



PHYS 772 – The Standard Model of Particle Physics

Problem Set 8 – Solution

Due: Tuesday, April 08 at 4:00pm

Term: Spring 2025

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1. Can the following hadrons, in principle, exist within QCD? **(a)** qq , **(b)** $qq\bar{q}$, **(c)** $qq\bar{q}\bar{q}$, **(d)** gg , **(e)** qqg , **(f)** $q\bar{q}g$, **(g)** $qqqq\bar{q}$. **Hint:** Consider $SU(3)_c$ symmetry transformations of observable hadrons. Gluons transform under the adjoint representation of $SU(3)_c$.

Solution: Hadrons within QCD must be color neutral, that is a hadron h *must* belong to the **1** representation of $SU(3)_c$. So, all we need to find is if the given combinations of quarks and gluons admit a singlet representation. Recall that quarks lie in the **3** of $SU(3)_c$, antiquarks lie in the **3*** of $SU(3)_c$, and gluons lie in the **8** of $SU(3)_c$.

So, for (a)

$$qq \rightarrow \mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3} = \mathbf{3}^* + \mathbf{6} \not\supset \mathbf{1},$$

therefore qq is **not** a valid hadron.

For (b), we have (recalling that $\mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3}^* = \mathbf{1} + \mathbf{8}$),

$$qq\bar{q} \rightarrow \mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3}^* = \mathbf{3} \times (\mathbf{1} + \mathbf{8}) \not\supset \mathbf{1},$$

since the $\mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{8} = \mathbf{3} + \mathbf{6}^* + \mathbf{15}$ which was found in Problem Set 7. Therefore, $qq\bar{q}$ is **not** a valid hadron.

For (c), $qq\bar{q}\bar{q}$ is

$$\begin{aligned} qq\bar{q}\bar{q} &\rightarrow \mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3}^* \times \mathbf{3}^* = (\mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3}^*) \times (\mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3}^*), \\ &= (\mathbf{1} + \mathbf{8}) \times (\mathbf{1} + \mathbf{8}) \supset \mathbf{1}. \end{aligned}$$

So, $qq\bar{q}\bar{q}$ **is** a valid hadron. These are *tetraquarks*, which candidates have been observed in the heavy quark sector, e.g., the $Z_c(3900)$.

For (d), gg , we need the product $\mathbf{8} \times \mathbf{8}$. From lecture, we worked out this product, and found it contains a singlet representation. Therefore,

$$gg \rightarrow \mathbf{8} \times \mathbf{8} \supset \mathbf{1},$$

and thus is a valid hadron. These are *glueballs*, bound states of gluons. There is suspicion that higher mass states in the $J^{PC} = 0^{++}$ and 2^{++} sectors contain strong mixing into these glueball states.

For (e), qqg , we have $\mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{8} = \mathbf{3}^* + \mathbf{3}^* + \mathbf{6} + \mathbf{6} + \mathbf{15}^* + \mathbf{15}^* + \mathbf{24}$ from Problem Set 7. So,

$$qqg \rightarrow \mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{8} \not\supset \mathbf{1},$$

and thus is **not** a valid hadron.

For (f), $q\bar{q}g$, we have from Problem Set 7, $\mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3}^* \times \mathbf{8} = \mathbf{1} + \mathbf{8} + \mathbf{8} + \mathbf{8} + \mathbf{10} + \mathbf{10}^* + \mathbf{27}$. So,

$$q\bar{q}g \rightarrow \mathbf{3} \times \mathbf{3}^* \times \mathbf{8} \supset \mathbf{1}.$$

Therefore, $q\bar{q}g$ is a valid hadron. These are *hybrid* mesons, which had a substantial component from excited glue. The $\pi_1(1600)$ is an observed hybrid candidate.

2. Consider a non-abelian gauge field $A_\mu \equiv A_\mu^j T_j$, where $T_j \in \mathfrak{su}(N)$ are generators satisfying the Lie algebra $[T_j, T_k] = i c_{jkl} T_l$ with c_{jkl} being structure constants and $j, k, l = 1, 2, \dots, N^2 - 1$. Under a local gauge transformation, $U = \exp(i\alpha^j(x)T_j)$ where $\alpha_j(x) \in \mathbb{R}$ for every j , the gauge fields transform as

$$A_\mu \rightarrow U A_\mu U^{-1} + \frac{i}{g} (\partial_\mu U) U^{-1}.$$

Show that under infinitesimal transformations, $\alpha^a(x) \ll 1$, the gauge fields transform as

$$A_\mu^j \rightarrow A_\mu^j - \frac{1}{g} \partial_\mu \alpha^j(x) - c_{jkl} \alpha^k A_\mu^l + \mathcal{O}(\alpha^2).$$

Solution: Taking $\alpha^j(x) \ll 1$ for all $j = 1, 2, \dots, N^2 - 1$, we can Taylor expand the exponential

$$U = \exp(i\alpha^j(x)T_j) = 1 + i\alpha^j(x)T_j + \mathcal{O}(\alpha^2).$$

So, the gauge transformation is

$$\begin{aligned} A_\mu^j T_j &\rightarrow U A_\mu^j T_j U^{-1} + \frac{i}{g} (\partial_\mu U) U^{-1}, \\ &= (1 + i\alpha^j T_j + \mathcal{O}(\alpha^2)) A_\mu^k T_k (1 - i\alpha^l T_l + \mathcal{O}(\alpha^2)) \\ &\quad + \frac{i}{g} \partial_\mu (1 + i\alpha^j T_j + \mathcal{O}(\alpha^2)) (1 + i\alpha^k T_k + \mathcal{O}(\alpha^2)), \\ &= A_\mu^j T_j + i\alpha^k A_\mu^l (T_k T_l - T_l T_k) - \frac{1}{g} \partial_\mu \alpha^j T_j + \mathcal{O}(\alpha^2), \\ &= A_\mu^j T_j + i\alpha^k A_\mu^l (i c_{klj} T_j) - \frac{1}{g} \partial_\mu \alpha^j T_j + \mathcal{O}(\alpha^2), \\ &= \left(A_\mu^j - c_{jkl} \alpha^k A_\mu^l - \frac{1}{g} \partial_\mu \alpha^j + \mathcal{O}(\alpha^2) \right) T_j. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the infinitesimal transformation gives

$$A_\mu^j \rightarrow A_\mu^j - \frac{1}{g} \partial_\mu \alpha^j - c_{jkl} \alpha^k A_\mu^l + \mathcal{O}(\alpha^2).$$

3. The $SU(3)_c$ Yang-Mills Lagrange density for interacting gluon fields is given by $\mathcal{L}_{\text{YM}} = -\frac{1}{2} \text{tr} (G_{\mu\nu} G^{\mu\nu})$, where the field-strength tensor is defined as $G_{\mu\nu} = \partial_\mu A_\nu - \partial_\nu A_\mu + ig_s [A_\mu, A_\nu]$ with $A_\mu = A_\mu^a \lambda_a/2$ are the gluon gauge fields and λ_a are the Gell-Mann matrices. Write the Lagrange density as a free part $\mathcal{L}_{\text{YM}}^{(\text{free})}$ and an interacting part $\mathcal{L}_{\text{YM}}^{(\text{int})}$ which depends on the strong coupling g_s .

Solution: Contracting the field strength tensors,

$$\begin{aligned} G_{\mu\nu} G^{\mu\nu} &= \left(\partial_\mu A_\nu - \partial_\nu A_\mu + ig_s [A_\mu, A_\nu] \right) \left(\partial^\mu A^\nu - \partial^\nu A^\mu + ig_s [A^\mu, A^\nu] \right), \\ &= (\partial_\mu A_\nu - \partial_\nu A_\mu) (\partial^\mu A^\nu - \partial^\nu A^\mu) \\ &\quad + ig_s (\partial_\mu A_\nu - \partial_\nu A_\mu) [A^\mu, A^\nu] + ig_s [A_\mu, A_\nu] (\partial^\mu A^\nu - \partial^\nu A^\mu) \\ &\quad - g_s^2 [A_\mu, A_\nu] [A^\mu, A^\nu]. \end{aligned}$$

Now, we use that $A_\mu = A_\mu^a T_a$ where $T_a = \lambda_a/2$, so

$$\begin{aligned} G_{\mu\nu} G^{\mu\nu} &= (\partial_\mu A_\nu^a - \partial_\nu A_\mu^a) (\partial^\mu A^{\nu b} - \partial^\nu A^{\mu b}) T_a T_b \\ &\quad + ig_s (\partial_\mu A_\nu^a - \partial_\nu A_\mu^a) A^{\mu b} A^{\nu c} T_a [T_b, T_c] + ig_s A_\mu^a A_\nu^b (\partial_\mu A^{\nu c} - \partial_\nu A^{\mu c}) [T_a, T_b] T_c \\ &\quad - g_s^2 A_\mu^a A_\nu^b A^{\mu c} A^{\nu d} [T_a, T_b] [T_c, T_d]. \end{aligned}$$

Furthermore, $[T_a, T_b] = if_{abc} T_c$, so

$$\begin{aligned} G_{\mu\nu} G^{\mu\nu} &= (\partial_\mu A_\nu^a - \partial_\nu A_\mu^a) (\partial^\mu A^{\nu b} - \partial^\nu A^{\mu b}) T_a T_b \\ &\quad + ig_s (\partial_\mu A_\nu^a - \partial_\nu A_\mu^a) A^{\mu b} A^{\nu c} T_a (if_{bcd} T_d) + ig_s A_\mu^a A_\nu^b (\partial_\mu A^{\nu c} - \partial_\nu A^{\mu c}) (if_{abd} T_d) T_c \\ &\quad - g_s^2 A_\mu^a A_\nu^b A^{\mu c} A^{\nu d} (if_{abe} T_e) (if_{cdf} T_f). \end{aligned}$$

Now, taking the trace, we use $\text{tr}(T_a T_b) = \text{tr}(\lambda_a \lambda_b)/4 = \delta_{ab}/2$, so the Yang-Mills Lagrange density is

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{L}_{\text{YM}} &= -\frac{1}{4} (\partial_\mu A_\nu^a - \partial_\nu A_\mu^a) (\partial^\mu A^{\nu a} - \partial^\nu A^{\mu a}) \\ &\quad - \frac{1}{4} g_s f_{bca} (\partial_\mu A_\nu^a - \partial_\nu A_\mu^a) A^{\mu b} A^{\nu c} - \frac{1}{4} g_s f_{abc} A_\mu^a A_\nu^b (\partial_\mu A^{\nu c} - \partial_\nu A^{\mu c}) \\ &\quad + \frac{1}{4} g_s^2 f_{abe} f_{cde} A_\mu^a A_\nu^b A^{\mu c} A^{\nu d}, \\ &= -\frac{1}{4} (\partial_\mu A_\nu^a - \partial_\nu A_\mu^a) (\partial^\mu A^{\nu a} - \partial^\nu A^{\mu a}) \\ &\quad - \frac{1}{2} g_s f_{abc} (\partial_\mu A_\nu^a - \partial_\nu A_\mu^a) A^{\mu b} A^{\nu c} + \frac{1}{4} g_s^2 f_{abe} f_{cde} A_\mu^a A_\nu^b A^{\mu c} A^{\nu d}, \\ &\equiv \mathcal{L}_{\text{YM}}^{(\text{free})} + \mathcal{L}_{\text{YM}}^{(\text{int})}, \end{aligned}$$

where we used $f_{bca} = f_{abc}$ from the antisymmetry properties of the structure constants. So, the

free and interacting Lagrange densities are

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{YM}}^{(\text{free})} = -\frac{1}{4} (\partial_\mu A_\nu^a - \partial_\nu A_\mu^a) (\partial^\mu A^{\nu a} - \partial^\nu A^{\mu a}) ,$$

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{YM}}^{(\text{int})} = -\frac{1}{2} g_s f_{abc} (\partial_\mu A_\nu^a - \partial_\nu A_\mu^a) A^{\mu b} A^{\nu c} + \frac{1}{4} g_s^2 f_{abe} f_{cde} A_\mu^a A_\nu^b A^{\mu c} A^{\nu d} .$$

4. We can learn about the structure of hadrons through interactions with electromagnetic probes. Consider elastic $e^- p \rightarrow e^- p$ for incident electron energies $E_e \gg m_p$. At leading order in the QED coupling, the process is dominated by one-photon exchange. The QED vertex for the proton can in general be written as

$$\Gamma_p^\mu(P', P) = \gamma^\mu F_1(Q^2) + \frac{i}{2m_p} \sigma^{\mu\nu} q_\nu F_2(Q^2) ,$$

where P and P' are the initial and final momentum of the proton, respectively, and $q = P' - P$ is the momentum transfer by the photon with virtuality $Q^2 \equiv -q^2$. The form-factors F_1 and F_2 encode all the non-perturbative QCD interactions with the photon.

- (a) Show that, in the initial proton rest frame, that the ratio of the final to initial electron energy is

$$\frac{E'_e}{E_e} = \left(1 + \frac{2E_e}{m_p} \sin^2 \frac{\theta}{2} \right)^{-1} ,$$

where E_e and E'_e are the initial and final electron energies, respectively, and θ is the scattering angle defined with respect to the incident electron momentum.

Solution: In the target system for relativistic electrons, $p_e = (E_e, \mathbf{p}_e)$, $p'_e = (E'_e, \mathbf{p}'_e)$ where $|\mathbf{p}_e| = E_e$, $|\mathbf{p}'_e| = E'_e$ and $\hat{\mathbf{p}}_e \cdot \hat{\mathbf{p}}'_e = \cos \theta$. The kinematics for the initial and final state protons are $P = (m_p, \mathbf{0})$ and $P' = (E'_p, \mathbf{P}')$. Conservation of energy yields

$$E_e + m_p = E'_e + E'_p \implies (E_e + m_p - E'_e)^2 = m_p^2 + \mathbf{P}'^2 ,$$

while conservation of momentum yields

$$\mathbf{p}_e = \mathbf{p}'_e + \mathbf{P}' \implies \mathbf{P}'^2 = (\mathbf{p}_e - \mathbf{p}'_e)^2 = E_e^2 + E_e'^2 - 2E_e E'_e \cos \theta ,$$

thus we find

$$\begin{aligned} (E_e + m_p - E'_e)^2 &= m_p^2 + E_e^2 + E_e'^2 - 2E_e E'_e \cos \theta , \\ \implies 2m_p E_e - 2m_p E'_e - 2E_e E'_e &= -2E_e E'_e \cos \theta , \\ \implies E_e - E'_e &= \frac{E_e E'_e}{m_p} (1 - \cos \theta) , \\ \implies \frac{E_e}{E'_e} - 1 &= \frac{2E_e}{m_p} \sin^2 \frac{\theta}{2} , \end{aligned}$$

where we used the trigonometric identity $2 \sin^2 \theta/2 = 1 - \cos \theta$. Solving for E'_e/E_e we recover the expression desired.

(b) Show that, in the initial proton rest frame, that the differential cross-section is

$$\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} = \frac{\alpha^2}{4E_e^2 \sin^4 \frac{\theta}{2}} \frac{E'_e}{E_e} \left[\left(F_1^2 + \frac{Q^2}{4m_p^2} F_2^2 \right) \cos^2 \frac{\theta}{2} + \frac{Q^2}{4m_p^2} (F_1 + F_2)^2 \sin^2 \frac{\theta}{2} \right],$$

where Ω is the solid angle defined in the initial proton rest frame. **Hint:** Use the Gordon identity to rewrite the proton-photon vertex as

$$\Gamma^\mu = \gamma^\mu (F_1 + F_2) - \frac{(P' + P)^\mu}{2m_p} F_2,$$

for simpler trace relations.

Solution: The scattering amplitude at leading order in the QED coupling is

$$i\mathcal{M} = -(-ie)^2 \bar{u}(\mathbf{p}'_e, r') \gamma_\mu u(\mathbf{p}_e, r) \frac{i}{Q^2} \bar{u}(\mathbf{P}', s') \Gamma_p^\mu u(\mathbf{P}, s),$$

so that the spin-averaged matrix element is

$$\begin{aligned} \langle |\mathcal{M}|^2 \rangle &= \frac{1}{4} \sum_{s, s'} \sum_{r, r'} |\mathcal{M}|^2, \\ &= \frac{(4\pi\alpha)^2}{4Q^4} L_{\mu\nu} H^{\mu\nu}, \end{aligned}$$

where the lepton tensor $L_{\mu\nu}$ is

$$L_{\mu\nu} = \text{tr} \left[\gamma_\mu \not{p}_e \gamma_\nu \not{p}'_e \right],$$

and the hadron tensor $H^{\mu\nu}$ is

$$H^{\mu\nu} = \text{tr} \left[\Gamma_p^\mu (\not{P} + m_p) \Gamma_p^\nu (\not{P}' + m_p) \right].$$

Using the trace theorems, the lepton tensor evaluates to

$$L_{\mu\nu} = 4(p_e^\mu p_e'^\nu + p_e^\nu p_e'^\mu - g^{\mu\nu} p_e \cdot p'_e),$$

with $p_e \cdot p'_e = -(p_e - p'_e)^2/2 = Q^2/2$. Using the Gordon identity, the Hadronic tensor can be written as

$$\begin{aligned} H^{\mu\nu} &= \text{tr} \left[\Gamma_p^\mu (\not{P} + m_p) \Gamma_p^\nu (\not{P}' + m_p) \right], \\ &= \text{tr} \left[\left(\gamma^\mu (F_1 + F_2) - \frac{(P' + P)^\mu}{2m_p} F_2 \right) (\not{P} + m_p) \left(\gamma^\nu (F_1 + F_2) - \frac{(P' + P)^\nu}{2m_p} F_2 \right) (\not{P}' + m_p) \right]. \end{aligned}$$

To perform the trace, we use **FeynCalc** and subsequently contract with the leptonic tensor to find

$$\langle |\mathcal{M}|^2 \rangle = \frac{4(4\pi\alpha)^2 m_p^2}{Q^4} \left[-\frac{Q^2}{2m_p^2} (F_1 + F_2)^2 + 4 \left(F_1^2 + \frac{Q^2}{4m_p^2} F_2^2 \right) E_e E'_e \cos^2 \frac{\theta}{2} \right],$$

where we have additionally used $Q^2 = -q^2 = -(p_e - p'_e)^2 = -2E_e E'_e (1 - \cos \theta) = -4E_e E'_e \sin^2 \theta/2$. Some additional manipulations lead to the form

$$\langle |\mathcal{M}|^2 \rangle = \frac{(16\pi\alpha)^2 m_p^2}{Q^4} E_e E'_e \left[\left(F_1^2 + \frac{Q^2}{4m_p^2} F_2^2 \right) \cos^2 \frac{\theta}{2} + \frac{Q^2}{4m_p^2} (F_1 + F_2)^2 \sin^2 \frac{\theta}{2} \right].$$

Now, the differential cross section in the lab frame is given by

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} &= \frac{1}{(8\pi)^2 m_p E_e} \frac{E_e'^2}{E'_e (E_e + m_p) - E_e E'_e \cos \theta} \langle |\mathcal{M}|^2 \rangle, \\ &= \frac{1}{(8\pi)^2 m_p E_e} \frac{E_e'^2}{m_p E_e} \langle |\mathcal{M}|^2 \rangle. \end{aligned}$$

where we used $m_p(E_e - E'_e) = E_e E'_e (1 - \cos \theta)$. Therefore, substituting the spin-averaged matrix element and using $Q^2 = -4E_e E'_e \sin^2 \theta/2$, we find

$$\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} = \frac{\alpha^2}{4E_e^2 \sin^4 \frac{\theta}{2}} \left(\frac{E'_e}{E_e} \right) \left[\left(F_1^2 + \frac{Q^2}{4m_p^2} F_2^2 \right) \cos^2 \frac{\theta}{2} + \frac{Q^2}{4m_p^2} (F_1 + F_2)^2 \sin^2 \frac{\theta}{2} \right],$$

as desired.

- (c) Simplify the differential cross section for following limits: (i) the static source limit $m_p \rightarrow \infty$, and the (ii) structureless proton limit.

Solution: In the static source limit, $m_p \rightarrow \infty$, we find that $E_e = E'_e$ and $Q^2/m_p \rightarrow 0$, thus

$$\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} = \frac{\alpha^2}{4E_e^2 \sin^4 \frac{\theta}{2}} \cos^2 \frac{\theta}{2},$$

which is the Mott cross section with $F_1 = 1$ when $Q^2 = 0$ since $E_e = E'_e$. For a structureless proton, we have identically $F_1 = 1$ and $F_2 = 0$, thus

$$\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} = \frac{\alpha^2}{4E_e^2 \sin^4 \frac{\theta}{2}} \left(\frac{E'_e}{E_e} \right) \left[\cos^2 \frac{\theta}{2} + \frac{Q^2}{4m_p^2} \sin^2 \frac{\theta}{2} \right].$$

- (d) The Mott cross section (modified for proton recoil) is that of an electron on a spinless target,

$$\left(\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} \right)_{\text{Mott}} = \frac{\alpha^2}{4E_e^2 \sin^4 \frac{\theta}{2}} \left(\frac{E'_e}{E_e} \right) \cos^2 \frac{\theta}{2}.$$

Show that the electron-proton scattering cross section can be written in the Rosenbluth form as

$$\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} = \left(\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} \right)_{\text{Mott}} \left[\frac{G_E^2 + \tau G_M^2}{1 + \tau} + 2\tau G_M^2 \tan^2 \frac{\theta}{2} \right],$$

where $\tau = Q^2/4m_p^2$ and we have introduced the Sachs electric and magnetic form factors,

$$G_E = F_1 - \tau F_2, \quad G_M = F_1 + F_2.$$

The Sachs form factors are often easier to measure, and offer interpretations for Fourier transforms of electromagnetic charge distributions. Show that $G_E(0) = 1$ (unit proton charge) and $G_M(0) = \mu_p$ (proton magnetic moment).

Solution: Given the definition of the Sachs' form-factors, we can solve for F_1 and F_2 ,

$$F_1 = \frac{G_E + \tau G_M}{1 + \tau}, \quad F_2 = \frac{G_M - G_E}{1 + \tau}.$$

Squaring each and summing them,

$$F_1^2 = \frac{1}{(1 + \tau)^2} (G_E^2 + \tau^2 G_M^2 + 2\tau G_E G_M), \quad F_2^2 = \frac{1}{(1 + \tau)^2} (G_E^2 + G_M^2 - 2G_E G_M),$$

$$\Rightarrow F_1^2 + \tau F_2^2 = \frac{1}{(1 + \tau)^2} ((1 + \tau)G_E^2 + \tau(1 + \tau)G_M^2) = \frac{G_E^2 + \tau G_M^2}{1 + \tau}.$$

So, the differential cross section is given by

$$\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} = \left(\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} \right)_{\text{Mott}} \left[\frac{G_E^2 + \tau G_M^2}{1 + \tau} + 2\tau G_M^2 \tan^2 \frac{\theta}{2} \right],$$

as desired.

Recall that $F_1(0) = 1$ and $F_2(0) = \mu_p - 1$. Thus, we have $G_E(0) = 1$ and $G_M(0) = \mu_p$ identically.