). As was seen, the spin fluctuations are enhanced at low  $T$ . However, as was observed in recent NMR experiments [16,17], the enhancement does not occur at  $T_S$  despite the sharp increase of  $\Delta_s$  at  $T_S$ , but below about  $T \sim 40$  K. Interestingly, this increase of spin fluctuations at low  $T$  is caused by the orbital ordering which leads to a low  $T$  incommensurability in the spin susceptibility that pushes spectral weight away from the BZ edges, and therefore does not allow the structure factor to effectively filter out those fluctuations [20]. Note that although the low  $T$  spin susceptibility avoids the magnetic state by remaining below the Stoner limit, the enhanced fluctuations at low  $T$  have important consequences for spin-fluctuation-mediated pairing.

*Spin-fluctuation pairing.*—What is the dominant pairing instability for the low  $T$  orbitally ordered state? To answer

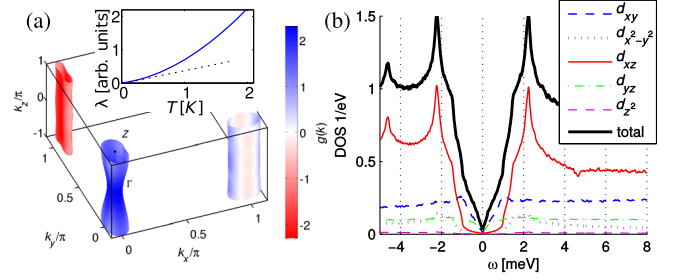


FIG. 4 (color online). Superconducting order parameter as calculated from a spin-fluctuation pairing using the interactions  $Uz = 1.8$  eV and  $Jz = 0.1Uz$  shows nodal regions on one of the electron pockets (a). The corresponding DOS clearly exhibits nodal behavior (b) and the penetration depth  $\lambda$  stays linear down to low  $T$  in agreement with the experiments [(a), inset].

this question, we consider the scattering vertex in the singlet channel projected onto the band space  $\Gamma(\mathbf{k}, \mathbf{k}')$  [20] and solve the linearized gap equation

$$-\frac{1}{V_G} \sum_j \int_{\text{FS}_j} dS \Gamma(\mathbf{k}, \mathbf{k}') \frac{g_\alpha(\mathbf{k}')}{|v_{Fj}(\mathbf{k}')|} = \lambda_\alpha g_\alpha(\mathbf{k}), \quad (5)$$

where  $v_{Fj}(\mathbf{k}')$  is the Fermi velocity of band  $j$  and the integration is performed over  $\text{FS}_j$  to obtain the gap symmetry functions  $g_\alpha(\mathbf{k})$  and the set of eigenvalues  $\lambda_\alpha$ . The largest eigenvalue corresponds to the leading instability and the corresponding eigenfunction determines the structure of the superconducting gap  $\Delta(\mathbf{k}) \sim g(\mathbf{k})$  close to  $T_c$ . In order to solve Eq. (5), the FS is discretized using a Delaunay triangulation [22] such that it reduces to solving a matrix eigenvalue problem. In the absence of orbital order, the leading instability is  $d$  wave, with nodes on the hole pockets and no accidental nodes on the electron pockets, whereas in the absence of any band renormalization the leading instability is a nodeless sign changing  $s \pm$  state. In Fig. 4(a) we show the result for the gap structure in the low  $T$  phase with orbital order. The character of the gap structure cannot be classified in  $s$ - or  $d$ -wave symmetry because the underlying band structure is only  $C_2$  symmetric [30]. As seen in Fig. 4(a), the orbital order has strong effects on the position of the nodes; i.e., it removes the nodes from the hole pockets and induces nodal lines on the  $X$ -centered ( $Y$  for the other twin) electron pocket. The associated DOS (maximum gap set to  $\approx 2.2$  meV) and the linear- $T$  behavior of the low  $T$  penetration depth  $\lambda$  shown in Fig. 4 are remarkably similar to recent experimental findings [1,19].

In summary, we have presented a model for the electronic structure of FeSe that includes orbital ordering, which is consistent with recent ARPES and QO experiments on high quality FeSe samples. This band, along with the standard local interaction potentials and exchanges, explains both the  $T$  dependence of the NMR Knight shifts and spin-relaxation rate, and it leads to a pairing state with

nodes and a  $T$  dependence of the London penetration depth in agreement with a series of recent experiments on FeSe.

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