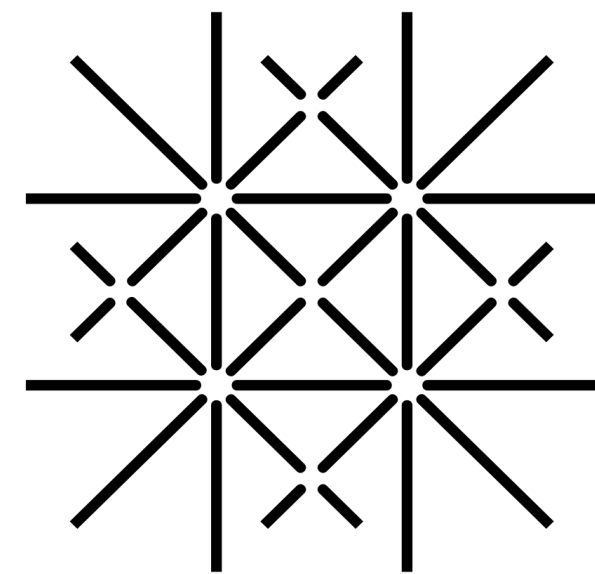


Froggatt-Nielsen ALP

Alessandro Valenti

University of Basel

Based on [2407.02998](#) in collaboration with Admir Greljo, Aleks Smolkovič



**Universität
Basel**

PLANCK 2025

Padova
May 27th, 2025

What is the lowest FN scale compatible with present experimental constraints?

**What is the lowest FN scale compatible
with present experimental constraints?**

Answer:

**The current energy frontier
(TeV)**

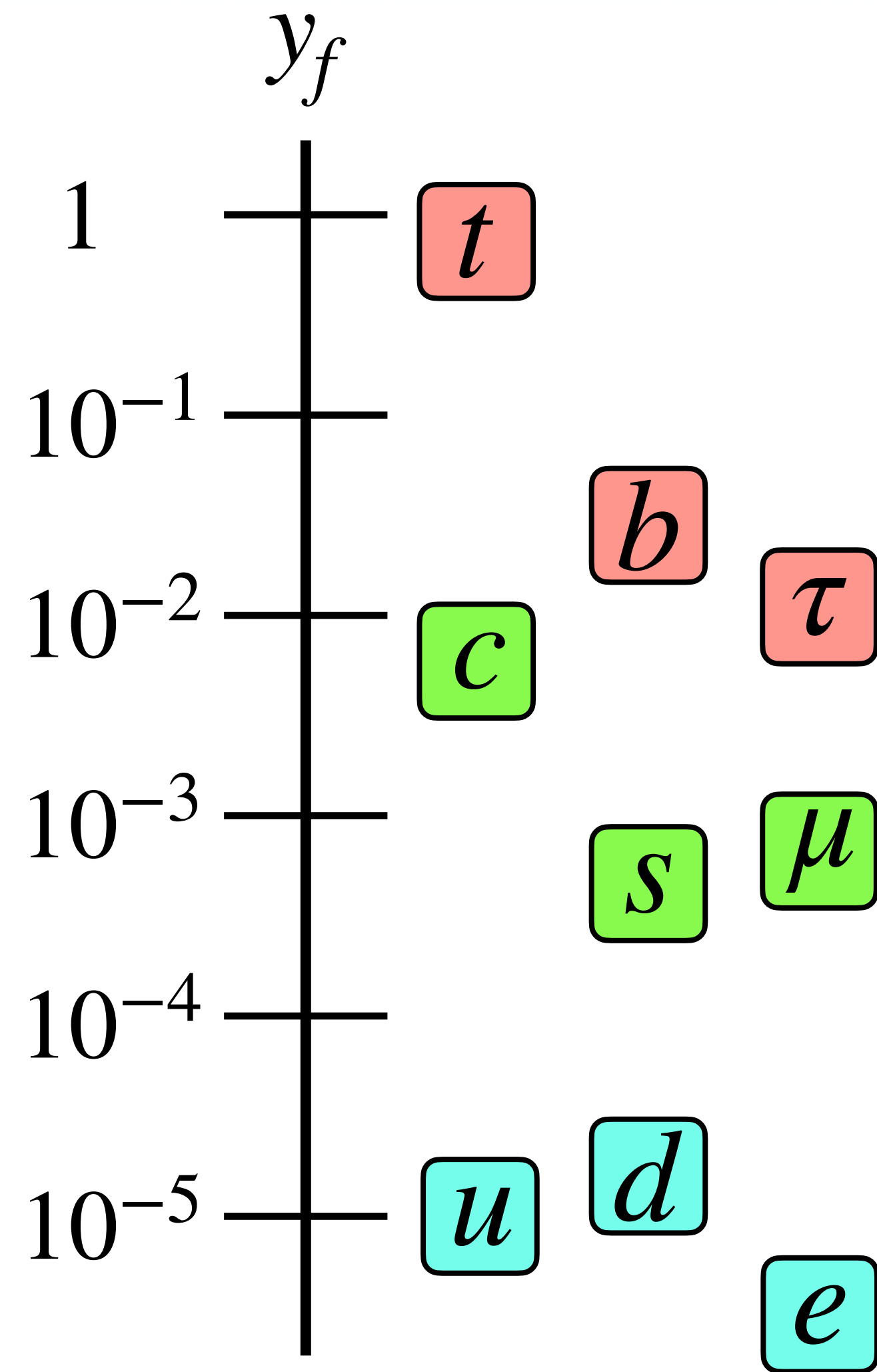
Outline

1. Introduction: flavor puzzle and Froggatt-Nielsen models
2. Z_N Froggatt-Nielsen
3. The minimal model: Z_4
 - Setup
 - Phenomenology
4. Conclusion

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1. The flavor puzzle and Froggatt-Nielsen models



Standard Model

$SU(3) \times SU(2) \times U(1)$ gauge theory, 3 generations

Gauge sector: $U(3)^5$ symmetric

Higgs sector (Yukawa): $U(3)^5$ broken (partially)

Why is the breaking so hierarchical?

The flavor puzzle

1. The flavor puzzle and Froggatt-Nielsen models

Froggatt-Nielsen

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{SM}} \supset \sum_{F,f} y_{ij}^f \bar{F}_{L,i} H f_{R,j} + \{\tilde{H}\} + \text{h.c.}$$

FN idea: $y_{ij}^f \longrightarrow x_{ij}^f \epsilon^{n_{ij}^f} \quad x_{ij}^f \sim \mathcal{O}(1)$

$$U(1)_{\text{FN}}$$

Froggatt, Nielsen (1978)

$$[F_i] = Q_i^F \quad [f_j] = Q_j^f \quad [\epsilon] = 1$$

$U(1)_{\text{FN}}$ -breaking spurion

Selection rules $\leftrightarrow n_{ij}^f \leftrightarrow$ flavor pattern

1. The flavor puzzle and Froggatt-Nielsen models

Froggatt-Nielsen

Dynamical realization: $\epsilon \longrightarrow \frac{\langle \Phi \rangle}{M} \quad [\Phi] = 1$

$$\left(y_{ij}^f \longrightarrow x_{ij}^f \epsilon^{n_{ij}^f} \right)$$

$$\Phi = \frac{v_\Phi + \rho}{\sqrt{2}} e^{i \frac{a}{v_\Phi}} \quad \left(\langle \Phi \rangle = \frac{v_\Phi}{\sqrt{2}} \right)$$

$\downarrow$

$$U(1)_{\text{FN}} \text{ SSB} \longleftrightarrow \textbf{ALP } a$$

1. The flavor puzzle and Froggatt-Nielsen models

Froggatt-Nielsen

- If $U(1)_{\text{FN}}$ has anomaly with QCD $\longrightarrow$ Strong CP for free!
flaxion/axiflaxon

Calibbi, Goertz, Redigolo,
Ziegler, Zupan (2016)

Ema, Hamaguchi,
Moroi, Nakayama (2016)

1. The flavor puzzle and Froggatt-Nielsen models

Froggatt-Nielsen

- If $U(1)_{\text{FN}}$ has anomaly with QCD $\longrightarrow$ Strong CP for free!

flaxion/axiflapon

- Bound: $\mathcal{L} \sim \epsilon^{n_{sd}} e^{ia/v_\Phi} \bar{s}_L H d_R + \text{h.c.}$

Calibbi, Goertz, Redigolo,
Ziegler, Zupan (2016)

Ema, Hamaguchi,
Moroi, Nakayama (2016)

E787+E949 (2007)
95% CL

$$\text{Br}(K^+ \rightarrow \pi^+ a) < 9.5 \times 10^{-11}$$

$$\Rightarrow v_\Phi \gtrsim 10^{12} \text{ GeV} \times \epsilon^{n_{sd}}$$

Camalich, Pospelov, Vuong,
Ziegler, Zupan (2020)

Can we lower this?

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Discrete Froggatt-Nielsen models

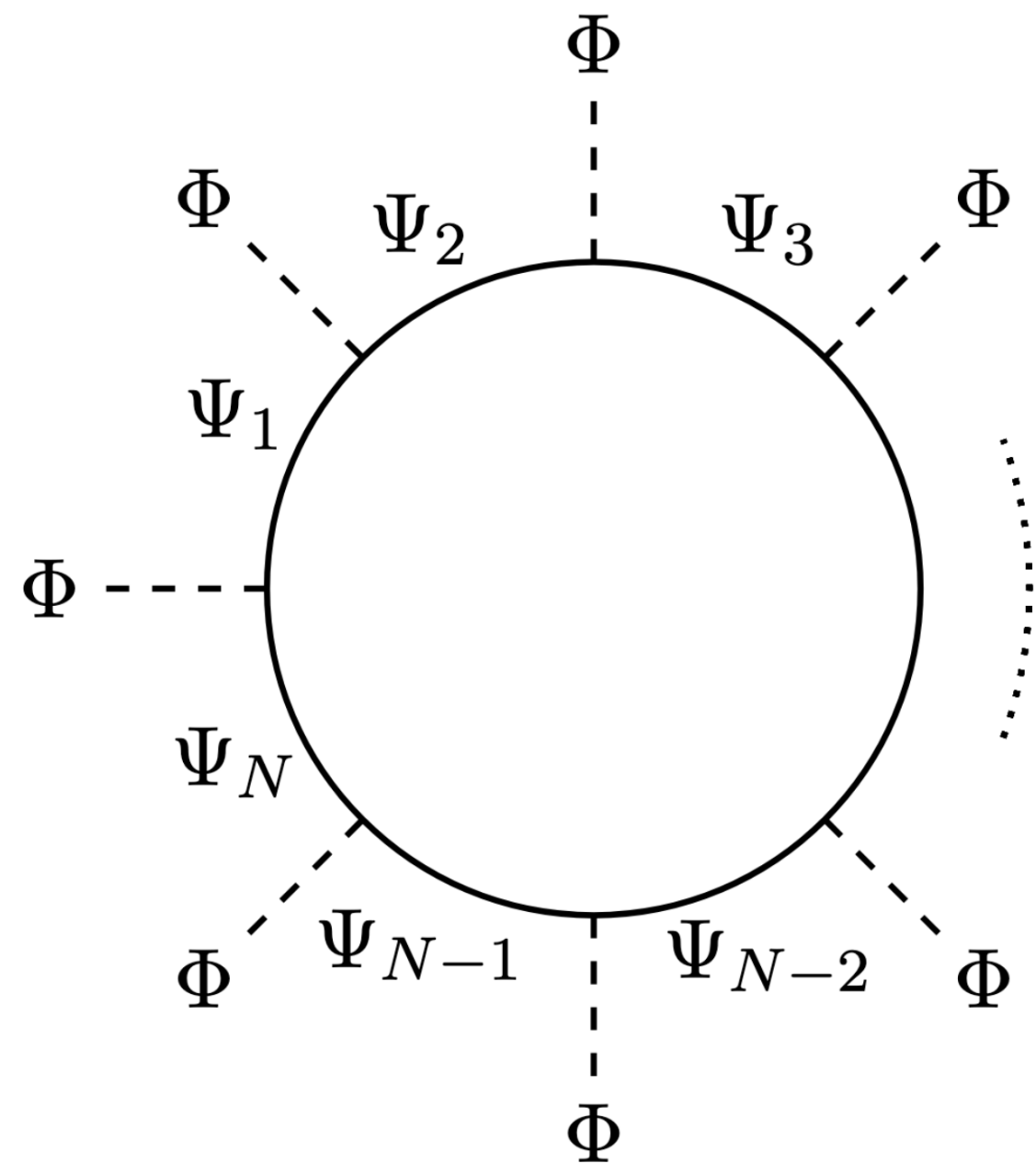
Simplest setup: $U(1)_{\text{FN}} \rightarrow Z_N \text{ symmetry}$

$$\mathcal{L} \supset -\frac{1}{4} \frac{\lambda'_N}{M_{\Phi}^{N-4}} [\Phi^N + (\Phi^*)^N]$$

Discrete Froggatt-Nielsen models

Simplest setup:

$$U(1)_{\text{FN}} \rightarrow Z_N \text{ symmetry}$$



$$\mathcal{L} \supset -\frac{1}{4} \frac{\lambda'_N}{M_{\Phi}^{N-4}} [\Phi^N + (\Phi^*)^N]$$

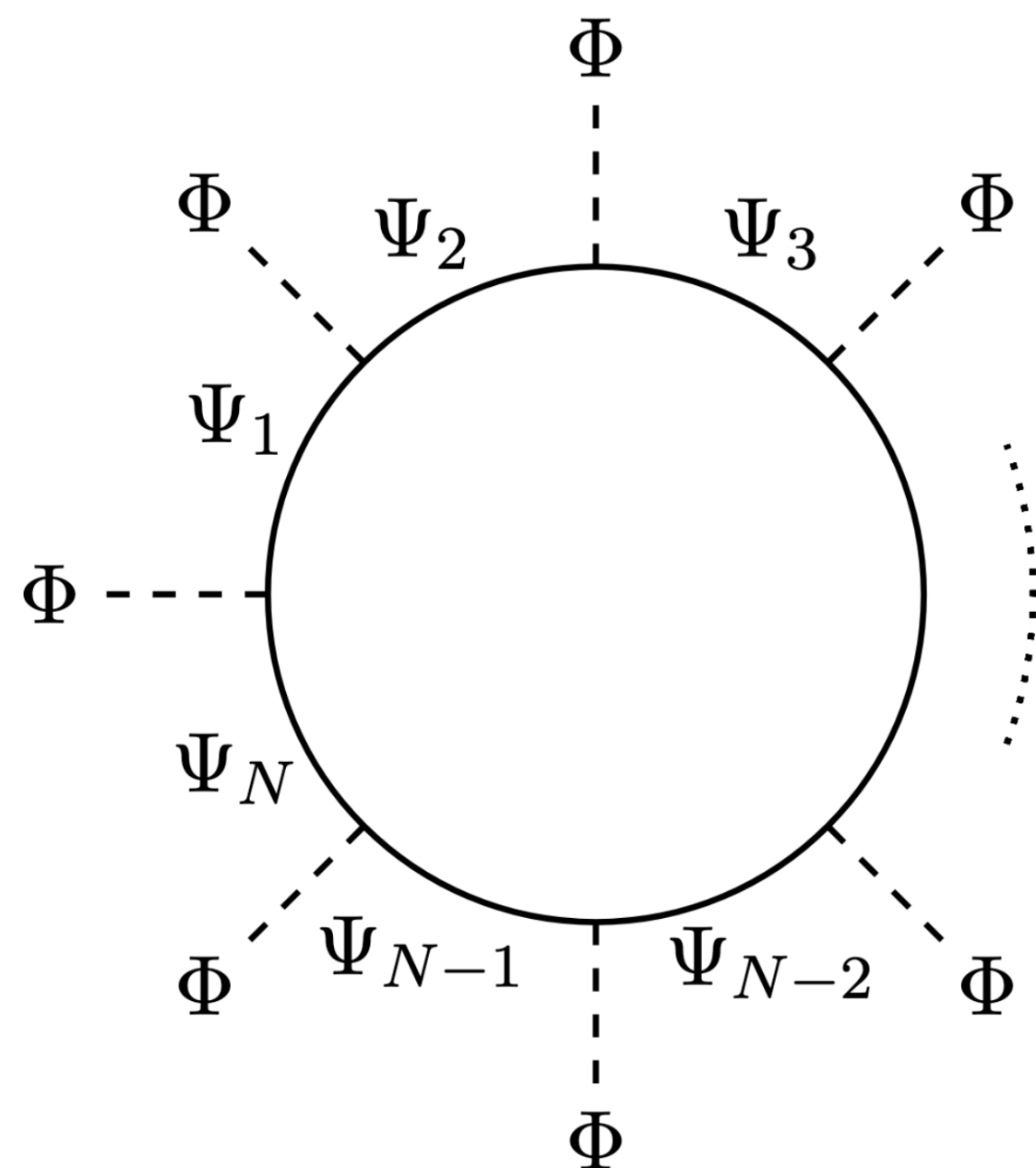
Concrete models:

$$M_{\Phi} \sim M$$

Discrete Froggatt-Nielsen models

Simplest setup:

$$U(1)_{\text{FN}} \rightarrow \textcolor{red}{Z}_N \text{ symmetry}$$



$$\mathcal{L} \supset -\frac{1}{4} \frac{\lambda'_N}{M_{\Phi}^{N-4}} [\Phi^N + (\Phi^*)^N]$$

$$m_a^2 \sim \textcolor{red}{\lambda'_N v_{\Phi}^2 \left(\frac{v_{\Phi}}{M_{\Phi}} \right)^{N-4}} \sim \textcolor{red}{\lambda'_N v_{\Phi}^2 \epsilon^{N-4}} \quad \left(\lambda'_N \sim \frac{\prod_k y_k}{16\pi^2} \right)$$

Concrete models:

$$M_{\Phi} \sim M$$

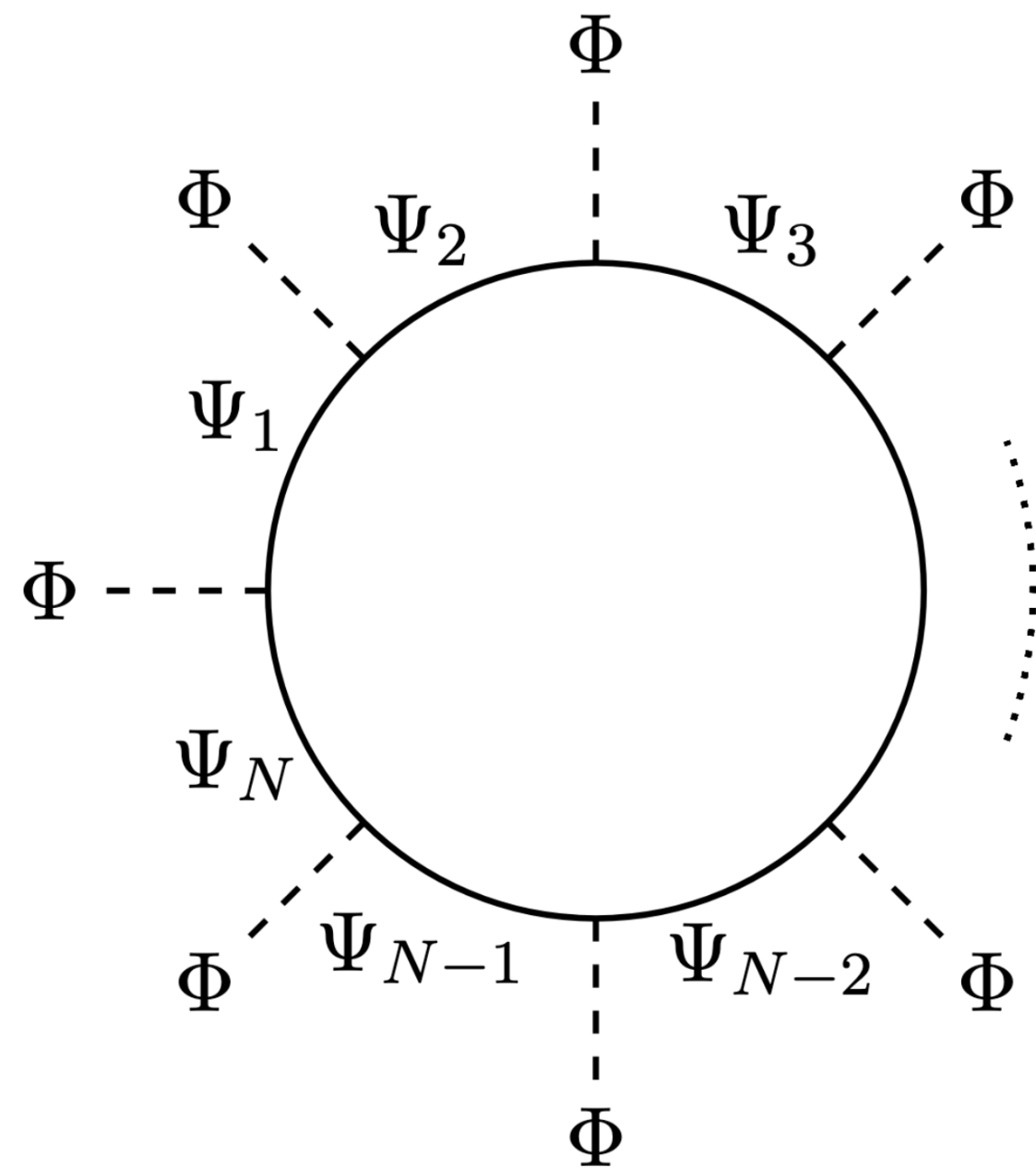
$K \rightarrow \pi a$ not kinematically allowed!

(Strong CP solved externally)

Discrete Froggatt-Nielsen models

Simplest setup:

$$U(1)_{\text{FN}} \rightarrow \textcolor{red}{Z}_N \text{ symmetry}$$



Concrete models:

$$M_\Phi \sim M$$

Important: $\Phi^{n_{ij}^f} \sim (\Phi^*)^{N-n_{ij}^f} \quad (Z_N)$

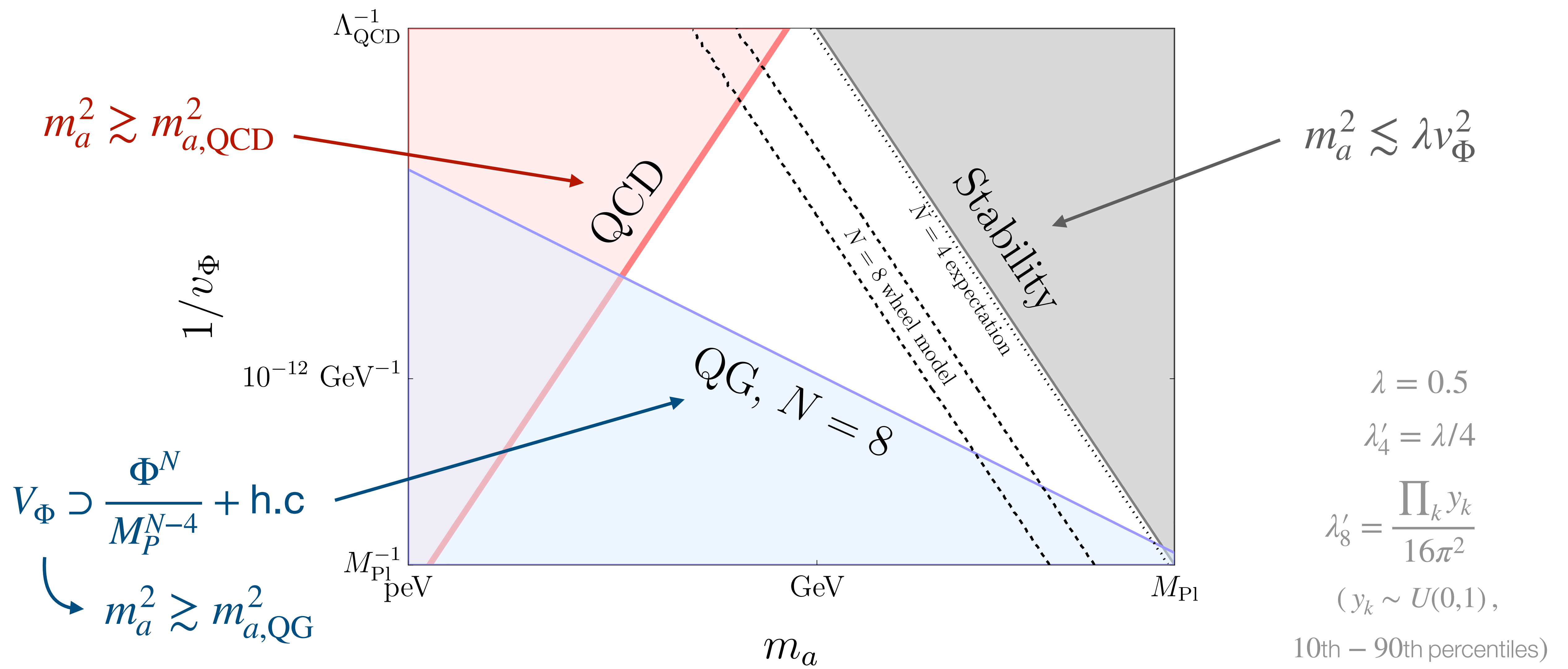
$$\textcolor{red}{\max} [n_{ij}^f] \leq N/2$$

required to not spoil hierarchies

(Exceptions e.g. SUSY)

2. Discrete Froggatt-Nielsen

Theory constraints (no fine-tunings)



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3. The minimal model: Z_4

Minimal model: Z_4 “ $q + \bar{e}$ ”

$$(\max(n_{ij}) \leq N/2)$$

Z_4 charge: $q_1, \bar{e}_1 \sim 2 \mid q_2, \bar{e}_2 \sim 1 \mid q_3, \bar{e}_3 \sim 0$

$$Y_d = \begin{pmatrix} 0.55\epsilon^2 & 2.5\epsilon^2 & (0.73 - 1.8i)\epsilon^2 \\ 0 & 0.049\epsilon & 0.10\epsilon \\ 0 & 0 & 0.011 \end{pmatrix} \quad Y_u = \begin{pmatrix} 0.25\epsilon^2 & z_{u_2}\epsilon^2 & z_{u_3}\epsilon^2 \\ 0 & 0.57\epsilon & y_{u_3}\epsilon \\ 0 & 0 & 0.71 \end{pmatrix} \quad Y_e = \begin{pmatrix} 0.15\epsilon^2 & 0 & 0 \\ z_{e_2}\epsilon^2 & 0.14\epsilon & 0 \\ z_{e_3}\epsilon^2 & y_{e_3}\epsilon & 0.01 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\begin{cases} y_{u,d,e} \sim \epsilon^2 & \text{(1st gen)} \\ y_{c,s,\mu} \sim \epsilon & \text{(2nd gen)} \\ y_{t,b,\tau} \sim 1 & \text{(3rd gen)} \end{cases}$$

$$\epsilon \simeq 4.4 \times 10^{-3}$$

- “Acceptable” fit ($O(10^{-2})$ tuning)
- Pattern analogous to $U(2)_{q+e}$ models

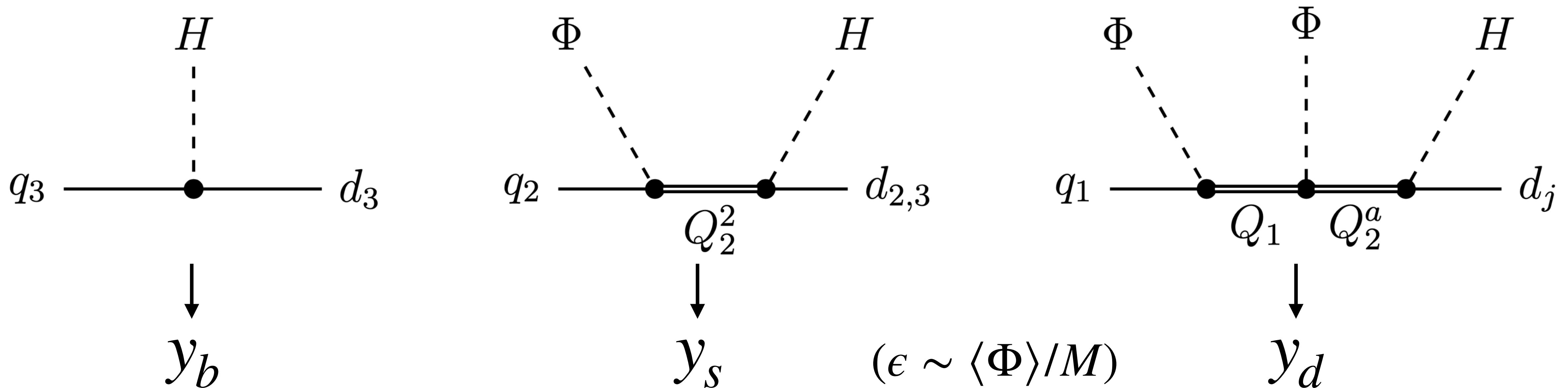
Antusch, Greljo, Stefanek, Thomsen (2023)

3. The minimal model: Z_4

Minimal model: Z_4 “ $q + \bar{e}$ ”

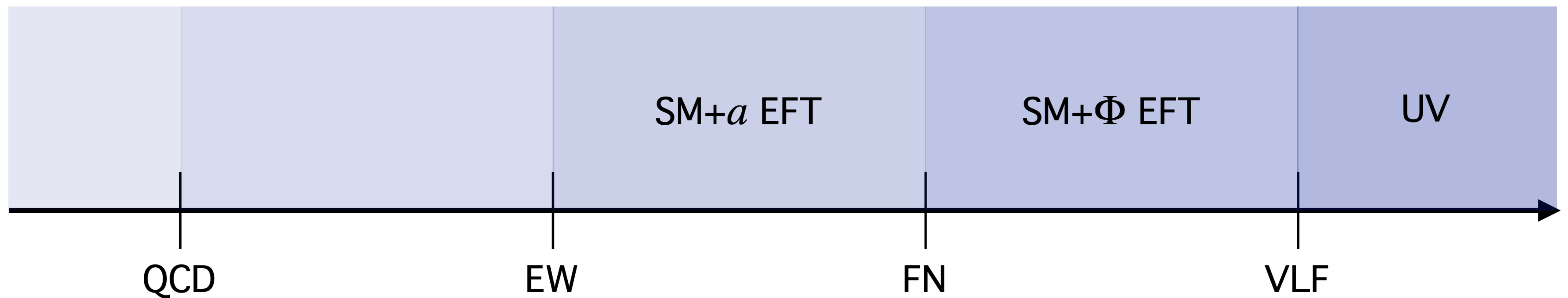
UV completion: $\underline{\text{VLQ}} \text{ } Q_2^a, Q_1 + \underline{\text{VLL}} \text{ } E_2^a, E_1$

Z_4 charge: $(0, 1)$ $(0, 1)$



up quarks, leptons analogous

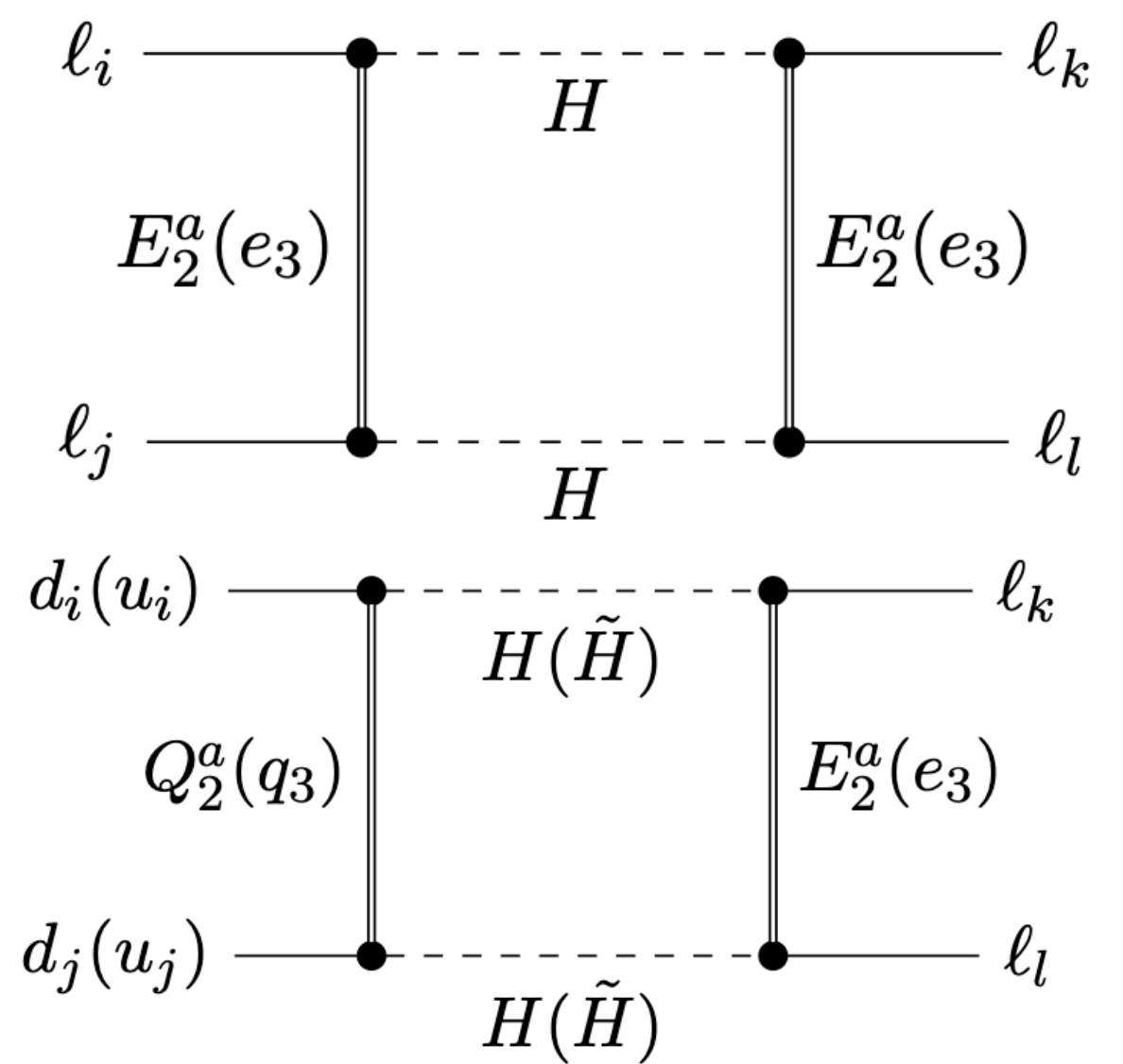
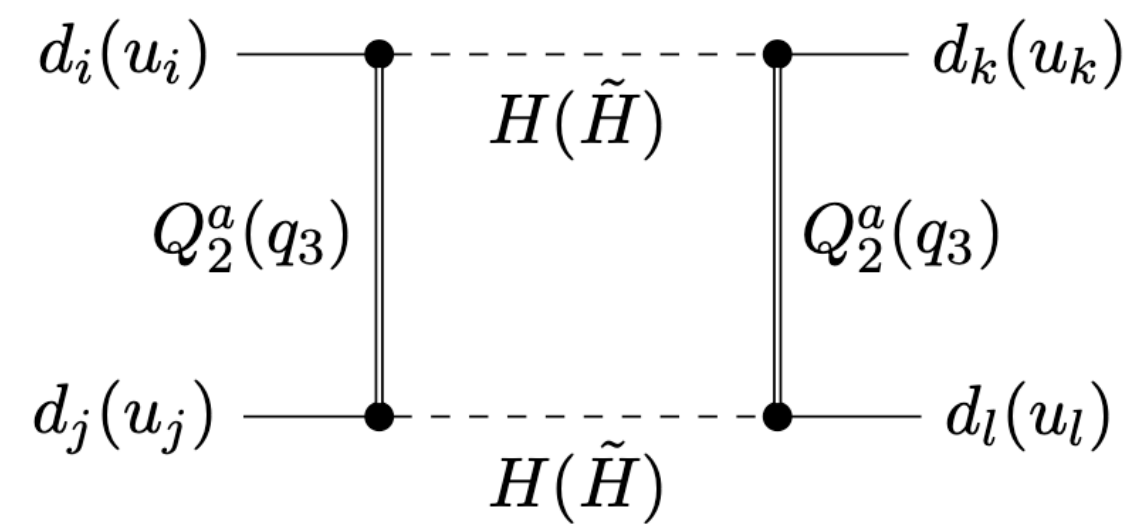
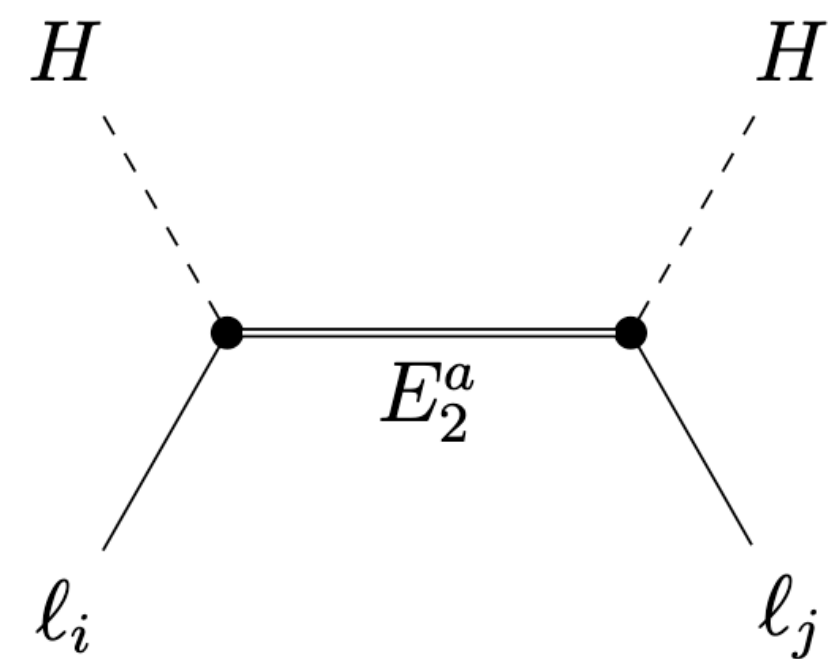
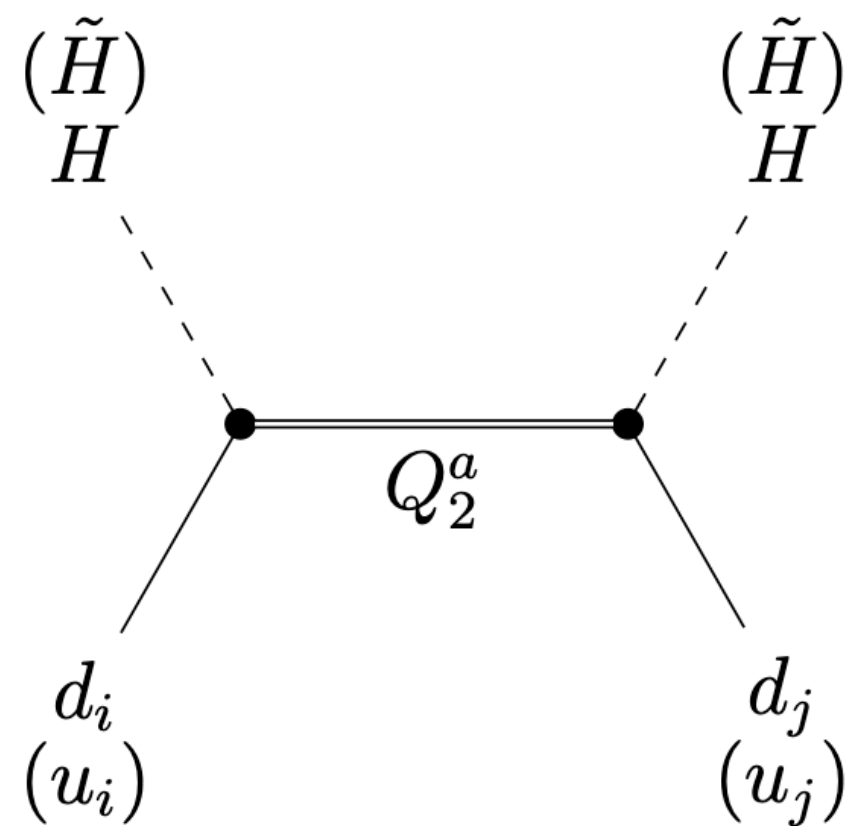
Phenomenology: tower of EFTs



Interplay between UV (VLF) and ALP effects

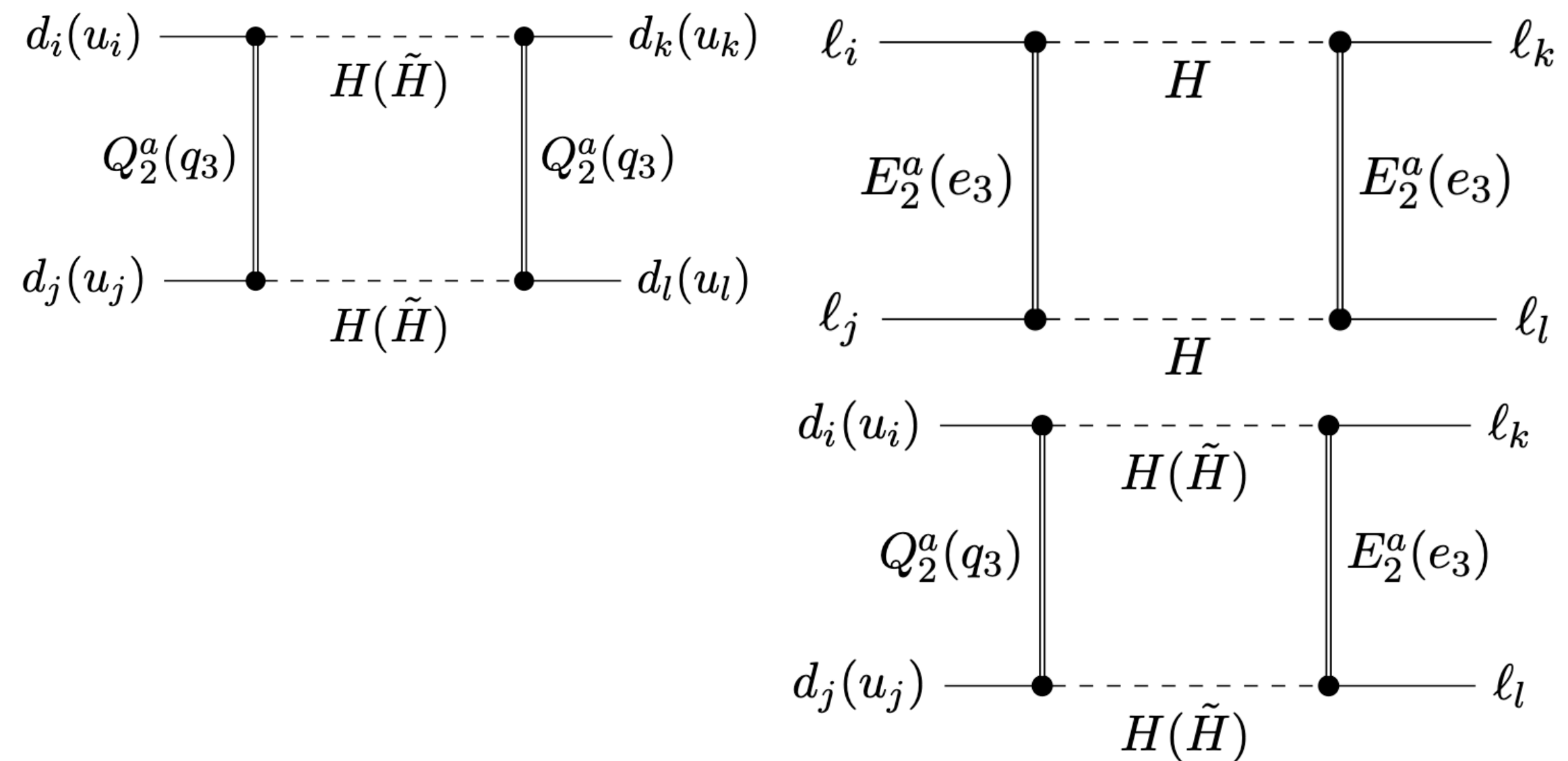
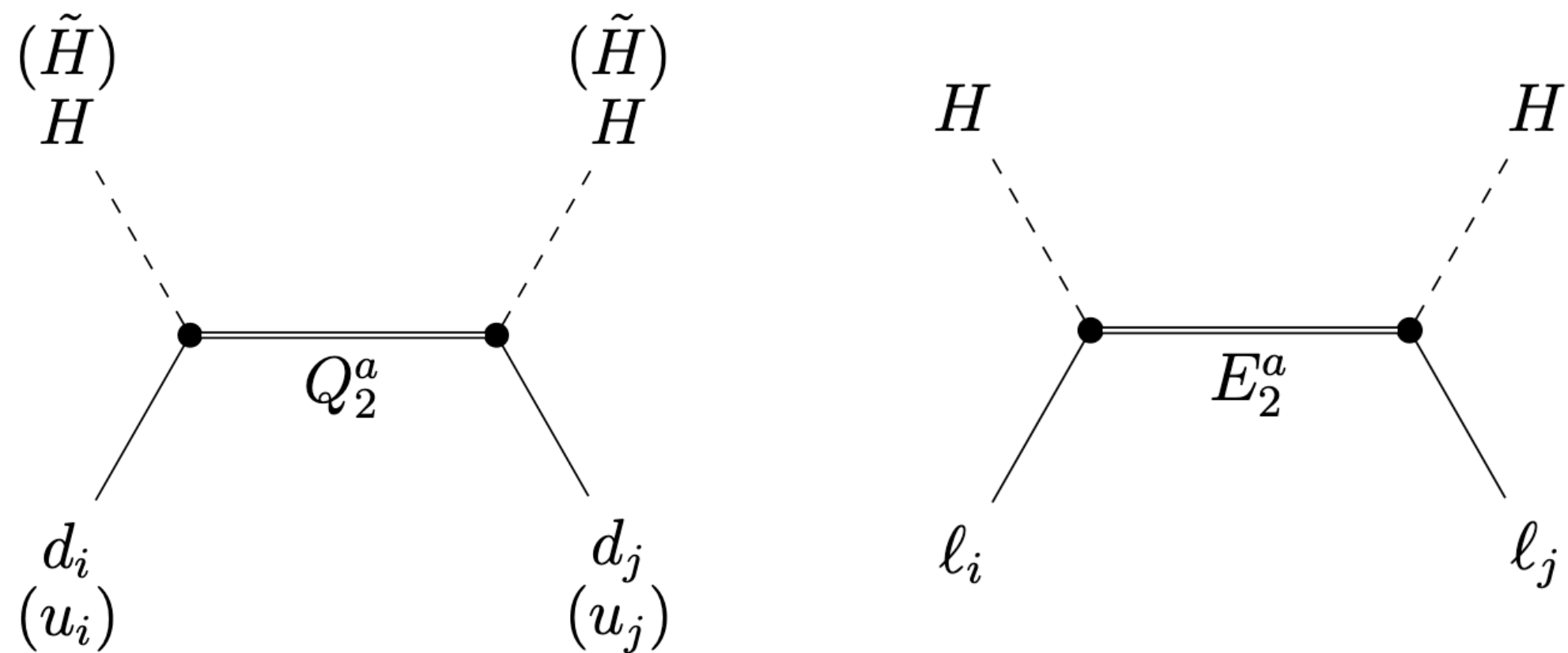
Phenomenogy: tower of EFTs

- VLF**



Phenomenogy: tower of EFTs

• VLF

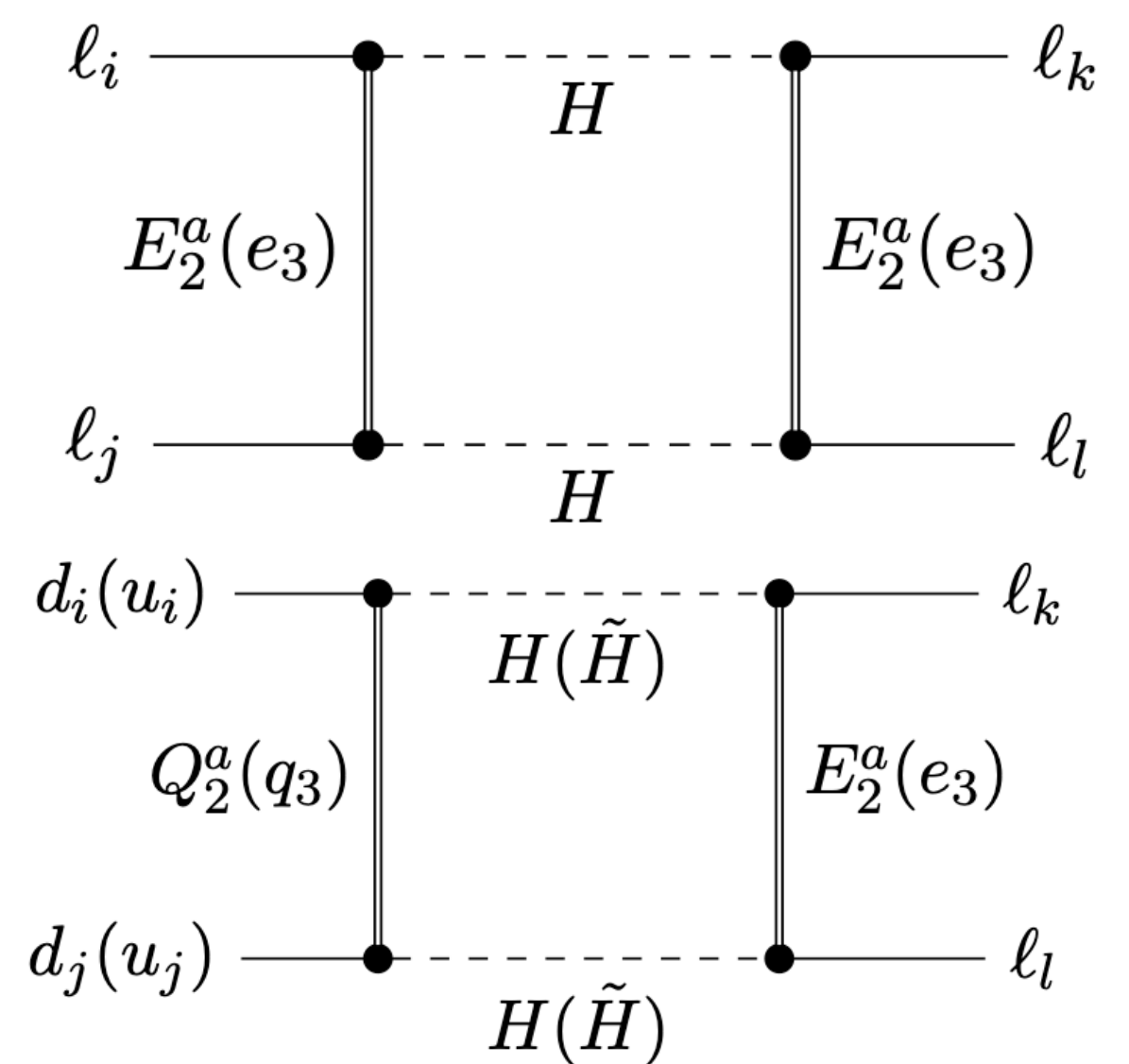
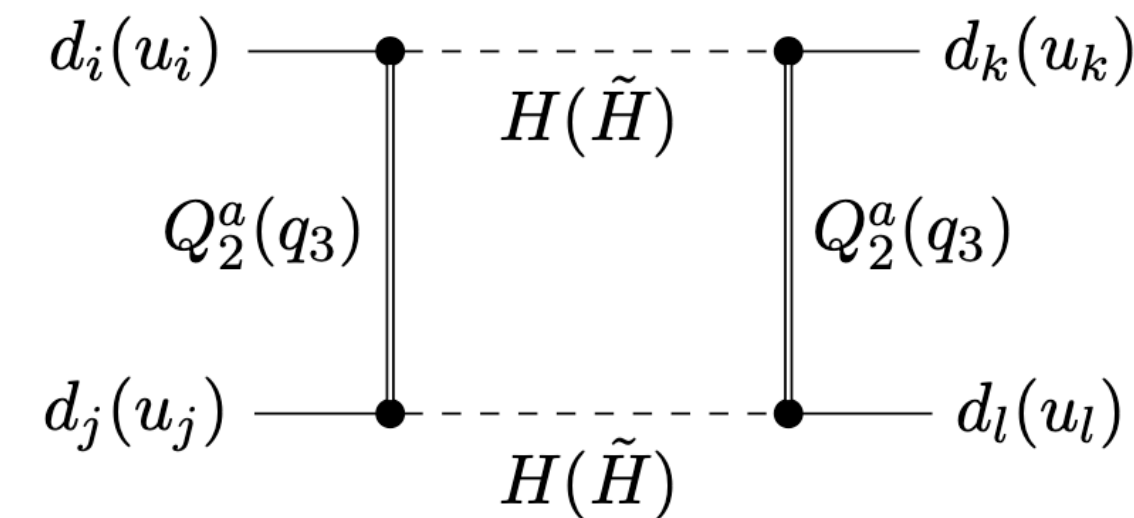
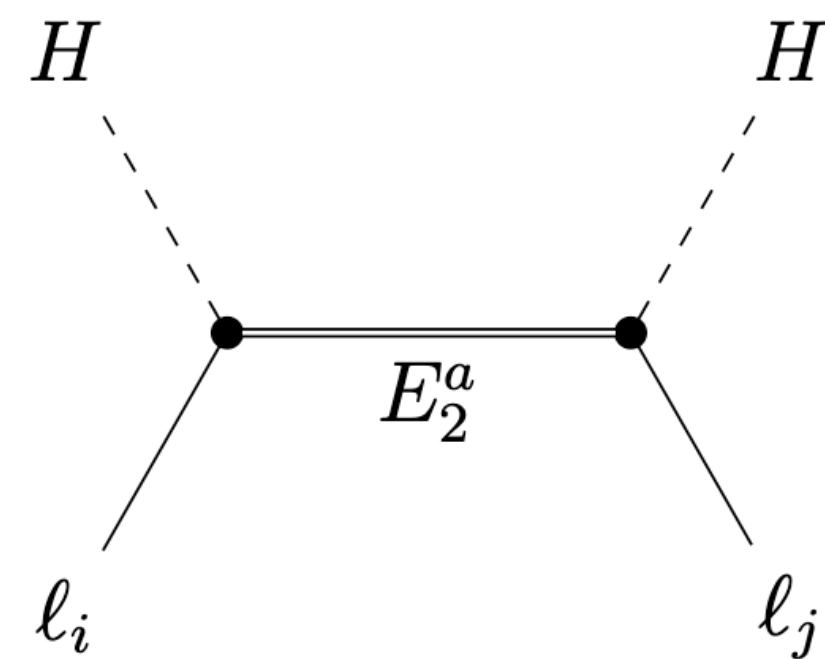
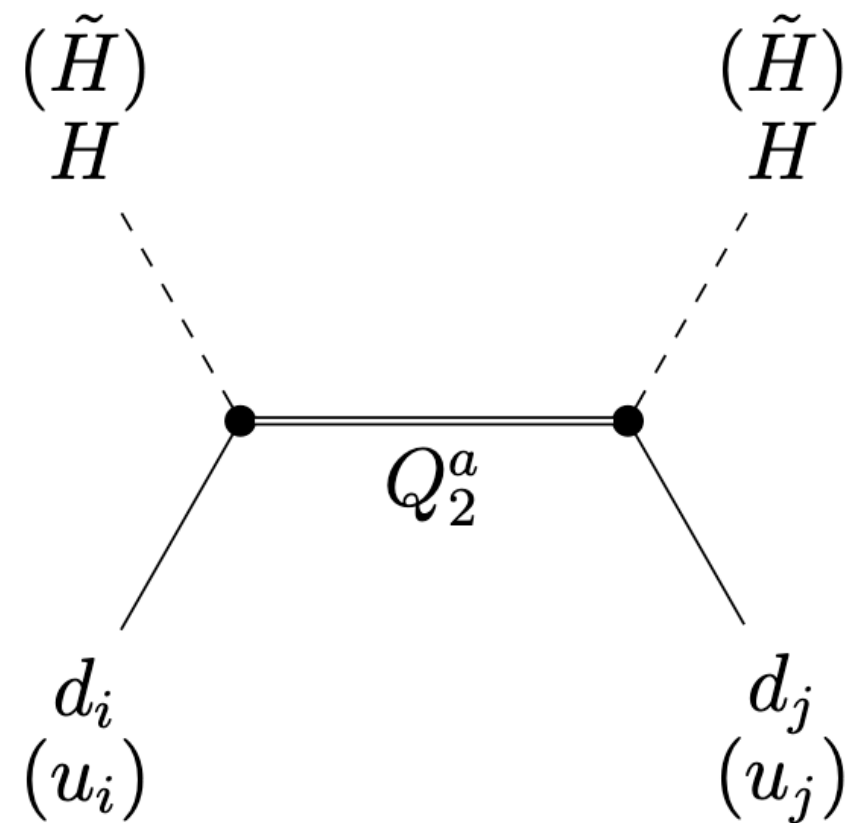


Observables:

- Rare meson decays
- Rare lepton decays
- Meson mixings
- ...

Phenomenogy: tower of EFTs

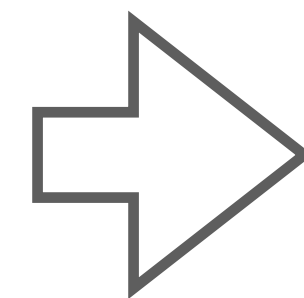
• VLF



Observables:

- Rare meson decays
- Rare lepton decays
- Meson mixings
- ...

$$\nu_\Phi \sim \epsilon M_{Q,E}$$



$$\nu_\Phi \gtrsim 3 \text{ TeV}$$

Leading: ϵ_K

Phenomenogy: tower of EFTs

- VLF
- **ALP**

$$\mathcal{L} \supset \sum_{f=u,d,e} \frac{1}{v_\Phi} c_{ij}^f \bar{f}_{L,i} (\rho + ia) f_{R,j} + \text{h.c.} + \text{h.o.}$$

See also:

Björkeröth, Chun, King (2018)

Bauer, Schnell, Plehn (2016)

Bauer, Neubert, Renner, Schnubel, Tamm (2017,2020,2022)

....

Phenomenology: tower of EFTs

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$$\mathcal{L} \supset \sum_{f=u,d,e} \frac{1}{v_\Phi} c_{ij}^f \bar{f}_{L,i} (\rho + ia) f_{R,j} + \text{h.c.} + \text{h.o.}$$

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....

- c_{ij}^f **fixed by FN mechanism**

- **Free parameters:** m_a, v_Φ

Here $m_a \sim v_\Phi$ natural expectation ($\lambda_4 \sim 1$)

$$c^d \sim \frac{1}{v_\Phi} \begin{pmatrix} m_d & m_s \frac{m_d}{m_s} & m_b \frac{m_d}{m_b} \\ m_d \frac{m_d}{m_s} & m_s & m_b \frac{m_s}{m_b} \\ m_d \frac{m_d}{m_d} & m_s \frac{m_s}{m_b} & m_b \frac{m_s^2}{m_b^2} \end{pmatrix}$$

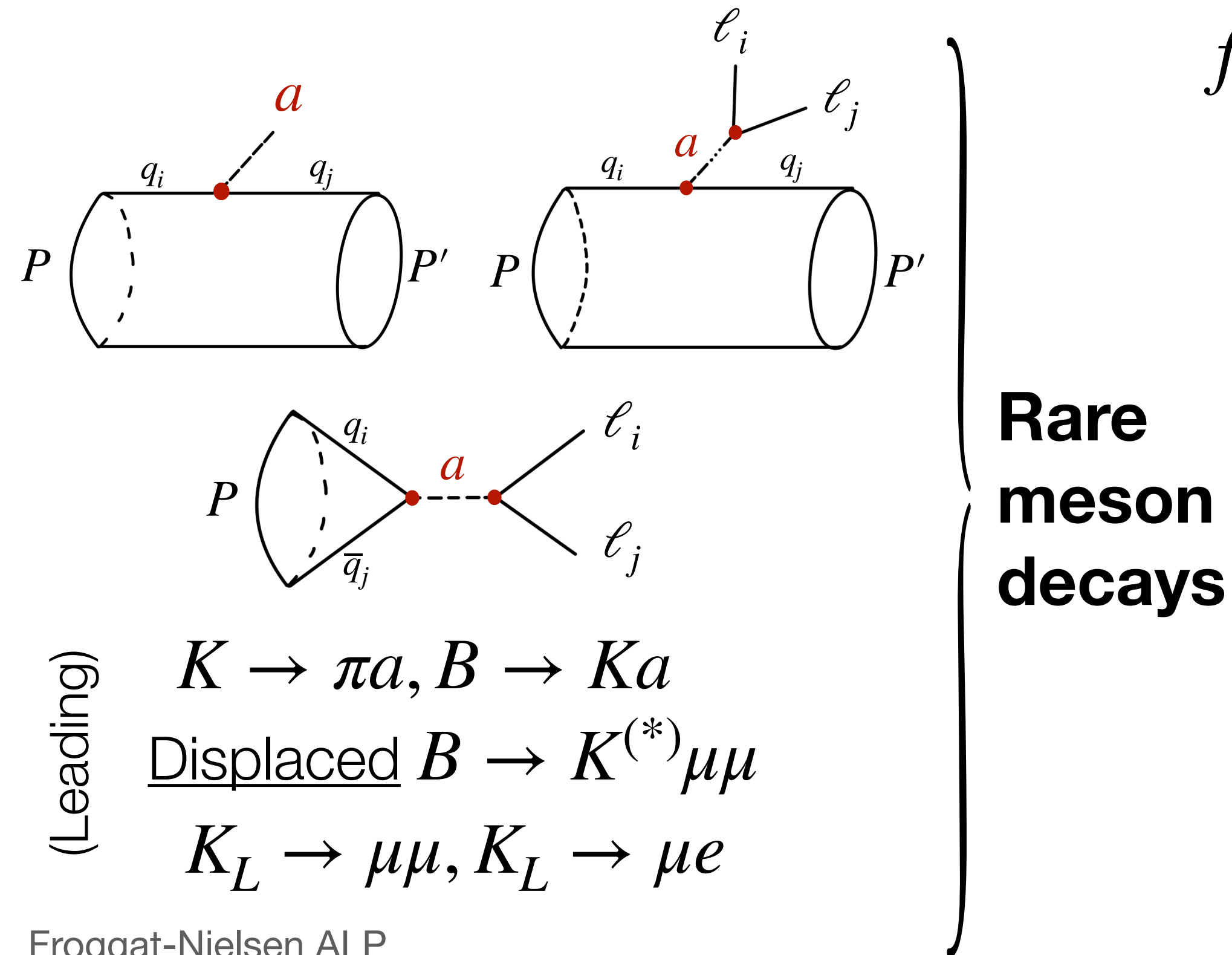
$(c^u, (c^e)^t$ analogous)

3. The minimal model: Z_4

Phenomenology: tower of EFTs

- VLF
- **ALP**

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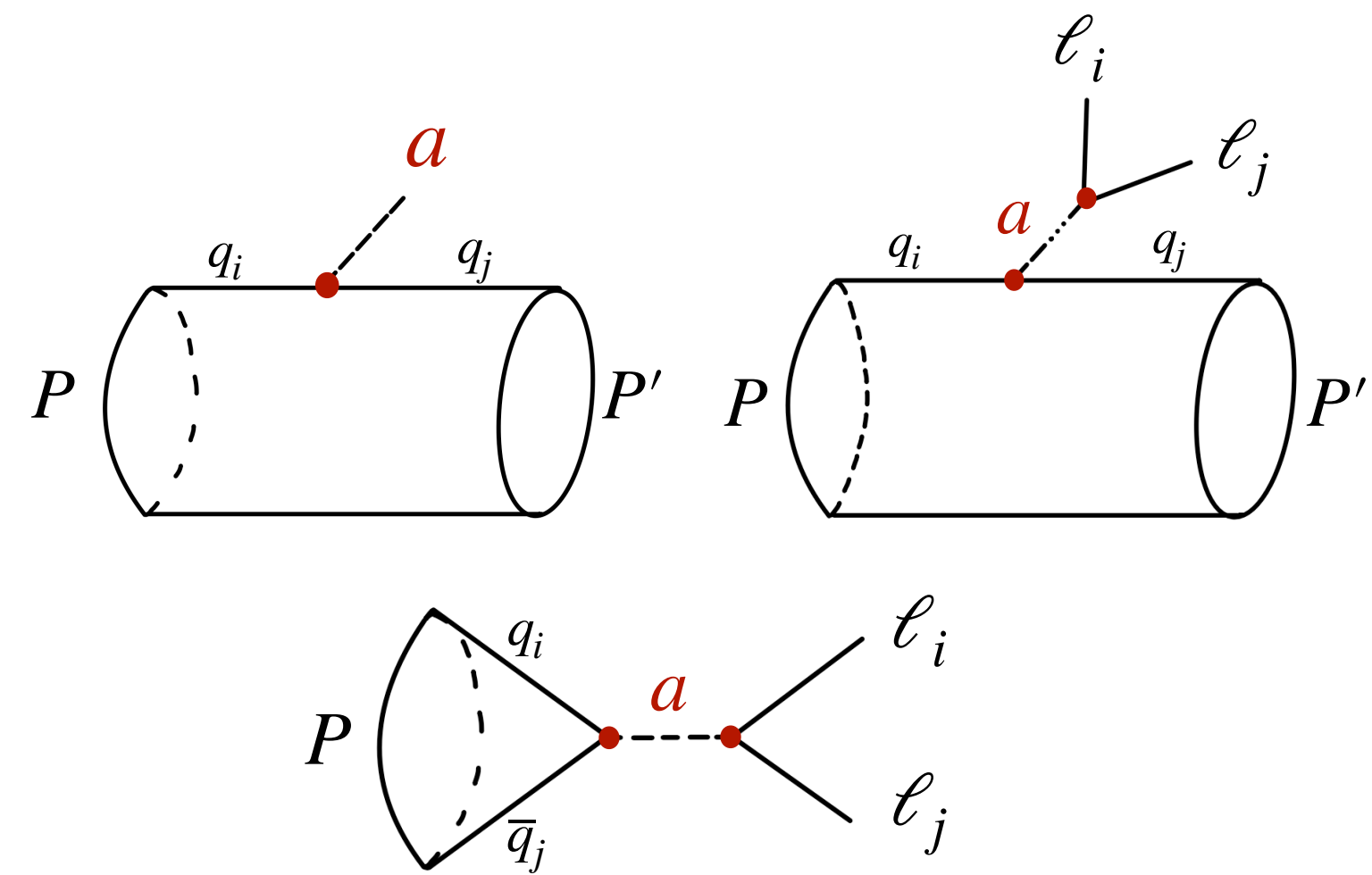


3. The minimal model: Z_4

Phenomenology: tower of EFTs

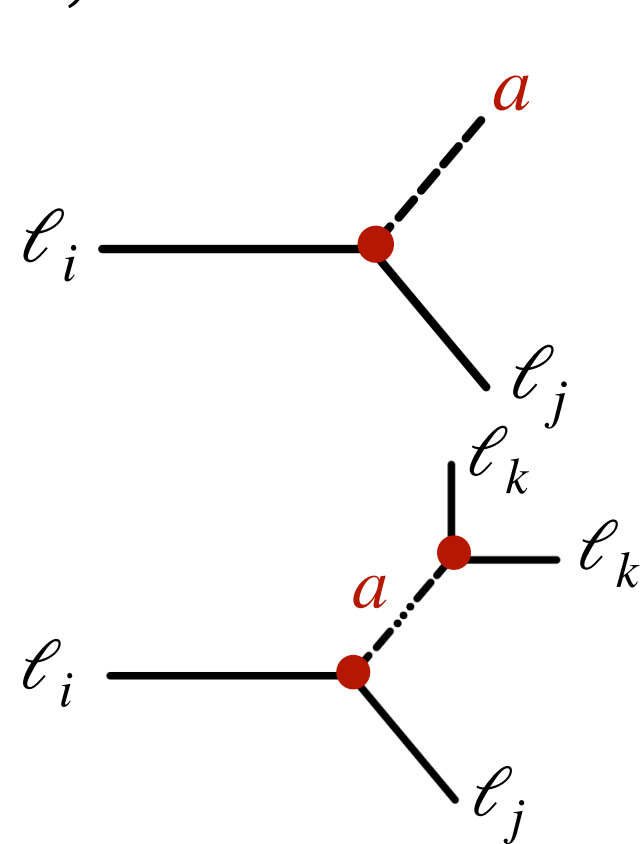
- VLF
- **ALP**

$$\mathcal{L} \supset \sum_{f=u,d,e} \frac{1}{v_\Phi} c_{ij}^f \bar{f}_{L,i} (\rho + ia) f_{R,j} + \text{h.c.} + \text{h.o.}$$



**Rare
meson
decays**

(Leading)
 $K \rightarrow \pi a, B \rightarrow Ka$
Displaced $B \rightarrow K^{(*)} \mu \mu$
 $K_L \rightarrow \mu \mu, K_L \rightarrow \mu e$



**Rare
lepton
decays**

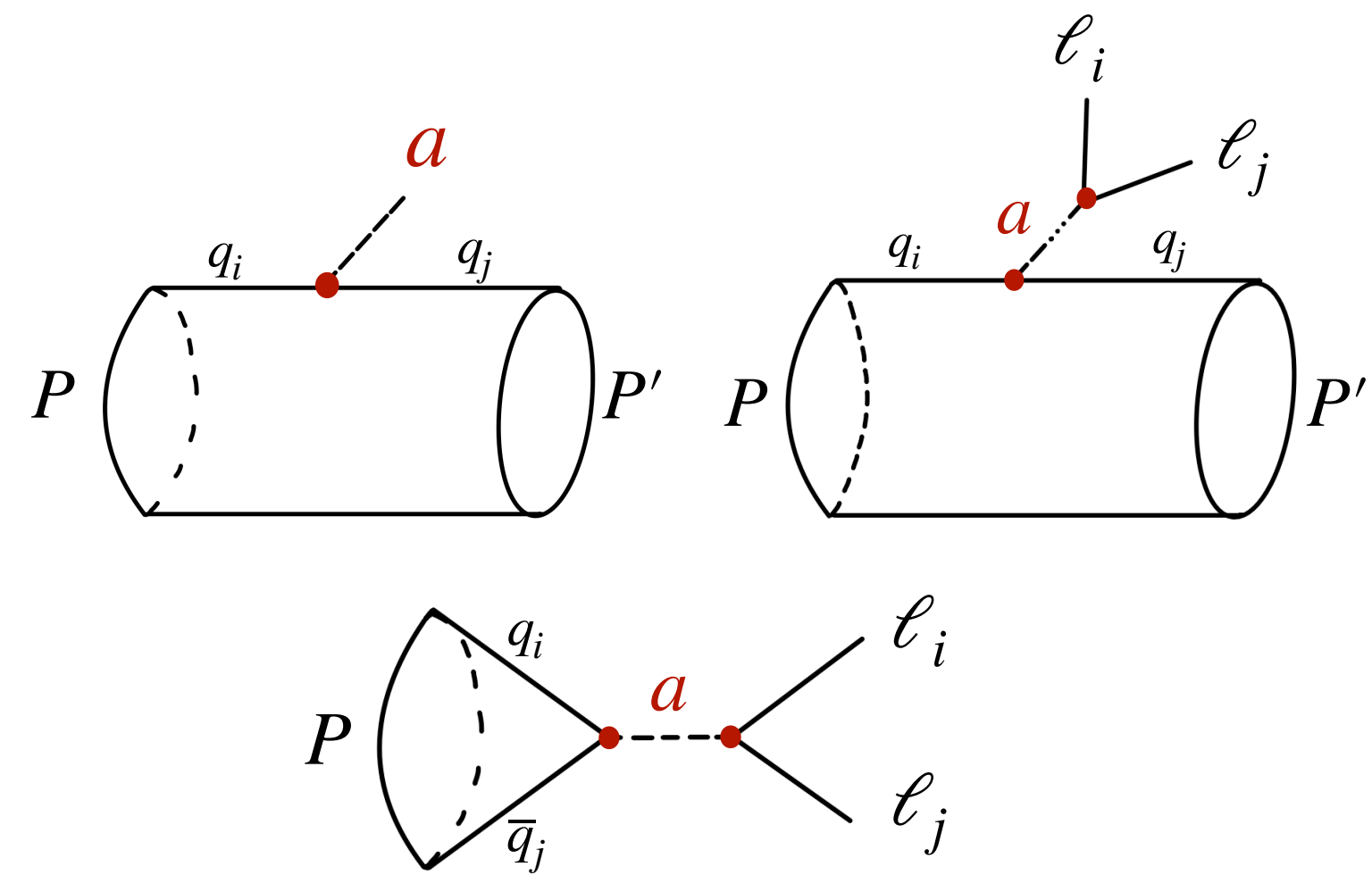
(Leading)
 $\tau \rightarrow \mu a$
 $\tau \rightarrow 3\mu$ (displaced?)

3. The minimal model: Z_4

Phenomenology: tower of EFTs

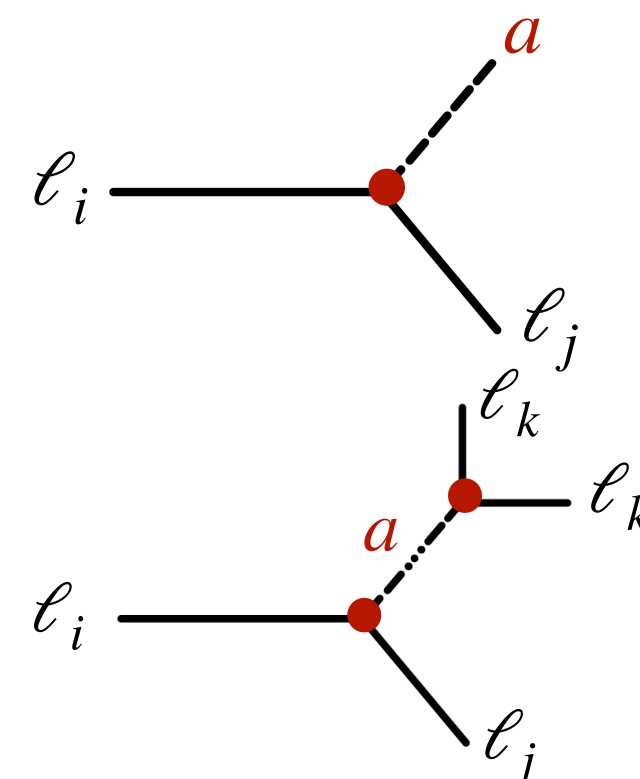
- VLF
- **ALP**

$$\mathcal{L} \supset \sum_{f=u,d,e} \frac{1}{v_\Phi} c_{ij}^f \bar{f}_{L,i} (\rho + ia) f_{R,j} + \text{h.c.} + \text{h.o.}$$



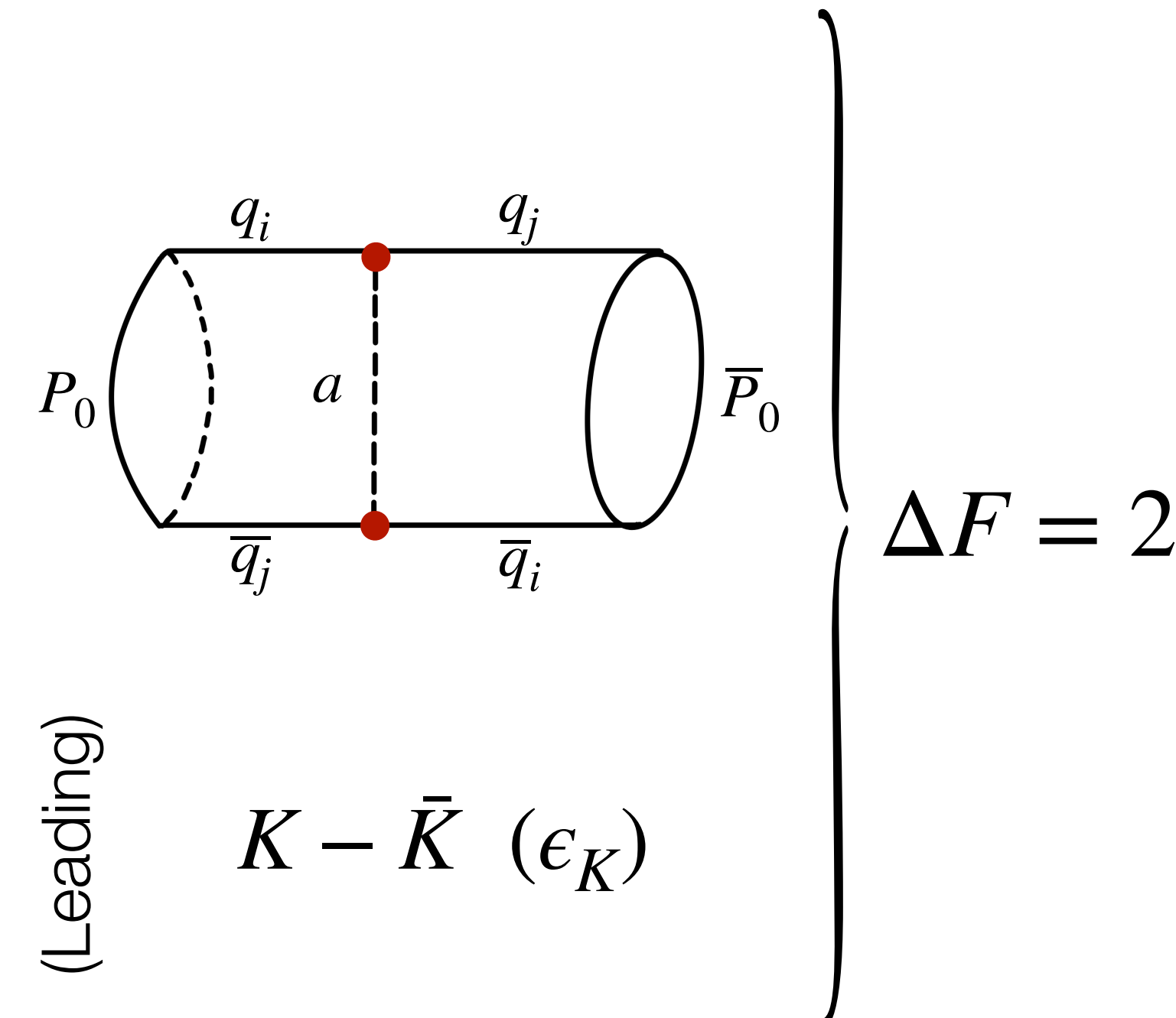
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 $K_L \rightarrow \mu \mu, K_L \rightarrow \mu e$



**Rare
lepton
decays**

(Leading)
 $\tau \rightarrow \mu a$
 $\tau \rightarrow 3\mu$ (displaced?)



$\Delta F = 2$

(Leading)
 $K - \bar{K} \ (\epsilon_K)$

Phenomenology: tower of EFTs

- VLF
- **ALP**

$$\mathcal{L} \supset \sum_{f=u,d,e} \frac{1}{v_\Phi} c_{ij}^f \bar{f}_{L,i} (\rho + ia) f_{R,j} + \text{h.c.} + \text{h.o.}$$

$$+ \ell_i \rightarrow \ell_j \gamma \quad \longrightarrow \quad \tau \rightarrow \mu \gamma, \mu \rightarrow e \gamma, \dots$$

+ $\mu \rightarrow e$ conversion

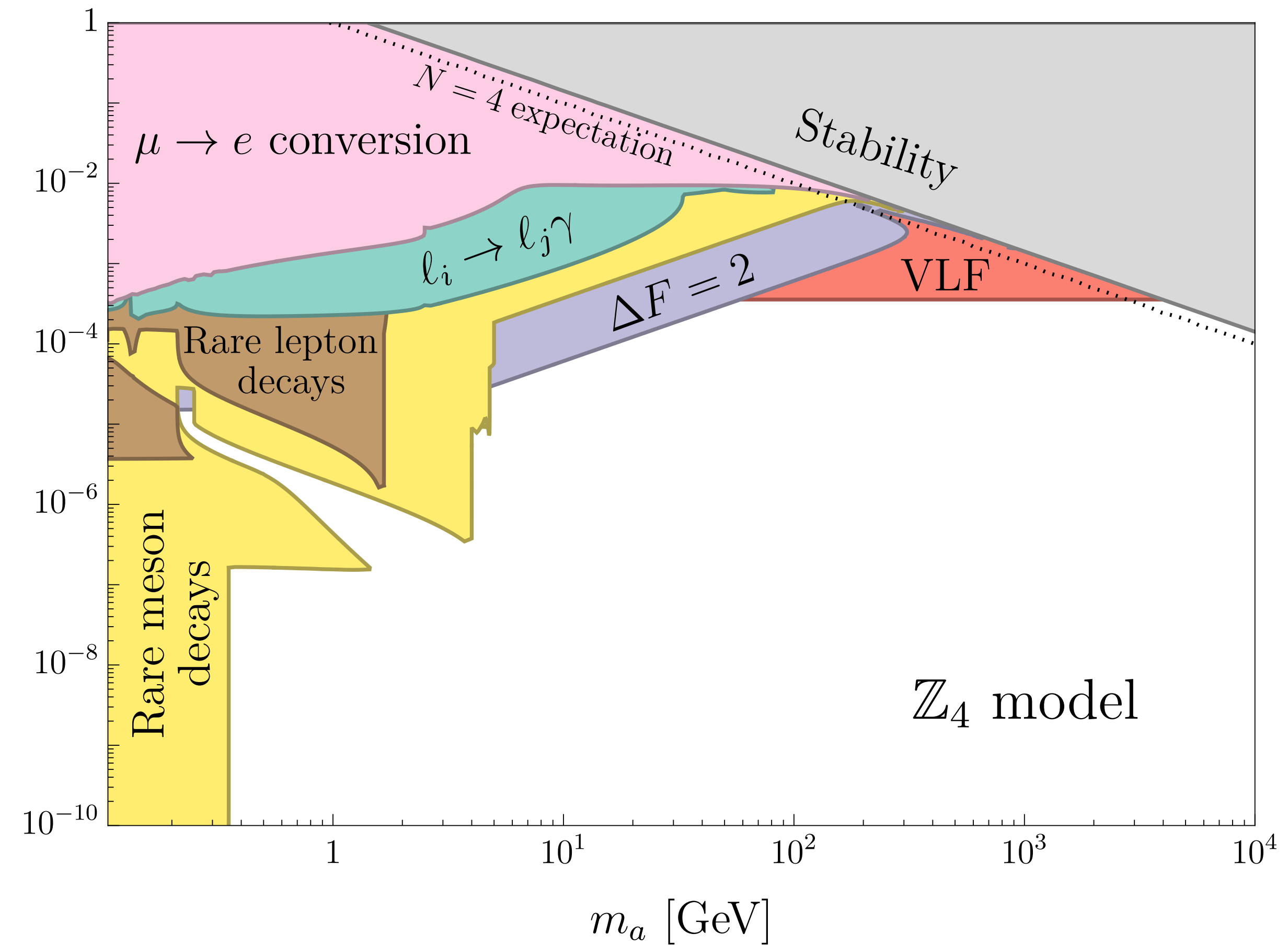
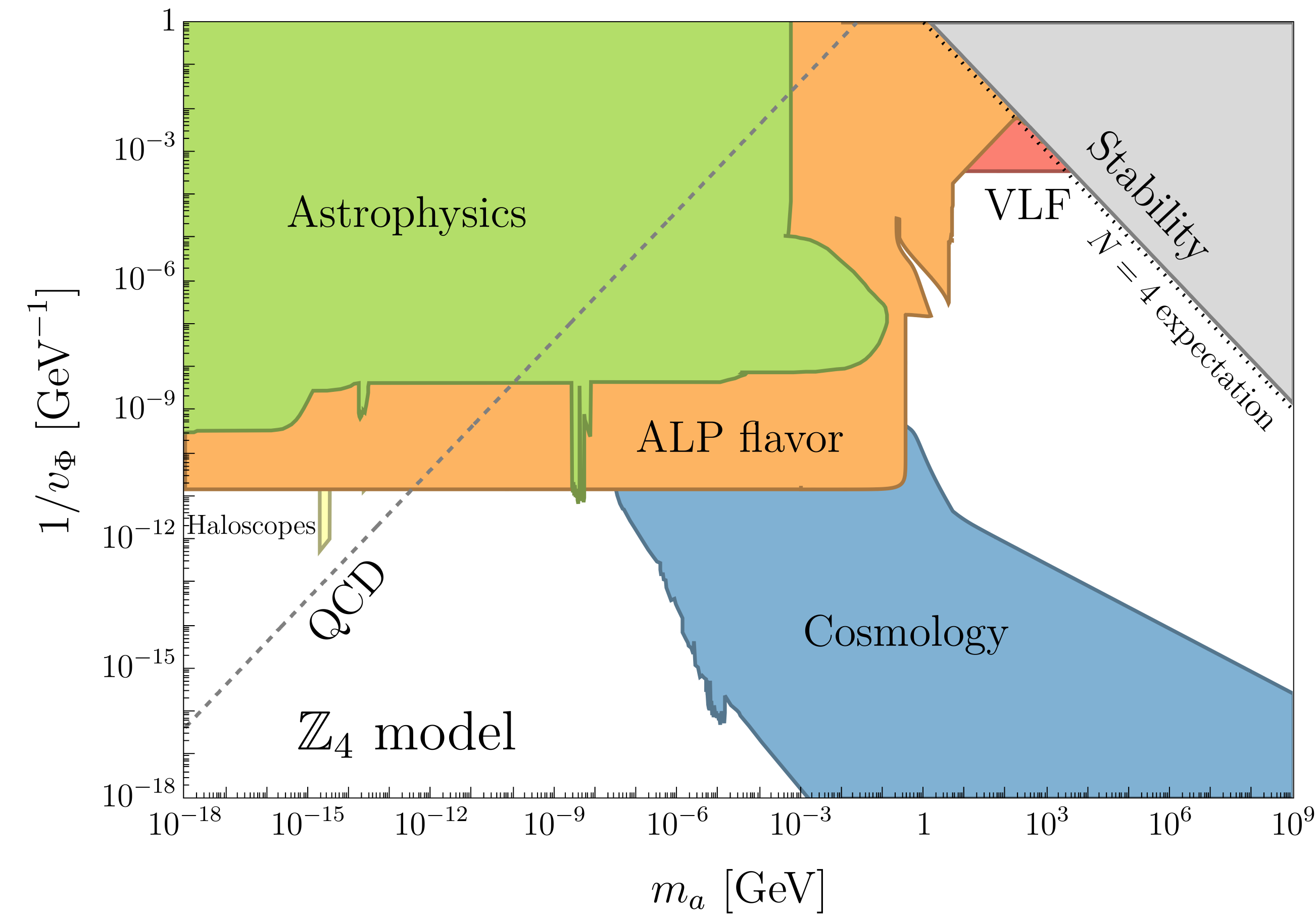
+ ...

+ **Cosmology** $\longrightarrow$ BBN ($\Gamma_a \gtrsim H(T_{\text{BBN}})$,
X-rays, ...)

+ **Astrophysics** $\longrightarrow$ SN1987, ...

+ **Haloscopes** + ...

3. The minimal model: Z_4



“Natural” Z_4 probed by UV completion, $v_\Phi \sim$ few TeV allowed!

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4. Conclusion

- FN models: popular, high-scale flavor models
- *Discrete* FN models allow massive ALP, lower FN scale
- Z_4 : minimal, predictive framework with simple UV completion
- Phenomenology: interplay between VLF and ALP crucial
- *FN models can live at few TeV scale!*

Thank you for your attention!

Backup

Z_N potential

$$V(\Phi) = -m^2 |\Phi|^2 + \frac{\lambda}{2} |\Phi|^4 - \frac{1}{4} \frac{\lambda'_N}{M_\Phi^{N-4}} [\Phi^N + (\Phi^*)^N] + \dots$$

$$\mathcal{L}_{UV} \supset \sum_k y_k \Phi \bar{\Psi}_{L,k+1} \psi_{R,k} \longrightarrow \frac{\lambda'_N}{M_\Phi^{N-4}} \sim \frac{1}{M_\psi^{N-4}} \frac{\prod_k y_k}{16\pi^2}$$

$$\frac{m_a}{v_\Phi} \sim \frac{N}{8\pi} \epsilon^{N/2-2} \sqrt{\prod_k y_k}$$

$$- \epsilon^{N/2} \sim (y_e/y_t) \longrightarrow \text{large } N \text{ disfavored} \quad \left(\epsilon \sim (y_e/y_t)^{2/N} \right)$$

Z_8 model

$$q_{1,2,3} \sim (2,1,0) \quad \bar{u}_{1,2,3} \sim (2,1,0) \quad \bar{d}_{1,2,3} (2,2,2)$$

$$\ell_{1,2,3} \sim (4,4,4) \quad \bar{e}_{1,2,3} \sim (0,1,2)$$

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \hat{y}_{ii}^{d,e} \sim (\epsilon^4, \epsilon^3, \epsilon^2) \\ \hat{y}_{ii}^u \sim (\epsilon^4, \epsilon^2, 1) \\ \epsilon \simeq 6.6 \times 10^{-2} \end{array} \right. \quad Y_d \simeq \begin{pmatrix} 0.55\epsilon^4 & 2.5\epsilon^4 & (0.73 - 1.84i)\epsilon^4 \\ 0 & 0.74\epsilon^3 & 1.51\epsilon^3 \\ 0 & 0 & 2.4\epsilon^2 \end{pmatrix}, \quad Y_u \simeq \begin{pmatrix} 0.25\epsilon^4 & z_{u_2}\epsilon^3 & z_{u_3}\epsilon^2 \\ y_{u_1}\epsilon^3 & 0.57\epsilon^2 & y_{u_3}\epsilon \\ x_{u_1}\epsilon^2 & x_{u_2}\epsilon & 0.71 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$Y_e \simeq \begin{pmatrix} 0.15\epsilon^4 & 0 & 0 \\ z_{e_2}\epsilon^4 & 2.1\epsilon^3 & 0 \\ z_{e_3}\epsilon^4 & y_{e_3}\epsilon^3 & 2.3\epsilon^2 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Z_8 model

UV completion:

$$[L_N] = 0, \quad [L_{N-1}^a] = -1, \quad [L_{N-2}^i] = -2, \quad [L_{N-3}^i] = -3$$

$$[Q_2^a] = 0, \quad [Q_1] = 1,$$

$$[U_2^a] = 0, \quad [U_1] = -1,$$

$$[D_2^i] = 0, \quad [D_1^i] = -1.$$

