Many-Body Resonance in a Correlated Topological Kagome Antiferromagnet

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We use scanning tunneling microscopy to elucidate the atomically resolved electronic structure in the strongly correlated kagome Weyl antiferromagnet Mn_3Sn . In stark contrast to its broad single-particle electronic structure, we observe a pronounced resonance with a Fano line shape at the Fermi level resembling the many-body Kondo resonance. We find that this resonance does not arise from the step edges or atomic impurities but the intrinsic kagome lattice. Moreover, the resonance is robust against the perturbation of a vector magnetic field, but broadens substantially with increasing temperature, signaling strongly interacting physics. We show that this resonance can be understood as the result of geometrical frustration and strong correlation based on the kagome lattice Hubbard model. Our results point to the emergent many-body resonance behavior in a topological kagome magnet.

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Studying the effects of correlation and topology in quantum materials is emerging as one of the central themes in condensed matter physics [1]. In electron systems with strong Coulomb interaction, they often exhibit exotic electronic and magnetic properties that cannot be sufficiently accounted for by the noninteracting properties of their individual constituents. As such, the realization of these emergent properties in topological materials can lead to unpredicted manifestations of their many-body physics. Recently, a series of correlated kagome magnets have been observed to have anomalous transport response, correlated topological electronic structure, and giant spin-orbit tunability [2–16]. Among these, Mn₃Sn stands out due to its antiferromagnetism and the absence of any nonkagome layers. It is also one of the rare antiferromagnets that exhibits large anomalous Hall and Nernst effects, arising from the Berry curvature due to gapped magnetic nodal lines leading to Weyl fermions [2,3]. In addition to its large Berry curvature, photoemissions experiments have shown a broad single-particle electronic structure with a band

renormalization factor as large as five [4]. Therefore, this combination of kagome lattice, topological bands, and strong correlation in Mn_3Sn lends itself to be a fascinating platform for studying the strongly correlated topological kagome magnet.

Mn₃Sn crystallizes in space group $P6_3/mmc$ with the lattice constant a = b = 5.7 Å, where each layer consists of a kagome lattice made of Mn atoms stuffed with Sn atoms [Fig. 1(a)], with *AB* stacking of the equivalent layers [Fig. 1(b)]. A first-principles calculation of the bulk band structure [Fig. 1(c)] finds several flatbands and Weyl fermions [3,4]. Because of strong interplane coupling, the as-cleaved surface does not exhibit an atomic lattice structure [5,12]. To prepare atomic surfaces, we first cleave the sample and then anneal it at 1100 K for one hour. With this *in situ* annealing process, we can measure large clean flat areas with terraces larger than 300 nm in size [Fig. 1(d)]. We directly visualize the Mn₃Sn atomic surface at 4.6 K with hexagonal symmetry and expected lattice constant, as shown in Fig. 1(e). A comparison to simulation



FIG. 1. (a) Crystal structure of the Mn_3Sn kagome lattice. (b) *c*-axis *AB* stacking of the kagome lattice from side view and top view, respectively. (c) Normalized bulk band structure of Mn_3Sn in the conformal Brillouin zone showing low energy flatbands (black arrows) and Weyl nodes with two examples indicated by red and blue arrows. (d),(e) STM topographic images at different scales of Mn_3Sn after annealing the cleaved surface at 1100 K for 1 h, showing a large atomic flat surface showing the lattice with hexagonal symmetry. (e) inset: First-principles simulation of the image overlaid with atoms illustrations. (f) STM topographic image across multiple steps of single layers, whose line profile is shown on the right. (g) Stacking alignment of two layers across a step, with the black and blue dots denoting Sn atoms of the upper and lower layers, respectively. All topographic data were taken at T = 4.6 K, V = -50 mV, I = 50 pA.

finds reasonable agreement [Fig. 1(e), inset], similar to the kagome surfaces in Fe₃Sn₂ [5,13] and Co₃Sn₂S₂ [10,15]. An analysis of a line cut taken across several single atomic steps finds each step to be approximately 2.3 Å, consistent with its half *c*-axis unit [Fig. 1(f)]. Further analysis across a single atomic step reveals the interlayer alignment of the kagome lattice, consistent with the *AB* stacking of the bulk crystal structure [Fig. 1(g)].

Having visualized the atomic kagome surface of Mn_3Sn , we now investigate its low-energy electronic structure. Measuring the dI/dV spectrum along a line of 50 nm, far from any step edge, we find a consistent resonance feature at E_F with a line shape asymmetry [Fig. 2(a)]. Near the atomic step edge, we find that the resonance is strongly suppressed [Fig. 2(b) and its inset], demonstrating that the resonance is not from the breaking bonding induced scattering from the step edge. As this peak is observed at every position on the kagome surface, this resonance state is not related to an isolated impurity but is a feature of the kagome lattice. This point is further supported in Fig. 2(c), that the resonance is slightly suppressed by the isolated atomic impurity. The spectral asymmetry of this resonance leads us to consider the Fano equation $F(E) \approx [(q + E/\Gamma)^2]/[1 + (E/\Gamma)^2]$, where q is the quality factor that quantifies the coupling of the tip to the discrete state and Γ is the resonance width. The spatially averaged dI/dV spectrum can indeed be fitted by $A^*F(E) + B$ as shown in Fig. 2(d), where A and B are the additional adjustment parameters. It can also be seen that there is a nonzero background, indicative that not all states are associated with the resonance. $\Gamma = 3.9$ meV is the characteristic energy scale of the resonance, the estimated Kondo temperature would amount to $T_{\rm K} = \Gamma/1.4k_B = 32$ K.

A magnetic field dependent measurement finds that despite some weak broadening the resonance peak does not split or shift under an out-of-plane 4 T field or in-plane 2 T field relative to the unperturbed resonance state [Fig. 3(a) orange, brown, and blue curves, respectively]. In reference to tunneling experiments in YbRh₂Si₂ and SmB₆ among others [6,7,17] where a Kondo resonance with a Fano line shape was observed, the resonance was also not split by a strong magnetic field. In contrast to the weak field response, we observe a strong temperature



FIG. 2. (a) dI/dV line cut across 50 nm, taken far from any step edge, showing a peak at E_F . Every fifth curve is marked by a solid black line for clarity. (b) Perturbation of a step edge on the Fermi level resonance. The inset shows the line cut spectra taken across a single step edge, whose position is marked by the arrow. (c) Perturbation of the atomic impurity on the Fermi level resonance. The inset shows the topographic image of the impurity. (d) Spatially averaged dI/dV spectrum (open circles). The solid line is a fit to Fano line shape function, $F(E) = [(q + E/\Gamma)^2]/[1 + (E/\Gamma)^2].$

dependence of the resonance. Our temperature-dependent measurement finds that the resonance peak is substantially suppressed and broadens with increasing temperature [Fig. 3(b), solid lines]. In tunneling experiments, the dI/dV spectra measure the convolution of the DOS and the derivative of the Fermi Dirac distribution function. As such, we also plot the temperature convolution of the spectrum taken at our lowest temperature (T = 4.6 K) for each temperature (dotted lines) for comparison. We see that the actual data show a stronger temperature broadening effect than the convoluted curves, indicating an interaction driven resonance with intrinsic temperature dependence. Next, we fit the experimental data with the thermally convoluted Fano function in Fig. 3(c). During the fitting, we find that although q shows little variation, Γ increases substantially with T, which is associated with the intrinsic thermal broadening of the DOS peak. The spatially



FIG. 3. (a) dI/dV taken at 0 T (blue curve), 2 T along *a* axis (brown curve), and 4 T along *c* axis (yellow curve). (b) Temperature dependence of dI/dV with spectra offset for clarity. The dotted lines are numerically calculated spectra by convoluting the 4.6 K data with the derivative of Fermi-Dirac distribution function at respective temperatures. (c) Fit of the temperaturedependent spectra by thermally convoluted Fano function. (d) Resonance width Γ plotted against temperature, giving a Kondo temperature of $T_K = 30$ K when fit to the Kondo model.

independent line shape, magnetic field response, and thermal broadening of this resonance all resemble the behavior of the resonance in systems that can be described by the Kondo lattice model [6,7,17–20]. Fitting $\Gamma(T)$ with the extended phenomenological expression derived initially for the single-impurity model [21–23], $\Gamma = [2(k_BT_K)^2 + (\pi k_BT)^2]^{0.5}$, we obtain an estimated Kondo temperature of $T_K = 30$ K, as shown in Fig. 3(d). The obtained T_K is consistent with the energy scale of the linewidth at base temperature. In the bulk resistivity data [24], we have also observed a characteristic Kondo upturn around this T_K determined by scanning tunneling microscopy (STM) or scanning tunneling spectroscopy, indicating its bulk origin. We can use this estimated Kondo temperature to reexamine the nonsplitting nature of the resonant state under the magnetic field. The minimum field with which the resonant state splits is related to the Kondo temperature by approximately $g\mu_B B \approx 0.5 k_B T_K$ [44,45]. For an estimated $T_K = 30$ K and $g \approx 2$, a minimum field of approximately 11 T would be required. For the smaller fields applied in our experiment, some broadening of the resonance can be observed, but without clearly splitting.

Indeed, there are several ways in which the crystal and electronic structure of Mn_3Sn can be considered analogous to systems described by the Kondo model [46]. In the Kondo model, the localized moments in a lattice are screened by the itinerant conductive sea, forming periodic singlet states [Fig. 4(a)]. In their excitation spectrum, the many-body interactions between the flatband and itinerant conduction band can manifest as a resonance with a Fano line shape at the Fermi level [Fig. 4(b)]. This behavior is mostly observed in heavy fermion systems with localized *f* orbitals. However, the key components for the formation of such a resonance—namely the flatband and the strong



FIG. 4. (a) Schematic depicting a Kondo lattice formed by the coupling between periodic localized states (red arrows) and itinerant conduction electrons (blue arrows). (b) DOS spectrum of the Kondo lattice, where a Kondo resonance (dark blue) at E_F is generated by the many-body coupling of the localized flatband (red) and itinerant conduction band (shaded blue). (c) Band structure for a kagome tight-binding model showing a flatband with interband coupling and a large Hubbard interaction. (d) The calculated DOS shows a weak bump arising from the kagome flatband and a many-body resonance at E_F due to the hybridization of the localized and itinerant states.

Coulomb interactions-can, in principle, be satisfied in a strongly correlated 3d kagome metal. In this case, the kagome lattice localizes the electronic wave functions in place of the heavy f electrons, with the itinerant conduction sea naturally arising from its metallic state. Although the higher-energy single-particle flatband cannot be clearly resolved in this strongly correlated system due to the short quasiparticle lifetime [4], the flatband is a general feature of the kagome lattices as demonstrated in its first-principles calculations. Theoretically, we consider a set of kagome flatbands touching a dispersive band with a dominating Hubbard U and an interband coupling [Fig. 4(c)]. By solving the coupled equation of motion for the Green's function derived to the third order for the kagome lattice Hubbard model [24], we show that there can be a manybody resonance at the Fermi level in the density of states [Fig. 4(d)]. While our model considers electronic frustration, we note that magnetic frustration could also introduce heavy fermions [47].

Moreover, in contrast to heavy fermion materials, Mn_3Sn exhibits anomalous Hall and Nernst effects coming from Berry curvature with topological fermions and Fermi arcs [2,4,11], and the interplay between frustrated magnetism, Berry phase, and many-body effects within this material has the potential to open new research directions. The achievement of a large atomic flat surface in this material by our methodology also indicates the possibility of engineering such stoichiometric materials down to

atomically thin layers to realize the quantized anomalous effect toward the realization of high-temperature interacting dissipationless modes. Finally, it has not escaped our attention that previous tunneling data directly into the kagome layer of Fe_3Sn_2 and $Co_3Sn_2S_2$ all exhibit an anomalous zero-bias peak [5,10,13,15]; therefore, this many-body resonance phenomenon may be ubiquitous in this family of strongly correlated kagome metals.

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