



# The $a_1(1260)$ meson from lattice QCD and phenomenology

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# Overview

Review 2B-lattice: [\[Briceno\]](#)  
Reviews 3B-lattice: [\[Hansen\]](#) [\[Mai\]](#)  
Review hadron resonances: [\[Mai\]](#)

Key publications Finite-Volume Unitary (FVU) approach:

- Three-body unitarity [\[Mai/JPAC\]](#)
- Three-body unitarity finite volume [\[Mai\]](#)
- $a_1$  in finite volume & results from IQCD [\[Mai\]](#)

## Talk outline:

- 3-body unitarity
- $a_1$  in infinite volume
- $3\pi^+$ ,  $a_1$  in finite volume

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## Progress in last three years alone (narrowly defined for 3B)

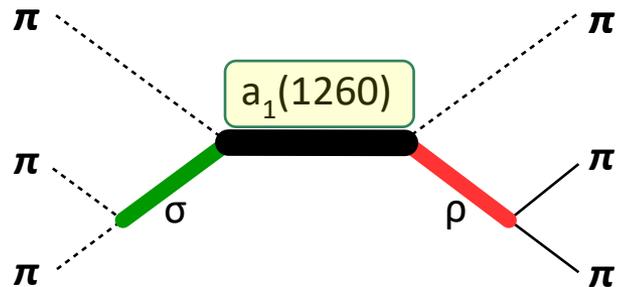
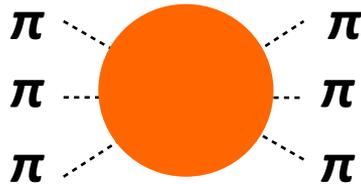
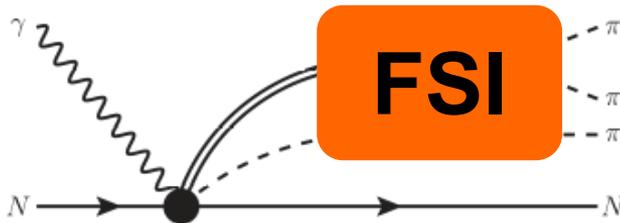
- **Whitepapers:** Snowmass whitepaper amplitude analysis: [1], Snowmass whitepaper lattice: [2]
- **FVU papers:**  $a_1$  pole phenomenological: [3],  $a_1 \rightarrow \pi\sigma$  inf. volume: [4],  $a_1$  1QCD/PRL: [5], Review 3B lattice: [6], 3B force: [7],  $3K^+$ : [8],  $a_1$  Dalitz: [9],  $3\pi^+$  GWQCD data: [10]  $3\pi^+$  interpretation Hanlon Data: [11], cross channel  $\pi\pi$ : [12], Resonance review (preprint): [13], ( $\rho$  with ETMC [14],  $\varphi^4$  equivalence FVU/RFT [15])
- **RFT papers:**  $3\pi^+$  HadSpec “Dalitz”/inf. vol. amplitude: [16], Decay amplitude to 3 hadrons: [17], 3 pions all isospins: [18], Review 3B fin vol Hansen: [19], QC  $\pi^+\pi^+K^+$ : [20], Higher-spin isobars: [21], Non-degenerate scalars 3B: [22] Alternative derivation 3B QC [23], ETMC/Bonn  $3\pi^+$ : [24].  $3\pi^+$  PRL analysis [25] of Hanlon/Hoerz data: [26]
- **(N)REFT:** Resonance form factor from corr functions [27], Spurious poles [28], EFT Book [29], Rel.-inv. formulation [30],  $\phi^4$  test scattering [31], Lüscher-Lellouch analog 3-body [32], Analytic energy shift 3B ground state [33], N-particle energy shift [34], Rusetsky Mini-review 3-body [35] Latest (schematic) effort for Roper fin vol [36].
- **Peng/Pang/Koenig, others:** Fin-vol extrapolation eigenvector continuation [37]. 3B resonances pionless EFT [38], Few-body bound states Fin Vol [39], Few-body resonances fin-vol [40], *DDK* system finite volume [41], Finite volume magnetic field [42, 43], Different fin vol geometries [44], Few-body resonances finite volume [45], Visualization three-body resonances (analytic cont. of L-dependence) [46], Multi- $\pi^+$  and analysis of lattice data [47], Threshold expansion  $N$ -particle Fin Vol [48], Propagation particle torus [49]
- **inf. vol./Equivalence 3B formalisms:** Equivalence different 3B QC [50], Jackura 3B unitarity PW [51], JPAC hadron physics review [52], 3B unitarity in RFT: [53].

# Three-body aspects: $\pi\pi N$ vs. $\pi\pi\pi$

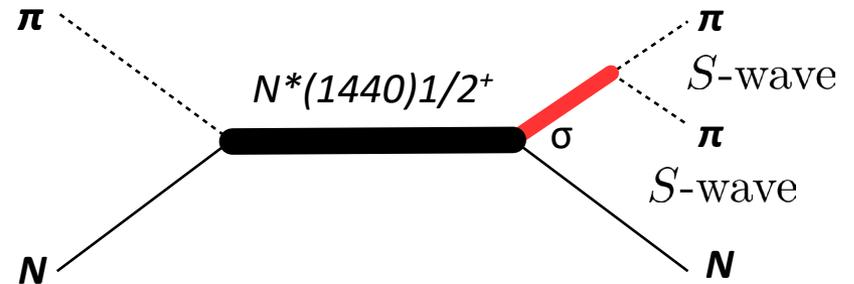
Light mesons



- COMPASS @ CERN:  $\pi_1(1600)$  discovery
- GlueX @ Jlab in search of hybrids and exotics,
- Finite volume spectrum from lattice QCD:
  - Lang (2014), Woss [HadronSpectrum] (2018)
  - Hörz (2019), Culver (2020, 21,...), Fischer (2020), Hansen/HadSpec (2020)



Light baryons



- Roper resonance is debated for  $\sim 50$  years in experiment.
- 1<sup>st</sup> calculation w. meson-baryon operators on the lattice: Lang et al. (2017)

## Three-body unitarity with isobars \*

[Mai 2017]

$$\begin{aligned} \langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | (\hat{T} - \hat{T}^\dagger) | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle &= i \int_P \langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | \hat{T}^\dagger | k_1, k_2, k_3 \rangle \langle k_1, k_2, k_3 | \hat{T} | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle \\ &\times \prod_{\ell=1}^3 \left[ \frac{d^4 k_\ell}{(2\pi)^4} (2\pi) \delta^+(k_\ell^2 - m^2) \right] (2\pi)^4 \delta^4 \left( P - \sum_{\ell=1}^3 k_\ell \right) \end{aligned}$$

delta function sets all intermediate particles on-shell

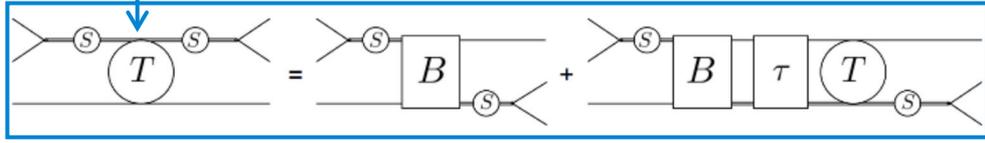
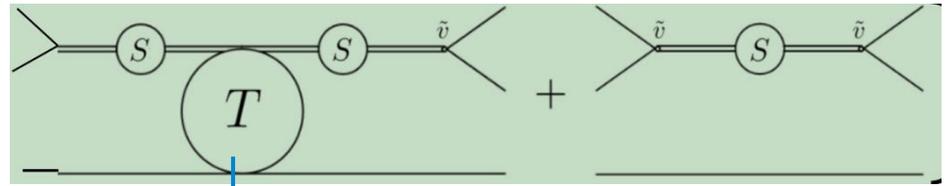
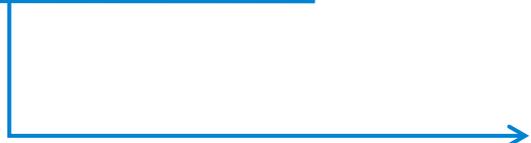
**Idea:** To construct a 3B amplitude, start directly from unitarity (based on ideas of 60's); match a general amplitude to it

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\* "Isobar" stands for two-body sub-amplitude which can be resonant or not; can be matched to CHPT expansion to one loop if desired. Isobars are re-parametrizations of full 2-body amplitudes [Bedaque][Hammer]

# Three-body unitarity

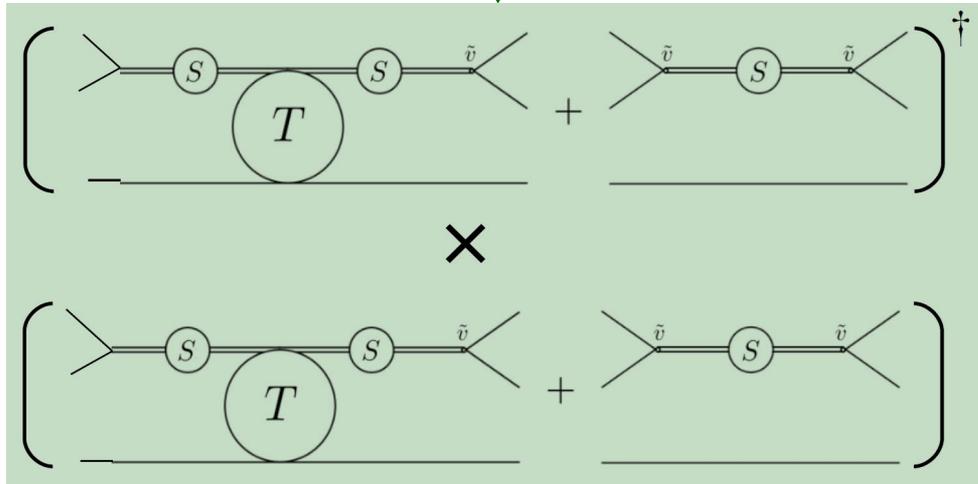
$$\langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | (\hat{T} - \hat{T}^\dagger) | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle = i \int_P \langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | \hat{T}^\dagger | k_1, k_2, k_3 \rangle \langle k_1, k_2, k_3 | \hat{T} | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle$$



**General Ansatz for the isobar-spectator interaction**  
 → **B** & **τ** are **new** unknown functions

# Three-body unitarity

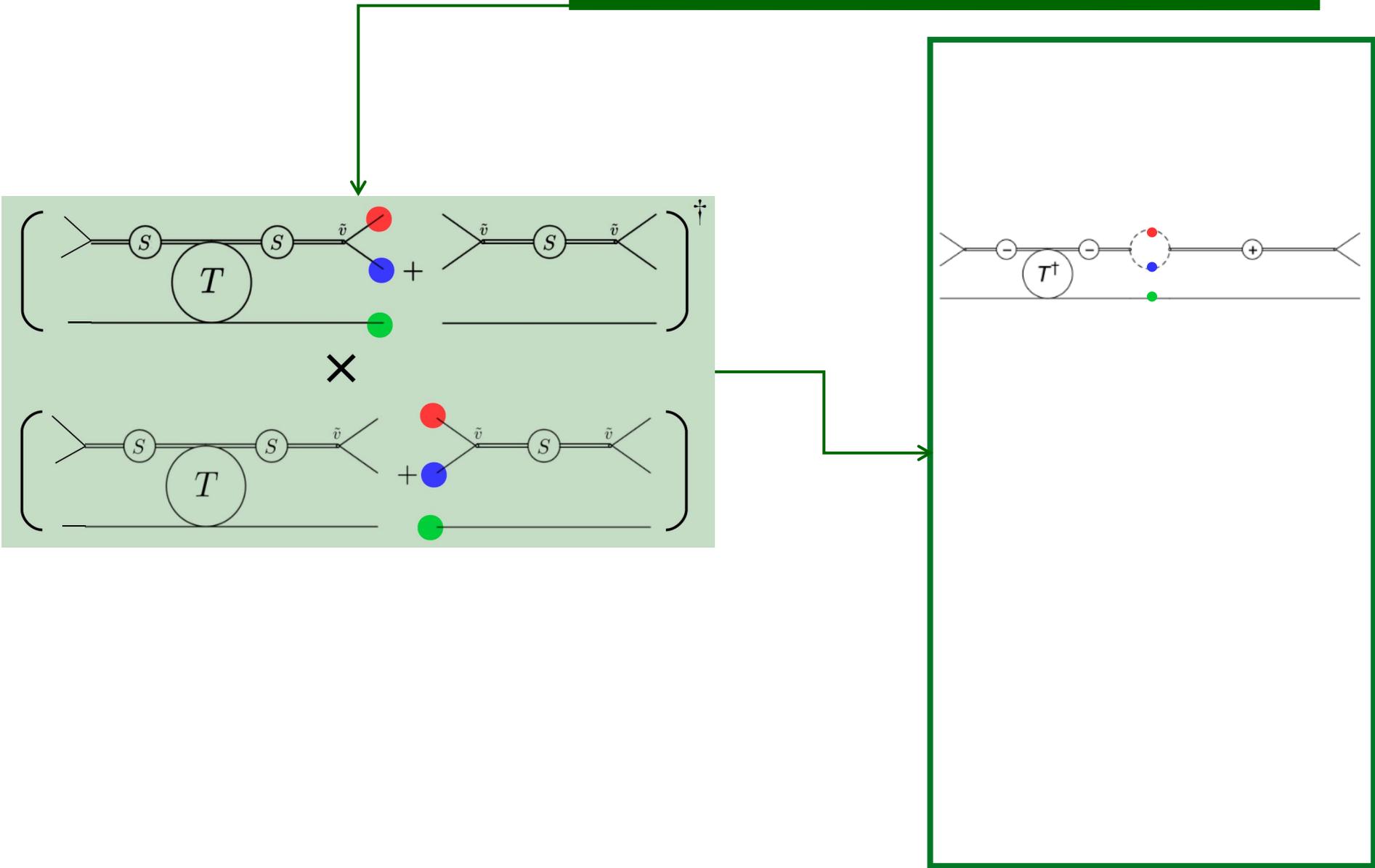
$$\langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | (\hat{T} - \hat{T}^\dagger) | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle = i \int_P \langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | \hat{T}^\dagger | k_1, k_2, k_3 \rangle \langle k_1, k_2, k_3 | \hat{T} | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle$$



General connected-disconnected structure

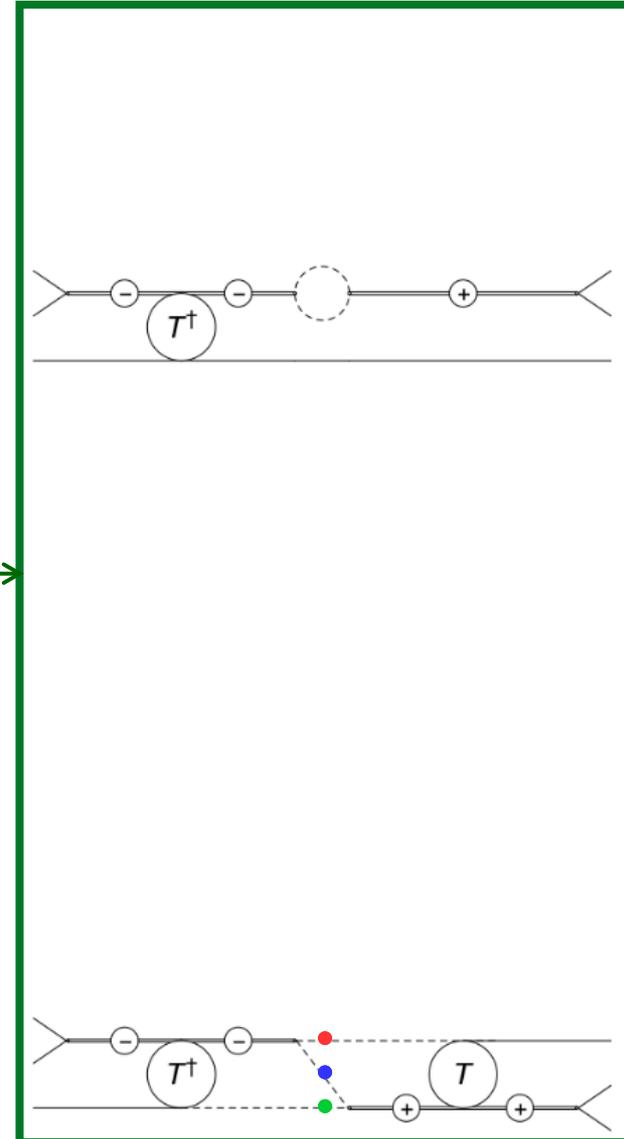
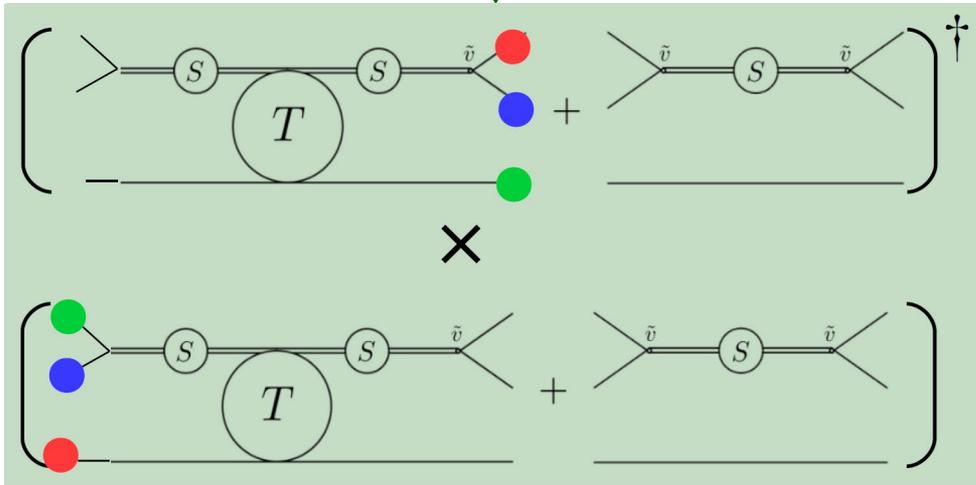
# Three-body unitarity

$$\langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | (\hat{T} - \hat{T}^\dagger) | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle = i \int_P \langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | \hat{T}^\dagger | k_1, k_2, k_3 \rangle \langle k_1, k_2, k_3 | \hat{T} | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle$$



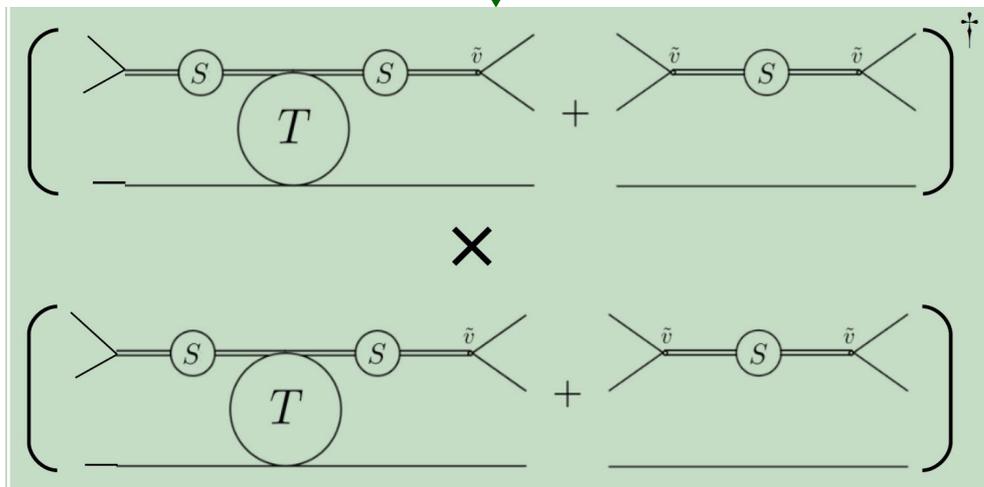
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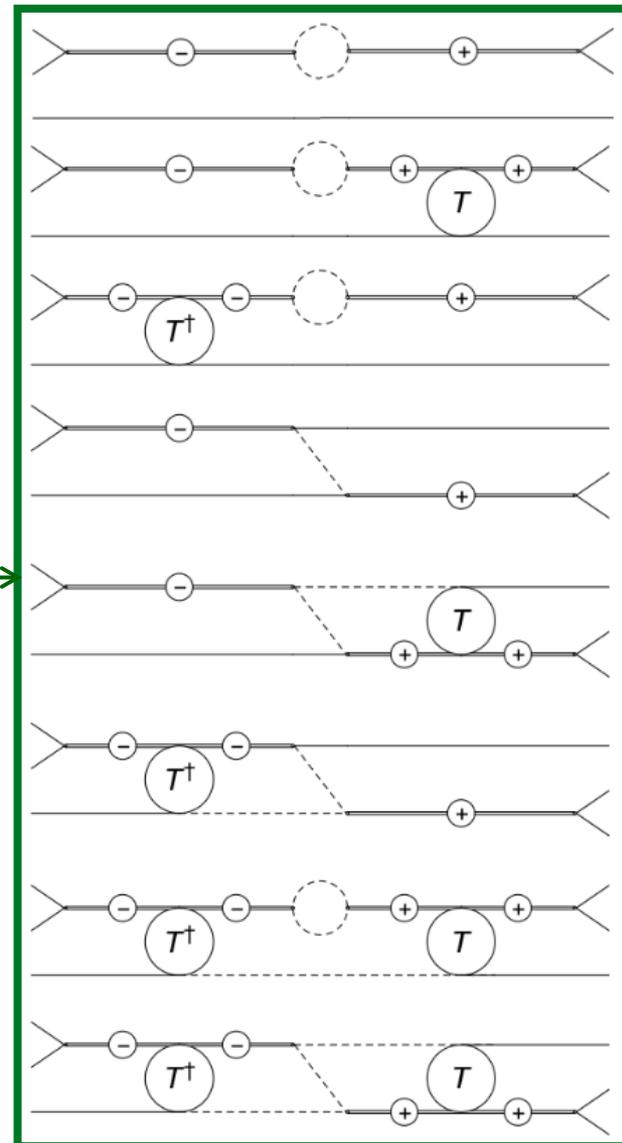


# Three-body unitarity

$$\langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | (\hat{T} - \hat{T}^\dagger) | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle = i \int_P \langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | \hat{T}^\dagger | k_1, k_2, k_3 \rangle \langle k_1, k_2, k_3 | \hat{T} | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle$$

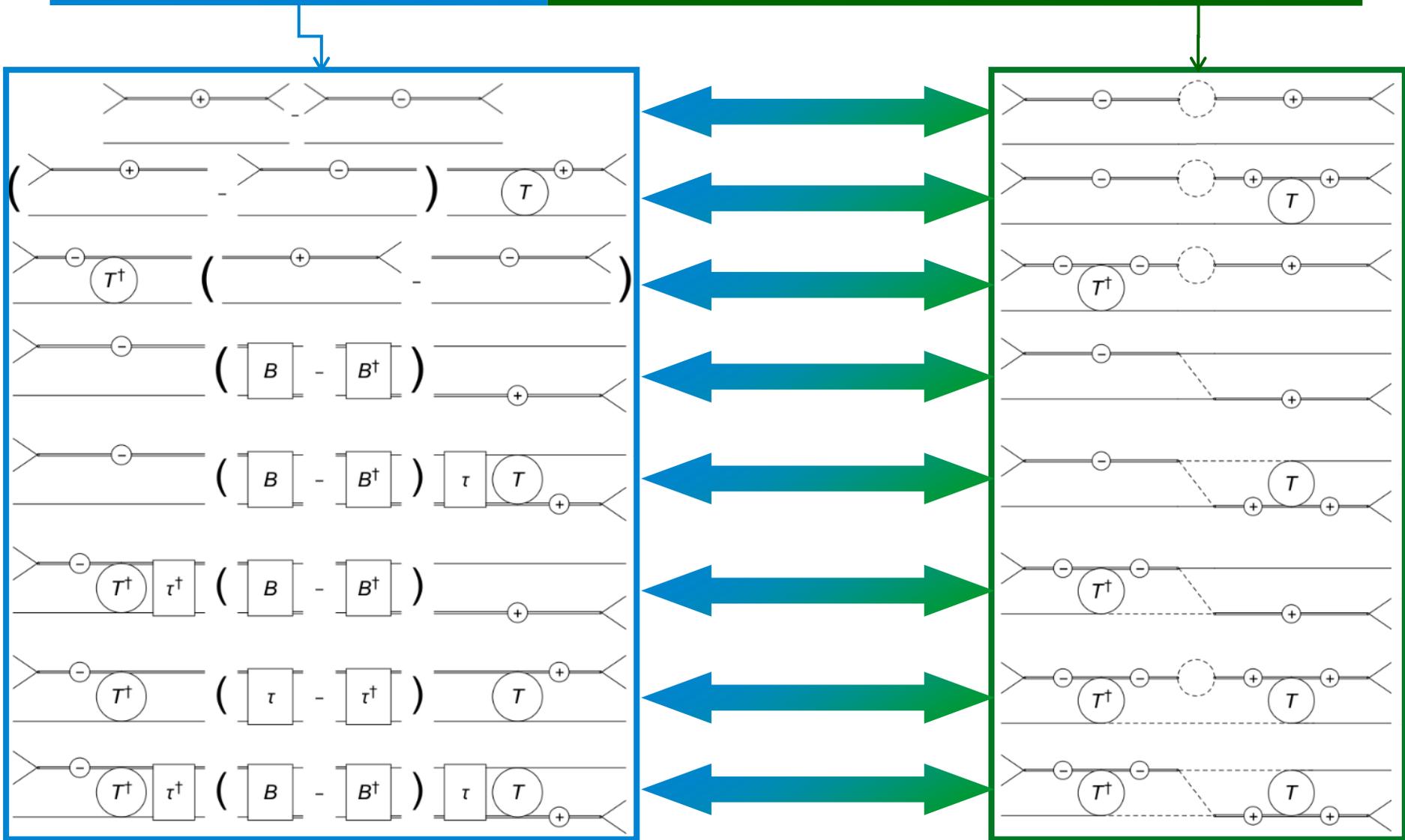


8 topologies



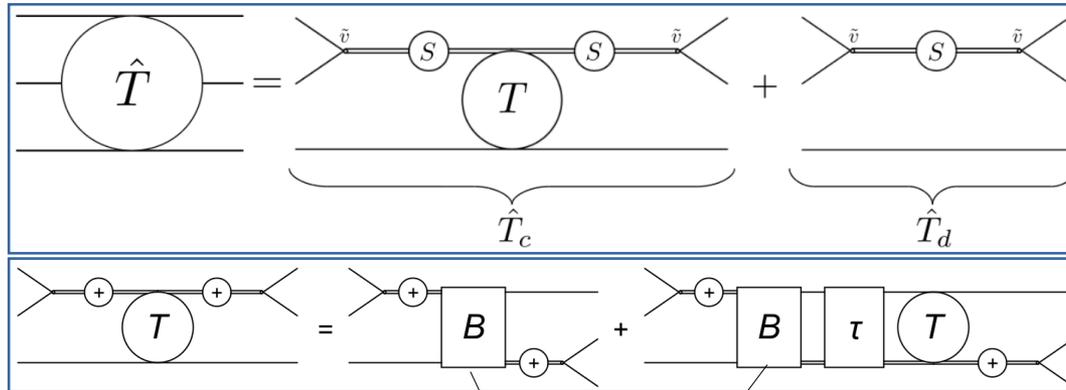
# Three-body unitarity

$$\langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | (\hat{T} - \hat{T}^\dagger) | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle = i \int_P \langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | \hat{T}^\dagger | k_1, k_2, k_3 \rangle \langle k_1, k_2, k_3 | \hat{T} | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle$$



# Scattering amplitude

3 → 3 scattering amplitude is a 3-dimensional integral equation



LS-type

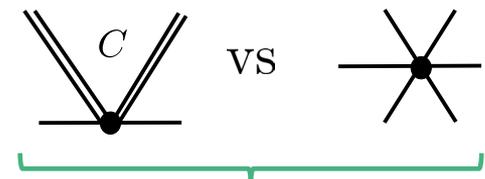
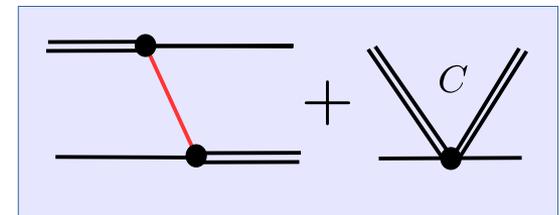
- Imaginary parts of **B, S** are fixed by **unitarity/matching**
- B, S are determined **consistently** through 8 different relations

Matching  $\rightarrow$   $\text{Disc } B(u) = 2\pi i \lambda^2 \frac{\delta(E_Q - \sqrt{m^2 + Q^2})}{2\sqrt{m^2 + Q^2}}$

- un-subtracted dispersion relation

$$\langle q|B(s)|p \rangle = -\frac{\lambda^2}{2\sqrt{m^2 + Q^2} (E_Q - \sqrt{m^2 + Q^2} + i\epsilon)} + C$$

- one- $\pi$  exchange in TOPT  $\rightarrow$  **RESULT, NOT INPUT!**
- One can map to field theory but does not have to. Result is a-priori dispersive.

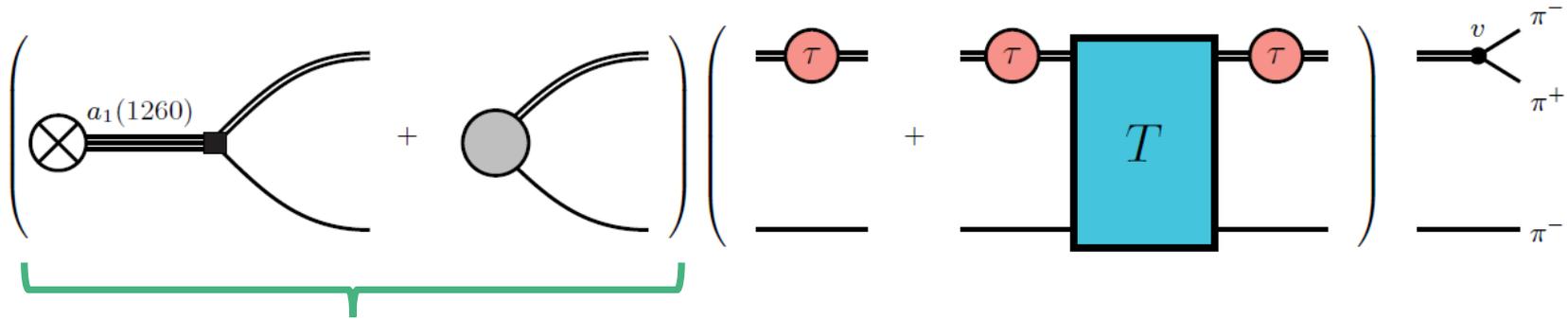


Add. Steps to map to theory might be needed [Brett (2021)]

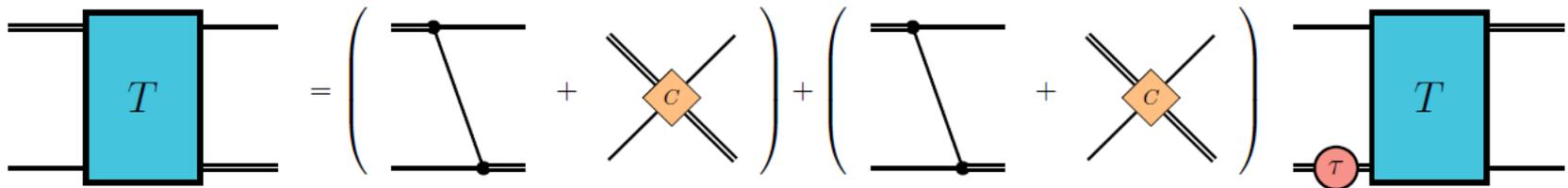
# The $a_1(1260)$ and its Dalitz plots

[Sadasivan 2020]

- Disconnected and connected decays for three-body unitarity



Additional fit parameters

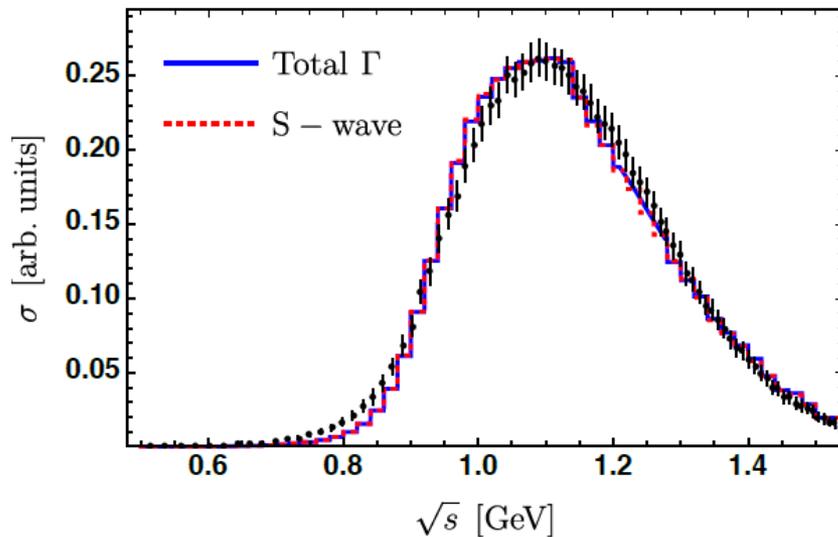


# Fitting the lineshape & predicting Dalitz plots

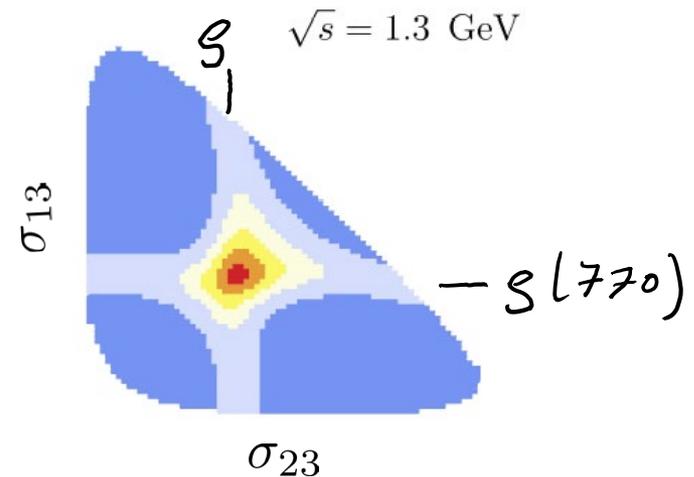
[Sadasivan 2020]

- One can have  $\pi\rho$  in S- and D-wave coupled channels
- Fit contact terms to the lineshape from Experiment (ALEPH)

$a_1 \rightarrow \pi^- \pi^- \pi^+$  (symmetrize  $\pi^-$ 's!)



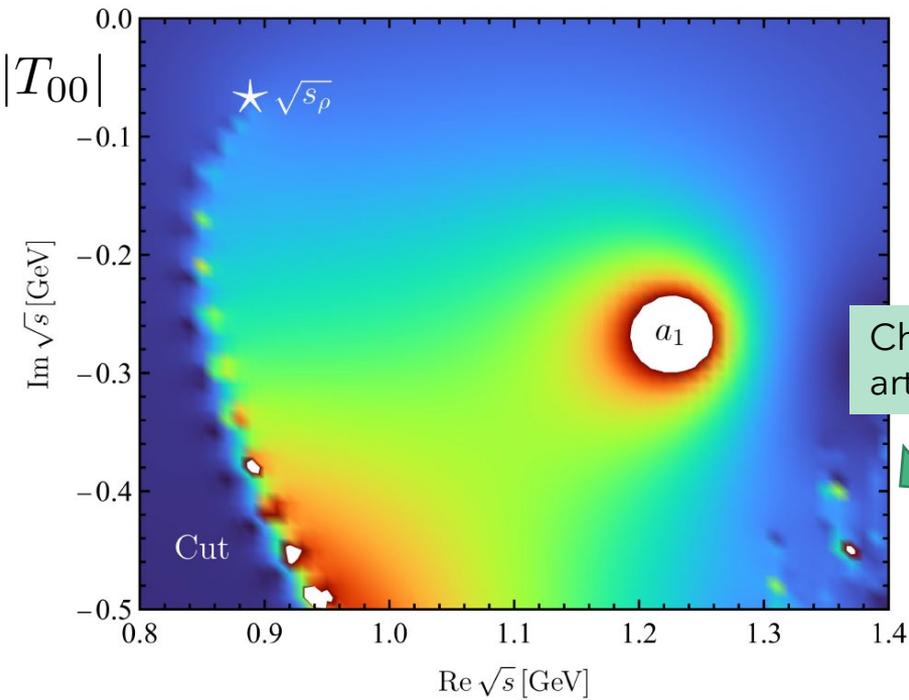
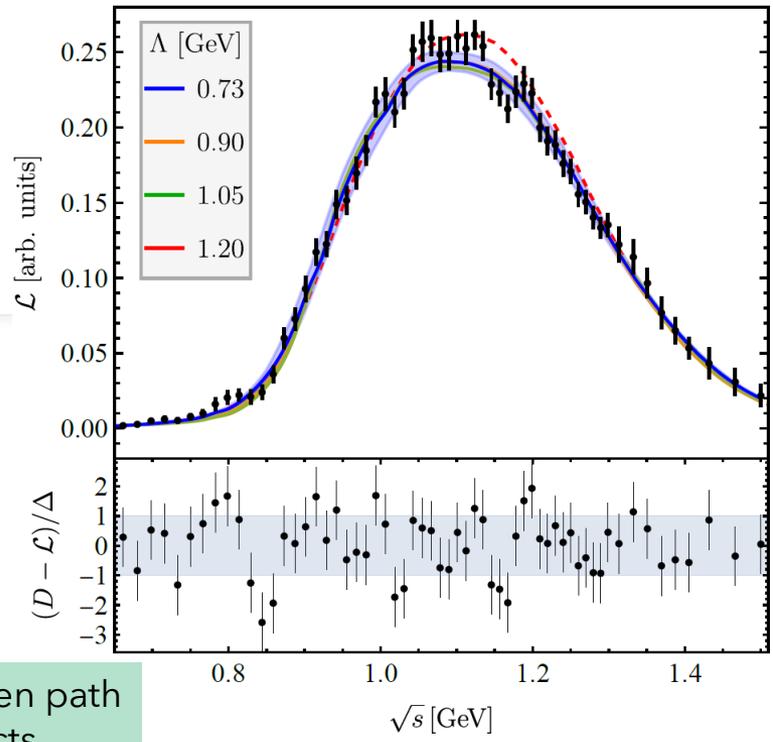
predict  $\rightarrow$



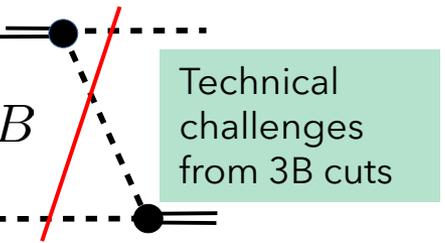
Where is the resonance pole in<sup>14</sup>?

# Result: Pole position

Technicalities analytic cont.:  
 contour deformation } [Sadasivan (2021)]  
 [Doering (2009)]

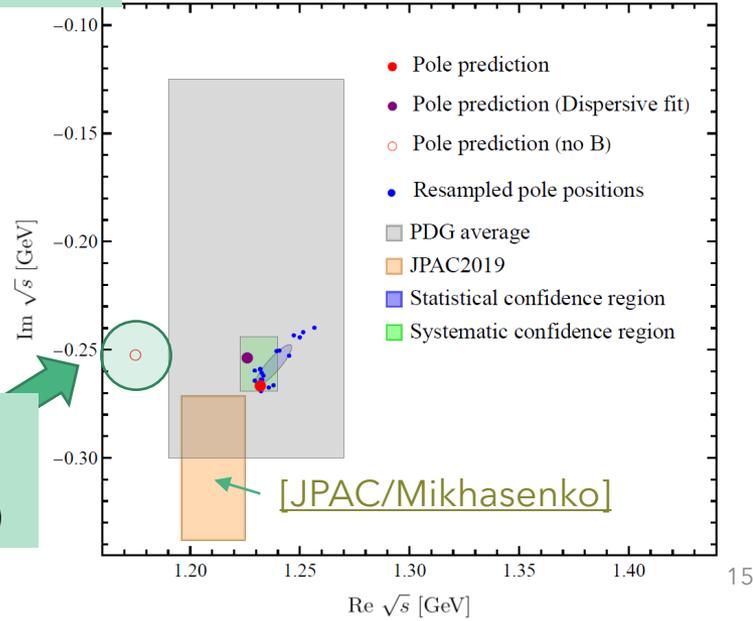


Chosen path artifacts



Technical challenges from 3B cuts

If the B-term is neglected + refit (unitarity violated)

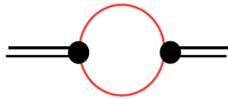


[JPAC/Mikhasenko]

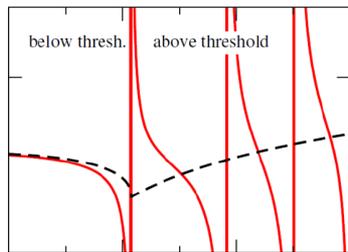
# Lattice QCD: Finite-volume unitarity (FVU)

Two-body unitarity

On-shell condition



Imaginary parts



Infinite  
→ Fin. Vol

Power-law fin-vol. effects

Lüscher

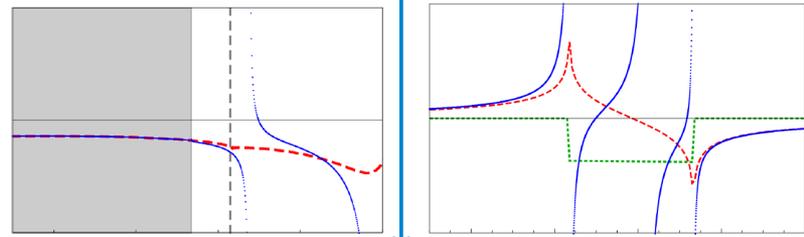
$$p \cot \delta(p) = -8\pi\sqrt{s} (\tilde{G}(E) - \text{Re } G(E))$$

Three-body unitarity

On-shell condition



Imaginary parts



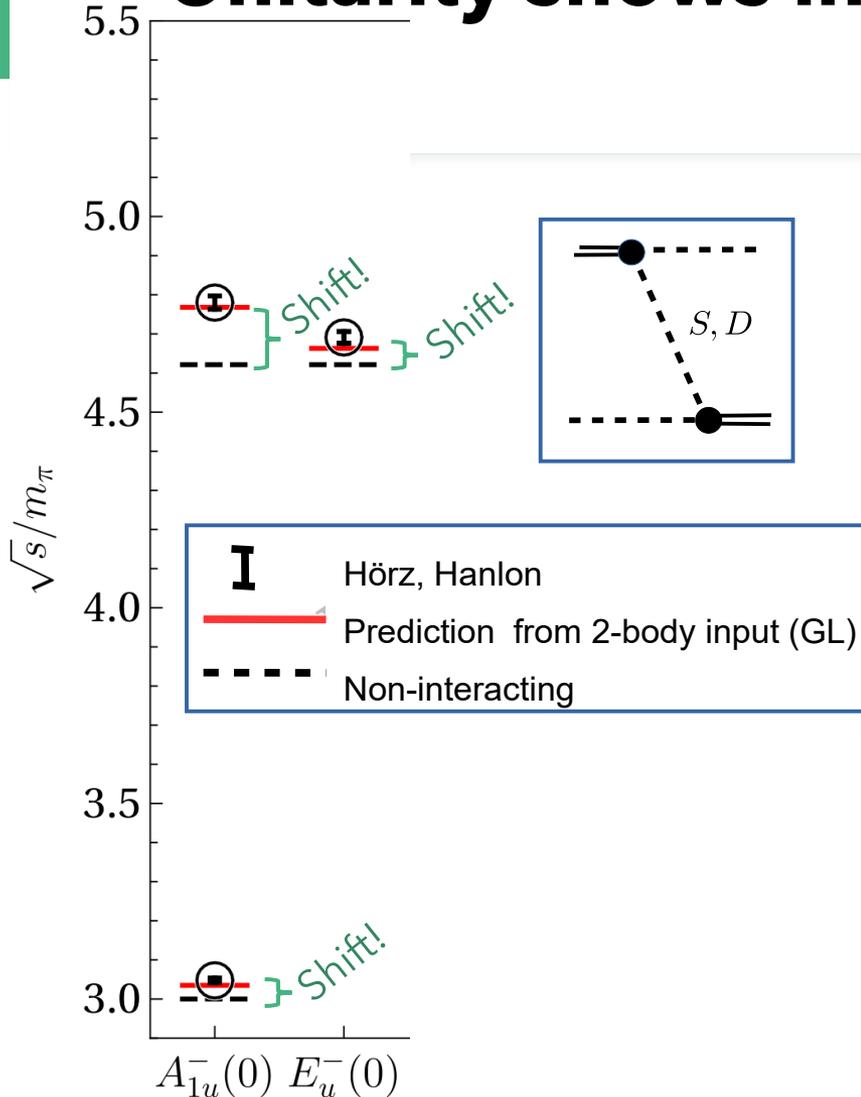
Power-law fin-vol. effects

Quantization Condition

$$\text{Det} \left( \mathbf{B}_{\mathbf{uu}'}^{\Gamma_{\mathbf{ss}'}}(\mathbf{W}^2) + \frac{2\mathbf{E}_s \mathbf{L}^3}{\vartheta(\mathbf{s})} \tau_s(\mathbf{W}^2)^{-1} \delta_{\mathbf{ss}'} \delta_{\mathbf{uu}'} \right) = 0$$

# Unitarity shows in FV spectrum: $3\pi^+$

[GWQCD/Culver 2019]



**S**    **D** (lowest participating wave)

- D-wave prediction qualitatively good
  - Relative/absolute strength between S- and D-wave matched
  - Consequence that 3-body interaction dominated by exchange
  - Consequence of 3-body Unitarity

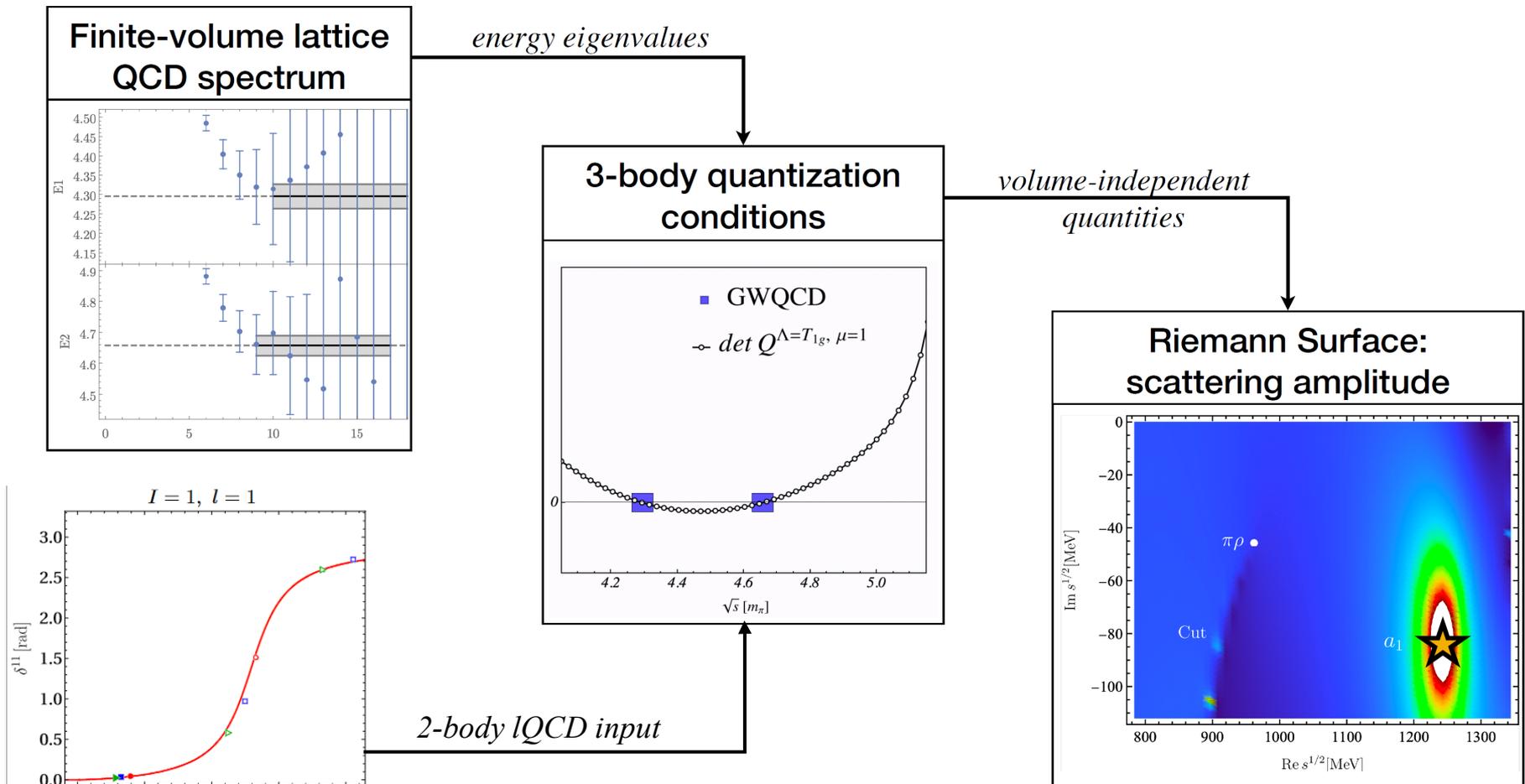
• Three-body unitarity directly visible in the eigenvalue spectrum of lattice QCD

- Many additional levels, including boosts (not shown)

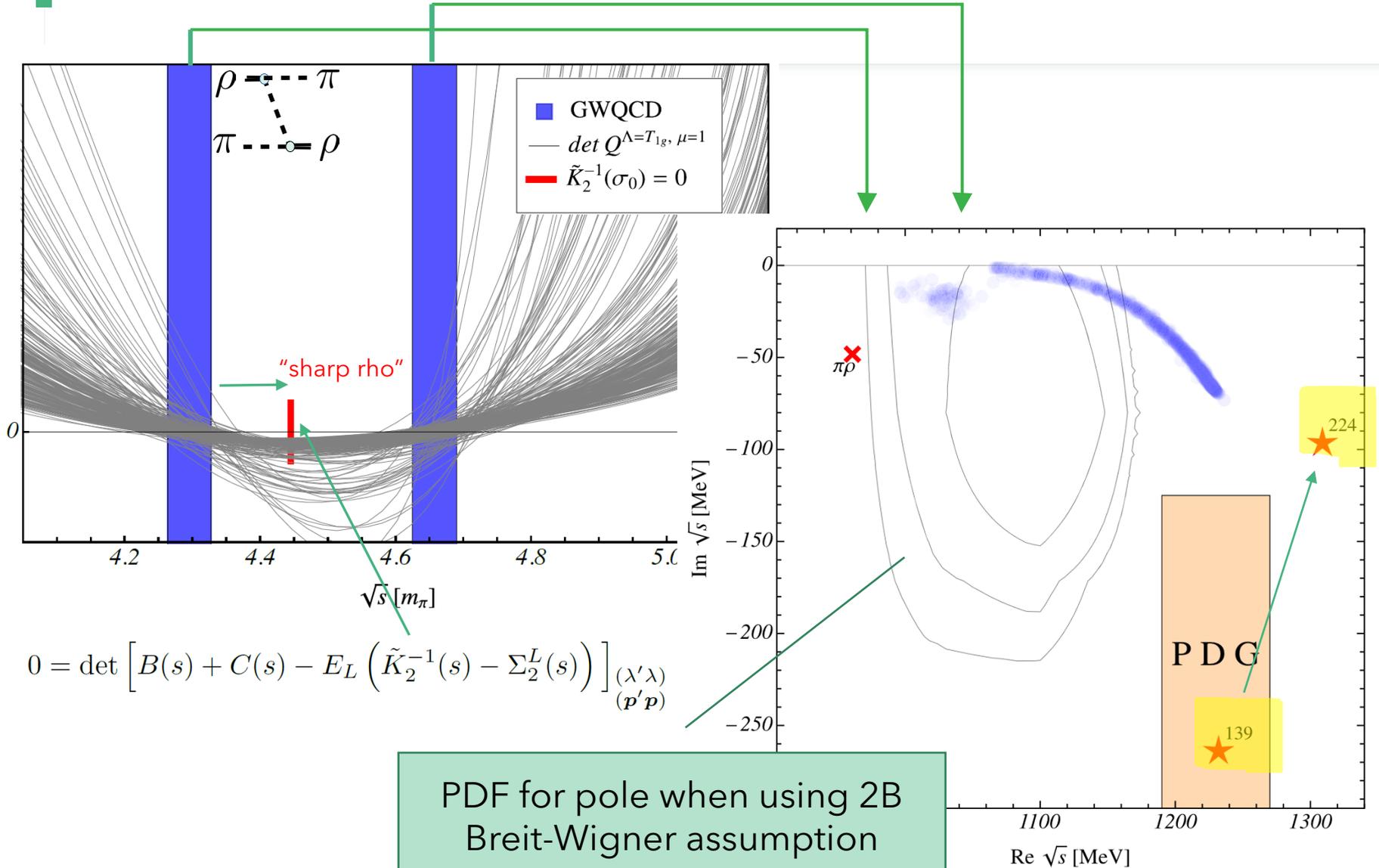
# Extraction of $a_1(1260)$ from IQCD

[Mai/GWQCD, PRL 2021]

- First-ever three-body resonance from 1<sup>st</sup> principles (with explicit three-body dynamics).



# Results - overview



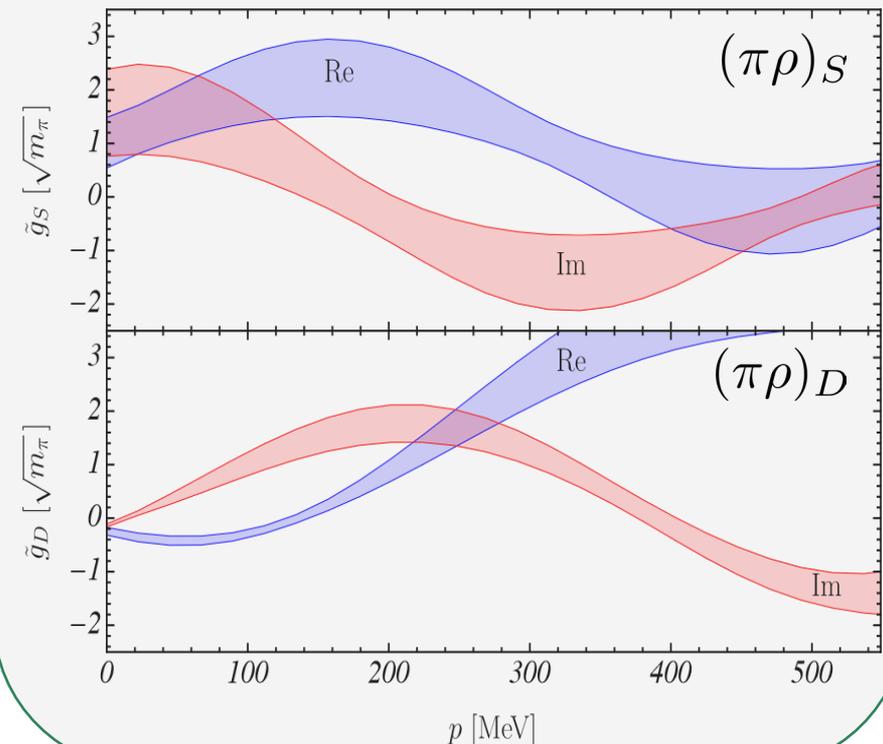
# Branching ratios

- Calculate the residue at the pole:

$$\text{Res}(T_{e'e}^c(\sqrt{s})) = \tilde{g}_{e'}\tilde{g}_e$$

- This result is not as reliable as pole position/existence of  $a_1$
- More energy eigenvalues needed to better pin down the decay channels

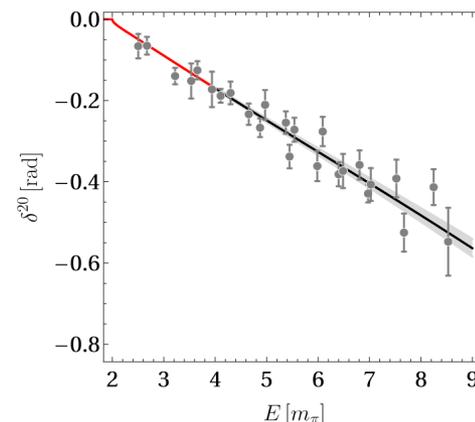
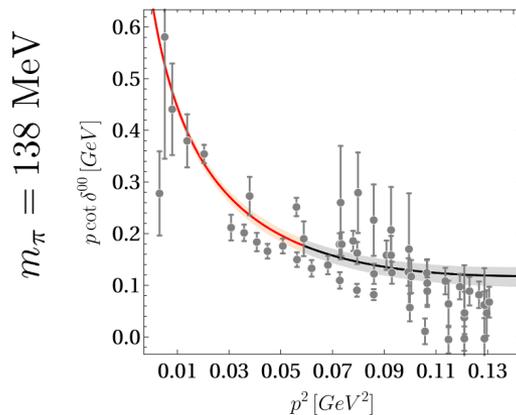
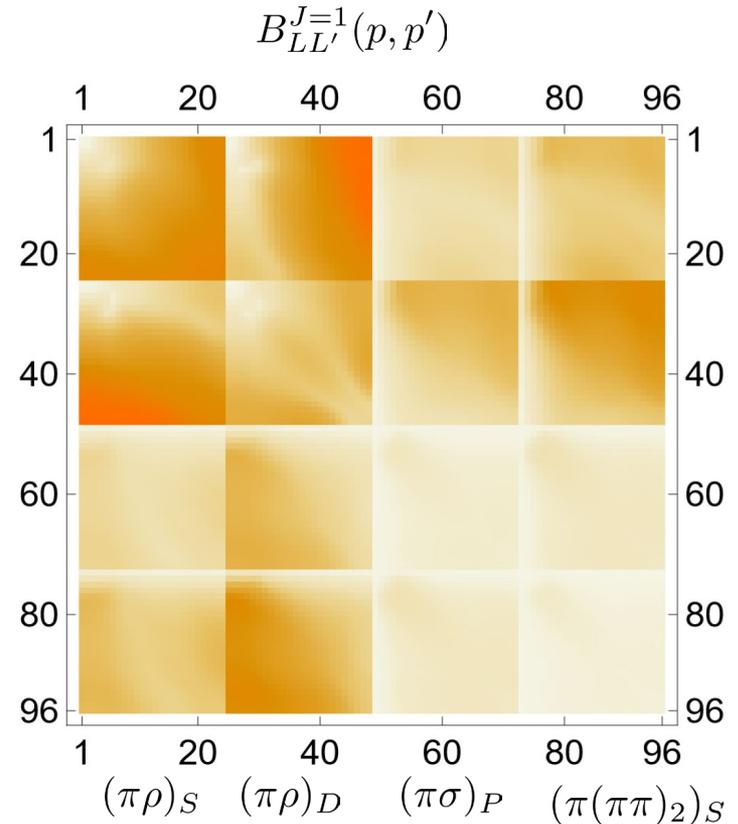
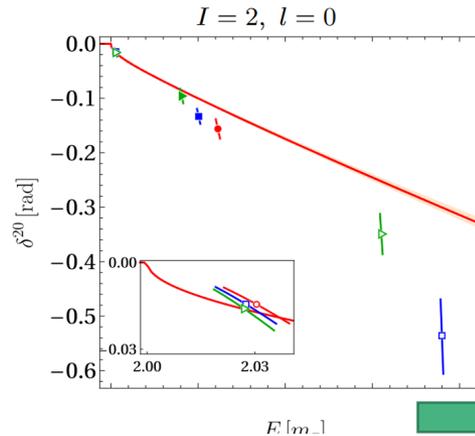
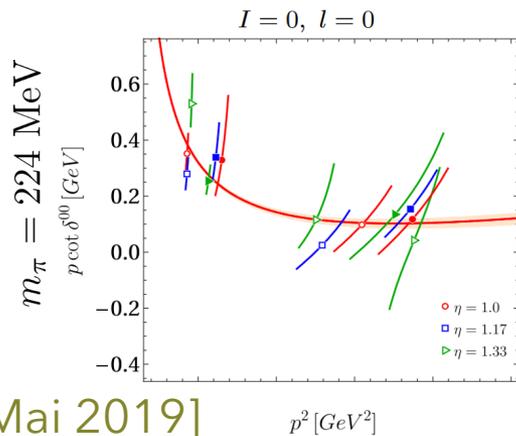
“**Branching ratios**” in 3B decays are momentum -dependent, complex pole residues



# Outlook: 4+ coupled channels

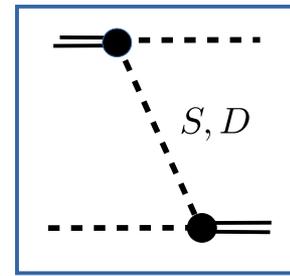
$$a_1 \leftrightarrow (\pi\rho)_S \leftrightarrow (\pi\rho)_D \leftrightarrow (\pi\sigma)_P \leftrightarrow (\pi(\pi\pi)_{S,I=2})$$

- Inclusion of all S- and P-wave isobars (from 2B IQCD input)
- Current status: Solved in infinite volume/awaiting FVU implement.



[Mai 2019]

# Summary



- Lattice QCD progress in determining the explicit dynamics of three-body systems:
  - Three pions at maximal isospin well understood (FVU, RFT, Peng,...)
  - First determination of existence and properties of a three-body resonance - the  $a_1(1260)$  - in coupled channels
- **Outlook:** More (isospin) channels; other physical systems
  - Lattice: more energy eigenvalues to assess uncertainties and put limits on decay properties. More pion masses to map out chiral trajectory
  - Phenomenology: Fit Dalitz plots instead of predicting them. Coupled-channel, unitary final-state interaction for data analysis (potentially GlueX)

# Spare slides

# Partial-wave decomposition

- Plane-wave basis

$$T_{\lambda'\lambda}(\mathbf{p}, \mathbf{q}_1) = (B_{\lambda'\lambda}(\mathbf{p}, \mathbf{q}_1) + C) + \sum_{\lambda''} \int \frac{d^3l}{(2\pi)^3 2E_l} (B_{\lambda'\lambda''}(\mathbf{p}, l) + C) \tau(\sigma(l)) T_{\lambda''\lambda}(l, \mathbf{q}_1)$$

$$B_{\lambda\lambda'}^J(q_1, p) = 2\pi \int_{-1}^{+1} dx d_{\lambda\lambda'}^J(x) B_{\lambda\lambda'}(\mathbf{q}_1, \mathbf{p}) \quad B_{LL'}^J(q_1, p) = U_{L\lambda} B_{\lambda\lambda'}^J(q_1, p) U_{\lambda'L'}$$

- JLS basis:

$$T_{LL'}^J(q_1, p) = (B_{LL'}^J(q_1, p) + C_{LL'}(q_1, p)) + \int_0^\Lambda \frac{dl l^2}{(2\pi)^3 2E_l} (B_{LL''}^J(q_1, l) + C_{LL''}(q_1, l)) \tau(\sigma(l)) T_{L''L'}^J(l, p)$$

# Analytic cont. 3-body

[Sadasivan (2021)]

[Doering (2009)]

SMC

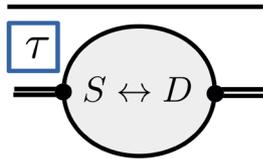
$$T_{LL'}^J(q_1, p) = (B_{LL'}^J(q_1, p) + C_{LL'}(q_1, p)) + \int_0^\Lambda \frac{dl l^2}{(2\pi)^3 2E_l} (B_{LL''}^J(q_1, l) + C_{LL''}(q_1, l)) \tau(\sigma(l)) T_{L''L'}^J(l, p)$$

$$\tau^{-1}(\sigma) = K^{-1} - \Sigma,$$

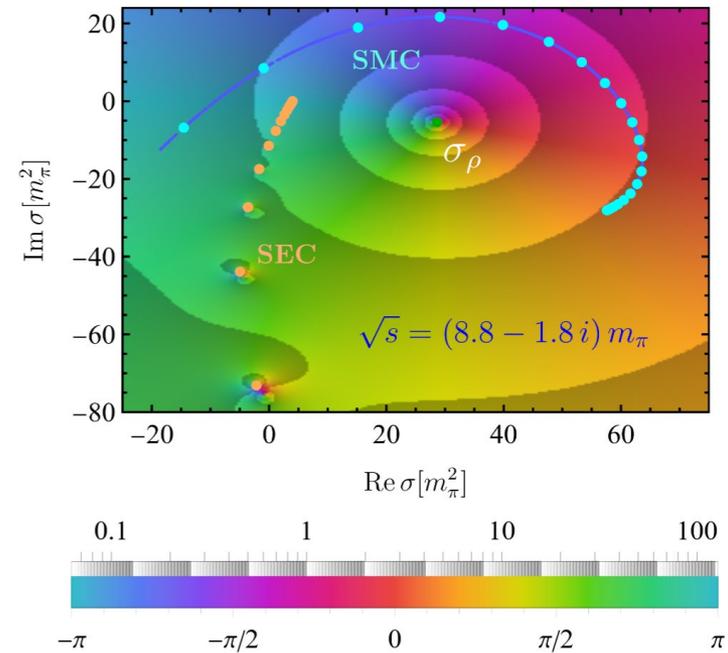
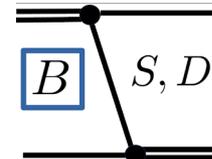
$$\Sigma = \int_0^\infty \frac{dk k^2}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2E_k} \frac{\sigma^2}{\sigma'^2} \frac{\tilde{v}(k)^* \tilde{v}(k)}{\sigma - 4E_k^2 + i\epsilon}$$

$$B_{\lambda\lambda'}(p, p') = \frac{v_\lambda^*(P - p - p', p) v_{\lambda'}(P - p - p', p')}{2E_{p'+p}(\sqrt{s} - E_p - E_{p'} - E_{p'+p} + i\epsilon)}$$

SEC



Singularities

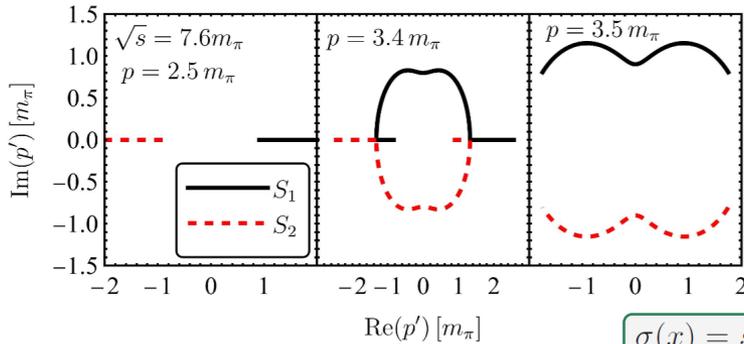


- Two contours (SMC and SEC)
- Deform both “adiabatically” to go to complex s
- Set of rules:
  - Contours cannot intersect with each others
  - Contours cannot intersect with (3-body) cuts
- Passing singularities left or right determines sheet

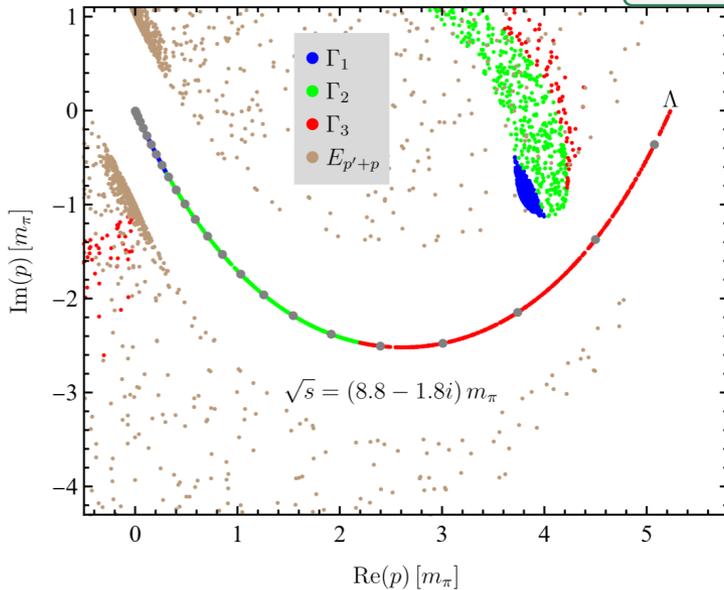
# Analytic continuation 3-body (contd.)

- Three-body cuts

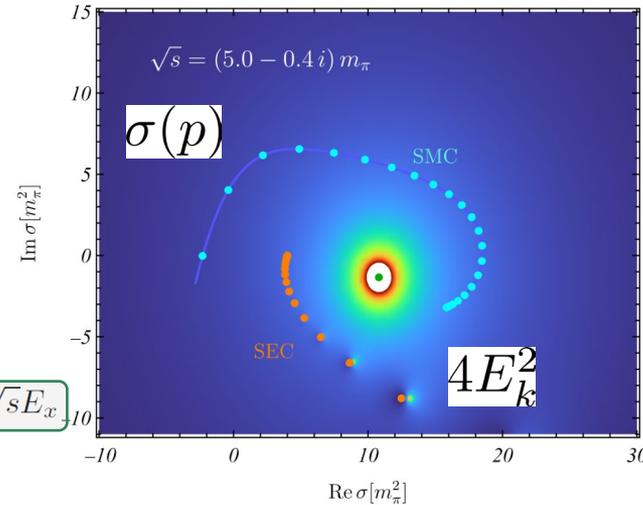
$$\sqrt{s} - E_p - E_{p'} - E_{p+p'} + i\epsilon = 0$$



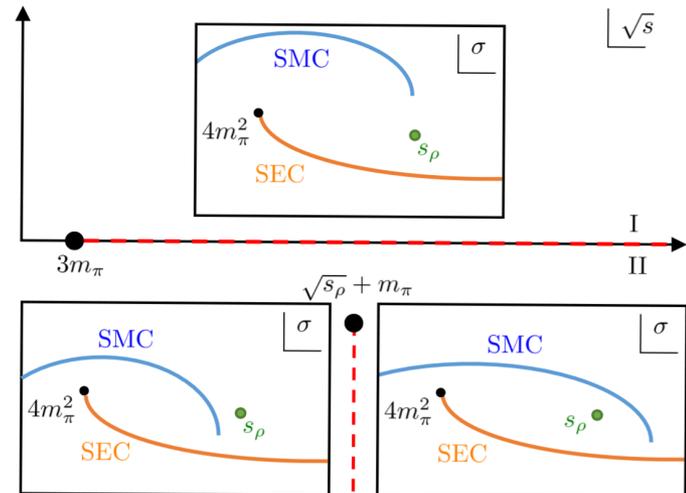
$$\sigma(x) = s + m_\pi^2 - 2\sqrt{s}E_x$$



- Complex branch points



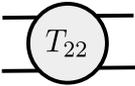
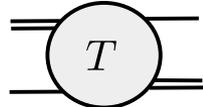
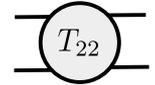
Integration limits at poles induce branch points

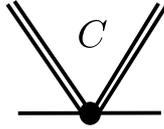
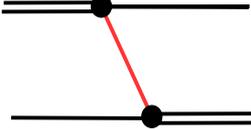


# Scattering amplitude (Details)

Here: Version in which isobar rewritten in on-shell 2 → 2 scattering amplitude  $T_{22}$

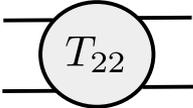
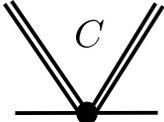
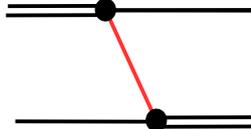
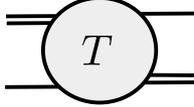
$$\langle q_1, q_2, q_3 | \hat{T}_c(s) | p_1, p_2, p_3 \rangle = \frac{1}{3!} \sum_{n=1}^3 \sum_{m=1}^3 T_{22}(\sigma(q_n)) \langle q_n | T(s) | p_m \rangle T_{22}(\sigma(p_m))$$

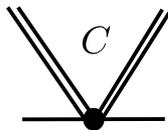



$$\langle q | T(s) | p \rangle = \langle q | C(s) | p \rangle + \frac{1}{m^2 - (P - p - q)^2 - i\epsilon}$$

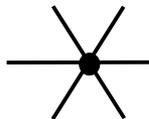
$$- \int \frac{d^3\ell}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2E_\ell} T_{22}(\sigma(\ell)) \left( \langle p | C(s) | \ell \rangle + \frac{1}{m^2 - (P - p - \ell)^2 - i\epsilon} \right) \langle \ell | T(s) | p \rangle$$

Technical  
Detail:



vs



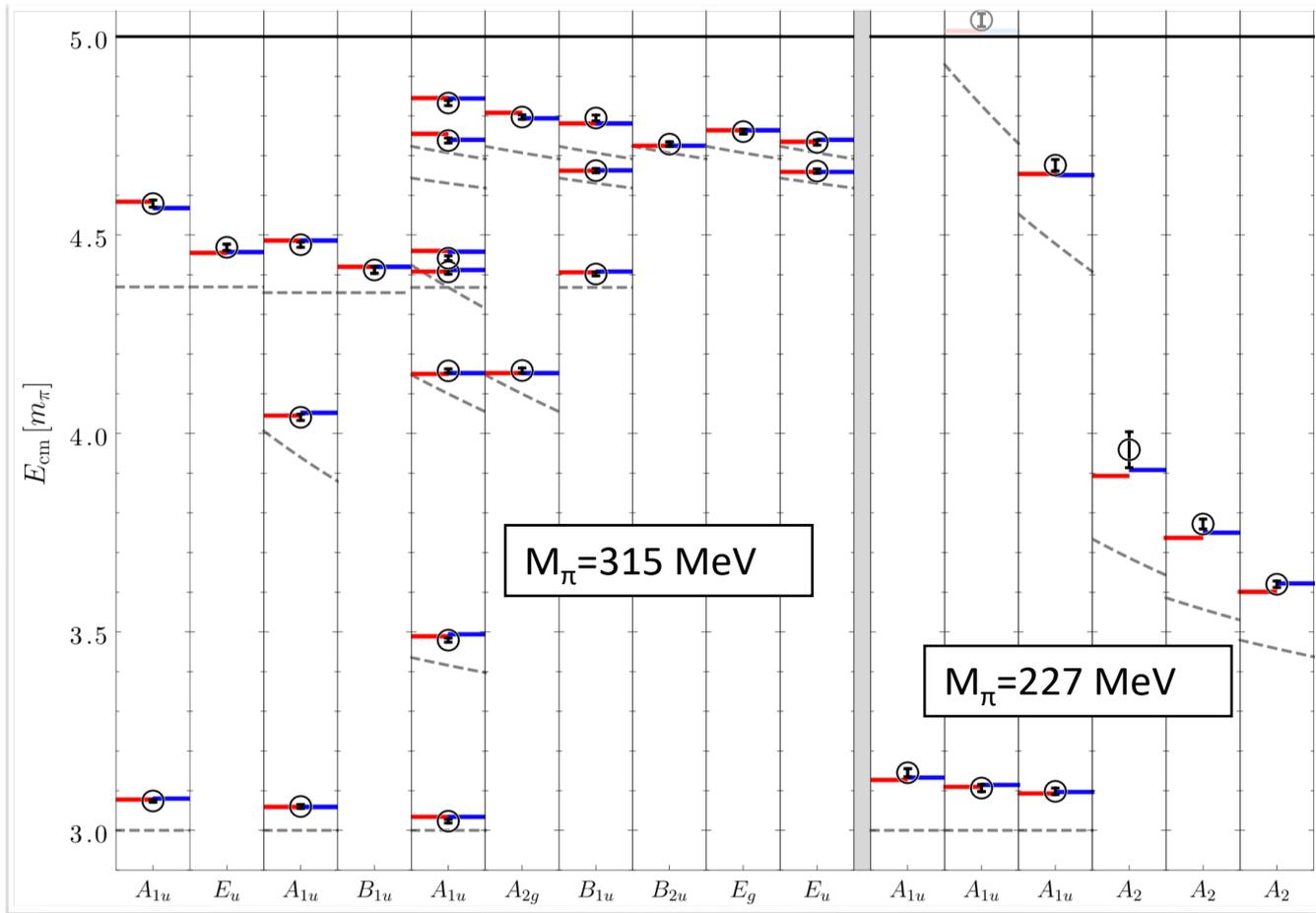
Scheme-dependent 3-body force  
requires a mapping [\[Brett \(2021\)\]](#)

(S-wave)

# GWUQCD data

Culver, MM, Brett, Alexandru, Döring (2019) PRD

- *More recent data is available*
  - *very dense spectrum from elongated boxes*
  - *different pion masses (chiral extrapolations?)*



— predictions from  
— MM/Döring (2018)

◆ lattice calculation

$\chi^2_{pp}$  (no fit)  $\sim 2$

*C=0 still works fine*

# Plane-wave implementation of the C-term

- **Step 1:** JM-basis  $\rightarrow$  Helicity basis
- **Step 2:** partial-wave basis  $\rightarrow$  Plane-wave basis
- **Step 3:** C (and B, and 3B propagator) from plane-wave basis to irreps by suitable rotations

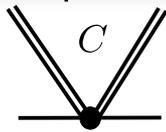
$$\mathcal{A}_{\lambda'\lambda}(s, \mathbf{p}', \mathbf{p}) = \sum_{M=-J}^J \frac{2J+1}{4\pi} \mathfrak{D}_{M\lambda'}^{J*}(\phi_{\mathbf{p}'}, \theta_{\mathbf{p}'}, 0) \mathcal{A}_{\lambda'\lambda}^J(s, p', p) \mathfrak{D}_{M\lambda}^J(\phi_{\mathbf{p}}, \theta_{\mathbf{p}}, 0), \quad \text{Step 2}$$

$$\mathcal{A}_{\lambda'\lambda}^J(s, p', p) = U_{\lambda'e'} \mathcal{A}_{e'e}(s, p', p) U_{e\lambda},$$

$$U_{e\lambda} := \sqrt{\frac{2\ell+1}{2J+1}} (\ell 0 1 \lambda | J \lambda) (1 \lambda 0 0 | 1 \lambda) = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}} & -\sqrt{\frac{2}{3}} & \frac{1}{\sqrt{6}} \end{pmatrix}, \quad \text{Step 1}$$

# 4 different fits to 2 energy eigenvalues

- Fitted isobar-spectator interaction (case 1, 2) for  $|\mathbf{p}| \leq 2\pi/L|(1, 1, 0)| \approx 2.69 m_\pi$ .



$$C_{\ell\ell}(s, \mathbf{p}', \mathbf{p}) = \sum_{i=-1}^{\infty} c_{\ell'\ell}^{(i)}(\mathbf{p}', \mathbf{p})(s - m_{a_1}^2)^i$$

- $a_1$  can be generated as pole even though no built-in singularity

Non-zero coefficients	No of fit parameters	$\chi^2$
$c_{00}^0$ (no built-in pole)	1	9
$c_{00}^0, c_{00}^1$ (no built-in pole)	2	0.15
$g_0, g_2, m_{a_1}, c$	4	$10^{-7}$



$$C_{\ell\ell}(s, \mathbf{p}', \mathbf{p}) = g_{\ell'} \left( \frac{|\mathbf{p}'|}{m_\pi} \right)^{\ell'} \frac{m_\pi^2}{s - m_{a_1}^2} g_\ell \left( \frac{|\mathbf{p}|}{m_\pi} \right)^\ell + c \delta_{\ell'0} \delta_{\ell 0}$$

- In these cases, there is a built-in singularity, leading to resonance poles

# Three kaons at maximal isospin

[Alexandru 2020]

- First study of three kaons from lattice QCD with chiral amplitudes
- Other groups have improved on this in the meantime:
  - Max. isospin, non-identical masses ( $\pi^+\pi^+K^+$ ,  $\pi^+K^+K^+$ )  
[Blanton 2021]
  - Pions and kaons at maximal isospin with unprecedented accuracy and no. of levels ( $\pi^+\pi^+\pi^+$ ,  $K^+K^+K^+$ )  
[Blanton 2021]

- Two mass-degenerate light quarks (u,d); valence strange quark
- nHYP-smearred clover action
- quark propagation is treated using the LapH method with optimized inverters
- Lattice spacing determined from Wilson flow parameter  $w_0$