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Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3363r25r>

Journal

Physical review letters, 95(17)

ISSN

0031-9007

Authors

Aubert, B
Barate, R
Boutigny, D
[et al.](#)

Publication Date

2005-10-01

DOI

10.1103/physrevlett.95.171802

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Peer reviewed

Measurements of Branching Fractions and Dalitz Distributions for $B^0 \rightarrow D^{(*)\pm} K^0 \pi^\mp$ Decays

B. Aubert,¹ R. Barate,¹ D. Boutigny,¹ F. Couderc,¹ Y. Karyotakis,¹ J. P. Lees,¹ V. Poireau,¹ V. Tisserand,¹ A. Zghiche,¹ E. Grauges-Pous,² A. Palano,³ A. Pompili,³ J. C. Chen,⁴ N. D. Qi,⁴ G. Rong,⁴ P. Wang,⁴ Y. S. Zhu,⁴ G. Eigen,⁵ I. Ofte,⁵ B. Stugu,⁵ G. S. Abrams,⁶ A. W. Borgland,⁶ A. B. Breon,⁶ D. N. Brown,⁶ J. Button-Shafer,⁶ R. N. Cahn,⁶ E. Charles,⁶ C. T. Day,⁶ M. S. Gill,⁶ A. V. Gritsan,⁶ Y. Groysman,⁶ R. G. Jacobsen,⁶ R. W. Kadel,⁶ J. Kadyk,⁶ L. T. Kerth,⁶ Yu. G. Kolomensky,⁶ G. Kukartsev,⁶ G. Lynch,⁶ L. M. Mir,⁶ P. J. Oddone,⁶ T. J. Orimoto,⁶ M. Pripstein,⁶ N. A. Roe,⁶ M. T. Ronan,⁶ W. A. Wenzel,⁶ M. Barrett,⁷ K. E. Ford,⁷ T. J. Harrison,⁷ A. J. Hart,⁷ C. M. Hawkes,⁸ S. E. Morgan,⁷ A. T. Watson,⁷ M. Fritsch,⁸ K. Goetzen,⁸ T. Held,⁸ H. Koch,⁸ B. Lewandowski,⁸ M. Pelizaeus,⁸ T. Schroeder,⁸ M. Steinke,⁸ J. T. Boyd,⁹ N. Chevalier,⁹ W. N. Cottingham,⁹ M. P. Kelly,⁹ T. E. Latham,⁹ F. F. Wilson,⁹ T. Cuhadar-Donszelmann,¹⁰ C. Hearty,¹⁰ N. S. Knecht,¹⁰ T. S. Mattison,¹⁰ J. A. McKenna,¹⁰ D. Thiessen,¹⁰ A. Khan,¹¹ P. Kyberd,¹¹ L. Teodorescu,¹¹ A. E. Blinov,¹² V. E. Blinov,¹² V. P. Druzhinin,¹² V. B. Golubev,¹² V. N. Ivanchenko,¹² E. A. Kravchenko,¹² A. P. Onuchin,¹² S. I. Serednyakov,¹² Yu. I. Skovpen,¹² E. P. Solodov,¹² A. N. Yushkov,¹² D. Best,¹³ M. Bruinsma,¹³ M. Chao,¹³ I. Eschrich,¹³ D. Kirkby,¹³ A. J. Lankford,¹³ M. Mandelkern,¹³ R. K. Mommsen,¹³ W. Roethel,¹³ D. P. Stoker,¹³ C. Buchanan,¹⁴ B. L. Hartfiel,¹⁴ A. J. R. Weinstein,¹⁴ S. D. Foulkes,¹⁵ J. W. Gary,¹⁵ B. C. Shen,¹⁵ K. Wang,¹⁵ D. del Re,¹⁶ H. K. Hadavand,¹⁶ E. J. Hill,¹⁶ D. B. MacFarlane,¹⁶ H. P. Paar,¹⁶ Sh. Rahatlou,¹⁶ V. Sharma,¹⁶ J. W. Berryhill,¹⁷ C. Campagnari,¹⁷ A. Cunha,¹⁷ B. Dahmes,¹⁷ T. M. Hong,¹⁷ A. Lu,¹⁷ M. A. Mazur,¹⁷ J. D. Richman,¹⁷ W. Verkerke,¹⁷ T. W. Beck,¹⁸ A. M. Eisner,¹⁸ C. A. Heusch,¹⁸ J. Kroseberg,¹⁸ W. S. Lockman,¹⁸ G. Nesom,¹⁸ T. Schalk,¹⁸ B. A. Schumm,¹⁸ A. Seiden,¹⁸ P. Spradlin,¹⁸ D. C. Williams,¹⁸ M. G. Wilson,¹⁸ J. Albert,¹⁹ E. Chen,¹⁹ G. P. Dubois-Felsmann,¹⁹ A. Dvoretzki,¹⁹ D. G. Hitlin,¹⁹ I. Narsky,¹⁹ T. Piatenko,¹⁹ F. C. Porter,¹⁹ A. Ryd,¹⁹ A. Samuel,¹⁹ S. Yang,¹⁹ S. Jayatilake,²⁰ G. Mancinelli,²⁰ B. T. Meadows,²⁰ M. D. Sokoloff,²⁰ F. Blanc,²¹ P. Bloom,²¹ S. Chen,²¹ W. T. Ford,²¹ U. Nauenberg,²¹ A. Olivas,²¹ P. Rankin,²¹ W. O. Ruddick,²¹ J. G. Smith,²¹ K. A. Ulmer,²¹ J. Zhang,²¹ L. Zhang,²¹ A. Chen,²² E. A. Eckhart,²² J. L. Harton,²² A. Soffer,²² W. H. Toki,²² R. J. Wilson,²² Q. Zeng,²² B. Spaan,²³ D. Altenburg,²⁴ T. Brandt,²⁴ J. Brose,²⁴ M. Dickopp,²⁴ E. Feltresi,²⁴ A. Hauke,²⁴ H. M. Lacker,²⁴ R. Nogowski,²⁴ S. Otto,²⁴ A. Petzold,²⁴ J. Schubert,²⁴ K. R. Schubert,²⁴ R. Schwierz,²⁴ J. E. Sundermann,²⁴ D. Bernard,²⁵ G. R. Bonneaud,²⁵ P. Grenier,²⁵ S. Schrenk,²⁵ Ch. Thiebaux,²⁵ G. Vasileiadis,²⁵ M. Verderi,²⁵ D. J. Bard,²⁶ P. J. Clark,²⁶ F. Muheim,²⁶ S. Playfer,²⁶ Y. Xie,²⁶ M. Andreotti,²⁷ V. Azzolini,²⁷ D. Bettoni,²⁷ C. Bozzi,²⁷ R. Calabrese,²⁷ G. Cibinetto,²⁷ E. Luppi,²⁷ M. Negrini,²⁷ L. Piemontese,²⁷ A. Sarti,²⁷ F. Anulli,²⁸ R. Baldini-Ferrolli,²⁸ A. Calcaterra,²⁸ R. de Sangro,²⁸ G. Finocchiaro,²⁸ P. Patteri,²⁸ I. M. Peruzzi,²⁸ M. Piccolo,²⁸ A. Zallo,²⁸ A. Buzzo,²⁹ R. Capra,²⁹ R. Contri,²⁹ G. Crosetti,²⁹ M. Lo Vetere,²⁹ M. Macri,²⁹ M. R. Monge,²⁹ S. Passaggio,²⁹ C. Patrignani,²⁹ E. Robutti,²⁹ A. Santroni,²⁹ S. Tosi,²⁹ S. Bailey,³⁰ G. Brandenburg,³⁰ K. S. Chaisanguanthum,³⁰ M. Morii,³⁰ E. Won,³⁰ R. S. Dubitzky,³¹ U. Langenegger,³¹ J. Marks,³¹ U. Uwer,³¹ W. Bhimji,³² D. A. Bowerman,³² P. D. Dauncey,³² U. Egede,³² J. R. Gaillard,³² G. W. Morton,³² J. A. Nash,³² M. B. Nikolich,³² G. P. Taylor,³² M. J. Charles,³³ G. J. Grenier,³³ U. Mallik,³³ J. Cochran,³⁴ H. B. Crawley,³⁴ J. Lamsa,³⁴ W. T. Meyer,³⁴ S. Prell,³⁴ E. I. Rosenberg,³⁴ A. E. Rubin,³⁴ J. Yi,³⁴ N. Arnaud,³⁵ M. Davier,³⁵ X. Giroux,³⁵ G. Grosdidier,³⁵ A. Höcker,³⁵ F. Le Diberder,³⁵ V. Lepeltier,³⁵ A. M. Lutz,³⁵ T. C. Petersen,³⁵ S. Plaszczynski,³⁵ M. H. Schune,³⁵ G. Wormser,³⁵ C. H. Cheng,³⁶ D. J. Lange,³⁶ M. C. Simani,³⁶ D. M. Wright,³⁶ A. J. Bevan,³⁷ C. A. Chavez,³⁷ J. P. Coleman,³⁷ I. J. Forster,³⁷ J. R. Fry,³⁷ E. Gabathuler,³⁷ R. Gamet,³⁷ D. E. Hutchcroft,³⁷ R. J. Parry,³⁷ D. J. Payne,³⁷ C. Touramanis,³⁷ C. M. Cormack,³⁸ F. Di Lodovico,³⁸ C. L. Brown,³⁹ G. Cowan,³⁹ R. L. Flack,³⁹ H. U. Flaecher,³⁹ M. G. Green,³⁹ P. S. Jackson,³⁹ T. R. McMahon,³⁹ S. Ricciardi,³⁹ F. Salvatore,³⁹ M. A. Winter,³⁹ D. Brown,⁴⁰ C. L. Davis,⁴⁰ J. Allison,⁴¹ N. R. Barlow,⁴¹ R. J. Barlow,⁴¹ M. C. Hodgkinson,⁴¹ G. D. Lafferty,⁴¹ J. C. Williams,⁴¹ C. Chen,⁴² A. Farbin,⁴² W. D. Hulsbergen,⁴² A. Jawahery,⁴² D. Kovalskyi,⁴² C. K. Lae,⁴² V. Lillard,⁴² D. A. Roberts,⁴² G. Blaylock,⁴³ C. Dallapiccola,⁴³ S. S. Hertzbach,⁴³ R. Kofler,⁴³ V. B. Koptchev,⁴³ T. B. Moore,⁴³ S. Saremi,⁴³ H. Staengle,⁴³ S. Willocq,⁴³ R. Cowan,⁴⁴ K. Koeneke,⁴⁴ G. Sciolla,⁴⁴ S. J. Sekula,⁴⁴ F. Taylor,⁴⁴ R. K. Yamamoto,⁴⁴ D. J. J. Mangeol,⁴⁵ P. M. Patel,⁴⁵ S. H. Robertson,⁴⁵ A. Lazzaro,⁴⁶ V. Lombardo,⁴⁶ F. Palombo,⁴⁶ J. M. Bauer,⁴⁷ L. Cremaldi,⁴⁷ V. Eschenburg,⁴⁷ R. Godang,⁴⁷ R. Kroeger,⁴⁷ J. Reidy,⁴⁷ D. A. Sanders,⁴⁷ D. J. Summers,⁴⁷ H. W. Zhao,⁴⁷ S. Brunet,⁴⁸ D. Côté,⁴⁸ P. Taras,⁴⁸ H. Nicholson,⁴⁹ N. Cavallo,^{50,*} F. Fabozzi,^{50,*} C. Gatto,⁵⁰ L. Lista,⁵⁰ D. Monorchio,⁵⁰ P. Paolucci,⁵⁰ D. Piccolo,⁵⁰ C. Sciacca,⁵⁰ M. Baak,⁵¹ H. Bulten,⁵¹ G. Raven,⁵¹ H. L. Snoek,⁵¹ L. Wilden,⁵¹ C. P. Jessop,⁵² J. M. LoSecco,⁵² T. Allmendinger,⁵³ K. K. Gan,⁵³ K. Honscheid,⁵³ D. Hufnagel,⁵³ H. Kagan,⁵³ R. Kass,⁵³ T. Pulliam,⁵³ A. M. Rahimi,⁵³ R. Ter-Antonyan,⁵³ Q. K. Wong,⁵³ J. Brau,⁵⁴ R. Frey,⁵⁴ O. Igonkina,⁵⁴ M. Lu,⁵⁴ C. T. Potter,⁵⁴ N. B. Sinev,⁵⁴ D. Strom,⁵⁴ E. Torrence,⁵⁴ F. Colechia,⁵⁵ A. Dorigo,⁵⁵ F. Galeazzi,⁵⁵ M. Margoni,⁵⁵ M. Morandin,⁵⁵ M. Posocco,⁵⁵ M. Rotondo,⁵⁵

F. Simonetto,⁵⁵ R. Stroili,⁵⁵ C. Voci,⁵⁵ M. Benayoun,⁵⁶ H. Briand,⁵⁶ J. Chauveau,⁵⁶ P. David,⁵⁶ Ch. de la Vaissière,⁵⁶ L. Del Buono,⁵⁶ O. Hamon,⁵⁶ M. J. J. John,⁵⁶ Ph. Leruste,⁵⁶ J. Malcles,⁵⁶ J. Ocariz,⁵⁶ L. Roos,⁵⁶ G. Therin,⁵⁶ P. K. Behera,⁵⁷ L. Gladney,⁵⁷ Q. H. Guo,⁵⁷ J. Panetta,⁵⁷ M. Biasini,⁵⁸ R. Covarelli,⁵⁸ M. Pioppi,⁵⁸ C. Angelini,⁵⁹ G. Batignani,⁵⁹ S. Bettarini,⁵⁹ M. Bondioli,⁵⁹ F. Bucci,⁵⁹ G. Calderini,⁵⁹ M. Carpinelli,⁵⁹ F. Forti,⁵⁹ M. A. Giorgi,⁵⁹ A. Lusiani,⁵⁹ G. Marchiori,⁵⁹ M. Morganti,⁵⁹ N. Neri,⁵⁹ E. Paoloni,⁵⁹ M. Rama,⁵⁹ G. Rizzo,⁵⁹ G. Simi,⁵⁹ J. Walsh,⁵⁹ M. Haire,⁶⁰ D. Judd,⁶⁰ K. Paick,⁶⁰ D. E. Wagoner,⁶⁰ N. Danielson,⁶¹ P. Elmer,⁶¹ Y. P. Lau,⁶¹ C. Lu,⁶¹ V. Miftakov,⁶¹ J. Olsen,⁶¹ A. J. S. Smith,⁶¹ A. V. Telnov,⁶¹ F. Bellini,⁶² G. Cavoto,^{61,62} R. Faccini,⁶² F. Ferrarotto,⁶² F. Ferroni,⁶² M. Gaspero,⁶² L. Li Gioi,⁶² M. A. Mazzoni,⁶² S. Morganti,⁶² M. Pierini,⁶² G. Piredda,⁶² F. Safai Tehrani,⁶² C. Voena,⁶² S. Christ,⁶³ G. Wagner,⁶³ R. Waldi,⁶³ T. Adye,⁶⁴ N. De Groot,⁶⁴ B. Franek,⁶⁴ N. I. Geddes,⁶⁴ G. P. Gopal,⁶⁴ E. O. Olaiya,⁶⁴ R. Aleksan,⁶⁵ S. Emery,⁶⁵ A. Gaidot,⁶⁵ S. F. Ganzhur,⁶⁵ P.-F. Giraud,⁶⁵ G. Hamel de Monchenault,⁶⁵ W. Kozanecki,⁶⁵ M. Legendre,⁶⁵ G. W. London,⁶⁵ B. Mayer,⁶⁵ G. Schott,⁶⁵ G. Vasseur,⁶⁵ Ch. Yèche,⁶⁵ M. Zito,⁶⁵ M. V. Purohit,⁶⁶ A. W. Weidemann,⁶⁶ J. R. Wilson,⁶⁶ F. X. Yumiceva,⁶⁶ T. Abe,⁶⁷ D. Aston,⁶⁷ R. Bartoldus,⁶⁷ N. Berger,⁶⁷ A. M. Boyarski,⁶⁷ O. L. Buchmueller,⁶⁷ R. Claus,⁶⁷ M. R. Convery,⁶⁷ M. Cristinziani,⁶⁷ G. De Nardo,⁶⁷ J. C. Dingfelder,⁶⁷ D. Dong,⁶⁷ J. Dorfan,⁶⁷ D. Dujmic,⁶⁷ W. Dunwoodie,⁶⁷ S. Fan,⁶⁷ R. C. Field,⁶⁷ T. Glanzman,⁶⁷ S. J. Gowdy,⁶⁷ T. Hadig,⁶⁷ V. Halyo,⁶⁷ C. Hast,⁶⁷ T. Hryn'ova,⁶⁷ W. R. Innes,⁶⁷ M. H. Kelsey,⁶⁷ P. Kim,⁶⁷ M. L. Kocian,⁶⁷ D. W. G. S. Leith,⁶⁷ J. Libby,⁶⁷ S. Luitz,⁶⁷ V. Luth,⁶⁷ H. L. Lynch,⁶⁷ H. Marsiske,⁶⁷ R. Messner,⁶⁷ D. R. Muller,⁶⁷ C. P. O'Grady,⁶⁷ V. E. Ozcan,⁶⁷ A. Perazzo,⁶⁷ M. Perl,⁶⁷ B. N. Ratcliff,⁶⁷ A. Roodman,⁶⁷ A. A. Salnikov,⁶⁷ R. H. Schindler,⁶⁷ J. Schwiening,⁶⁷ A. Snyder,⁶⁷ A. Soha,⁶⁷ J. Stelzer,⁶⁷ J. Strube,^{54,67} D. Su,⁶⁷ M. K. Sullivan,⁶⁷ J. Va'vra,⁶⁷ S. R. Wagner,⁶⁷ M. Weaver,⁶⁷ W. J. Wisniewski,⁶⁷ M. Wittgen,⁶⁷ D. H. Wright,⁶⁷ A. K. Yarritu,⁶⁷ C. C. Young,⁶⁷ P. R. Burchat,⁶⁸ A. J. Edwards,⁶⁸ S. A. Majewski,⁶⁸ B. A. Petersen,⁶⁸ C. Roat,⁶⁸ M. Ahmed,⁶⁹ S. Ahmed,⁶⁹ M. S. Alam,⁶⁹ J. A. Ernst,⁶⁹ M. A. Saeed,⁶⁹ M. Saleem,⁶⁹ F. R. Wappler,⁶⁹ W. Bugg,⁷⁰ M. Krishnamurthy,⁷⁰ S. M. Spanier,⁷⁰ R. Eckmann,⁷¹ H. Kim,⁷¹ J. L. Ritchie,⁷¹ A. Satpathy,⁷¹ R. F. Schwitters,⁷¹ J. M. Izen,⁷² I. Kitayama,⁷² X. C. Lou,⁷² S. Ye,⁷² F. Bianchi,⁷³ M. Bona,⁷³ F. Gallo,⁷³ D. Gamba,⁷³ L. Bosisio,⁷⁴ C. Cartaro,⁷⁴ F. Cossutti,⁷⁴ G. Della Ricca,⁷⁴ S. Dittongo,⁷⁴ S. Grancagnolo,⁷⁴ L. Lanceri,⁷⁴ P. Poropat,^{74,†} L. Vitale,⁷⁴ G. Vuagnin,⁷⁴ F. Martinez-Vidal,^{2,75} R. S. Panvini,⁷⁶ Sw. Banerjee,⁷⁷ B. Bhuyan,⁷⁷ C. M. Brown,⁷⁷ D. Fortin,⁷⁷ P. D. Jackson,⁷⁷ R. Kowalewski,⁷⁷ J. M. Roney,⁷⁷ R. J. Sobie,⁷⁷ J. J. Back,⁷⁸ P. F. Harrison,⁷⁸ G. B. Mohanty,⁷⁸ H. R. Band,⁷⁹ X. Chen,⁷⁹ B. Cheng,⁷⁹ S. Dasu,⁷⁹ M. Datta,⁷⁹ A. M. Eichenbaum,⁷⁹ K. T. Flood,⁷⁹ M. Graham,⁷⁹ J. J. Hollar,⁷⁹ J. R. Johnson,⁷⁹ P. E. Kutter,⁷⁹ H. Li,⁷⁹ R. Liu,⁷⁹ A. Mihalys,⁷⁹ Y. Pan,⁷⁹ R. Prepost,⁷⁹ P. Tan,⁷⁹ J. H. von Wimmersperg-Toeller,⁷⁹ J. Wu,⁷⁹ S. L. Wu,⁷⁹ Z. Yu,⁷⁹ M. G. Greene,⁸⁰ and H. Neal⁸⁰

(BABAR Collaboration)

¹Laboratoire de Physique des Particules, F-74941 Annecy-le-Vieux, France

²Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, E-08193 Bellaterra, Barcelona, Spain

³Dipartimento di Fisica and INFN, Università di Bari, I-70126 Bari, Italy

⁴Institute of High Energy Physics, Beijing 100039, China

⁵University of Bergen, Inst. of Physics, N-5007 Bergen, Norway

⁶Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and University of California, Berkeley, California 94720, USA

⁷University of Birmingham, Birmingham, B15 2TT, United Kingdom

⁸Institut für Experimentalphysik I, Ruhr Universität Bochum, D-44780 Bochum, Germany

⁹University of Bristol, Bristol BS8 1TL, United Kingdom

¹⁰University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z1

¹¹Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 3PH, United Kingdom

¹²Budker Institute of Nuclear Physics, Novosibirsk 630090, Russia

¹³University of California at Irvine, Irvine, California 92697, USA

¹⁴University of California at Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California 90024, USA

¹⁵University of California at Riverside, Riverside, California 92521, USA

¹⁶University of California at San Diego, La Jolla, California 92093, USA

¹⁷University of California at Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, California 93106, USA

¹⁸Institute for Particle Physics, University of California at Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, California 95064, USA

¹⁹California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California 91125, USA

²⁰University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio 45221, USA

²¹University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado 80309, USA

²²Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado 80523, USA

²³Institut für Physik, Universität Dortmund, D-44221 Dortmund, Germany

²⁴Institut für Kern- und Teilchenphysik, Technische Universität Dresden, D-01062 Dresden, Germany

²⁵Ecole Polytechnique, LLR, F-91128 Palaiseau, France

- ²⁶University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh EH9 3JZ, United Kingdom
²⁷Dipartimento di Fisica and INFN, Università di Ferrara, I-44100 Ferrara, Italy
²⁸Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati dell'INFN, I-00044 Frascati, Italy
²⁹Dipartimento di Fisica and INFN, Università di Genova, I-16146 Genova, Italy
³⁰Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138, USA
³¹Physikalisches Institut, Universität Heidelberg, Philosophenweg 12, D-69120 Heidelberg, Germany
³²Imperial College London, London, SW7 2AZ, United Kingdom
³³University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52242, USA
³⁴Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011-3160, USA
³⁵Laboratoire de l'Accélérateur Linéaire, F-91898 Orsay, France
³⁶Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, California 94550, USA
³⁷University of Liverpool, Liverpool L69 7ZE, United Kingdom
³⁸Queen Mary, University of London, E1 4NS, United Kingdom
³⁹University of London, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX, United Kingdom
⁴⁰University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky 40292, USA
⁴¹University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL, United Kingdom
⁴²University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742, USA
⁴³University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts 01003, USA
⁴⁴Laboratory for Nuclear Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139, USA
⁴⁵McGill University, Montréal, QC, Canada H3A 2T8
⁴⁶Dipartimento di Fisica and INFN, Università di Milano, I-20133 Milano, Italy
⁴⁷University of Mississippi, University, Mississippi 38677, USA
⁴⁸Laboratoire René J. A. Lévesque, Université de Montréal, Montréal, QC, Canada H3C 3J7
⁴⁹Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075, USA
⁵⁰Dipartimento di Scienze Fisiche and INFN, Università di Napoli Federico II, I-80126, Napoli, Italy
⁵¹NIKHEF, National Institute for Nuclear Physics and High Energy Physics, NL-1009 DB Amsterdam, The Netherlands
⁵²University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556, USA
⁵³Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210, USA
⁵⁴University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403, USA
⁵⁵Dipartimento di Fisica and INFN, Università di Padova, I-35131 Padova, Italy
⁵⁶Laboratoire de Physique Nucléaire et de Hautes Energies, Universités Paris VI et VII, F-75252 Paris, France
⁵⁷University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104, USA
⁵⁸Dipartimento di Fisica and INFN, Università di Perugia, I-06100 Perugia, Italy
⁵⁹Dipartimento di Fisica, Scuola Normale Superiore and INFN, Università di Pisa, I-56127 Pisa, Italy
⁶⁰Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas 77446, USA
⁶¹Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey 08544, USA
⁶²Dipartimento di Fisica and INFN, Università di Roma La Sapienza, I-00185 Roma, Italy
⁶³Universität Rostock, D-18051 Rostock, Germany
⁶⁴Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Chilton, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 0QX, United Kingdom
⁶⁵DSM/Dapnia, CEA/Saclay, F-91191 Gif-sur-Yvette, France
⁶⁶University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina 29208, USA
⁶⁷Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, Stanford, California 94309, USA
⁶⁸Stanford University, Stanford, California 94305-4060, USA
⁶⁹State University of New York, Albany, New York 12222, USA
⁷⁰University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee 37996, USA
⁷¹University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712, USA
⁷²University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson, Texas 75083, USA
⁷³Dipartimento di Fisica Sperimentale and INFN, Università di Torino, I-10125 Torino, Italy
⁷⁴Dipartimento di Fisica and INFN, Università di Trieste, I-34127 Trieste, Italy
⁷⁵Universidad de Valencia, E-46100 Burjassot, Valencia, Spain
⁷⁶Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee 37235, USA
⁷⁷University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, Canada V8W 3P6
⁷⁸Department of Physics, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL, United Kingdom
⁷⁹University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin 53706, USA
⁸⁰Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut 06511, USA

(Received 15 December 2004; published 18 October 2005)

We present measurements of the branching fractions for the three-body decays $B^0 \rightarrow D^{(*)\mp} K^0 \pi^\pm$ and their resonant submodes $B^0 \rightarrow D^{(*)\mp} K^{*\pm}$ using a sample of approximately 88×10^6 $B\bar{B}$ pairs collected by the BABAR detector at the SLAC PEP-II asymmetric energy storage ring. We measure: $\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow D^{\mp} K^0 \pi^\pm) = (4.9 \pm 0.7_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.5_{\text{syst}}) \times 10^{-4}$, $\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow D^{*\mp} K^0 \pi^\pm) = (3.0 \pm 0.7_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.3_{\text{syst}}) \times 10^{-4}$, $\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow D^{\mp} K^{*\pm}) = (4.6 \pm 0.6_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.5_{\text{syst}}) \times 10^{-4}$, $\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow D^{*\mp} K^{*\pm}) = (3.2 \pm 0.6_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.3_{\text{syst}}) \times 10^{-4}$.

From these measurements we determine the fractions of resonant events to be $f(B^0 \rightarrow D^{\mp} K^{*\pm}) = 0.63 \pm 0.08_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.04_{\text{syst}}$ and $f(B^0 \rightarrow D^{*\mp} K^{*\pm}) = 0.72 \pm 0.14_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.05_{\text{syst}}$.

DOI: [10.1103/PhysRevLett.95.171802](https://doi.org/10.1103/PhysRevLett.95.171802)

PACS numbers: 13.25.Hw, 14.40.Nd

Several independent measurements are needed to test the standard model description of CP violation. The angle γ can be determined using decays of the type $B \rightarrow D^{(*)} K^{(*)}$ [1]. The experimental challenges are color suppression of the $b \rightarrow u$ transition, reconstruction of D^0 CP eigenstates, and interfering doubly-Cabibbo-suppressed decays (DCSD) [2]. Also, two-body mode analyses are complicated because there are eight degenerate solutions for γ in the interval $[0, 2\pi]$.

In recent papers [3,4] three-body decays have been suggested for measuring γ , since these do not suffer from the color suppression penalty. Furthermore, the channels $B^0 \rightarrow D^{(*)\mp} K^0 \pi^{\pm}$ do not have the above problems with CP states and DCSD interference, and can resolve most of the ambiguities [3]. The angle γ can be extracted from a time-dependent Dalitz analysis of these decay modes.

The analysis presented here is based on 81.8 fb^{-1} of data taken at the $Y(4S)$ resonance, corresponding to approximately 88×10^6 $B\bar{B}$ pairs, with the *BABAR* detector [5] at the SLAC PEP-II storage ring. We measure the branching fractions of the $B^0 \rightarrow D^{(*)\mp} K^0 \pi^{\pm}$ decays and consider their distribution in the Dalitz plot.

We reconstruct D^+ mesons in the decay mode $K^- \pi^+ \pi^+$ and D^{*+} mesons in the mode $D^0 \pi^+$, with the D^0 decaying to $K^- \pi^+$, $K^- \pi^+ \pi^0$, and $K^- \pi^+ \pi^- \pi^+$. Here and throughout the Letter charge conjugate states are implied. Tracks from the D decay are required to originate from a common vertex. Positive kaon identification is enforced on kaons from D meson decays, except for the $D^0 \rightarrow K^- \pi^+$ mode.

The D^+ candidates are required to have a mass within $12 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ (2σ) of the D^+ mass, while the mass of D^0 candidates decaying to charged daughters only is required to lie within $15 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ (2.5σ) of the D^0 mass, where σ is the experimental resolution. The $D^0 \rightarrow K^- \pi^+ \pi^0$ candidates are required to have a mass within $30 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ (2.5σ) of the D^0 mass and to be located at a point in the D^0 Dalitz plot where the density of events is larger than 1.4% of the maximum density.

The D^{*+} candidates are accepted if the mass difference $m_{D^{*+}} - m_{D^0}$ is within $2 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ (3σ) of the nominal value, except for the $D^0 \rightarrow K^- \pi^+ \pi^0$ candidates where we use $1.5 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ to reduce this mode's larger combinatoric background.

We combine oppositely charged tracks from a common vertex into K_S^0 candidates. The K_S^0 candidates are required to have a mass within $7 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ (3σ) of the K_S^0 mass and a transverse flight length that is significantly (4σ) greater than zero.

To form B^0 candidates, the $D^{(*)+}$ candidates are combined with a K_S^0 candidate and a π^- , for which the particle

identification (PID) is inconsistent with being a kaon or an electron. The probability of a common vertex is required to be above 0.1%. Using the beam energy, two almost-independent kinematic variables are constructed: the beam-energy substituted mass $m_{\text{ES}} \equiv \sqrt{(\sqrt{s}/2)^2 - p_B^{*2}}$, and the difference between the B^0 candidate's measured energy and the beam energy, $\Delta E \equiv E_B^* - \sqrt{s}/2$. The asterisk denotes evaluation in the $Y(4S)$ c.m. frame. B^0 candidates are required to have ΔE in the range $[-0.1, 0.1] \text{ GeV}$, and m_{ES} in the range $[5.24, 5.29] \times ([5.20, 5.288]) \text{ GeV}/c^2$ for $D^{\mp} K^0 \pi^{\pm}$ ($D^{*\mp} K^0 \pi^{\pm}$).

To suppress the dominant continuum background events, which have a more jetlike shape than $B\bar{B}$ events, we use a linear combination, \mathcal{F} , of four variables: $L_0 = \sum_i p_i$, $L_2 = \sum_i p_i |\cos\theta_i|^2$, and the absolute values of the cosine of the polar angles of the B momentum and of the B thrust direction [6]. Here, p_i is the momentum and θ_i is the angle with respect to the thrust axis of the signal B candidate of the tracks and clusters not used to reconstruct the B . All of these variables are calculated in the c.m. frame. The coefficients are chosen to maximize the separation between the signal Monte Carlo distribution and 9.6 fb^{-1} of continuum events from data taken 40 MeV below the $Y(4S)$ resonance (off-resonance data). \mathcal{F} has negligible correlations with m_{ES} and ΔE .

After the event selection, approximately 5% of the events have more than one B^0 candidate. We choose the one with m_D closest to the expected value and correct for differences between data and simulation. In simulated signal events, the final selection is 19.3% efficient for $B^0 \rightarrow D^{\mp} K^0 \pi^{\pm}$ and 15.5%, 3.9%, and 8.2% efficient for $B^0 \rightarrow D^{*\mp} K^0 \pi^{\pm}$ in the three D^0 decay modes $K^- \pi^+$, $K^- \pi^+ \pi^0$, and $K^- \pi^+ \pi^- \pi^+$, respectively.

We perform an unbinned extended maximum likelihood fit with the variables m_{ES} , ΔE , and \mathcal{F} on the selected candidates, using the logarithm of the likelihood

$$\ln \mathcal{L} = \sum_{i=\text{events}} \ln \left(\sum_j N_j P_{ij}(m_{\text{ES}}^i, \Delta E^i, \mathcal{F}^i) \right) - \sum_j N_j, \quad (1)$$

where P_{ij} is the product of probability density functions (PDFs) for event i of m_{ES}^i , ΔE^i , and \mathcal{F}^i , and N_j is the number of events of each sample component j : signal, continuum, combinatoric $B\bar{B}$ decays, and $B\bar{B}$ events that peak in m_{ES} but not in ΔE signal region (denoted peaking $B\bar{B}$ background).

The signal is described by a Gaussian distribution in m_{ES} , two Gaussian distributions with common mean in ΔE , and a Gaussian distribution with different widths on each side of the mean ("bifurcated Gaussian distribution") in \mathcal{F} . Their shape is obtained from the high-statistics data

control samples $B^0 \rightarrow D^{(*)\mp} a_1^\pm$ (similar topology of the final state as the signal) for m_{ES} and ΔE , and $B^0 \rightarrow D^{*\mp} \pi^\pm$ for \mathcal{F} , and all nine parameters are fixed in the fit.

The continuum and combinatoric $B\bar{B}$ backgrounds are described by empirical endpoint functions [7] in m_{ES} , linear functions in ΔE , and bifurcated Gaussian distributions in \mathcal{F} . The \mathcal{F} distribution of continuum is obtained from off-resonance data, while the \mathcal{F} distribution of the $B\bar{B}$ backgrounds is obtained from Monte Carlo simulation, and compared with data in high-statistics samples to ensure that there is no significant difference. The two \mathcal{F} distributions and the common endpoint in m_{ES} are fixed in the fit, while the m_{ES} shape and ΔE distributions are left free to float, leaving four out of 11 parameters free in the fit.

The peaking $B\bar{B}$ background is parametrized by a Gaussian distribution in m_{ES} , an exponential distribution in ΔE , and shares the PDF in \mathcal{F} with the nonpeaking $B\bar{B}$ background. The mean and width in m_{ES} of the peaking $B\bar{B}$ background are fixed to values obtained from Monte Carlo simulation, which are consistent with values measured in the ΔE sideband of data, thus adding one free and two fixed parameters.

The likelihood function is determined by the 27 parameters described above, of which all four yields and five background shape parameters are fitted. Subsequent to the fit, possible residual backgrounds from combinatoric D and K_S^0 candidates are estimated using the sidebands of m_D and $m_{K_S^0}$, and subtracted.

The three-body and quasi-two-body [that is $B^0 \rightarrow D^{(*)\mp} K^{*\pm}$] branching fractions are obtained by fitting first without regard to event positions in the Dalitz plot, and then with the requirement that the $K_S^0 \pi^\pm$ invariant mass lie within 100 MeV/ c^2 of the K^{*+} (892) mass. Because of the relatively small number of background events in the second fit, all $B\bar{B}$ shape parameters are kept fixed to the value obtained in the first fit.

The results are shown in Fig. 1, while yields and purities [defined as $N_{sig}/\sigma^2(N_{sig})$] are listed in Table I, with the K^{*+} resonant part included in the three-body state. To determine the three-body branching fractions optimally, a mapping of the efficiency across the Dalitz plot is needed. This is obtained from simulated signal events. Incorporating the efficiency variations ($\sim \pm 30\%$) across the Dalitz plot requires a measure of the (*a priori* unknown) event distribution in the Dalitz plot. We obtain the number of signal events from the likelihood fit using weights defined as

$$W_{sig}^i \equiv \frac{\sum_j \mathbf{V}_{sig,j} P_{ij}(m_{ES}^i, \Delta E^i, \mathcal{F}^i)}{\sum_j N_j P_{ij}(m_{ES}^i, \Delta E^i, \mathcal{F}^i)}, \quad (2)$$

where N_j and P_{ij} are defined as in Eq. (1), and $\mathbf{V}_{sig,j}$ is the signal row of the covariance matrix of the component yields obtained from the likelihood fit. These weights W_{sig}^i , which in the absence of correlations are signal prob-

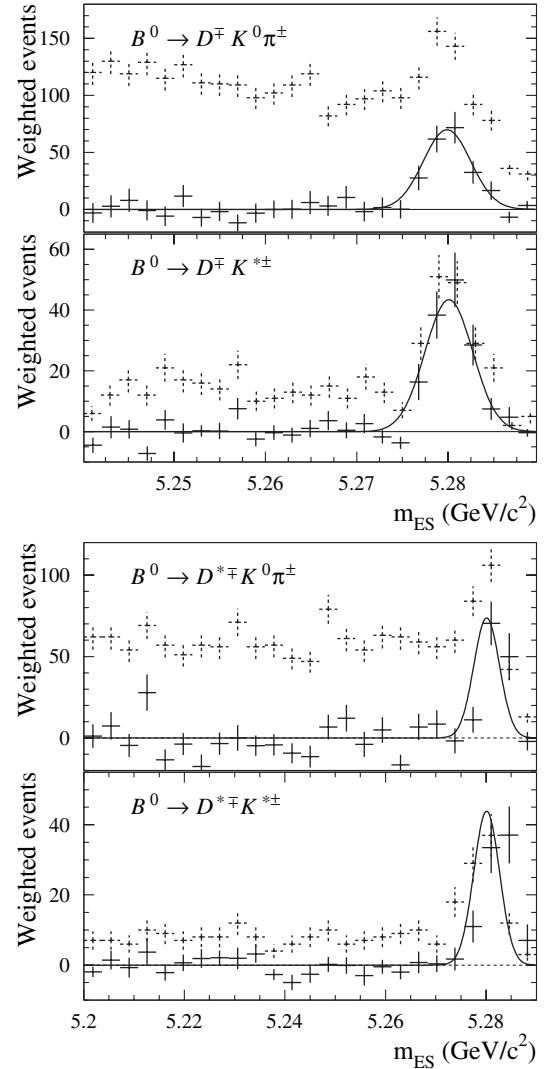


FIG. 1. m_{ES} distributions in data for the four decay modes. In solid markers are shown events weighted by W_{sig} (see text). Following the prescription of [8] the m_{ES} variable was removed from the likelihood to perform the second fit needed to obtain the m_{ES} free yields and covariance matrix entering into W_{sig} . The PDF used in the main fit is superimposed for comparison. For comparison, the m_{ES} distribution obtained with $|\Delta E| < 25$ MeV (2σ) is included (dotted points).

abilities P_{sig}/P_{total} , contain the signal distribution and its uncertainty for any quantity, uncorrelated with the variables in the likelihood fit [8]. It has been checked that the Dalitz variables have no significant correlation with the likelihood fit variables. It should be noted that because of

TABLE I. Signal yields and purities.

Decay mode	Signal yield	Purity
$B^0 \rightarrow D^{\mp} K^0 \pi^{\pm}$	230 ± 24	40%
$B^0 \rightarrow D^{\mp} K^{*\pm}$	143 ± 14	73%
$B^0 \rightarrow D^{*\mp} K^0 \pi^{\pm}$	134 ± 17	46%
$B^0 \rightarrow D^{*\mp} K^{*\pm}$	78 ± 10	78%

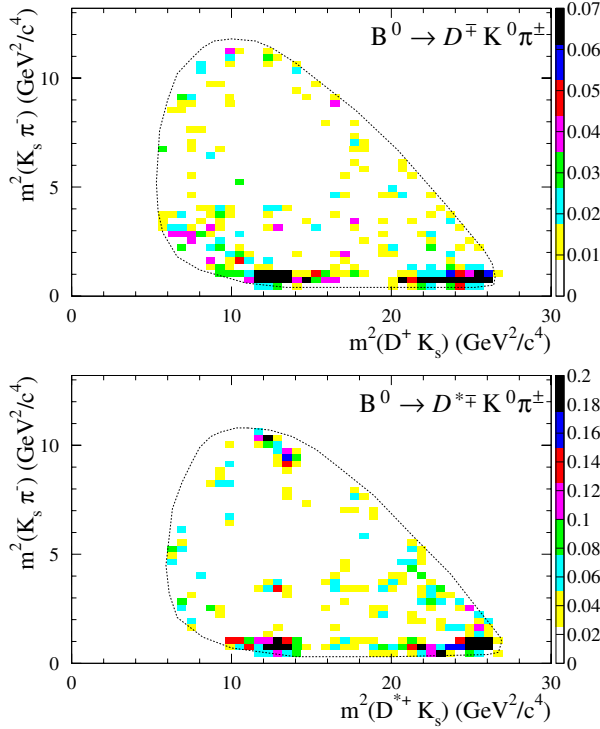


FIG. 2 (color online). Signal Dalitz distributions with events weighted by W_{sig} and corrected for efficiency variations. Each bin is colored according to its contribution to the branching fraction. The bins in white also include the contributions which are negative but still statistically compatible with zero.

the use of the covariance matrix, the weight can be negative especially for backgroundlike events.

The efficiency-corrected Dalitz distributions, weighted by W_{sig} , are shown in Fig. 2. The $K^*(892)^+$ resonance is dominant in both the $B^0 \rightarrow D^+ K^0 \pi^+$ and $B^0 \rightarrow D^{*+} K^0 \pi^+$ modes, while no other resonant structures are significant. In the $B^0 \rightarrow D^+ K^0 \pi^+$ channel, the spin-1 $K^{*\pm}$ meson has the helicity distribution $dN/d\cos\theta \propto \cos^2\theta$, where θ is the angle between the $K^{*\pm}$ and the K^0 in the $K^{*\pm}$ center of mass frame. This can be seen in Fig. 3.

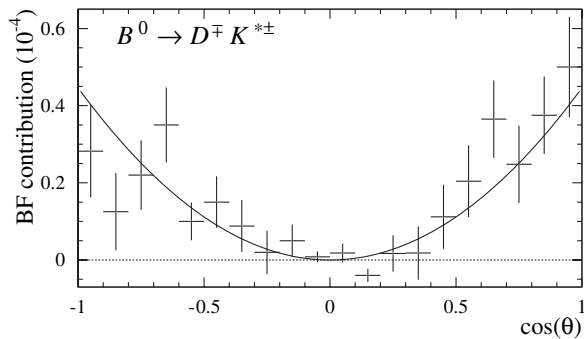


FIG. 3. Distribution of $\cos\theta$ for data for the $B^0 \rightarrow D^+ K^0 \pi^+$ decay mode in the $K^{*\pm}$ region using the signal weights W_{sig} and correcting for efficiency variations. The solid curve shows the expected spin-1 distribution $dN/d\cos\theta \propto \cos^2\theta$.

The systematic errors are summarized in Table II. Most systematic errors are due to possible differences between data and Monte Carlo calculations. The tracking efficiency residuals and associated systematic error are obtained from a large sample of τ decays. The efficiency correction as a function of the position in the Dalitz plot obtained from simulated signal events comes with systematic uncertainties due to resolution effects and binning, which are mostly of statistical origin. A $\pm 1\sigma$ variation of all fixed variables in the fit, including relevant correlations, is used to obtain the systematic from the uncertainty in the PDFs.

Our final branching fraction results, weighting the three D^0 modes according to their combined statistical and uncorrelated systematic error, are

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow D^+ K^0 \pi^+) &= (4.9 \pm 0.7_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.5_{\text{syst}}) \times 10^{-4}, \\ \mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow D^{*+} K^0 \pi^+) &= (3.0 \pm 0.7_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.3_{\text{syst}}) \times 10^{-4}, \\ \mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow D^+ K^{*\pm}) &= (4.6 \pm 0.6_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.5_{\text{syst}}) \times 10^{-4}, \\ \mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow D^{*+} K^{*\pm}) &= (3.2 \pm 0.6_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.3_{\text{syst}}) \times 10^{-4}.\end{aligned}$$

To summarize, a clear signal is seen in both the $B^0 \rightarrow D^+ K^0 \pi^+$ and $B^0 \rightarrow D^{*+} K^0 \pi^+$ channels, and in both modes the $K^*(892)^+$ resonance is dominant. Defining the K^* resonant fractions, f , as $\mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow D^{(*)+} K^{*\pm}) \mathcal{B}(K^{*+} \rightarrow K^0 \pi^+) / \mathcal{B}(B^0 \rightarrow D^{(*)+} K^0 \pi^+)$, we obtain the fractions $f(B^0 \rightarrow D^+ K^{*\pm}) = 0.63 \pm 0.08_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.04_{\text{syst}}$ and $f(B^0 \rightarrow D^{*+} K^{*\pm}) = 0.72 \pm 0.14_{\text{stat}} \pm 0.05_{\text{syst}}$, respectively, where the systematic errors are mainly from correcting for any possible nonresonant contributions.

Both the method of this analysis and the resulting three-body branching fraction measurements are the first of their kind, while the resonant decay modes have been measured before [9]. To determine the sensitivity to γ of these modes, a time-dependent Dalitz fit is required, for which the data sample is inadequate. However, the branching

TABLE II. Sources and sizes of systematic errors. The combined errors take correlations into account. All numbers are in percent.

Systematic	$DK\pi$	DK^*	$D^*K\pi$	D^*K^*
Tracking efficiency	5.9	5.9	6.1	6.3
PID efficiency	2.2	2.0	2.0	2.0
$\mathcal{B}(D^{*+})$	0.7	0.7
$\mathcal{B}(D^{+/0})$	6.5	6.5	3.4	3.8
$D^{(*)}$ reconstruction	0.7	0.7	1.2	1.2
K^{*+} fraction fit	...	3.7	...	5.1
$\mathcal{B}(K_S^0)$	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
K_S^0 reconstruction	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9
π^0 reconstruction	0.8	1.2
PDF parametrization	4.5	2.9	7.1	3.7
Efficiency variation	3.5	4.9	6.3	5.6
$B\bar{B}$ counting	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Combined error	11.0	11.6	12.6	12.2

fractions and Dalitz distributions suggest that these modes will be useful for measuring γ at the B factories.

We are grateful for the excellent luminosity and machine conditions provided by our SLAC PEP-II colleagues, and for the substantial dedicated effort from the computing organizations that support *BABAR*. The collaborating institutions wish to thank SLAC for its support and kind hospitality. This work is supported by DOE and NSF (USA), NSERC (Canada), IHEP (China), CEA and CNRS-IN2P3 (France), BMBF and DFG (Germany), INFN (Italy), FOM (The Netherlands), NFR (Norway), MIST (Russia), and PPARC (United Kingdom). Individuals have received support from the A.P. Sloan Foundation, Research Corporation, and Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

*Also with Università della Basilicata, Potenza, Italy.

[†]Deceased.

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