

Isotensor Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

Andrew W. Jackura

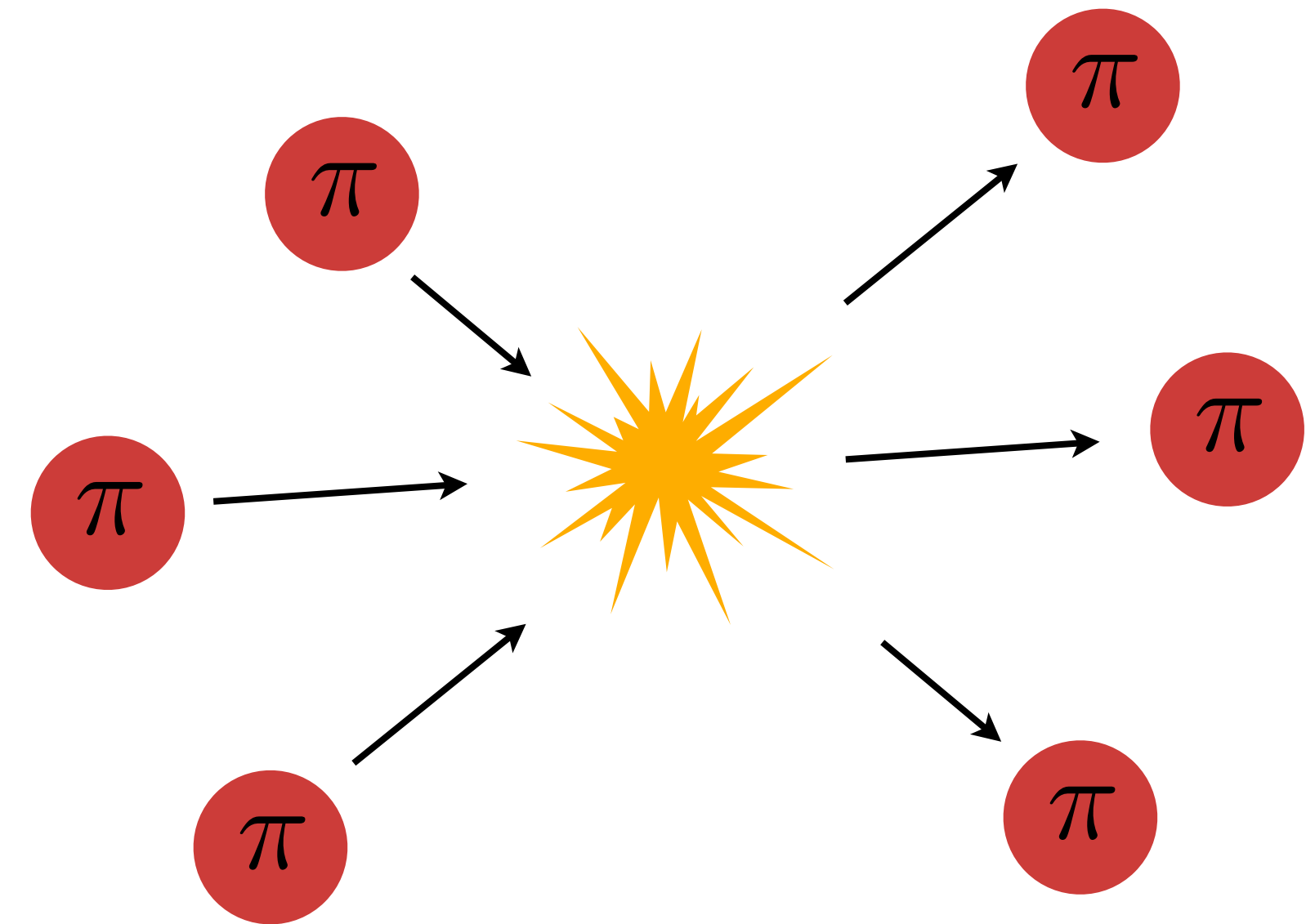
William & Mary

Department of Physics

The 43rd International Symposium on Lattice Field Theory

July 30, 2026

University of Maryland, College Park



had spec

EXO HAD
EXOTIC HADRONS TOPICAL COLLABORATION



awjackura@wm.edu



[ajackura.github.io](https://github.com/ajackura)



WILLIAM & MARY

CHARTERED 1693

First calculation of isotensor 3π scattering amplitude

- Strongly coupled with sub-channel ρ resonances
- Complete end-to-end analysis from energy levels to partial wave amplitudes
- Access to observables familiar with experimental analyses, e.g., Dalitz plots

Relevant Literature

Briceño, Hansen, **Jackura**, Thomas, Edwards

Isotensor $\pi\pi\pi$ scattering with a ρ resonant subsystem from QCD

arXiv:2510.24894 (accepted to PRL)



Raúl Briceño
UC Berkeley



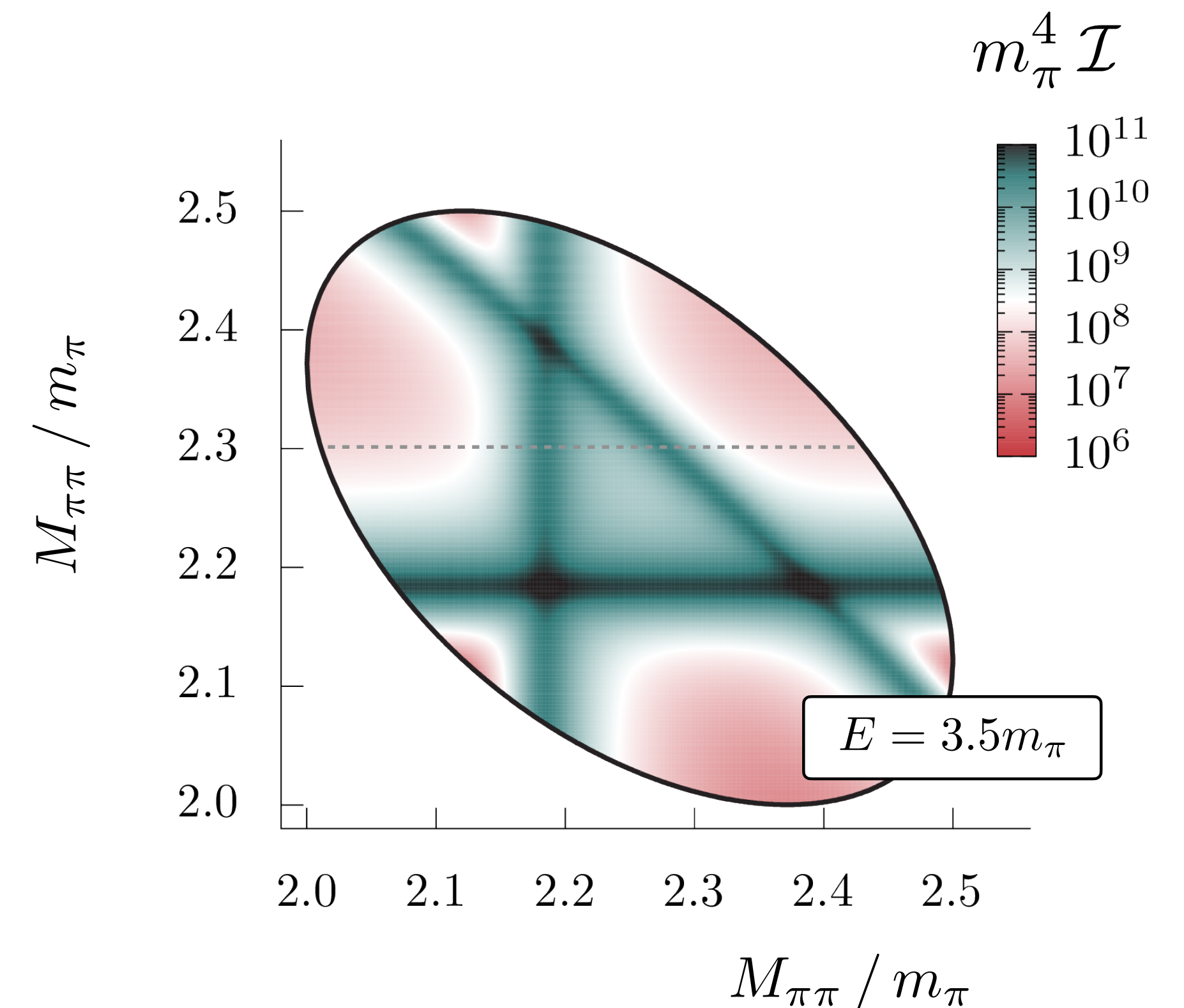
Maxwell Hansen
U Edinburgh



Robert Edwards
Jefferson Lab



Christopher Thomas
Cambridge

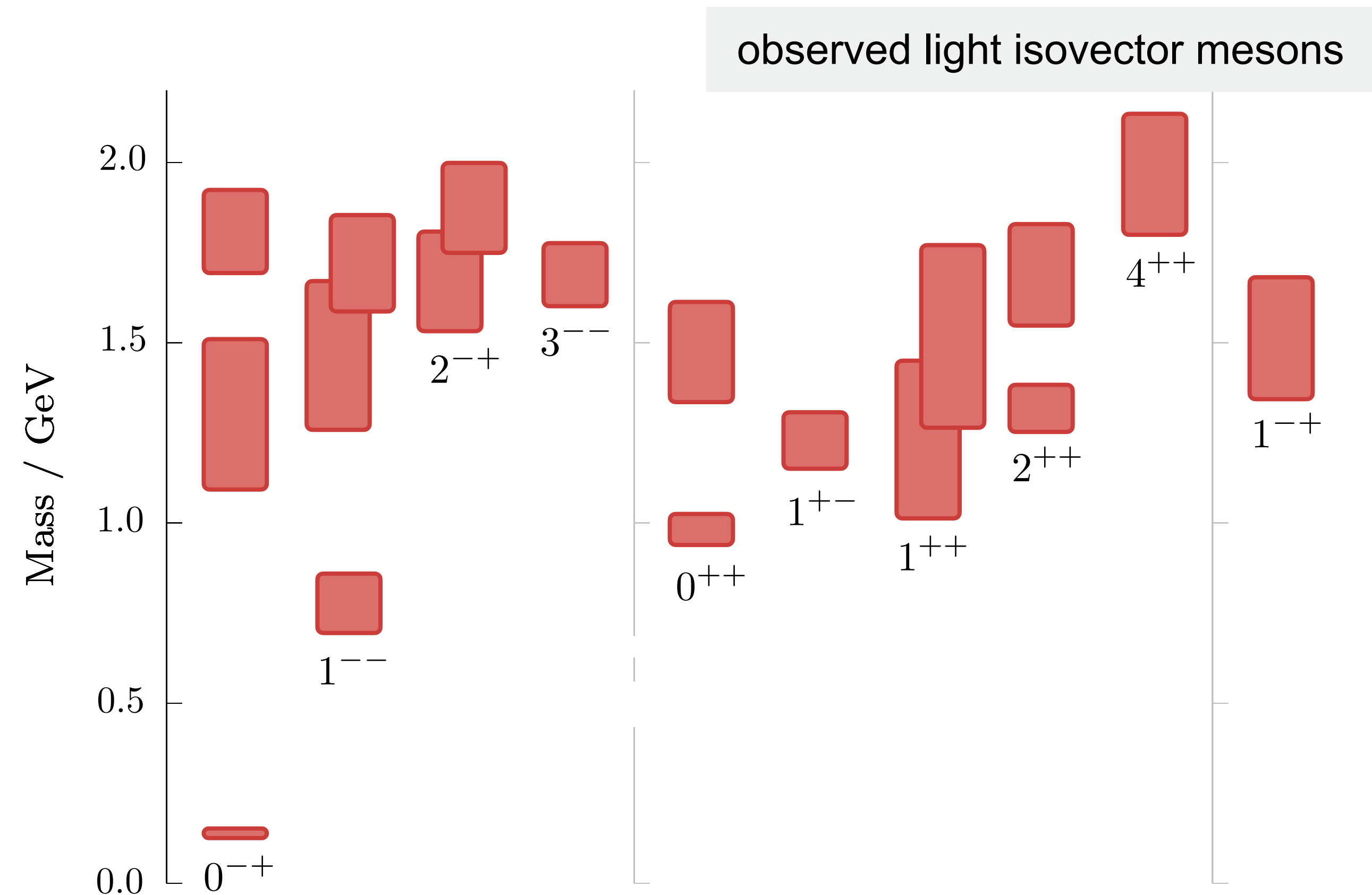


Hadron Spectroscopy

Goal: Understand the excited hadron spectrum from **QCD**

- Establish masses, lifetimes, couplings, etc. in a rigorous manner
- Requires ascertaining **reaction amplitudes** — key objects which contain *all* information
- Have ability to study hadron physics in manner commensurate with experimental colleagues

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{QCD}} = \sum_f \bar{\psi}_f (i\not{D} - m_f) \psi_f - \frac{1}{2} \text{tr} (\mathbf{G}_{\mu\nu} \mathbf{G}^{\mu\nu})$$

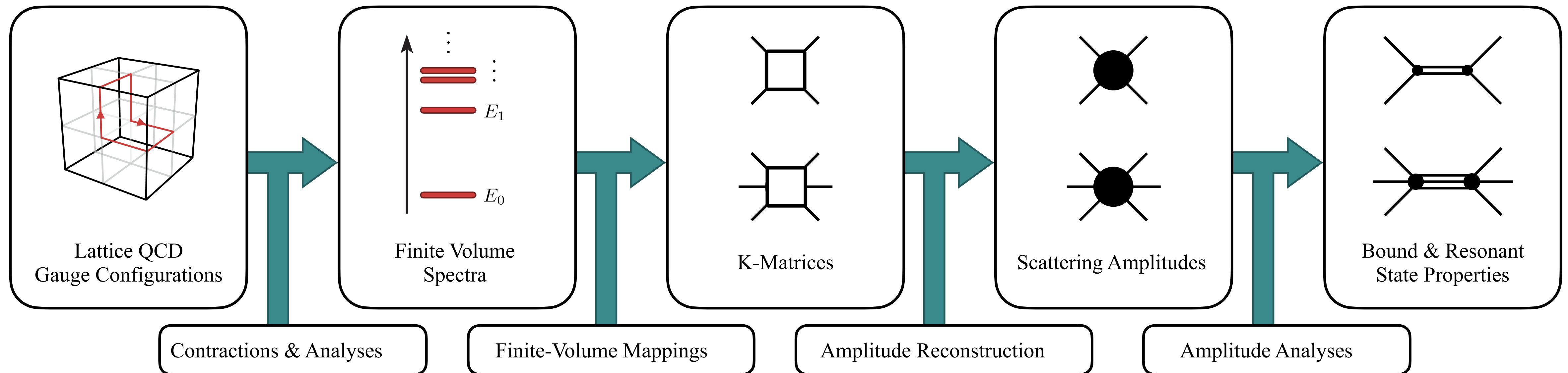


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Lüscher Methodology



M. Lüscher
Commun.Math.Phys. **105**, 153 (1986)
Nucl.Phys. **B354**, 531 (1991)

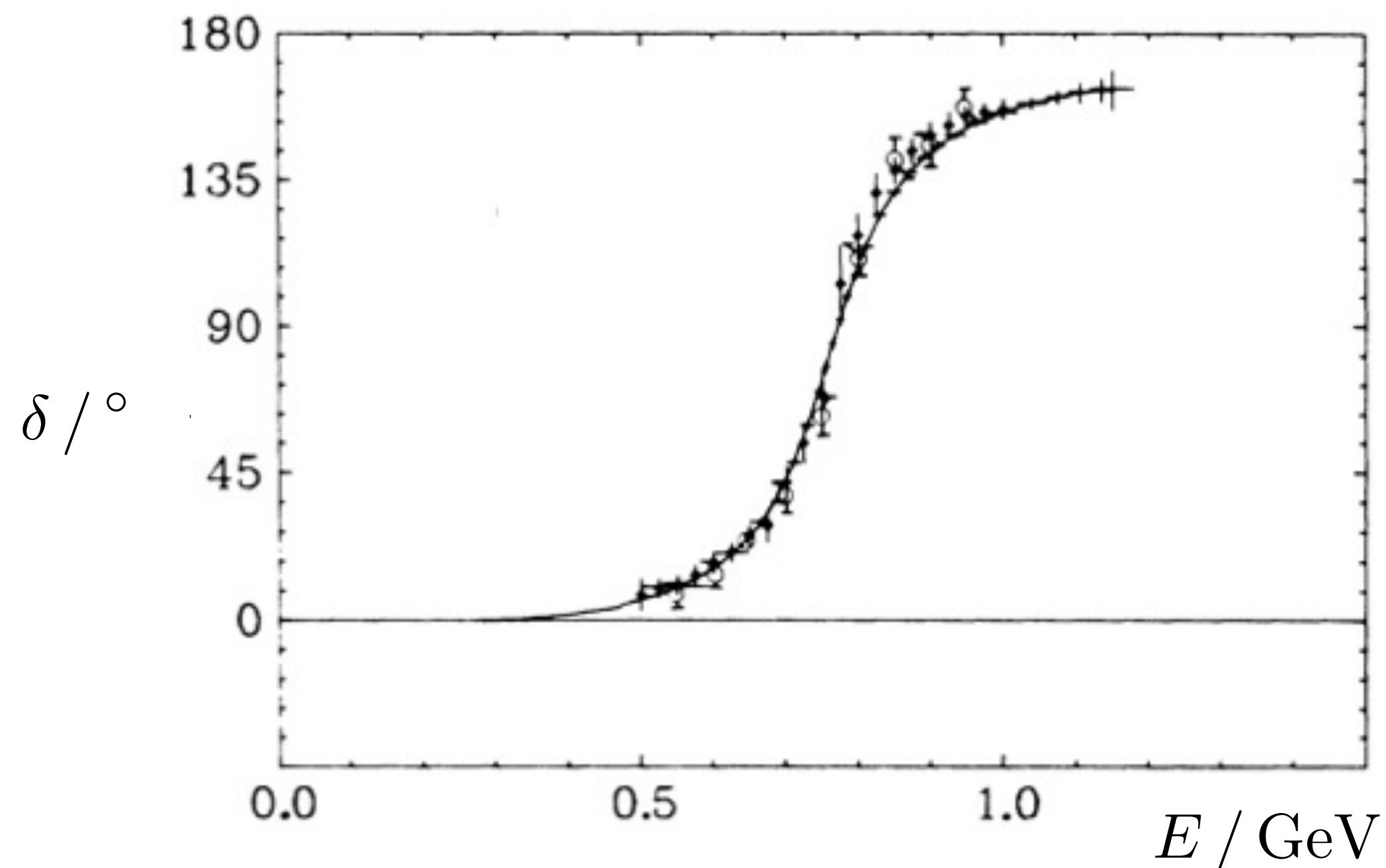
Many many others...

Hadron Spectroscopy

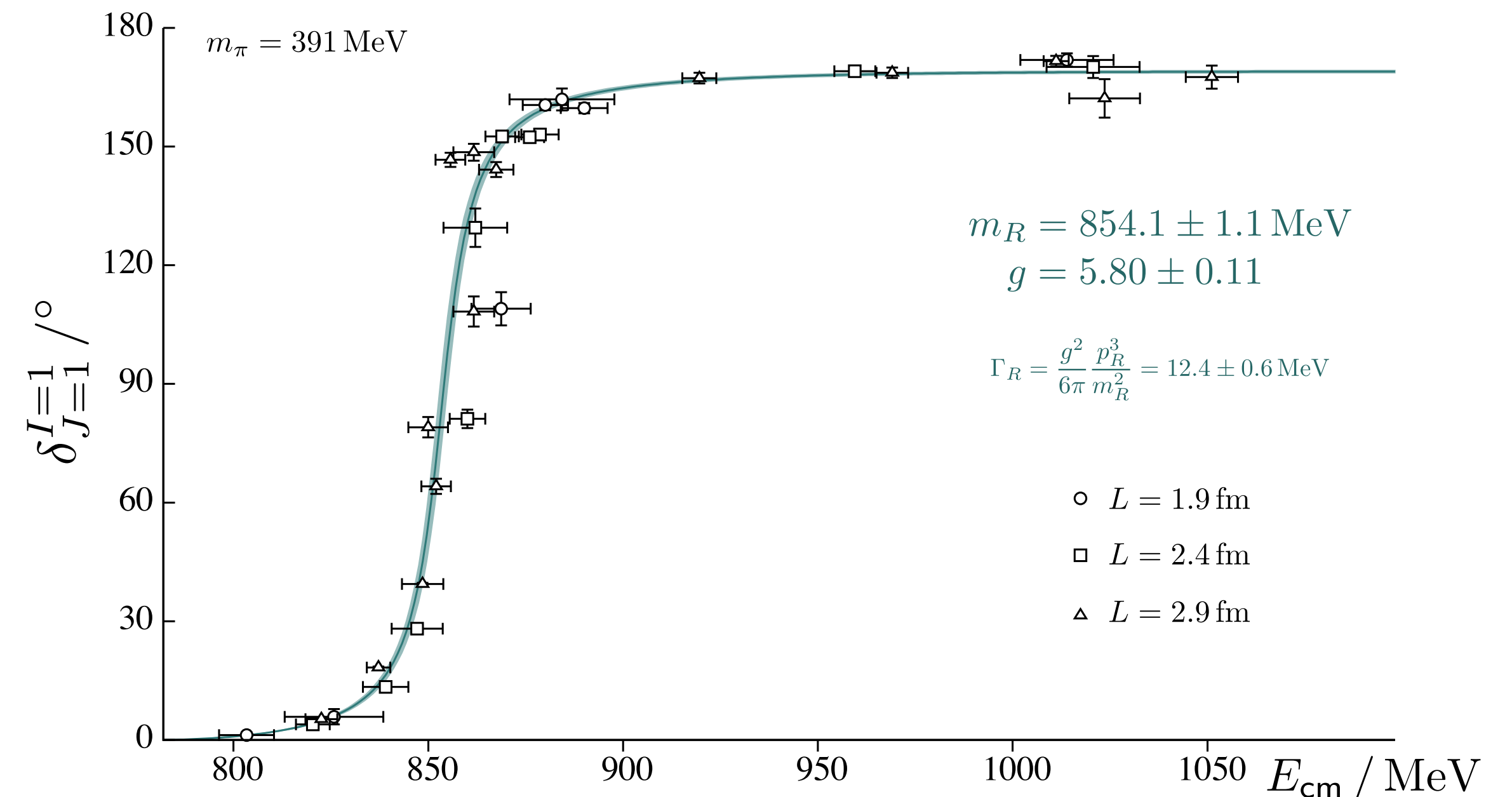
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Example: $\pi\pi$ ($I = 1$) Scattering



S.Protopopescu, et al
Phys.Rev.D, **7** (1973) 1279



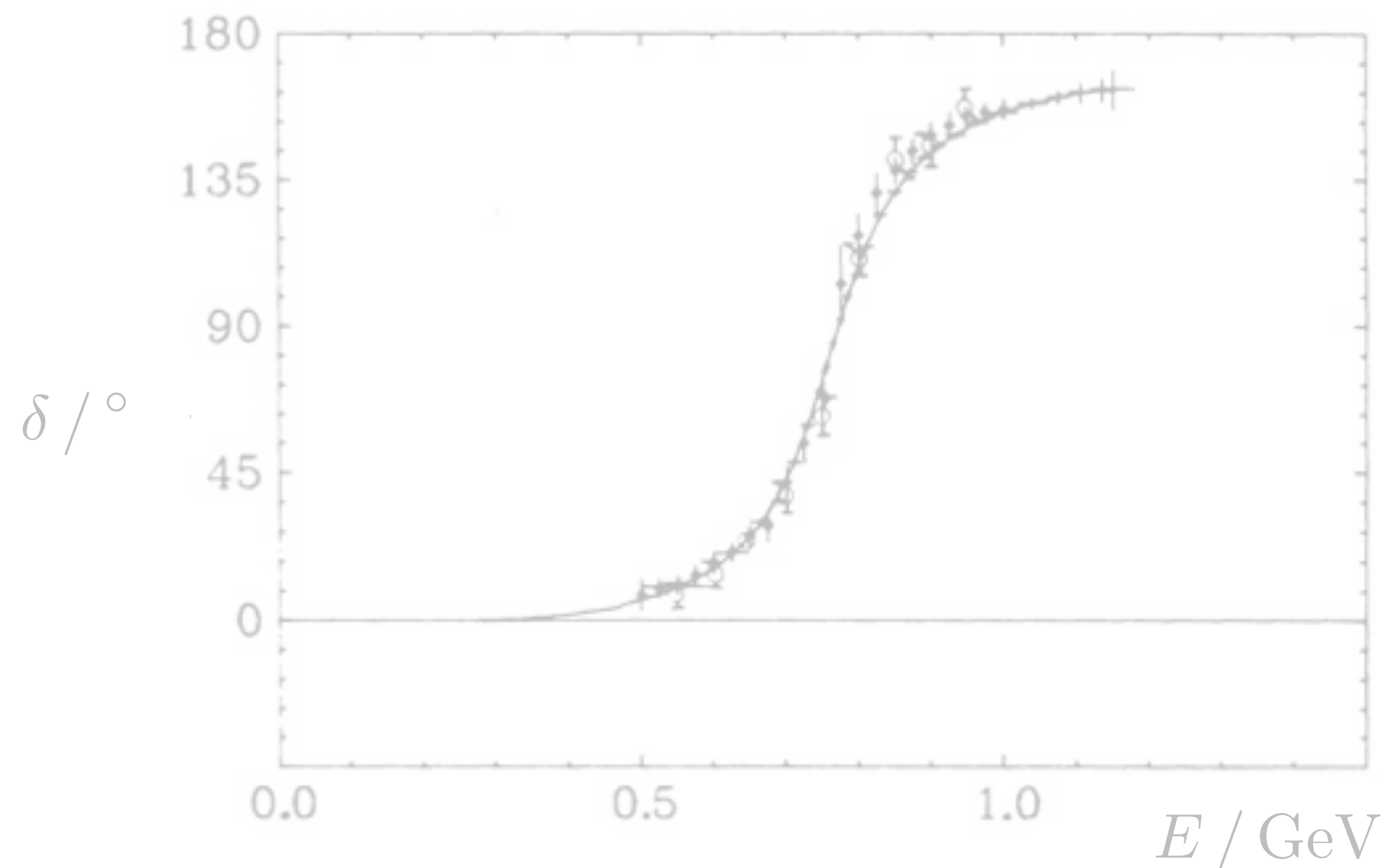
J.Dudek, R.Edwards, & C.Thomas
Phys.Rev.D, **87** (2013) 034505

Hadron Spectroscopy

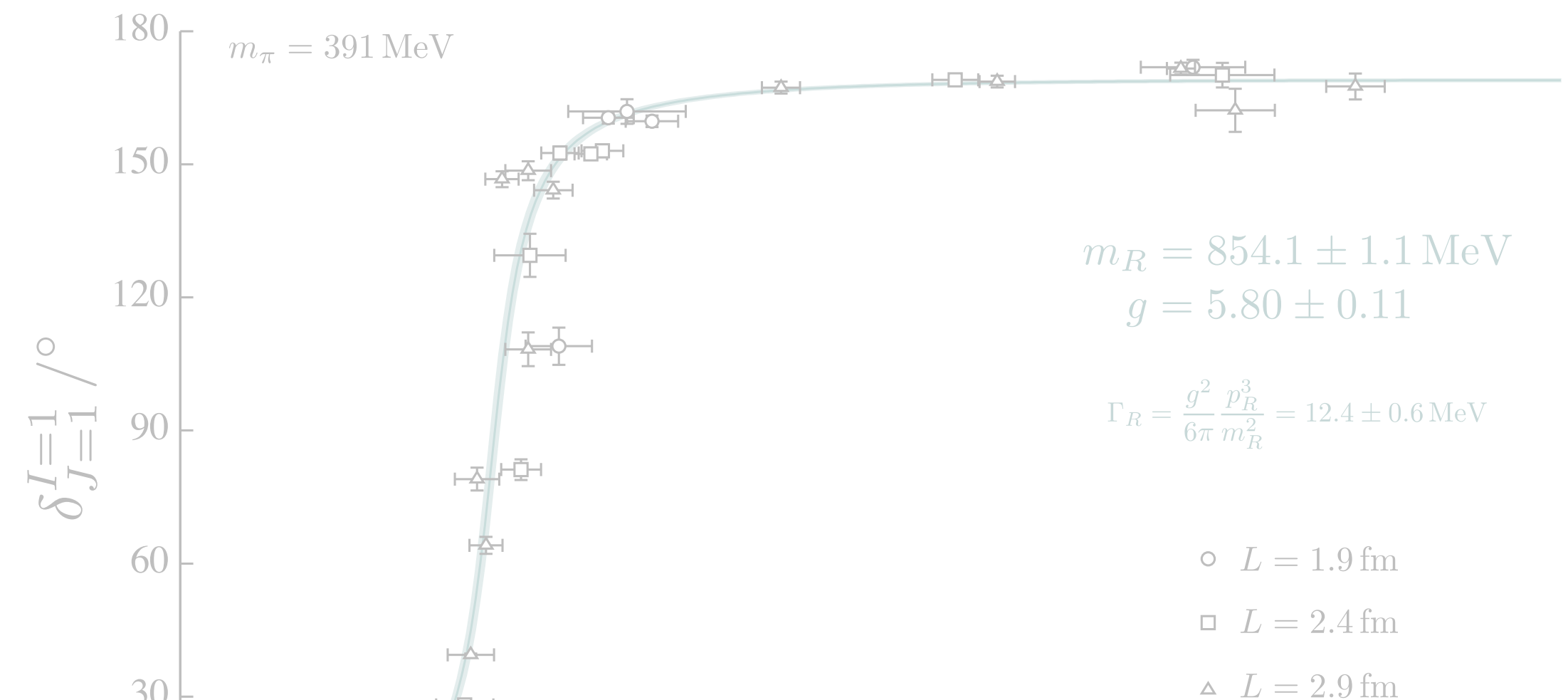
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Example: $\pi\pi$ ($I = 1$) Scattering



S.Protopopescu, et al
Phys.Rev.D, 7 (1973) 1279



Two-Hadron Systems

Two-hadron systems have been studied for decades, many interesting applications and physics learned — *no time to discuss here*

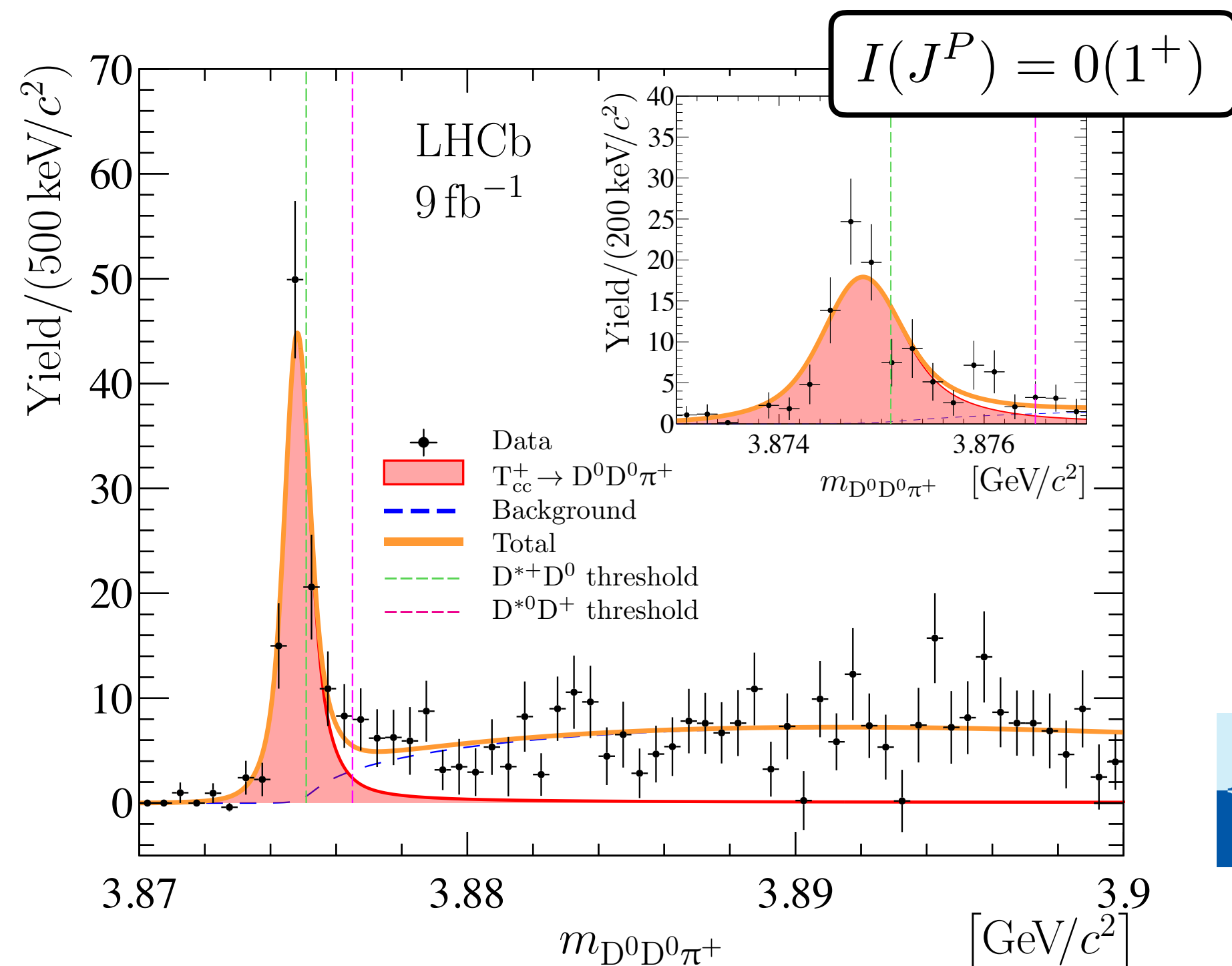
Phys.Rev.D, 87 (2013) 034505

Three-Hadron Spectroscopy

Continue pushing these ideas to three-particle systems

- Many resonances decay to three (or more) particles — *Can we access these states?*
- Most exotics discovered have strong coupling to three-particles — *What is significance?*
- BSM Physics involves studying multi-body flavor decays — *Can we constrain dynamics?*

Example: T_{cc} tetraquark candidate



Other Three-Body Talks

Maxwell Hansen (Tuesday)

Haobo Yan (Wednesday)

Maxim Mai (Wednesday)

Stephen Sharpe (Thursday)

R. Aaij et al.,
Nature Physics **18**, 751–754 (2022)

Three-Pion Scattering

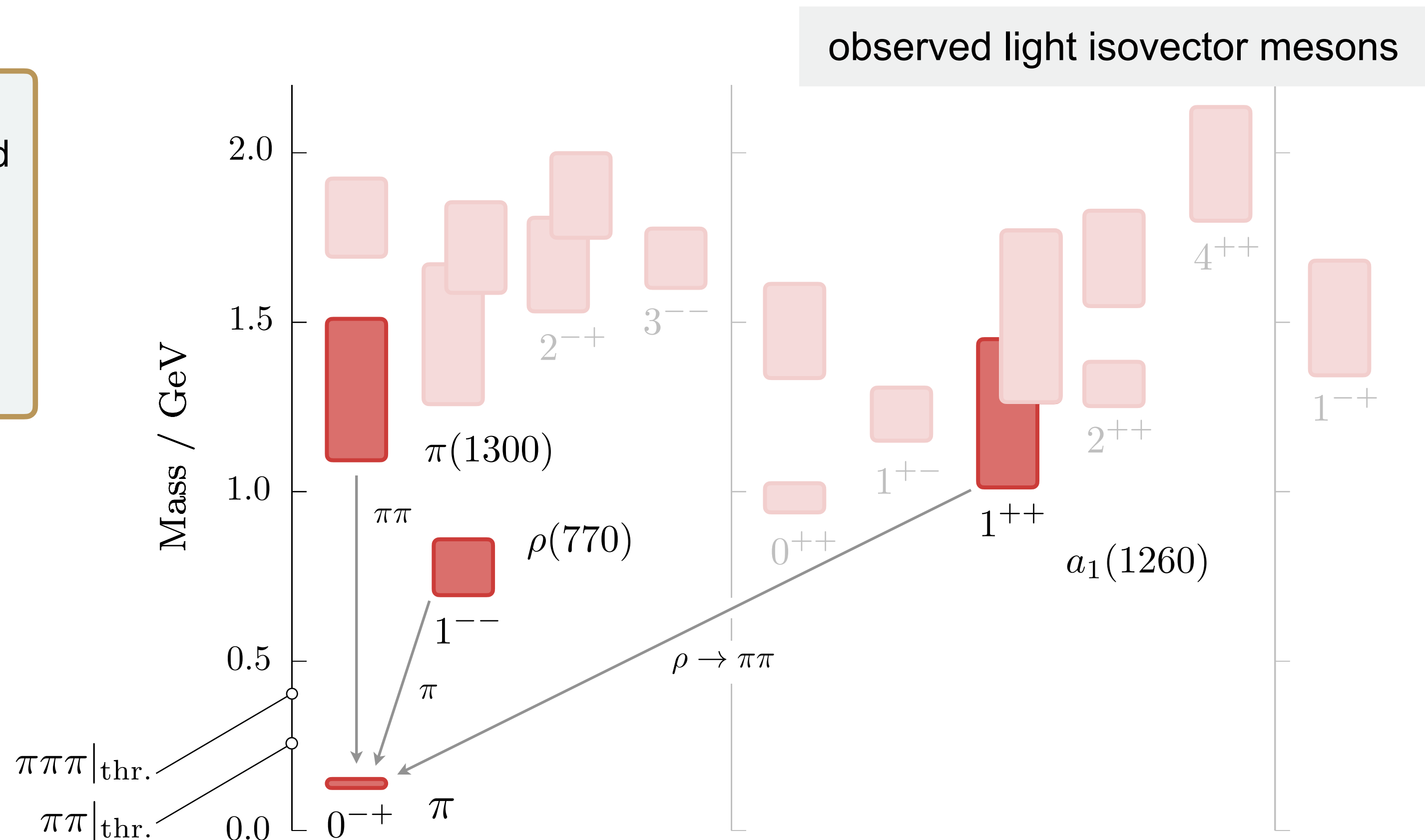
Focus on three-pion systems

- Many states couple to three pions — decades of phenomenological knowledge
- Three-pion amplitudes essential to other hadronic phenomena
- ‘Simple’ playground to test new formalisms, construct observable frameworks

Three-Hadron Systems

Studying three-hadron states is considerably more involved

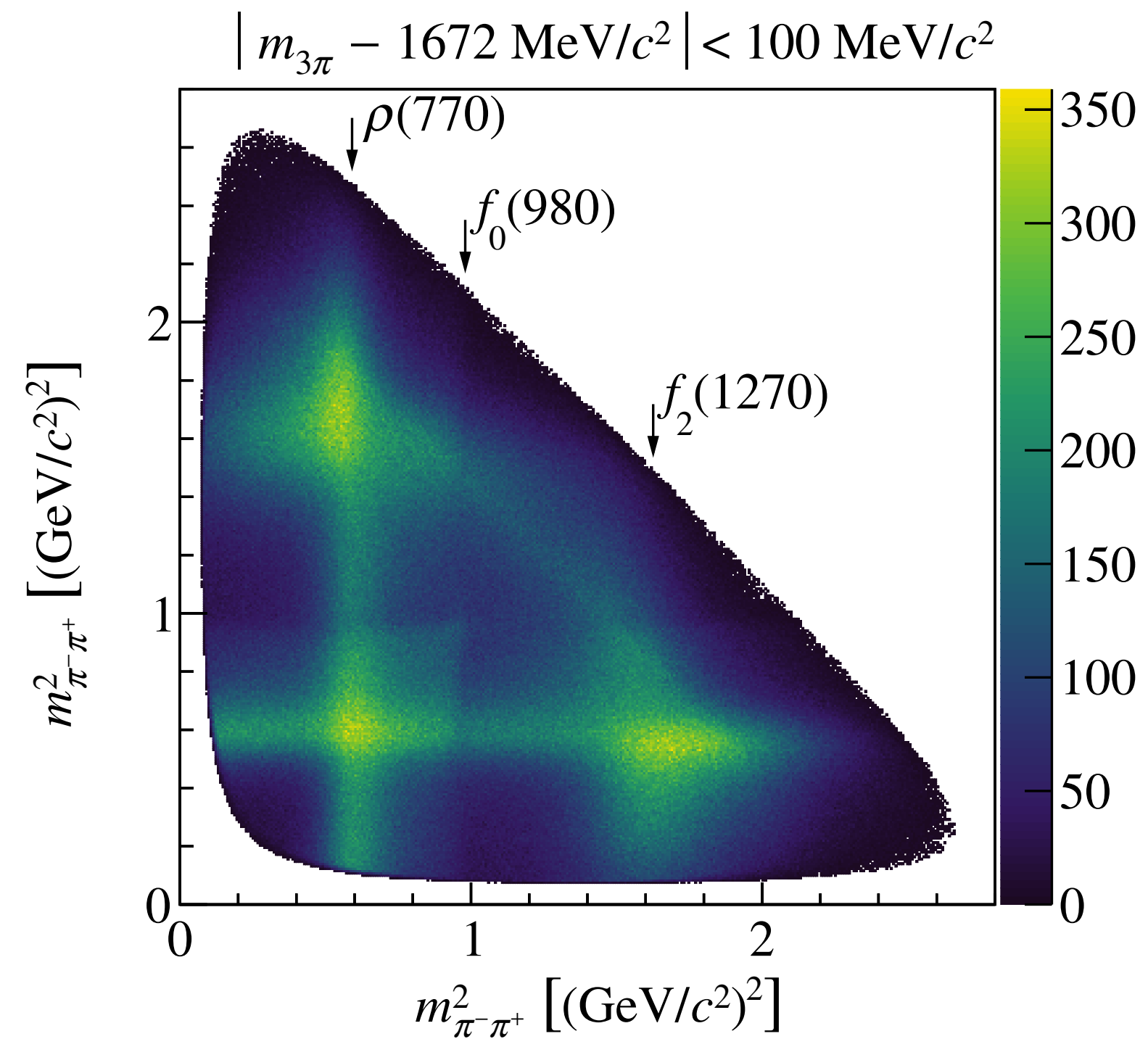
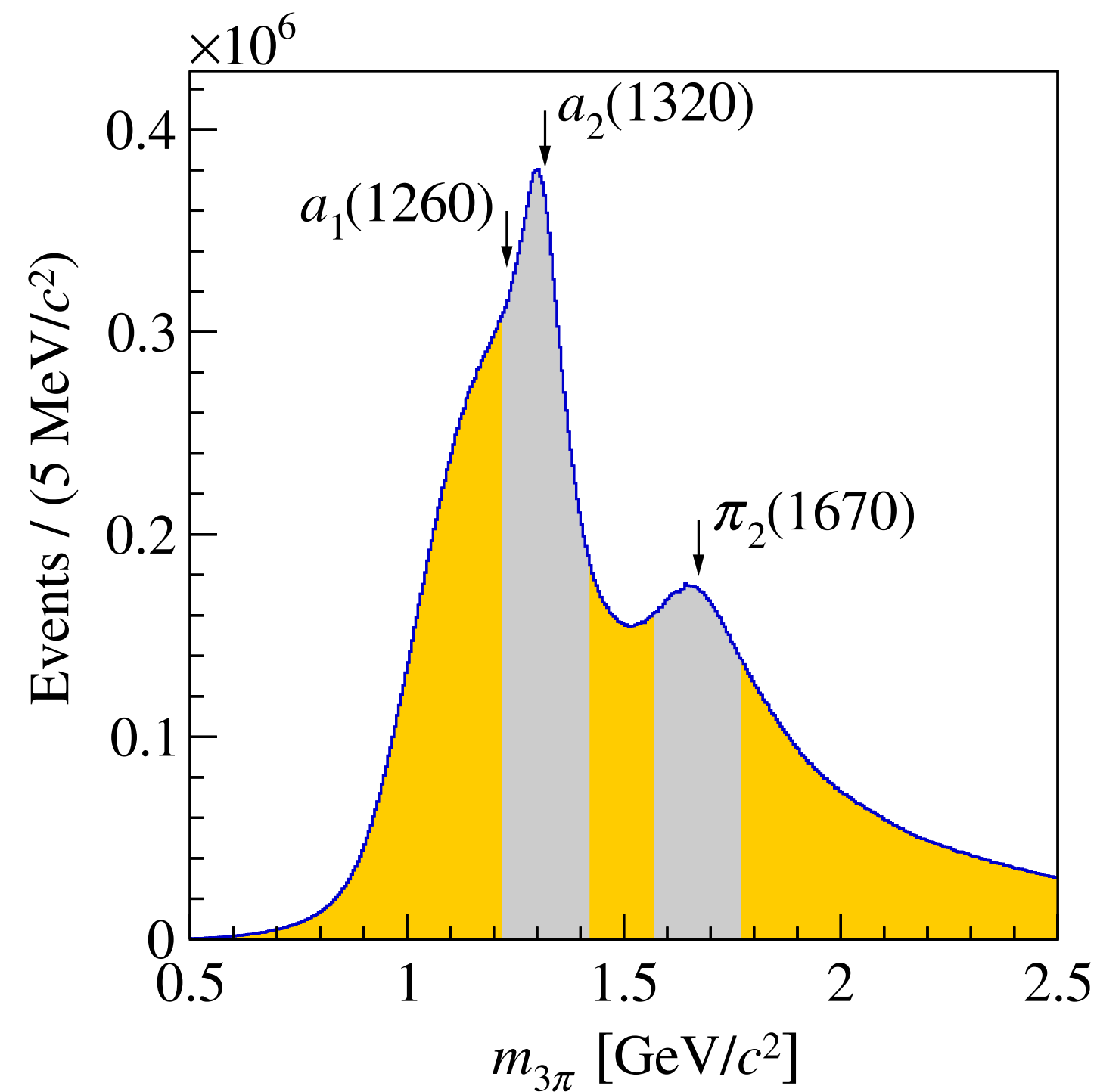
- No simple notion of *phase shift*
- Kinematic rescattering effects ubiquitous
- Relation between K matrices to amplitudes involves integral equations — more analysis required



Three-Pion Scattering

Focus on three-pion systems

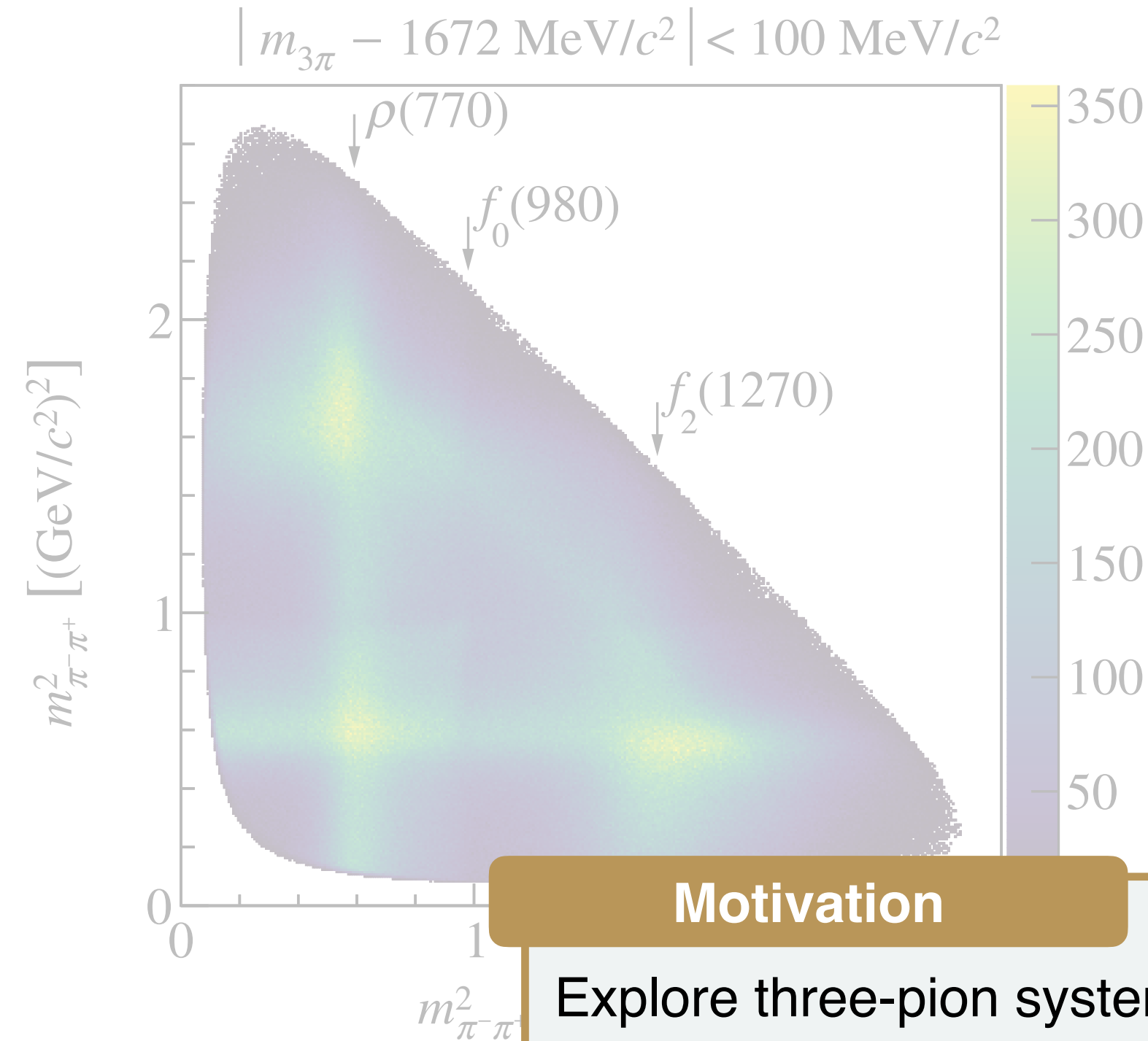
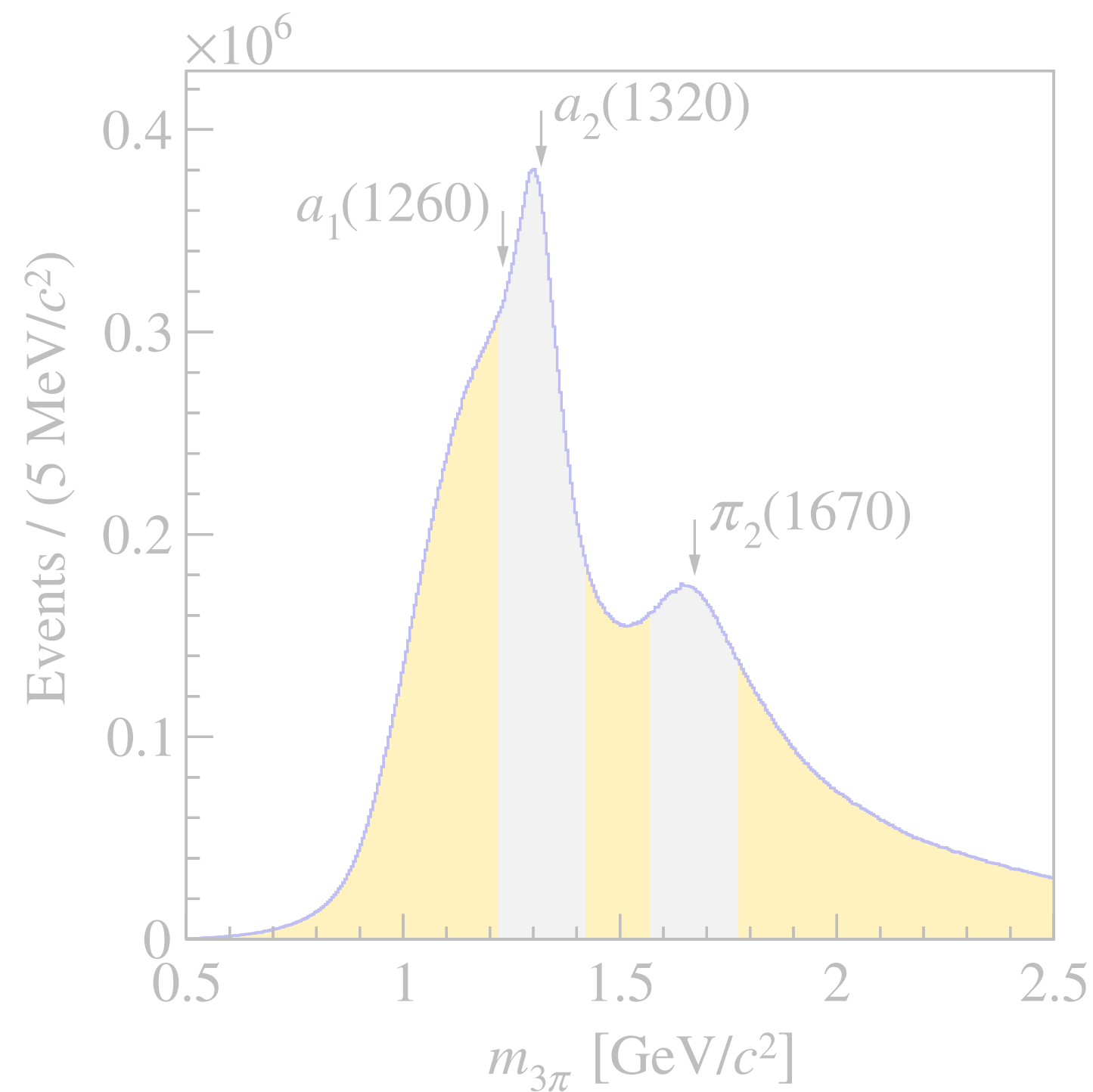
- Many states couple to three pions — decades of phenomenological knowledge
- Three-pion amplitudes essential to other hadronic phenomena
- ‘Simple’ playground to test new formalisms, construct observable frameworks



Three-Pion Scattering

Focus on three-pion systems

- Many states couple to three pions — decades of phenomenological knowledge
- Three-pion amplitudes essential to other hadronic phenomena
- ‘Simple’ playground to test new formalisms, construct observable frameworks



Motivation

Explore three-pion systems with lattice QCD — establish analysis framework in manner similar to experiment

Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

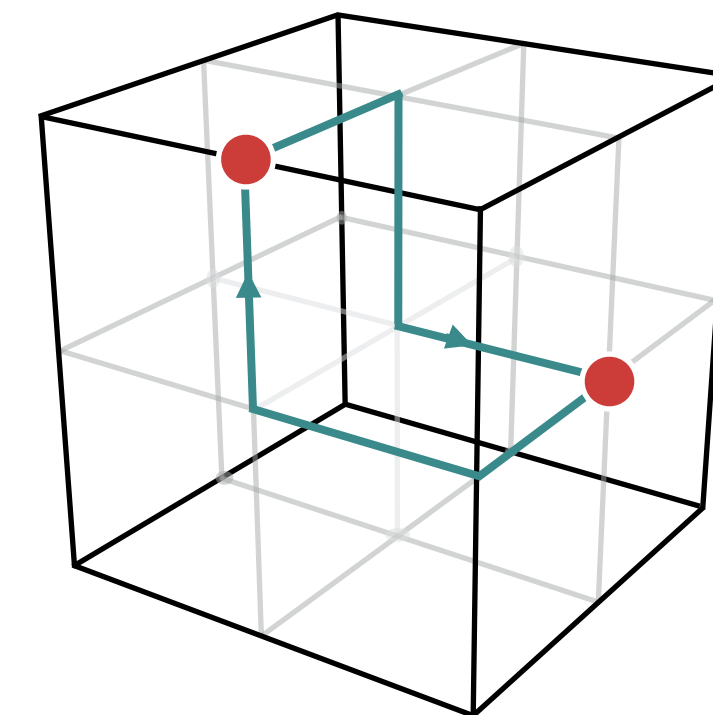
Follow usual *hadron spectrum collaboration (hadspec)* methodology

- $N_f = 2 + 1$ Anisotropic Wilson-Clover fermion action, Syzmanzik improved gauge action
- Large multi-hadron operator basis with distillation — $\pi\pi\pi$ operators & $\rho\pi$ operators
- Solve GEVP for finite-volume spectrum

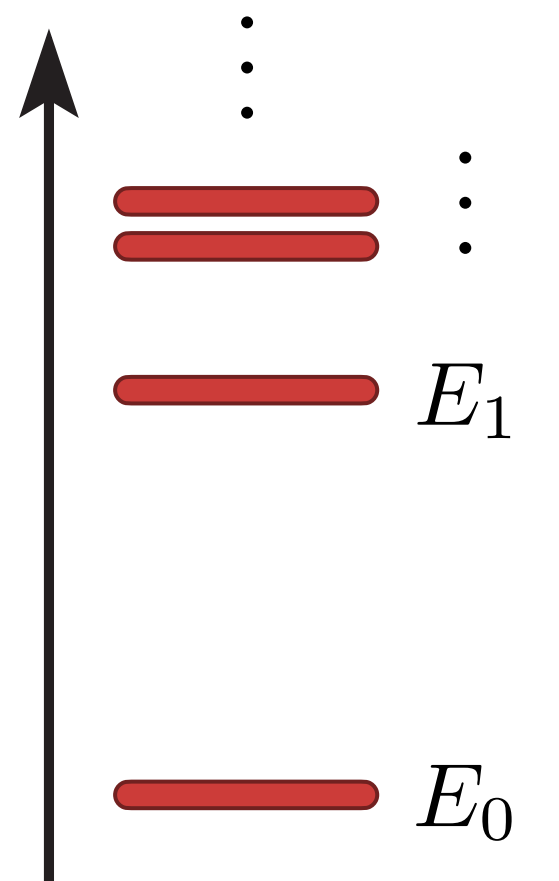
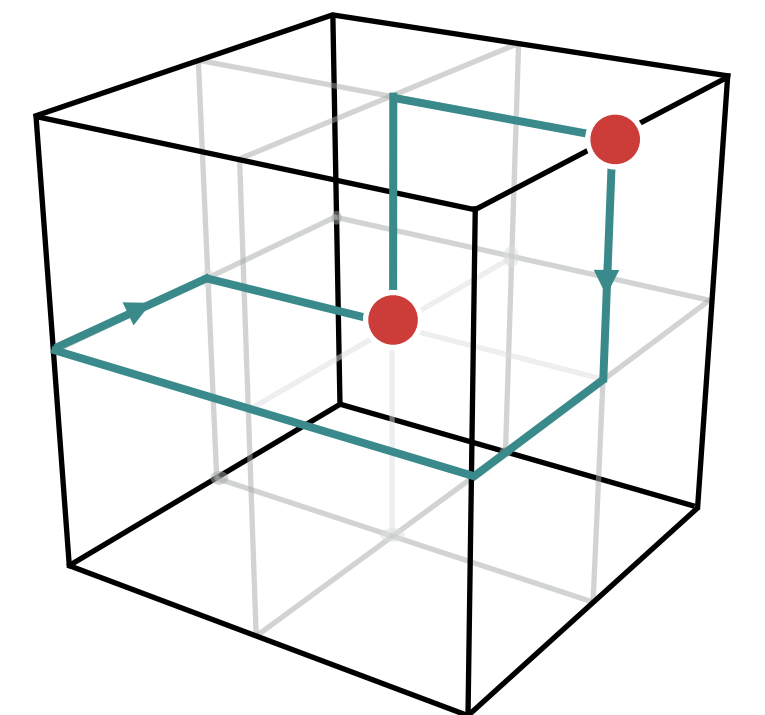
$$C_{ij}(t) = \langle \mathcal{O}_i(t) \mathcal{O}_j(0) \rangle$$

$$C_{ij}(t)v_{\mathbf{n}}^j = \lambda_{\mathbf{n}} C_{ij}(t_0)v_{\mathbf{n}}^j$$

$$\lambda_{\mathbf{n}} \sim e^{E_{\mathbf{n}}(t-t_0)}$$



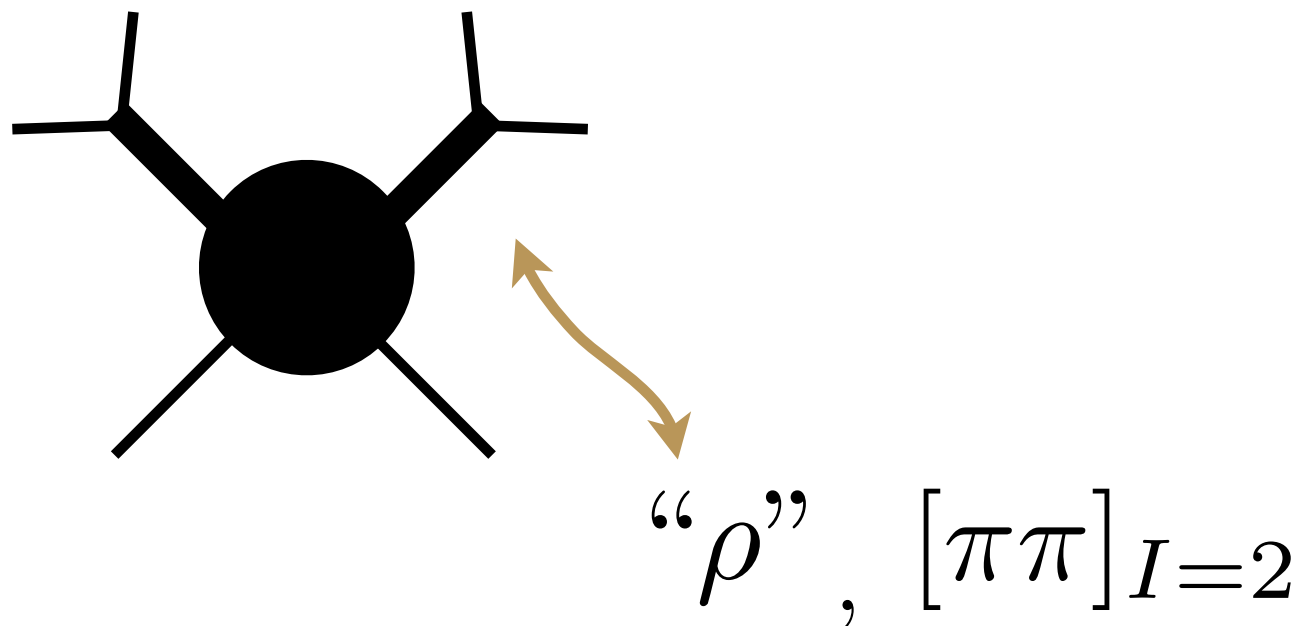
time evolution



Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

Here, focus on new results for three pions in $I = 2$

- Two-pion sub-channel resonances, no three-pion resonances
- Strongly coupled partial waves



$$m_\pi \approx 400 \text{ MeV}$$

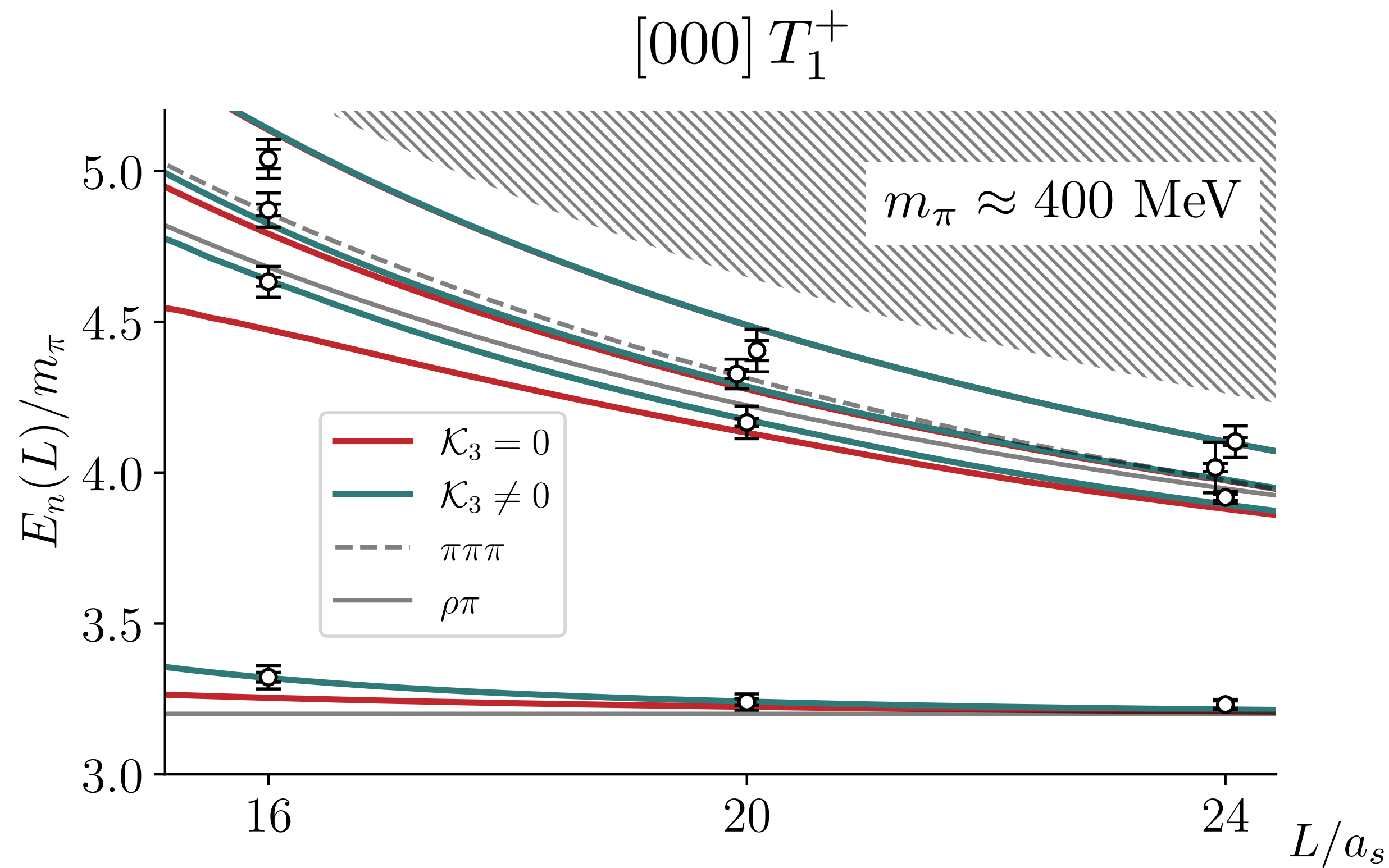
$(L/a_s)^3 \times (T/a_t)$	N_{cfgs}	N_{tsrc}	N_v
$16^3 \times 128$	479	4	64
$20^3 \times 256$	286	4	128
$24^3 \times 128$	553	1	160

$I_{3\pi}^G$	J^{PC}	$([\pi\pi]_\ell^I \pi)_L$
3^-	0^{-+}	$([\pi\pi]_S^2 \pi)_S$
	1^{-+}	none
	1^{++}	$([\pi\pi]_S^2 \pi)_P$
2^-	0^{--}	$([\pi\pi]_S^2 \pi)_S, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{--}	$([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{+-}	$([\pi\pi]_S^2 \pi)_P, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_S, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_D$
1^-	0^{-+}	$([\pi\pi]_S^{0,2} \pi)_S, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{-+}	$([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{++}	$([\pi\pi]_S^{0,2} \pi)_P, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_S, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_D$
0^-	0^{--}	$([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{--}	$([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{+-}	$([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_S, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_D$

Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

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- Two-pion sub-channel resonances, no three-pion resonances
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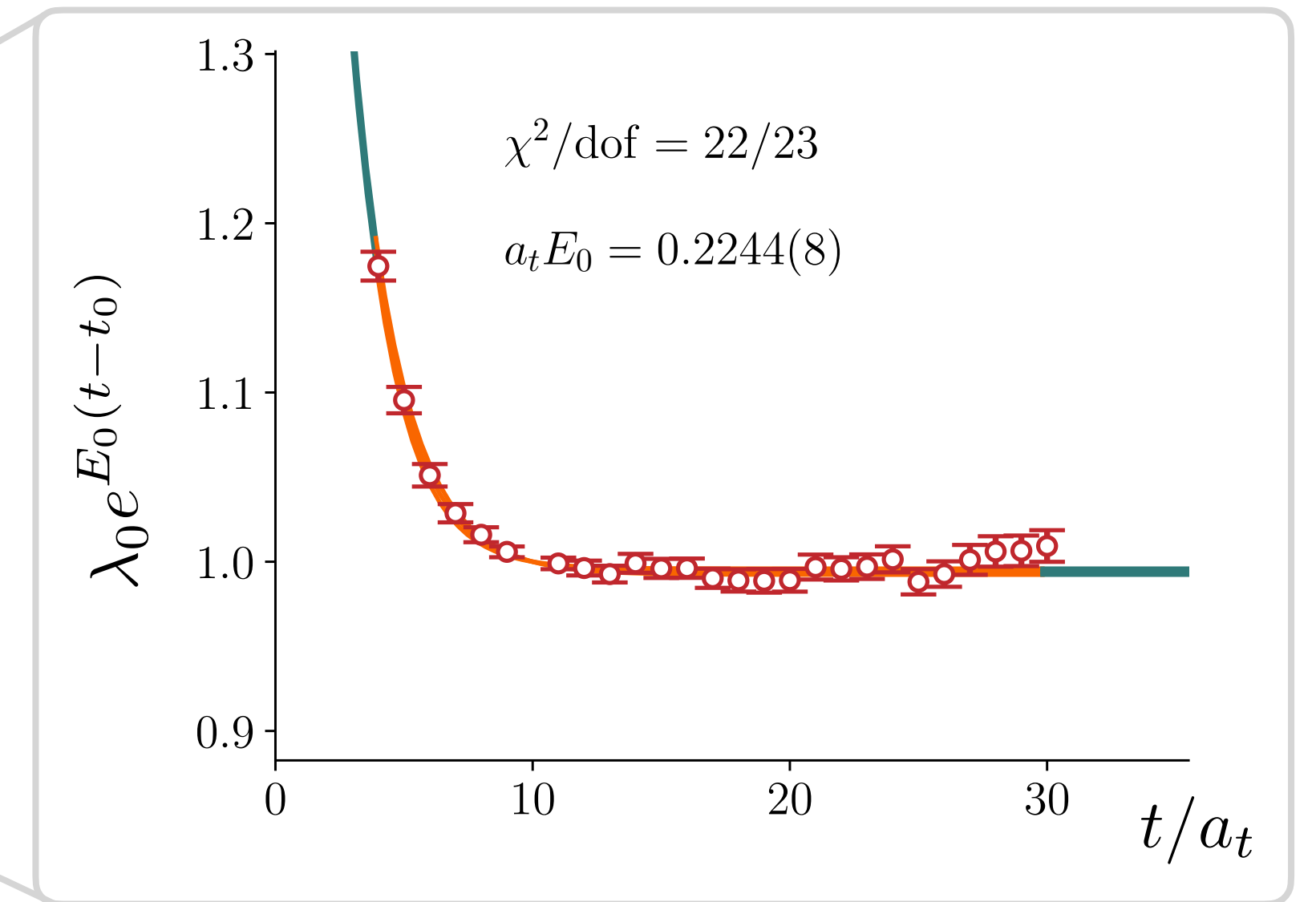
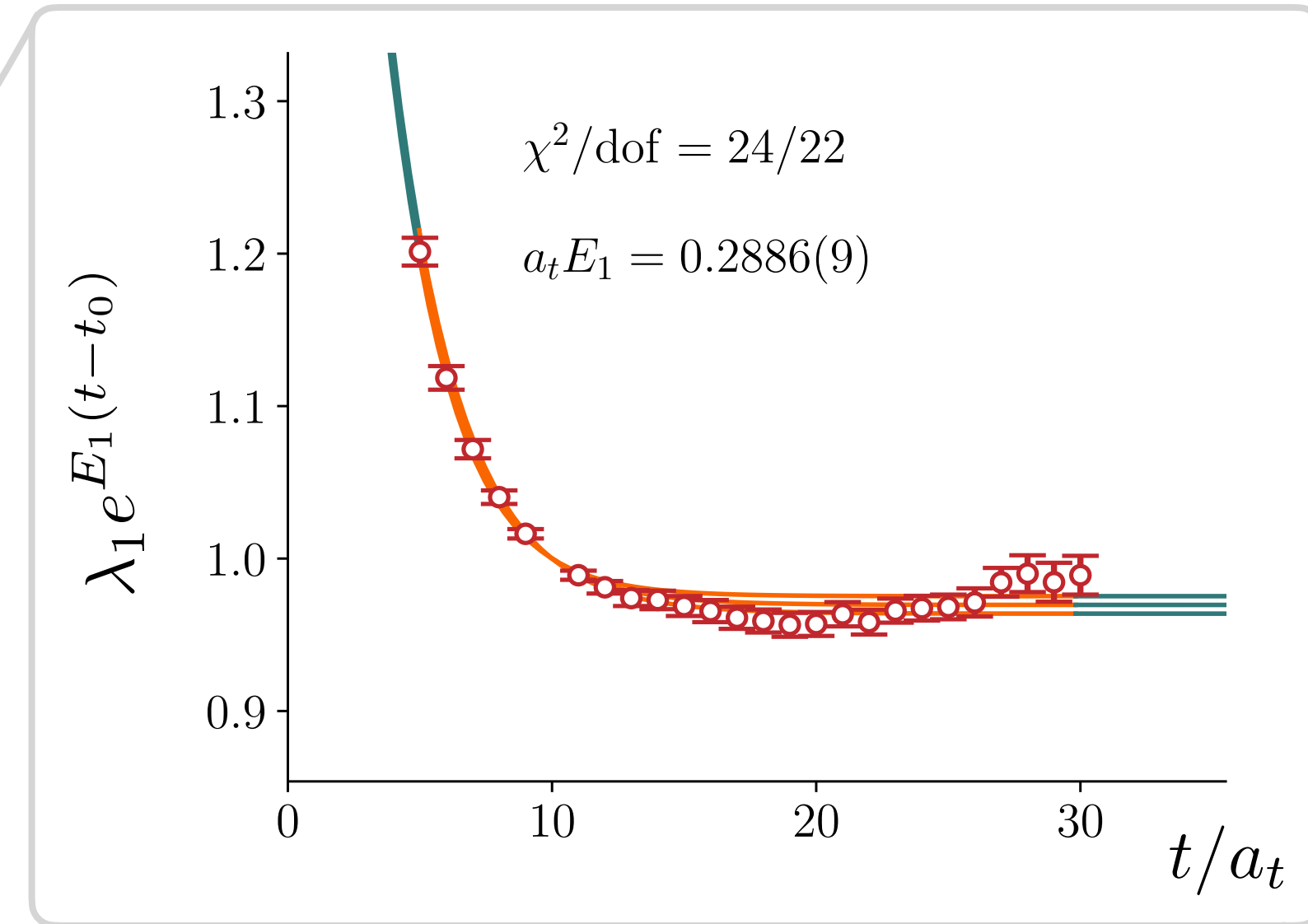
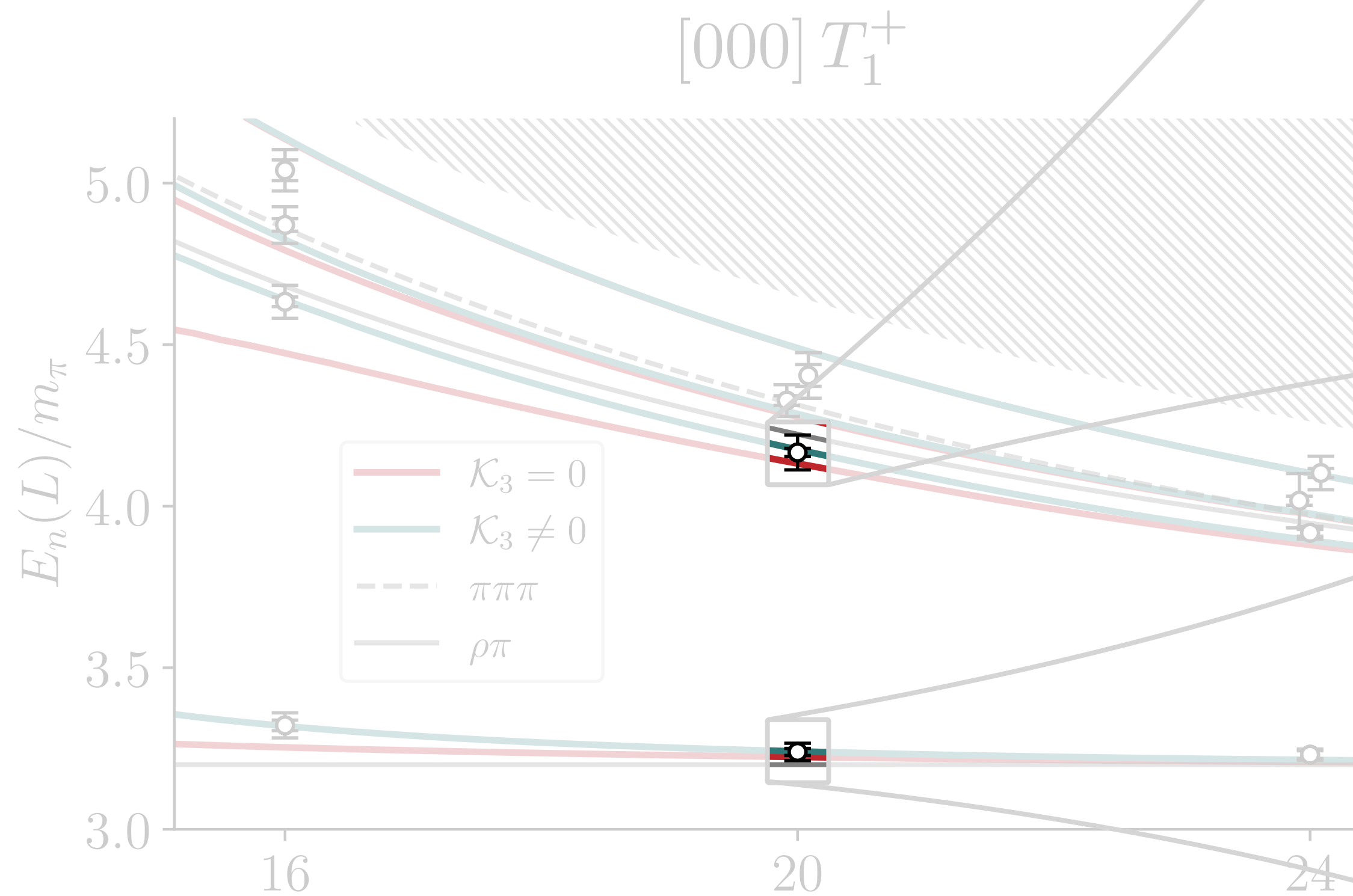
Operators

$$\begin{aligned}
 & [(\pi_{[001]})_{A_2} (\pi_{[00-1]})_{A_2}]_{T_1^-} (\pi_{[000]})_{A_1^-} \\
 & [(\pi_{[011]})_{A_2} (\pi_{[0-1-1]})_{A_2}]_{T_1^-} (\pi_{[000]})_{A_1^-} \\
 & [(\pi_{[-101]})_{A_2} (\pi_{[100]})_{A_2}]_{A_1} (\pi_{[00-1]})_{A_2} \\
 & [(\pi_{[-101]})_{A_2} (\pi_{[100]})_{A_2}]_{E_2} (\pi_{[00-1]})_{A_2} \\
 & [(\pi_{[111]})_{A_2} (\pi_{[000]})_{A_1^-}]_{A_1} (\pi_{[-1-1-1]})_{A_2} \\
 & [(\pi_{[002]})_{A_2} (\pi_{[00-1]})_{A_2}]_{A_1} (\pi_{[00-1]})_{A_2} \\
 & \hline
 & (\rho_{[000]}^{n=0})_{T_1^-} (\pi_{[000]})_{A_1^-} \\
 & (\rho_{[001]}^{n=0})_{A_1} (\pi_{[00-1]})_{A_2} \\
 & (\rho_{[001]}^{n=0})_{E_2} (\pi_{[00-1]})_{A_2} \\
 & (\rho_{[001]}^{n=1})_{A_1} (\pi_{[00-1]})_{A_2} \\
 & (\rho_{[011]}^{n=0})_{A_1} (\pi_{[0-1-1]})_{A_2} \\
 & (\rho_{[011]}^{n=0})_{B_1} (\pi_{[0-1-1]})_{A_2} \\
 & (\rho_{[011]}^{n=0})_{B_2} (\pi_{[0-1-1]})_{A_2}
 \end{aligned}$$

Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

Here, focus on new results for three pions in

- Two-pion sub-channel resonances, no three
- Strongly coupled partial waves



Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

Map finite-volume spectrum to K matrices

Quantization Condition

$$\det_{I,\mathbf{k},S,m} \left[\mathbf{F}_3^{-1}(E_n, L | \boldsymbol{\eta}_2) + \mathbf{K}_3(E_n, |\boldsymbol{\eta}_3) \right] = 0$$



$$\mathbf{F}_3(E, L | \boldsymbol{\eta}_2) = \frac{1}{L^3} \left[\left(\mathbf{F}_2(E, L) + \mathbf{G}(E, L) \right)^{-1} + \mathbf{K}_2(E | \boldsymbol{\eta}_2) \right]^{-1}$$

Equivalence proofs

M. Hansen and S. Sharpe
Phys. Rev. D **90**, (2014) 116003

M. Mai, B. Hu, M. Döring, A. Pilloni, and A. Szczepaniak
Eur. Phys. J. A **53**, 177 (2017)

AJ et al. [JPAC]
Eur. Phys. J. C **79**, no. 1, 56 (2019) *and many more....*

AJ et al. [JPAC]
Phys. Rev. D **100**, 034508 (2019)

T. Blanton and S. Sharpe
Phys. Rev. D **102**, 054515 (2020)

AJ
Phys. Rev. D **108**, 034505 (2023)

Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

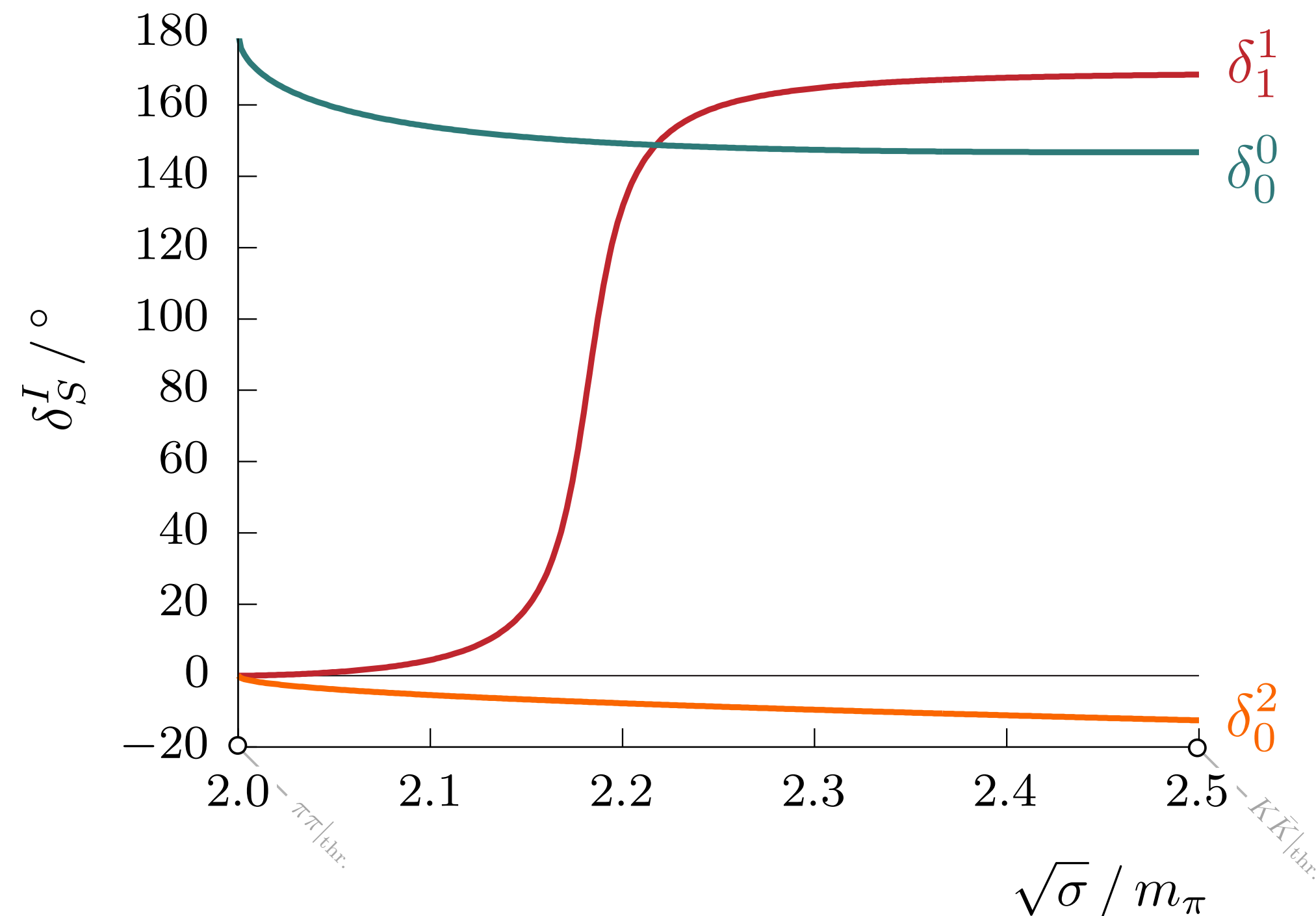
Map finite-volume spectrum to K matrices

- Use previously lattice QCD determined hadspec $\pi\pi$ phase shifts (input)

Quantization Condition

$$\det_{I,\mathbf{k},S,m} [\mathbf{F}_3^{-1}(E_n, L|\boldsymbol{\eta}_2) + \mathbf{K}_3(E_n, |\boldsymbol{\eta}_3)] = 0$$

Two-pion phase shifts @ $m_\pi \approx 400$ MeV



J.Dudek, R.Edwards, & C.Thomas
Phys.Rev.D **86** (2012) 034031

J.Dudek, R.Edwards, & C.Thomas
Phys.Rev.D, **87** (2013) 034505

R. Briceño, J.Dudek, R.Edwards, & D.Wilson
Phys.Rev.Lett. **118** (2017) 2, 022002

Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

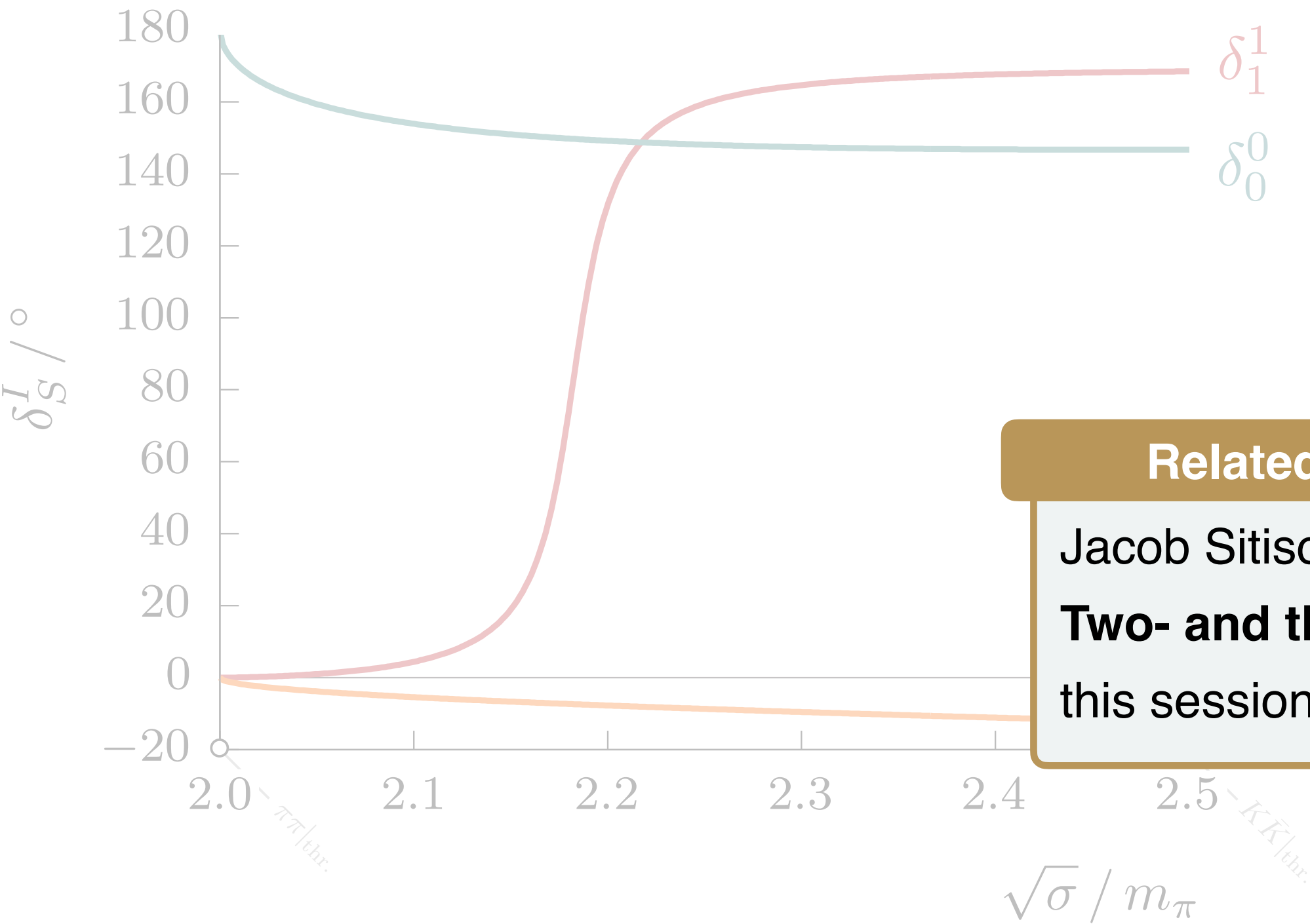
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Two-pion phase shifts @ $m_\pi \approx 400$ MeV



Related Talk

Jacob Sitison
Two- and three-pion scattering in multiple three-body isospin channels
this session

Phys.Rev.D, **87** (2013) 034505
R. Briceño, J.Dudek, R.Edwards, & D.Wilson
Phys.Rev.Lett. **118** (2017) 2, 022002



Jacob Sitison
U Colorado Boulder

Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

Map finite-volume spectrum to K matrices

- Use previously lattice QCD determined hadspec $\pi\pi$ phase shifts (input)
- Parameterize $\mathbf{K}_3$ with many flexible parameterizations

$$\mathbf{K}_3 = \mathbf{h} \tilde{\mathcal{K}}_3 \mathbf{h}$$

Known barrier factors, subduction coefficients,...

$$m_\pi^2 \tilde{\mathcal{K}}(^{2S'+1}\ell'_1 | ^{2S+1}\ell_1) = \alpha(^{2S'+1}\ell'_1 | ^{2S+1}\ell_1) + \left(\frac{s - (3m_\pi)^2}{m_\pi^2} \right) \beta(^{2S'+1}\ell'_1 | ^{2S+1}\ell_1)$$

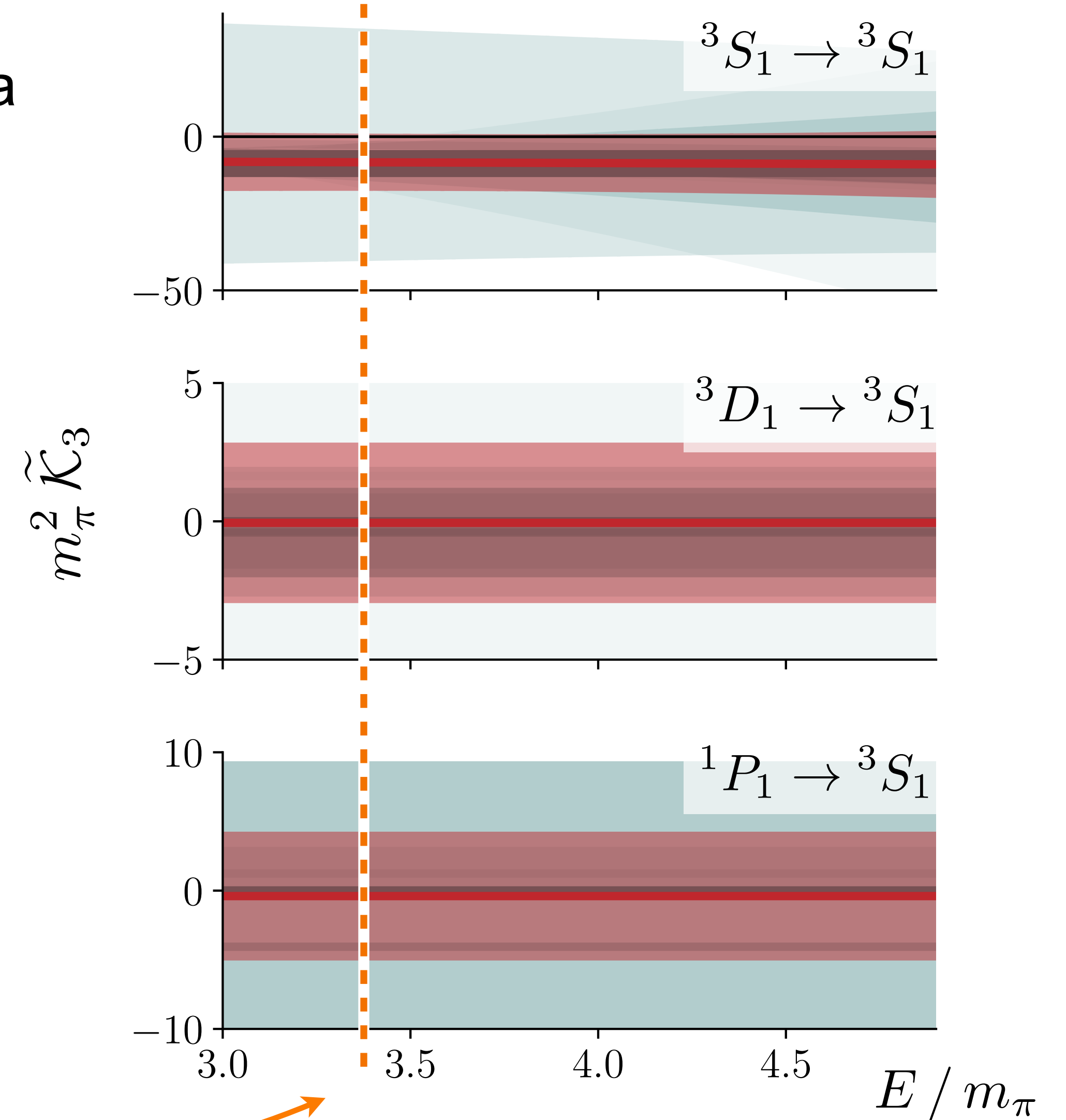
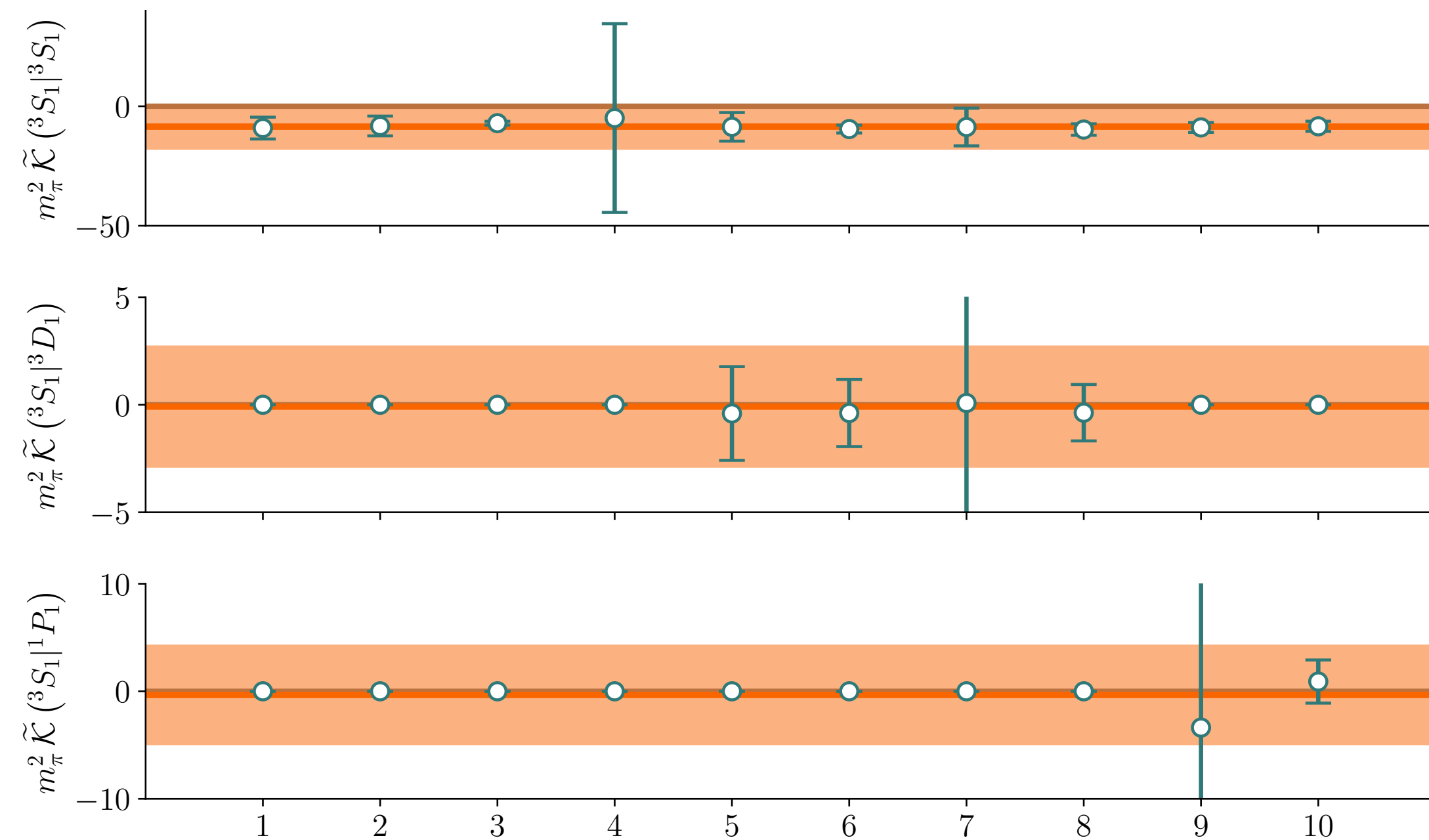
$$h_{\ell S}(k) = \frac{k^\ell q_k^{\star S}}{m_\pi^{\ell+S}} \left(1 + \gamma(^{2S+1}\ell_1) \frac{q_k^{\star 2}}{m_\pi^2} \right)$$

Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

Map finite-volume spectrum to K matrices

- Use previously lattice QCD determined hadspec $\pi\pi$ pha
- Parameterize $\mathbf{K}_3$ with many flexible parameterizations

$$\mathbf{K}_3 = \mathbf{h} \tilde{\mathcal{K}}_3 \mathbf{h}$$



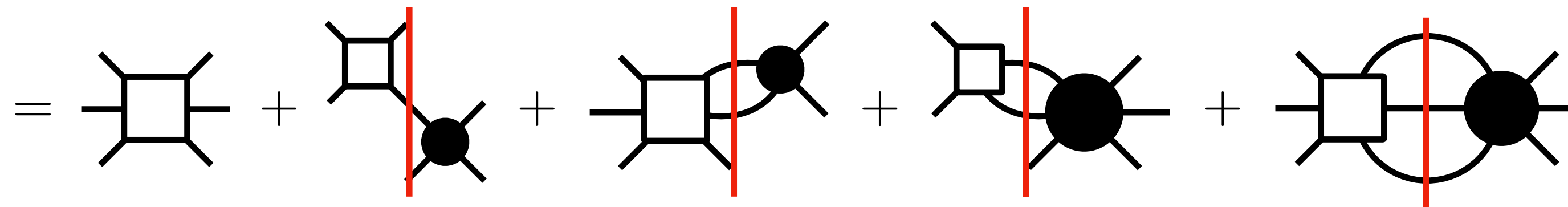
Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

Reconstruct amplitudes via set of integral equations

- Subchannel resonances, strongly coupled partial waves

$$\mathcal{M}_3 = \sum_{J^P} \mathcal{M}_3^{J^P} \mathcal{R}_{J^P}$$

K matrix representation is set of integral equations



Integral equations are solved numerically via Nyström method
— Approximate integral by quadrature, solve linear system
— care must be taken since kernels contain singularities

AJ
Phys.Rev.D **108** (2023) 3, 034505

AJ and R. Briceño
Phys.Rev.D **109** (2024) 9, 096030

R. Briceño, C. Costa, AJ
Phys.Rev.D **111** (2025) 3, 036029

S. Dawid, M. Islam, R. Briceño
Phys. Rev. A **108**, (2023) 034016

S. Dawid, M. Islam, R. Briceño, AJ
Phys. Rev. A **109**, (2024) 043325

AJ, N. Chambers, R. Briceño
Phys.Rev.D **113** (2026) 1, 014019

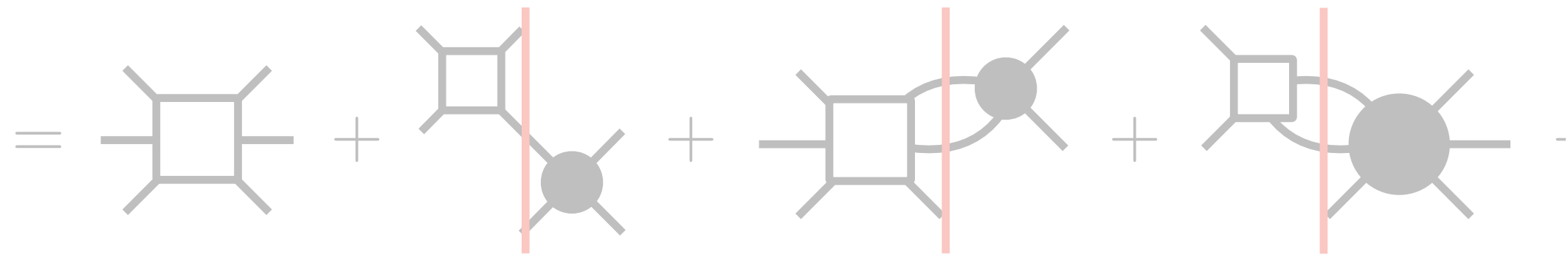
Three-Pion Scattering from Lattice QCD

Reconstruct amplitudes via set of integral equations

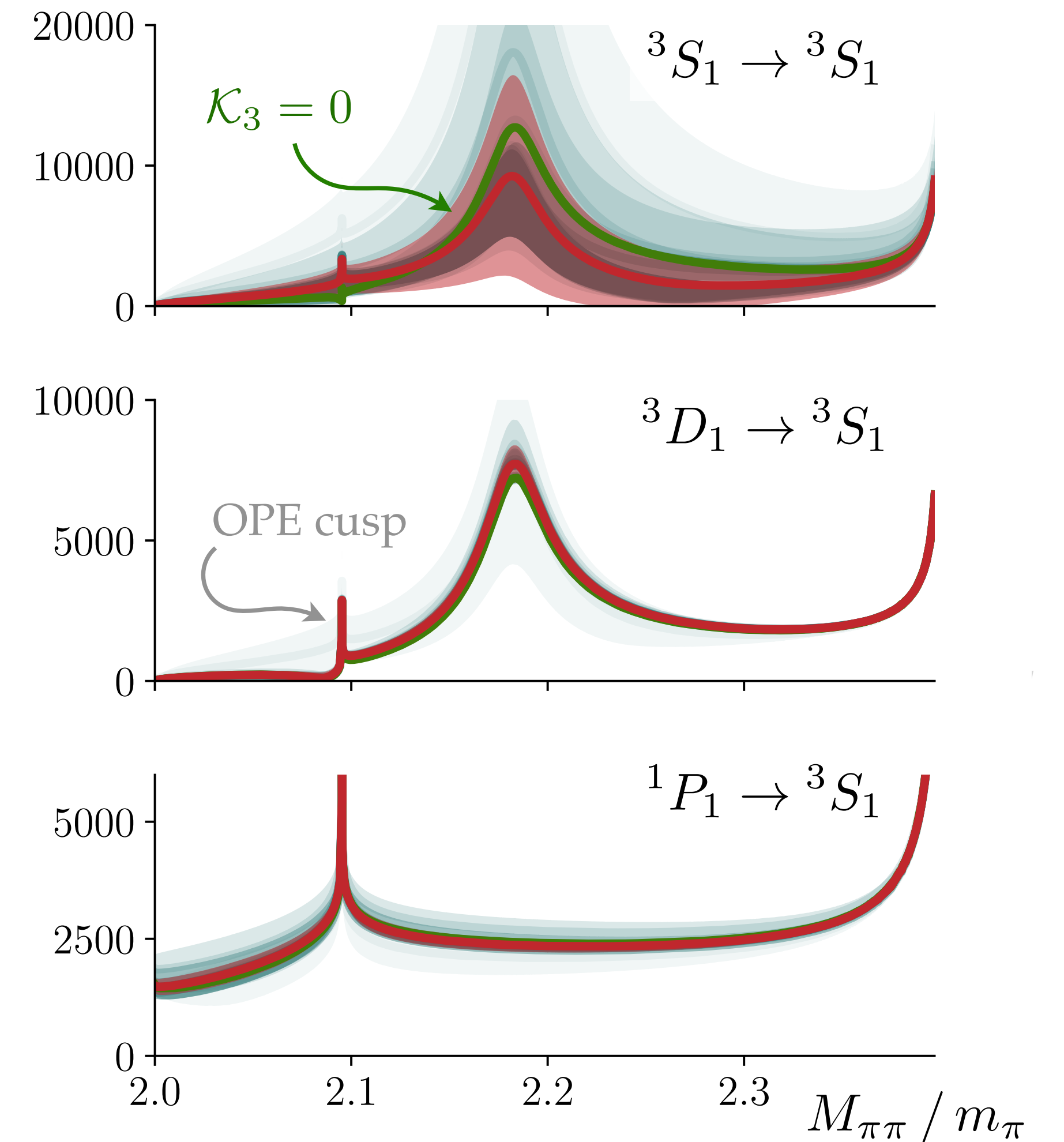
- Subchannel resonances, strongly coupled partial waves

$$\mathcal{M}_3 = \sum_{J^P} \mathcal{M}_3^{J^P} \mathcal{R}_{J^P}$$

K matrix representation



$$m_\pi^2 \left| \mathcal{M}_3^{(1,1)} \right|$$



AJ
Phys.Rev.D **108** (2023) 3, 034505

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R. Briceño, M. Hansen, AJ, R. Edwards, and C. Thomas
arXiv:2510.24894, accepted to PRL

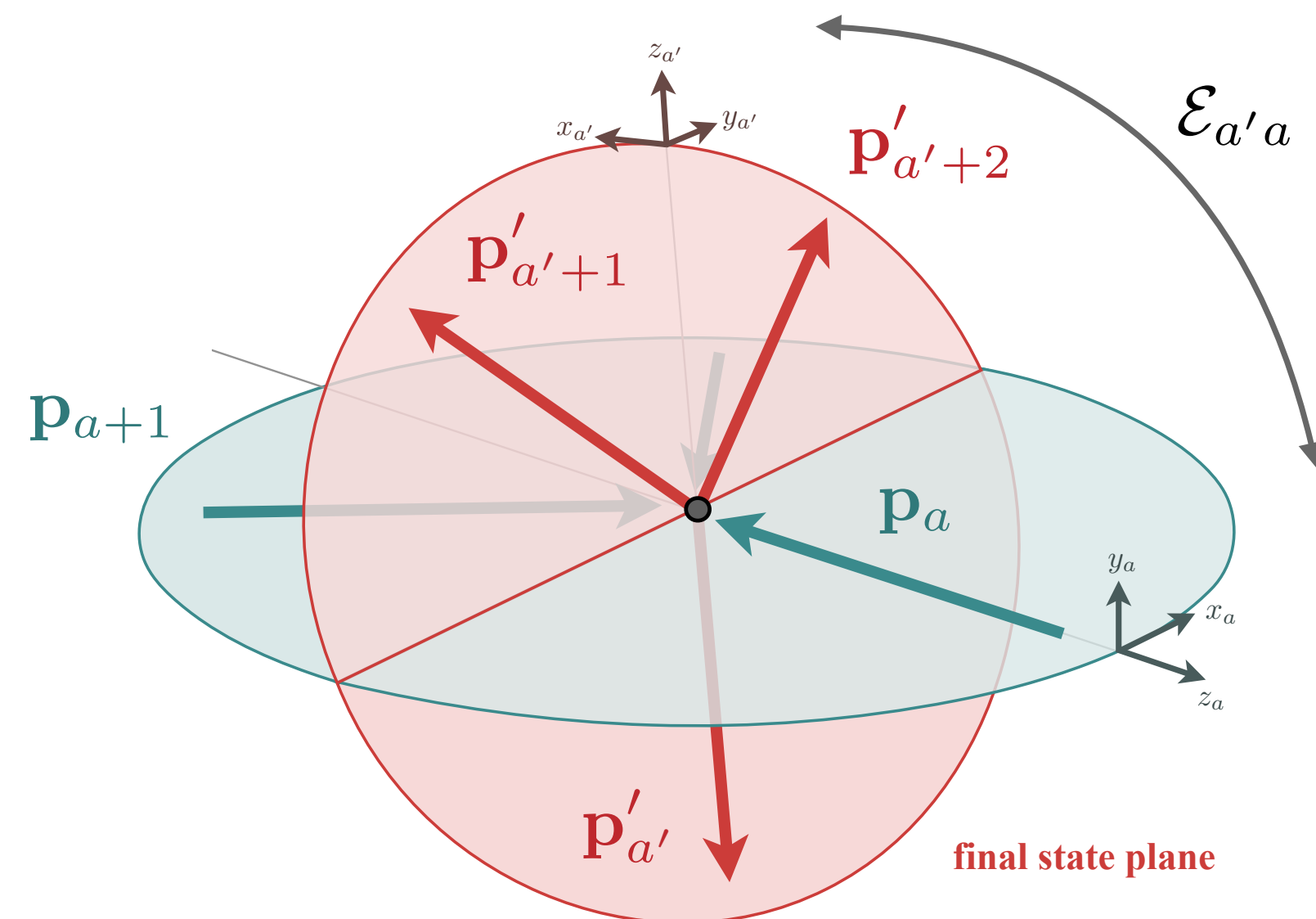
Dalitz observables

Can study amplitude features through **intensity distributions**

- Full amplitude requires recoupling between spectator choices (*symmetrizing*)

$$\mathcal{I} = \sum_{I'_2, I_2} \sum_{\lambda, \lambda'} \left| \mathcal{M}_{3, I'_2 \lambda', I_2 \lambda} \right|^2$$

$$\mathcal{M}_{3, I'_2 \lambda', I_2 \lambda} = \sum_{a, b} \mathcal{R}_{I'_2 \lambda'}^{(a)} \cdot \mathcal{M}_3^{(a, b)} \cdot \mathcal{R}_{I_2 \lambda}^{(b) \top}$$



Related Talk

Nick Chambers

Symmetrizing Three-body Partial-Wave Amplitudes
this session

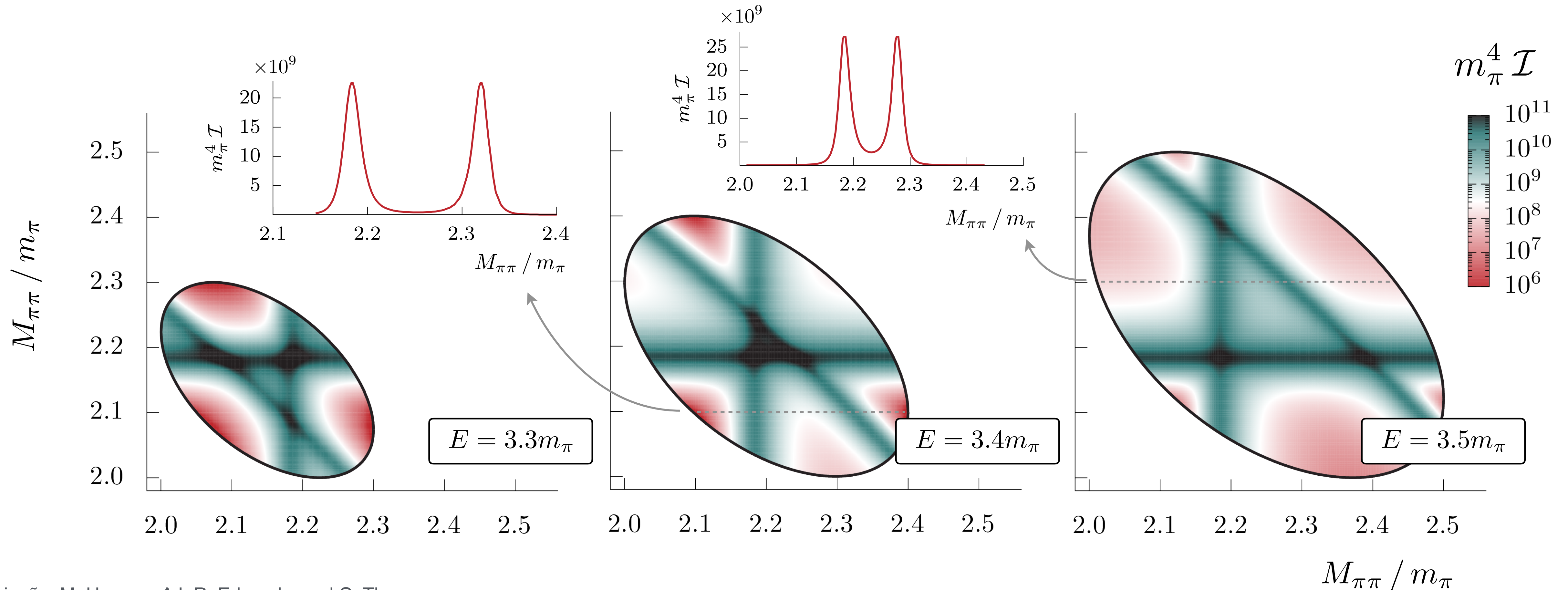


Nick Chambers
William & Mary

Dalitz observables

Can study amplitude features through **intensity distributions**

- Full amplitude requires recoupling between spectator choices (*symmetrizing*)
- e.g., view sub-channel resonances via Dalitz-plots



Summary

Lattice QCD spectroscopy is very active, making immense progress in few-body dynamics

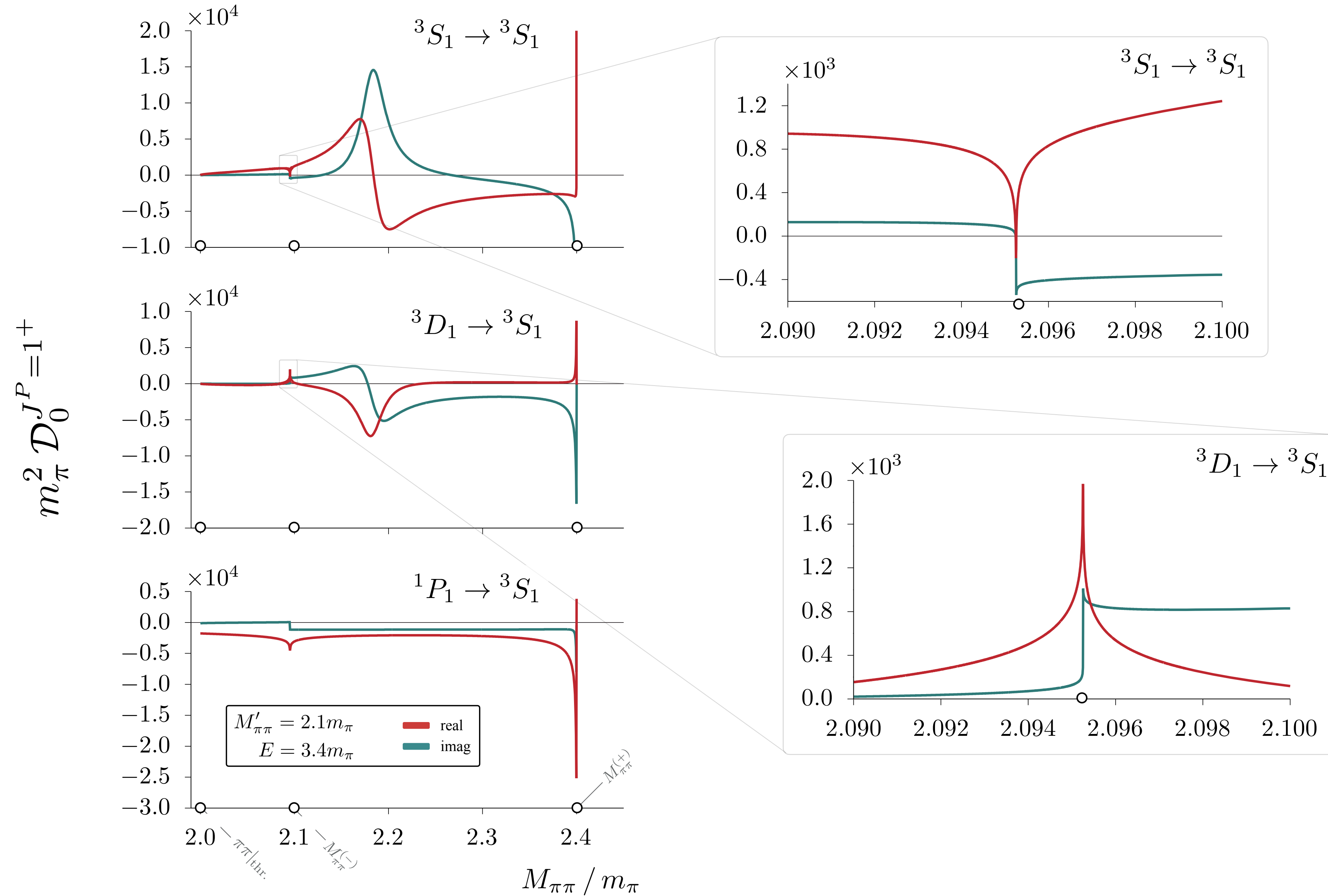
- First calculation of isotensor 3π scattering amplitude
- Three-hadron framework was years in development, now have first sets of calculations
- Future applications will aim to extract more interesting reactions and push new observables



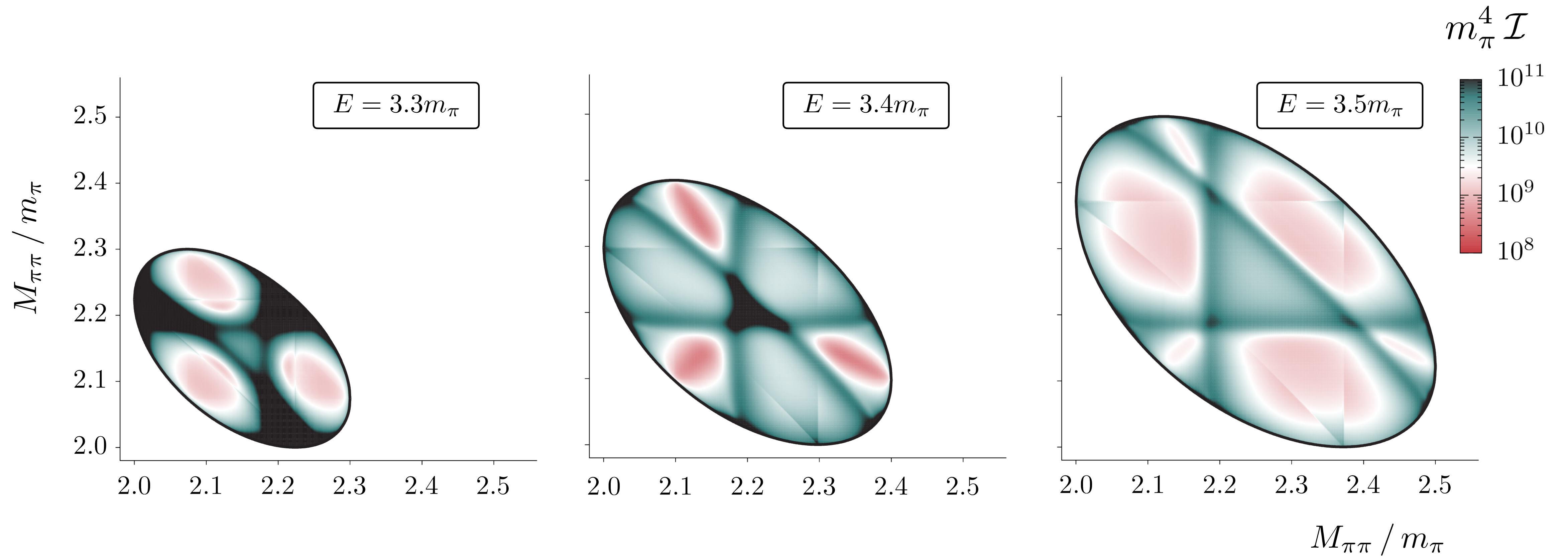
K Matrix Parameters

fit	$\alpha(^3S_1 ^3S_1)$	$\beta(^3S_1 ^3S_1)$	$\gamma(^3S_1)$	$\alpha(^3S_1 ^3D_1)$	$\alpha(^3D_1 ^3D_1)$	$\alpha(^1P_1 ^1P_1)$	dof	Corr	χ^2	$e^{-(2n_p+\chi^2)/2}$
1	-9(5)						11	1	5.1	0.029
2	-8(5)	-0.2(0.4)					10	$\begin{pmatrix} 1.00 & -0.56 \\ & 1.00 \end{pmatrix}$	5.0	0.011
3	-7.1(0.8)		-4(2)				10	$\begin{pmatrix} 1.00 & -0.29 \\ & 1.00 \end{pmatrix}$	4.7	0.013
4	-6(40)	-0.1(0.9)	-4(40)				9	$\begin{pmatrix} 1.00 & -0.62 & -0.97 \\ & 1.00 & 0.42 \\ & & 1.00 \end{pmatrix}$	4.6	0.005
5	-8(4)	0(1)		0(2)			9	$\begin{pmatrix} 1.00 & 0.52 & 0.70 \\ & 1.00 & 0.94 \\ & & 1.00 \end{pmatrix}$	4.6	0.005
6	-10(2)			0(2)			10	$\begin{pmatrix} 1.00 & 0.63 \\ & 1.00 \end{pmatrix}$	4.7	0.013
7	-8(2)	0(3)		0(20)	0(5)		8	$\begin{pmatrix} 1.00 & 0.82 & -0.83 & -0.83 \\ & 1.00 & -1.00 & -0.99 \\ & & 1.00 & 1.00 \\ & & & 1.00 \end{pmatrix}$	4.4	0.002
8	-10(2)			0(1)	0(1)		9	$\begin{pmatrix} 1.00 & 0.02 & -0.53 \\ & 1.00 & -0.29 \\ & & 1.00 \end{pmatrix}$	4.7	0.0047
9	-9(2)					-3(10)	10	$\begin{pmatrix} 1.00 & -0.21 \\ & 1.00 \end{pmatrix}$	5.0	0.011
10	-8(2)	-0.2(0.3)				1(2)	9	$\begin{pmatrix} 1.00 & -0.01 & 0.04 \\ & 1.00 & 0.03 \\ & & 1.00 \end{pmatrix}$	5.0	0.0042

OPE Singularities



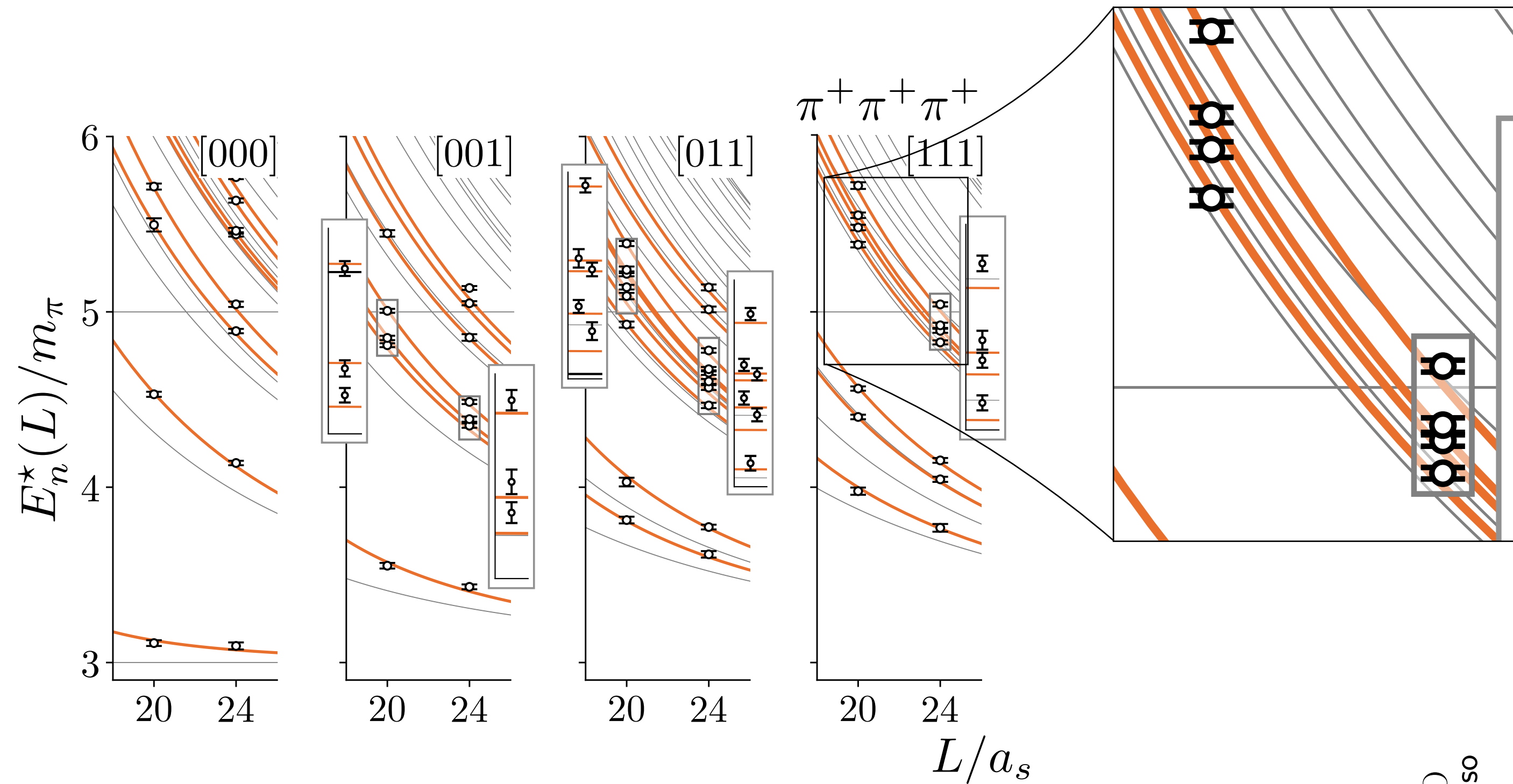
OPE Dalitz Plots



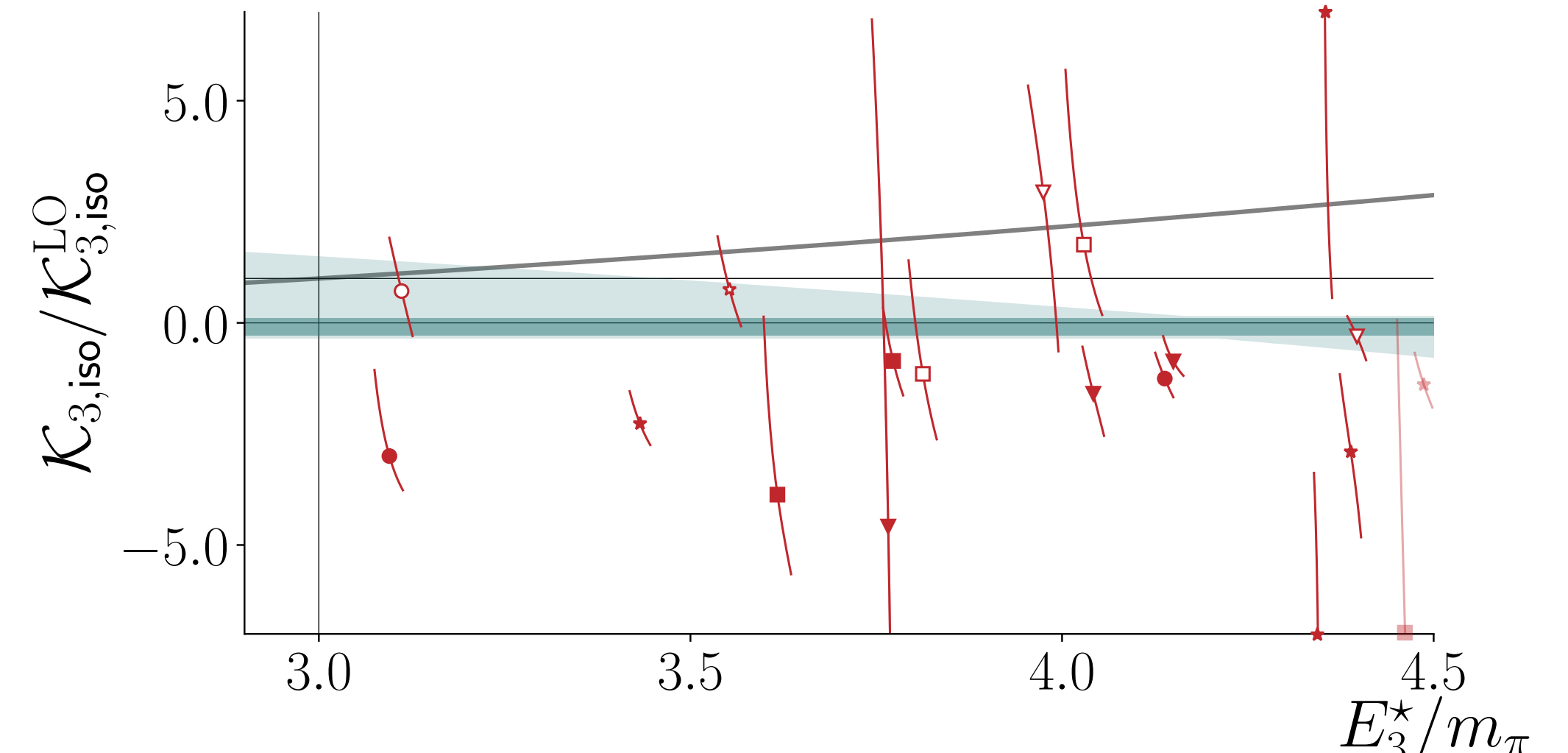
Three Pions

First applications were in $3\pi^+$ in $I(J^P) = 3(0^-)$

- Simple application without contamination from higher partial waves



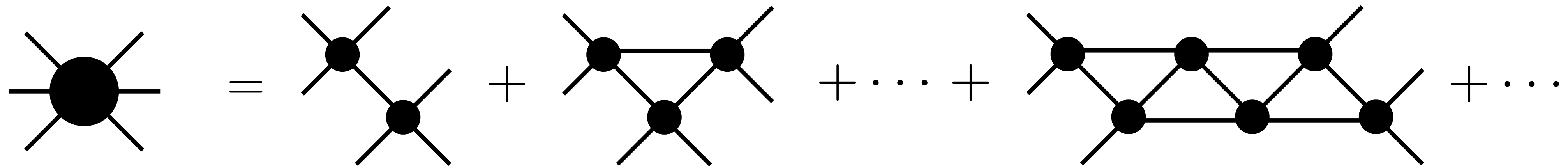
103 energy levels described by three numbers m_π , $a_{\pi\pi}^{I=2}$, $\mathcal{K}_{3,\text{iso}}^{I=3}$



Three Pions

First applications were in $3\pi^+$ in $I(J^P) = 3(0^-)$

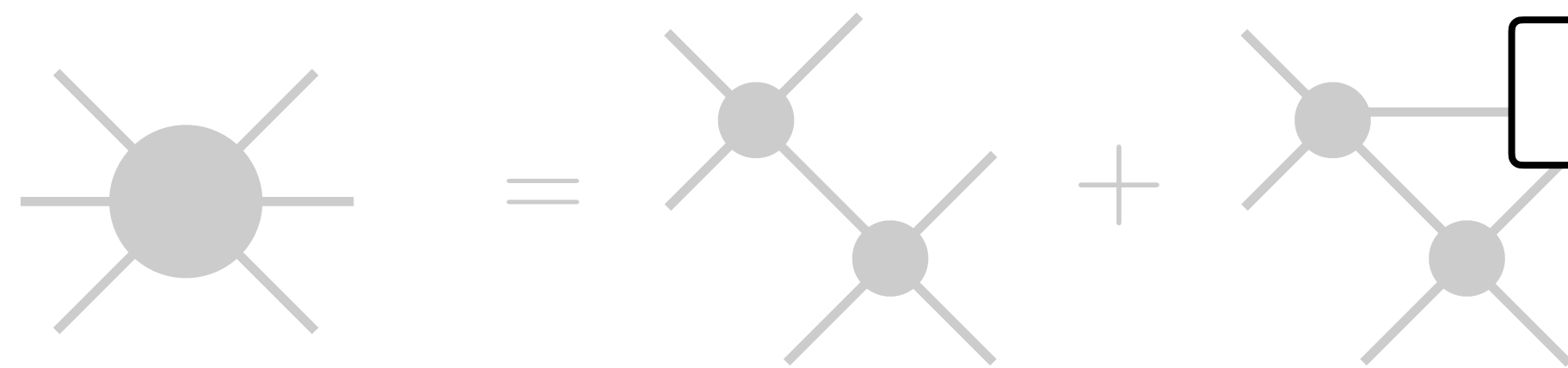
- Simple application without contamination from higher partial waves
- System dominated by ladder of exchanges



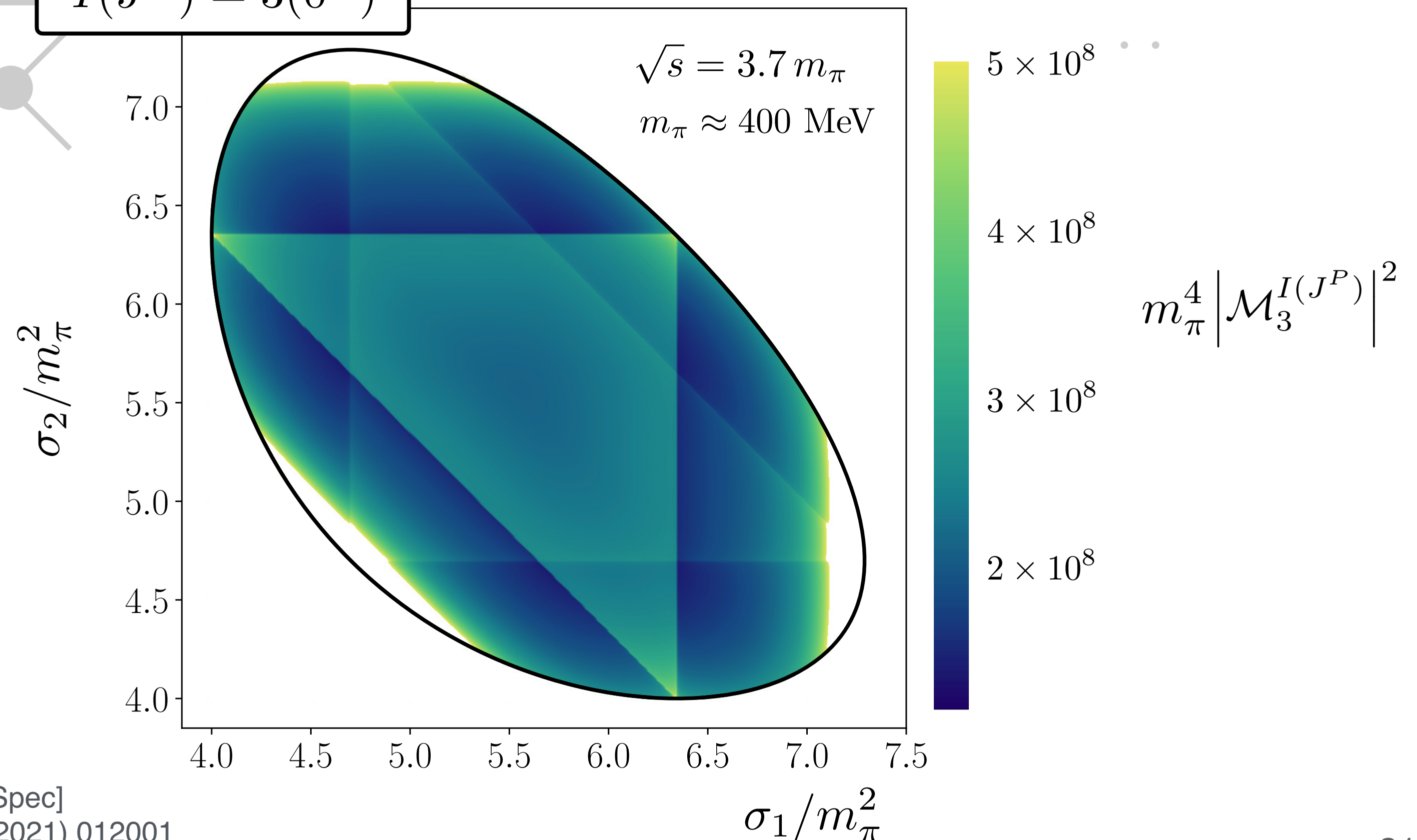
Three Pions

First applications were in $3\pi^+$ in $I(J^P) = 3(0^-)$

- Simple application without contamination from higher partial waves
- System dominated by ladder of exchanges



$I(J^P) = 3(0^-)$



$$\sigma_j = (\sqrt{s} - E_j)^2 - p_j^2$$

M. Hansen et al. [HadSpec]
 Phys. Rev. Lett. **126**, (2021) 012001

Higher Partial Waves

Can access higher waves — coupled integral equations

$$\mathcal{M}_3 = \sum_{JP} \mathcal{M}_3^{JP} \mathcal{R}_{JP}$$



Partial Wave Amplitudes
 — depends on ‘energy’ variables only
 — Matrix in LS -space for given J^P



Rotational Dependence
 — Clebsch-Gordan coefficients
 — Wigner D matrix elements
 — associated factors

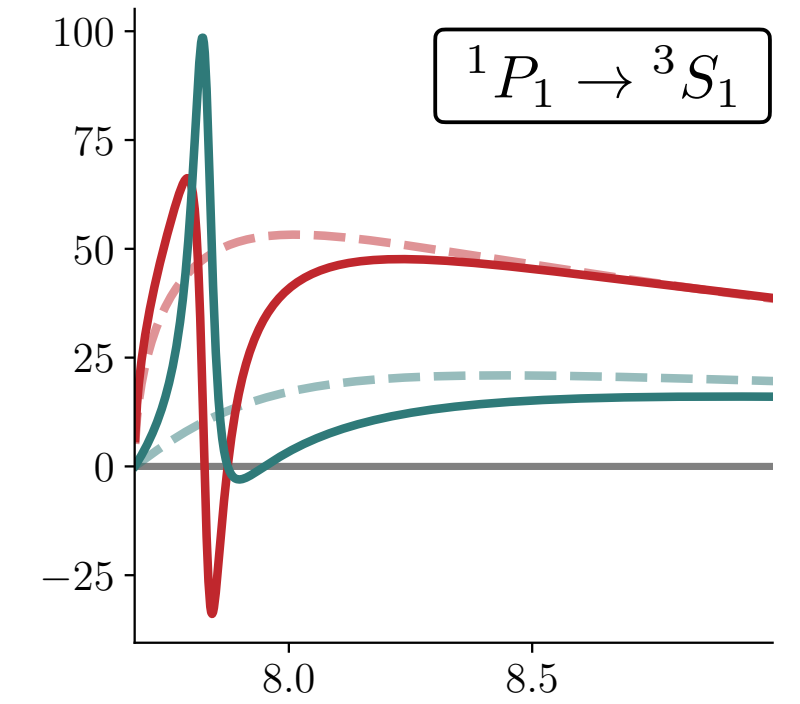
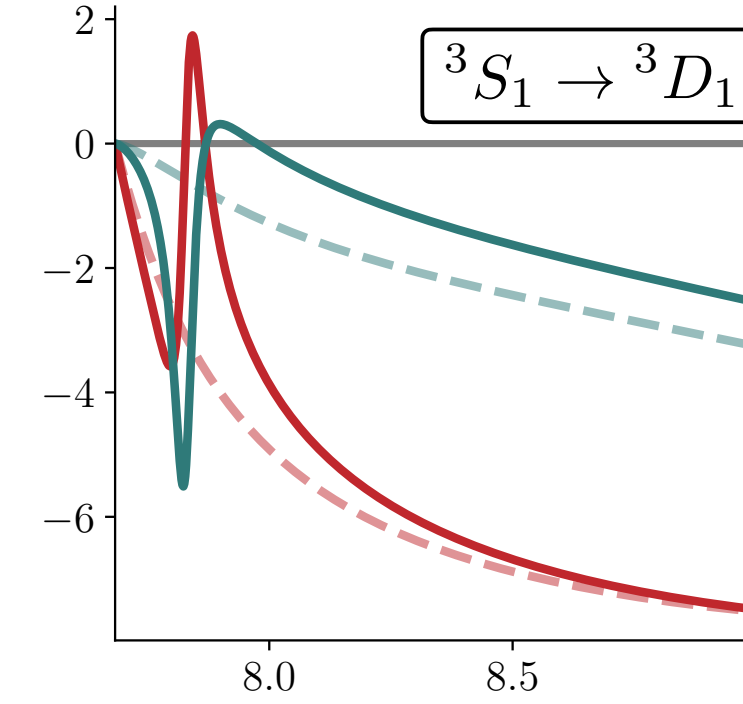
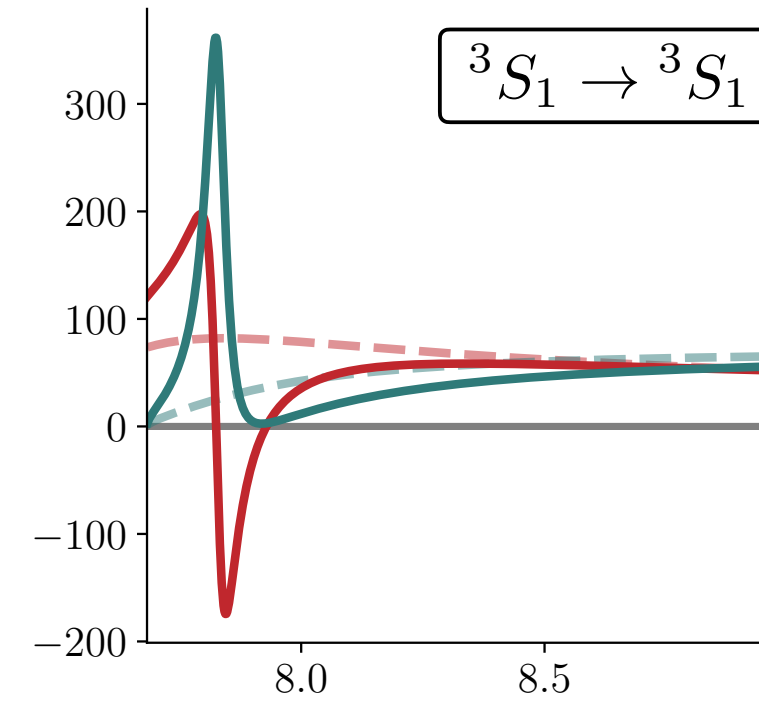
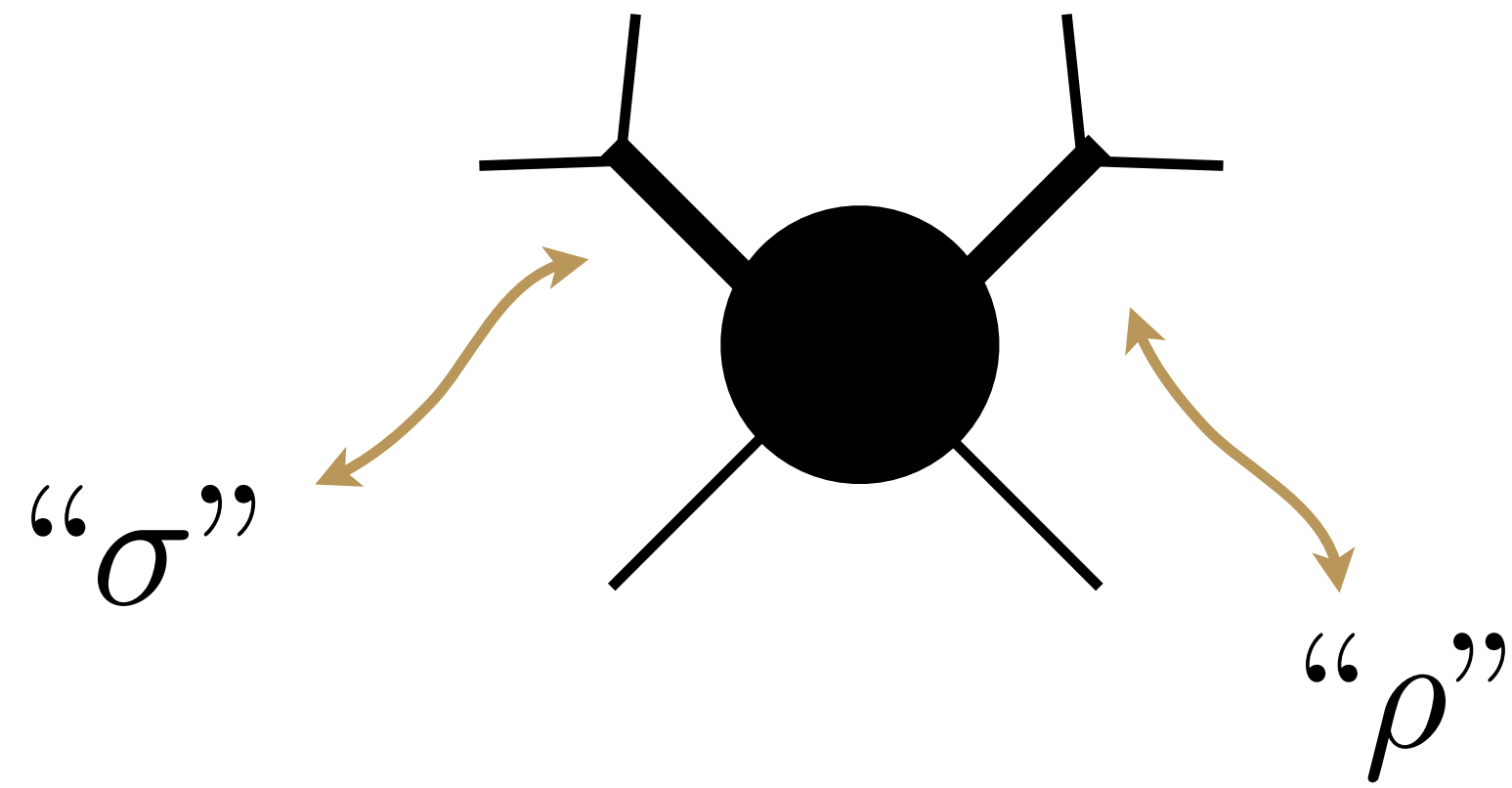
$I_{3\pi}^G$	J^{PC}	$([\pi\pi]_\ell^I \pi)_L$
3^-	0^{-+}	$([\pi\pi]_S^2 \pi)_S$
	1^{-+}	none
	1^{++}	$([\pi\pi]_S^2 \pi)_P$
2^-	0^{--}	$([\pi\pi]_S^2 \pi)_S, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{--}	$([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{+-}	$([\pi\pi]_S^2 \pi)_P, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_S, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_D$
1^-	0^{-+}	$([\pi\pi]_S^{0,2} \pi)_S, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{-+}	$([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{++}	$([\pi\pi]_S^{0,2} \pi)_P, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_S, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_D$
0^-	0^{--}	$([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{--}	$([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_P$
	1^{+-}	$([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_S, ([\pi\pi]_P^1 \pi)_D$

$$\mathcal{R}_{JP} \sim \sum_{m_J} Z_{L'S'}^{Jm_J*}(\hat{\mathbf{p}}) Z_{LS}^{Jm_J}(\hat{\mathbf{k}})$$

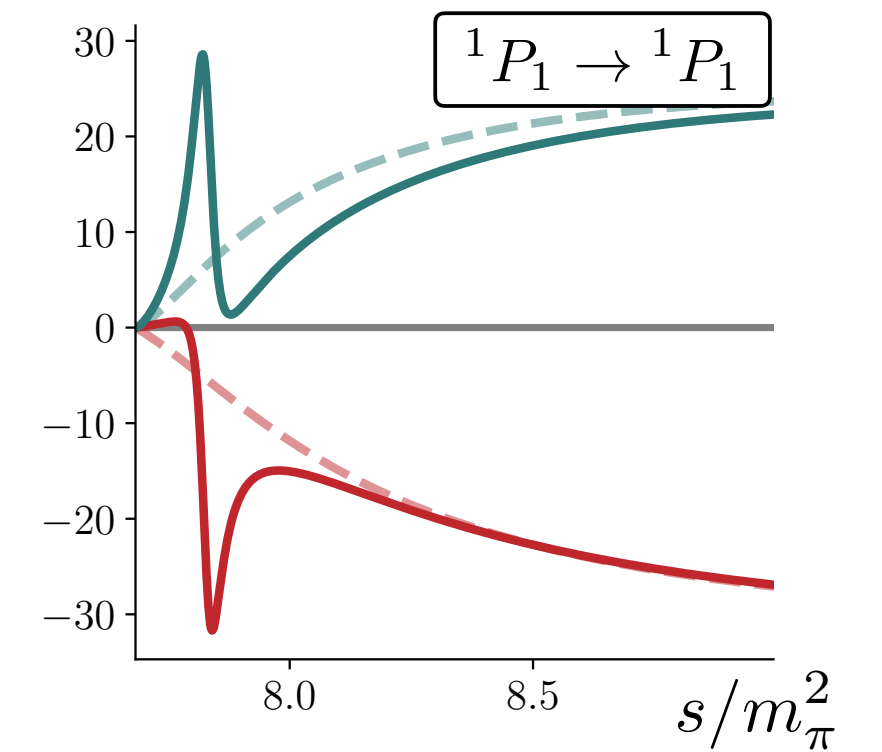
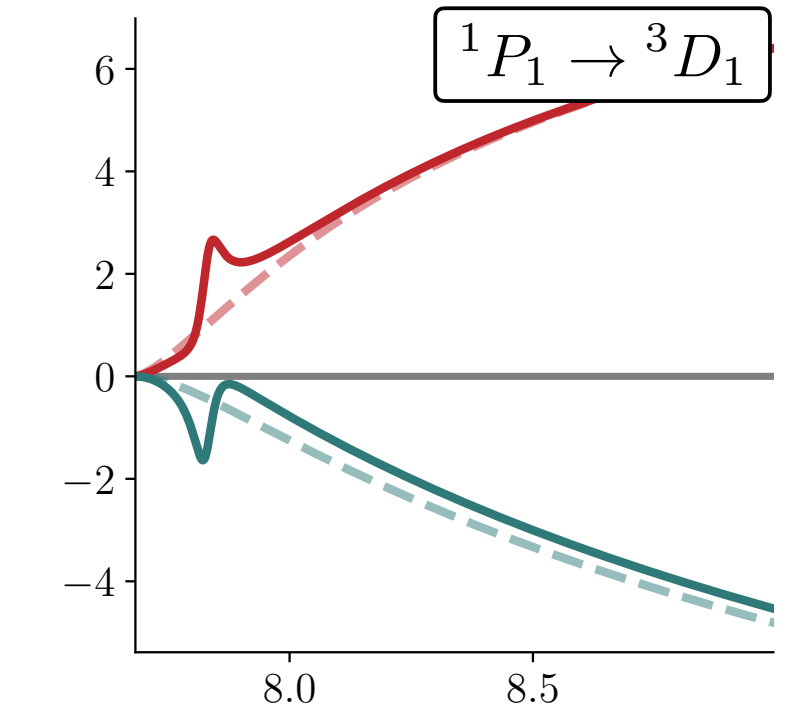
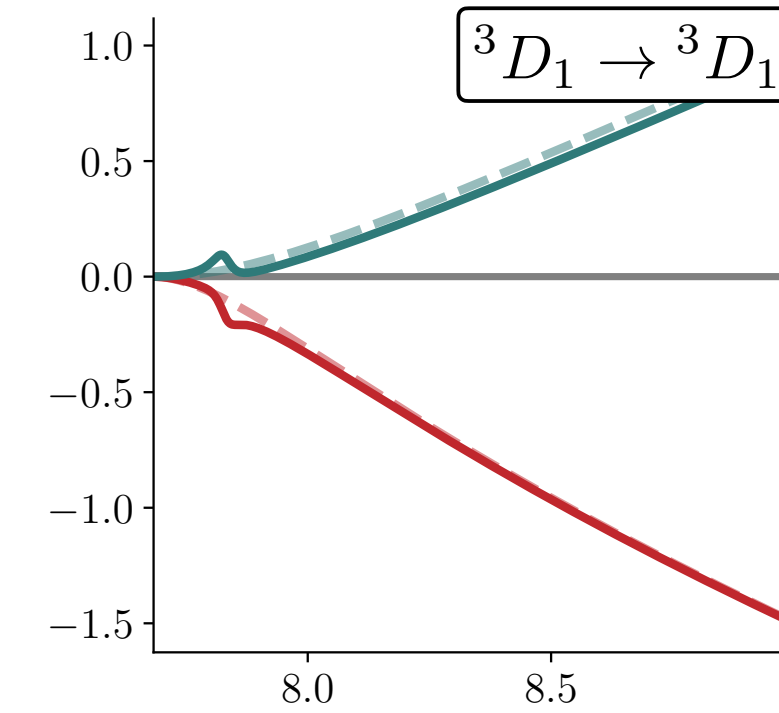
$$Z_{LS}^{Jm_J}(\hat{\mathbf{k}}) = \sqrt{4\pi(2L+1)} \sum_{\lambda} \langle J\lambda | L0, S\lambda \rangle D_{m_J\lambda}^{(J)}(\hat{\mathbf{k}}) Y_{S\lambda}^*(\hat{\mathbf{a}})$$

Higher Partial Waves

Can access higher waves — coupled integral equations



$T(J^P) = 1(1^+)$
 — real
 — imag



Testing frameworks for lattice QCD applications

AJ and R. Briceño
 Phys.Rev.D **109** (2024) 9, 096030

R. Briceño, C. Costa, AJ
 Phys.Rev.D **111** (2025) 3, 036029

