Towards an effective string theory for the flux-tube spectrum

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- In QCD quarks are confined in bound states called flux-tubes
- Long flux tubes behave pretty much like thin strings
	- Energy increases with separation: $V \approx \sigma r$, $\sqrt{\sigma} \approx 440$ MeV
	- At some point the string breaks String breaking –
	- We need dynamical fermions to observe string breaking
	- We work in pure gauge theory
- There are $D 2$ massless Goldstone modes from broken translation invariance in the $D-2$ directions
- There should be a Low Energy Effective String Theory model describing the energy spectrum of the flux tube
- Questions to be addressed
	- What is this effective string theory?
	- How good an approximation such an effective string theory is?
	- Are there additional massive excitations along the flux-tube?

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How to investigate

- Questions:
	- Is there a theoretical description in agreement with Lattice data for the flux-tube?
	- Is there a group of lattice data in striking disagreement with the theory?
	- What does this disagreement teach about the theory? Can it be extended?
- Choose a flux-tube set up:

We extracted the spectrum of closed flux-tubes in the Large $-N$ limit

The effective string theory of long strings

- Universal properties of the QCD string studied extensively [Dubovsky, Gorbenko, Aharony]
- Re-parametrisation invariance and D -dimensional target space Poincaré symmetry

$$
S = -\int d^2\sigma \sqrt{-\det h_{\alpha\beta}} \left[\ell_s^{-2} + \mathcal{R} + a_2 K^2 + b_2 K^\mu_{\alpha\beta} K^{\alpha\beta}_\mu + O(\ell_s^2)\right]
$$

- First non-trivial subleading correction starts at ℓ_s^2 level
- Hence, the perturbative perspectives of the theory are universally determined by Nambu-Goto action

$$
S_{\rm NG} = -\ell_s^{-2} \int d^2 \sigma \sqrt{-\det h_{\alpha\beta}} \,, \qquad h_{\alpha\beta} = \partial_\alpha X^\mu \partial_\beta X_\mu
$$

The Goddard-Goldstone-Rebbi-Thorn spectrum

We quantize the Closed bosonic string (Nambu-Goto) \bullet

$$
S_{\rm NG} = -\ell_s^{-2} \int d^2 \sigma \sqrt{-\det h_{\alpha\beta}}
$$

• The spectrum of a closed bosonic string compactified around a torus is given by:

$$
E_{\rm GGRT}(N_L,N_R) = \sqrt{\frac{4\pi^2(N_L-N_R)^2}{R^2} + \frac{R^2}{\ell_s^4} + \frac{4\pi}{\ell_s^2}\left(N_L+N_R-\frac{D-2}{12}\right) + \left(\frac{2\pi q}{R}\right)^2}
$$

- The spectrum is described by
	- 1. The winding momentum $p_{\parallel} = 2\pi q/R$ with $q = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2, \ldots$
	- 2. The total contribution of $N_L = \sum_{k>0} n_L(k) k$ and $N_R = \sum_{k'>0} n_R(k')k'$
	- 3. Level matching Constrain: $N_L N_R = q$

The expansion in $1/RI_s^{-1}$

• Topic received contributions since the early 80s

[M. Lüscher '81, J. Polchinski & A. Strominger '90, M. Lüscher & P. Weisz '04, O. Aharony et al '07 – 11, S. Dubovsky et al '12 – 19]

$$
E_n(R) = l_s^{-1}(Rl_s^{-1})
$$

+
$$
\frac{4\pi l_s^{-1}}{(Rl_s^{-1})} \left(n - \frac{D-2}{24}\right)
$$

-
$$
\frac{8\pi^2 l_s^{-1}}{(Rl_s^{-1})^3} \left(n - \frac{D-2}{24}\right)^2
$$

+
$$
\frac{32\pi^3 l_s^{-1}}{(Rl_s^{-1})^5} \left(n - \frac{D-2}{24}\right)^3 + \left(\frac{1}{(Rl_s^{-1})^7}\right)
$$

Linear Confinement

Lüscher 1980, Polchinski&Strominger 1991

Lüscher&Weisz 2004, Drummond 2004

Aharony&Karzbrun 2009

• Relation to the GGRT spectrum:

$$
E_n(R) = l_s^{-1}(Rl_s^{-1}) + \frac{l_s^{-1}c_1^{\text{GGRT}}}{(Rl_s^{-1})} + \frac{l_s^{-1}c_2^{\text{GGRT}}}{(Rl_s^{-1})^3} + \frac{l_s^{-1}c_3^{\text{GGRT}}}{(Rl_s^{-1})^5} + \left(\frac{1}{(Rl_s^{-1})^7}\right)
$$

= $E_{\text{GGRT}}(N_L = 0, N_R = 0, R) + \left(\frac{1}{(Rl_s^{-1})^7}\right)$

The expansion in $1/Rl_s^{-1}$ - the $D=2+1$ case

- In $D = 2 + 1$ only string like states have been observed so far
- $D = 3 + 1$ case is more complex and interesting to look for such states

- Thermodynamic Bethe Ansatz (ΤΒΑ)
	- \longrightarrow finite volume spectrum of a $(1 + 1) D$ integrable theory from 2 \rightarrow 2 scattering
- Leading spectrum is given by integrable theory of $D-2$ scalars with phase shift:

$$
e^{2i\delta(s)} = e^{is\ell_s^2/4}
$$

- Using TBA leads to the GGRT spectrum
- Phonon scattering amplitudes can be calculated with perturbation theory
- Diagonalization of the S –matrix:

$$
2\delta_{sym} = \frac{\ell_s^2 s}{4} - \frac{11\ell_s^4 s^2}{192\pi} + \frac{A-B}{256\pi^2} \ell_s^6 s^3 + O(s^4)
$$

\n
$$
2\delta_{anti} = \frac{\ell_s^2 s}{4} + \frac{11\ell_s^4 s^2}{192\pi} - \frac{A+B}{256\pi^2} \ell_s^6 s^3 + O(s^4)
$$

\n
$$
2\delta_{sing} = \frac{\ell_s^2 s}{4} + \frac{11\ell_s^4 s^2}{192\pi} + \frac{3A-B}{256\pi^2} \ell_s^6 s^3 + O(s^4)
$$

• TBA formulates with the generalized quantization condition around the circle:

$$
p_{li}R + \sum_{j} 2\delta_{a_i a_j} (p_{li}, p_{rj}) - i \sum_{b} \int_0^{\infty} \frac{dq}{2\pi} \frac{d2\delta_{a_i b} (ip_{li}, q)}{dq} \ln \left(1 - e^{-R\epsilon_r^b(q)} \right) = 2\pi N_{li},
$$

$$
p_{ri}R + \sum_{j} 2\delta_{a_j a_i} (p_{ri}, p_{lj}) + i \sum_{b} \int_0^{\infty} \frac{dq}{2\pi} \frac{d2\delta_{ba_i} (-ip_{ri}, q)}{dq} \ln \left(1 - e^{-R\epsilon_l^b(q)} \right) = 2\pi N_{ri},
$$

• The pseudo-energies $\epsilon_{l(r)}^a$ satisfy:

$$
\epsilon_l^a(q) = q + \frac{i}{R} \sum_i 2\delta_{ab_i} (q, -ip_{ri}) + \frac{1}{2\pi R} \sum_b \int_0^\infty dq' \frac{d2\delta_{ab} (q, q')}{dq'} \ln \left(1 - e^{-R\epsilon_r^b(q')} \right)
$$

$$
\epsilon_r^a(q) = q - \frac{i}{R} \sum_i 2\delta_{b_i a} (q, ip_{li}) + \frac{1}{2\pi R} \sum_b \int_0^\infty dq' \frac{d2\delta_{ba} (q, q')}{dq'} \ln \left(1 - e^{-R\epsilon_l^b(q')} \right)
$$

• The energy of a state is written as

$$
\Delta E = \sum_{i} p_{li} + \sum_{i} p_{ri} + \frac{1}{2\pi} \sum_{a} \int_{0}^{\infty} dq \ln \left(1 - e^{-Re_l^a(q)} \right) + \frac{1}{2\pi} \sum_{a} \int_{0}^{\infty} dq \ln \left(1 - e^{-Re_r^a(q)} \right)
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• + Approximations

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$$
\mathsf{ABA}\qquad p_{li}R + \sum_{j} 2\delta_{a_i a_j} (p_{li}, p_{rj}) \longrightarrow \sum_{b} \int_0^\infty \frac{dq}{2\pi} \frac{d2\delta_{a_i b} (ip_{li}, q)}{dq} \ln\left(1 - e^{-R\epsilon_r^b(q)}\right) = 2\pi N_{li},
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\n
$$
p_{ri}R + \sum_{j} 2\delta_{a_j a_i} (p_{ri}, p_{lj}) + i \sum_{b} \int_0^\infty \frac{dq}{2\pi} \frac{d2\delta_{ba_i} (-ip_{ri}, q)}{dq} \ln\left(1 - e^{-R\epsilon_l^b(q)}\right) = 2\pi N_{ri},
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$$

• + Approximations

- $T\bar{T}$ simplifies TBA because the undressed theory is free in the leading order $E(R,\ell_s) = \frac{1}{\mathcal{R}_0}(R + \frac{\ell_s^2}{2}E(R,\ell_s))E(R_0,0) + \frac{\ell_s^2}{2\mathcal{R}_0}P(R)P(R_0)$
- We neglect all the winding corrections in the undressed spectrum
- Momentum Quantization Condition becomes the Asymptotic Bethe Ansatz (ABA)
- We can investigate the spectrum of phonons massive excitations using ABA + $T\overline{T}$ deformations. [Chen, Conkey, Dubovsky, Hernández-Chifflet 2018]

Recipe

- Start with a world-sheet theory of free phonons (phonons can interact at subleading order in low energy limit) and massive particles.
- Compute the finite volume spectrum of this theory using ABA.
- Deform the theory by $T\overline{T}$ operator to the string scale, which will automatically incorporate the axion-interaction at leading order.

Theory – The Axionic String Ansatz (ASA)

- Lattice calculations demonstrate that there is one massive resonance
- We add a massive resonance [Dubovsky et al 2013]

$$
S_a = \int d^2 \sigma \sqrt{-h} \left(-\frac{1}{2} (\partial \phi)^2 - \frac{1}{2} m^2 \phi^2 + \frac{Q_\phi}{4} h^{\alpha \beta} \epsilon_{\mu \nu \lambda \rho} \partial_\alpha t^{\mu \nu} \partial_\beta t^{\lambda \rho} \phi \right)
$$

• ϕ is a pseudoscalar – the world-sheet axion $t^{\mu\nu} = \frac{\epsilon^{\alpha\nu}}{\sqrt{-h}} \partial_\alpha X^\mu \partial_\beta X^\nu$

• From Monte-Carlo data of 4D SU(3) Yang-Mills: $Q_{\phi} \approx 0.38 \pm 0.04$, $m \approx 1.85^{+0.02}_{-0.03} \ell_s^{-1}$

• Integrable coupling:
$$
Q_{\text{integrable}} = \sqrt{7/(16\pi)} \approx 0.373
$$

• Can we describe all states in $D = 3 + 1$ with the worldsheet fields only?

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Lattice Calculation in $D = 3 + 1$ – Extracting the spectrum

The spectrum is extracted using torelon correlation functions

$$
\langle \phi^{\dagger}(t = an_t)\phi(0) \rangle = \langle \phi^{\dagger}e^{-Han_t}\phi \rangle = \sum_i |c_i|^2 e^{-aE_i n_t}
$$

$$
\stackrel{t \to \infty}{=} |c_0|^2 e^{-aE_0 n_t}
$$

 n_t

Using the effective mass Provides the ground state $SU(6)$ at $\beta = 25.55$. $\lim_{t\to\infty}\left[-\ln\left(\frac{C(t)}{C(t-a)}\right)\right]=aE_0$ Example of effective masses $aE_{eff}(n_t)$ 0.6 $0.2\,$ • For excitation spectrum we use GEVP

Lattice Calculation in $D = 3 + 1$ – The Quantum Numbers

Quantum numbers

We build operators described by the quantum numbers of J , P_{\perp} , P_{\parallel}

• We use a large basis of operators with transverse deformations:

Results: the absolute ground state $N_L = N_R = 0$

$$
E_{\text{GGRT}}(N_L, N_R) = \sqrt{\frac{4\pi^2 (N_L - N_R)^2}{R^2} + \frac{R^2}{\ell_s^4} + \frac{4\pi}{\ell_s^2} \left(N_L + N_R - \frac{D-2}{12}\right)}
$$

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$$

 N_L, N_R

 $N_L = N_R = 0$

 $N_L = N_R = 1$

 $N_L=2, N_R=2$

 $|J|$

 $\overline{0}$ $\overline{0}$ $\overline{0}$

 $\sqrt{2}$ $\overline{2}$ $\bf{0}$ $\bf{0}$ $\bf{0}$ $\bf{0}$ $\bf{0}$ $\mathbf{1}$ $\mathbf{1}$ $\mathbf{1}$

 $\mathbf{1}$ $\overline{2}$ $\overline{2}$ $\overline{2}$ $\,2$ $\frac{2}{2}$ $\overline{3}$ $\boldsymbol{3}$ $\overline{4}$ $\overline{4}$

The Axionic States

Results: the 0⁻⁻state and the axion

Results: the 0⁺⁺ states and the axion

Results: the 1^+ , 1^- ground states

Results: The $J = 1$, $q = 1$ ground, 1st and 2nd excited states

$$
E_{\text{GGRT}}(N_L, N_R) = \sqrt{\frac{4\pi^2 (N_L - N_R)^2}{R^2} + \frac{R^2}{\ell_s^4} + \frac{4\pi}{\ell_s^2} \left(N_L + N_R - \frac{D-2}{12}\right) + \left(\frac{2\pi q}{R}\right)^2}
$$

Results: The 0^- , $q = 1$ ground and first excitations

$$
E_{\text{GGRT}}(N_L, N_R) = \sqrt{\frac{4\pi^2 (N_L - N_R)^2}{R^2} + \frac{R^2}{\ell_s^4} + \frac{4\pi}{\ell_s^2} \left(N_L + N_R - \frac{D-2}{12}\right) + \left(\frac{2\pi q}{R}\right)^2}
$$

Outlook

- Low-lying spectrum is given by an effective theory with one massive axion
- The interaction involving axions can be approximated by the $T\overline{T}$ deformation
- We observe two towers of states (phonon) + (axions + phonon) states
- There is an axion in $4D SU(N)$ Gauge Theories
- We have obtained the spectrum of closed flux-tubes in 4D $SU(N)$ Gauge Theories for all configurations of $\{J, P_\perp, P_\parallel\}$ using LGTs
- So far there is no effective string theory describing the open flux tube
- With collaborators we investigate the open flux tube [A. Sharifian poster]
- TBA Analysis is needed for the open flux tube

Thanks for your attention!!!