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## $\eta \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^0 \gamma \gamma$ to 1-Loop in ChPT \*

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# 1 Introduction

a) Motivation:

Phenomenological interest for the rare decay  $\eta \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^0 \gamma \gamma \iff$  Large number of observed  $\eta$ 's anticipated at various  $\eta$ -factories, e.g. CELSIUS [ $2 \times 10^9$ ], ITEP [ $\sim 10^9$ ], DAΦNE [ $3 \times 10^8$  ( $\phi \rightarrow \eta \gamma$ )] and other facilities, such as GRAAL [ $10^8$ ], MAMI, ELSA, CEBAF, ( $[n]=\#\eta$ 's per year).

Theoretical interest: testing chiral perturbation theory (ChPT) (effect of chiral loops). Of a similar interest [1-9]: [ $\gamma \gamma \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^0$ ,  $\eta \rightarrow \pi^0 \gamma \gamma$ ]=0 to lowest order (LO)  $\implies$  chiral loops are important.

b) Status of  $\eta \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^0 \gamma \gamma$ :

$$A(\eta \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^0 \gamma \gamma) = A_R + A_{NR} ,$$

physically distinct.

$A_R$  has a pole at  $s_{\gamma\gamma} = m_{\pi^0}^2$  ( $\sqrt{s_{\gamma\gamma}}$  = diphoton invariant mass).

$A_R \propto A_{\eta \rightarrow 3\pi^0}^{on-shell} A_{\pi^0 \rightarrow \gamma\gamma}^{on-shell} \implies$  Get  $A_R$  (up to a phase) from data  
(no ChPT calculation needed)

$$A_R = - \frac{A(\eta \rightarrow 3\pi^0) A(\pi^0 \rightarrow \gamma\gamma)}{s_{\gamma\gamma} - m_{\pi^0}^2} .$$

$A_R$  dominates over the full kinematical range to LO [10].

$A_{NR}$  must be calculated in ChPT (not from data).  $A_{NR}$  computed at tree level  $O(p^4)$  [10]: only  $\eta$ -exchange diagram  $\eta \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\eta^* \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\gamma\gamma$ .

In [10] also  $\eta'$ -exchange, formally of higher order (HO).

For both diagrams  $A_{NR}$  is negligible with respect to  $A_R$ , because the LO  $\eta\eta\pi^0\pi^0$  and  $\eta\eta'\pi^0\pi^0$  vertices vanish in the limit  $m_u = m_d = 0$ .

Note: analogous suppression factor in the  $\pi^0$ -exchange contribution  $\propto (m_u - m_d)$ , but thanks to the enhancement due to the pole term  $A_R$  dominates over  $A_{NR}$ .

To one loop?

Presumably not: in the (related)  $\gamma\gamma \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\pi^0$  amplitude  $A_{1-loop} \approx 10A_{tree}$  [11], because  $A_{tree} \propto m_\pi^2$  and  $A_{1-loop}$  is not suppressed.

c) Purpose:

to calculate  $A_{NR}$  to one loop, neglecting  $m_u - m_d$  and the (suppressed)  $\eta$ -exchange. Only 1PI diagrams contribute and  $A_{NR}$  is finite.

$O(p^6)$  counterterms (CT) [12] do not contribute (as in  $\gamma\gamma \rightarrow 3\pi^0$ ).

d) Results:

$A_{NR}^{1-loop}$  dominates  $A_{NR}^{tree}$  (at  $m_u = m_d = 0$ :  $A_{NR}^{1-loop} \neq 0$ ,  $A_{NR}^{tree} = 0$ ).

At large  $s_{\gamma\gamma}$ ,  $A_R$  (background for  $A_{NR}$ ) is suppressed  $\implies$  detect a pure  $O(p^6)$  effect by measuring  $\Gamma(\eta \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\gamma\gamma)$ .

## 2 Kinematics and couplings

a) Kinematics of  $\eta(q) \rightarrow \pi^0(p_1)\pi^0(p_2)\gamma(k_1, \epsilon_1)\gamma(k_2, \epsilon_2)$ :

Five independent scalar variables:

$$\begin{aligned} s_{\pi\pi} &= (p_1 + p_2)^2, & z_{1,2} &= k_{1,2} \cdot (p_1 + p_2), \\ s_{\gamma\gamma} &= (k_1 + k_2)^2, & z_3 &= (k_1 + k_2) \cdot (p_1 - p_2). \end{aligned}$$

Decay amplitude:

$$A(\eta \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\gamma\gamma) = e^2 \epsilon_1^\mu \epsilon_2^\nu A_{\mu\nu}.$$

Decay width:

$$\Gamma(\eta \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\gamma\gamma) = \frac{\alpha_{em}^2}{2^{11}\pi^6 m_\eta} \int \frac{d^3 p_1}{p_1^0} \frac{d^3 p_2}{p_2^0} \frac{d^3 k_1}{k_1^0} \frac{d^3 k_2}{k_2^0} \delta^{(4)}(p_1 + p_2 + k_1 + k_2) A^{\mu\nu} A_{\mu\nu}^*.$$

$A_{\mu\nu}$  is  $O(p^4)$

(contributions only from odd-intrinsic parity sector of ChPT  $\Leftarrow$  process involving the electromagnetic interaction of an odd number of pions).

b) Interaction terms (couplings):

$O(p^4)$  ChPT  $\mathcal{L}$ :

$$\mathcal{L} = \mathcal{L}^{(2)} + \mathcal{L}^{(4)},$$

$$\mathcal{L}^{(2)} = \frac{F^2}{4} \text{tr} \left( D_\mu U D^\mu U^\dagger + \chi U^\dagger + \chi^\dagger U \right)$$

$\mathcal{L}^{(4)}$  splits into the odd-intrinsic anomalous part (i.e. the Wess–Zumino term [13]) and the  $O(p^4)$  Gasser–Leutwyler lagrangian [14]

$$\mathcal{L}^{(4)} = \mathcal{L}_{WZ} + \sum_{i=1}^{10} L_i \mathcal{L}_i^{(4)} .$$

Usual exponential parametrization:  $U = \exp(i\sqrt{2}P_8/F)$   
 $P_8 = SU(3)$  octet matrix of pseudoscalar mesons  
 $F|_{LO} \equiv \pi^+$  decay constant  $F_\pi = 92.4$  MeV [14,15].

Covariant derivative:  
 $D_\mu U = \partial_\mu U + ieA_\mu[Q, U]$   
 $Q = \text{diag}(2/3, -1/3, -1/3)$ .

In the external scalar sources:  $\chi = \chi^\dagger = 2B\mathcal{M}$   
 $\mathcal{M} = \text{diag}(m_u, m_d, m_s)$  quark mass matrix  
 $B|_{LO} \equiv$  mass ratio  $B_0 = m_\pi^2/(m_u + m_d)$ .

Neglect in  $A_{NR}$  the  $\eta - \eta'$  mixing, i.e. mixing of  $P_8$  with the singlet-field  $\eta_0$   
 $\implies$  mass-eigenstate  $\eta \equiv \eta_8$  octet-field.  
Also  $m_\pi = m_{\pi^0}$  (we neglect isospin-breaking in  $A_{NR}$ ).

Couplings for tree-level calculation [10]:

$$A^{(2)}(\eta_8 \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^0 \pi^0) = 3A^{(2)}(\eta_8 \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^+ \pi^-) = \frac{B_0(m_u - m_d)}{\sqrt{3}F_\pi^2} ,$$

$$A^{(2)}(\eta_8 \rightarrow \eta_8 \pi^0 \pi^0) = A^{(2)}(\eta_8 \rightarrow \eta_8 \pi^+ \pi^-) = \frac{B_0(m_u + m_d)}{3F_\pi^2} ,$$

$$A^{(4)}(\pi^0 \rightarrow \gamma\gamma) = \sqrt{3}A^{(4)}(\eta_8 \rightarrow \gamma\gamma) = \frac{e^2}{4\pi^2 F_\pi} \epsilon_{\mu\nu\alpha\beta} \epsilon_1^\mu k_1^\nu \epsilon_2^\alpha k_2^\beta .$$

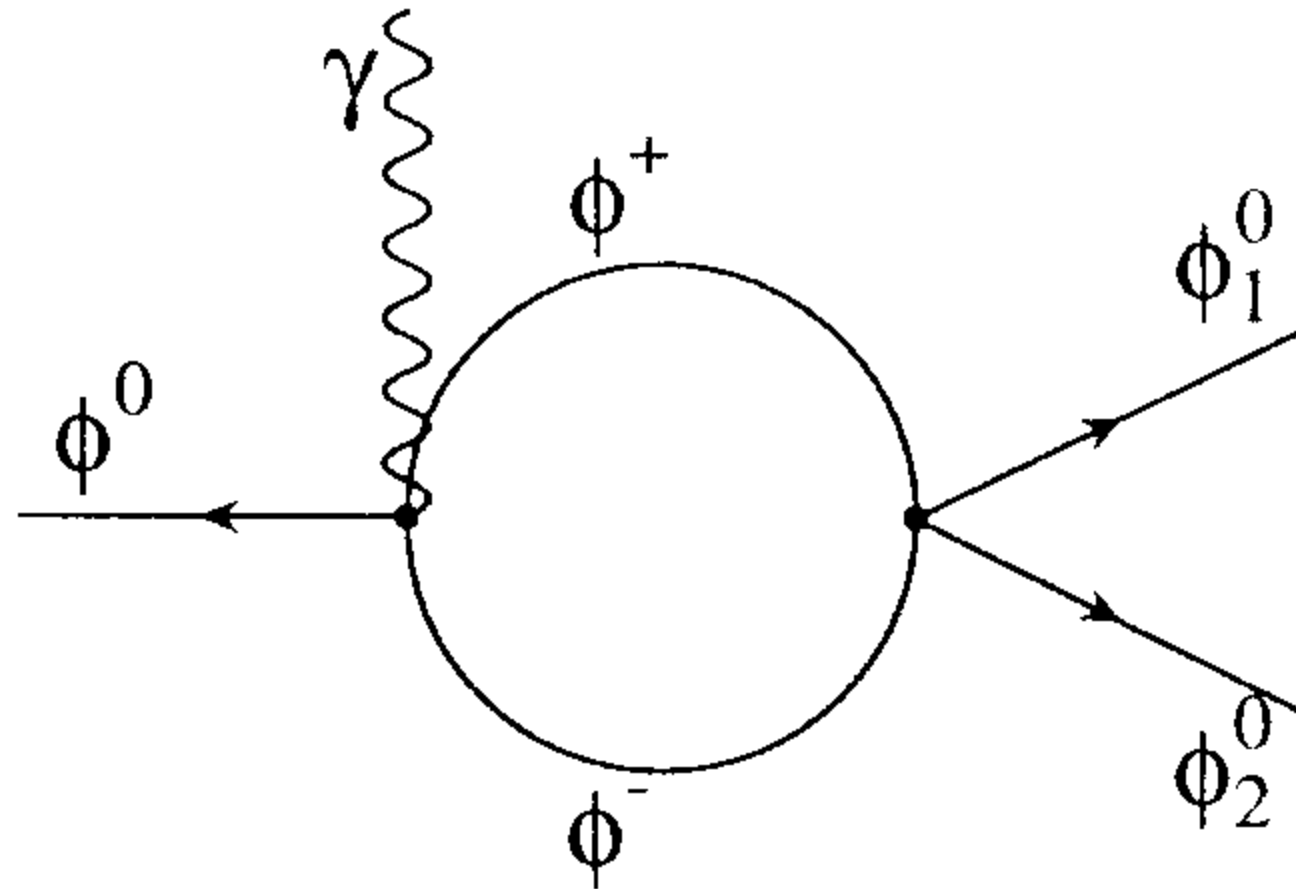


Figure 1: 1PI one-loop diagrams for the  $\phi^0 \rightarrow \phi_1^0 \phi_2^0 \gamma \gamma$  transition. The second photon line has to be attached to the charged lines running in the loop and to the vertices.

Additional couplings for 1-loop diagrams in fig. 1:

$$A^{(2)}(\phi^+ \phi^- \rightarrow \phi_1^0 \phi_2^0) = a s_{\pi\pi} + b m_\pi^2 + c(p_+^2 - m_\pi^2) + d(p_-^2 - m_\pi^2) ,$$

$$A^{(4)}(\phi^0 \rightarrow \phi^+ \phi^- \gamma) = f \epsilon_{\mu\nu\alpha\beta} \epsilon^\mu k^\nu p_+^\alpha q^\beta ,$$

$q, p_\pm, p_{1,2}, k$ : (outgoing) momenta of the pseudoscalars  $\phi^0, \phi^\pm, \phi_{1,2}^0$  and of  $A_\mu$ .

$a, b, c$  and  $d$  are constants with  $\dim = m^{-2}$ ;  $[f] = m^{-3}$ .

$c, d$  are ‘off-shell couplings’ and irrelevant (they cancel in the amplitude, due to gauge invariance (GI)).

In  $\pi^+ \pi^- \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^0$  and  $\eta_8 \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^- \gamma$  we find

$$a = -b = \frac{1}{F_\pi^2} \quad \text{and} \quad f = -\frac{e}{4\sqrt{3}\pi^2 F_\pi^3} .$$

(useful to estimate dominant  $\pi$ -loops).

### 3 Decay amplitude (analytic)

a) Tree-level:

$$A_R^{(4)} = -\frac{e^2}{4\sqrt{3}\pi^2 F_\pi^3} \frac{B_0(m_u - m_d)}{(s_{\gamma\gamma} - m_{\pi^0}^2)} \epsilon_{\mu\nu\alpha\beta} \epsilon_1^\mu k_1^\nu \epsilon_2^\alpha k_2^\beta ,$$

$$A_{NR}^{(4)} = -\frac{e^2}{12\sqrt{3}\pi^2 F_\pi^3} \frac{B_0(m_u + m_d)}{(s_{\gamma\gamma} - m_\eta^2)} \epsilon_{\mu\nu\alpha\beta} \epsilon_1^\mu k_1^\nu \epsilon_2^\alpha k_2^\beta .$$

$A_R^{(4)}$  enhanced and dominant over  $A_{NR}^{(4)}$  in the entire kinematical space.

b) One loop:

$O(p^6)$  loop and CT divided in three GI subgroups: reducible  $\pi^0$ -exchange diagrams, reducible  $\eta_8$ -exchange diagrams and 1PI diagrams.

- i.  $\pi^0$ -exchange diagrams (include both loops and CT) contribute mainly to  $A_R$ .

In principle they contribute also to  $A_{NR}$ . Decompose the  $\eta \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^0 (\pi^0)^*$  amplitude:

$$A(\eta \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^0 (\pi^0)^*) = A_{on-shell}(\eta \rightarrow 3\pi^0) + (s_{\gamma\gamma} - m_\pi^2) \times A_{off-shell} .$$

Non-resonant contribution  $\propto \mathcal{A}_{off-shell}$  vanishes in the limit  $m_u = m_d \implies$  neglected.

Extract  $|\mathcal{A}_{on-shell}|$  from experiments, no need to evaluate it in ChPT.

- ii.  $\eta_8$ -exchange diagrams (both loops and CT) contribute only to  $A_{NR}$  and can be neglected.

We explicitly checked that they are same order as tree-level  $A_{NR}^{(4)}$  (small).

Reason of suppression:  $\pi$ - $\pi$  loops (dominant contribution) are suppressed by  $(m_u + m_d)$  (as the tree level).

$K$ - $K$  loops and  $\mathcal{L}^{(4)}$  are not suppressed by  $(m_u + m_d)$ . Nonetheless negligible

(we are far below the kaon threshold and the CT combinations involved, i.e.  $(L_1 + L_3/6)$ ,  $(L_2 + L_3/3)$  and  $L_4$ , are small [16]).

- iii. The 1PI diagrams: fig. 1 (at least four distinct diagrams).

Their sum is finite and is the dominant contribution to  $A_{NR}$ .



Calculation of loop diagrams in fig. 1 similar to [17]: the radiative four-meson amplitudes, with one pseudoscalar replaced by one photon (difference).

Results simply dictated by QED

$$A_{NR}^{1PI} = 4ef(as_{\pi\pi} + bm_\pi^2) \times \\ \times \left\{ \widetilde{C}_{20}(s_{\pi\pi}, -z_2) \epsilon_{\mu\nu\alpha\beta} \epsilon_1^\mu k_1^\nu [(\epsilon_2 \cdot p_{12}) k_2^\alpha - z_2 \epsilon_2^\alpha] q^\beta + (\epsilon_1, k_1 \leftrightarrow \epsilon_2, k_2) \right\},$$

$$p_{12} = p_1 + p_2$$

function  $\widetilde{C}_{20}(x, y)$  defined in terms of the three-denominator one-loop scalar functions [17].

In  $\pi$ - $\pi$  case and for  $x, x - 2y > 4m_\pi^2$  the explicit expression is:

$$(4\pi)^2 \Re \widetilde{C}_{20}(x, y) = \frac{x}{8y^2} \left\{ \left(1 - 2\frac{y}{x}\right) \left[ \beta \log\left(\frac{1+\beta}{1-\beta}\right) - \beta_0 \log\left(\frac{1+\beta_0}{1-\beta_0}\right) \right] \right. \\ \left. + \frac{m_\pi^2}{x} \left[ \log^2\left(\frac{1+\beta_0}{1-\beta_0}\right) - \log^2\left(\frac{1+\beta}{1-\beta}\right) \right] + 2\frac{y}{x} \right\},$$

$$(16\pi) \Im \widetilde{C}_{20}(x, y) = -\frac{x}{8y^2} \left\{ \left(1 - 2\frac{y}{x}\right) [\beta - \beta_0] \right. \\ \left. + \frac{2m_\pi^2}{x} \left[ \log\left(\frac{1+\beta_0}{1-\beta_0}\right) - \log\left(\frac{1+\beta}{1-\beta}\right) \right] + 2\frac{y}{x} \right\},$$

$$\text{where } \beta_0 = \sqrt{1 - \frac{4m_\pi^2}{x}} \quad \text{and} \quad \beta = \sqrt{1 - \frac{4m_\pi^2}{(x - 2y)}}.$$

Due to GI, amplitude depends only on ‘on-shell couplings’  $a, b$  and  $f$ . Result is  $O(k_1, k_2)$  (analogy to  $O(k)$  direct-emission amplitudes of [17]).

Vertices in a general form  $\implies$  not only dominant pion loops, but also kaon loops are represented in result.

We recover, as a particular case, part of the result of [11] (i.e. the 1PI diagrams).

Correspondence of  $\widetilde{C}_{20}(x, y)$  with their function  $R(x, y)$ :

$$R(x, y) = 32\pi^2 y \widetilde{C}_{20}(x, y) .$$

Result depends only on  $\widetilde{C}_{20}$  and thus is finite  $\iff$

1. GI of the amplitude and
2. on-shell  $\pi^+\pi^- \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0$  amplitude independent of loop variables (it depends only on  $s_{\pi\pi}$ ).

Sum of 1PI diagrams is no more finite if the two external  $\pi^0$ 's are replaced by a  $\pi^+\pi^-$  pair  $\iff$

1. on-shell  $\pi^+\pi^- \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-$  amplitude depends on loop momenta, also
2. sum is not GI (to get GI result, add reducible diagrams with a photon emission from external legs).

## 4 Decay width (numerical)

Results of numerical analysis: figs. 2 and 3 from [18].

Plots obtained integrating numerically the (modulus-square of) decay amplitude:

$$A(\eta \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^0 \gamma \gamma) = A_R^{phys} + [A_{NR}^{(4)} + A_{NR}^{1PI}] .$$

$A_{NR}^{(4)}$ ,  $A_{NR}^{1PI}$  are the ChPT results.

$A_R^{phys}$  is a phenomenological expression for the resonant amplitude:

$$A_R^{phys} = A_R^{(4)} \rho e^{i\alpha_0} .$$

Factor  $\rho e^{i\alpha_0}$  = corrections to tree-level  $\eta \rightarrow 3\pi^0$  amplitude (known to be large [19]).

$\rho$  can be obtained from data:

assume a flat Dalitz Plot for  $\eta \rightarrow 3\pi^0$  decay

(no experimental evidence of a D-wave contribution)

and use [19]

$$B_0(m_u - m_d) = m_{K^0}^2 - m_{K^+}^2 - m_{\pi^0}^2 + m_{\pi^+}^2 ,$$

$\implies$  we find  $\rho \simeq 2$ .

Phase  $\alpha_0$  cannot be extracted from  $\eta \rightarrow 3\pi^0$  data.

Evaluate  $\alpha_0$ , similarly to  $K \rightarrow 3\pi$  analysis of [20]:  
 expand the one-loop  $\eta \rightarrow 3\pi^0$  amplitude of [19] around the center of the Dalitz Plot

$$\implies \alpha_0 = \frac{1}{32\pi F_\pi^2} \left(1 - \frac{4m_\pi^2}{s_0}\right)^{1/2} (2s_0 + m_\pi^2) \simeq 0.18 ,$$

where  $s_0 = (m_\eta^2 + 3m_\pi^2)/3$ .

Figs. 2,3 show that:

1.  $A_{NR}^{1PI}$  dominates over  $A_{NR}^{(4)}$  in the whole phase space.
2. For  $s_{\gamma\gamma} \gtrsim 0.15m_\eta^2$ :  $A_{NR}$  becomes non-negligible with respect to  $A_R$ .
3. For  $s_{\gamma\gamma} \gtrsim 0.20m_\eta^2$ :  $A_{NR}$  gives the dominant contribution.

Used  $\rho = 2$  in  $A_R^{phys}$  and dominant  $\pi$ - $\pi$  loops only in  $A_{NR}^{1PI}$ .  
 Kaon loops give a very small contribution (checked).

Fig 3: result is quite independent of  $\alpha_0$ .  
 Normalization factor  $\rho$  is very important.

More precise data on  $\eta \rightarrow 3\pi^0 \implies$  improve the accuracy on  $A_R^{phys} \implies$   
 include the (small)  $D$ -wave contribution we neglected.

Discrepancy with [10] in overall normalization factor. Analytic agreement.  
 Problem in the program used to produce [10] plots.

$\delta m[\text{MeV}]$	0	25	50	75
Br	0.3	$10^{-7}$	$3 \times 10^{-8}$	$10^{-8}$
N/year	$9 \times 10^7$	30	9	3
$\Gamma_{NR}/\Gamma_R$	—	0.4	1	1.5

At DAΦNE, assuming luminosity  $\mathcal{L} = 5 \times 10^{32} \text{ cm}^{-2}\text{s}^{-1}$ , 1 year =  $10^7$  s

$\implies$  # of  $\phi \rightarrow \eta\gamma$  decays per year =  $2.8 \times 10^8$ .

Used:  $\Gamma_{tot}(\eta) = 1.18 \times 10^{-3} \text{ MeV}$ ,  $\text{Br}(\eta \rightarrow 3\pi^0) = 32.1\%$

[recalling:  $\text{Br}(\pi^0 \rightarrow \gamma\gamma) = 99\%$ ]

$\implies$  total # of  $(\eta \rightarrow 3\pi^0)$  events (no cut, i.e.  $\delta m = 0$ ) =  $9 \times 10^7$  per year.

$$\Gamma_R = \int d\Gamma |A_R|^2$$

$$\Gamma_{NR} = \int d\Gamma \left( |A_{NR}|^2 + 2\text{Re}(A_R^* A_{NR}) \right)$$

## 5 Discussion: detectability of chiral loop effects (background suppression)

Dominant 1-loop corrections in ChPT to  $\eta \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\gamma\gamma$ , to go beyond the simple current algebra calculation of [10].

Phenomenological interest: experimental facilities acting effectively as  $\eta$ -factories.

Results on  $\gamma\gamma \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\pi^0$  [11] inspiring:

1. lowest-order amplitude is suppressed and
2. the corrections due to chiral loops dominate the cross-section.

Similar result for the non-resonant contribution to  $\eta \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\gamma\gamma$ .

Despite this enhancement (due to 1-loop corrections),  $A_{NR}$  is shadowed from  $A_R$  (i.e. the  $\pi^0$ -exchange) over a large portion of the diphoton spectrum.

However, at large  $s_{\gamma\gamma}$ ,  $A_{NR}^{1PI}$  dominates over  $A_R$ .

Measurement of  $\eta \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\gamma\gamma$  partial width in this region  $\implies$  new test of ChPT at  $O(p^6)$ .

Future developments.

$\eta \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-\gamma\gamma$  (statistically favored): dominated by the bremsstrahlung of  
 $\eta \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-\gamma$  [10]

(not suppressed already at the tree level)  $\implies$  1-loop corrections not related  
to the  $\eta \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-\gamma$  amplitude will be hardly detectable.

$\gamma\gamma \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^-\eta$  and  $\gamma\gamma \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\eta$  more interesting for studying chiral-loop  
effects.

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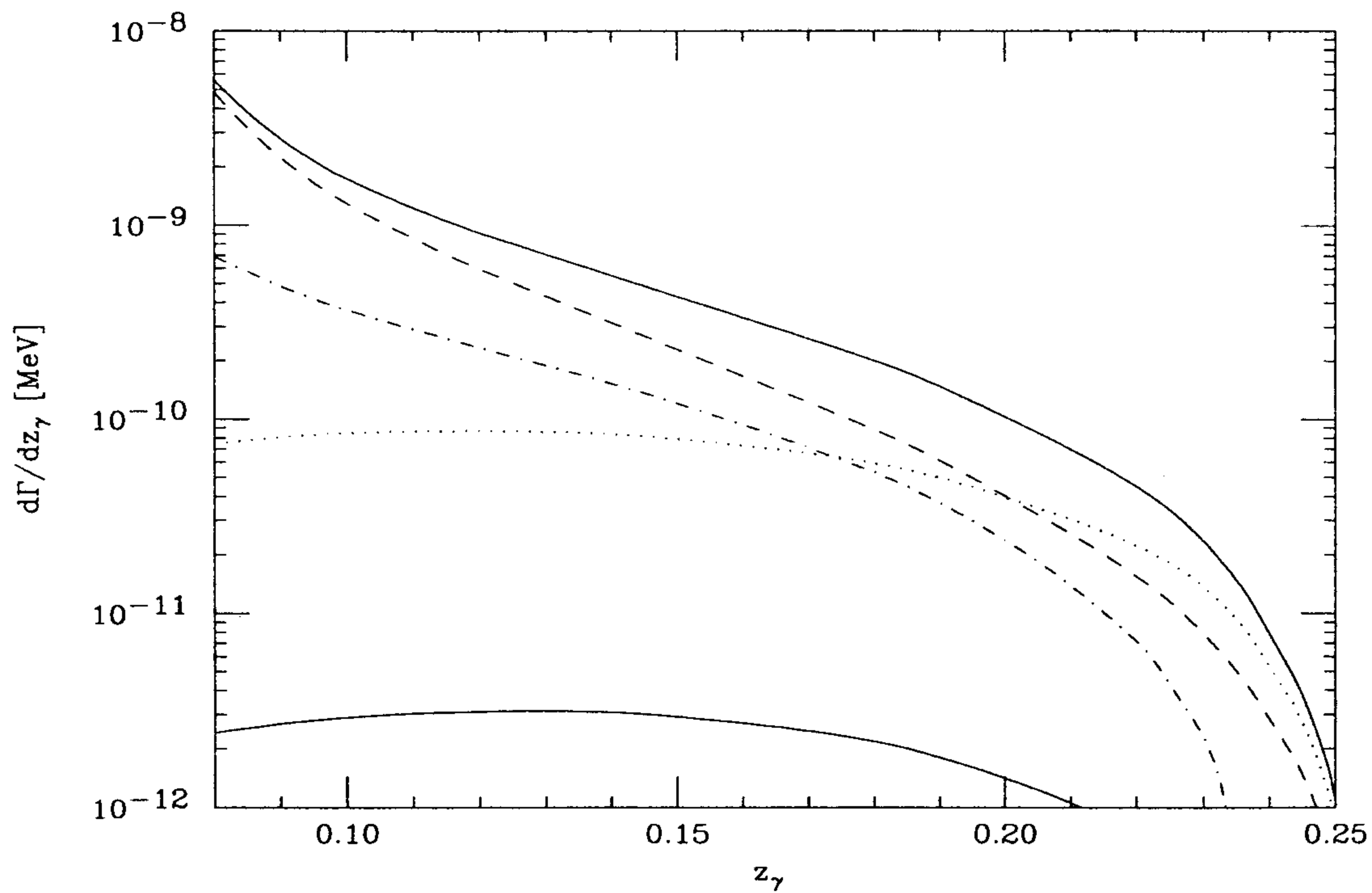


Figure 2: Diphoton spectrum ( $z_\gamma = s_{\gamma\gamma}/m_\eta^2$ ) for the decay  $\eta \rightarrow \pi^0\pi^0\gamma\gamma$ . The upper full line is the total contribution. The dashed line is the resonant contribution ( $|A_R^{phys}|^2$ ), the dotted line is the one-loop non-resonant contribution ( $|A_{NR}^{1PI}|^2$ ) and the dash-dotted line is their interference ( $\rho = 2$ ,  $\alpha_0 = 0.18$ ). The lower full line is the tree-level non-resonant contribution ( $|A_{NR}^{(4)}|^2$ ).

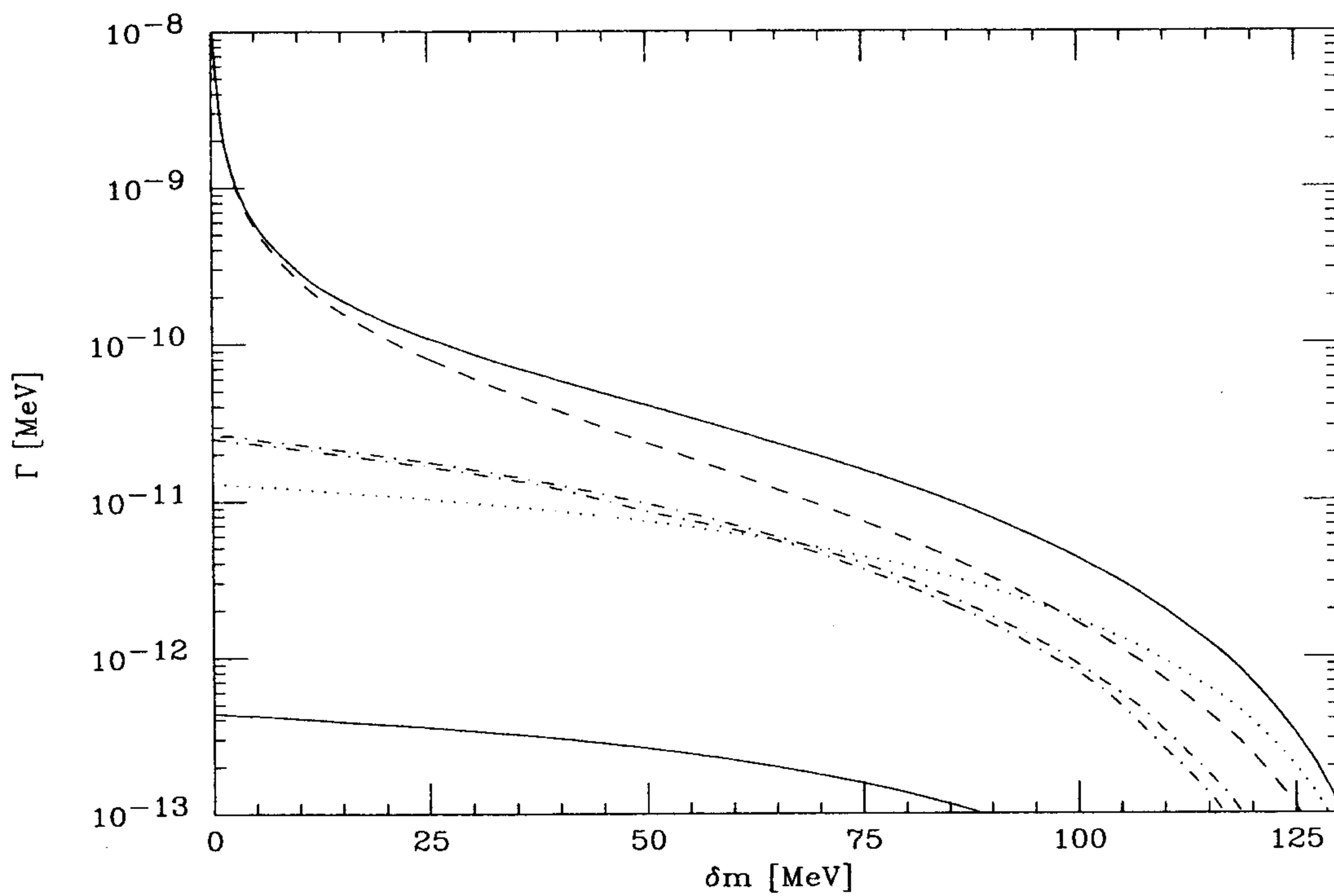


Figure 3: Partial decay rate of  $\eta \rightarrow \pi^0 \pi^0 \gamma \gamma$  as a function of the energy cut  $|s_{\gamma\gamma}^{1/2} - m_{\pi^0}| < \delta m$ . Full, dashed and dotted curves as in fig. 2. The two dash-dotted lines, denoting the interference between  $A_R^{phys}$  and  $A_{NR}^{1PI}$ , have been obtained for  $\alpha_0 = 0.16$  (upper line) and  $\alpha_0 = 0.20$  (lower line).