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The holographic QCD axion

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Based on

- FB, A. Caddeo, A.L. Cotrone, P. Di Vecchia, A. Marzolla, 1906.12117
- FB, A.L. Cotrone, M. Järvinen, E. Kiritsis, 1906.12132

Plan

- Holography
- Holographic QCD and axion
- Axion couplings to nucleons
- Finite temperature

Plan

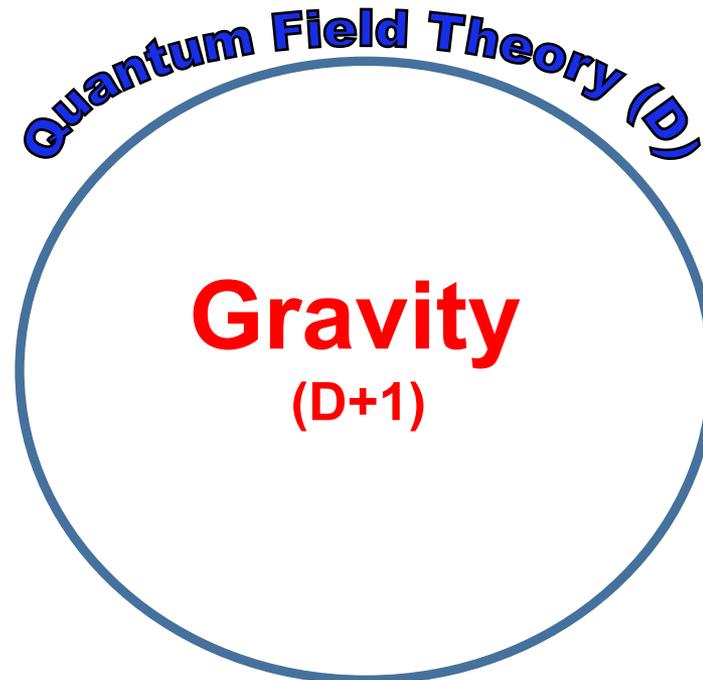
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The holographic conjecture

Quantum Gravity
in $D+1$ dimensions

=

Quantum Field Theory
in D dimensions



$$Z_{QFT} = Z_{QG} \approx e^{-S_{GR}}$$

[Maldacena, 97. Gubser, Klebanov, Polyakov; Witten, 98]

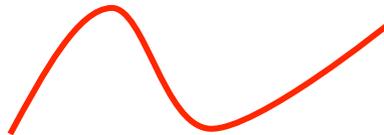
A hint : String theory

- Assumption: fundamental constituents are string-like
- Point particles are different modes of a vibrating string

String

Particle

Open



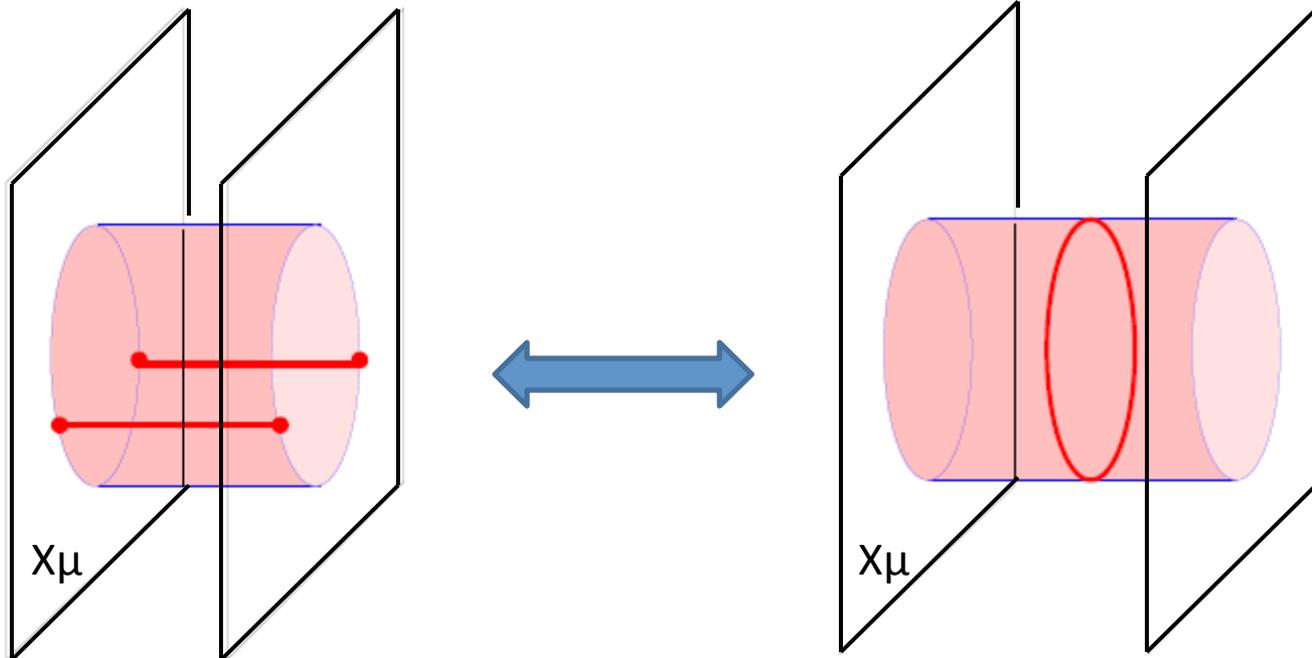
photon (gluon) +...

Closed



graviton +.....

- Open/closed string duality (or: 2 ways of drawing a cylinder)



Open string loop (**quantum**)
 Quantum Field Theory
 X_μ, u (RG **scale**)



Closed string propagation (**classical**)
 Theory of gravity
 X_μ, r (**extra dimension**)

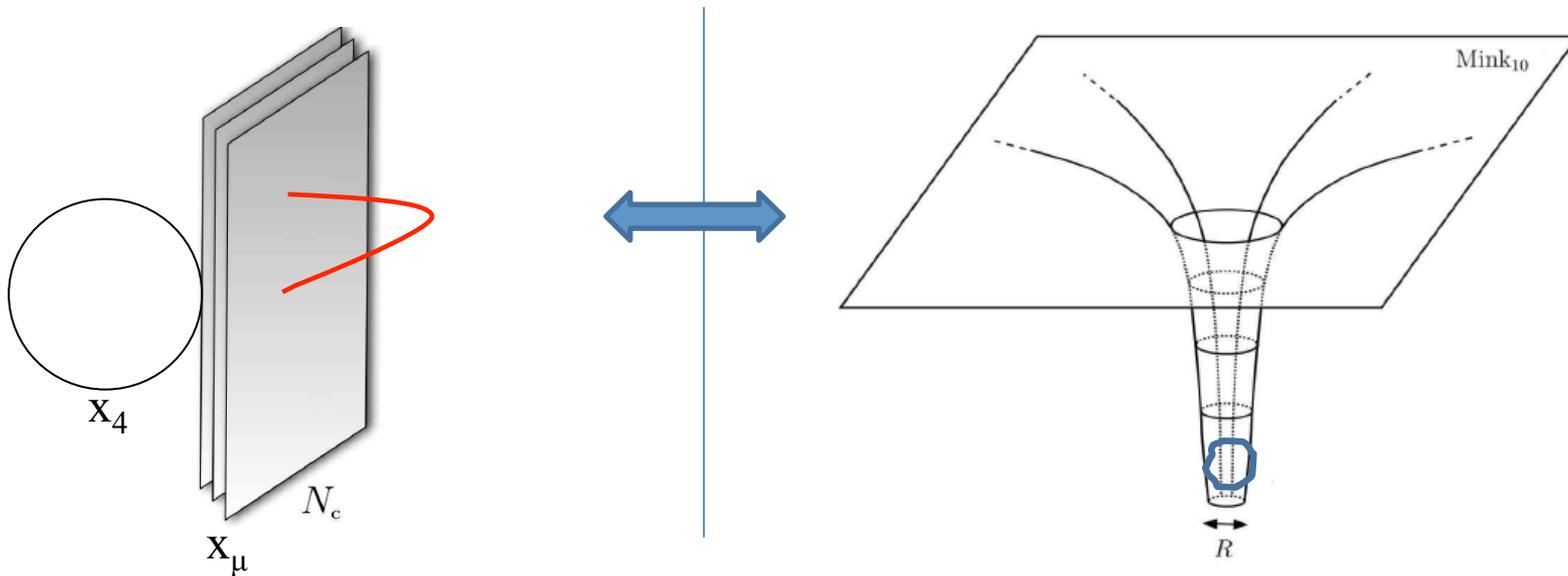
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Holographic Yang-Mills [Witten 1998]

$SU(N_c)$ Yang-Mills in 3+1 dimensions + massive adjoint KK fields

- N_c D4-branes on circle $S^1_{x_4}$, radius $R_4 = 1/M_{\text{KK}}$, antiperiodic fermions.
- Low energy: 4d non-susy $SU(N_c)$ Yang-Mills + massive adjoint KK modes
- Dual description: gravity solution sourced by wrapped D4-branes



Holographic Yang-Mills [Witten 1998]

- **Gravity action** (closed string description)

$$S = \frac{1}{2k_0^2} \int d^{10}x \sqrt{-g} \left[e^{-2\phi} (\mathcal{R} + 4(\partial\phi)^2) - \frac{1}{2}|F_4|^2 - \frac{1}{2}|F_2|^2 \right]$$

- **Gauge theory action** (open string description, IR limit of D4-brane action)

$$S = \frac{1}{8\pi g_s l_s M_{KK}} \int d^4x \text{Tr} F_{\mu\nu} F^{\mu\nu} - \frac{i}{32\pi^2 l_s} \int_{S_{x^4}} C_1 \int d^4x \epsilon^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \text{Tr} F_{\mu\nu} F_{\rho\sigma}$$

$$F_2 = d C_1$$

$$\theta + 2\pi k = \frac{1}{l_s} \int_{S_{x^4}} C_1$$

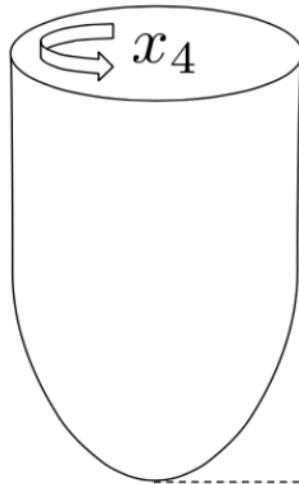
- **Classical gravity picture dual to gauge theory at** $\lambda_4 \gg 1, N_c \gg 1$

$$\lambda_4 = g_{YM}^2 N_c = 2\pi g_s l_s M_{KK} N_c$$

Holographic Yang-Mills [Witten 1998]

$$ds^2 = \left(\frac{u}{R}\right)^{3/2} [dx_\mu dx^\mu + f(u) dx_4^2] + \left(\frac{u}{R}\right)^{-3/2} \left[\frac{du^2}{f(u)} + u^2 d\Omega_4^2 \right]$$

$$e^\phi = g_s \left(\frac{u}{R}\right)^{3/4}, \quad F_4 = \frac{3N_c}{4\pi} \omega_4, \quad f(u) = 1 - \frac{u_0^3}{u^3}. \quad R = (\pi g_s N_c)^{1/3} l_s$$



- $x_4 \sim x_4 + 2\pi/M_{KK}$
- (u, x_4) subspace is a cigar
- $g_{00}(u_0) \neq 0$ (regular metric)
- ✓ IR: Confinement and mass gap
- UV: very different from pure YM

$$u_0 = \frac{4R^3}{9} M_{KK}^2$$

- To leading order in θ/N_c treat C_1 as a probe [Witten 1998]:

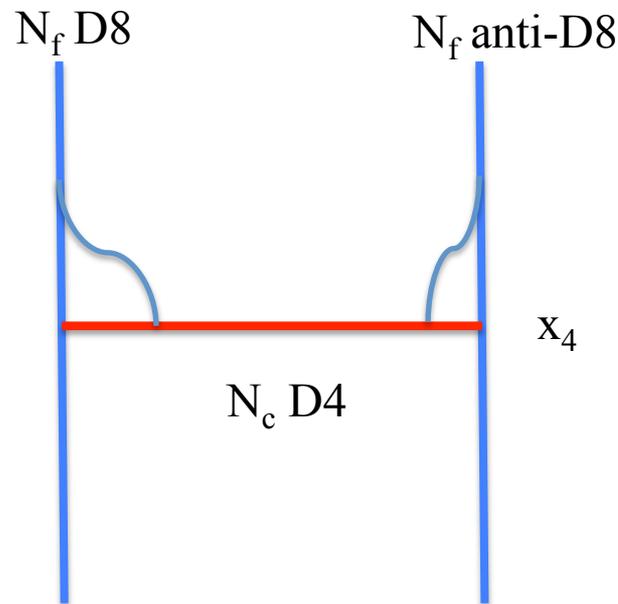
$$C_1 = \frac{\Theta}{l_s g_s} f(U) dx_4, \quad \text{where} \quad \Theta \equiv \frac{\lambda}{4\pi^2} \left(\frac{\theta + 2\pi k}{N_c} \right)$$

- Theta dependence of free energy from $S_\theta \sim \int d^{10}x |F_2|^2$, $F_2 = dC_1$

Holographic QCD [Sakai,Sugimoto 2004]

Witten's $SU(N_c)$ Yang-Mills + N_f massless fundamental quarks

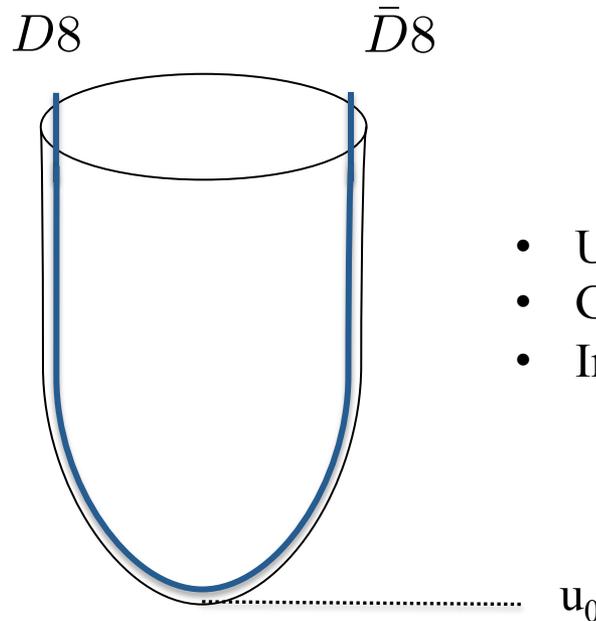
- N_f massless flavors from extra D4-D8 open strings
- $U(N_f)_L \times U(N_f)_R$ gauge symmetry on D8 dual to classical QFT chiral symm.



Holographic QCD [Sakai, Sugimoto 2004]

Witten's $SU(N_c)$ Yang-Mills + N_f massless fundamental quarks

- At strong coupling, replace D4s by dual background.
- If $N_f \ll N_c$ treat D8-branes as probes.



- $U(N_f)$ gauge theory on D8
- Gauge field fluctuations = **mesons**
- Instanton solutions = **baryons**

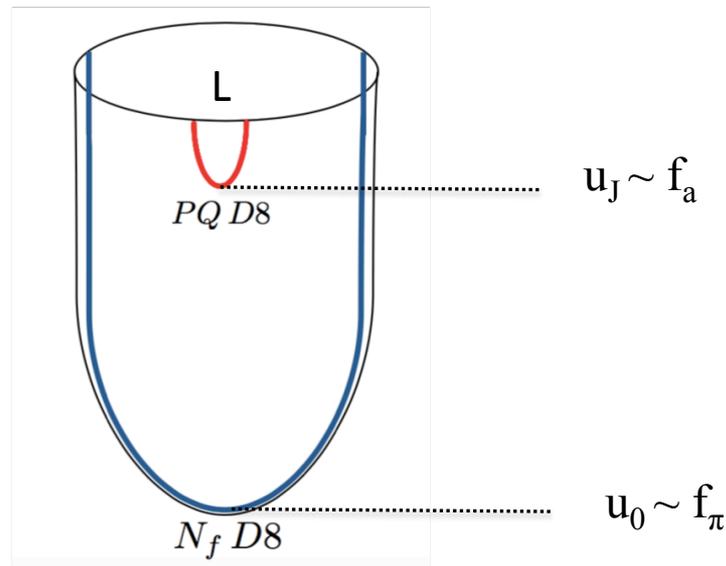
- **Chiral symmetry breaking** = **joining** of the two branches
- Pion coupling $f_\pi \sim u_0$

The Holographic QCD axion

[FB, Caddeo, Cotrone, Di Vecchia, Marzolla, '19]

Witten's $SU(N_c)$ Yang-Mills + N_f massless fundamental quarks + **1 extra quark**

- Extra **massless** quark flavor = extra (Peccei-Quinn) **non antipodal D8-anti D8**
- Spontaneous breaking of PQ symmetry = joining of extra D8



- Extra parameter $L < \pi R_4$ (or $u_J - u_0$) : related to **NJL coupling** of extra quark [Antonyan, Harvey, Jensen, Kutasov, 06]
- If $L \ll \pi R_4$, axion coupling $f_a \gg f_\pi$

Low energy effective action

$$S_{\text{tot}} = S_{\text{WSS}} + S_{\text{PQ}} + S_{\theta} + S_{\text{mass}}$$

- At low energy and integrating over u and S^4 : **chiral Lagrangian + axion**
- Same as in [Di Vecchia, Rossi, Veneziano, Yankielowicz 2017]

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{eff}} = -\frac{f_{\pi}^2}{4} \text{Tr}[\partial_{\mu} U \partial^{\mu} U^{\dagger}] - \frac{1}{2} \partial_{\mu} a \partial^{\mu} a + c \text{Tr}[M U^{\dagger} + \text{h.c.}] - \frac{\chi_{\text{WYM}}}{2} \left(\theta + \frac{\sqrt{2N_f}}{f_{\pi}} \eta' + \frac{\sqrt{2}}{f_a} a \right)^2$$

- Mass term from worldsheet instantons. Topological term from Chern-Simons.

$$U = \mathcal{P} e^{i \int dz A_z^{\text{WSS}}} = e^{\frac{2i}{f_{\pi}} \left(\pi^a T^a + \frac{\eta'}{\sqrt{2N_f}} \right)}, \quad \boxed{\sqrt{2} \frac{a}{f_a} = \int A_z^{\text{PQ}} dz}$$

- **Axion mass:** $m_a^2 = \frac{2}{f_a^2} \chi, \quad \chi = \frac{4c \chi_{\text{WYM}}}{4c + 2\chi_{\text{WYM}} \text{Tr}[M^{-1}]}$

- All parameters in terms of $\lambda, N_c, N_f, R_4 = 1/M_{\text{KK}}, L, M = \text{diag}(m_u, m_d, \dots)$

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Axion couplings to nucleons

[FB, Cotrone, Kiritsis, Yarvinen, '19]

- Focus on $N_f=2$ case. $M=\text{diag}(m_u, m_d)$. $N=(p, n)$ nucleon field.
- Compute **CP even** (c_N) and **CP odd** (\bar{c}_N) axion-nucleon couplings

$$\delta\mathcal{L}_{aNN,\text{der}} = -\frac{\partial_\mu a}{\sqrt{2}f_a} c_N \bar{N} \gamma^\mu \gamma^5 N, \quad \delta\mathcal{L}_{aNN,\text{non-der}} = \bar{c}_N a \bar{N} N$$

- **Ingredient 1**: in WSS model, **nucleons = instanton** solutions for \mathcal{F}_{WSS}
- Nucleon mass scales like N_c : a non relativistic limit can be taken
- **Ingredient 2**: neglecting η' - π mixing, mass eigenstates to $O(1/f_a)$ are

$$\hat{\eta}' = \eta' + \frac{\chi f_\pi}{4c} \text{Tr}[M^{-1}] \frac{\sqrt{2}a}{f_a},$$

$$\hat{\pi}^a = \pi^a + \frac{\chi f_\pi}{4c} \text{Tr}[\tau^a M^{-1}] \frac{\sqrt{2}a}{f_a},$$

$$\hat{a} = a - \frac{\chi f_\pi}{4c} \text{Tr}[M^{-1}] \frac{\sqrt{2}\eta'}{f_a} - \frac{\chi f_\pi}{4c} \text{Tr}[\tau^a M^{-1}] \frac{\sqrt{2}\pi^a}{f_a}$$

Axion couplings to nucleons

- CP even axion couplings from meson-nucleon ones. In chiral limit:

$$\begin{aligned}c_p &\approx -\frac{1}{2}\hat{g}_A - \frac{1}{2}g_A \frac{m_d - m_u}{m_d + m_u} & \hat{g}_A &\approx \frac{27}{2\lambda} \\c_n &\approx -\frac{1}{2}\hat{g}_A + \frac{1}{2}g_A \frac{m_d - m_u}{m_d + m_u} & g_A &\approx \frac{2}{\pi} \sqrt{\frac{2}{15}} N_c\end{aligned}$$

- $g_{\eta' NN} = \frac{m_N}{f_\pi} \hat{g}_A$, $g_{\pi NN} = \frac{m_N}{f_\pi} g_A$ [Goldberger-Treiman relations]
- Just as in KSVZ class.

Axion couplings to nucleons

- CP-odd axion nucleon couplings: $\delta\mathcal{L}_{aNN,\text{non-der}} = \bar{c}_N a \bar{N} N$
- [If there is any residual θ angle]. In chiral limit, from mixing, get

$$\bar{c}_p \approx -\frac{1}{2}\bar{g}_{\eta' NN} \frac{f_\pi}{f_a} - \frac{1}{2}\bar{g}_{\pi NN} \frac{f_\pi}{f_a} \frac{m_d - m_u}{m_d + m_u}$$

$$\bar{c}_n \approx -\frac{1}{2}\bar{g}_{\eta' NN} \frac{f_\pi}{f_a} + \frac{1}{2}\bar{g}_{\pi NN} \frac{f_\pi}{f_a} \frac{m_d - m_u}{m_d + m_u}$$

- Computing mass term on instanton solution get, to first order in $m_d - m_u$

$$\bar{c}_p \approx \frac{1}{4}\sigma_N \frac{\theta}{f_a} - \frac{1}{8}(M_n - M_p)_{\text{str.}} \frac{\theta}{f_a},$$

$$\bar{c}_n \approx \frac{1}{4}\sigma_N \frac{\theta}{f_a} + \frac{1}{8}(M_n - M_p)_{\text{str.}} \frac{\theta}{f_a}$$

- σ_N : pion-nucleon sigma term (quark mass contribution to nucleon mass)
- Cfr [Moody, Wilczek 1984]

Axion couplings to nucleons

- CP-odd axion nucleon couplings: $\delta\mathcal{L}_{aNN,\text{non-der}} = \bar{c}_N a \bar{N} N$
- Computed in holoQCD and in Skyrme as functions of model parameters.
- Compare with estimates from previous (CL) formulae, using value of sigma term from lattice [ETCM coll. 2019] or from pionic atoms [pheno: Meissner 2017].
 $(M_n - M_p)_{\text{str.}}$ from [Borsanyi et al 2015]

	CL + lattice	CL + pheno	Skyrme	Holography
\bar{c}_n	9.4(9)	13.0(1.1)	27(5)	21(4)
\bar{c}_p	8.8(9)	12.4(1.1)	27(5)	20(4)

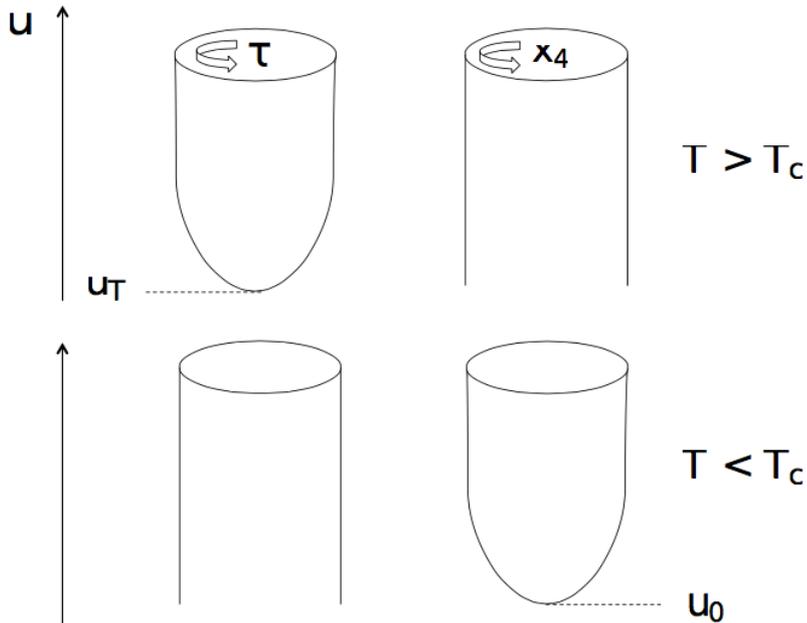
[in MeV θ/f_a units]

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Holographic YM at Finite temperature

Two possible gravity solutions, with Euclidean time circle of length $1/T$



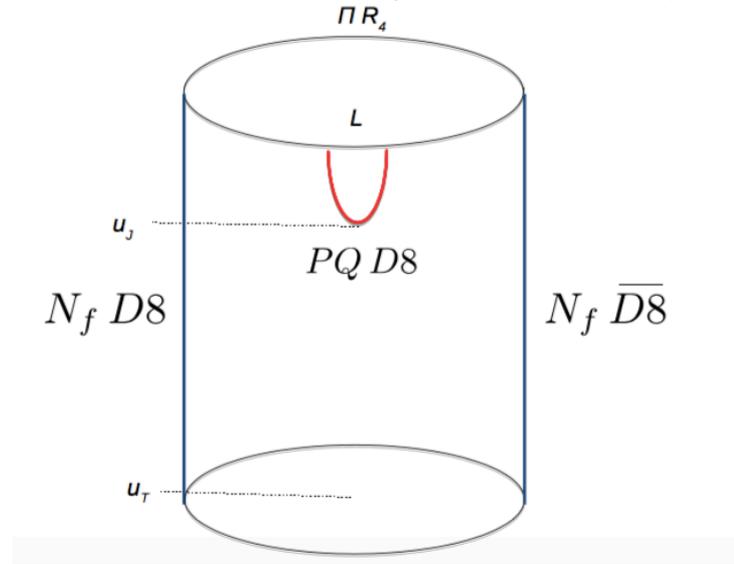
- black hole solution
- $g_{00}(u_T) = 0$: **deconfinement**
- no theta dependence to leading order
 $C_1 \sim \theta dx_4, F_2 = 0$ $[(u, x_4) : \text{cylinder}]$

- Euclidean version of $T=0$ one
- Theta-dependence
- Confinement

- At $T_c = \frac{M_{KK}}{2\pi}$ first order phase transition

Holographic axion at Finite temperature

- If $T_c < T \ll f_a$ QCD mesons melt (chiral symm. restored) , while our axion survives



- We can study the **temperature dependence of the axion mass** in the **unflavored** case
- Hence we can compute $\chi_{\text{WYM}}(T)$
- Since $F_2=0$ at $T > T_c$, classical gravity approximation gives $\chi_{\text{WYM}}(T)=0$
- Need stringy instanton corrections to gravity action [Green, Gutperle, Vanhove 97]

Axion mass at $T > T_c$

[FB, Caddeo, Cotrone, Di Vecchia, Marzolla, 19]

- Topological susceptibility and hence the axion mass

- $$\chi_{\text{WYM}}(T) = \frac{3285\pi^{3/2}}{42} \left(\frac{4\pi}{3}\right)^4 \frac{\sqrt{N_c}}{\sqrt{\lambda_{\text{eff}}(T)}} T^4 e^{-\frac{8\pi^2}{g_{\text{YM}}^2}}$$

$$\lambda_{\text{eff}}(T) \equiv g_{\text{YM}}^2 N_c \frac{T^2}{M_{\text{KK}}^2} \equiv \lambda_{\text{YM}} \frac{T^2}{M_{\text{KK}}^2}$$

- $m_a^2(T) f_a^2 = 2\chi_{\text{WYM}}(T) \sim M_{\text{KK}} T^3$
- Axion mass increases with T
- Strong difference with Yang-Mills instanton gas.

- Aside result: also computed for $N=4$ SYM: $\chi_{\text{SYM}}(T) = \frac{15}{128} \pi^{3/2} \sqrt{N_c} T^4 e^{-\frac{8\pi^2}{g_{\text{YM}}^2}}$

Final comments

- Our model: **one extra massless quark** flavor added to (holographic) QCD.
- It is **NOT** a standard extra flavor: it **condenses at a scale** $M_a \sim f_a \gg \Lambda_{\text{QCD}}$
- Thus extra hadrons decouple.

- Exception, **the axion**: (pseudo) Goldstone boson of extra chiral symmetry breaking.
- Anomalous $U(1)_A$ symmetry of extra flavor = $U(1)_{\text{PQ}}$ broken symmetry.

- In our model $f_a/f_\pi \approx R_4/L$ **can be made parametrically large**.
- **At weak coupling** [Antonyan, Harvey, Jensen, Kutasov 06]: NJL coupling.

- UV completion under control, higher dimensional model in string theory.

- The model has **a dual holographic description at large N_c** .
- It provides **analytic predictions** on the (strongly coupled) IR physics.
- Derivative and non-derivative **axion-nucleon couplings** computed.

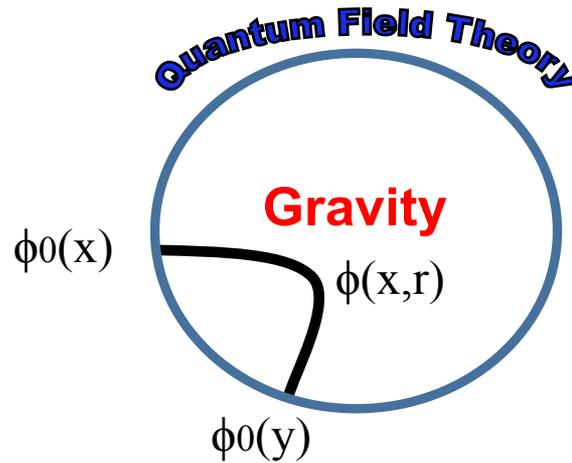
- UV completion is higher dimensional: very different behavior from QCD.
- We have shown that explicitly by studying the **high temperature behavior**.

Thank you

Holography at work

[Maldacena, 97; Witten; Gubser, Klebanov, Polyakov, 98]

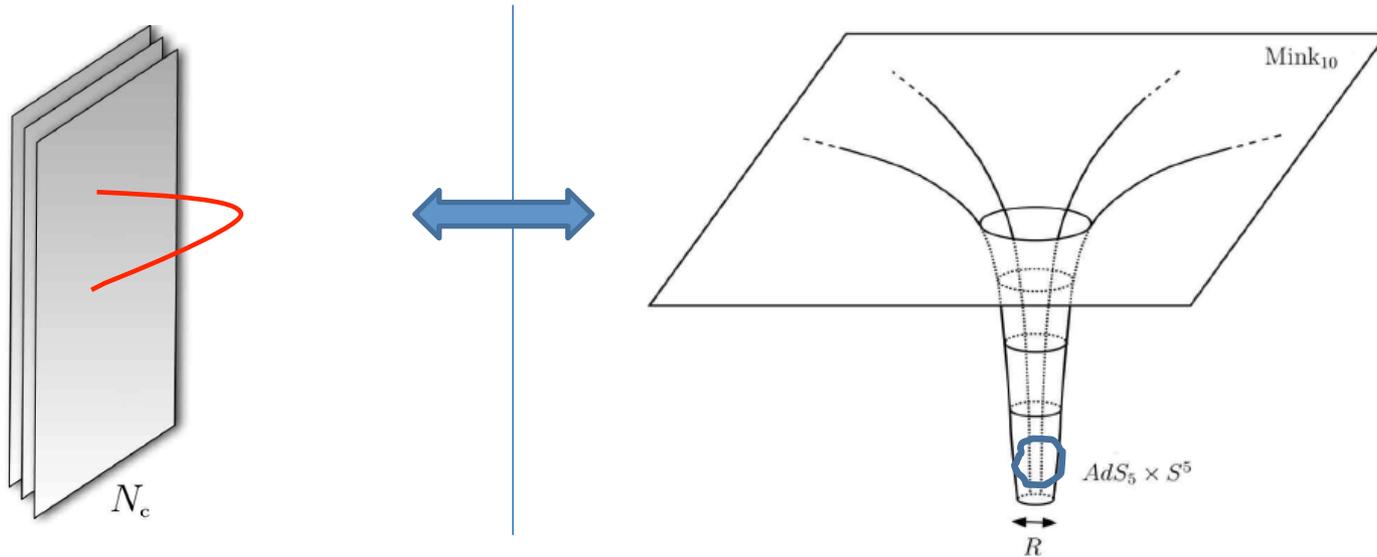
- Large N, strongly correlated QFT \longleftrightarrow Classical Gravity



$$Z_{QFT}[\phi_0] = Z_{QG/String} \approx e^{iS_{gravity}[\phi_0]} \Big|_{\phi(x,r) \rightarrow \phi_0(x)}$$

- QFT phase (finite T, μ, \dots) \longleftrightarrow Gravity background (black hole, charged bh, ...)
- QFT operator ($T_{\mu\nu}, J_\mu, \text{Tr } F^2, \dots$) \longleftrightarrow Gravity field ($g_{\mu\nu}, A_\mu, \phi, \dots$)
- Global symmetry (e.g. Chiral) \longleftrightarrow Gauge symmetry

- The dual nature of Dp-branes [Polchinski, 95]



- Taking low energy limit on both sides: **two interacting theories** [J.M. Maldacena, 97]:
- Left: **4d $SU(N_c)$ susy Yang-Mills (CFT)**. From open strings on **N_c D3-branes**
- Right: **closed IIB strings (gravity)** on **Anti-de-Sitter 5d** background (times S^5)
- **$N_c \gg 1$, $\lambda = g_{\text{YM}}^2 N_c \gg 1$ in QFT** \longleftrightarrow **Classical theory of gravity**

- Reminder. **Strong CP problem: why is QCD θ angle so tiny?**
- Peccei-Quinn: if extra axial symmetry, θ can be rotated away.
- We do not see PQ symmetry: it must be (spontaneously) broken.
- **Here, PQ symmetry = axial U(1) acting on extra quark, NOT on SM quarks.**
- Extra quark condensation (**U-shaped PQ brane**) spontaneously breaks it.
- Pseudo-Goldstone boson: **axion**. Gets mass due to anomaly, like η' .
- PQ and WSS branes are distant: quarks and extra quark interact only through gauge sector. Since we work at large N interactions are suppressed.
- Hence our axion model **fits in the KSVZ class** [Kim; Shifman, Vainshtein, Zakharov, '80]
- Thus axion coupling to nucleons only receive IR contributions.
- Electromagnetic current in WSS: weakly gauging of U(1) in $U(N_f)$
- As such it pertains to WSS D-branes: the PQ quarks are uncharged.
- Hence electromagnetic interactions of the axion just come from mixing with neutral pion and η' , with no UV contribution.

NJL model from D4-D8 setup

[Antonyan, Harvey, Jensen, Kutasov, 06]

In the D4-D8 setup q_L and q_R are separated in the x_4 direction. They live in the 3+1 dimensional D4-D8 intersection but the gauge field they interchange is 4+1 dimensional (before compactifying x_4)

$$\mathcal{S} = \int d^5x \left[-\frac{1}{4g_5^2} F_{MN}^2 + \delta(x^4 + \frac{L}{2}) q_L^\dagger \bar{\sigma}^\mu (i\partial_\mu + A_\mu) q_L + \delta(x^4 - \frac{L}{2}) q_R^\dagger \sigma^\mu (i\partial_\mu + A_\mu) q_R \right]$$

At weak coupling q_L and q_R interact via a (non local) one (five dimensional) gluon exchange. Integrating out the 5d gauge field in the single gluon exchange approx

$$\mathcal{S}_{\text{eff}} = i \int d^4x \left(q_L^\dagger \bar{\sigma}^\mu \partial_\mu q_L + q_R^\dagger \sigma^\mu \partial_\mu q_R \right) + \frac{g_5^2}{4\pi^2} \int d^4x d^4y G(x-y, L) \left[q_L^\dagger(x) \cdot q_R(y) \right] \left[q_R^\dagger(y) \cdot q_L(x) \right]$$

$G(x, x_4)$ 5d scalar propagator

A (non local) NJL model: $\mathcal{L}_{\text{int}} = G q_L^\dagger \cdot q_R q_R^\dagger \cdot q_L$

NJL: for $G > G_c$ chiral symmetry breaking i.e. $\langle q_L^\dagger \cdot q_R \rangle$ condensate.

The axion coupling f_a

$$f_a^2 = \frac{N_c \lambda}{16\pi^3} \frac{J^3(b)}{I(b)} \frac{1}{M_{\text{KK}} L^3}, \quad b \equiv \frac{u_0}{u_J}$$

$$J(b) = \frac{2}{3} \sqrt{1-b^3} \int_0^1 dy \frac{y^{\frac{1}{2}}}{(1-b^3 y) \sqrt{1-b^3 y - (1-b^3) y^{\frac{8}{3}}}} \quad I(b) = \int_0^1 dy \frac{y^{-\frac{1}{2}}}{\sqrt{1-b^3 y - (1-b^3) y^{\frac{8}{3}}}}$$

$$L = J(b) R^{\frac{3}{2}} u_J^{-\frac{1}{2}}$$

- Tune b so that $10^9 \lesssim \frac{f_a}{f_\pi} \lesssim 10^{18} : 10^{-24} \lesssim b \lesssim 10^{-12}$
- Within this interval $f_a^2 \approx 0.1534 \frac{N_c \lambda}{16\pi^3} \frac{1}{M_{\text{KK}} L^3}$

Axion couplings to nucleons

- CP-odd axion nucleon couplings: $\delta\mathcal{L}_{aNN,\text{non-der}} = \bar{c}_N a \bar{N} N$

- Consider the quark mass contribution to the nucleon mass term

$$\delta\mathcal{L}_M = c \text{Tr} \left[M e^{-i\frac{\theta}{N_f}} (U_{cl} - \mathbb{1}_2) + h.c. \right]$$

- U_{cl} classical instanton solution describing a nucleon [Hata,Sakai,Sugimoto,Yamato 07]

$$U_{cl} = \exp \left[i\pi \frac{\vec{\tau} \cdot \vec{x}}{|\vec{x}|} \left(1 - \frac{1}{\sqrt{1 + \rho^2/|\vec{x}|^2}} \right) \right]$$

- Analogous to Skyrme hedgehog. ρ is the instanton radius, $\rho_{cl}^2 \sim \lambda^{-1}$

- $$\delta M_N(\theta) = - \int d^3x \delta\mathcal{L}_M \approx 0.032 \frac{m_\pi^2 N_c^{3/2}}{f_\pi} \cos\left(\frac{\theta}{2}\right)$$

- At $\theta=0$ this is the pion-nucleon sigma term

Holographic YM at Finite temperature

- θ -dependence in deconfined phase can be recovered **including instanton corrections**
- Instanton = Euclidean D0-brane wrapped on the x_4 circle

$$S_{D0} = \frac{1}{l_s} \int e^{-\phi} \sqrt{g_{44}} dx_4 - \frac{i}{l_s} \int C_1 = \frac{8\pi^2}{g_{\text{YM}}^2} - i\theta$$

- Instanton corrections to the IIA supergravity action on a circle are known
- They can be deduced **from M-theory on a torus** [Green, Gutperle, Vanhove 97]
- Notice that WYM background can be obtained **from AdS₇ × S⁴ black hole solution**

$$ds^2 = G_{MN} dx^M dx^N = \frac{y^2}{R^2} \left[-f(y) dt^2 + \sum_{i=1}^4 dx_i^2 + dx_{10}^2 \right] + \frac{4R^2}{f(y)y^2} dy^2 + R^2 d\Omega_4^2, \quad f(y) = 1 - y_0^6/y^6$$

- torus $S_{x_{10}} \times S_{x_4}$ radii $R_4 = M_{\text{KK}}^{-1}$ and $R_{10} = g_s l_s$

Holographic YM at Finite temperature

- Quartic corrections to 11d sugra action on a torus

$$\delta S = -\frac{1}{\kappa_{11}^{2/3}} \int d^{11}x \sqrt{-G} W \left[\frac{2\pi^2}{3} + \mathcal{V}_2^{-3/2} f(\rho, \bar{\rho}) \right]$$

- W in terms of the Weyl tensor $W = C^{hmnk} C_{pmnq} C_h^{rsp} C_{rsk}^q + \frac{1}{2} C^{hkmn} C_{pqmn} C_h^{rsp} C_{rsk}^q$

- \mathcal{V}_2 related to the volume of the torus $V_T = \kappa_{11}^{4/9} \mathcal{V}_2 = \int dx_4 dx_{10} \sqrt{G_{(2)}}$

- Modular function up to one-instanton corrections

$$f(\rho, \bar{\rho}) = 2\zeta(3)\rho_2^{3/2} + \frac{2\pi^2}{3}(\rho_2)^{-1/2} + 4\pi(e^{2\pi i\rho} + e^{-2\pi i\bar{\rho}}) + \dots$$

$$\rho \equiv \rho_1 + i\rho_2 = (2\pi)^{-1}\theta + 4\pi i g_{\text{YM}}^{-2} \sim S_{D_0}$$

- On AdS₇ × S⁴ black hole $W = \frac{3285}{64R^8} \frac{y_0^{24}}{y^{24}}$ [Gubser, Klebanov, Tseytlin 98]