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Angle-resolved photoemission in doped charge-transfer Mott insulators

A.S. Alexandrov and C. J. Dent

Department of Physics, Loughborough University, Loughborough LE11 3TU, U.K.

A theory of angle-resolved photoemission (ARPES) in doped cuprates and other charge-transfer Mott insulators is developed taking into account the realistic (LDA+U) band structure, (bi)polaron formation due to the strong electron-phonon interaction, and a random field potential. In most of these materials the first band to be doped is the oxygen band inside the Mott-Hubbard gap. We derive the coherent part of the ARPES spectra with the oxygen hole spectral function calculated in the non-crossing (ladder) approximation and with the exact spectral function of a one-dimensional hole in a random potential. Some unusual features of ARPES including the polarisation dependence and spectral shape in YBa$_2$Cu$_3$O$_y$ and YBa$_2$Cu$_4$O$_6$ are described without any Fermi-surface, large or small. The theory is compatible with the doping dependence of kinetic and thermodynamic properties of cuprates as well as with the d-wave symmetry of the superconducting order parameter.

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1. Introduction

The concept of polarons led to the discovery of the copper oxide superconductors. The expectation was that if an electron and a surrounding lattice distortion with a high effective mass can travel through the lattice as a whole, and a strong electron-phonon coupling exists, the perovskite insulator could be turned into a high temperature superconductor [1]. In this paper we develop the theory of ARPES in doped charge-transfer Mott insulators based on the bipolaron theory [2], which describes some unusual ARPES features of high-$T_c$ YBa$_2$Cu$_3$O$_{7-\delta}$ (Y123), YBa$_2$Cu$_4$O$_6$ (Y124) and a few other materials.

ARPES data in cuprates remains highly controversial [3]. One of the surprising features is a large Fermi surface claimed to exist in a wide range of doping fitting well the LDA band structures in the earlier studies. This should evolve with doping as $(1-x)$ in a clear contradiction with low frequency kinetics and thermodynamics (see, for example [4], which show an evolution proportional to $x$ in a wide range of doping including the overdoped region $x$ (the number of holes introduced by doping). Now it is established, however, that there is a normal state (pseudo)gap in ARPES and tunnelling, existing well above $T_c$, so that some segments of a large Fermi surface are actually missing. The temperature and doping dependence of the gap still remain a subject of controversy. While kinetic, thermodynamic, tunnelling [5] and some ARPES data suggest that the gap opens at any relevant temperature in a wide range of doping, other ARPES studies claim that it exists only in underdoped samples below a characteristic temperature $T^*$.

Perhaps the most intriguing feature of ARPES is the extremely narrow and intense peak lying below the Fermi energy, which is most clearly seen near the Y and X points in Y124 [6] Y123 [7] and more recently in La$_{2-x}$Sr$_x$CuO$_4$ [8]. Its angular dependence and spectral shape as well as the origin of the featureless (but dispersive) background remain unclear. Some authors refer to the peak as an extended van Hove singularity (evHs) arising from the plane (CuO$_2$) strongly correlated band. They also implicate the resulting (quasi)1D density of states singularity as a possible origin for the high transition temperature. However, recent polarised ARPES studies of untwinned Y123 crystals of exceptional quality unambiguously refer the peak to as a narrow resonance arising primarily from the quasi-1D CuO$_3$ chains in the buffer layers rather than from the planes. Also, careful analysis of the Eliashberg equations shows that the van Hove singularity can hardly be the origin of high $T_c$, in sharp contrast with a naive weak-coupling estimate. Interestingly, a very similar narrow peak was observed by Park et al [9] in high-resolution ARPES near the gap edge of the cubic semiconductor FeSi with no Fermi surface at all.

In this paper we take the view that cuprates and many other transition metal compounds are charge transfer Mott-Hubbard insulators at any level of doping. This means that the first band to be doped is the oxygen band lying within the Hubbard gap, Fig.1. Strong coupling with high frequency phonons, unambiguously established for many oxides [10], leads to the high-energy spectral features of an oxygen hole in an energy window about twice the Franck-Condon (polaronic) level shift, $E_p$, and to the band-narrowing effect. On the other hand, the low energy spectral function is influenced by the low frequency thermal lattice, spin and random fluctuations. The latter can be described as ‘Gaussian white noise’. The p-hole polaron in oxides is almost one-dimensional due to a large difference in the $pp\sigma$ and $pp\pi$ hopping integrals and effective ‘one-dimensional’ localisation by the random potential as described in Ref. [11]. This allows us to explain the narrow peak in the ARPES spectra with the spectral density $A(k, E)$ of a one-dimensional particle in a Gaussian white noise potential [12].

The electron-phonon interaction also binds holes into inter-site oxygen bipolarons the size of a lattice constant [13]. The bipolaron density remains relatively low (below 0.15 per cell) at any relevant level of doping. The residual repulsive (Coulomb) polaron-bipolaron interaction is strongly suppressed by the lattice polarisation owing to a large static dielectric constant. As
a result, the only role of hole bipolarons in ARPES is to pin the chemical potential inside the charge transfer gap, half the bipolaron binding energy above the oxygen band edge, Fig.1a. This binding energy as well as the singlet-triplet bipolaron exchange energy are thought to be the origin of the normal state pseudogaps, as first proposed by one of us. In particular, the non-Korringa temperature dependence of NMR, and more recently the values and universal scaling with temperature of the uniform magnetic susceptibility and electronic specific heat were quantitatively described with bipolarons. In overdoped samples the bipolaron and polaron bands might overlap because the bipolaron binding energy becomes small, so the chemical potential might enter the oxygen band, Fig.1b, and then a Fermi-level crossing might be seen in ARPES. The featureless background is explained as the phonon cloud of a small hole polaron, which spreads over a wide energy interval about $2E_p \approx 1eV$.

The same approach has been applied to the tunnelling spectra. As a result, the temperature independent gap and the anomalous $\text{gap}/T_c$ ratio, injection/emission asymmetry both in magnitude and shape, zero-bias conductance at zero temperature, the spectral shape inside and outside the gap region, temperature/doping dependence and dip-hump structure of the tunnelling conductance were described. The approach is compatible with the recent $\text{DA+U}$ band structures in cuprates and manganites, which suggest the single-particle density of states shown in Fig.1. It is clearly compatible with the doping evolution of thermodynamic and kinetic properties because holes introduced by doping into the oxygen band are the only carriers in our theory. Moreover, the derived bipolaron energy dispersion with minima at the Brillouin zone boundaries provides $d$-wave symmetry of the Bose-Einstein condensate in agreement with phasesensitive experiments. It also provides a parameter-free expression for $T_c$ in the few dozen cuprates, irrespective of the level of doping.

Here we first derive the polaronic ARPES theory in Section 2. Then, in Section 3 we apply the simplest non-crossing approximation for the self-energy and compare it with the exact result in Section 4. The experimental ARPES results, in particular the angular dispersion, spectral shape and polarisation dependence are compared with the theory in Section 5. We conclude that the narrow peak in ARPES is an intrinsic polaron (oxygen) band found below the chemical potential by half of the bipolaron binding energy. We also arrive at the conclusion that the present experimental photoemission spectra can be understood with a small or even without any Fermi surface (depending on doping).

2. Polaronic ARPES

The interaction of the crystal with the electromagnetic field of frequency $\nu$ is described by the Hamiltonian (in the dipole approximation)

$$H_{\text{int}} = (8\pi I)^{1/2} \sin(\nu t) \sum_{k,k'} (\mathbf{e} \cdot \mathbf{d}_{k,k'}) \hbar^\dagger_k \hbar^{\dagger}_{k'} + H.c., \quad (1)$$

where $I$ is the intensity of the radiation with the polarisation $\mathbf{e}$ (we take $c = \hbar = k_B = 1$), $\mathbf{k}$ is the momentum of the final state (i.e. of the photoelectron registered by the detector), $\mathbf{k}'$ is the (quasi)momentum of the hole remaining in the sample after the emission, and $\hbar^\dagger_k$ and $\hbar^{\dagger}_{k'}$ are their creation operators, respectively. For simplicity we suppress the band index in $\hbar^\dagger_k$.

Due to the translational symmetry of the Bloch states, $|\mathbf{k}'\rangle \equiv u_{-\mathbf{k}}(\mathbf{r}) \exp(-i\mathbf{k}' \cdot \mathbf{r})$, there is a momentum conservation rule in the dipole matrix element,

$$\mathbf{d}_{k,k'} = \mathbf{d}(\mathbf{k}) \delta_{k+k',G} \quad (2)$$

with

$$\mathbf{d}(\mathbf{k}) = i\epsilon(N/v_0)^{1/2} \nabla_k \int_{v_0} e^{-i\mathbf{G} \cdot \mathbf{r}} u_{k-G}(\mathbf{r}) d\mathbf{r}, \quad (3)$$

where $\mathbf{G}$ is a reciprocal lattice vector, $N$ the number of unit cells in the crystal of the volume $V_0$.

The Fermi Golden Rule gives the photocurrent to be

$$I(\mathbf{k}, E) = 4\pi^2 I |\mathbf{e} \cdot \mathbf{d}(\mathbf{k})|^2 \times \sum_{i,f} e^{\Omega+\mu N_i - E_i} |<f | h_{k-G}^\dagger i>|^2 \delta(E + E_f - E_i), \quad (4)$$

where $E$ is the binding energy, $E_{i,f}$ is the energy of the initial and final states of the crystal, and $\Omega, \mu, N_i$ are the thermodynamic and chemical potentials and the number of holes, respectively. By definition the sum in Eq.(4) is $n(E) A(\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{G}, -E)$ where the spectral function $A(\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{G}, E) = (-1/\pi) 3G^{R}(\mathbf{k} - \mathbf{G}, E)$ is proportional to the imaginary part of the retarded Green function (GF), and $n(E) = [\exp(E/T) + 1]^{-1}$, the Fermi distribution. In the following we consider temperatures well below the experimental energy resolution, so that $n(E) = 1$ if $E$ is negative and zero otherwise, and, for convenience, we put $\mathbf{G} = 0$.

The spectral function depends on essential interactions of a single hole with the rest of the system. As we argued earlier, the most important interaction in oxides is the Fröhlich long-range electron-phonon interaction of the oxygen hole with the c-axis polarised high-frequency phonons. The Fröhlich interaction is integrated out with the Lang-Firsov canonical transformation. With the Quantum-Monte-Carlo technique one can prove that this transformation is practically exact for a long-range interaction in a wide region of the coupling strength, including the intermediate and weak-coupling regime and in a wide range of the adiabatic ratio, $\omega/D$ ($\omega$ is the phonon frequency and $D$ is the bandwidth). By applying the Lang-Firsov canonical transformation the hole Matsubara GF is expressed as a convolution of the coherent polaron GF and the multiphonon correlation function $\sigma(m, \Omega_n)$,
\[ G(k, \omega_n) = \frac{T}{N} \sum_{\omega_{n'}, m, k'} \frac{\sigma(m, \omega_{n'} - \omega_n) e^{i(k - k') \cdot m}}{i \omega_{n'} - \xi_{k'}}, \]  

where the multi-phonon correlation function, \( \sigma(m, \tau) = T \sum_n e^{-i\omega_n \tau} \sigma(m, \Omega_n) \) is found as

\[ \sigma(m, \tau) = e^{\exp} \left( \frac{1}{2N} \sum_q |\gamma(q)|^2 f_q(m, \tau) \right). \]  

Here

\[ f_q(m, \tau) = [\cos(q \cdot m)cosh(\omega_q |\tau|) - 1]coth \frac{\omega_q}{2T} + \cos(q \cdot m)sinh(\omega_q |\tau|) \]

with \( m \) the lattice vector, \( \omega_n = \pi T(2n + 1) \), \( n = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2... \) and \( \Omega_n = 2\pi Tn \).

In the case of dispersionless phonons and a short-range (Holstein) interaction with a \( q \)-dependent matrix element \( \omega_q = \omega, |\gamma(q)|^2 = 2g^2 \) one can readily calculate the Fourier component of \( \sigma(m, \tau) \) to obtain

\[ G(k, \omega_n) = \frac{e^{-g^2}}{i \omega_n - \xi_k} + \frac{e^{-g^2}}{N} \sum_{l = 1}^{2g^2} \frac{\gamma_{kl}}{l!} \times \sum_{k'} \frac{n_{k'}}{i \omega_n - \xi_{k'} + i \omega + i \omega_n - \xi_{k'} - i \omega}. \]  

The Green’s function of a polaronic carrier comprises two different contributions. The first coherent \( k \)-dependent term arises from the polaron band tunneling. The spectral weight of the coherent part is strongly (exponentially) suppressed as \( Z = exp(-g^2) \) and the effective mass is strongly enhanced, \( \xi_k = Z E_k - \mu \) (we include the polaronic level shift into the chemical potential, \( \mu \)) . Here \( E(k) \) is the bare (LDA+U) hole band dispersion. The second \( k \)-independent contribution describes the excitations accompanied by the emission and absorption of phonons. We believe that this term, \( \delta (k, E) \) is responsible for the asymmetric background in the optical conductivity and in the photoemission spectra of cuprates and manganites. We notice that its spectral density spreads over a wide energy range of about twice the polaron level shift \( E_p = g^2 \omega \). On the contrary the coherent term shows an angular dependence in the energy range of the order of the polaron bandwidth \( 2w \equiv ZD \).

As we have discussed above ARPES measures the imaginary part of the retarded GF multiplied by the Fermi-Dirac distribution function and by the square of the dipole matrix element. \( G^R \) is obtained from \( G(k, \omega_n) \) with a substitution \( i \omega_n \rightarrow E + i0^+ \). As a result we obtain

\[ I(k, E) \sim |d(k)|^2 n(E) Z \delta(E + \xi_k) + \delta (k, E), \]  

where \( \delta (k, E) \) is a structureless function of the binding energy, which spreads from about \( -\omega \) down to \(-2E_p \). Only in the extreme limit of a very strong electron-phonon coupling, where the polaron bandwidth is well below the phonon frequency, can multiphonon structure in \( \delta (k, E) \) be verified [14] has actually been observed in the optical conductivity [16].

The small Holstein polaron is very heavy except if the phonon frequency is extremely high [26]. In fact, oxides are ionic semiconductors where the long-range electron-phonon interaction dominates. That leads to a much lighter mobile small Fröhlich polaron (SFP) [27, 28]. Considering the electron-phonon interaction in a multi-polaron system one has to take into account the dynamic properties of the dielectric response function [29]. One can naively believe [30] that the long-range Fröhlich interaction becomes short range (Holstein) due to screening. This is of course untrue. In the long-wave limit \((q \rightarrow 0)\) the response of polarons at the optical phonon frequency is dynamic, because \( \omega >> qv \) (\( v \) is the characteristic group velocity of polarons). Therefore, the singular (Fröhlich) behaviour of \( |\gamma(q)| \sim 1/q \) is unaffected by the screening. Polars are slow enough and cannot screen the high-frequency crystal field oscillations. Hence, the interaction with the high-frequency optical phonons in ionic polaron solids remains long-range whatever the carrier density. It is easy to show [31] using Eq.(5) and Eq.(6) that for any finite-radius interaction with a \( q \)-dependent matrix element the coherent part of ARPS spectra takes the same form as Eq.(8), but with a different spectral weight \((Z)\) and effective mass \((Z')\) renormalisation exponents. Also some \( k \) dependence of the incoherent background appears if the matrix element of the electron-phonon interaction depends on \( q\). Hence, in general,

\[ I(k, E) \sim |d(k)|^2 n(E) Z \delta(E + \xi_k) + \delta (k, E), \]  

with the same \( Z = exp(-E_p/\omega) \) as in the case of the Holstein polaron but with the SFP bandwidth much less reduced, \( \xi_k = Z'E(k) - \mu \), where \( Z' = exp(-\gamma E_p/\omega) \). In general one finds

\[ \gamma = \sum_q |\gamma(q)|^2\left[1 - cos(q \cdot a)/\sum_q |\gamma(q)|^2\right], \]  

and \( E_p = (1/2)\sum_q |\gamma(q)|^2\omega_q \). The numerical coefficient \( \gamma \) might be as small as 0.4[35] and even smaller in the cuprates with the nearest neighbour oxygen-oxygen distance less than the lattice constant, \( \gamma \approx 0.2\) which is precisely confirmed by exact QMC calculation of the small polaron mass [35]. On the other hand this important result tells us that small polarons as well as intersite bipolarons are perfectly mobile and can account for the high-Tc values in cuprates [35]. On the other the coherent spectral weight remains strongly suppressed in polaronic conductors, Eq.(9), because \( Z \) might be less than \( Z' \) by one or even a few orders of magnitude. These unusual SFP spectral features provide an explanation for the apparent discrepancy between a very small Drude weight and a relatively moderate mass enhancement, \( \rho^* \sim 3m_e - 4m_e \) (depending on doping) of carriers in manganites [36] and cuprates. They also explain why the evHs observed in ARPES [33] can be hardly seen in angle averaged photoemission. Indeed, the integrated spectral weight of the
incoherent background is proportional to \( (1 - Z) \), Eq.(7). It turns out to be much larger than the coherent contribution, proportional to \( Z \ll 1 \). Finally, the \( k \)-dependent incoherent background might obscure the experimental determination of the Fermi-level crossing, leaving the ‘leading edge’ determination of it rather unreliable.

In the following we concentrate on the angular, spectral and polarisation dependence of the first coherent term, Eq.(9). The present experimental resolution allows probing of the intrinsic damping of the coherent polaron tunnelling. This damping appears due to the random field and low-frequency lattice and spin fluctuations described by the polaron self-energy \( \Sigma_p(k,E) \), so that the coherent part of the spectral function is given by

\[
A_p(k,E) = (1/p) \frac{3\Sigma_p(k,E)}{[E + i\Sigma_p(k,E) - \xi_k]^2 + [3\Sigma_p(k,E)]^2}.
\]

(11)

Hence, the theory of the narrow ARPES peak reduces to the determination of the self-energy of the coherent small hole polaron scattered by impurities, low-frequency deformation and spin fluctuations.

3. Self-energy of 1D hole in the non-crossing approximation

Due to energy conservation small polarons exist in the Bloch states at temperatures well below the optical phonon frequency \( T << \omega/2 \) no matter how strong their interaction with phonons is. This textbook result, known for a long time, has been questioned by some authors. It has been shown that the confusion is due to a profound misunderstanding of the strong-coupling expansion by those authors. The finite polaron self-energy appears only due to the (quasi)elastic scattering. First we apply the simplest non-crossing (ladder) approximation to derive the analytical results, Fig.2. Within this approximation the self-energy is \( k \)-independent for a short-range scattering potential like the deformation or a screened impurity potential, so that

\[
\Sigma_p(E) = \sum_k G_p^R(k,E),
\]

(12)

with \( G_p^R(k,E) = [E - \xi_k - \Sigma_p(E)]^{-1} \).

The oxygen polaron spectrum is parametrised in the tight-binding model as

\[
\xi_k^x,y = 2[t \cos(k_{x,y}a) + t' \cos(k_{y,x}a) + t_c \cos(k_{c,d}a)] - \mu,
\]

(13)

If the oxygen hopping integrals in Eq.(13), reduced by the narrowing effect, are positive, the minima of the polaron bands are found at the Brillouin zone boundary in \( X (\pi,0) \) and \( Y (0,\pi) \). The wave vectors corresponding to the energy minima belong to the stars with two prongs. Their group has only 1D representations. This means that the spectrum is degenerate with respect to the number of prongs of the star. The spectrum Eq.(13) belongs to the star with two prongs, and, hence it is a two-fold degenerate. The doublet is degenerate if the hole resides on the apical oxygen. In general, the degeneracy can be removed due to the chains in the buffer layers of Y123 and Y124, so that the \( y \)-polarized band corresponding to the tunnelling along the chains might be the lowest one.

As mentioned above the oxygen hole is (quasi) one-dimensional due to a large difference between the oxygen hopping integrals for the orbitals elongated parallel to and perpendicular to the oxygen-oxygen hopping \( t', t_c << t \). This allows us to apply a one-dimensional approximation, reducing Eq.(13) to two 1D parabolic bands near the \( X \) and \( Y \) points, \( \xi_{k,x}^x,y = k^2/2m^* - \mu \) with \( m^* = 1/2ta^2 \) and \( k \) taking relative to \( (0,0) \) and \( (0,\pi) \), respectively. Then, the equation for the self-energy in the non-crossing approximation, Eq.(12) takes the following form

\[
\Sigma_p(\epsilon) = -2^{-3/2}[\Sigma_p(\epsilon) - \epsilon]^{-1/2},
\]

(14)

for each doublet component. Here we introduce a dimensionless energy (and self-energy), \( \epsilon \equiv (E + \mu)/\epsilon_0 \) using \( \epsilon_0 = (D^2m^*)^{1/3} \) as the energy unit. The constant \( D \) is the second moment of the Gaussian white noise potential, comprising thermal and random fluctuations as \( D = 2(V_0^2T/M + n_{im}v^2) \), where \( V_0 \) is the amplitude of the deformation potential, \( M \) is the elastic modulus, \( n_{im} \) is the impurity density, and \( v \) is the coefficient of the \( \delta \)-function impurity potential. The solution is

\[
\Sigma_p(\epsilon) = \frac{\epsilon}{3} - \left( 1 + \frac{\epsilon^3}{2} \right) \left[ \frac{1}{16} + \frac{\epsilon^3}{27} + \frac{1}{256} + \frac{\epsilon^3}{216} \right]^{1/3} - \left( 1 - \frac{\epsilon^3}{2} \right) \left[ \frac{1}{27} + \frac{\epsilon^3}{216} - \frac{1}{256} + \frac{\epsilon^3}{256} \right]^{1/3}.
\]

(15)

While the energy resolution in the present ARPES studies is almost perfect, the momentum resolution remains rather poor, \( \delta > 0.1\pi/a \). Hence we have to integrate the spectral function, Eq.(11), with a Gaussian momentum resolution to obtain the experimental photocurrent,

\[
I(k,E) \sim Z \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} dk' A_p(k', -E) \exp\left[ -\frac{(k - k')^2}{\delta^2} \right].
\]

(16)

The integral is expressed in terms of \( \Sigma_p(\epsilon) \), Eq.(15) and the tabulated Error function \( w(z) \) as

\[
I(k,E) \sim -\frac{2Z}{\delta} \Im \left\{ \Sigma_p(\epsilon) [w(z_1) + w(z_2)] \right\},
\]

(17)

where \( z_{1,2} = [\pm k - i/2\Sigma_p(\epsilon)]/\delta \), \( w(z) = e^{-z^2} erf c(-iz) \) and \( \epsilon = (E + \mu)/\epsilon_0 \). This photocurrent is plotted as dashed lines in Fig.3 for two momenta, \( k = 0.04\pi/a \) (almost \( Y \) or \( X \) points of the Brillouin zone) and \( k = 0.3\pi/a \).
The chemical potential is placed in the charge transfer gap below the bottom of the hole band, \( \mu = -20 \text{meV} \), the momentum resolution is taken as \( \delta = 0.28\pi/a \) and the damping \( \epsilon_0 = 19\text{meV} \).

The imaginary part of the self-energy, Eq.(15) disappears below \( \epsilon = -3/2^{5/3} \sim -0.9449 \). Hence this approximation gives a well-defined gap rather than a pseudogap. Actually, the non-crossing approximation fails to describe the localised states inside the gap (i.e. the Lifshitz tail of the density of states). One has to go beyond the simple ladder, Fig.2, to describe the single-electron tunnelling inside the gap and the ARPES spectra at very small binding energy.

### 4. Exact spectral function of 1D hole

The exact spectral function for a one dimensional particle in a random Gaussian white noise potential was derived by Halperin and the density of states by Frisch and Lloyd. Halperin derived two pairs of differential equations from whose solutions the spectral function of a ‘Schroedinger’ particle (i.e. in the effective mass approximation) and of a ‘discrete’ particle (tight-binding approximation) may be calculated. The QMC polaronic formation gives a well-defined gap rather than a pseudogap.

\[
A_p(k, \epsilon) = 4 \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} p_0(-z) R p_1(z) dz ,
\]

(18)

where \( p_{0,1}(z) \) obey the two differential equations

\[
\left[ \frac{d^2}{dz^2} + \frac{d}{dz} (z^2 + 2\epsilon) \right] p_0 = 0 ,
\]

(19)

and

\[
\left[ \frac{d^2}{dz^2} + \frac{d}{dz} (z^2 + 2\epsilon) - z - ik \right] p_1 + p_0 = 0 ,
\]

(20)

with boundary conditions

\[
\lim_{z \to \infty} z^{2-n} p_n(z) = \lim_{z \to -\infty} z^{2-n} p_n(z)
\]

(21)

where \( k \) is measured in units of \( k_0 = \left( D^{1/2} m^* \right)^{2/3} \). The first equation may be integrated to give

\[
p_0(z) = \frac{\exp(-z^3/3 - 2\epsilon z) \int_{-\infty}^{z} \exp(u^3/3 + 2\epsilon u) du}{\pi^{1/2} \int_{0}^{\infty} u^{1/2} \exp(-u^3/12 - 2\epsilon u) du} .
\]

(22)

The equation for \( p_1(z) \) has no known analytic solution, and hence must be solved numerically. There is however an asymptotic expression for \( A_p(k, \epsilon) \) in the tail where \( |\epsilon| \gg 1 \):

\[
A_p(k, \epsilon) \sim 2\pi (-2\epsilon)^{3/2} \exp\left[-\frac{4}{3} (-2\epsilon)^{3/2} \right] \cosh^2 \left[ \frac{\pi k}{(-8\epsilon)^{1/2}} \right] .
\]

(23)

In practice, for computational efficiency we use the exact spectral density for \(-1.4 \leq \epsilon < 1 \), and outside this range we use the asymptotic result for \( \epsilon < -1.4 \), Eq.(23) and the non-crossing approximation for \( \epsilon > 1 \), where they are almost indistinguishable from the exact result on the scale of the diagrams plotted here.

The result for \( N_p(k, -E) \) integrated with the Gaussian momentum resolution is shown in Fig.3 for two values of the momentum (solid lines). Quite differently from the non-crossing approximation the exact spectral function (averaged with the momentum resolution function) has the Lifshitz tail due to the states localised by disorder within the normal state gap. However, besides this tail the non-crossing approximation gives very good agreement, and for binding energy greater than about 30meV it is practically exact.

The cumulative DOS

\[
N_p(\epsilon) = (2\pi)^{-1} \int_{-\infty}^{\epsilon} d\epsilon' \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} dk A_p(k, \epsilon')
\]

(24)

is expressed analytically in terms of the tabulated Airy functions \( Ai(x) \) and \( Bi(x) \) as

\[
N_p(\epsilon) = \pi^{-2} [Ai^2(-2\epsilon) + Bi^2(-2\epsilon)]^{-1} .
\]

(25)

The DOS \( dN(\epsilon)/d\epsilon \) fits well the voltage-current tunnelling characteristics of cuprates.

### 5. Theory of ARPES in Y124 and Y123

With the polaronic doublet, Eq.(13) placed above the chemical potential we can quantitatively describe high T\(_c\) cuprates. The Bloch periodic function \( u_k(r) \) can be expressed in terms of the Wannier orbitals \( w(r) \) as

\[
u_k(r) = N^{-1/2} \sum_m e^{i k (m-r)} w(r - m) .
\]

(26)

Then the dipole matrix element is given by the derivative of the Fourier component of the atomic (Wannier) orbital, \( f_k = v_0^{-1} \int dr w(r) \exp(i k \cdot r) \) as

\[
\mathbf{d}(k) = i(\mathbf{e} \cdot \nabla_k) f_k .
\]

(27)

To estimate \( f_k \) we approximate the \( x, y \) oxygen orbitals contributing to the \( x \) and \( y \) polaronic bands, respectively, with \( w_{x,y}(r) = (1/4a_0^2\pi)^{1/2}(x/2a_0) \exp(-r^2/2a_0) \) and \( w_{y,(x)}(r) = (1/4a_0^2\pi)^{1/2}(y/2a_0) \exp(-r^2/2a_0) \). As a result we obtain for the \( x \) orbital,

\[
\frac{\partial f_k}{\partial k_x} = \left( 8a_0^3\pi/v_0 \right)^{1/2} a_0 \times \left( (k a_0)^2 + \frac{3}{2} - 6(k a_0)^2 \right) \left[ (k a_0)^2 + \frac{3}{2} \right]^{-1} ,
\]

(28)

and

\[
\frac{\partial f_k}{\partial k_y,z} = -6(8a_0^3\pi/v_0)^{1/2} a_0 k_x k_{y,z} (k a_0)^2 + \frac{3}{2} \right]^{-1} ,
\]

(29)
Here $\mathbf{k}$ is the photoelectron momentum and $a_0$ is the size of the Wannier function. For the case of $y$-orbital one should interchange $x$ and $y$. Near the $X$ and $Y$ points of the Brillouin zone, $|k_{y,x}| << k$, respectively. Then it follows from Eq.(28) and Eq.(29) that the ARPES peak should be seen at $X$ and almost disappear at $Y$ if the photons are polarised along the $x$-direction, i.e. $\mathbf{e} \parallel \mathbf{a}$. If the polarisation is along the $y$-direction ($\mathbf{e} \parallel \mathbf{b}$) the peak appears at $Y$ and almost disappears at $X$. Precisely on the photon energy, a strong dependence of the dipole matrix element, Eq.(28) should be seen at $X$ and almost disappear at $Y$ if the exchange is not incompatible with our scenario (see Fig.1 inset), we do not believe that it has really been observed in Y124. First of all these authors suppressed a few experimental curves in the $Y - \Gamma$ direction, Fig.5, which prevented them from observing the intensity loss in this ‘dielectric’ direction, where there is obviously no Fermi-surface crossing. This loss of intensity along $Y - \Gamma$ tells us that the intensity loss might be due to the matrix element rather than to the Fermi-surface crossing in both directions. This is confirmed by our observation of a similar rapid loss of the intensity in a dielectric, FeSe Fig.9 with no Fermi-surface at all. The peaks in the $Y - S$ direction are all 15 meV or more below the Fermi level - at a temperature of 1 meV, if the loss of spectral weight were due to a Fermi-surface crossing one would expect the peaks to approach much closer to the Fermi level. Also the experimental spectral shape of the intensity at $\mathbf{k} = \mathbf{k}_F$ is incompatible with any theoretical scenario, including different marginal Fermi-liquid models, Fig.10. The spectral function on the Fermi surface should be close to a simple Lorentzian,

$$A_\nu(k, E) \sim \frac{|E|^\beta}{E^2 + \text{constant} \times E^{2\gamma}},$$

because the imaginary part of the self-energy behaves as $|E|^\beta$ with $0 \leq \beta \leq 2$. On the contrary, the experimental intensity shows a pronounced minimum at the alleged Fermi-surface, Fig.10.

If there is indeed no Fermi-surface crossing in many cuprates, as we argue, why then does the ‘maximum locus’ determination point to a large Fermi surface in cuprates, which is drastically incompatible with their kinetic and thermodynamic properties? We propose that it appears due to the fact that oxygen semiconducting band has its minima at large $k$ inside or even on the boundary of the Brillouin zone. That is why ARPES show intense peaks near large $k$ mimicking a large Fermi-surface.

6. Summary and conclusions

In summary, we have proposed a theory of ARPES in cuprates based on the LDA+U band structure and the bipolaron theory compatible with the normal state kinetic and thermodynamic properties of these materials. The theory explains the narrow flat bands observed in Y123 and Y124, including their polarisation, spectral and angular dependence, as well as a featureless (but dispersive) background. The ARPES peak originates from the hole excitations of the polaronic oxygen band of the buffer layers, in agreement with the experimental results and electronic structure of Schabel et al. Differently from these authors we suggest that this band is intrinsic for cuprates and takes part in the bipolaron formation and superconductivity, which is nicely confirmed by a few independent studies. The normal state gap is half of the bipolaron binding energy. The angular dependence of the peak and of the gap is due to the polaron band dispersion, which agrees well with the QMC results for the small Fröhlich polaron.

The spectral shape of the peak is affected by the soft lattice, spin and random fluctuations. The characteristic
scattering rate agrees well with that found in the tunnelling experiments. This scattering rate is temperature dependent not only due to the thermal lattice fluctuations, but also because of the anomalous screening below $T_c$ in the charged Bose-liquid. The Bose-Einstein condensate screens effectively the long-range Coulomb potential of impurities. As a result one can expect a drastic change of the damping $\epsilon_0$ when $T_c$ is passed. That might help to understand the near disappearance of the narrow peak above $T_c$ in some Bi-cuprates. On the other hand in the stoichiometric Y124 with (theoretically) no impurities, one can expect about the same results from ARPES below and above $T_c$, which seems to be the case. Within the bipolaron theory there is only one single – particle gap, which is half of the bipolaron binding energy both below and above $T_c$.

We believe that many cuprates are doped insulators with no Fermi surface at all due to the bipolaron formation. The Fermi-surface crossing, if it were firmly established in the overdoped samples, would correspond to a small Fermi surface of the oxygen band pockets located at finite $k$ like in many ordinary semiconductors, for example, in Ge and Si.

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There is strong experimental evidence for apical holes in cuprates from the site-specific X-ray absorption (M. Merz et al, Phys. Rev. Lett. 80, 5192 (1998)) and from the site-specific effect of Ba and Y substitution for Pr in YBa$_2$Cu$_3$O$_7$ (J.D. Dow, U. Howard and A. Blackstead, Bulletin of American Physical Society, 43, 877 (1998)).

Fig.1. Schematic LDU+U density of states. The chemical potential is pinned inside the charge transfer gap (a) due to the bipolaron formation in underdoped cuprates. It might enter the oxygen band in overdoped cuprates (b) if the polaron band crosses the bipolaron one (inset).

Fig.2. The non-crossing diagram for the self-energy. The dashed line corresponds to the random potential and (or) to the thermal lattice and spin fluctuations.

Fig.3. The polaron spectral function, integrated with the momentum resolution function for two angles, $k = 0.04\pi/a$ (upper curves), and $k = 0.30\pi/a$ with the damping $\epsilon_0 = 19\text{meV}$, the momentum resolution $\delta = 0.28\pi/a$ and the polaron mass $m^* = 9.9m_e$. The bipolaron binding energy $2|\mu| = 40\text{meV}$. The dashed curves are the spectral density integrated with the momentum resolution in the non-crossing approximation.

Fig.4. Polarisation dependence of the ARPES peak in Y123 near X and Y points.

Fig.5. Theoretical ARPES spectra (b) compared with experiment (a) in Y124 for Y−Γ direction. Parameters are those of Fig.3.

Fig.6. Theoretical fit (dashed lines) to two experimental ARPES curves corresponding to $k = 0.04\pi/a$ (upper curves), and $k = 0.30\pi/a$.

Fig.7. Theoretical ARPES spectra (b) compared with experiment (a) in Y124 for Y−S direction.

Fig.8. The energy-integrated ARPES intensity in Y124 in the Y−Γ (a) and Y−S (b) directions. Momenta are measured relative to the Y-point of the Brillouin zone.

Fig.9. (a) The energy-integrated ARPES intensity in FeSi as a function of the analyser angle. The spectra are shown in (b).

Fig.10. The experimental ARPES signal (solid line) on the alleged Fermi-surface does not correspond to a Fermi-liquid spectral function (dashed line). We assume particle-hole symmetry to obtain the spectral function for negative binding energy.
\[ \Sigma(\Sigma (E)) = G(k, E) \]
Intensity (arb. units)

Binding Energy (meV)
Theory  |  Experiment

\[ \begin{array}{c}
E \parallel b \\
Y \\
\text{Binding Energy} \\
E \parallel a \\
Y \\
\end{array} \]
Integrated Intensity

ky (π/a)

Integrated Intensity

kx (π/a)