

# Spectrum of the open QCD flux tube and its effective string description

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# 1. Introduction

Confinement, flux tubes and strings

## Static $q\bar{q}$ -potentials

static  $q\bar{q}$ -potential:

energy of static  $q\bar{q}$  pair at distance  $R$

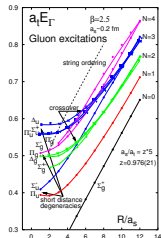
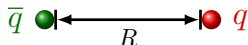
for states with excited gluons configurations:

hybrid  $q\bar{q}$ -potentials

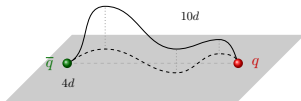
Physical relevance:

- ▶ linearly rising potential  $\Leftrightarrow$  confinement
- ▶ input for model calculations (hybrid mesons, ...)
- ⇒ analytic description is wanted
- ▶ can be used to make contact to AdS/CFT duals of pure gauge theory

For the latter: **effective string theory**



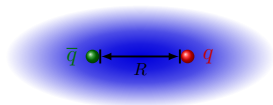
[ Juge, Kuti, Morningstar, PRL90 (2003) ]



## Confinement and flux tubes

### Heuristic confinement mechanism:

- ▶  $q\bar{q}$  pair connected by region of strong chromo-electromagnetic flux
- ▶ pulling the quarks apart:  
flux gets squeezed into a narrow region



⇒ **flux tube**

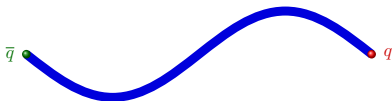


- ▶ squeezing due to dual Meissner effect
- ▶ here all quarks are static  
(no string breaking)
- ▶ for such a tube:  
expect constant energy density  
⇒ linearly rising potential  $V(R) = \sigma R$   
 $\sigma$  : string tension

## Flux tubes and string theory

at large  $R$ : flux tube looks like a thin energy string

excitation spectrum will be dominated by stringy excitations!



⇒ formulation of effective string theories (EST) for the flux tube.

[ Nambu, PLB 80, 372 (1979); Lüscher, Symanzik, Weisz, NPB 173, 365 (1980); Polyakov, NPB 164, 171 (1980) ]

since then: formalism has been developed and action is known up to  $O(R^{-5})$

[ Lüscher, Weisz, ..., Polchinski, Strominger, ..., Casselle, ..., Aharony, ..., Dubovsky, Flauger, Gorbenko ... ]

for details and references see review [ BB, Meineri, IJMP A31 (2016) ]

Historically:

- ▶ idea also motivated by Regge trajectories [ Regge, NC14 (1959) ]
- ▶ origin of first string theories [ Goddard *et al*, NPB65 (1963); Goto, PTP46 (1971) ]

## EST spectrum (open strings)

[ Aharony, Klinghoffer, JHEP1012 (2010) ]

$$E_{n,l}^{\text{EST}}(R) = \sigma R \sqrt{1 + \frac{2\pi}{\sigma R^2} \left( n - \frac{1}{24} (d-2) \right)} - \bar{b}_2 \frac{\pi^3}{\sqrt{\sigma^3 R^4} \left( B_n^l + \frac{d-2}{60} \right)} - \frac{\pi^3 (d-26)}{48\sigma^2 R^5} C_n^l + \mathcal{O}(R^{-\xi})$$

LC spectrum (or NG) [ J.F. Arvis, PLB127 (1983) ] boundary term

 $\bar{b}_2$ : dimensionless non-universal boundary coefficient  $\bar{b}_2 = \sqrt{\sigma^3} b_2$  $B_n^l, C_n^l$ : dimensionless, depend on representation of  $SO(d-2)$ 

$ n, l\rangle$	$SO(d-2)$ representation	$B_n^l$	$C_n^l$
$ 0\rangle$	$1 0\rangle$ scalar	0	0
$ 1\rangle$	$\alpha_{-1}^i  0\rangle$ vector	4	$d-3$
$ 2, 1\rangle$	$\alpha_{-1}^i \alpha_{-1}^i  0\rangle$ scalar	8	0
$ 2, 2\rangle$	$\alpha_{-2}^i  0\rangle$ vector	32	$16(d-3)$
$ 2, 3\rangle$	$(\alpha_{-1}^i \alpha_{-1}^j - \frac{\delta^{ij}}{d-2} \alpha_{-1}^i \alpha_{-1}^i)  0\rangle$ sym. traceless tensor	8	$4(d-2)$

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# AdS/CFT correspondence and the holographic string

large-N QCD: supposed to have dual 10d AdS superstring description

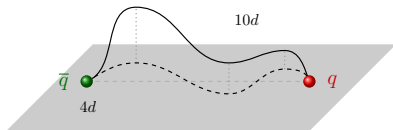
question: which is the associated holographic string background?

EST string:

4d projection of 10d superstring

for particular backgrounds:

can derive EST action



several suitable backgrounds are known

[ Witten, ATMP2 (1998); Klebanov, Strassler, JHEP0008 (2000); Maldacena, Nunez, PRL86 (2001) ]

all have the same LO action, consistent with EST [ Aharony, Karzbrun, JHEP0906 (2009) ]

non-universal coefficients relate to properties of 10d string theory

e.g.  $b_2 = -\frac{1}{64\sigma} \sum_{\xi} \frac{(-1)^{BC(\xi)}}{m_{\xi}^b} + b_2^f + \dots$  [ Aharony, Field, JHEP1101 (2011) ]

⇒ extraction of non-universal parameters can provide information on AdS side

## Rigidity and massive modes

- ▶ so far ignored in EST: **extrinsic curvature term**

formally higher order; can give contributions under quantisation

[ Billo *et al*, 1205 (2012); Ambjorn *et al*, PRD89 (2014); Caselle *et al*, JHEP1501 (2015) ]

**correction term for potential:**

$$V_{\text{ext}}(R) = -\frac{m}{2\pi} \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{K_1(2nmR)}{n} - \frac{(d-2)(d-10)\pi^2}{3840m\sigma R^4}$$

$K_1$ : Modified Bessel function of first kind

$m$ : free parameter with dimension of mass

⇒ **mixes with the boundary term** (can change value of  $\bar{b}_2$ )

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- ▶ other possible contribution: **massive modes**

found to be important to describe 4d spectrum

[ Dubovsky, Flauger, Gorbenko, PRL111 (2013); JETP120 (2015) ]

however: **4d coupling term not allowed in 3d**

can only couple indirectly via the induced metric

⇒ **formally similar contribution to rigidity term!**

## Current status of lattice simulations

A large number of lattice studies in the past 35 years:

- ▶ static potential and excited states:

good agreement with LC spectrum

3d: small deviations can be fitted to  $\bar{b}_2$  correction

[ BB, JHEP1102 (2011); Billo *et al*, 1205 (2012) ]

4d: behaviour of excited states points to presence of massive modes

[ Juge, Kuti, Morningstar, PRL90 (2003) ]

3d  $Z_2$  and  $U(1)$ : presence/importance of rigidity term has been observed

[ Billo *et al*, 1205 (2012); Caselle *et al*, JHEP1501 (2015) ]

- ▶ closed flux tubes:

3d: good agreement with EST

4d: massive modes found to be important to describe 4d spectrum

[ Dubovsky, Flauger, Gorbenko, PRL111 (2013); JETP120 (2015) ]

- ▶ can also study: flux tube width, finite temperature, ...

for a review and more references see [ BB, Meineri, IJMP A31 (2016) ]

## Goals and setup of this study

first goal: extract EST parameters at finite  $N$  and in the  $N \rightarrow \infty$  limit

in particular: use pure gauge lattice simulation in 3d

- ▶ extract  $\sqrt{\sigma}r_0$  and  $\bar{b}_2$  in 3d  $SU(N = 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)$  from  $V(R)$ 
  - ▶ multiple lattice spacings  $a \approx 0.11, 0.08, 0.06$  fm with  $V \gtrsim 5$  fm
  - ▶ error reduction: LW algorithm  
(2000 total meas; 20 000 sub. updates;  $t_s = 2, 4, 6$ )
- ▶ extrapolate to continuum  $a \rightarrow 0$  and subsequently  $N \rightarrow \infty$ .
- ▶ check the consistency of results with the excited states  
here: use old  $SU(2)$  data from [BB, JHEP1102 (2011)]

second goal: test consistency with massive modes/string rigidity

- ▶ extract mass  $m$  and investigate impact on  $\bar{b}_2$
- ▶ once more: compare continuum results for different values of  $N$   
 $\Rightarrow$  extrapolate  $N \rightarrow \infty$ ?

## 2. String tension and KKN prediction

## Extraction of the string tension

First step: Extract string tension  $\sigma$  (defined by  $R \rightarrow \infty$  behaviour)

reliable computation: demands extraction of  $R \rightarrow \infty$  behaviour

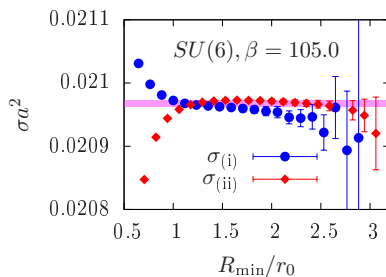
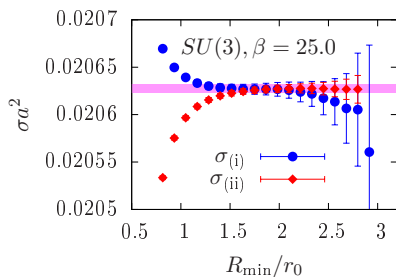
strategy: perform two different fits including different  $1/R$  corrections

(i) fit to LO force

(ii) fit to LC potential

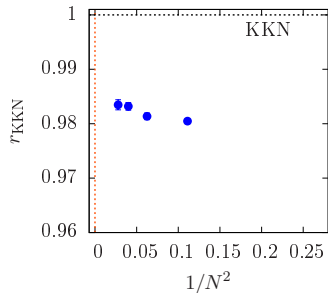
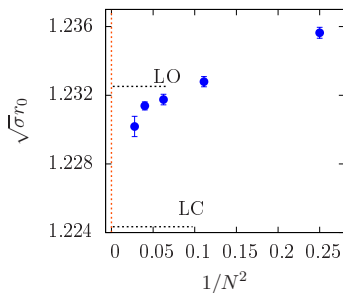
compare  $R_{\min}$ -dependence of  $\sigma$  from these methods

$\Rightarrow$  extraction of  $\sigma$  is reliable where results agree!





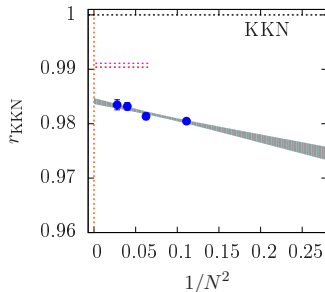
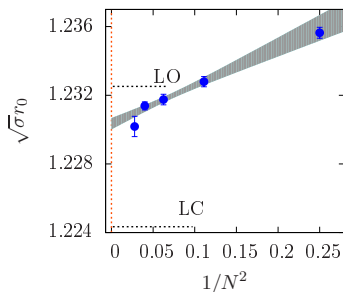
## Large-N extrapolations and KKN prediction



Karabali-Kim-Nair prediction:  $\frac{\sqrt{\sigma}}{g_{\text{MF}}^2} = \sqrt{\frac{N^2 - 1}{8\pi}}$  [ Karabali, Kim, Nair, PLB434 (1998) ]

$$r_{\text{KKN}} = \frac{(\sqrt{\sigma} r_0 / g^2 r_0)_{\text{lat}}}{(\sqrt{\sigma} r_0 / g^2 r_0)_{\text{KKN}}}$$

## Large-N extrapolations and KKN prediction



[ Teper, Lucini, PRD66 (2002) ]

[ Teper, Bringoltz, PoS LAT2006 (2006) ]

Karabali-Kim-Nair prediction:  $\frac{\sqrt{\sigma}}{g_{\text{MF}}^2} = \sqrt{\frac{N^2 - 1}{8\pi}}$  [ Karabali, Kim, Nair, PLB434 (1998) ]

final 3d large-N results:

$$\sqrt{\sigma} r_0 = 1.2304(4)(3) \quad r_{\text{KKN}} = \frac{(\sqrt{\sigma} r_0 / g^2 r_0)_{\text{lat}}}{(\sqrt{\sigma} r_0 / g^2 r_0)_{\text{KKN}}} = 0.9842(6)(14)$$

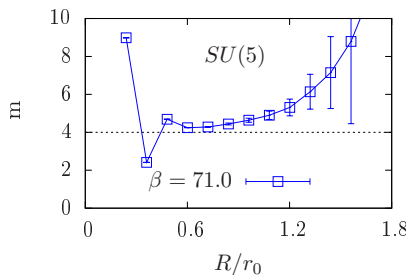
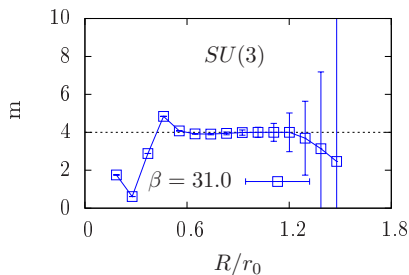
### **3. EST analysis without massive modes**

## Order of the leading order correction

first: check consistency of correction to LC potential with  $R^{-4}$

fit  $V(R)$  to form: 
$$V(R) = E_0^{\text{LC}}(R) + \frac{\eta}{(\sqrt{\sigma}R)^m}$$

look at  $R_{\text{min}}$  dependence of  $m$ :



## Extraction strategy

next step: extract the boundary coefficient!

fit data to:

$$V(R) = E_0^{\text{LC}}(R) - \bar{b}_2 \frac{\pi^3}{\sqrt{\sigma^3} R^4} \left( C_n^i + \frac{d-2}{60} \right) + \frac{\gamma_0^{(1)}}{\sqrt{\sigma^5} R^6} + \frac{\gamma_0^{(2)}}{\sigma^3 R^7} + V_0$$

To quantify systematic errors: perform different fits

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**A:** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$  from above – use  $\bar{b}_2$ ,  $\gamma_0^{(1)}$ ,  $\gamma_0^{(2)}$  as free params

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$$V(R) = E_0^{\text{LC}}(R) + \frac{\gamma_0^{(1)}}{\sqrt{\sigma^5 R^6}} + \frac{\gamma_0^{(2)}}{\sigma^3 R^7} + V_0$$

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fits **A** and **E** are checks whether  $\bar{b}_2 \neq 0$

fits **B–D** are used in the final analysis

## Extraction, limites and estimation of systematic errors

- ▶ **higher order terms:**

final result: average over fits **B–D**

estimate for uncertainty: largest deviation from final result

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$R_{\min}$ : defined by the second fit for which  $\chi^2/\text{dof}$  is acceptable.

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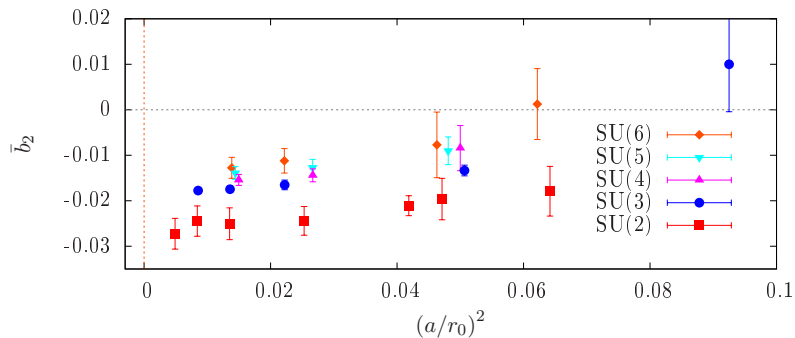
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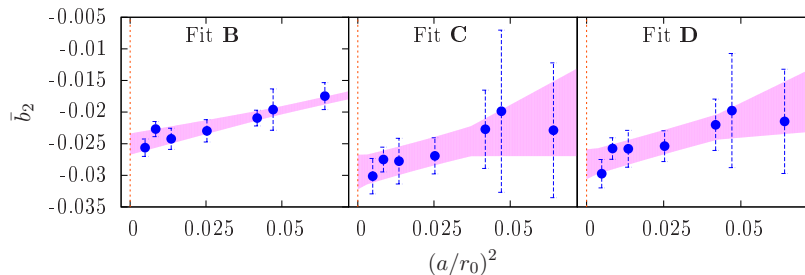
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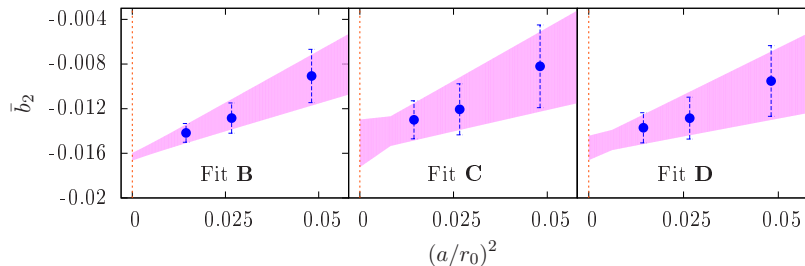
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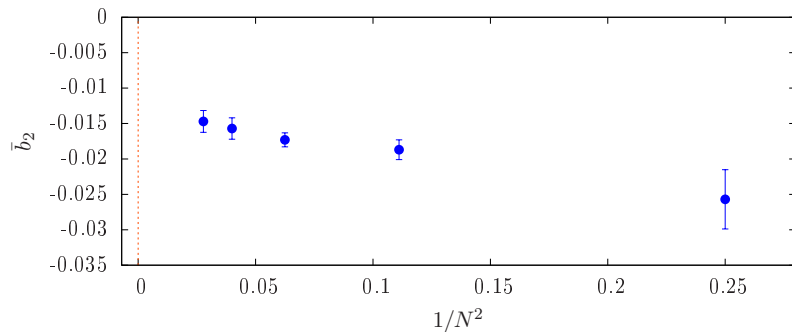
course of analysis: **perform all possible combinations of fits**

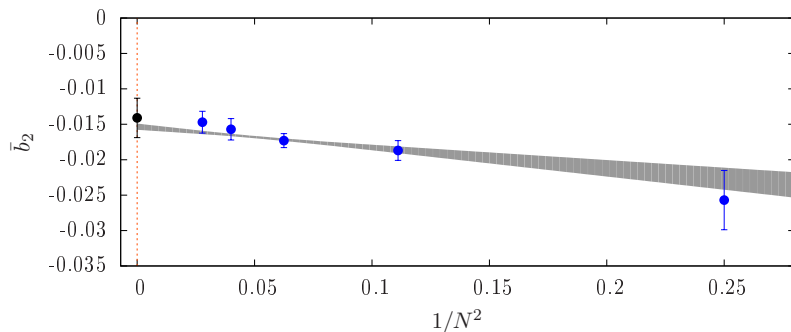


Results for  $\bar{b}_2$ 

Continuum extrapolation of  $\bar{b}_2$ Extrapolation for  $SU(2)$ linear continuum extrapolation works well for all  $N$

Continuum extrapolation of  $\bar{b}_2$ Extrapolation for  $SU(5)$ linear continuum extrapolation works well for all  $N$

Final continuum results for  $\bar{b}_2$ 

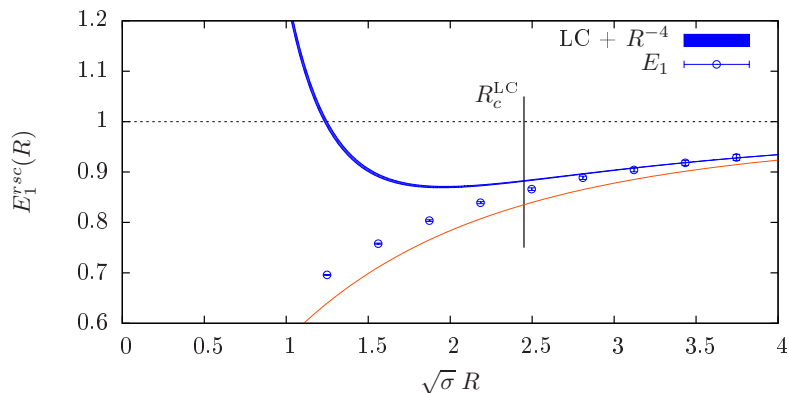
Large-N extrapolation  $\bar{b}_2$ 

final large-N result:  $\bar{b}_2^{N \rightarrow \infty} = -0.0141(3)(15)(13)(9)(17)$

errors: statistical, HO corr.,  $R_{\min}$ , cont. extra., large-N extra

## Consistency with the excited states

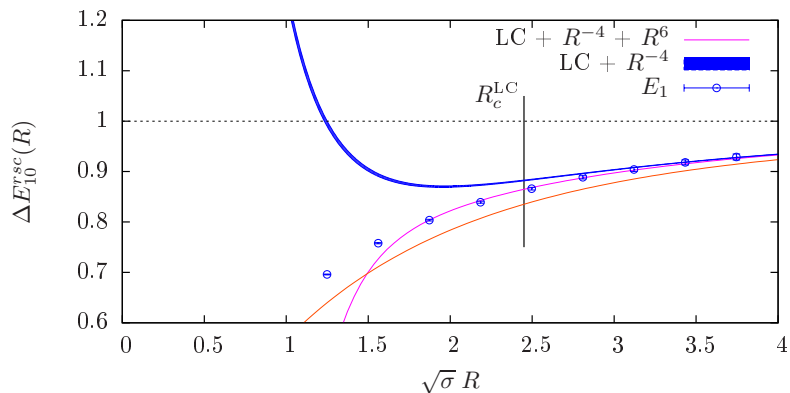
compare results for  $\bar{b}_2$  to  $E_1$  in 3d  $SU(2)$ : ( $\beta = 5.0$  data [BB, JHEP1102 (2011)] )



Energy levels fully determined by  $\bar{b}_2$  up to  $O(1/R^{6,7})$ .

## Consistency with the excited states

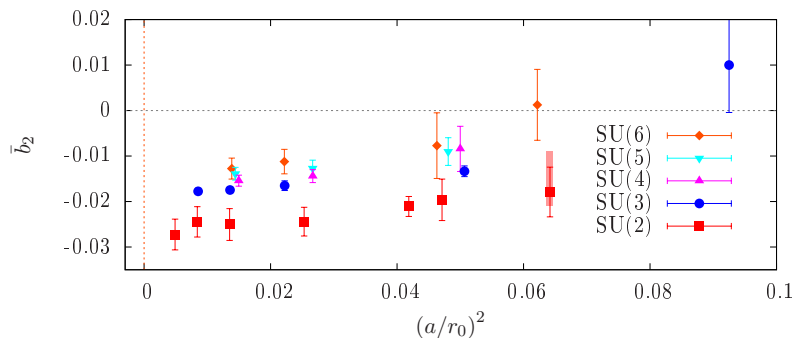
compare results for  $\bar{b}_2$  to  $E_1$  in 3d  $SU(2)$ : ( $\beta = 5.0$  data [BB, JHEP1102 (2011)] )



Fit the higher order terms: Good description of the data!

## Consistency with the excited states

Alternatively: extract  $\bar{b}_2$  from fit to excited states [ BB, JHEP1102 (2011) ]



$\Rightarrow$  excellent agreement with extraction from potential



## 4. Testing the presence of massive modes

## Extraction strategy

up to now: neglected the possible presence of massive modes

to test whether they can be present fit data to:

$$V(R) = E_0^{\text{LC}}(R) - \bar{b}_2 \frac{\pi^3}{\sqrt{\sigma^3} R^4} \left( C_n^i + \frac{d-2}{60} \right) - \frac{(d-2)(d-10)\pi^2}{3840 m \sigma R^4}$$

$$- \frac{m}{2\pi} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{K_1(2kmR)}{k} + \frac{\gamma_0^{(1)}}{\sqrt{\sigma^5} R^6} + \frac{\gamma_0^{(2)}}{\sigma^3 R^7} + V_0$$

perform different fits

## Extraction strategy

up to now: neglected the possible presence of massive modes

to test whether they can be present fit data to:

$$V(R) = E_0^{\text{LC}}(R) - \bar{b}_2 \frac{\pi^3}{\sqrt{\sigma^3} R^4} \left( C_n^i + \frac{d-2}{60} \right) - \frac{(d-2)(d-10)\pi^2}{3840 m \sigma R^4} - \frac{m}{2\pi} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{K_1(2kmR)}{k} + V_0$$

perform different fits

**F** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$  and  $m$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(1)} = \gamma_0^{(2)} = 0$

## Extraction strategy

up to now: neglected the possible presence of massive modes

to test whether they can be present fit data to:

$$V(R) = E_0^{\text{LC}}(R) - \bar{b}_2 \frac{\pi^3}{\sqrt{\sigma^3} R^4} \left( C_n^i + \frac{d-2}{60} \right) - \frac{(d-2)(d-10)\pi^2}{3840m\sigma R^4} \\ - \frac{m}{2\pi} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{K_1(2kmR)}{k} + \frac{\gamma_0^{(1)}}{\sqrt{\sigma^5} R^6} + V_0$$

perform different fits

**F** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$  and  $m$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(1)} = \gamma_0^{(2)} = 0$

**G** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$ ,  $m$  and  $\gamma_0^{(1)}$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(2)} = 0$

## Extraction strategy

up to now: neglected the possible presence of massive modes

to test whether they can be present fit data to:

$$V(R) = E_0^{\text{LC}}(R) - \bar{b}_2 \frac{\pi^3}{\sqrt{\sigma^3} R^4} \left( C_n^i + \frac{d-2}{60} \right) - \frac{(d-2)(d-10)\pi^2}{3840m\sigma R^4} \\ - \frac{m}{2\pi} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{K_1(2kmR)}{k} + \frac{\gamma_0^{(2)}}{\sigma^3 R^7} + V_0$$

perform different fits

**F** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$  and  $m$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(1)} = \gamma_0^{(2)} = 0$

**G** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$ ,  $m$  and  $\gamma_0^{(1)}$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(2)} = 0$

**H** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$ ,  $m$  and  $\gamma_0^{(2)}$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(1)} = 0$

## Extraction strategy

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to test whether they can be present fit data to:

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perform different fits

**F** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$  and  $m$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(1)} = \gamma_0^{(2)} = 0$

**G** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$ ,  $m$  and  $\gamma_0^{(1)}$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(2)} = 0$

**H** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$ ,  $m$  and  $\gamma_0^{(2)}$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(1)} = 0$

**J** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$  and  $m$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(1)} = \gamma_0^{(2)} = \bar{b}_2 = 0$

## Extraction strategy

up to now: neglected the possible presence of massive modes

to test whether they can be present fit data to:

$$V(R) = E_0^{\text{LC}}(R) - \bar{b}_2 \frac{\pi^3}{\sqrt{\sigma^3} R^4} \left( C_n^i + \frac{d-2}{60} \right) - \frac{(d-2)(d-10)\pi^2}{3840m\sigma R^4} \\ - \frac{m}{2\pi} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{K_1(2kmR)}{k} + \frac{\gamma_0^{(1)}}{\sqrt{\sigma^5} R^6} + \frac{\gamma_0^{(2)}}{\sigma^3 R^7} + V_0$$

perform different fits

**F** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$  and  $m$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(1)} = \gamma_0^{(2)} = 0$

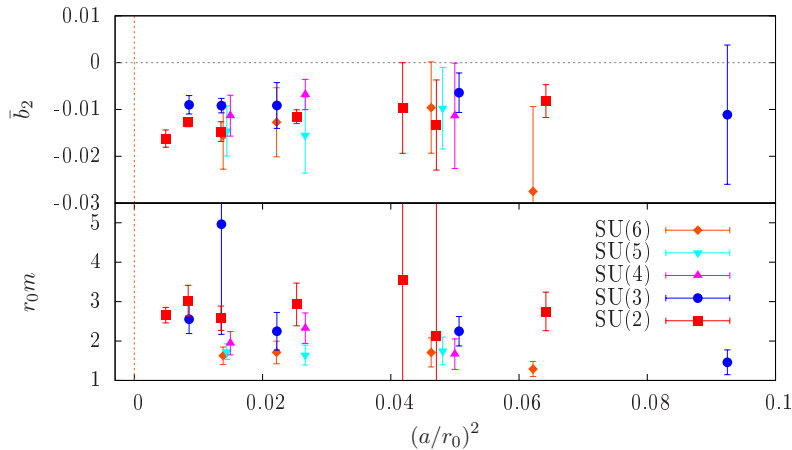
**G** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$ ,  $m$  and  $\gamma_0^{(1)}$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(2)} = 0$

**H** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$ ,  $\bar{b}_2$ ,  $m$  and  $\gamma_0^{(2)}$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(1)} = 0$

**J** use  $\sigma$ ,  $V_0$  and  $m$  as free parameters – set  $\gamma_0^{(1)} = \gamma_0^{(2)} = \bar{b}_2 = 0$

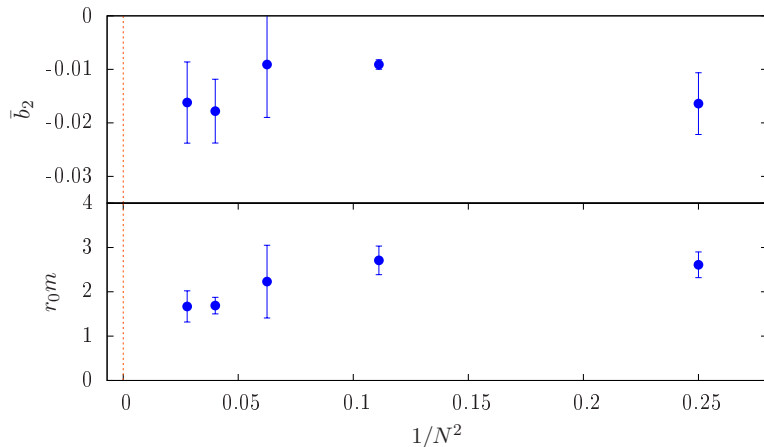
fit **J**: check whether  $\bar{b}_2 \neq 0$

fit **F** used in the final analysis (results of **G** and **H** not accurate enough)

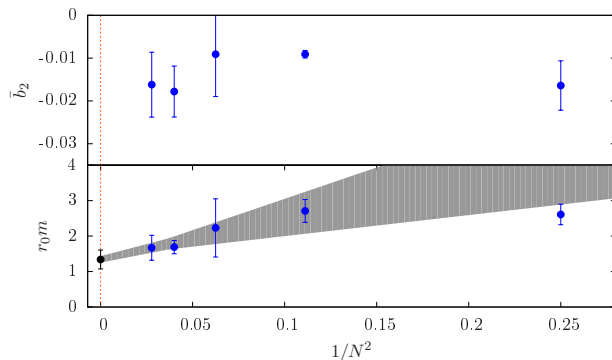
Results for  $\bar{b}_2$  and  $m$ 

main cause for large uncertainties:  $R_{\min}$ -dependence of fit



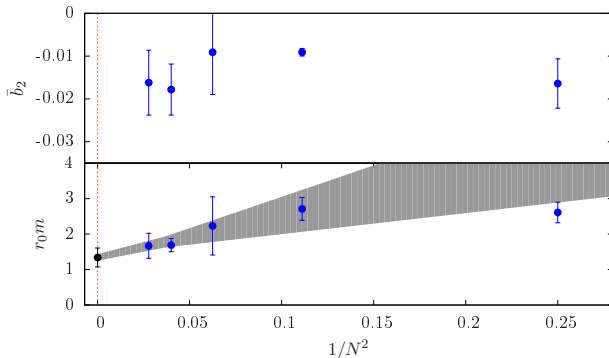
Final continuum results for  $\bar{b}_2$  and  $m$ 

much larger uncertainties  $\Rightarrow$  extrapolation for  $\bar{b}_2$  unstable

Large-N extrapolation  $m$ 

final large-N result:  $r_0 m^{N \rightarrow \infty} = -1.34(4)(8)(25)$

errors: statistical,  $R_{\min}$ , cont. extra. (HO corr, large-N: uncontrolled)

Large-N extrapolation  $m$ 

final large-N result:  $r_0 m^{N \rightarrow \infty} = -1.34(4)(8)(25) \Rightarrow \frac{m^{N \rightarrow \infty}}{\sqrt{\sigma}} \approx 1.1$

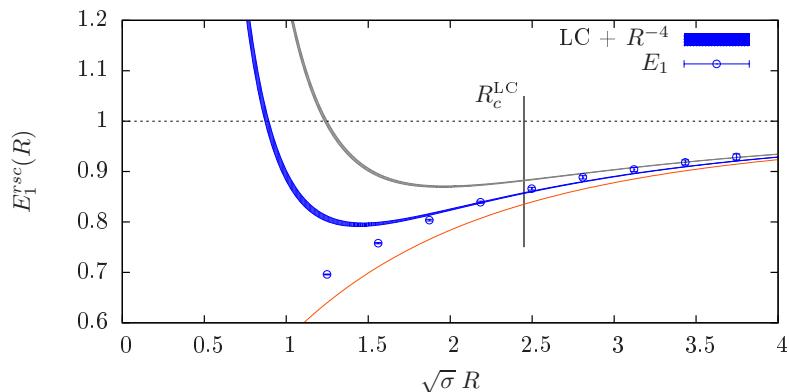
errors: statistical,  $R_{\min}$ , cont. extra. (HO corr, large-N: uncontrolled)

“worldsheet axion” (4d):  $\frac{m^{N \rightarrow \infty}}{\sqrt{\sigma}} \approx 1.713(4)$

[ Athenodorou, Teper, PLB771 (2017) ]

## Consistency with the excited states

Compare results for  $\bar{b}_2$  to state  $E_1$  in 3d  $SU(2)$ :



⇒ data misses points at large  $R$

## Conclusions

### Summary:

- ▶ **computed non-universal EST parameters in continuum and large- $N$  limits**
  - ▶ KKN prediction for  $\sigma$ : deviation only by 2%
  - ▶  $\bar{b}_2$  does not vanish for  $N \rightarrow \infty$   
(at least in analysis w/o massive modes)
- ▶ computed parameters are in good agreement with excited states
- ▶ **data allows for presence of massive mode/rigidity contributions**
  - ▶  $\bar{b}_2$  much less precise – cannot reliably extrapolate to large- $N$   
(appears to remain non-vanishing)
  - ▶  $m$  decreases (becomes similar to  $\sqrt{\sigma}$  or  $\Lambda_{QCD}$ )

### Future prospects:

- ▶ **include excited states in analysis** (more information?)  
(would be good to know contribution from massive modes in EST)
- ▶ **do the same for 4d theory** (extremely difficult)

Thank you for your attention!