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## Phase transition of the escape rate in dimer model

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We study the phase transition of the escape rate of exchange-coupled dimer of single-molecule magnets which are coupled either ferromagnetically or antiferromagnetically in a staggered magnetic field and an easy  $z$ -axis anisotropy. The Hamiltonian for this system has been used to study dimeric molecular nanomagnet  $[\text{Mn}_4]_2$  which is comprised of two single molecule magnets coupled antiferromagnetically. We generalize the method of mapping a single-molecule magnetic spin problem onto a quantum-mechanical particle to dimeric molecular nanomagnets. The problem is mapped to a single particle quantum-mechanical

Hamiltonian in terms of the relative coordinate and a coordinate dependent reduced mass. It is shown that the presence of the external staggered magnetic field creates a phase boundary separating the first- from the second-order transition. With the set of parameters used by R. Tiron, *et al*, *\prl* **91**, 227203 (2003), and S. Hill, *et al* *science* **302**, 1015 (2003) to fit experimental data for  $[\text{Mn}_4]_2$  dimer we find that the critical temperature at the phase boundary is  $T_0^{(c)} = 0.29K$ . Therefore, thermally activated transitions should occur for temperatures greater than  $T_0^{(c)}$ .

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