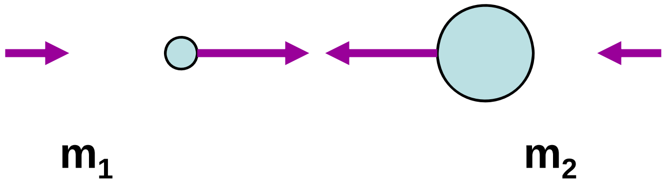
From High-Energy Heavy-Ion Collisions to Quark Matter

QuickTime™ and a
YUV420 codec decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

The fundamental forces and the building blocks of Nature

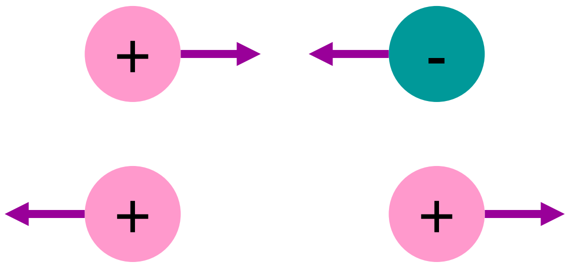
Gravity

- one “charge” (mass)
- force decreases with distance

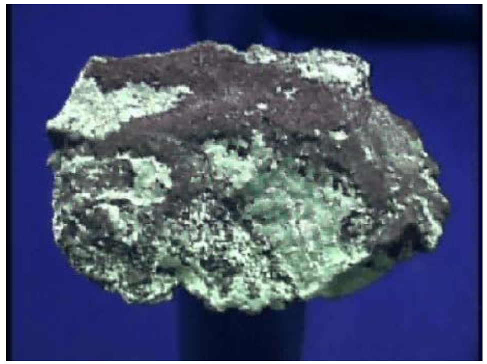


Electromagnetism (QED)

- two charges
- force decreases with distance



Atom



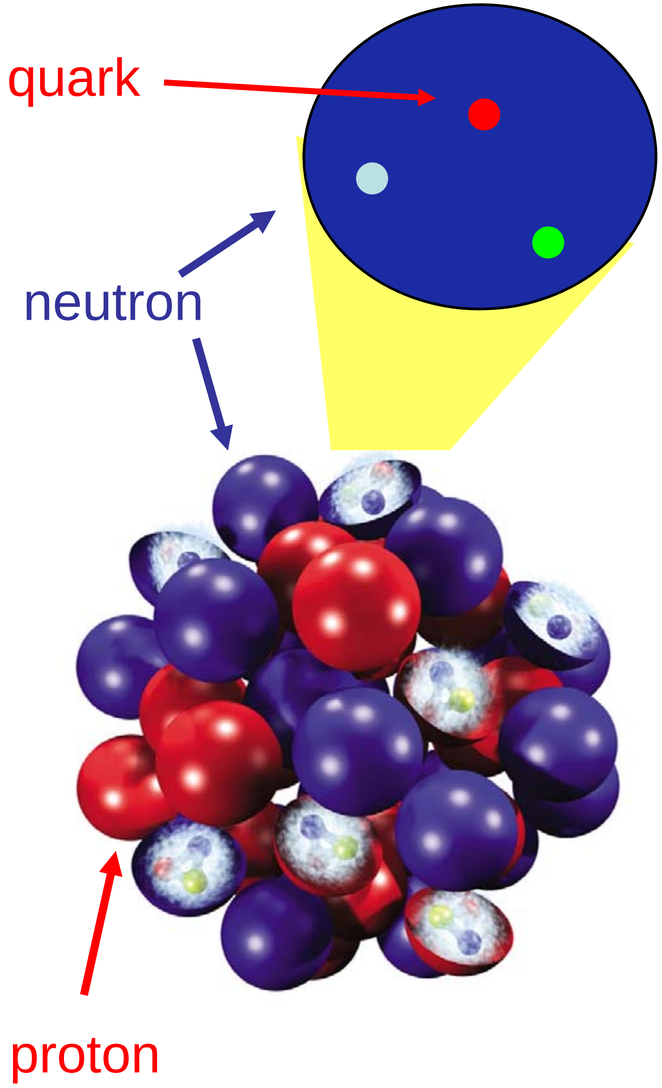
Atomic nuclei and the colour interaction

The nuclei are composed of:

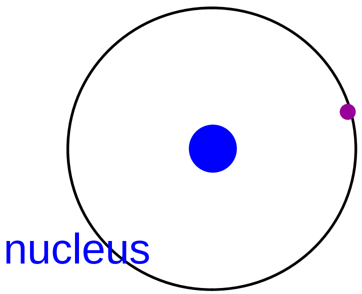
- protons (positive electric charge)
- neutrons (no electric charge)

They do not blow up thanks to the force between the colour charges of **quarks** and **gluons**

These interactions are described by **QCD** (Quantum Chromo Dynamics)



Confinement: a crucial feature of QCD



We can extract an electron from an atom by providing energy

But we cannot get free quarks out of hadrons: **“colour confinement”**

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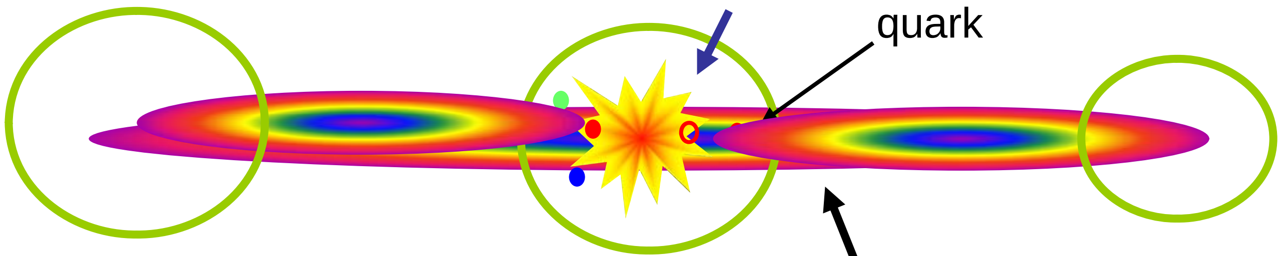
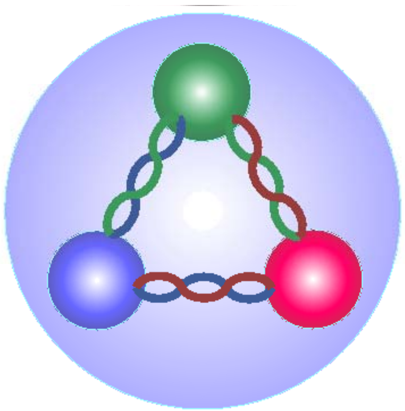
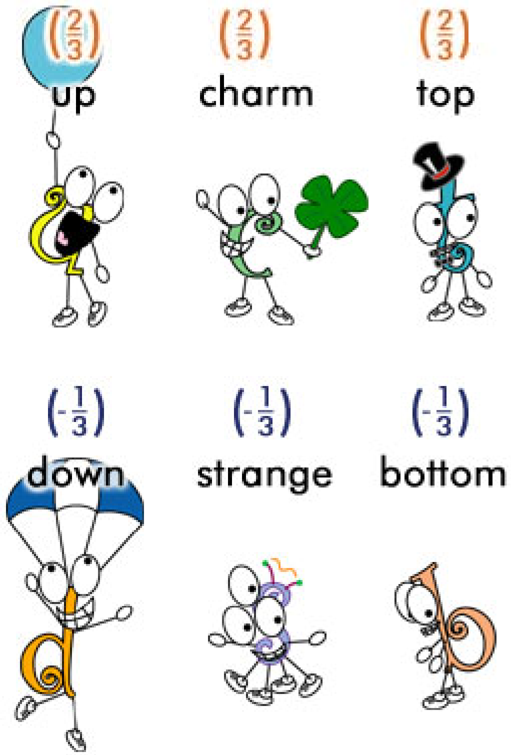
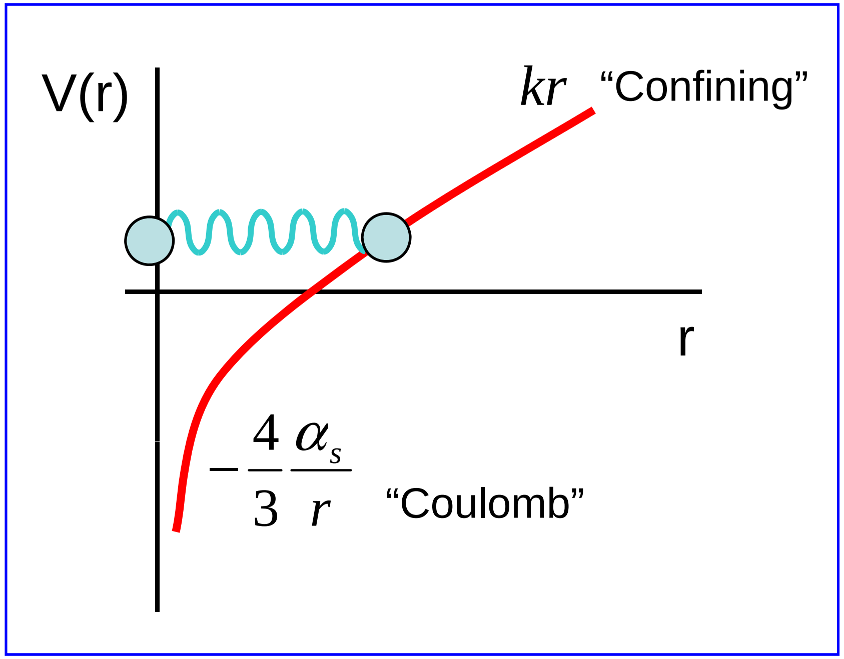


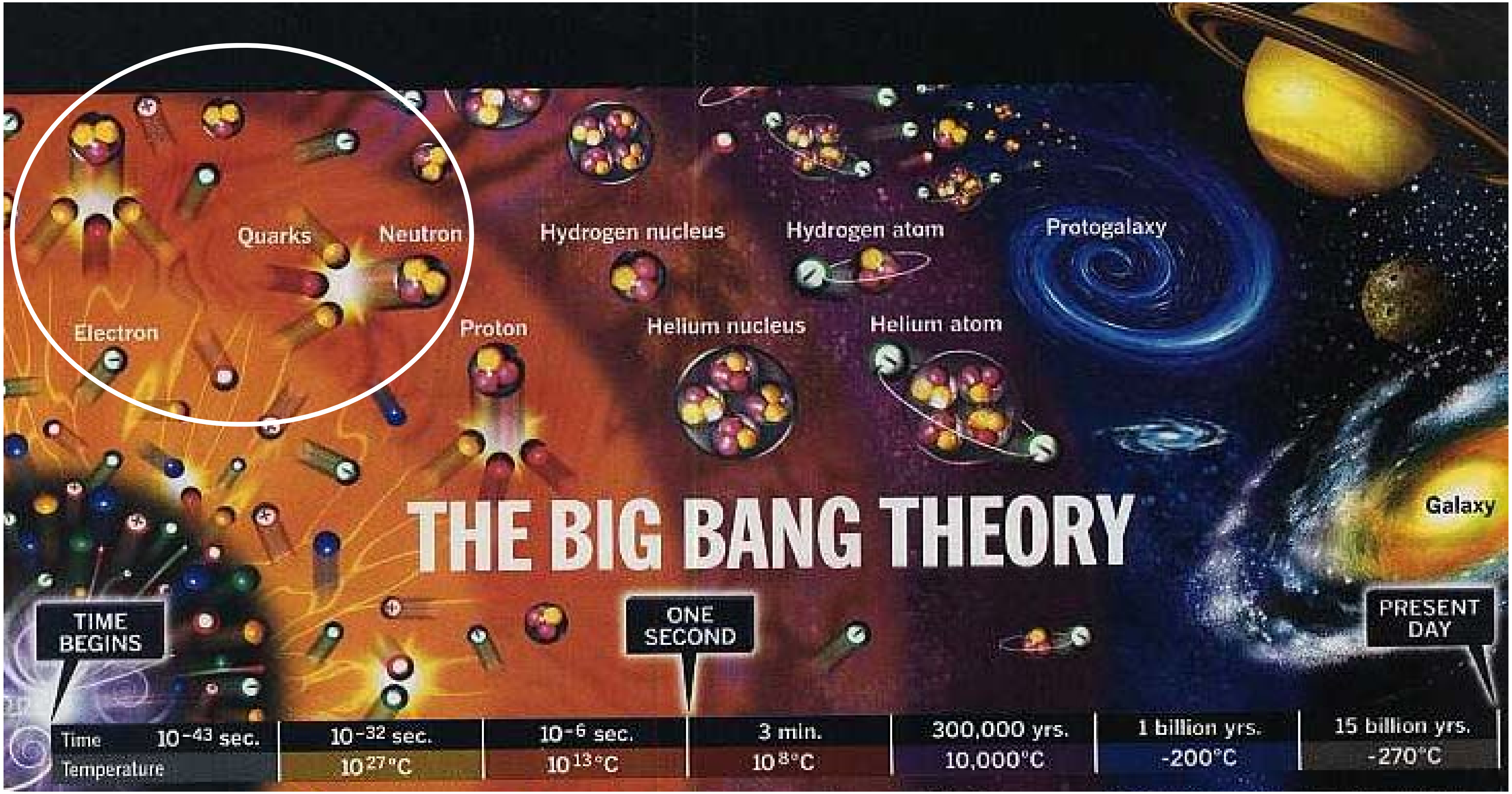
A proton is a composite object
made of quarks...
and gluons





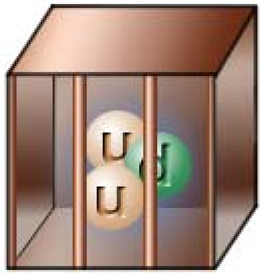
No one has ever seen a free quark;
QCD is a “confining gauge theory”





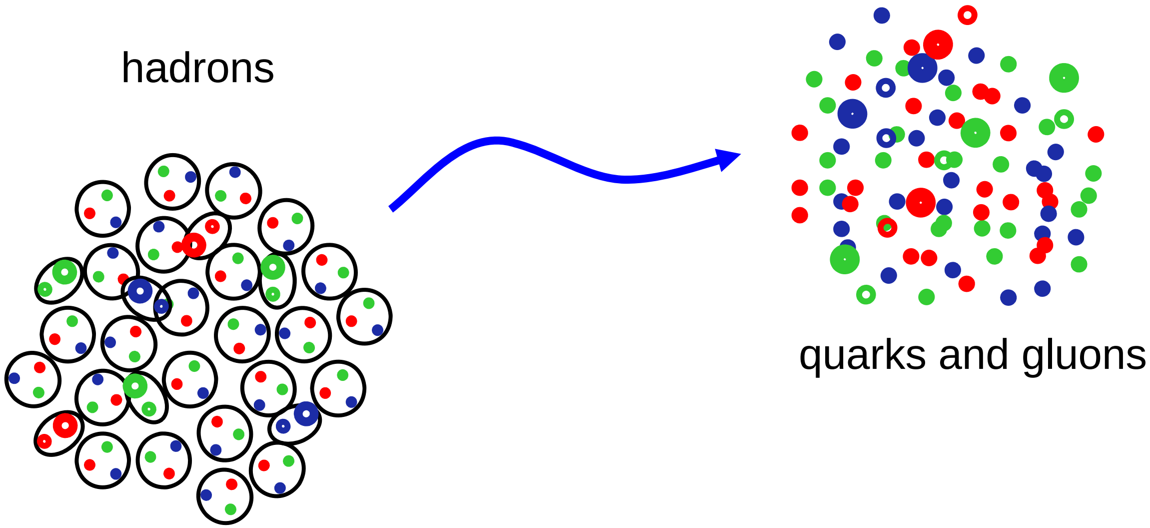
A very very long time ago... quarks and gluons were “free”.

As the universe cooled down, they got confined into hadrons and have remained imprisoned ever since...



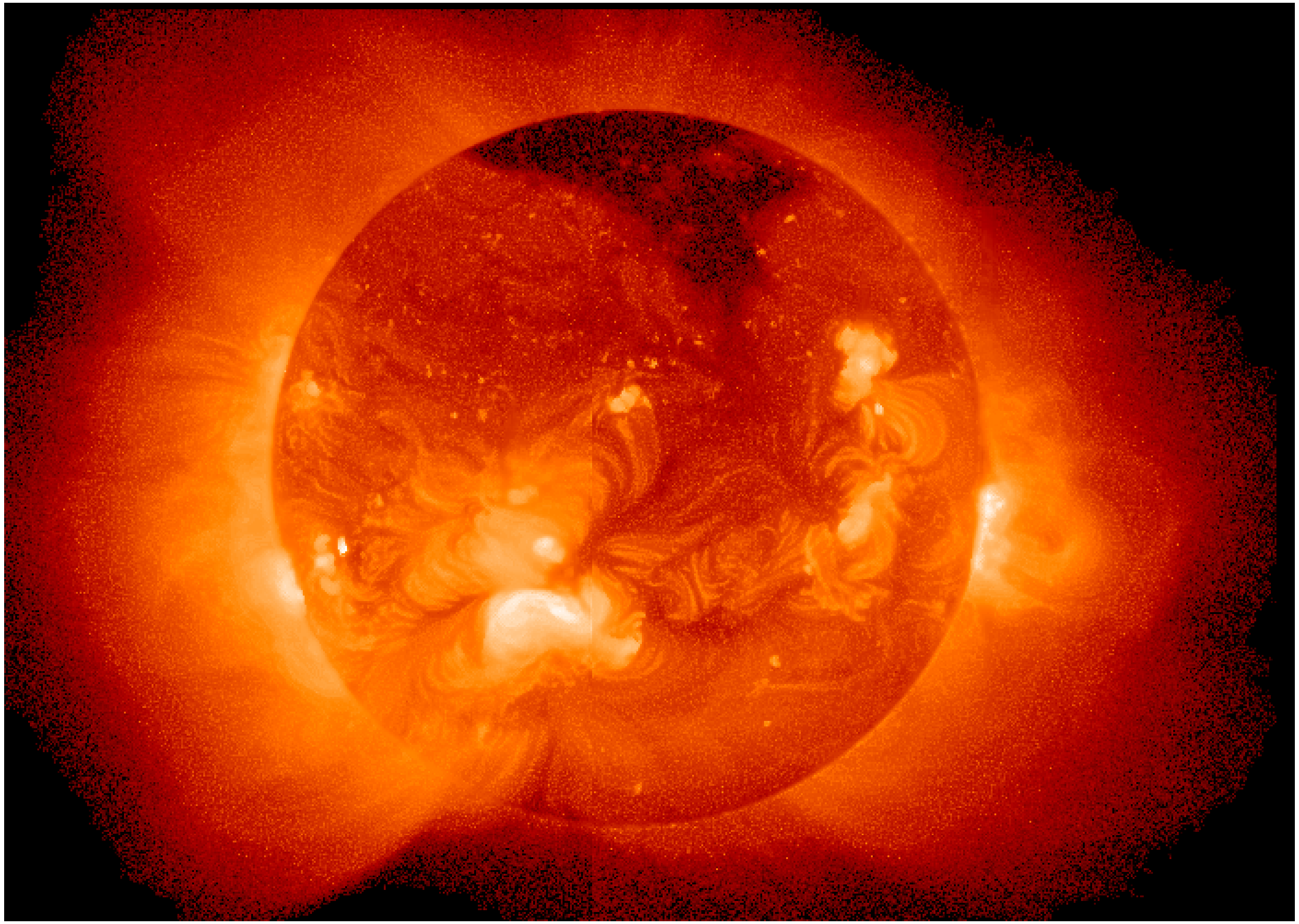
The QCD phase transition

QCD calculations indicate that, at a *critical* temperature around 170 MeV, strongly interacting matter undergoes a phase transition to a new state where the quarks and gluons are no longer confined in hadrons



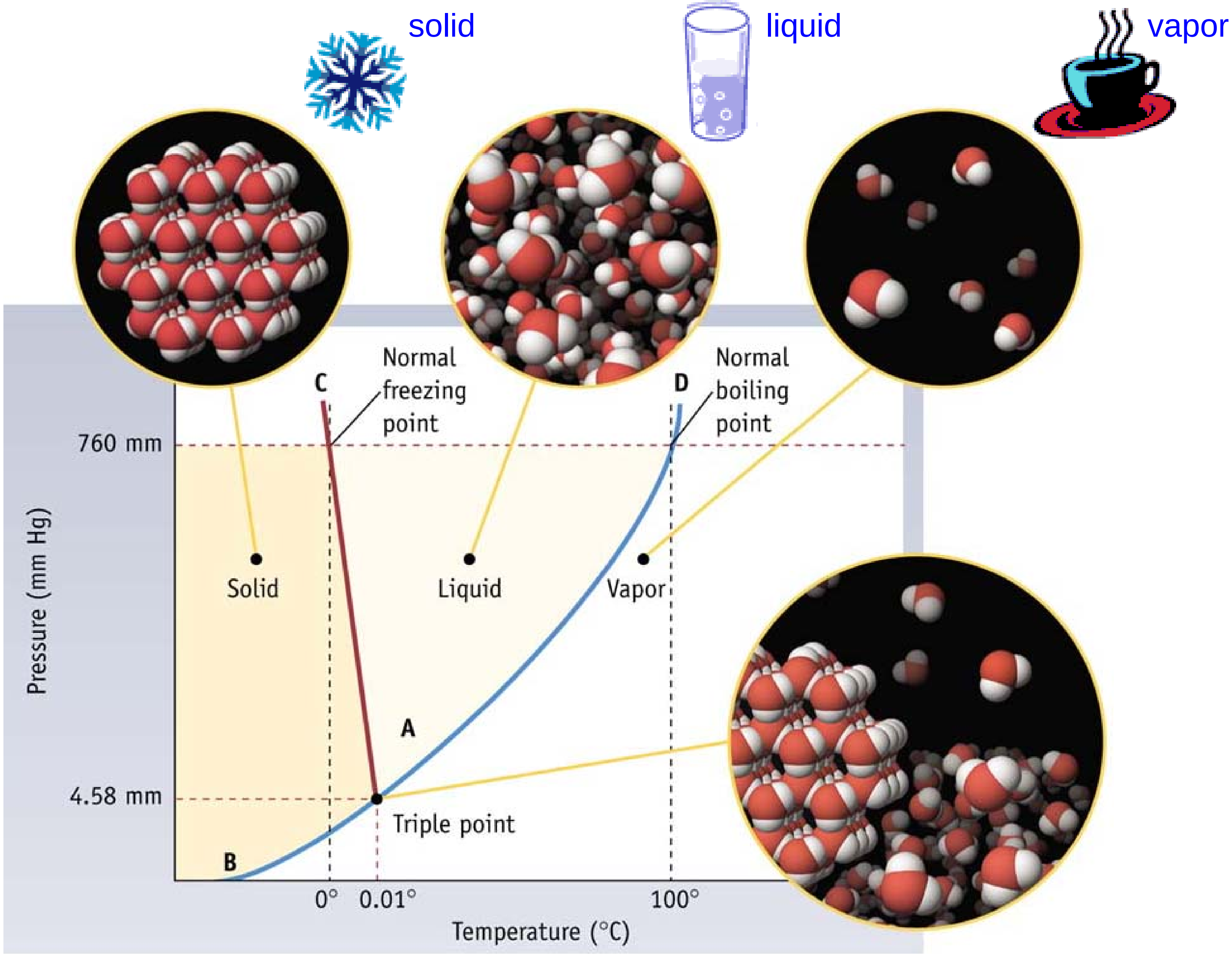
How hot is a medium of T ~ 170 MeV?

Temperature at the centre of the Sun ~ 15 000 000 K

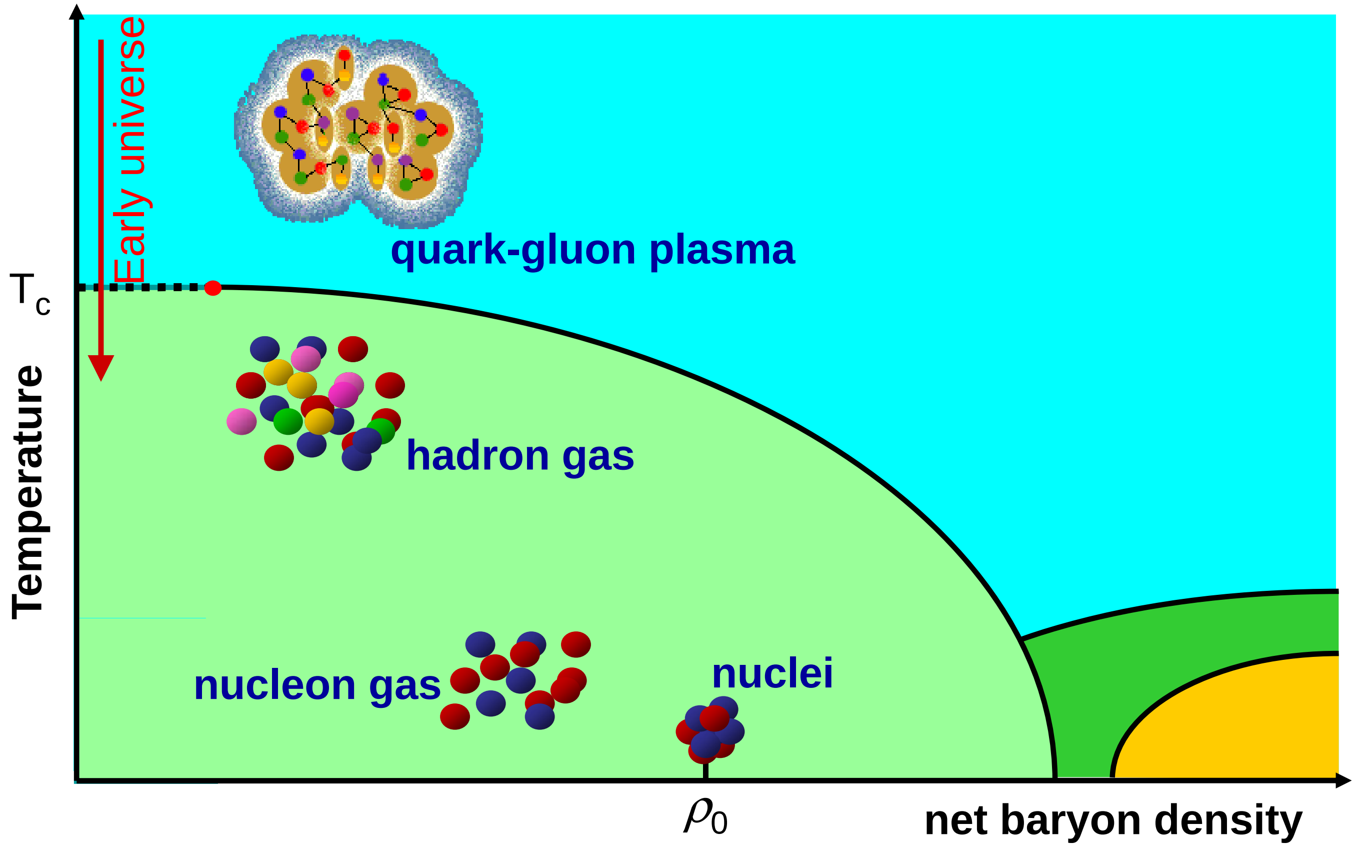


A medium of 170 MeV is more than 100 000 times hotter !!!

The phase diagram of water



The phase diagram of QCD, today



The phase diagram of QCD, in 1975

EXPONENTIAL HADRONIC SPECTRUM AND QUARK LIBERATION

N. Cabibbo and G. Parisi, Phys. Lett. B59 (1975) 67

The exponentially increasing spectrum proposed by Hagedorn is not necessarily connected with a limiting temperature, but it is present in any system which undergoes a second order phase transition. We suggest that the "observed" exponential spectrum is connected to the existence of a different phase of the vacuum in which quarks are not confined.

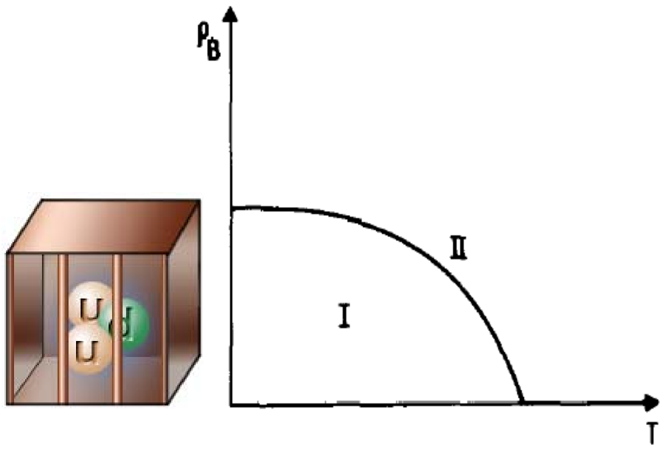
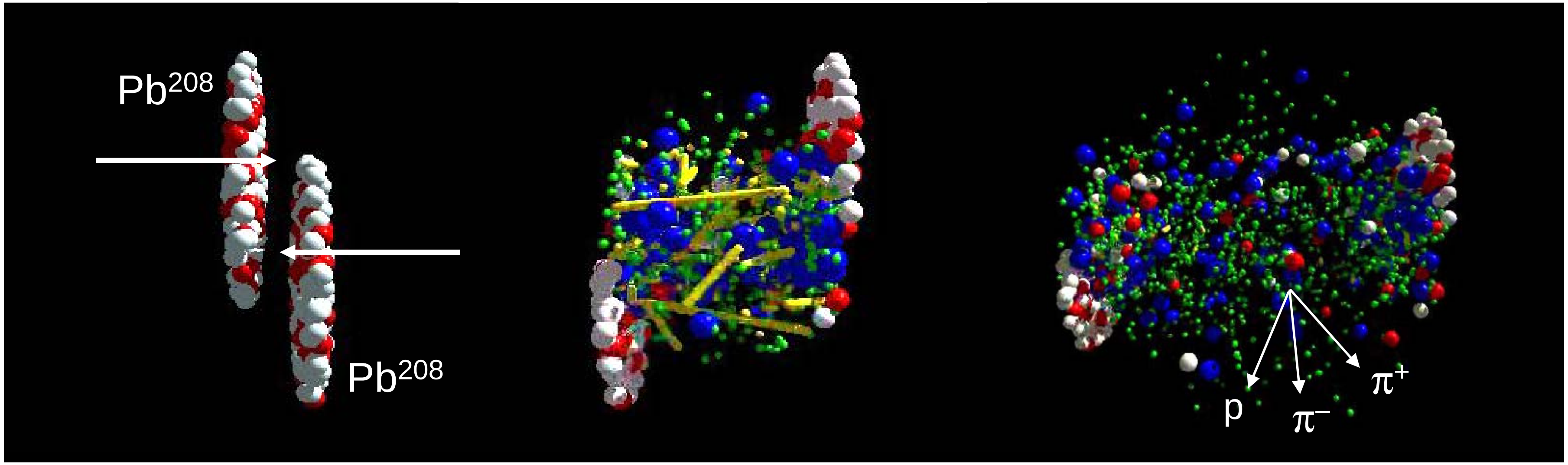


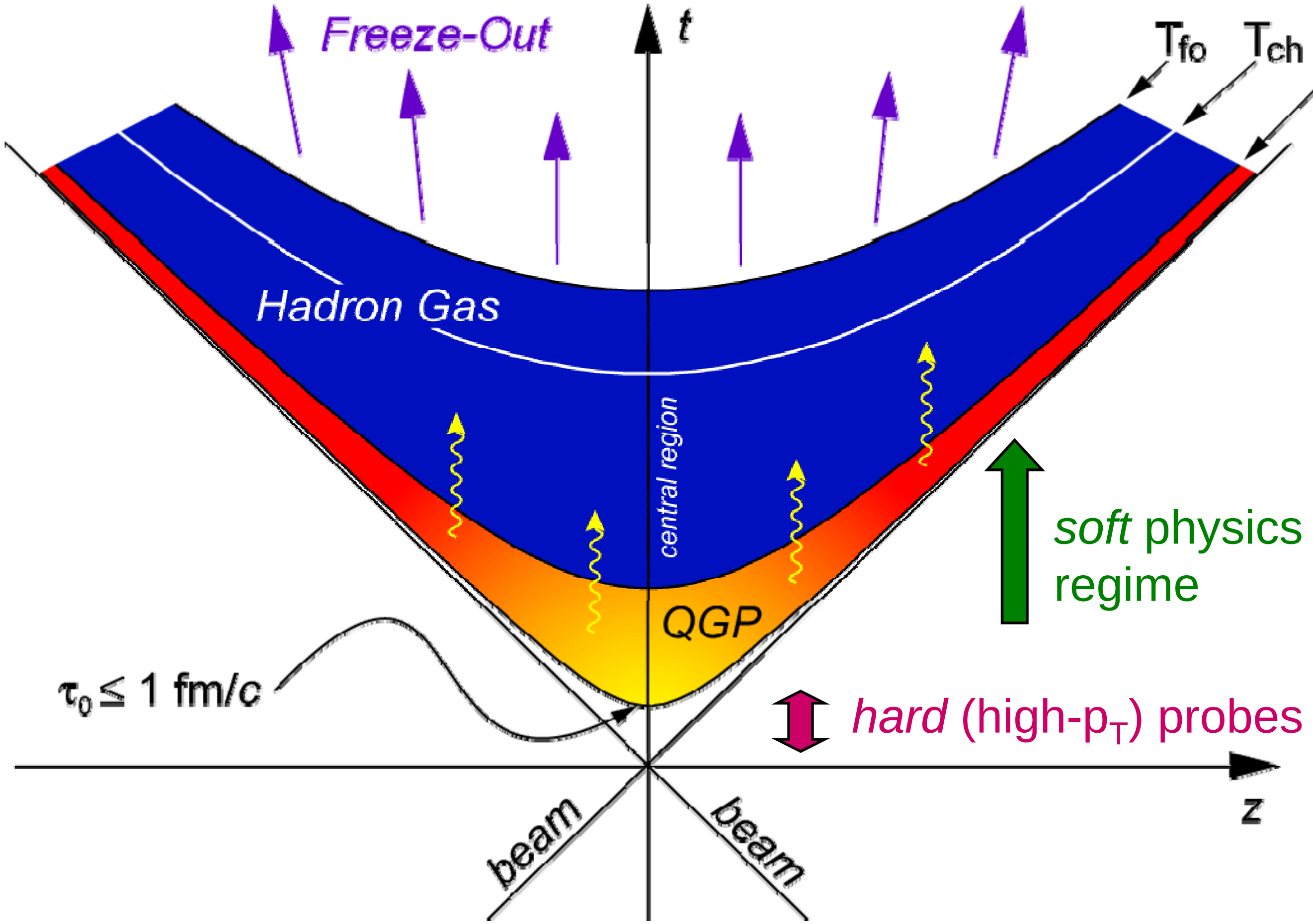
Fig. 1. Schematic phase diagram of hadronic matter. ρ_B is the density of baryonic number. Quarks are confined in phase I and unconfined in phase II.

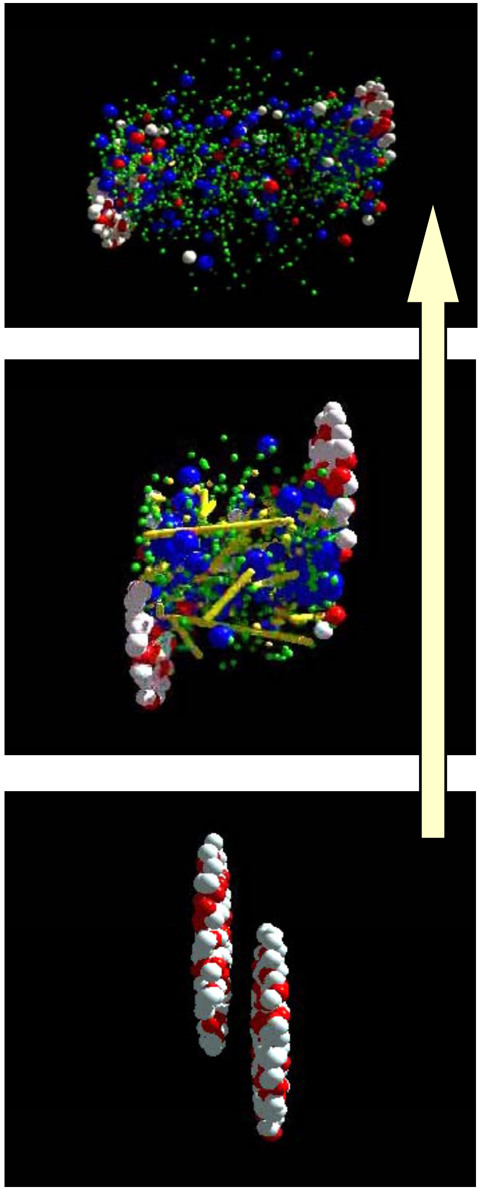
How do we study *bulk* QCD matter?

- We must heat and compress a large volume of QCD matter
- Done in the lab by colliding heavy nuclei at very high energies



The time evolution of the QCD matter produced in HI collisions

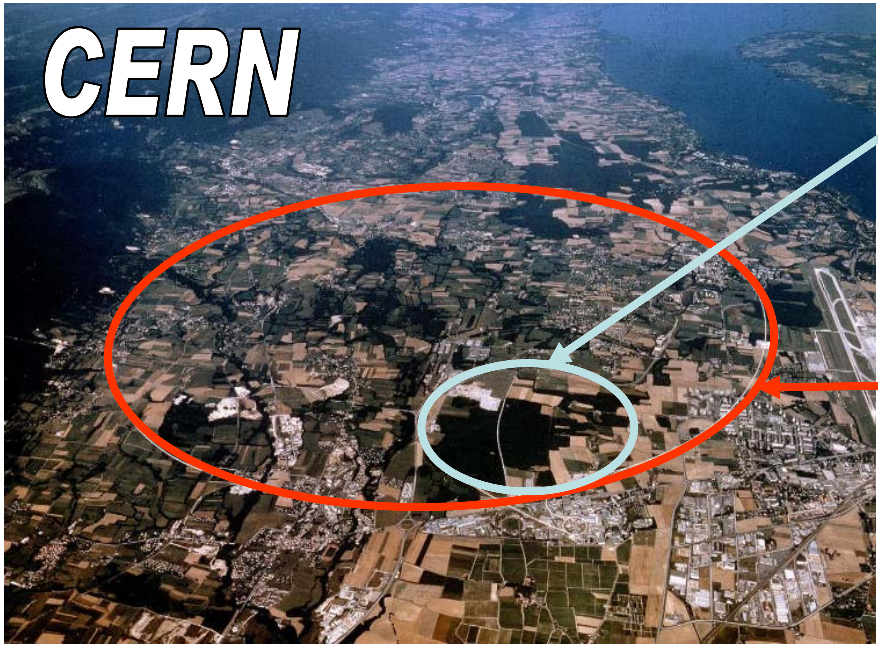




The "fireball" evolution:

- Starts with a "pre-equilibrium state"
- Forms a QGP phase (if T is larger than T_c)
- At *chemical* freeze-out, T_{ch}, hadrons stop being produced
- At *kinetic* freeze-out, T_{fo}, hadrons stop scattering

Two labs to recreate the Big-Bang



AGS : 1986 – 2000

- Si and Au beams ; $\sqrt{s}$ ~ 5 GeV
- only hadronic variables

RHIC : 2000 – ?

- Au beams ; up to $\sqrt{s}$ = 200 GeV
- 4 experiments

SPS : 1986 – 2003

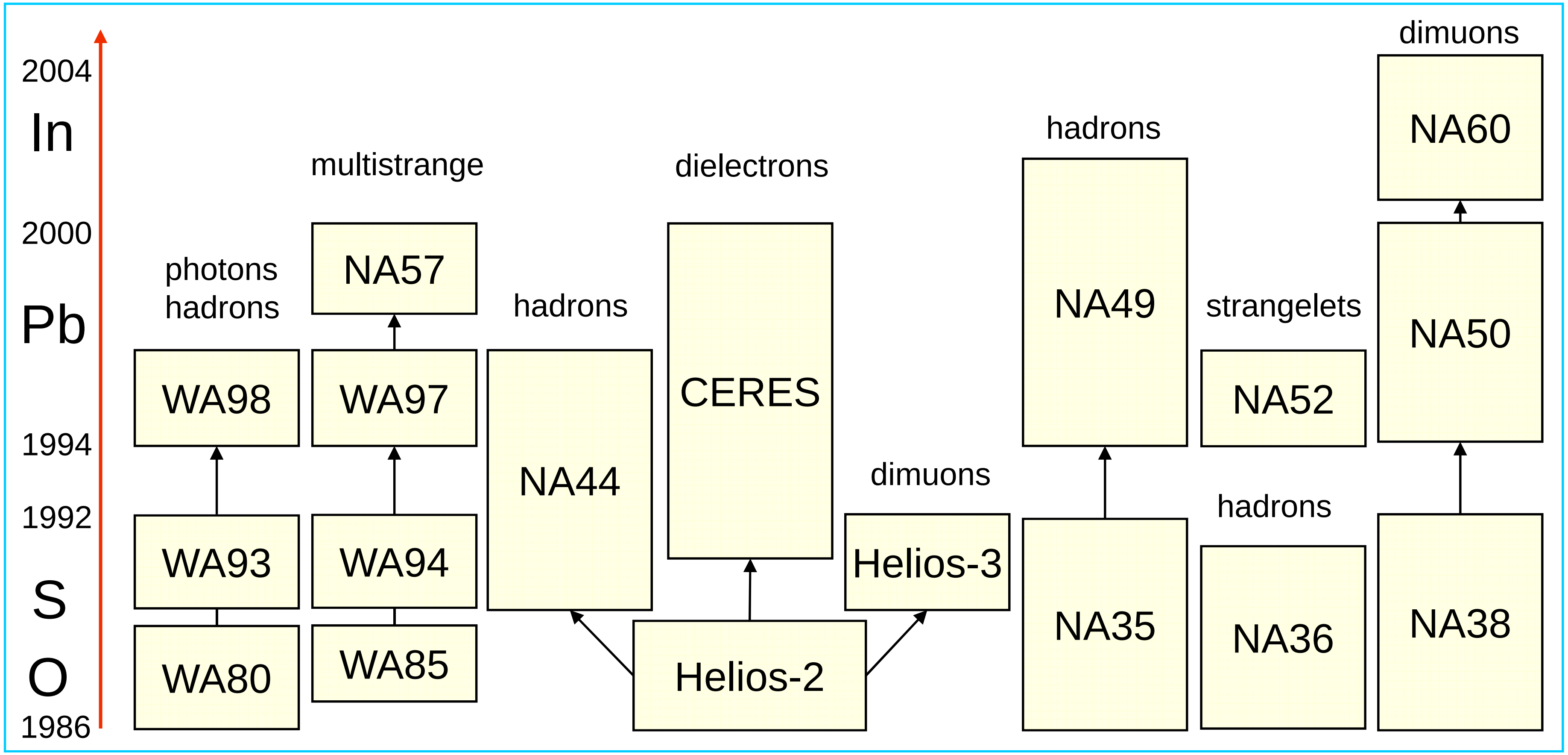
- O, S, In, Pb beams ; $\sqrt{s}$ ~ 20 GeV
- hadrons, photons and dileptons

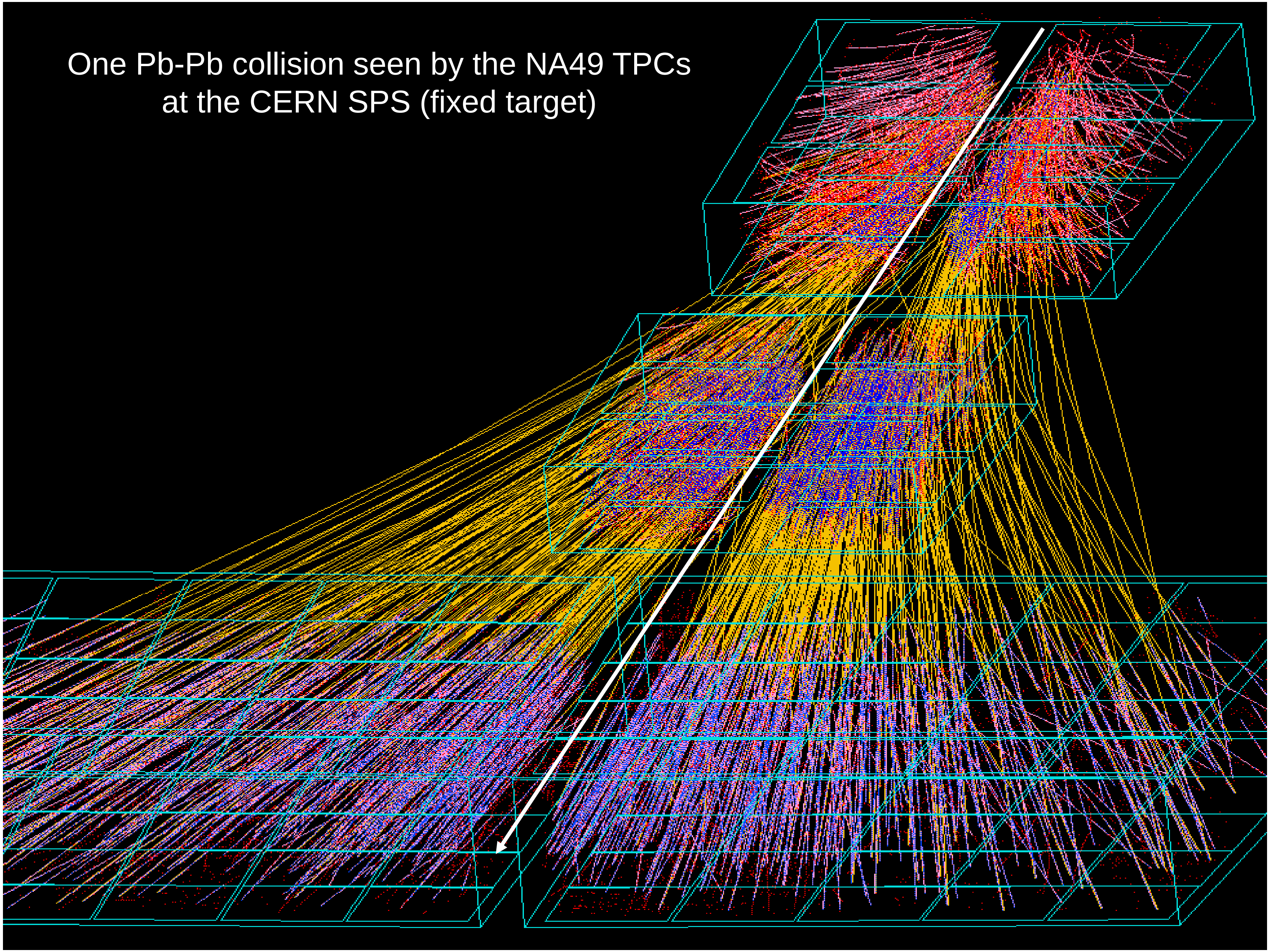
LHC : 2008 – ?

- Pb beams ; up to $\sqrt{s}$ = 5500 GeV
- ALICE, CMS and ATLAS

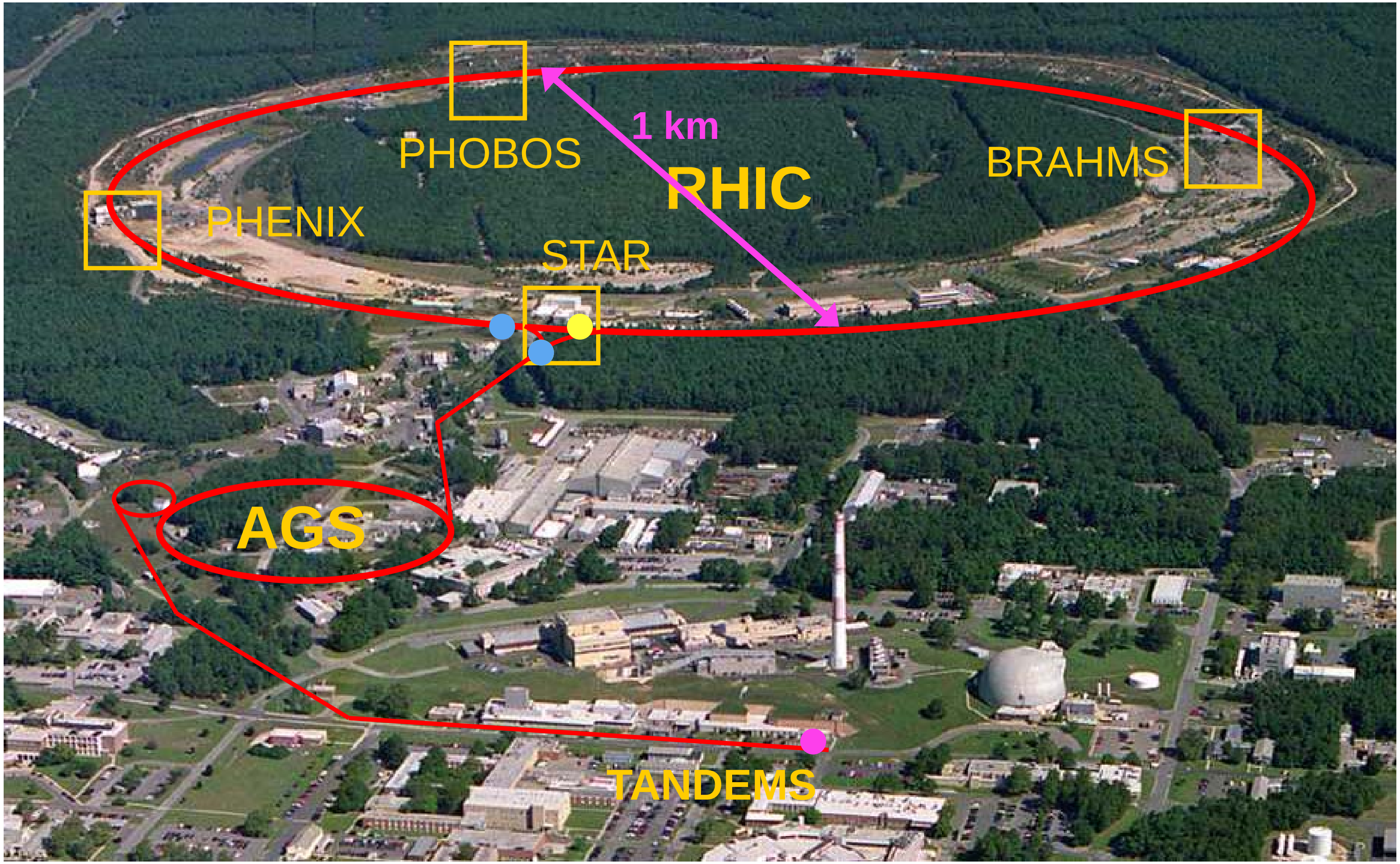
The CERN SPS heavy ion physics program

Between 1986 and 2003, many experiments studied high-energy nuclear collisions at the CERN SPS, to probe high density QCD matter



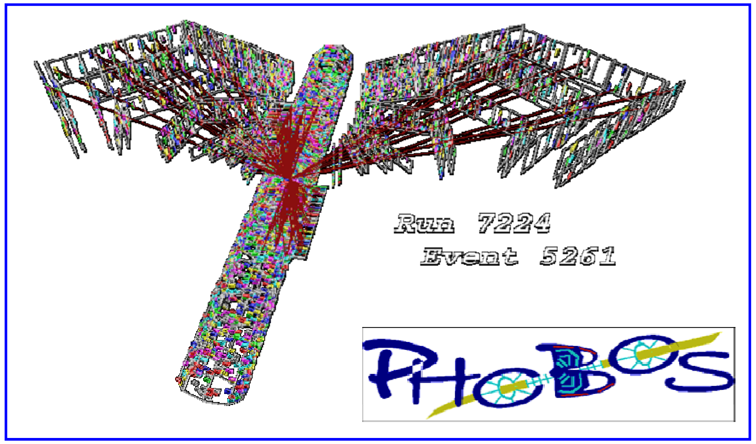

One Pb-Pb collision seen by the NA49 TPCs
at the CERN SPS (fixed target)

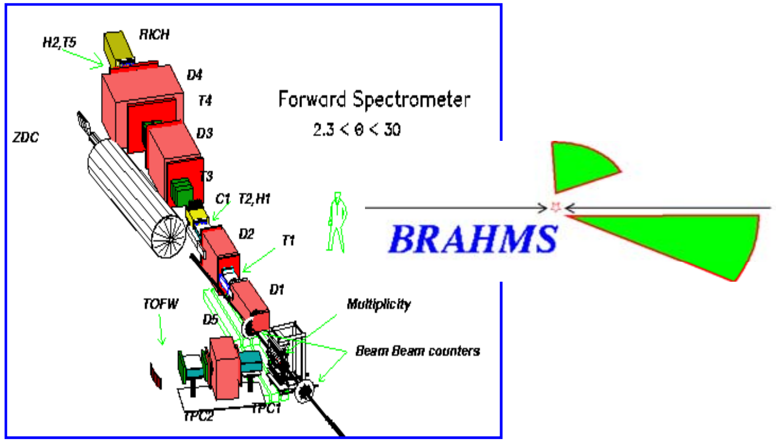
The Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC)

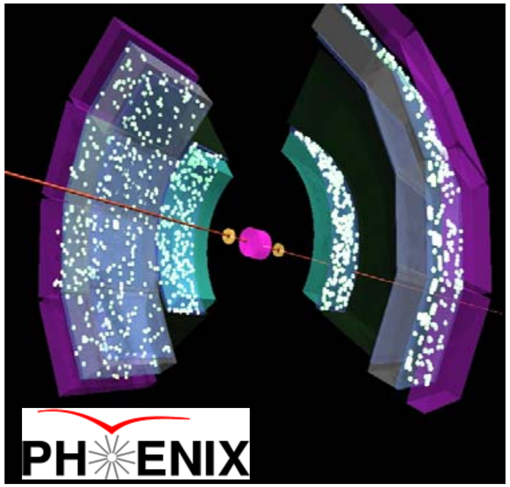


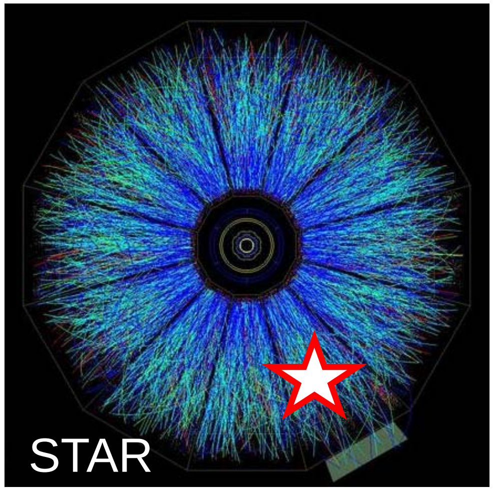
The RHIC experiments

- Successfully taking data since year 2000
- Au+Au collisions at $\sqrt{s}$ = 200 GeV complemented by data collected at lower energies and with lighter nuclei
- Polarized pp collisions at 500 GeV also underway (spin program)

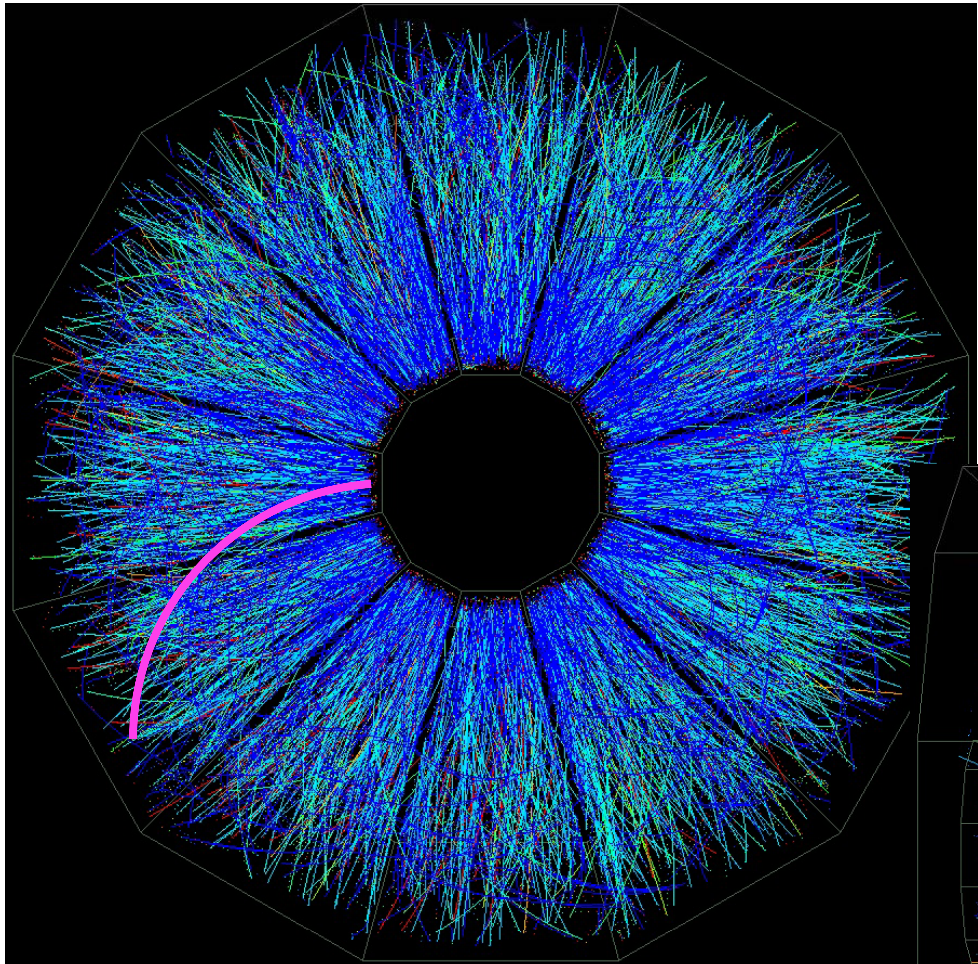




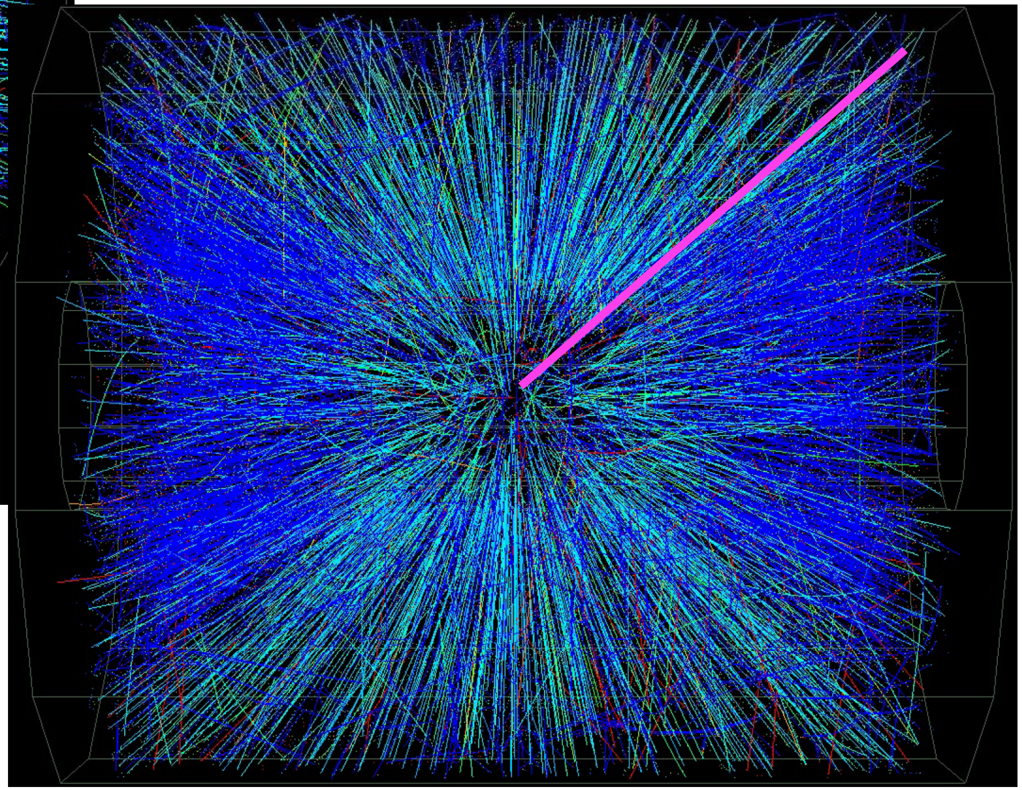




One Au-Au collision seen by the STAR TPC



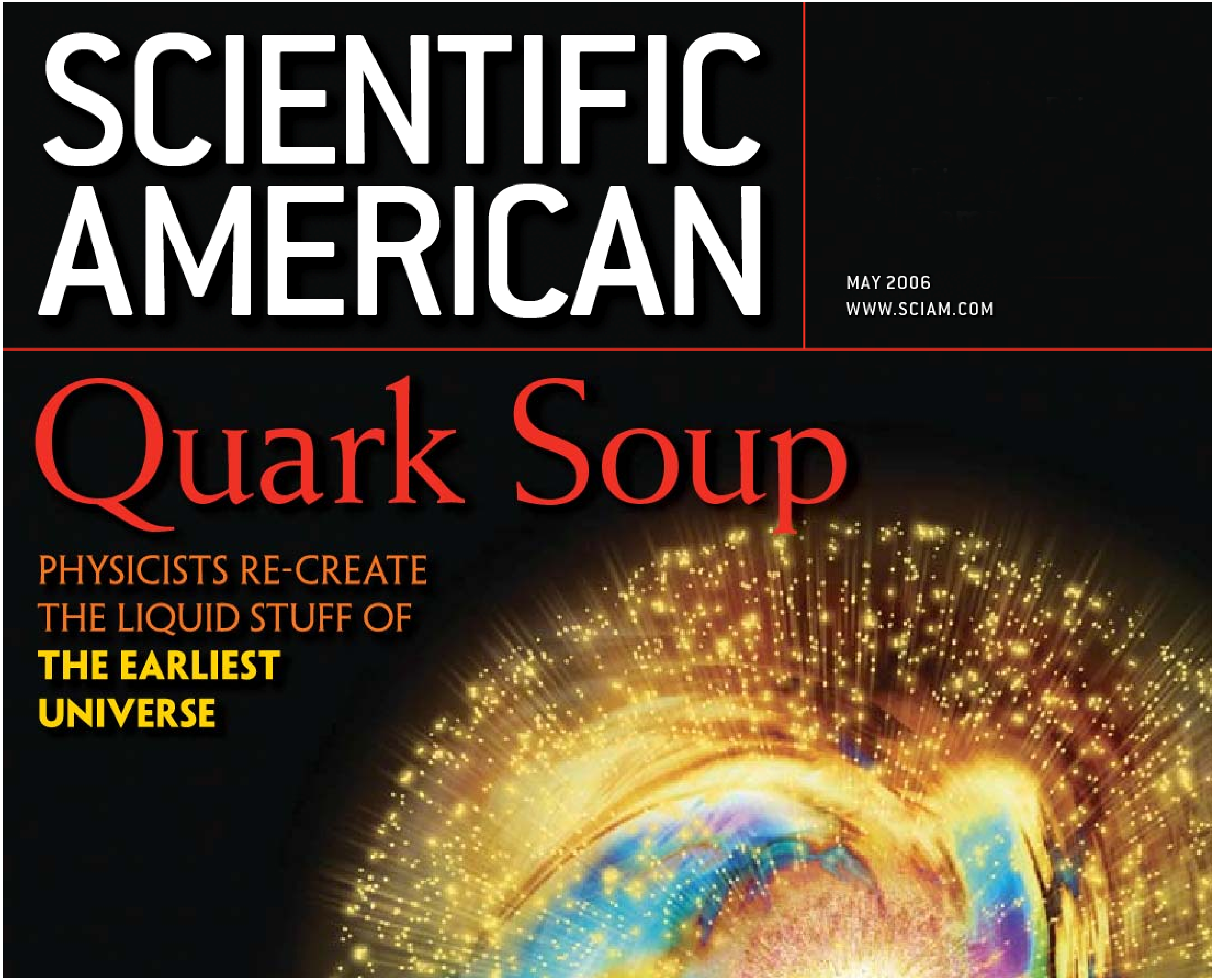
Momentum determined by track curvature in magnetic field…



“In media effects” of RHIC

Science Fiction - in this book, experiments including PHENIX and STAR study collisions which accidentally create *baby universes*

Journalists - when JFK Jr.’s plane disappeared, reporters called Brookhaven to ask if it could have been eaten by a *black hole* created at RHIC


SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN
MAY 2006
WWW.SCIAM.COM
Quark Soup
PHYSICISTS RE-CREATE THE LIQUID STUFF OF THE EARLIEST UNIVERSE

Are we going too fast?

Baby universes, black holes, quark soups...

If we go too fast, we skip important information…

Let's STOP and go back to the basic question !

What is the question?

We want to study the nature of Quantum Chromo-Dynamics under the extreme conditions which occurred in the earliest stages of the evolution of the Universe

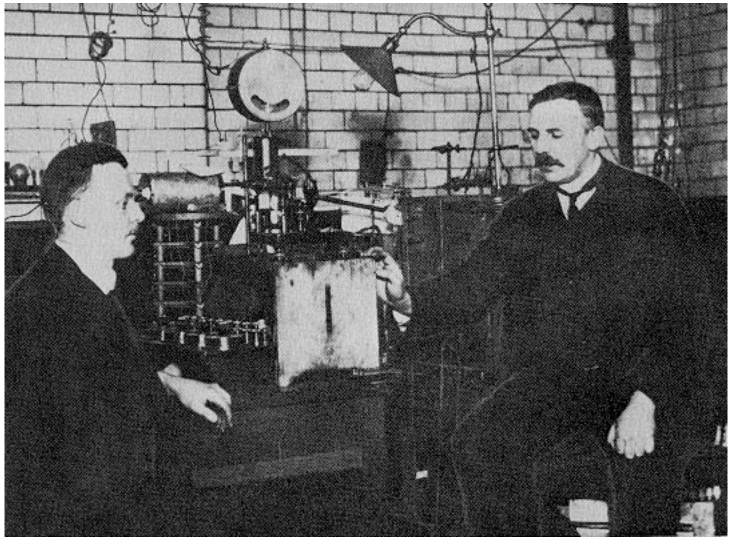
We do experiments in the laboratory, colliding high-energy heavy nuclei, to produce hot and dense strongly interacting matter, over extended volumes and lasting a finite time; but the produced system evolves (expands) very fast...

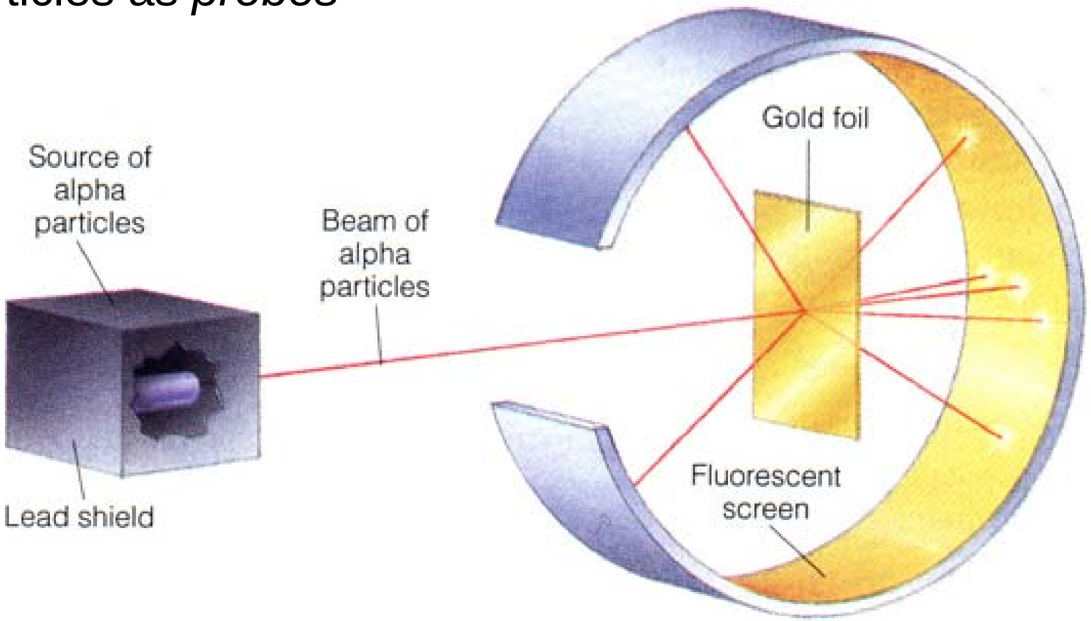
How can we “observe” the properties of the QCD matter we create in this way ?

How can these “observations” be related to the predicted transition to a phase where colour is deconfined ?

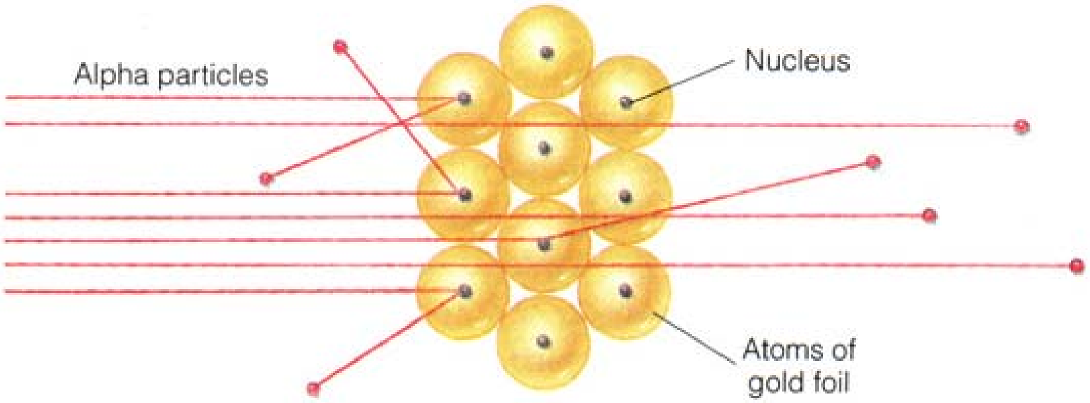
Seeing what the atoms are made of

The first exploration of subatomic structure, by Rutherford, used Au atoms as targets and α particles as *probes*



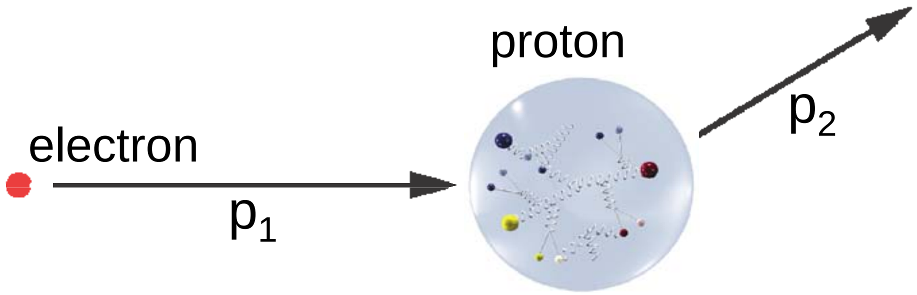


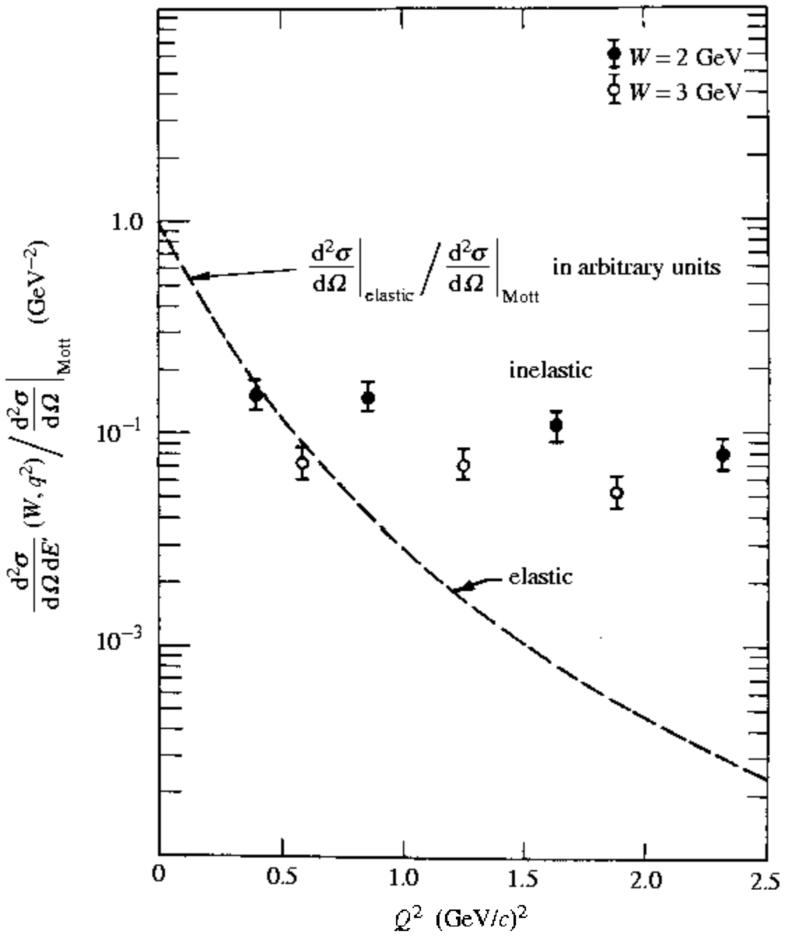
<u>Interpretation:</u>
Positive charge is concentrated in a tiny volume with respect to the atomic dimensions



Seeing what the nucleons are made of

The deep inelastic scattering experiments made at SLAC in the 1960s established the quark-parton model and our modern view of particle physics



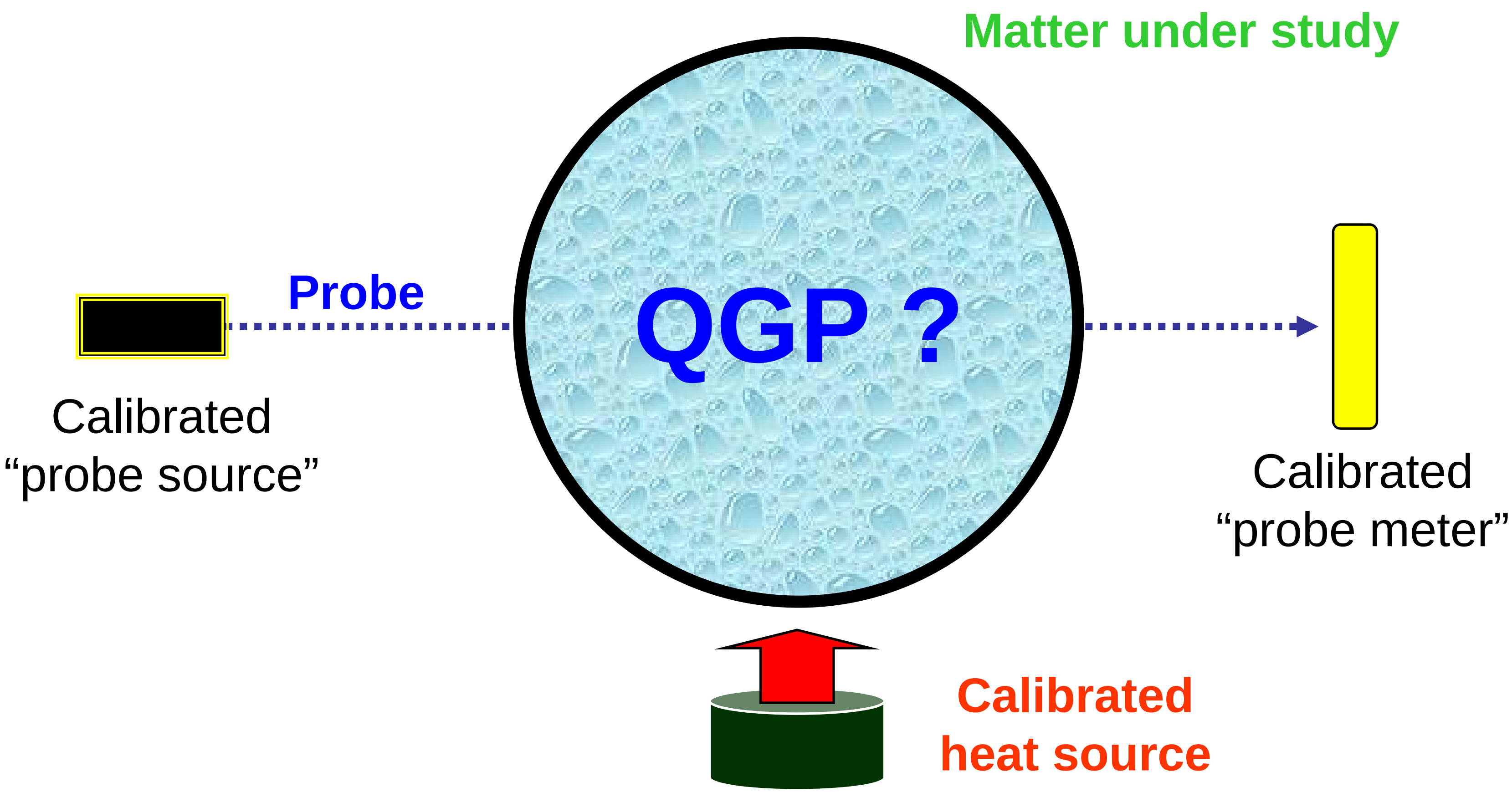


The angular distribution of the scattered electrons reflects the distribution of charge inside the proton

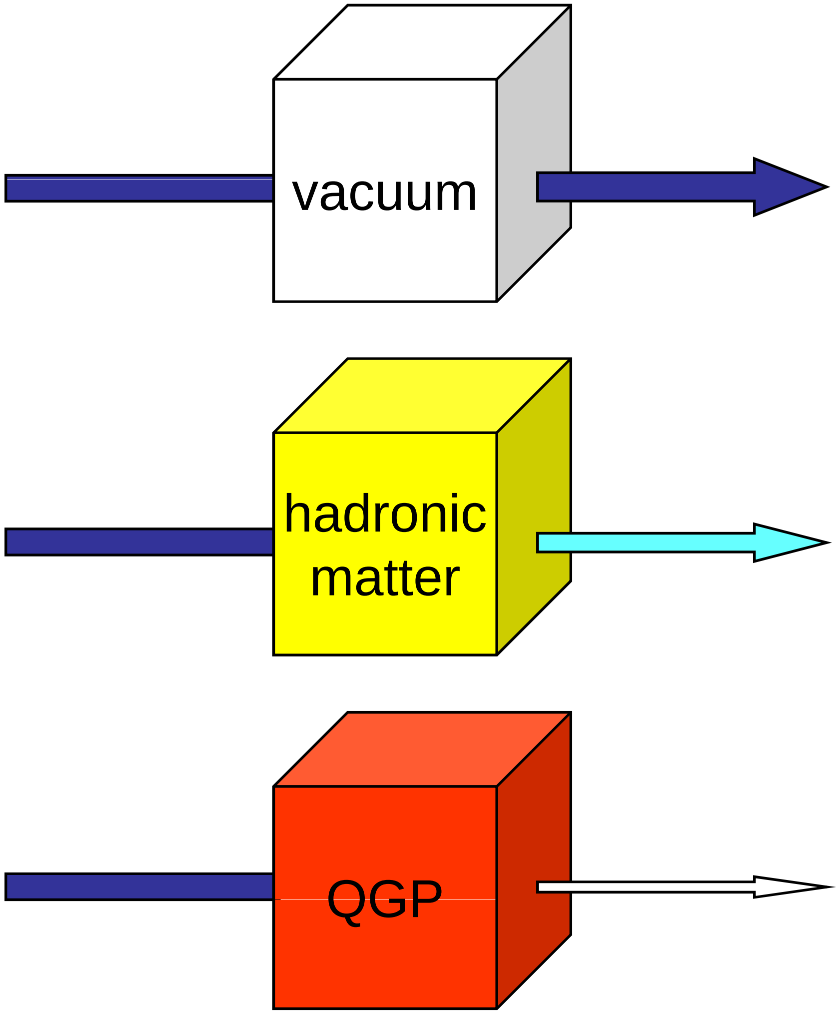
⇒ protons have point-like constituents
⇒ quarks

Seeing the QCD matter formed in heavy-ion collisions

We also study the QCD matter produced in HI collisions by seeing how it affects well understood probes,
as a function of the temperature of the system (centrality of the collisions)



Challenge: find the good probes of QCD matter



The good QCD matter probes should be:

Well understood in "pp collisions"

Slightly affected by hadronic matter,
<u>in a well understood way,</u>
<u>which can be accounted for</u>

Strongly affected by the
deconfined QCD medium...

Jets and *heavy quarkonia* (J/ψ, ψ', χ_c, Υ, Υ', etc) are good QCD matter probes !

Another challenge: creating and calibrating the probes

The “probes” must be *produced together with the system* they probe !

They must be created very early in the collision evolution, so that they are there *before* the QGP might form :

$\Rightarrow$ hard probes, such as jets and quarkonia

We must have “trivial” probes, *not affected* by the dense QCD matter, to serve as baseline reference :

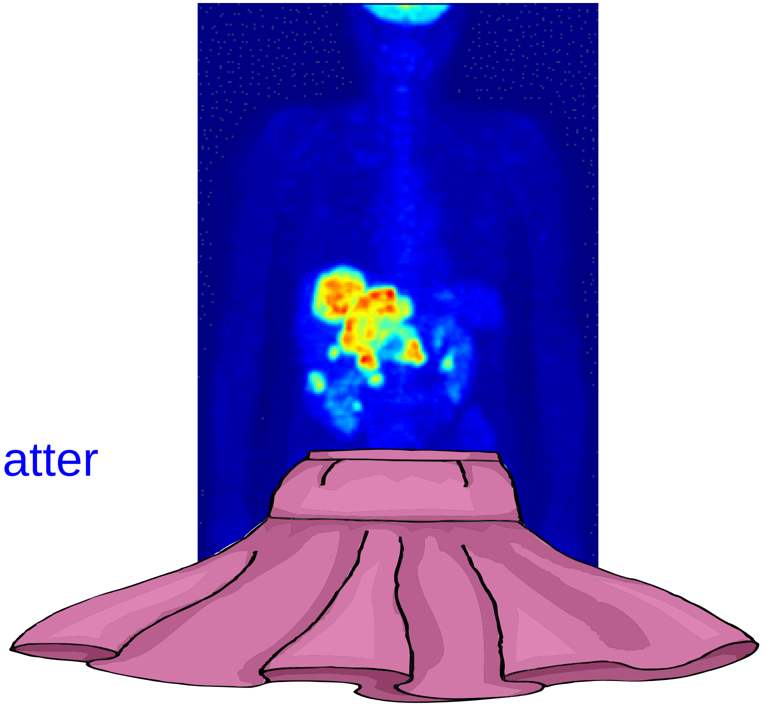
$\Rightarrow$ photons, Drell-Yan dimuons

We must have “trivial” collision systems, to understand how the probes are affected in the *absence* of “new physics” :

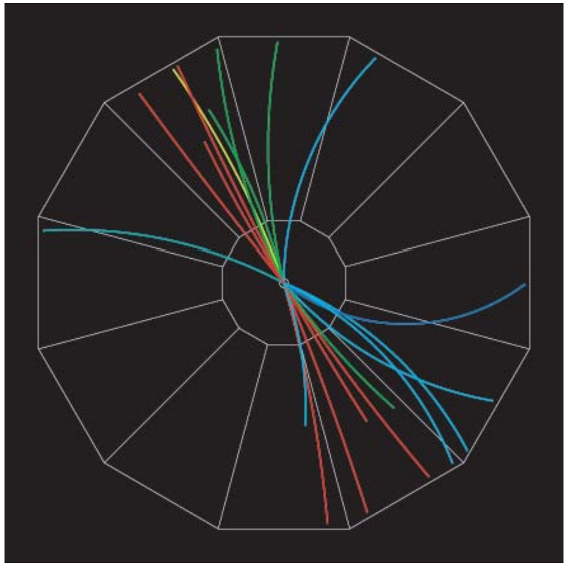
$\Rightarrow$ pp, p-nucleus, light ions

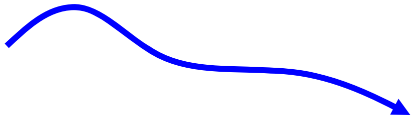
“Tomography” of the QCD matter produced in HI collisions

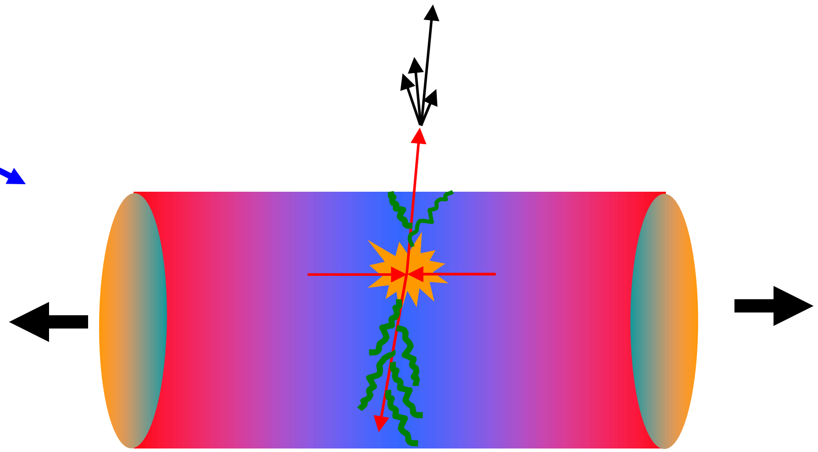
<u>Tomography in medical imaging :</u>
The measured absorption of a calibrated probe gives the 3-D density profile of the medium.



<u>Tomography in heavy-ion collisions :</u>
- Jet suppression gives the density profile of the matter
- Quarkonia suppression gives the state (hadronic or partonic) of the matter

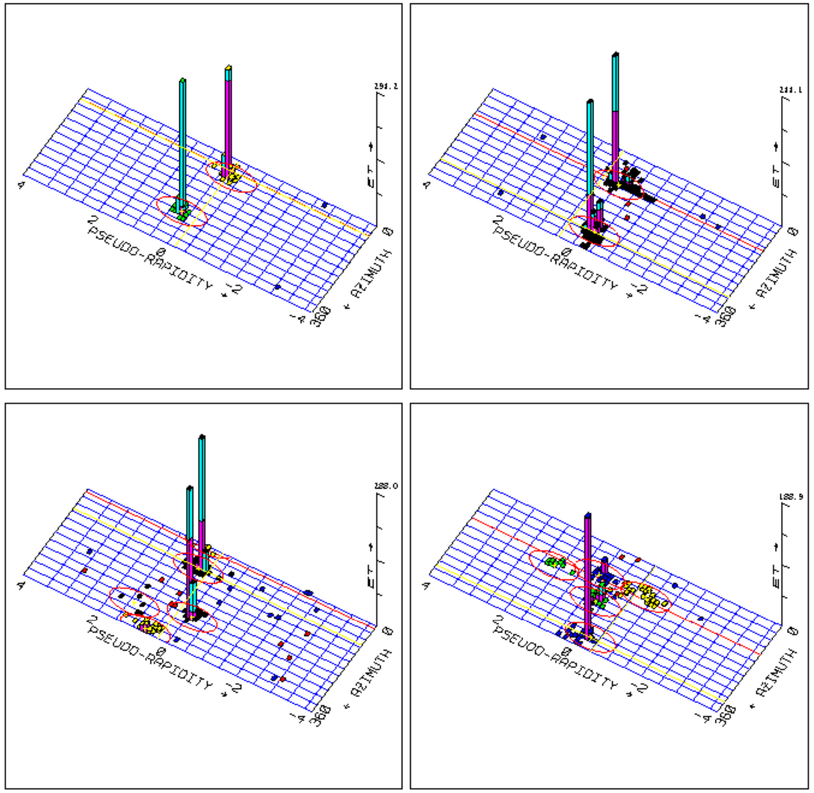




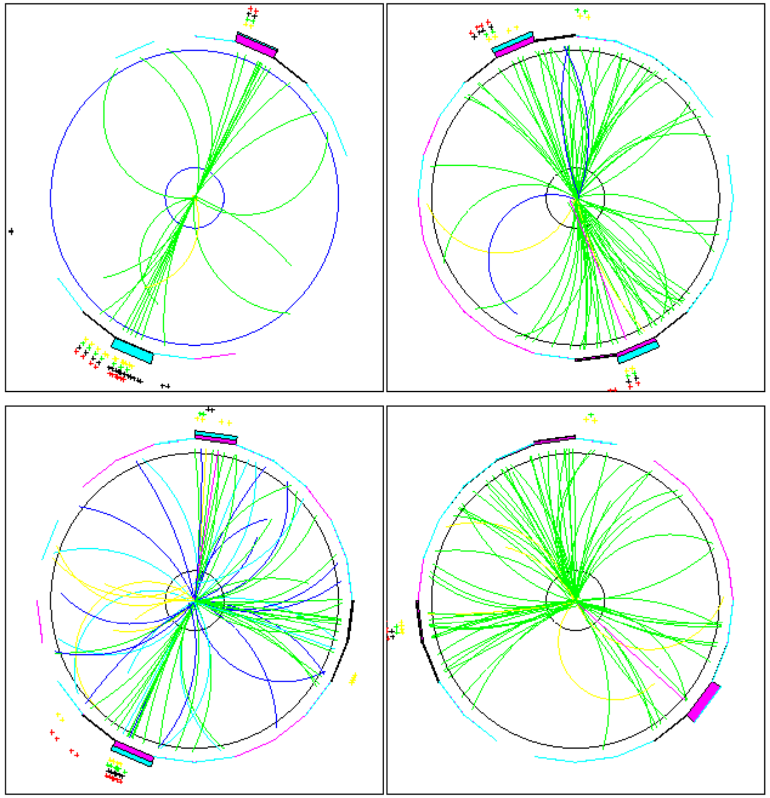


What is a jet?

A “blast” of particles, all going in roughly the same direction

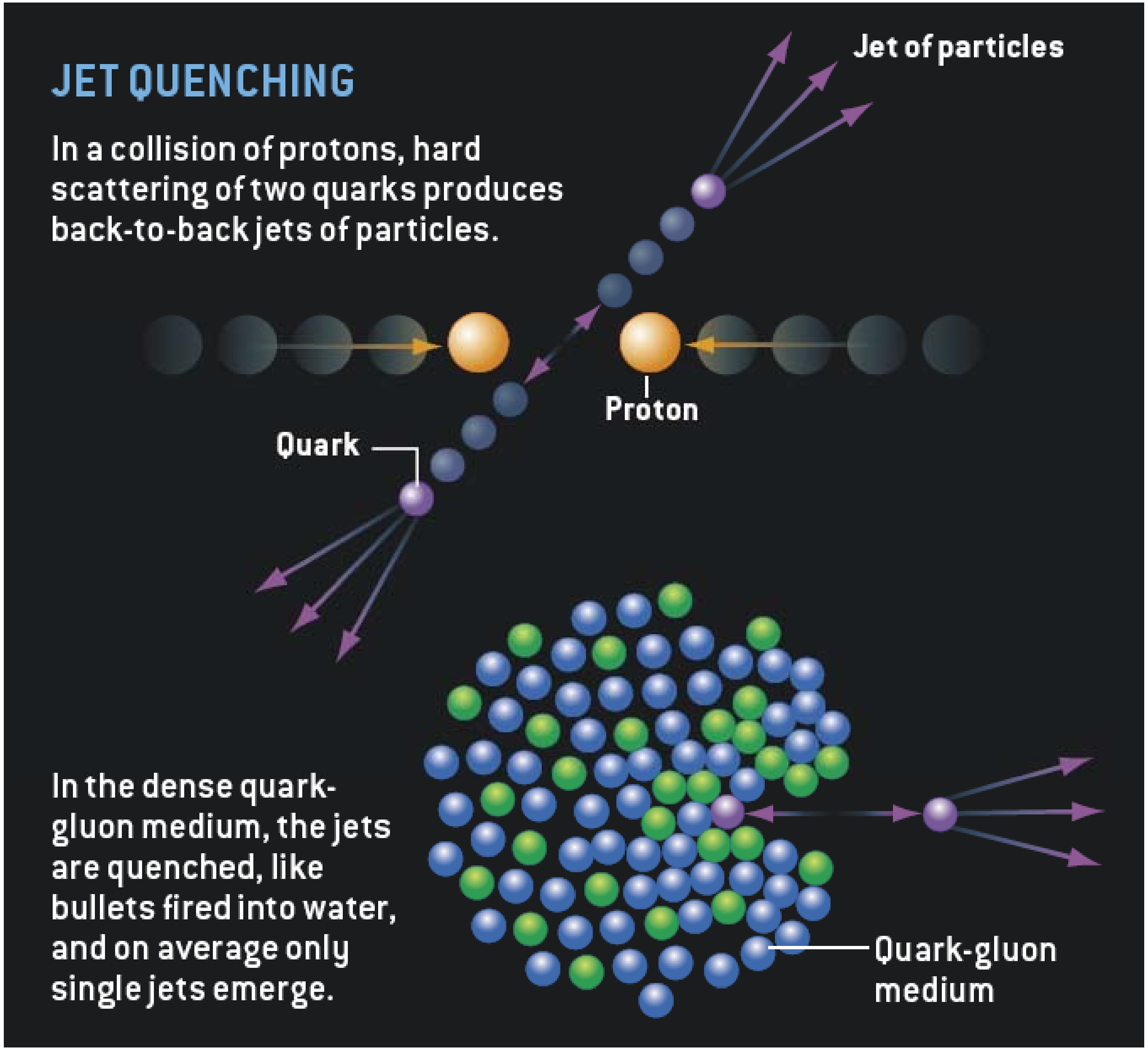


Calorimeter View



Tracking View

What is jet quenching?

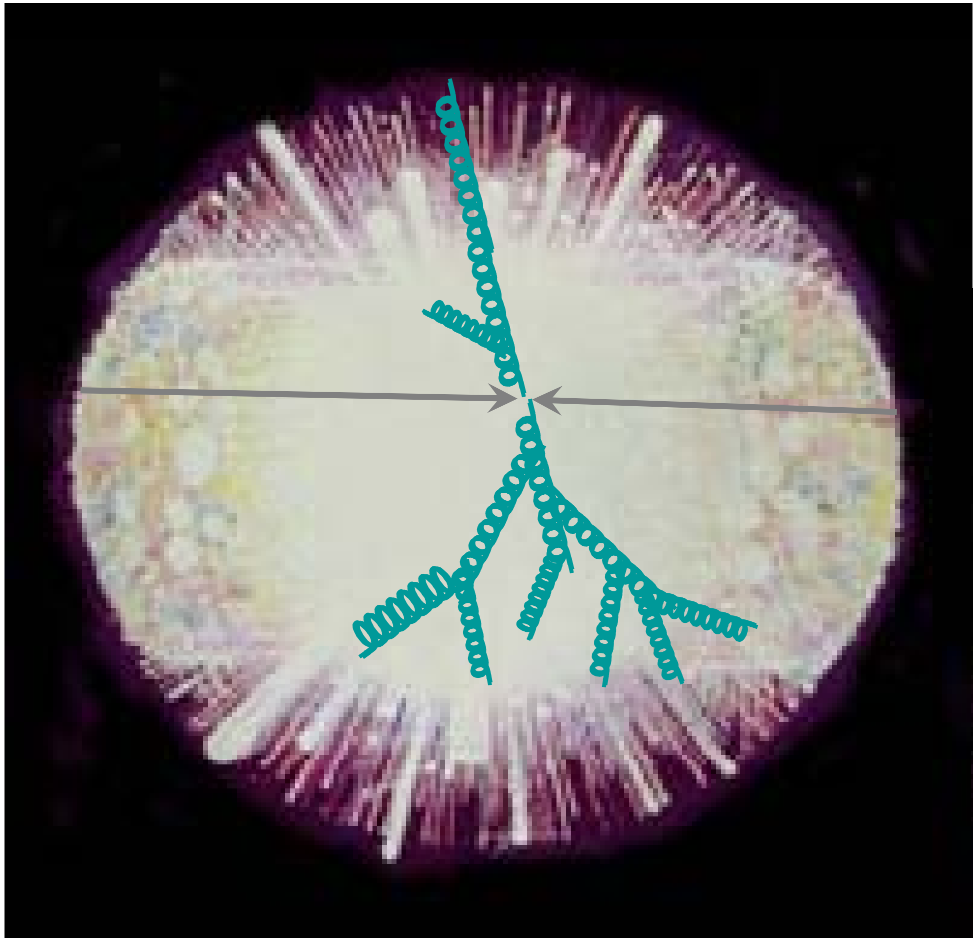


In pp, expect two back-to-back jets

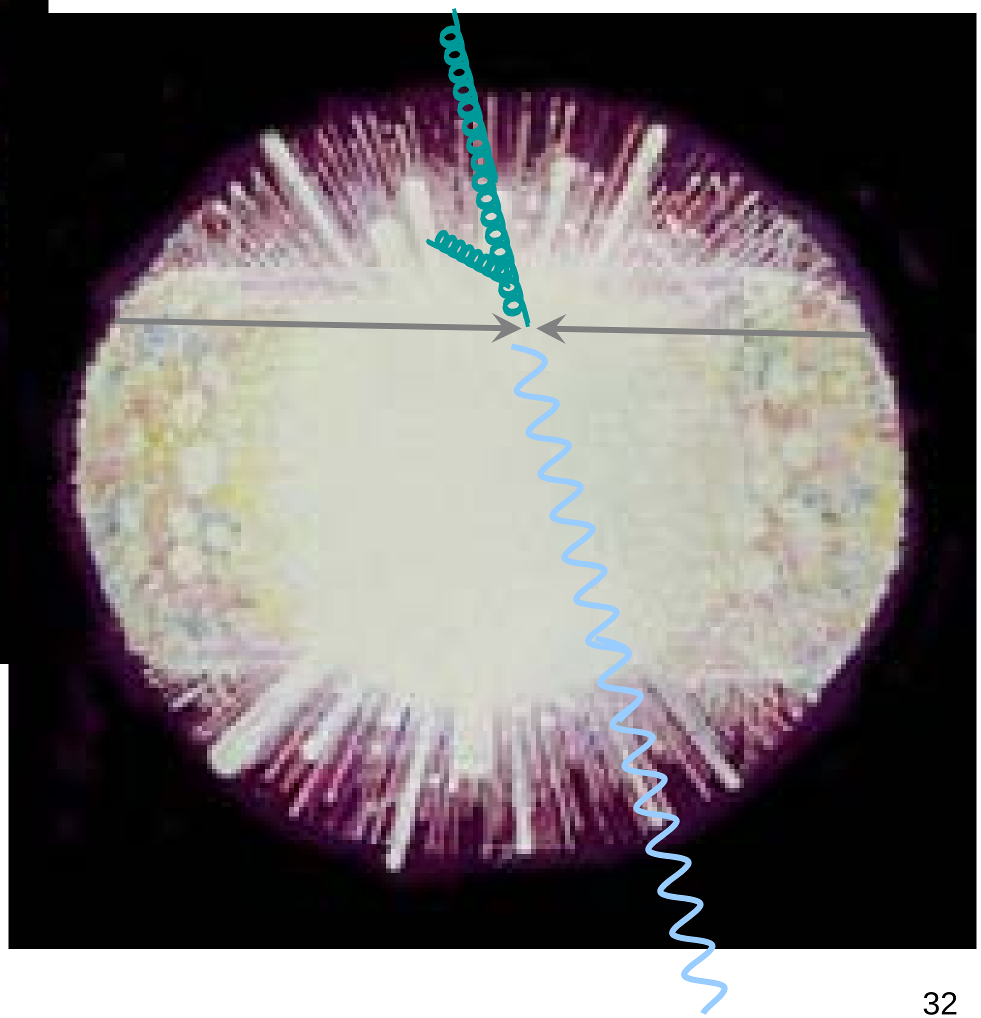
In the QGP, expect mono jets...

The “away-side” jet gets absorbed by the dense QCD medium

Dense matter absorbs quarks and gluons… but not photons



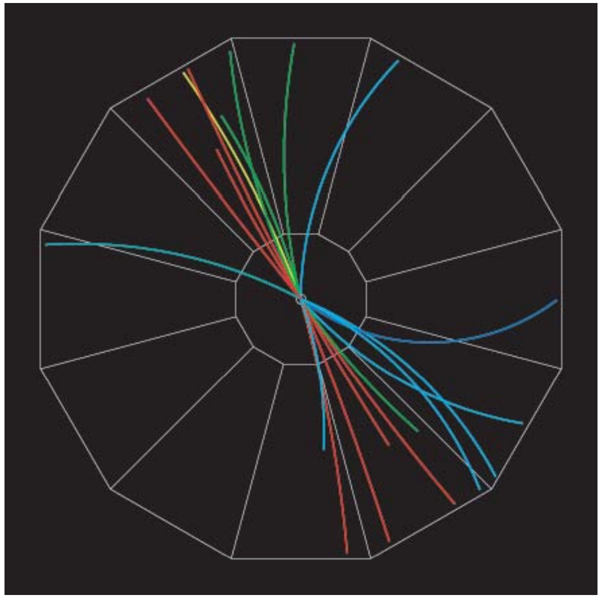
Quarks and gluons interact in the medium and lose energy

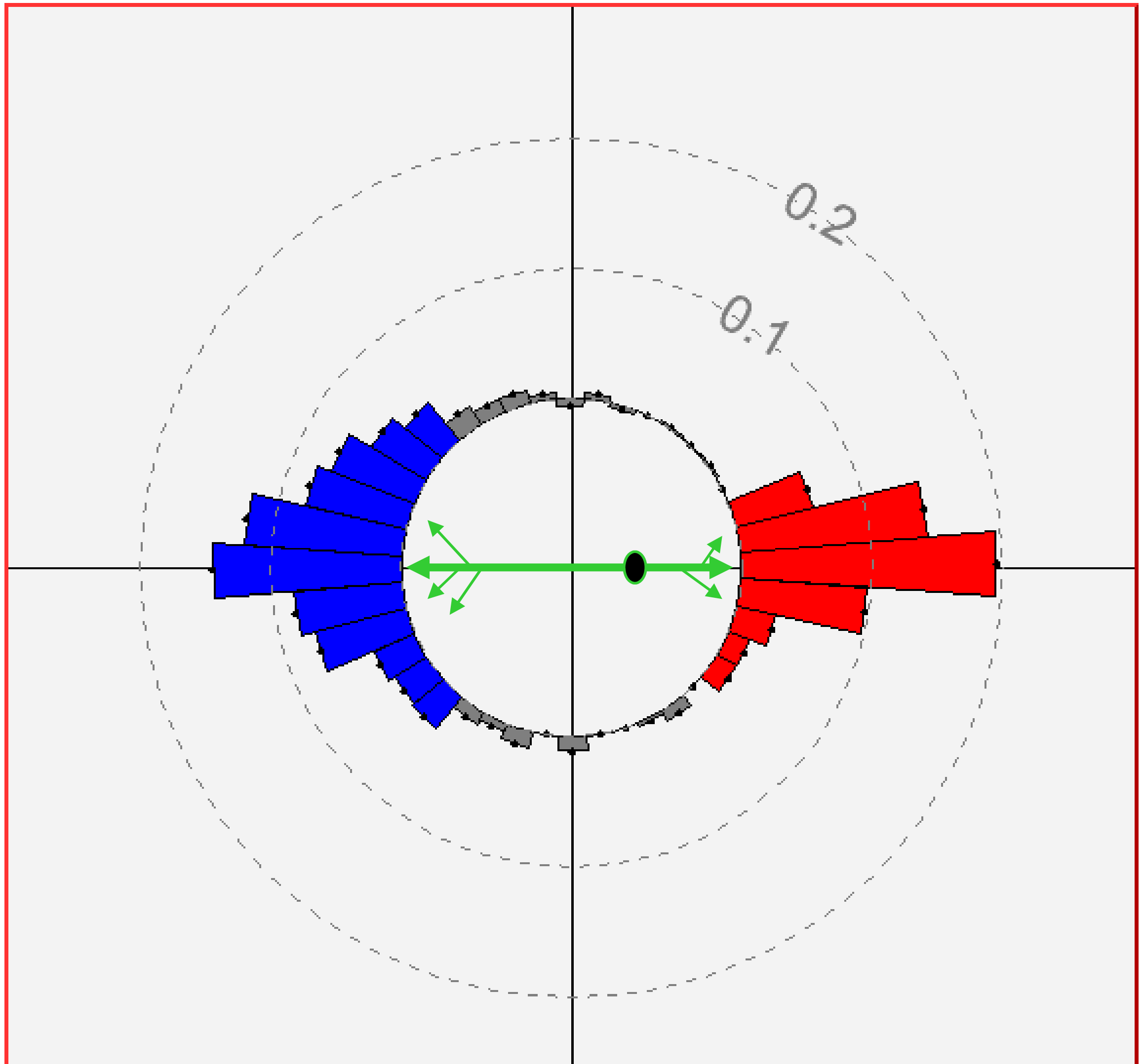


High energy photons shine through the dense QCD medium

Jet quenching: setting the stage with pp collisions

Azimuthal correlations show strong back-to-back peaks



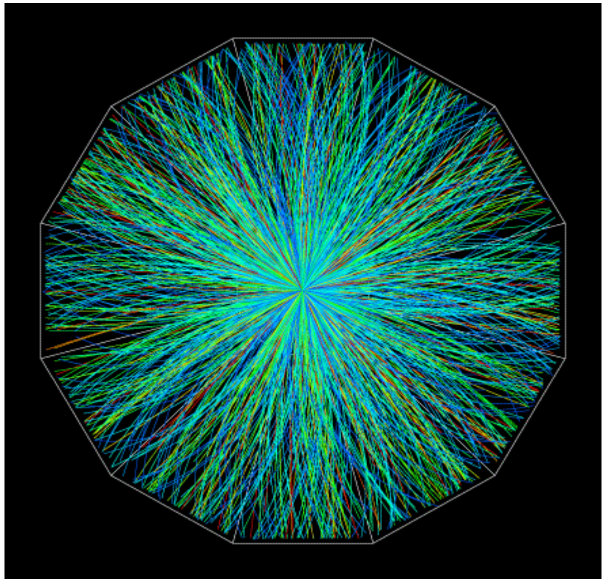


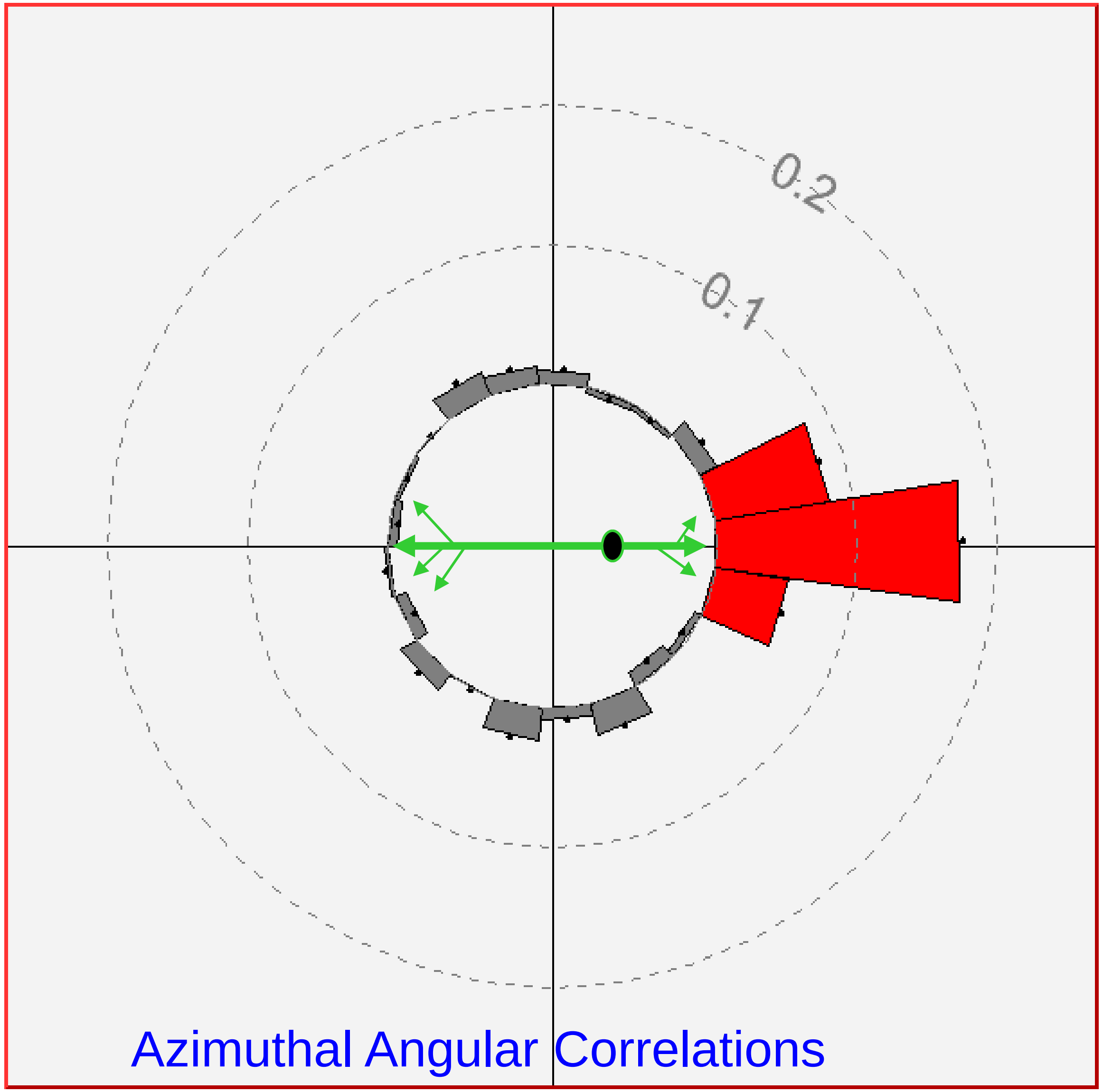
Azimuthal Angular Correlations

Jet quenching: discovery mode with central Au-Au collisions

Azimuthal correlations show that the “away-side jet” has disappeared...

if we only detect high-p_T particles, p_T > 2 GeV/c

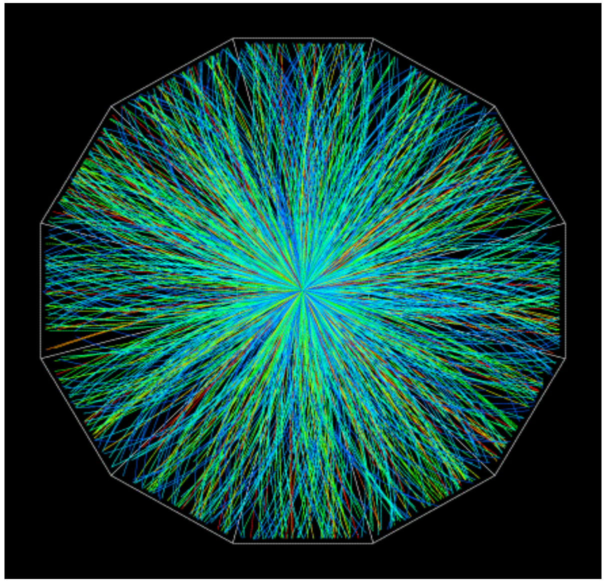


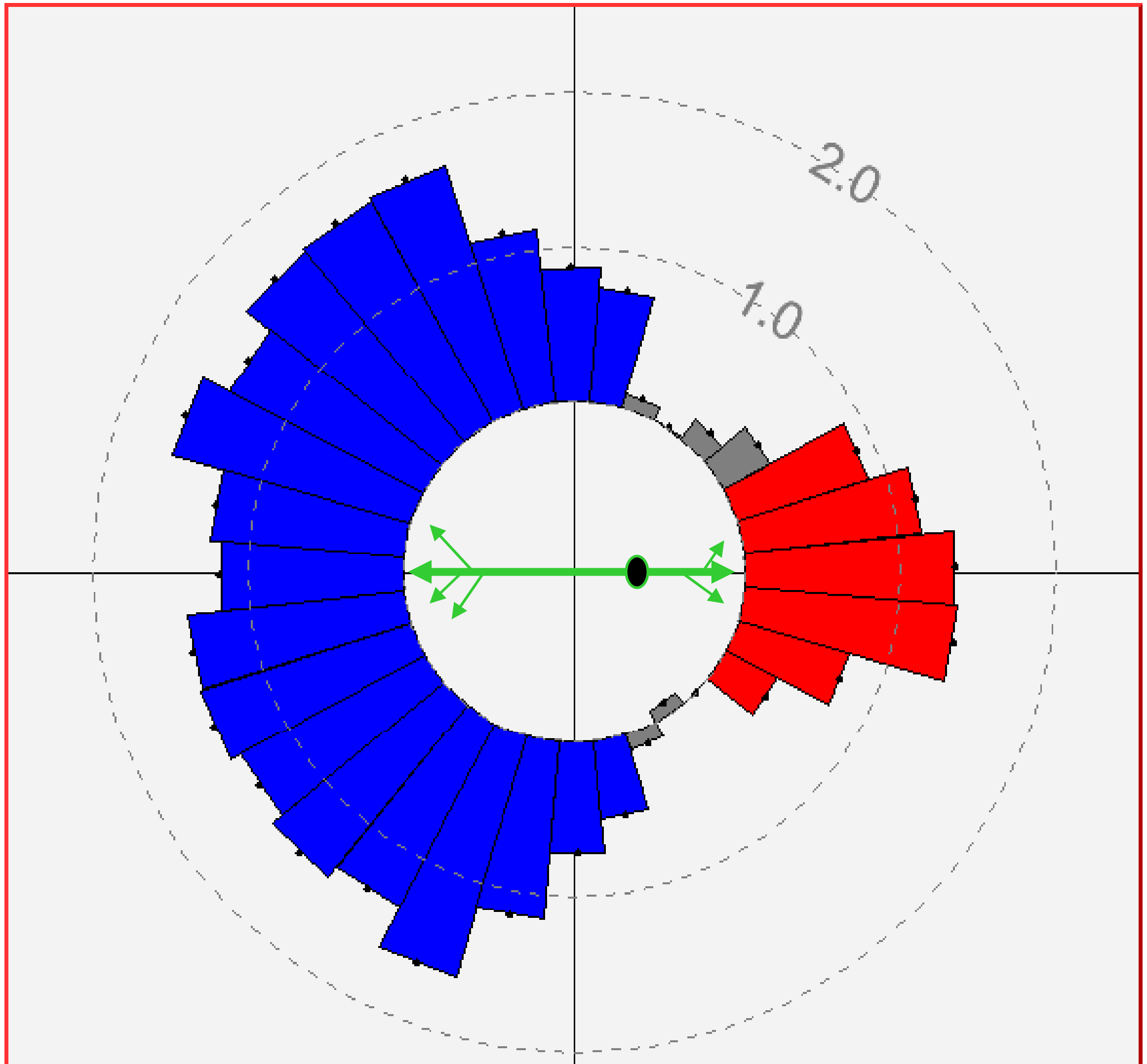


Jet quenching: where is the energy gone?

The “away-side” energy is no longer collimated into jets but distributed over many soft particles…

seen when the p_T threshold is lowered to 200 MeV/c



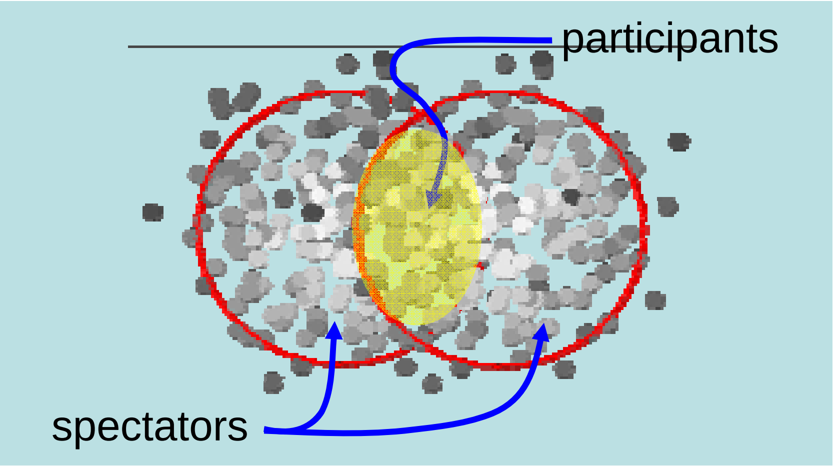


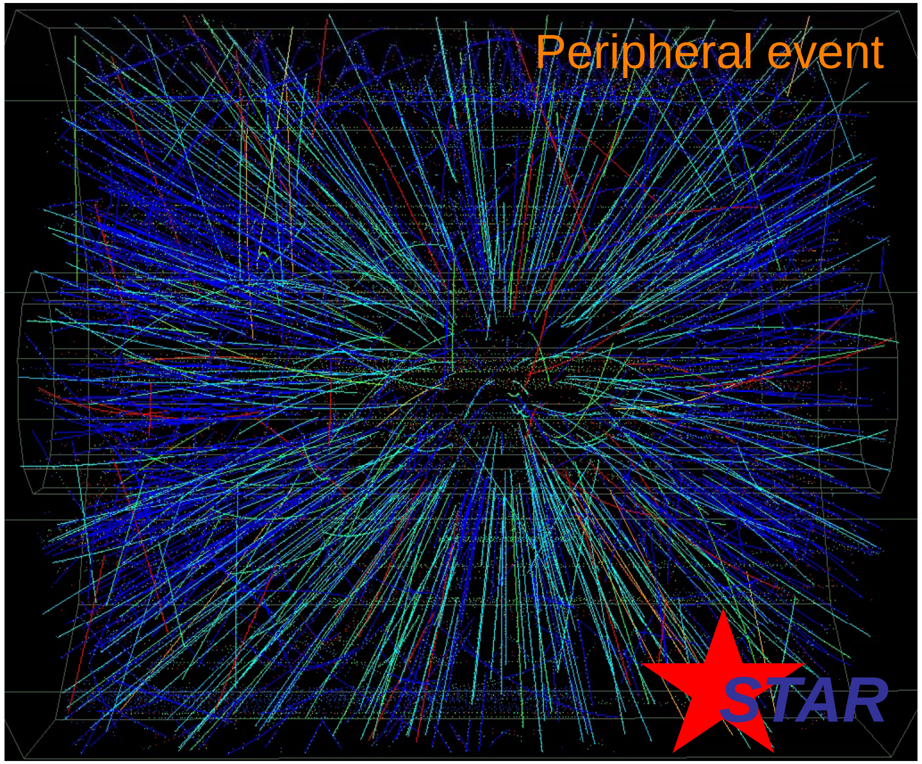
Azimuthal Angular Correlations

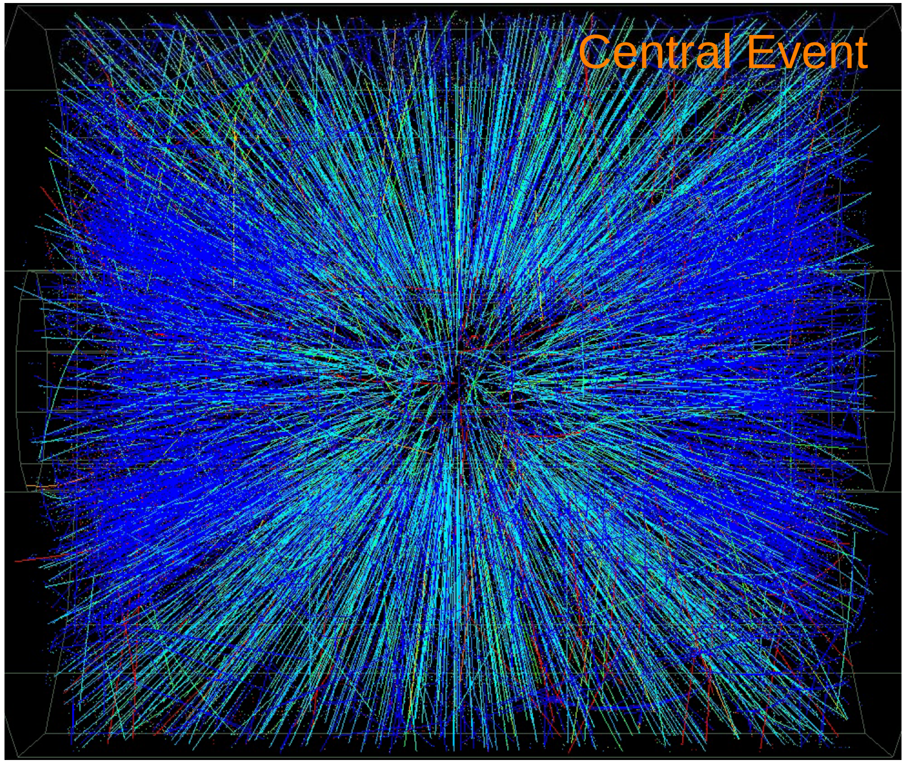
The "centrality" of a nucleus-nucleus collision

The signals of QGP formation should show up in the most "central" nuclear collisions

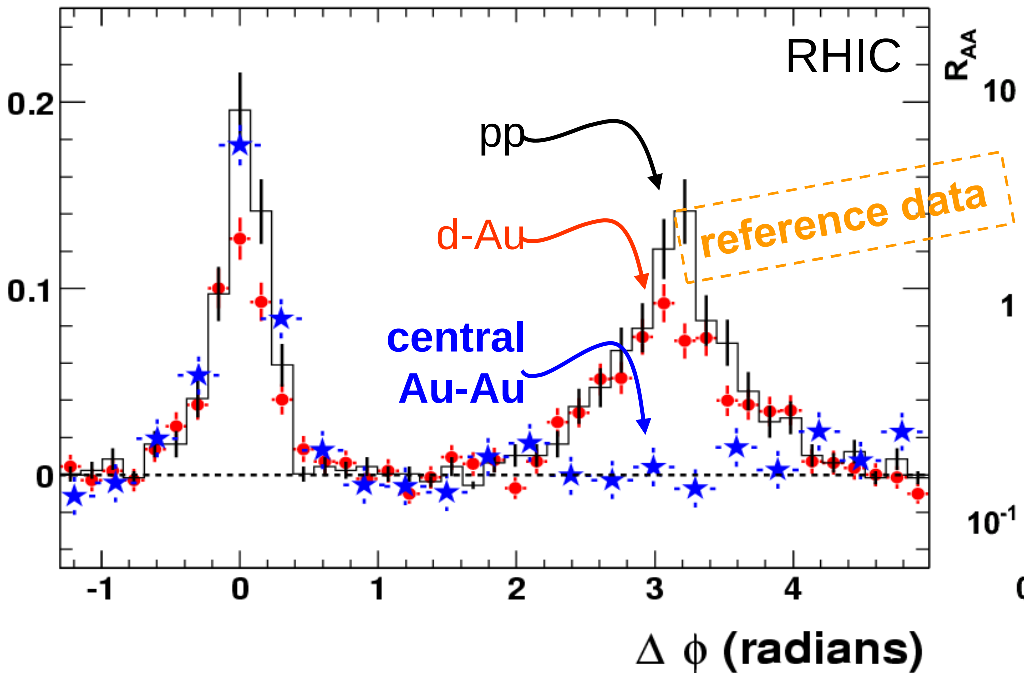
- large charged particles multiplicities, $dN_{ch}/d\eta$
- small impact parameter, b~0 fm ("head-on")
- large number of colliding nucleons, N_{part}

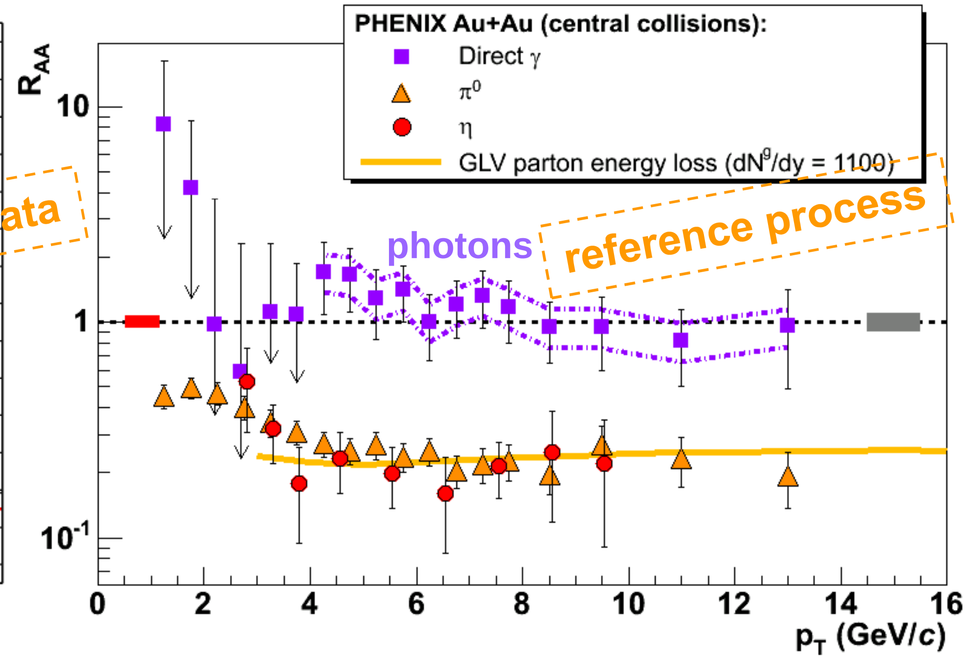






Jet suppression in heavy-ion collisions at RHIC





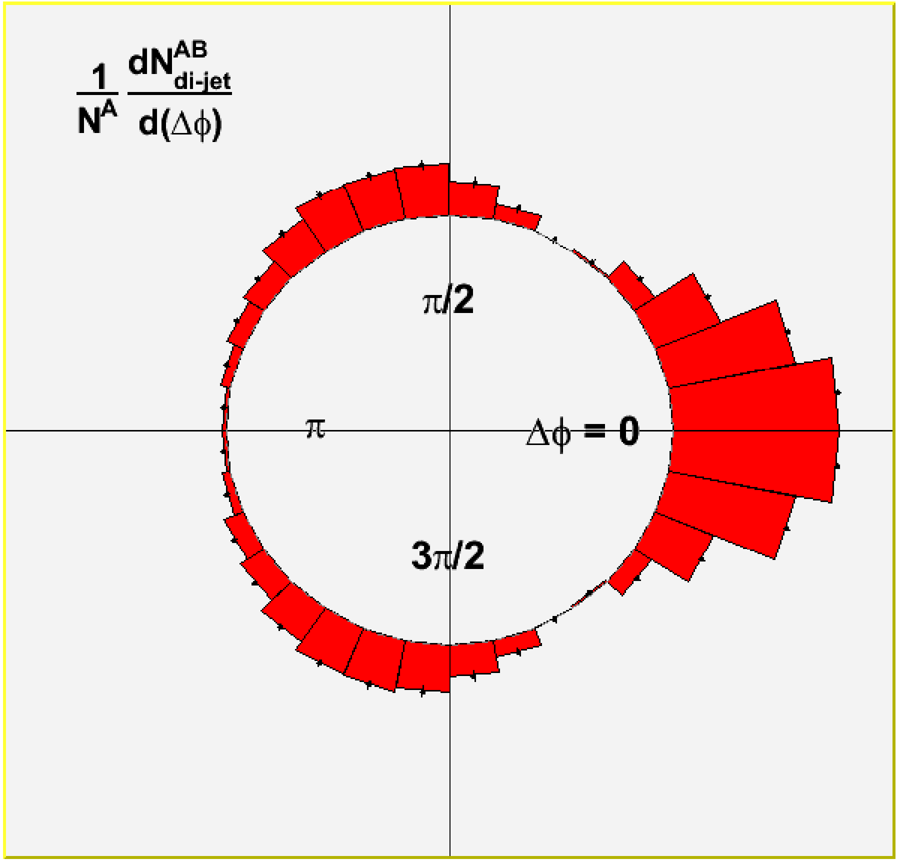
Two-particle azimuthal correlations show back-to-back jets in pp and d-Au collisions; the jet opposite to the high-p_T trigger particle "disappears" in central Au-Au collisions

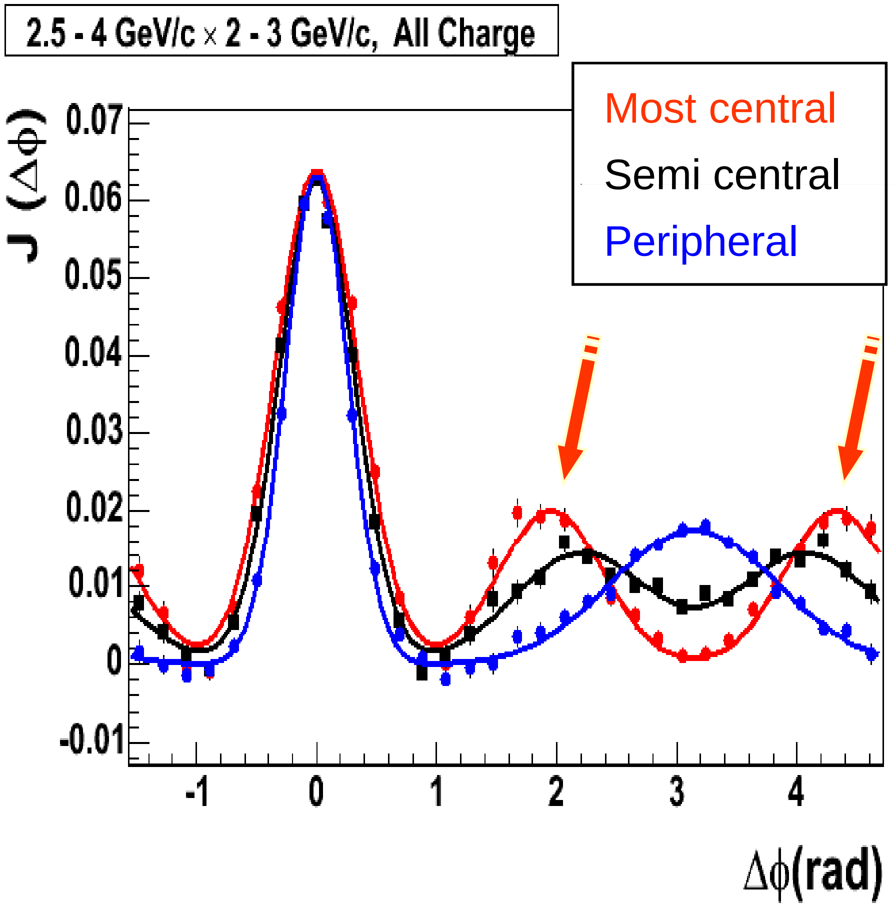
The pion yield in central Au-Au is 5 times lower than expected from pp collisions but the photons are not affected by the dense medium

Interpretation: the produced hard partons (our probe) are "anomalously absorbed" by the dense colored medium created in central Au+Au collisions at RHIC energies

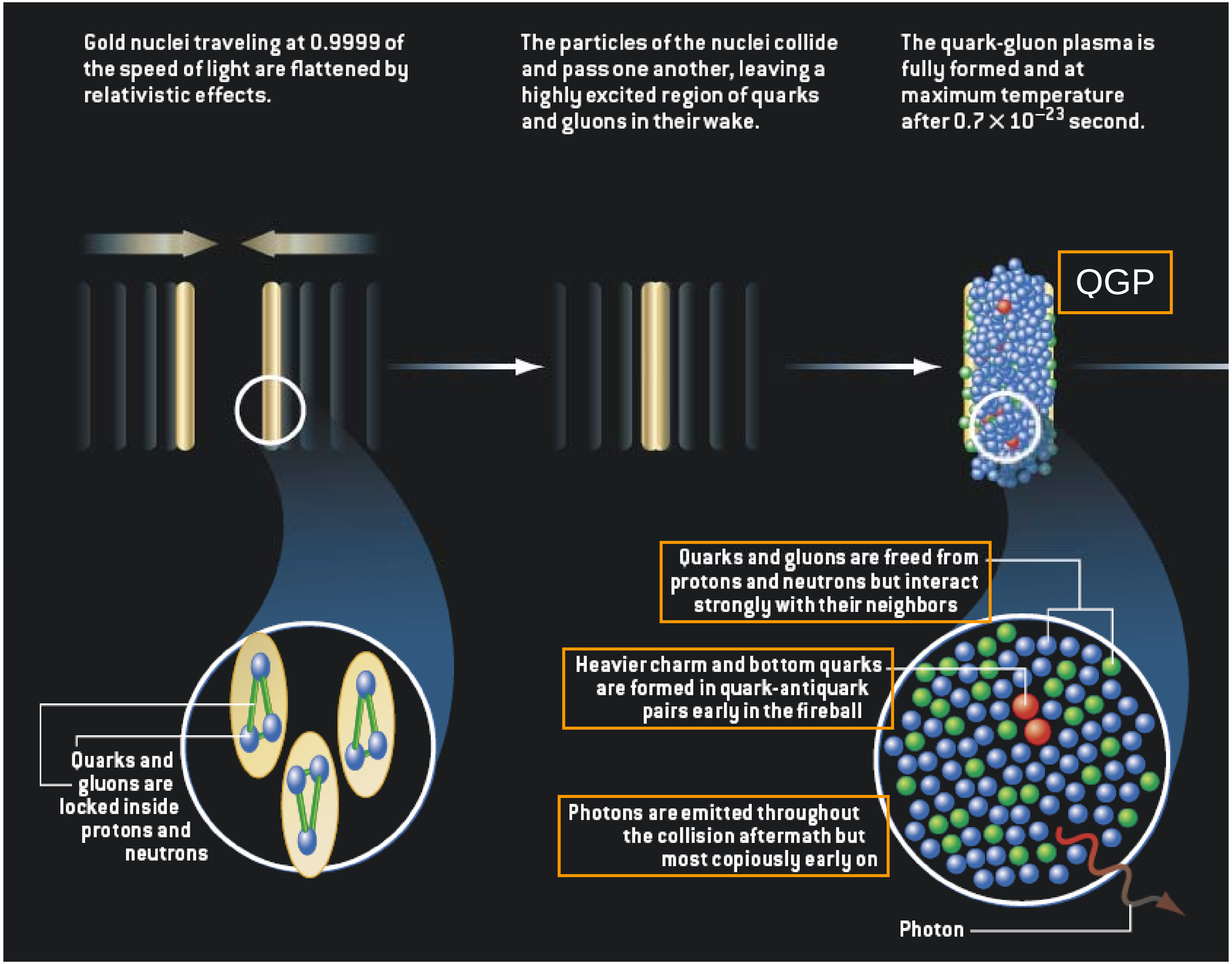
Jet quenching: latest result with much higher statistics

The availability of higher statistics reveals a very curious double-peak structure in the azimuthal distribution of the away-side peak, in central Au+Au collisions



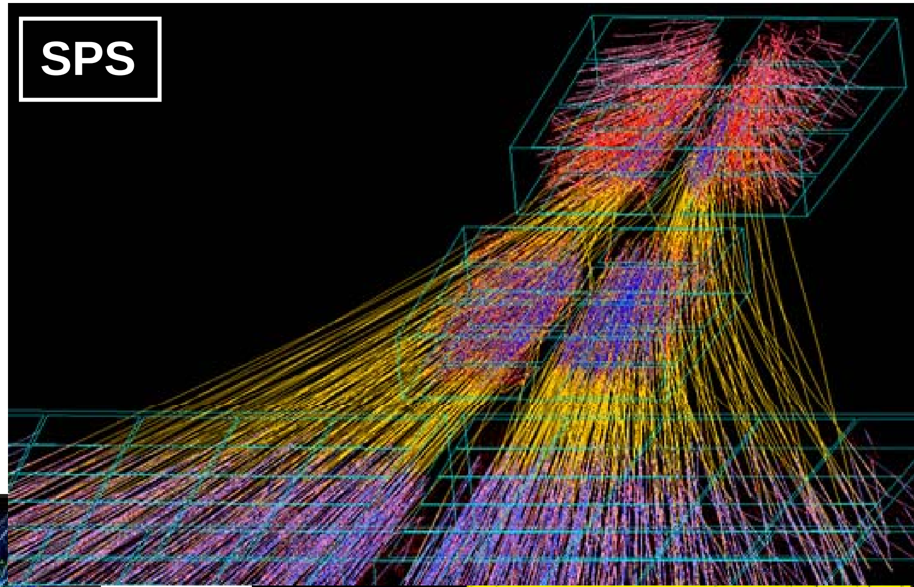


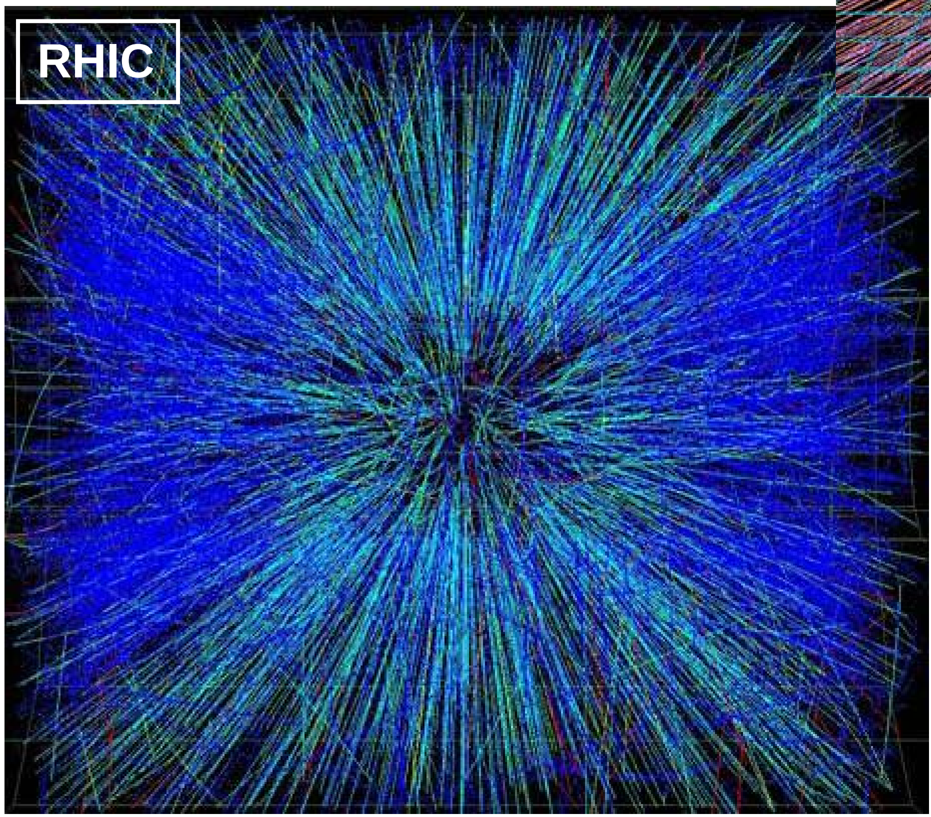
The little bang: a summary by the Scientific American

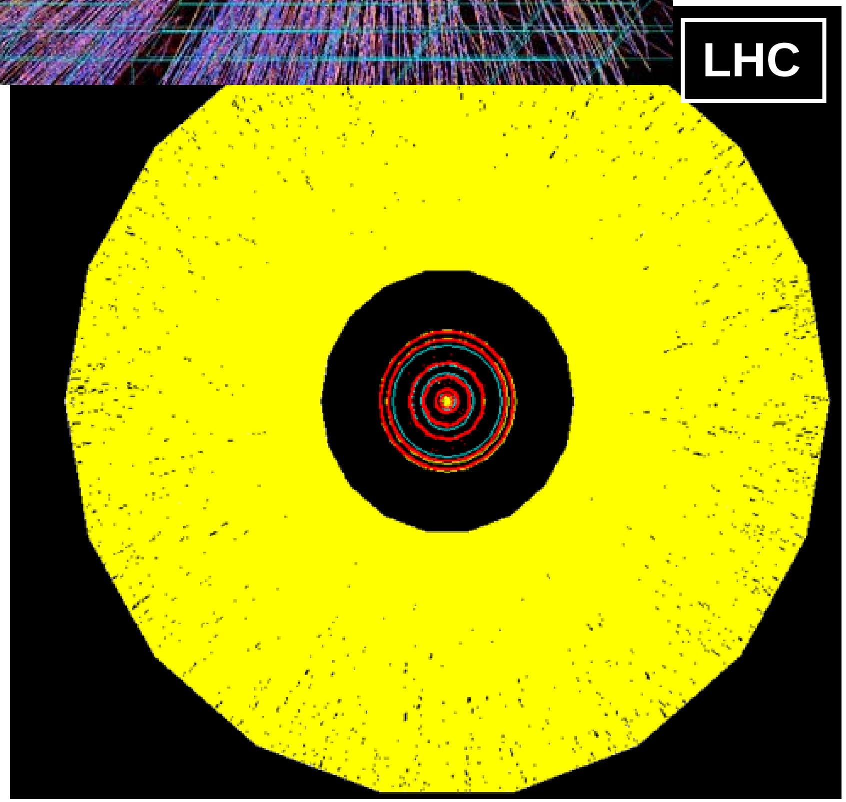


Back to the future

The search for evidence of QGP formation and the study of its properties will soon take place at the LHC, where Pb ions will collide at 5.5 TeV per NN collision







Three LHC experiments will study Pb-Pb collisions