

Mellin Amplitudes: the Scattering Amplitudes of CFT

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Gonçalves, Kaplan, Raju, Trevisani, van Rees

Strings 2015, Bengaluru, India, June 26th, 2015

Outline

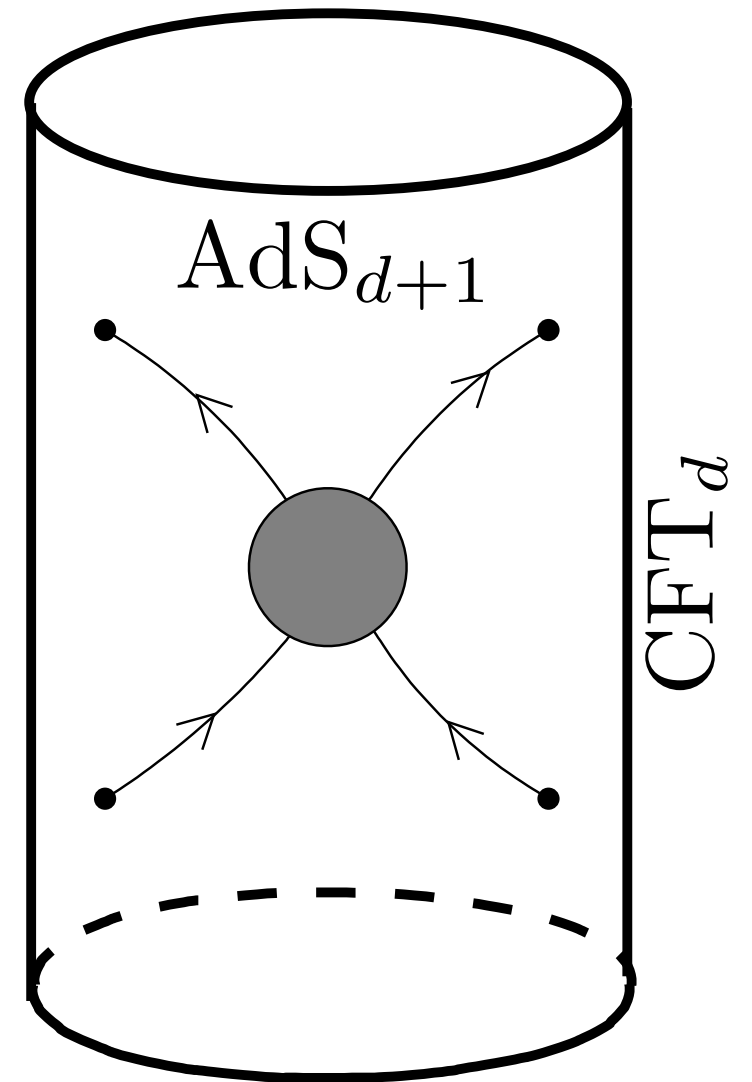
- Introduction
- CFT
 - Definition of Mellin amplitudes
 - OPE & Factorization
- AdS/CFT
 - Witten diagrams
 - Flat space limit of AdS
 - Bulk locality
- Problems for the future

Introduction

CFT correlation functions can be thought of as AdS scattering amplitudes.

Idea: explore this analogy to learn about CFT and AdS/CFT

Best language: **Mellin amplitudes**



CFT

Mellin Amplitudes

[Mack '09]

Correlation function of scalar primary operators

$$A(x_i) = \langle \mathcal{O}_1(x_1) \dots \mathcal{O}_n(x_n) \rangle$$

Mellin Amplitudes

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$$A(x_i) = \int [d\gamma] M(\gamma_{ij}) \prod_{i < j}^n \Gamma(\gamma_{ij}) (x_{ij}^2)^{-\gamma_{ij}}$$

Mellin Amplitudes

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Constraints:

$$\sum_{j=1}^n \gamma_{ij} = 0 \ , \quad \gamma_{ii} = -\Delta_i = -\dim[\mathcal{O}_i] \ , \quad \gamma_{ij} = \gamma_{ji}$$

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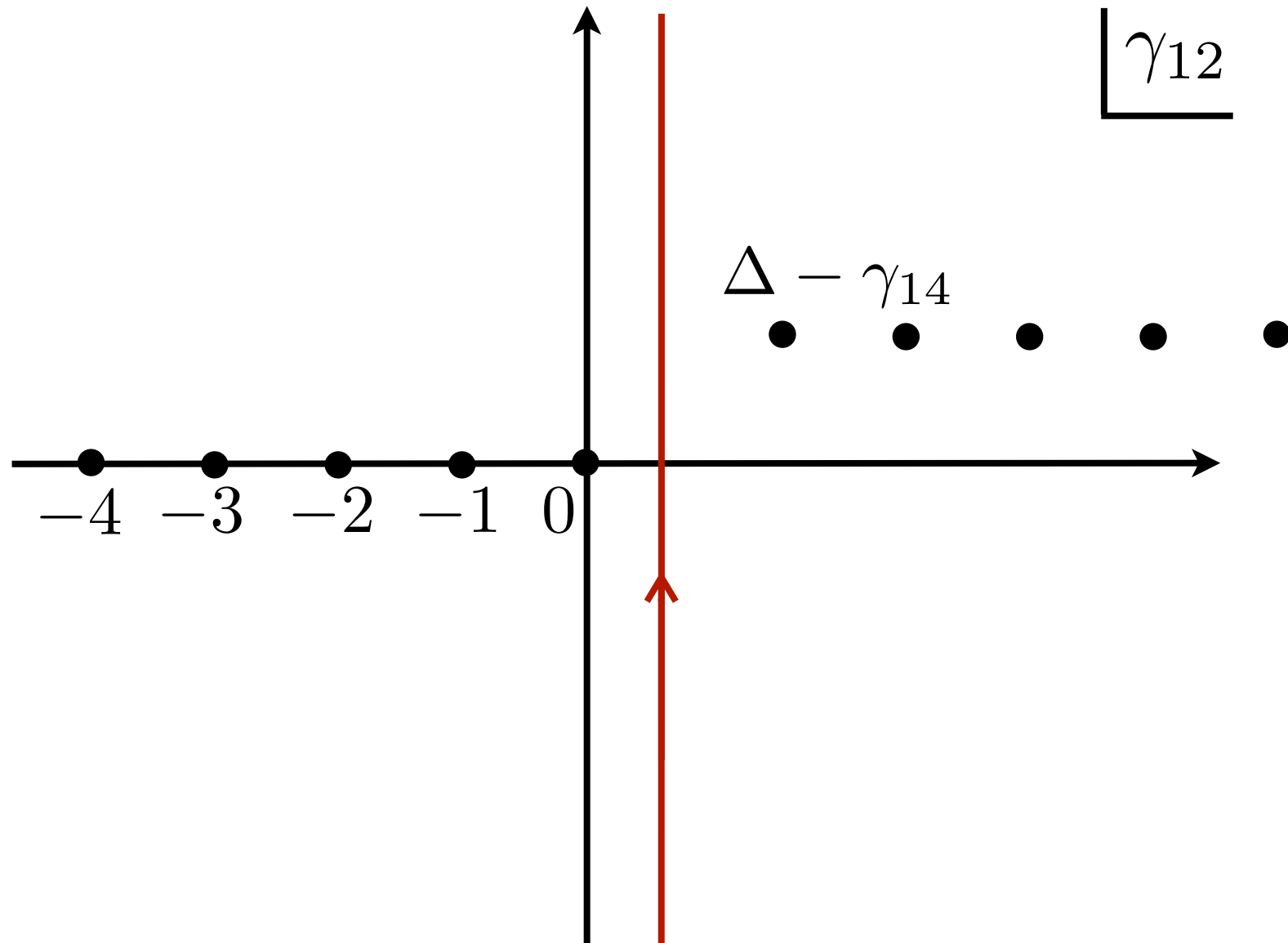
$$\# \text{ integration variables} = \# \text{ ind. cross-ratios} = \frac{n(n-3)}{2}$$

Example: $n = 4$ $\Delta_i = \Delta$

$$A(x_i) = \frac{1}{(x_{13}^2 x_{24}^2)^\Delta} \int_{-i\infty}^{i\infty} \frac{d\gamma_{12} d\gamma_{14}}{(2\pi i)^2} \left(\frac{x_{12}^2 x_{34}^2}{x_{13}^2 x_{24}^2} \right)^{-\gamma_{12}} \left(\frac{x_{14}^2 x_{23}^2}{x_{13}^2 x_{24}^2} \right)^{-\gamma_{14}} \times \\ \times M(\gamma_{12}, \gamma_{14}) \Gamma^2(\gamma_{12}) \Gamma^2(\gamma_{14}) \Gamma^2(\Delta - \gamma_{12} - \gamma_{14})$$

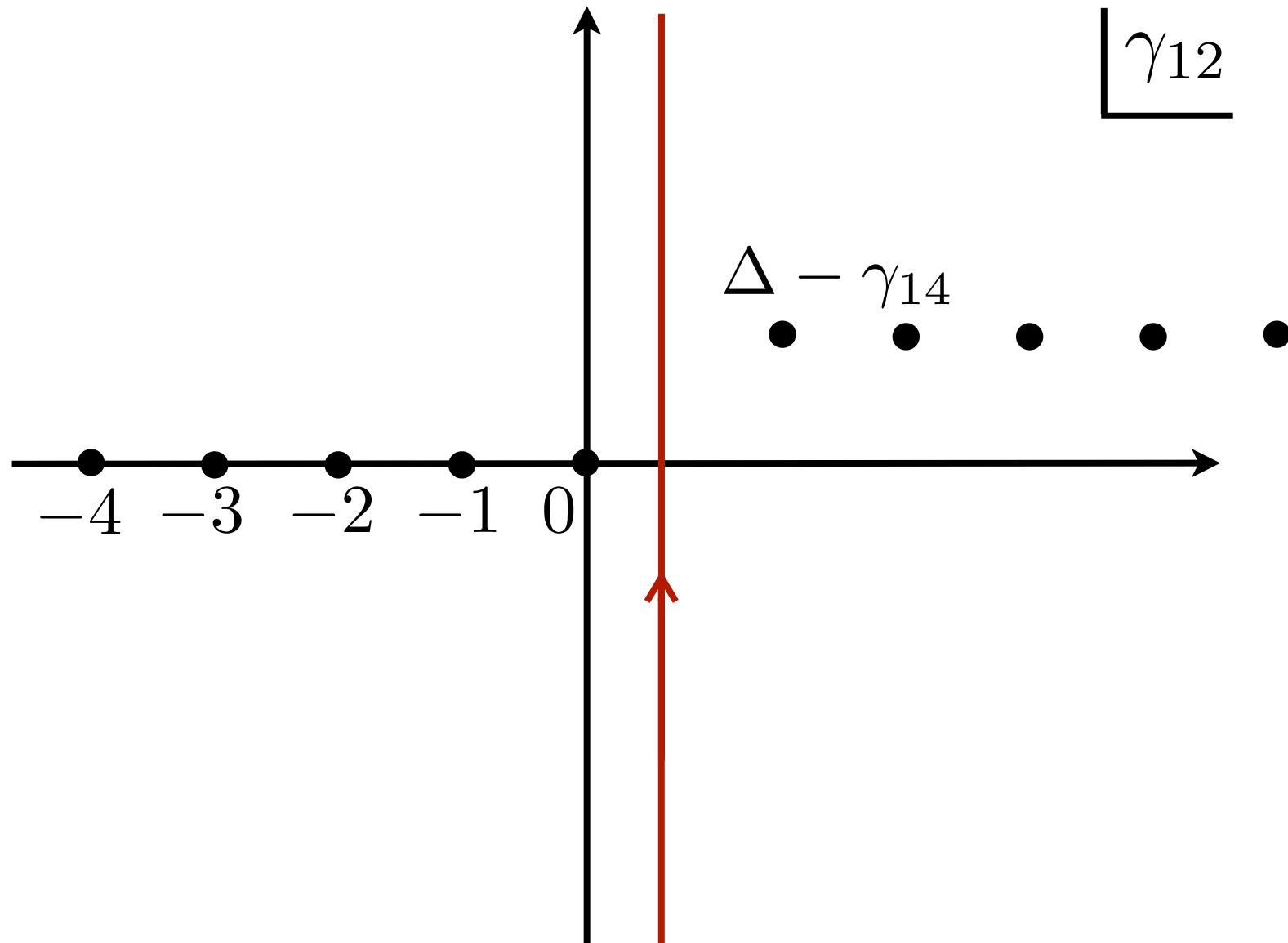
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Crossing symmetry

$$M(\gamma_{12}, \gamma_{13}, \gamma_{14})$$

$$\gamma_{12} + \gamma_{13} + \gamma_{14} = \Delta$$

Operator Product Expansion

$$\mathcal{O}_1(x_1)\mathcal{O}_2(x_2) = \sum_k \frac{C_{12k}}{(x_{12}^2)^{\frac{1}{2}(\Delta_1 + \Delta_2 - \Delta_k)}} [\mathcal{O}_k(x_2) + \text{descendants}]$$

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$$\langle \mathcal{O}_1(x_1)\mathcal{O}_2(x_2) \dots \rangle = \int d\gamma_{12} (x_{12}^2)^{-\gamma_{12}} \dots M(\gamma_{12}, \dots)$$

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$\Rightarrow M$ has simple poles at

$$\gamma_{12} = \frac{\Delta_1 + \Delta_2 - \Delta_k - 2m}{2}, \quad m = 0, \underbrace{1, 2, \dots}_{\text{descendants}}$$

with residue $\sim C_{12k} \langle \mathcal{O}_k \mathcal{O}_3 \dots \mathcal{O}_n \rangle$

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Discrete spectrum of scaling dimensions implies that the Mellin amplitude is **meromorphic**.

OPE $\Rightarrow$ Factorization

[Mack '09]

Introduce p_i such that $\gamma_{ij} = p_i \cdot p_j$ ($p_i^2 = -\Delta_i$) and $\sum_{i=1}^n p_i = 0$. Then γ_{ij} automatically solves the constraints.

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The OPE implies poles and factorization of residues.

$$\begin{array}{c} \langle \mathcal{O}_1 \dots \mathcal{O}_n \rangle \\ \downarrow \\ \text{Diagram of } M \end{array} \sim \frac{1}{\underbrace{(p_1 + \dots + p_k)^2 + \Delta}_{\sum_{i,j=1}^k \gamma_{ij}}} \begin{array}{c} \langle \mathcal{O}_1 \dots \mathcal{O}_k \mathcal{O}_\Delta \rangle \langle \mathcal{O}_\Delta \mathcal{O}_{k+1} \dots \mathcal{O}_n \rangle \\ \downarrow \quad \downarrow \\ \text{Diagram of } M_L \quad \times \quad \text{Diagram of } M_R \end{array}$$

The diagram of M is a circle with n external legs. The first k legs are labeled $1, \dots, k$ and the remaining $n-k$ legs are labeled $k+1, \dots, n$. The diagram of M_L is a circle with k external legs labeled $1, \dots, k$ and one leg labeled Δ . The diagram of M_R is a circle with one leg labeled Δ and $n-k$ external legs labeled $k+1, \dots, n$.

[Fitzpatrick, Kaplan, JP, Raju, van Rees '11]

[Fitzpatrick, Kaplan '12]

[Gonçalves, JP, Trevisani, '14]

OPE $\Rightarrow$ Factorization

$$M_n \approx \frac{Q_m(\gamma_{ij})}{(p_1 + \dots + p_k)^2 + \underbrace{\Delta - l + 2m}_{\text{twist}}}$$

$$m = 0, 1, 2, \dots$$

descendants

$$\langle \mathcal{O}_1 \dots \mathcal{O}_k \mathcal{O}_{\Delta, l} \rangle \rightarrow M_L$$

$$\langle \mathcal{O}_{\Delta, l} \mathcal{O}_{k+1} \dots \mathcal{O}_n \rangle \rightarrow M_R$$

Q_m determined from M_L and M_R

[Gonçalves, JP, Trevisani, '14]

OPE $\Rightarrow$ Factorization

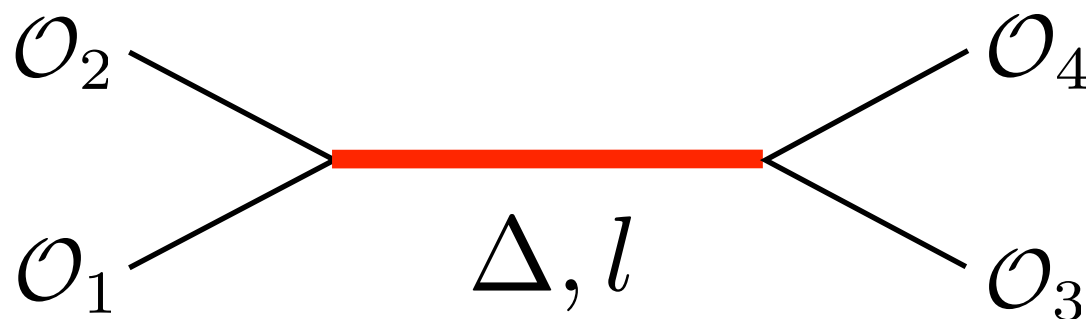
$$M_n \approx \frac{Q_m(\gamma_{ij})}{(p_1 + \dots + p_k)^2 + \underbrace{\Delta - l + 2m}_{\text{twist}}} \quad m = 0, 1, 2, \dots \underbrace{\hspace{1cm}}_{\text{descendants}}$$

$$\langle \mathcal{O}_1 \dots \mathcal{O}_k \mathcal{O}_{\Delta, l} \rangle \rightarrow M_L \quad \langle \mathcal{O}_{\Delta, l} \mathcal{O}_{k+1} \dots \mathcal{O}_n \rangle \rightarrow M_R$$

Q_m determined from M_L and M_R [Gonçalves, JP, Trevisani, '14]

For $n = 4$ and $k = 2$:

$$Q_m(\gamma_{ij}) = C_{12\mathcal{O}} C_{34\mathcal{O}} P_{l,m}(\gamma_{13})$$



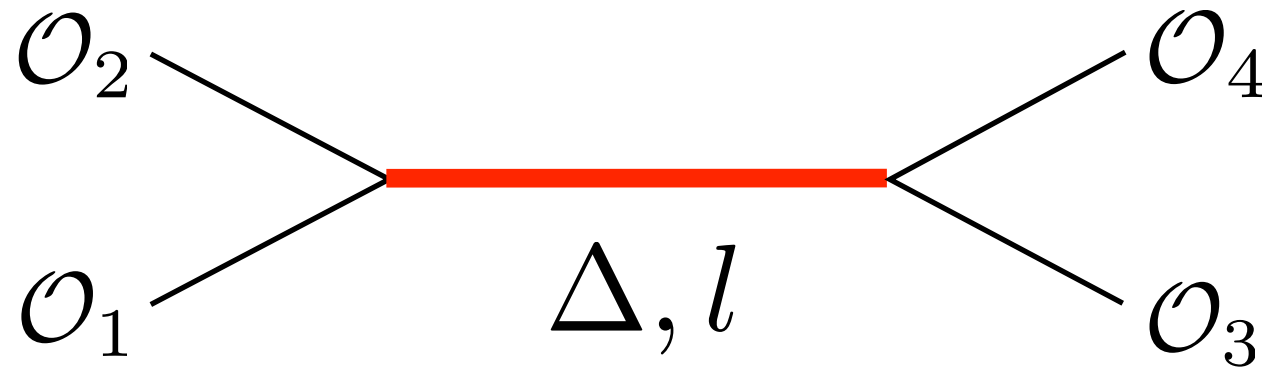


Mack polynomial
 Kinematical polynomial
 of degree l

[Mack '09]

Large N CFT

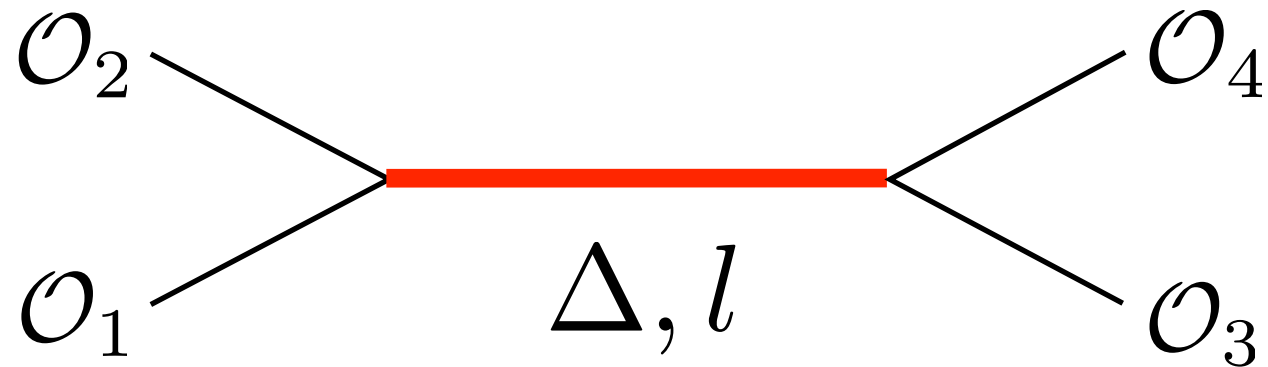
In **planar** correlators of large N CFT



$$\Delta = \Delta_1 + \Delta_2 + l + 2n + O\left(\frac{1}{N^2}\right)$$

Large N CFT

In **planar** correlators of large N CFT



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$\Gamma(\gamma_{12}) \rightarrow$ OPE contributions of $\mathcal{O}_1 \partial \dots \partial \mathcal{O}_2$

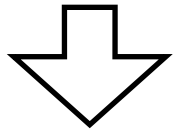
Only **single-trace** operators give rise to poles in planar Mellin amplitudes.

AdS/CFT

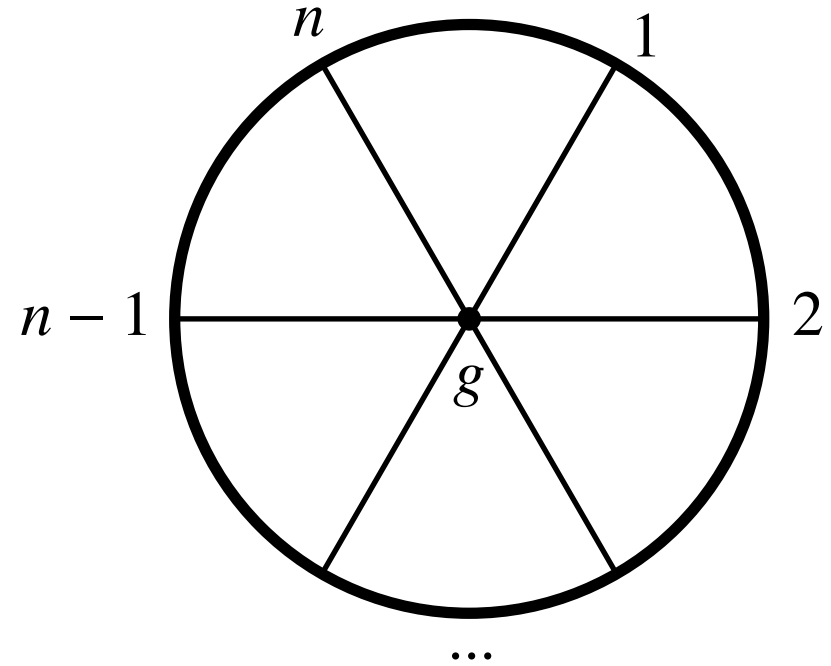
Witten diagrams

Bulk contact interaction

$$g\phi_1\phi_2\cdots\phi_n$$



$$M(\gamma_{ij}) = g$$



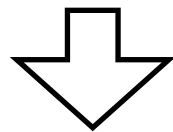
[JP'10]

Witten diagrams

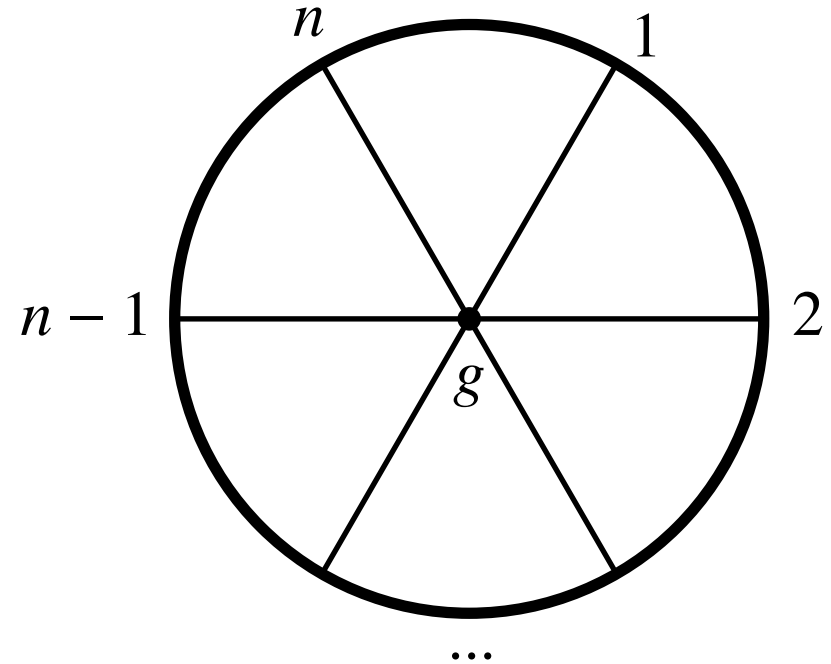
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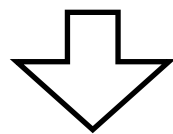
$$g\phi_1\phi_2\cdots\phi_n$$



$$M(\gamma_{ij}) = g$$



$$g\nabla\cdots\nabla\phi_1\cdots\nabla\cdots\nabla\phi_n$$



$$M(\gamma_{ij}) = g \text{ Polynomial}(\gamma_{ij})$$

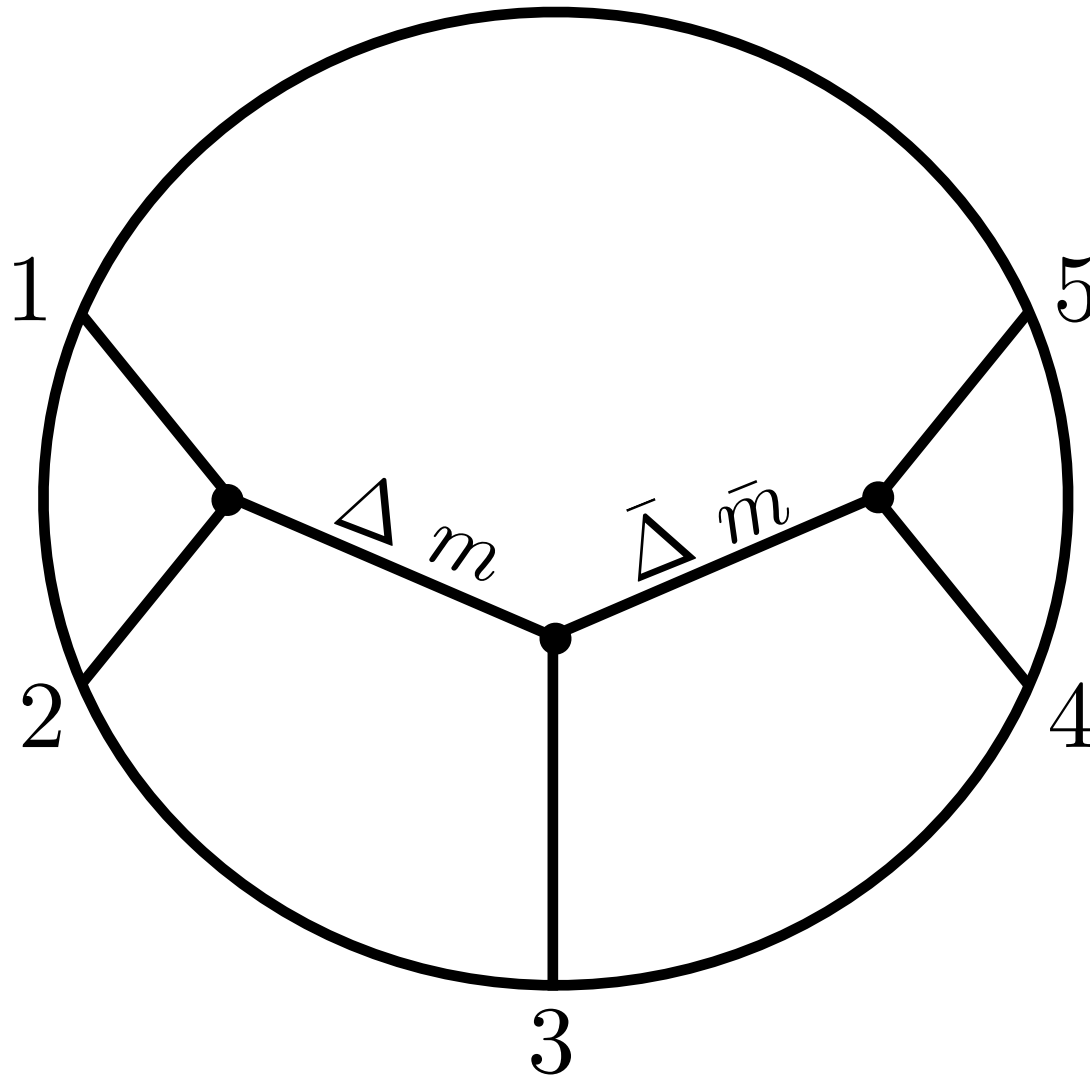
$$\text{degree} = \frac{1}{2} (\# \text{ derivatives})$$

Contact diagrams in AdS give **polynomial** Mellin amplitudes

Witten diagrams

[Fitzpatrick, Kaplan, JP, Raju, van Rees '11]
[Paulos '11]

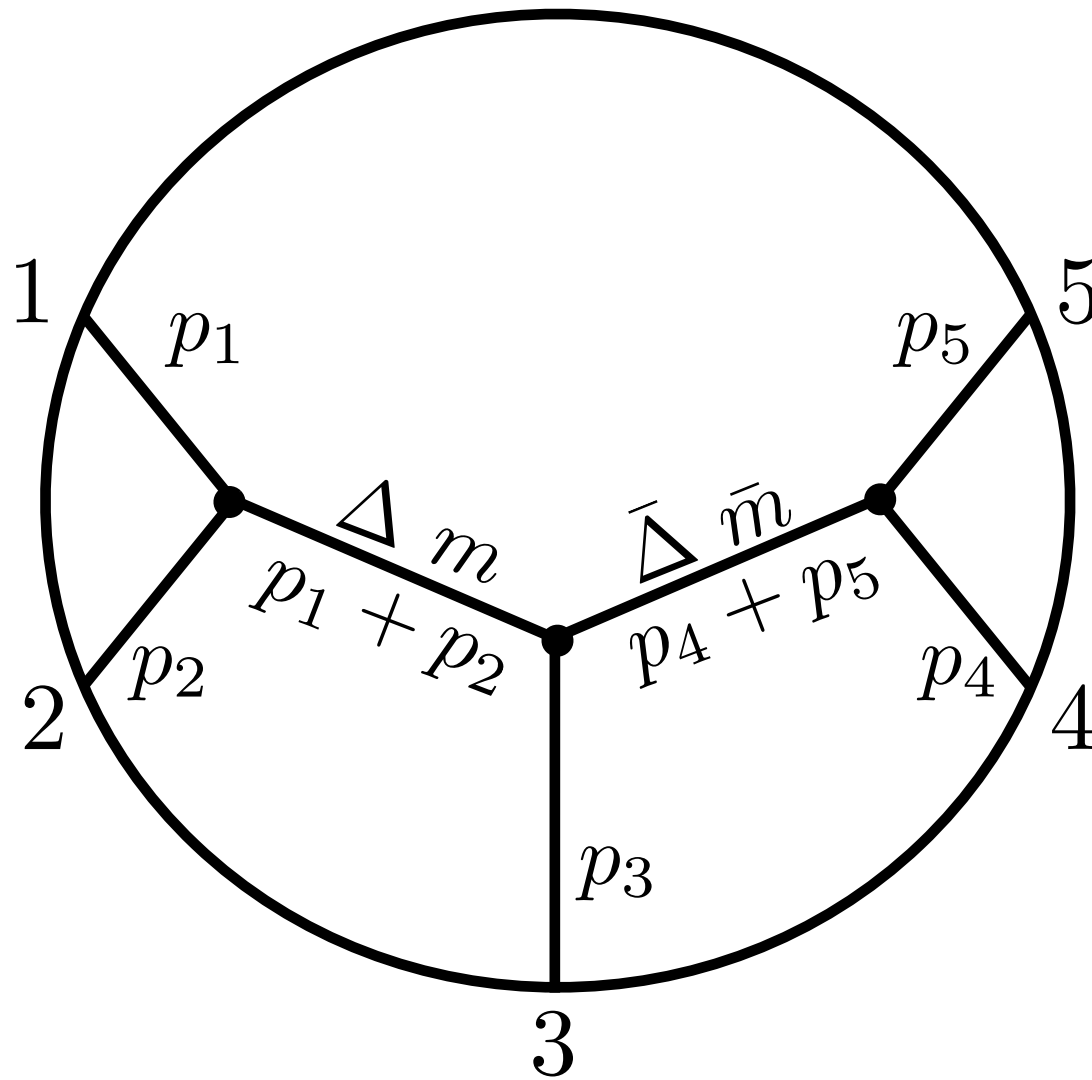
Feynman rules for scalar exchanges



Witten diagrams

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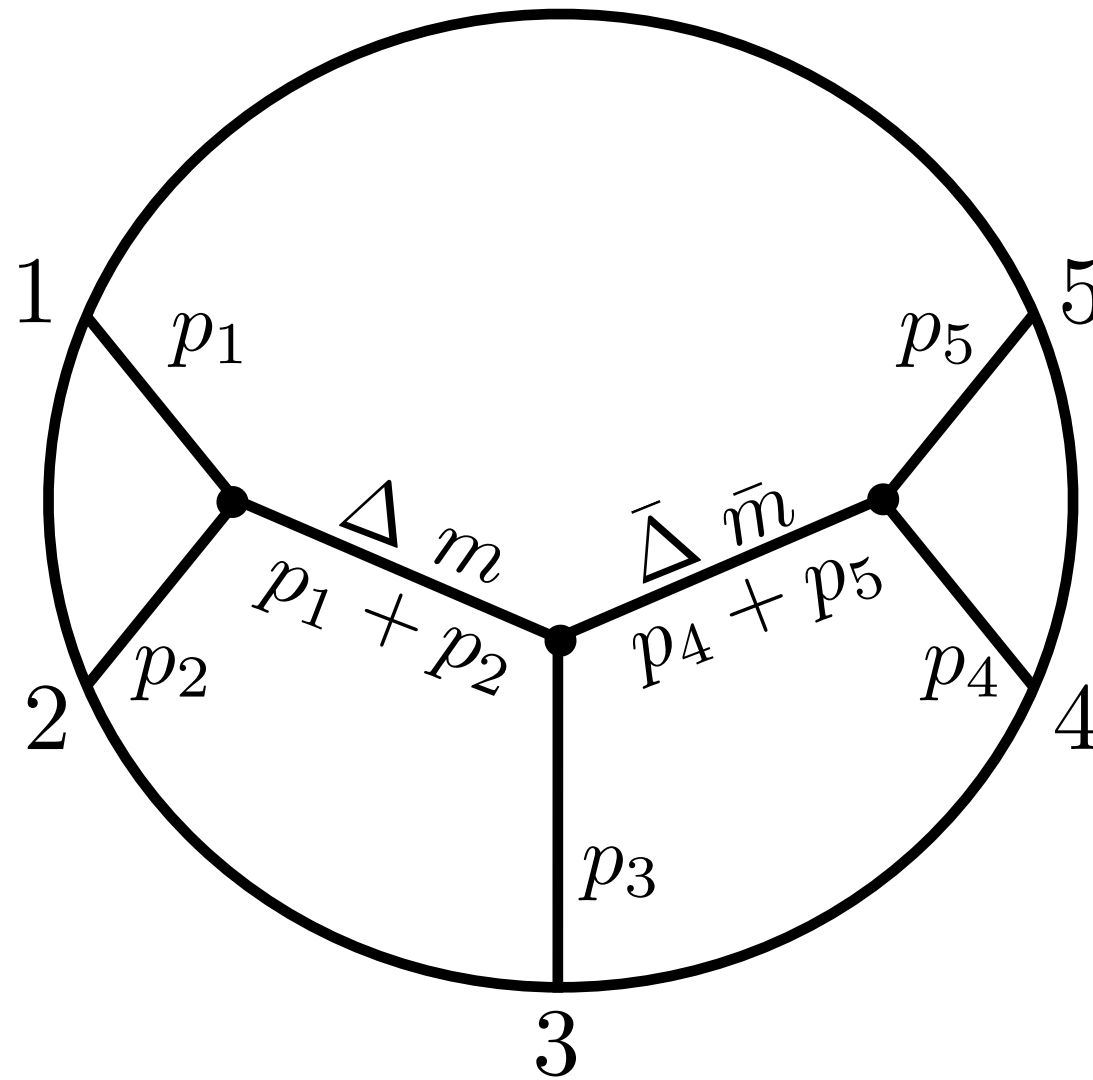
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Feynman rules for scalar exchanges

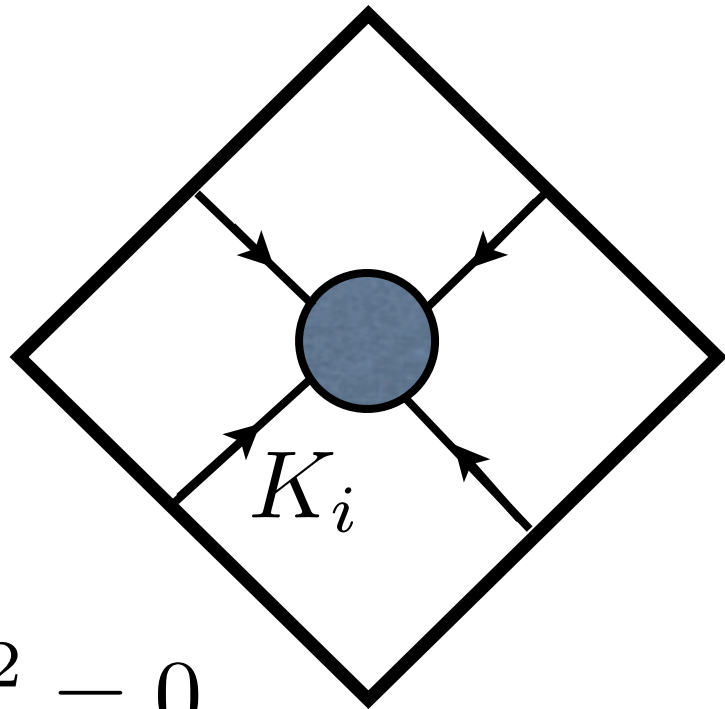


$$M = \sum_{m, \bar{m}=0}^{\infty} V \begin{bmatrix} \Delta_1 & \Delta_2 & \Delta \\ 0 & 0 & m \end{bmatrix} \frac{S_m(\Delta)}{(p_1 + p_2)^2 + \Delta + 2m} V \begin{bmatrix} \Delta & \bar{\Delta} & \Delta_3 \\ m & \bar{m} & 0 \end{bmatrix} \frac{S_{\bar{m}}(\bar{\Delta})}{(p_4 + p_5)^2 + \bar{\Delta} + 2\bar{m}} V \begin{bmatrix} \bar{\Delta} & \Delta_4 & \Delta_5 \\ \bar{m} & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

Flat space limit of AdS

[Susskind '99] [Polchinski '99]
[Gary, Giddings, JP '09] [Okuda, JP '10]
[JP '10] [Fitzpatrick, Kaplan '12]

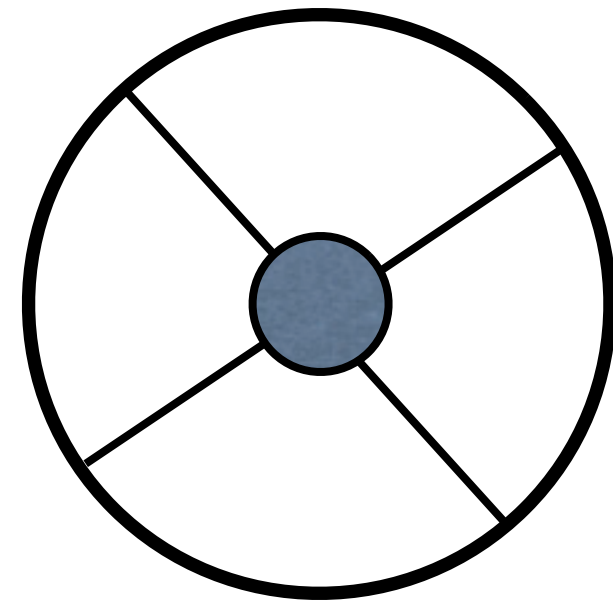
Minkowski



$R \rightarrow \infty$

$$K_i^2 = 0$$

Anti-de Sitter

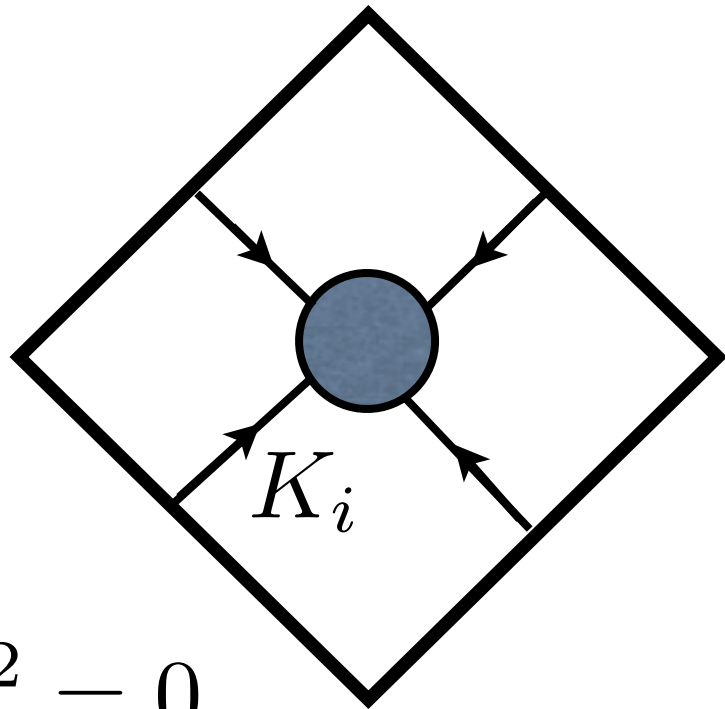


$$M_i^2 R^2 = \Delta_i (\Delta_i - d)$$

Flat space limit of AdS

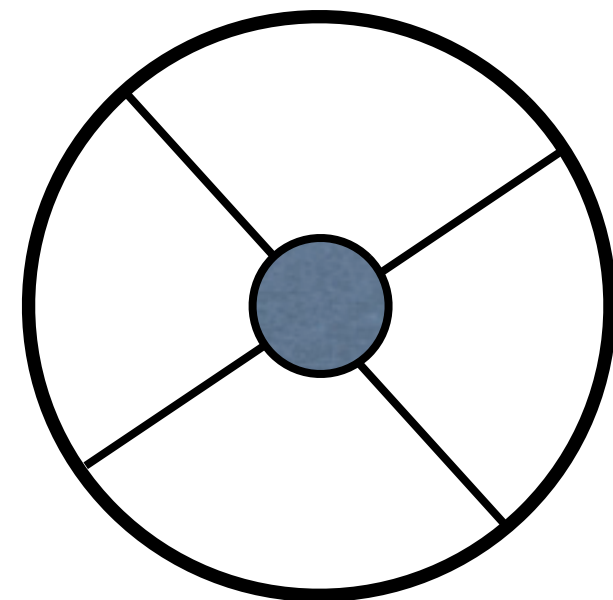
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Minkowski



$R \rightarrow \infty$

Anti-de Sitter



$$M_i^2 R^2 = \Delta_i(\Delta_i - d)$$

$$T(K_i) = \lim_{R \rightarrow \infty} \mathcal{N} \int_{-i\infty}^{i\infty} \frac{d\alpha}{2\pi i} e^\alpha \alpha^{\frac{d - \sum \Delta_i}{2}} M \left(\gamma_{ij} = \frac{R^2 K_i \cdot K_j}{2\alpha} \right)$$

Scattering amplitude

Mellin amplitude

Bulk Locality from CFT

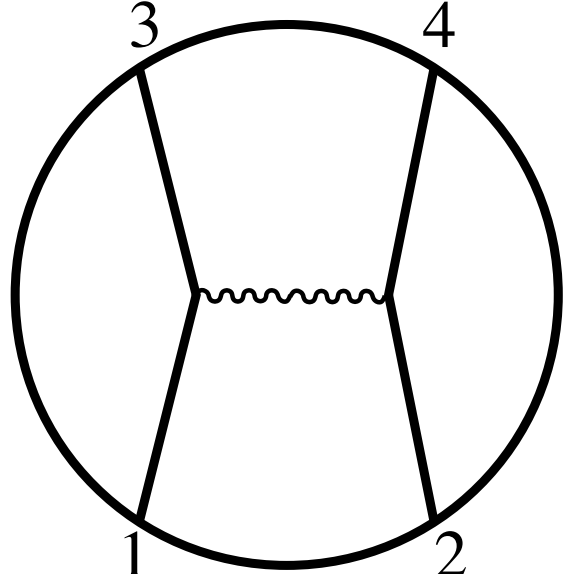
[Heemskerk, JP, Polchinski, Sully '09]

[Heemskerk, Sully '10] [JP '10]

- Large N + finite number of low dimension single-trace operators

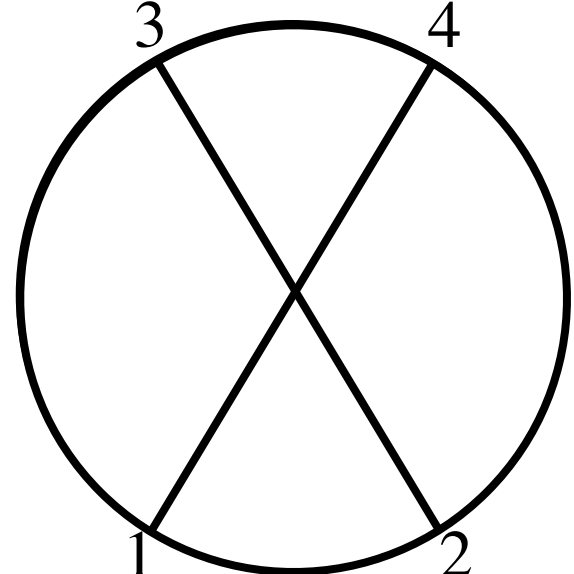
$\Delta_{gap} \rightarrow \infty \implies$ **Finite # of exchange diagrams**

$$\langle \mathcal{O}_1 \dots \mathcal{O}_4 \rangle_{\text{planar}} =$$



Poles

+



Polynomial

Bulk Locality from CFT

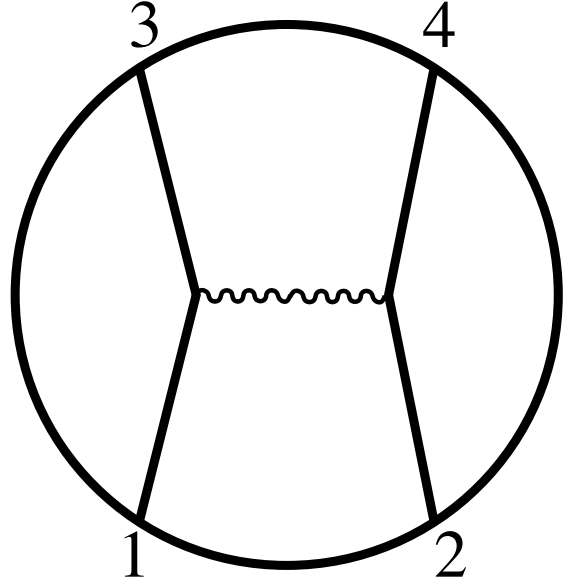
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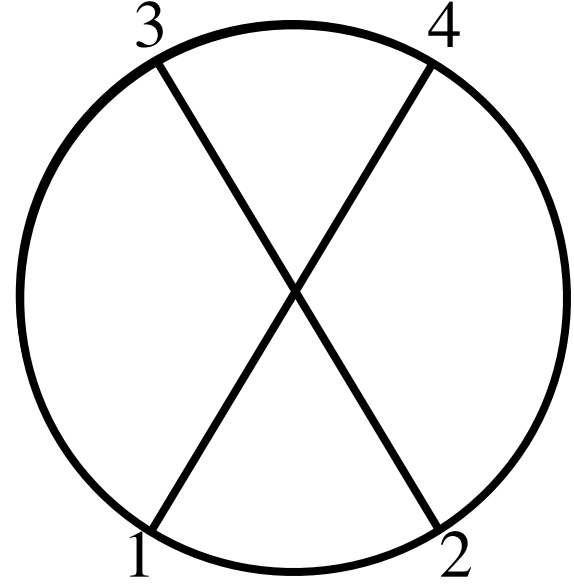
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Polynomial

- Regge limit: $s \rightarrow \infty$, t fixed

[Cornalba '07] [Costa, Gonçalves, JP '12]

[Maldacena, Shenker, Stanford '15]

$$M(s, t) \sim s^{j_0} \quad j_0 \leq 2$$

Bulk Locality from CFT

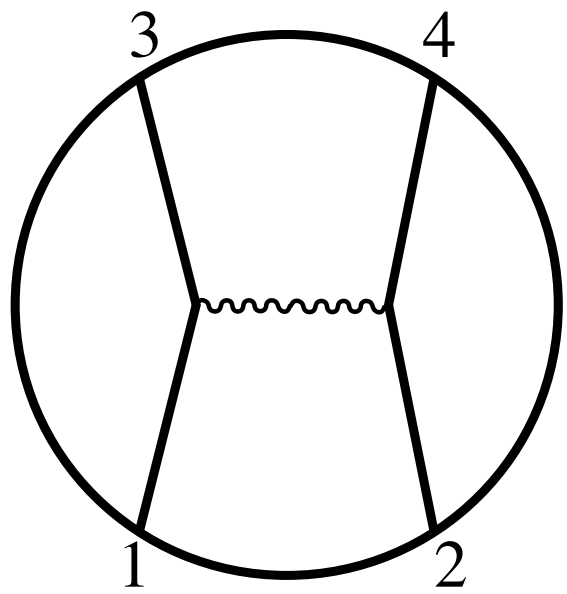
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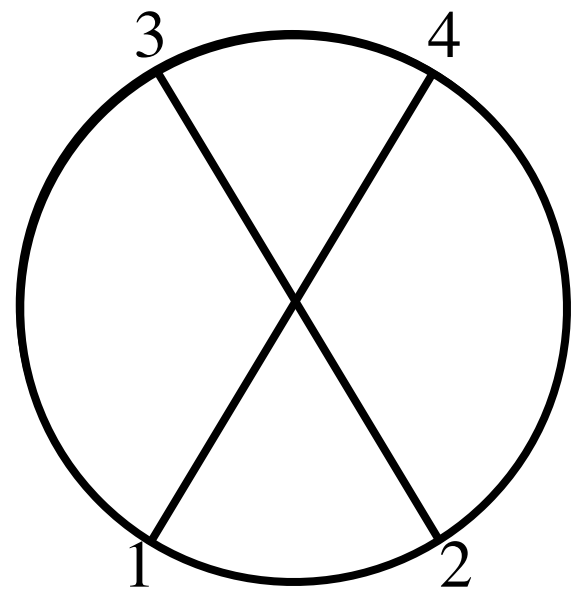
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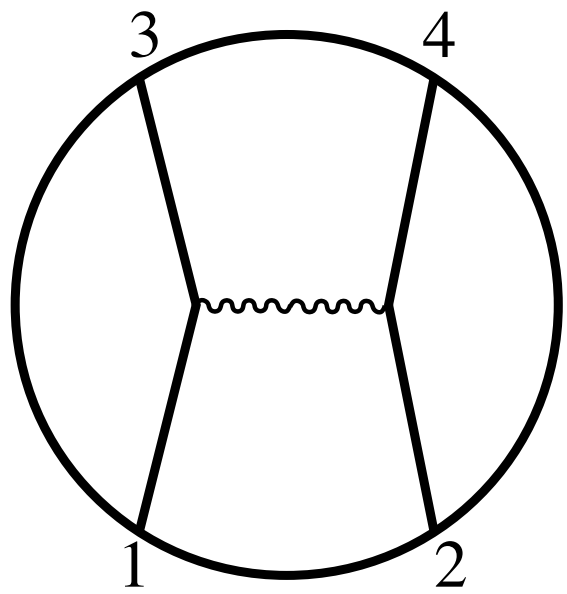
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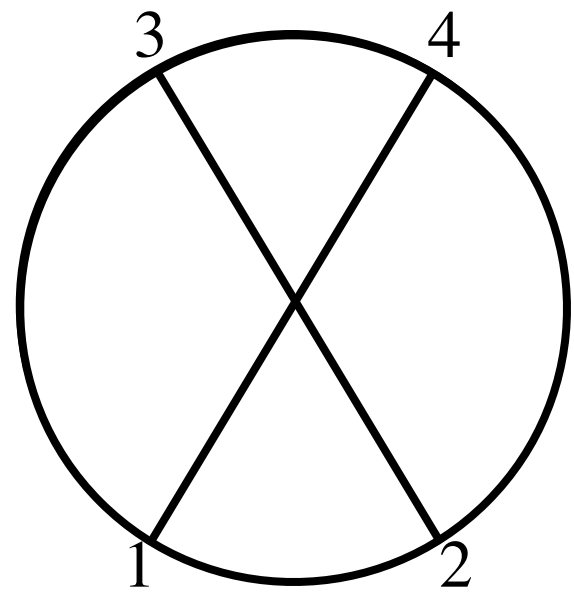
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Generalization of causality constraints for $\langle T_{\mu\nu} T_{\alpha\beta} T_{\rho\sigma} \rangle$

[Camanho, Edelstein, Maldacena, Zhiboedov '14]

Problems for the future

- Extend factorization formulas to general spin
- AdS tree-level n-point Mellin amplitudes a la [\[Cachazo, He, Yuan '14\]](#)
- When is Conformal Regge Theory valid?
- Simplify the OPE in large N CFTs
- Understand scaling of higher derivative corrections in AdS with $\Delta_{gap} \gg 1$ [\[Camanho, Edelstein, Maldacena, Zhiboedov '14\]](#)
- Mellin amplitude of Virasoro blocks (minimal models) [\[Alday, Zhiboedov '15\]](#)
- Study boundary correlators of QFT in AdS from BCFT correlators (UV) to scattering amplitudes (IR)

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Thank you!

Extra slides

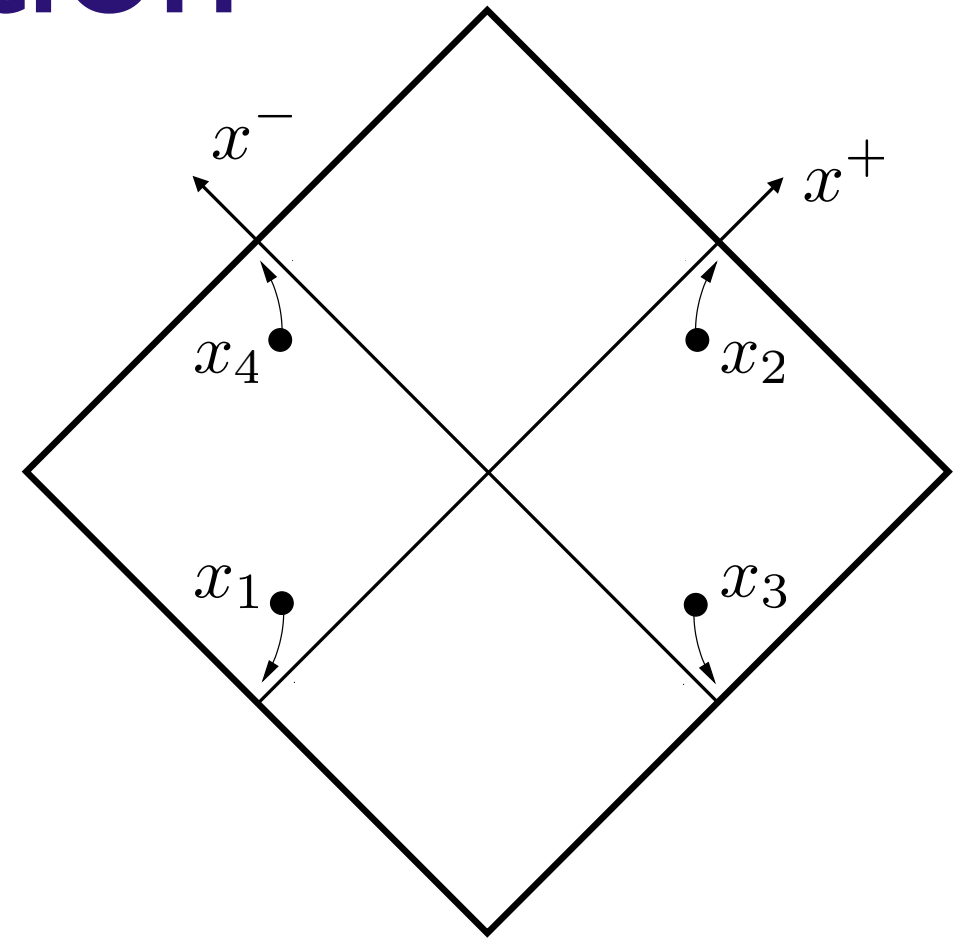
Regge limit of 4-pt function

“Mandelstam invariants”

$$s = -(p_1 + p_3)^2 = \Delta_1 + \Delta_3 - 2\gamma_{13}$$

$$t = -(p_1 + p_2)^2 = \Delta_1 + \Delta_2 - 2\gamma_{12}$$

Regge limit: $s \rightarrow \infty$, t fixed



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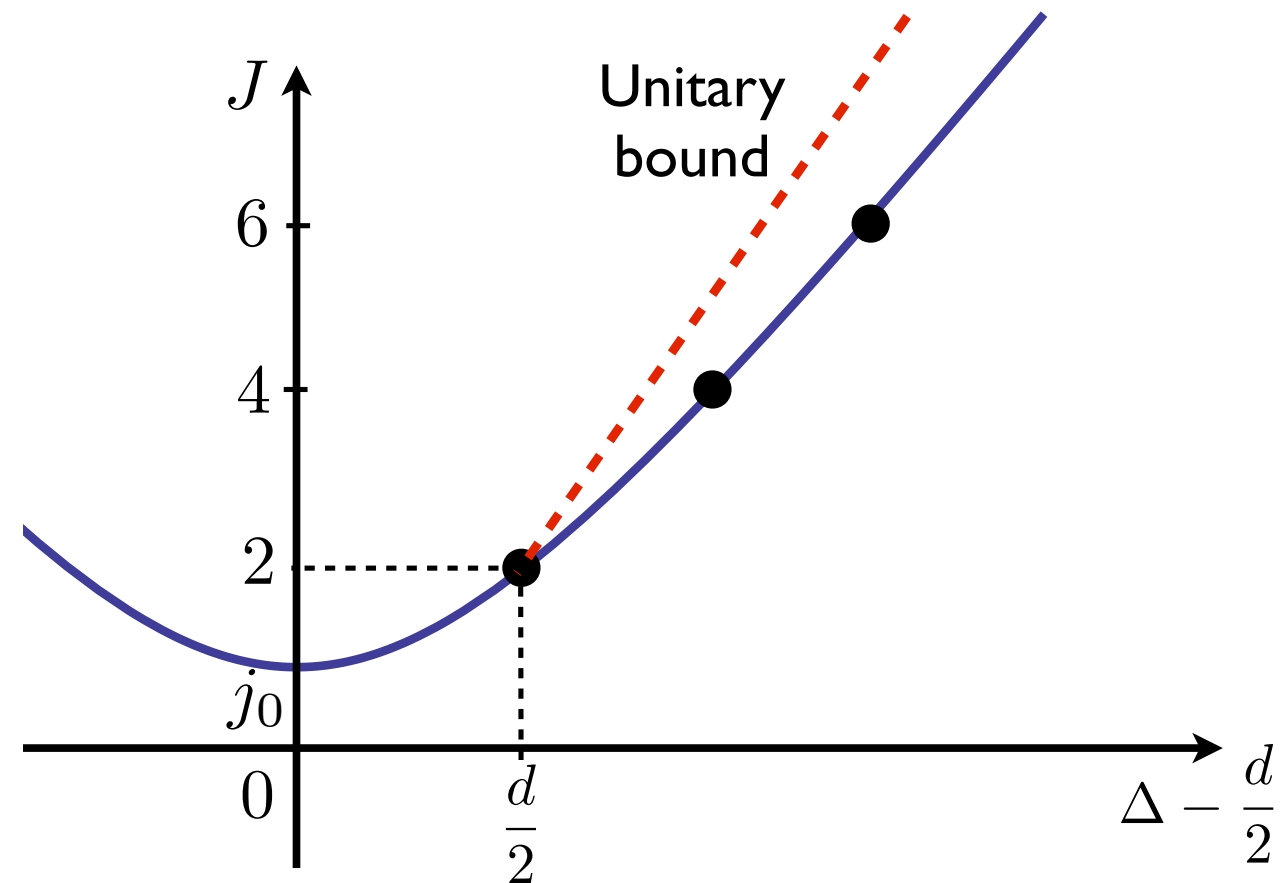
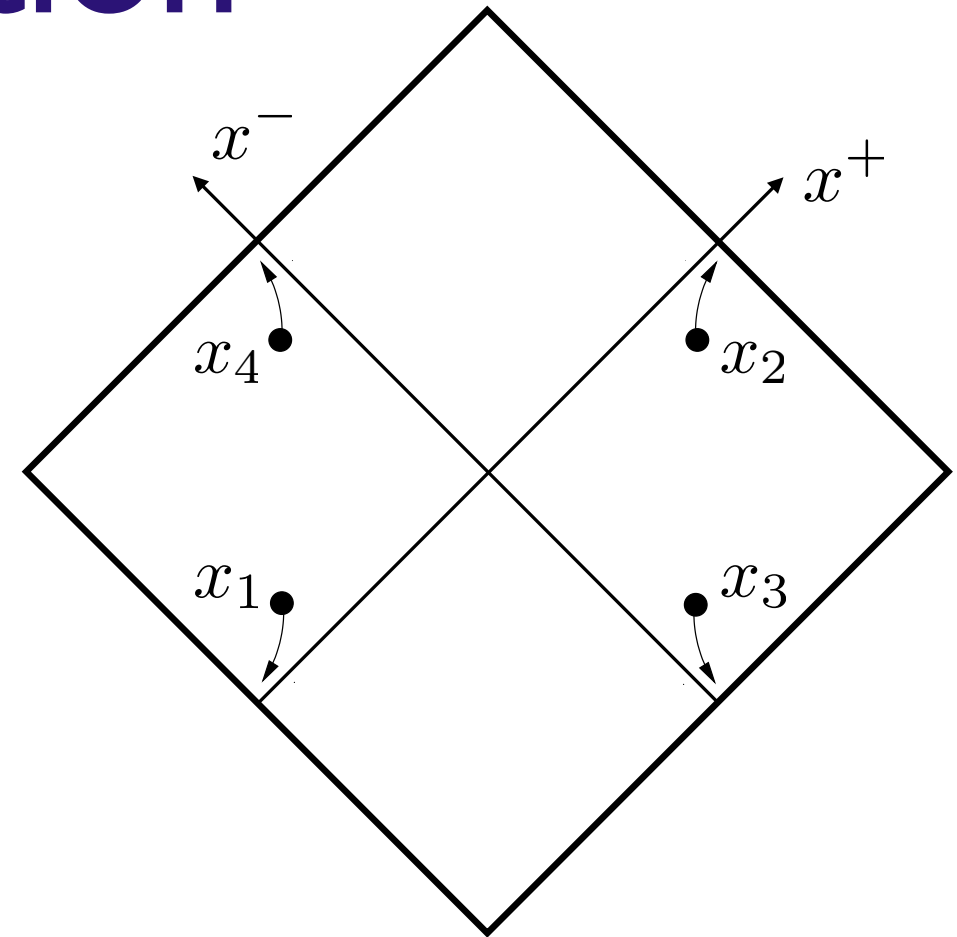
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[Cornalba '07]

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$$t = -(p_1 + p_2)^2 = \Delta_1 + \Delta_2 - 2\gamma_{12}$$

Regge limit: $s \rightarrow \infty$, t fixed

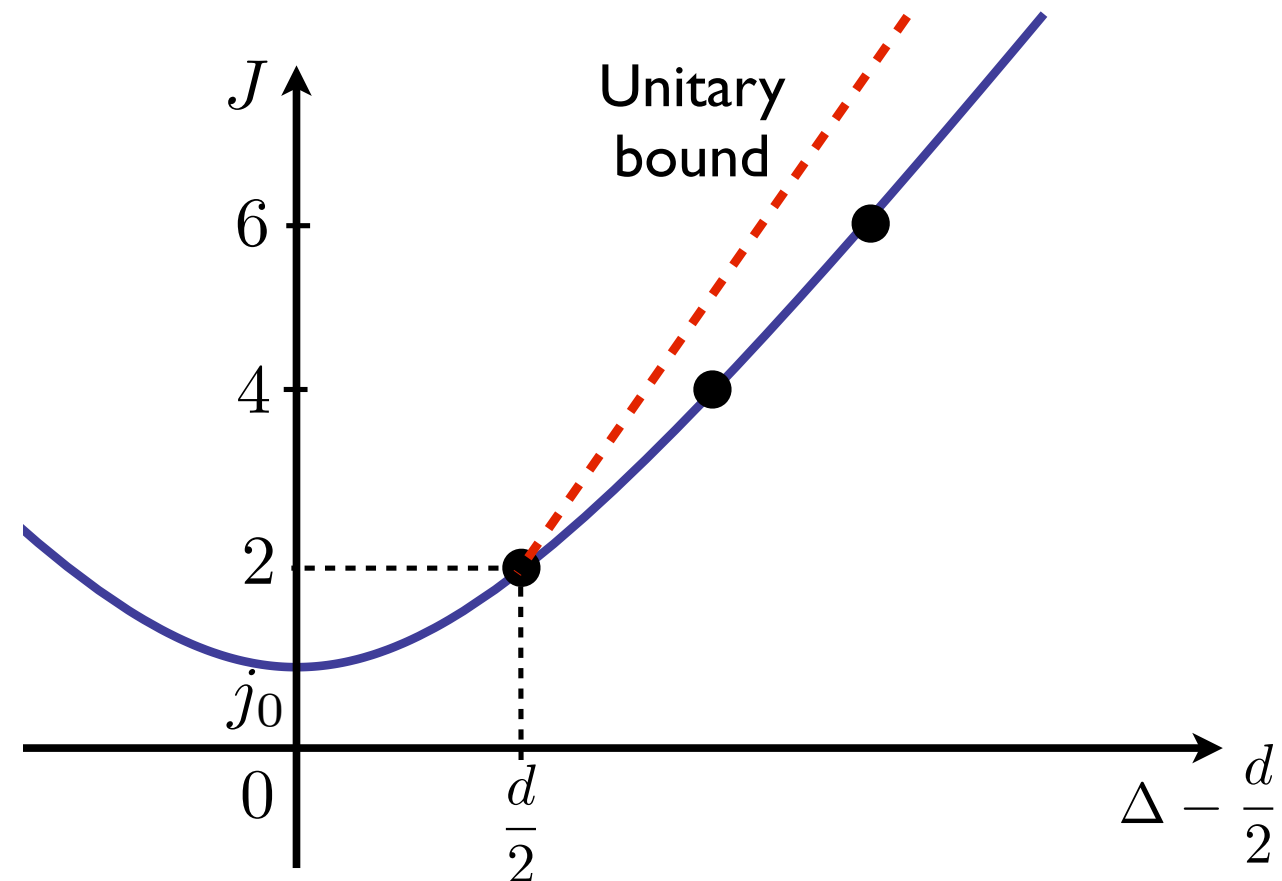
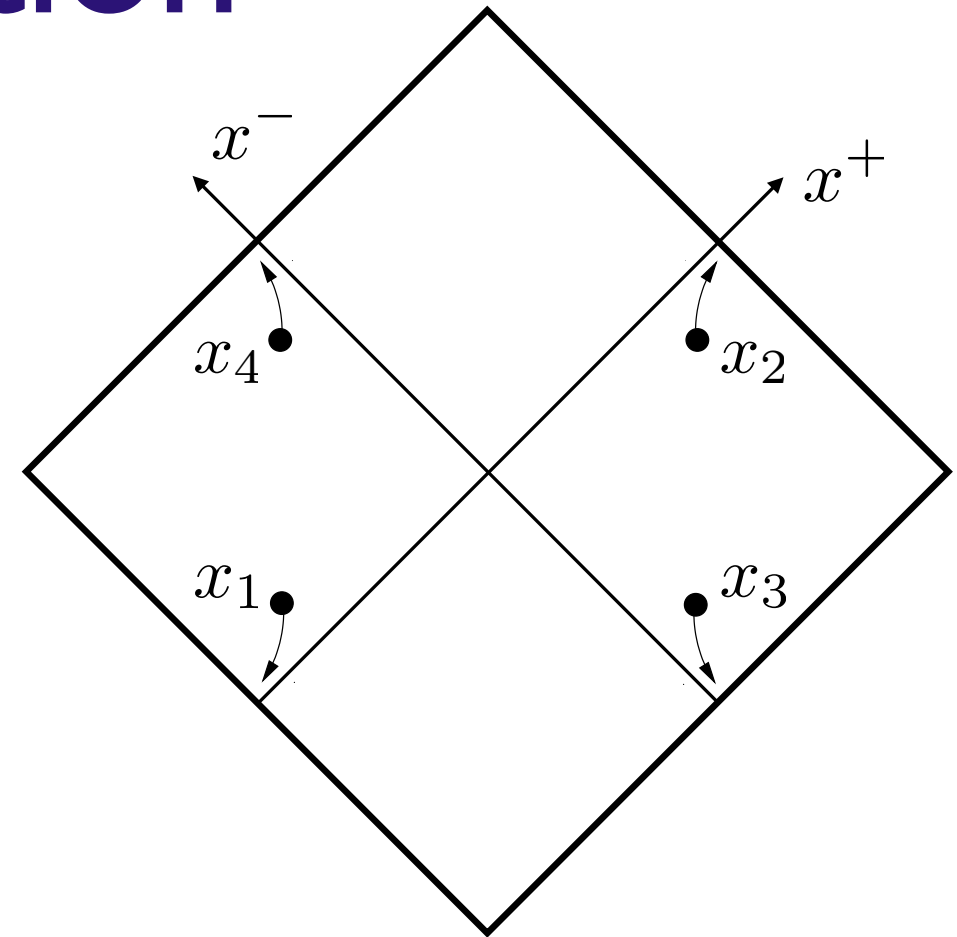
$$M(s, t) \sim s^{j_0}$$

[Cornalba '07]

[Costa, Gonçalves, JP '12]

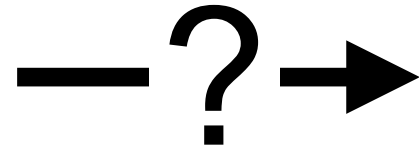
Planar limit $\Rightarrow j_0 \leq 2$

[Maldacena, Shenker, Stanford '15]



Planar OPE?

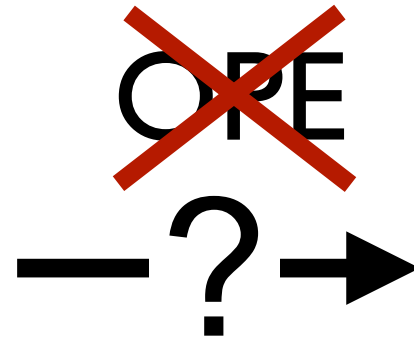
2pt and 3pt functions
of single-trace operators



n-pt functions
of single-trace operators

Planar OPE?

2pt and 3pt functions
of single-trace operators



n-pt functions
of single-trace operators

Planar OPE?

2pt and 3pt functions
of single-trace operators

~~OPE~~
— ? →
String
Theory?

n-pt functions
of single-trace operators

Planar OPE?

2pt and 3pt functions
of single-trace operators

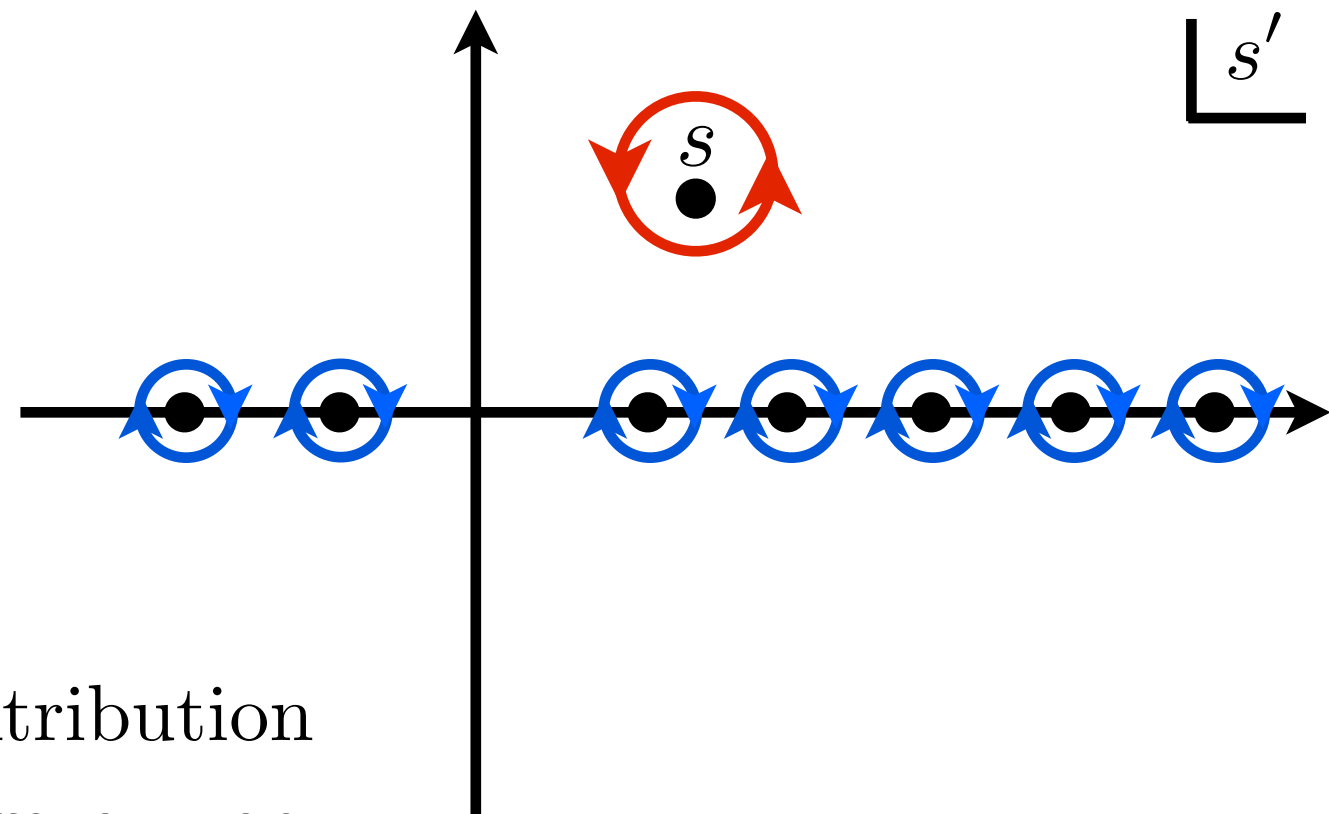
~~OPE~~
— ? →
String
Theory?

n-pt functions
of single-trace operators

$$M(s, t) = \oint \frac{ds'}{2\pi i} \frac{M(s', t)}{s' - s}$$

$$M(s, t) \sim s^{j_0} \quad j_0 \leq 2$$

$$M(s, t) = \sum_{s_*} \frac{\text{Res}_{s=s_*} M(s, t)}{s - s_*} + \text{contribution from } s = \infty$$



Mellin Redundancy

$$\begin{array}{l} \# \text{ independent} \\ \text{cross ratios} \end{array} = \begin{cases} \frac{n(n-3)}{2}, & n \leq d+2 \\ nd - \frac{(d+2)(d+1)}{2}, & n \geq d+2 \end{cases}$$

For $n > d+2$ the Mellin amplitude is not unique.

$$\det_{1 \leq i, j \leq d+3} P_i \cdot P_j = 0 \qquad P_i \in \mathbb{R}^{d+2}$$

We can add to the Mellin amplitude the Mellin transform of this determinant times any function.

External Spin

$$\langle \mathcal{O}^A(P) \mathcal{O}(P_1) \dots \mathcal{O}(P_n) \rangle = \sum_{a=1}^n P_a^A \int [d\gamma] M^a(\gamma_{ij}) \prod_{i < j}^n \frac{\Gamma(\gamma_{ij})}{(-2P_i \cdot P_j)^{\gamma_{ij}}} \prod_{i=1}^n \frac{\Gamma(\gamma_i + \delta_i^a)}{(-2P_i \cdot P)^{\gamma_i + \delta_i^a}}$$

$$\gamma_i = -\sum_{j=1}^n \gamma_{ij} \ , \quad \gamma_{ij} = \gamma_{ji} \ , \quad \gamma_{ii} = -\Delta_i \ , \quad \sum_{i,j=1}^n \gamma_{ij} = 1 - \Delta$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& \text{Diagram 1: A circle labeled } M \text{ with } k \text{ external lines on the left (labeled } 1, \dots, k) \text{ and } n \text{ external lines on the right (labeled } k+1, \dots, n). \\
& \sim \frac{\sum_{a=1}^k \sum_{b>k}^n \gamma_{ab} \text{Diagram 2} \times \text{Diagram 3}}{(p_1 + \dots + p_k)^2 + \Delta - 1}
\end{aligned}$$

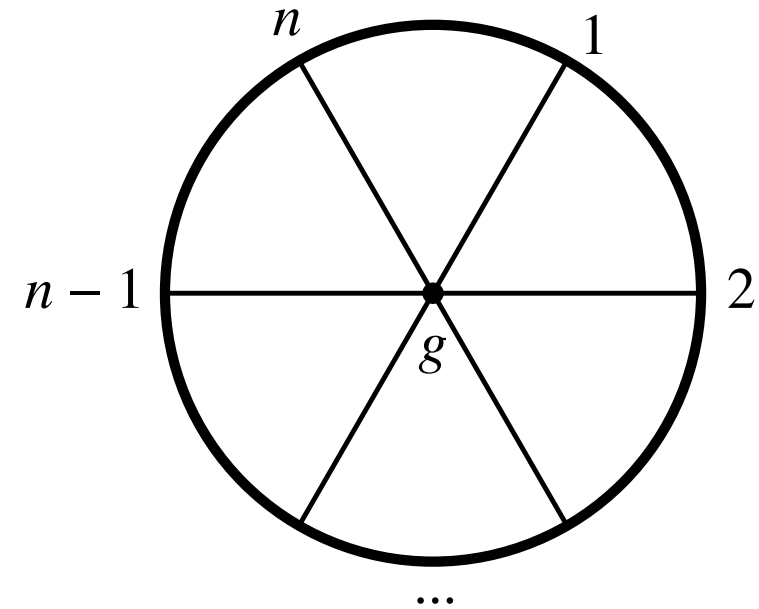
[Gonçalves, JP, Trevisani, '14]

Flat Space Limit of AdS

Evidence for $T = \lim \int \dots M$

1) Works for an infinite set of interactions

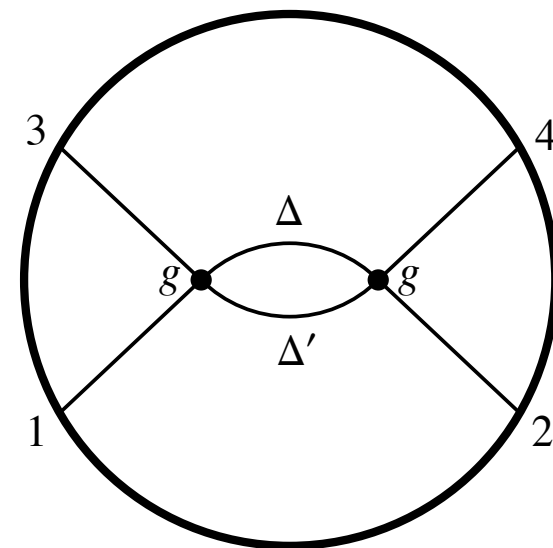
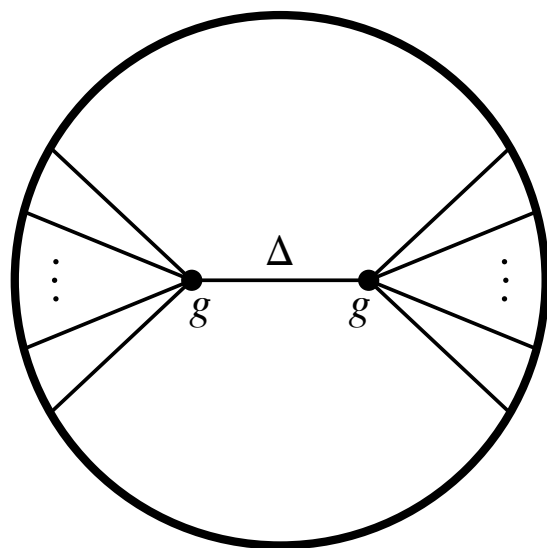
$$g \nabla \dots \nabla \phi_1 \nabla \dots \nabla \phi_2 \dots \nabla \dots \nabla \phi_n$$



2) Derived from wave-packet scattering localized in small region of AdS

[Fitzpatrick, Kaplan '12]
[Gary, Giddings, JP '09] [Okuda, JP '10]

3) Verified in several non-trivial examples

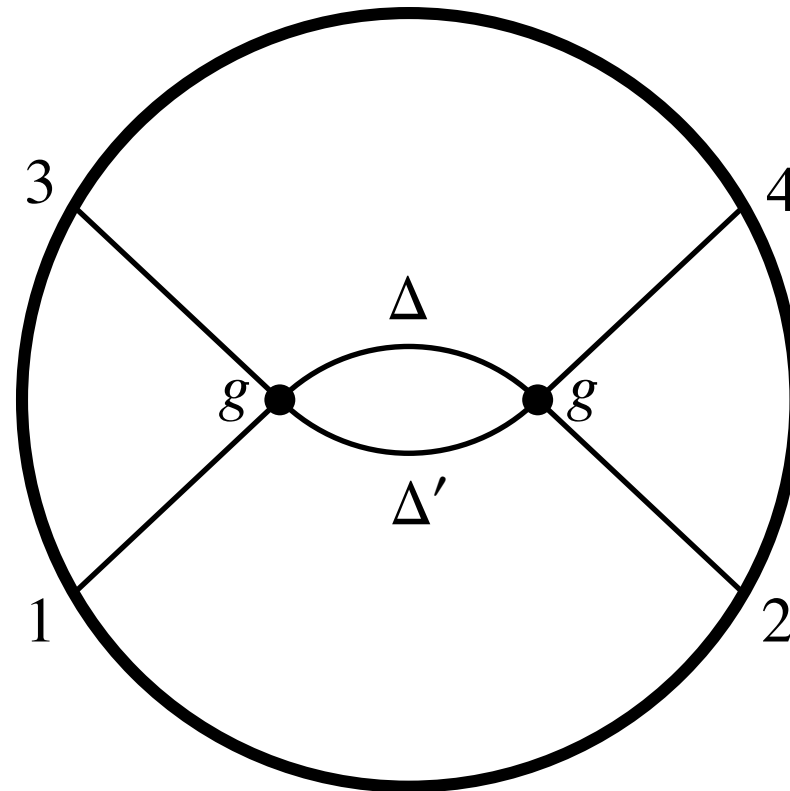


UV and IR divergences

UV divergences are the same in AdS and in flat space.

IR divergences are absent in AdS.

The Mellin amplitudes can be thought as IR regulated scattering amplitudes.



Application: from SYM to IIB strings

$\mathcal{N} = 4$ SYM



type IIB strings

$$g_{\text{YM}}^2 = 4\pi g_s$$

$$g_{\text{YM}}^2 N = \lambda = (R/\ell_s)^4$$

$\mathcal{O}(x)$ = Lagrangian density

ϕ = Dilaton

4pt function

$$\langle \mathcal{O}(x_1) \mathcal{O}(x_2) \mathcal{O}(x_3) \mathcal{O}(x_4) \rangle$$

$$\xrightarrow{R \rightarrow \infty}$$

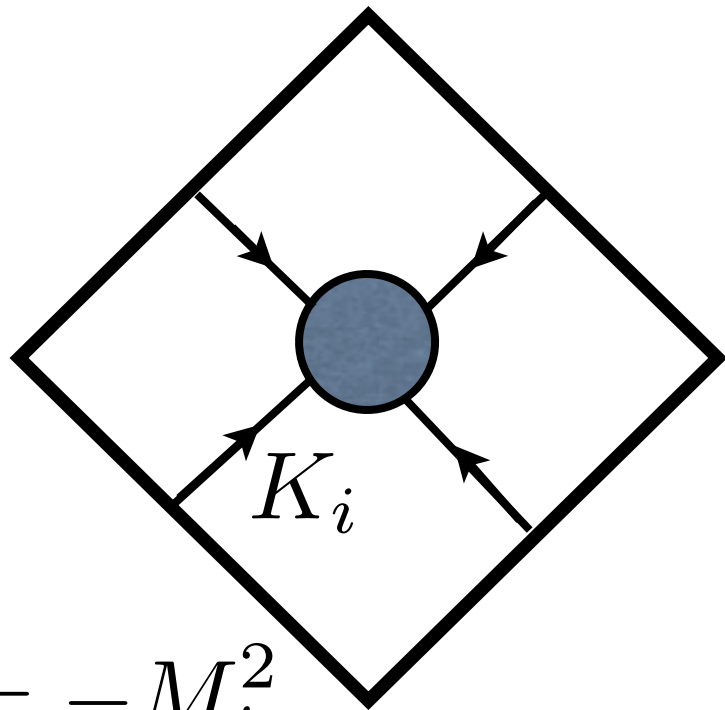
$2 \rightarrow 2$ scattering
amplitude

$$\lim_{\lambda \rightarrow \infty} \lambda^{\frac{3}{2}} M(g_{\text{YM}}^2, \lambda, s_{ij} = \sqrt{\lambda} \alpha_{ij}) = \frac{1}{120\pi^3 \ell_s^6} \int_0^\infty d\beta \beta^5 e^{-\beta} T_{10} \left(g_s, \ell_s, S_{ij} = \frac{2\beta}{\ell_s^2} \alpha_{ij} \right)$$

Mellin amplitude

FSL of AdS for massive particles

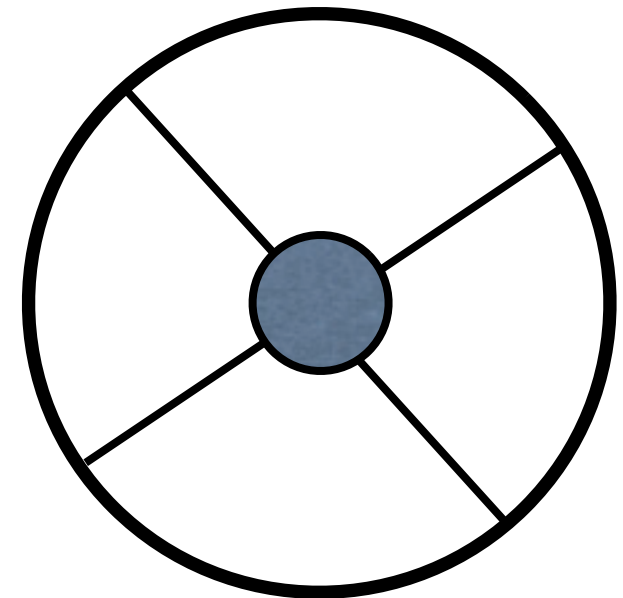
Minkowski



$$K_i^2 = -M_i^2$$

$$\leftarrow R \rightarrow \infty$$

Anti-de Sitter



$$M_i^2 R^2 = \Delta_i(\Delta_i - d)$$

[work in progress]

$$T(K_i) = \lim_{R \rightarrow \infty} \tilde{\mathcal{N}} M \left(\Delta_i = RM_i, \gamma_{ij} = R \frac{M_i M_j + K_i \cdot K_j}{\sum_l M_l} \right)$$

Scattering amplitude

Mellin amplitude