



Nuclear Tomography with Polarized Photon-Gluon Collisions at STAR

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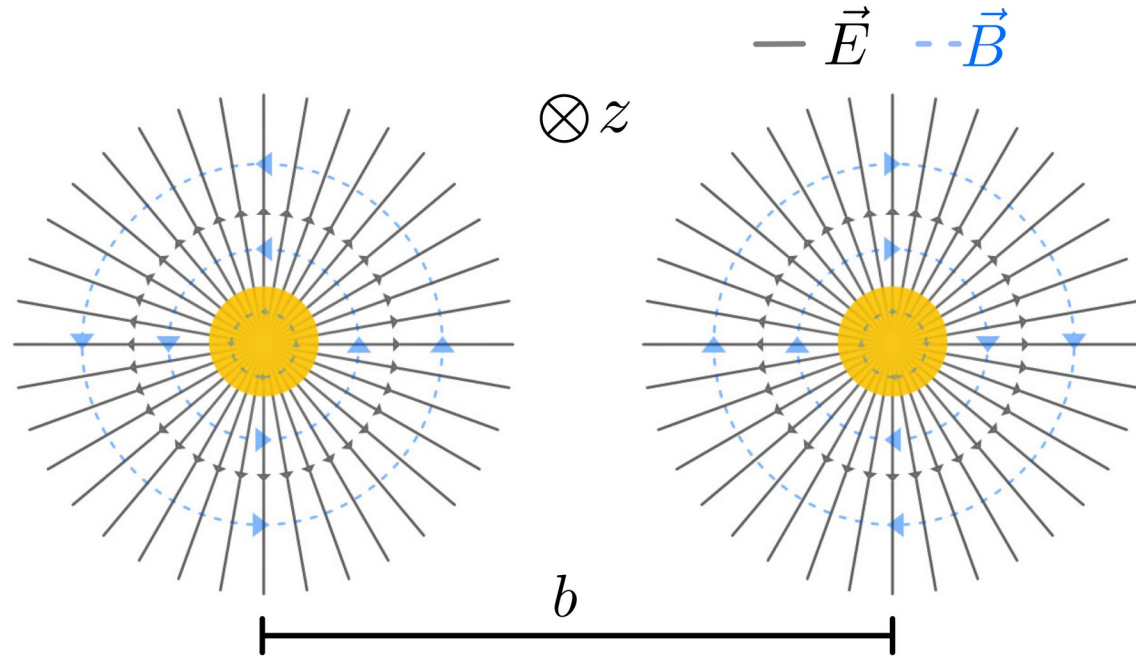
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Talk outline

- Introduction
 - Strong EM fields in A+A collisions
 - Origins of photon polarization
- Photon-gluon interactions
 - Coherent vector-meson production in the environment of HICs
 - Extraction of diffraction information via angular distribution of p^0 pion daughters
 - Comparisons between different systems
 - Interference-aided extraction of nuclear size
 - Modification from nuclear dynamics and the limits of coherence
- Summary

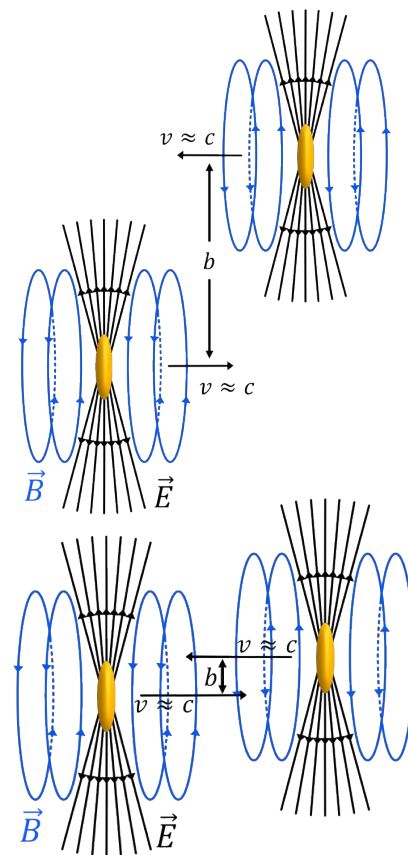
HICs as a photon source

- Strong EM fields in HICs. Highly compressed by Lorentz contraction from fast-moving nuclei
- Make quasi-real photons which are linearly polarized away from their source
- Photons may interact with the other nucleus to make particles



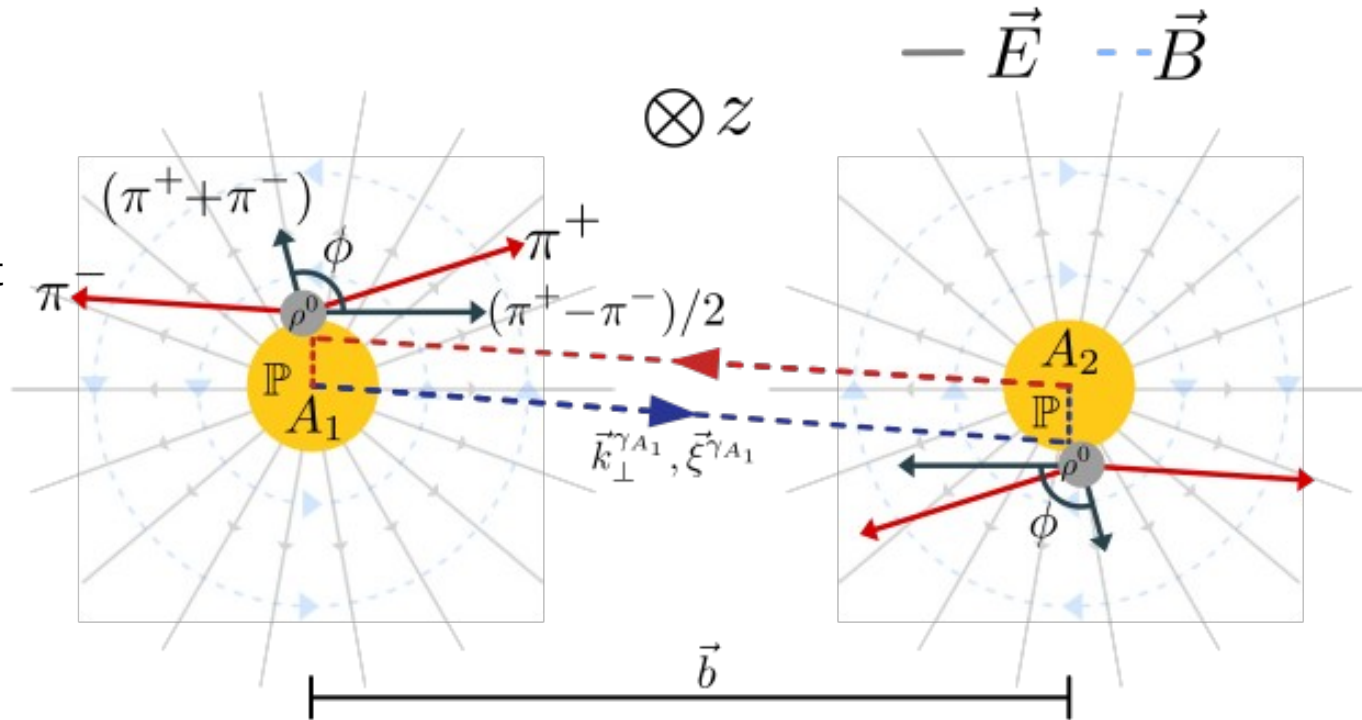
Photonuclear production in HIC

- Photonuclear vector mesons are produced following $\gamma\mathbb{P} \rightarrow \rho^0, J/\Psi, \text{ etc. } (J^P = 1^-)$
 - Photon from the EM field of one nucleus fluctuates to a $q\bar{q}$ pair, interacts with pomeron or reggeon
 - Photon quantum numbers are $J^{PC} = 1^{--}$
- ρ^0 has been studied in UPCs
 - C. Adler *et al.* (STAR Collaboration) Phys. Rev. Lett. **89**, 272302
 - L. Adamczyk *et al.* (STAR Collaboration) Phys. Rev. C **96**, 054904
 - S. Acharyai *et al.* (ALICE Collaboration) JHEP06 (2020) 35
 - etc.
- J/Ψ coherent photoproduction has been seen in nuclear collisions (noted as excess yield at low p_T)
 - J. Adam *et al.* (ALICE Collaboration) Phys. Rev. Lett. **116**, 222301
 - J. Adam *et al.* (STAR Collaboration) Phys. Rev. Lett. **123**, 132302



Measure ρ polarization

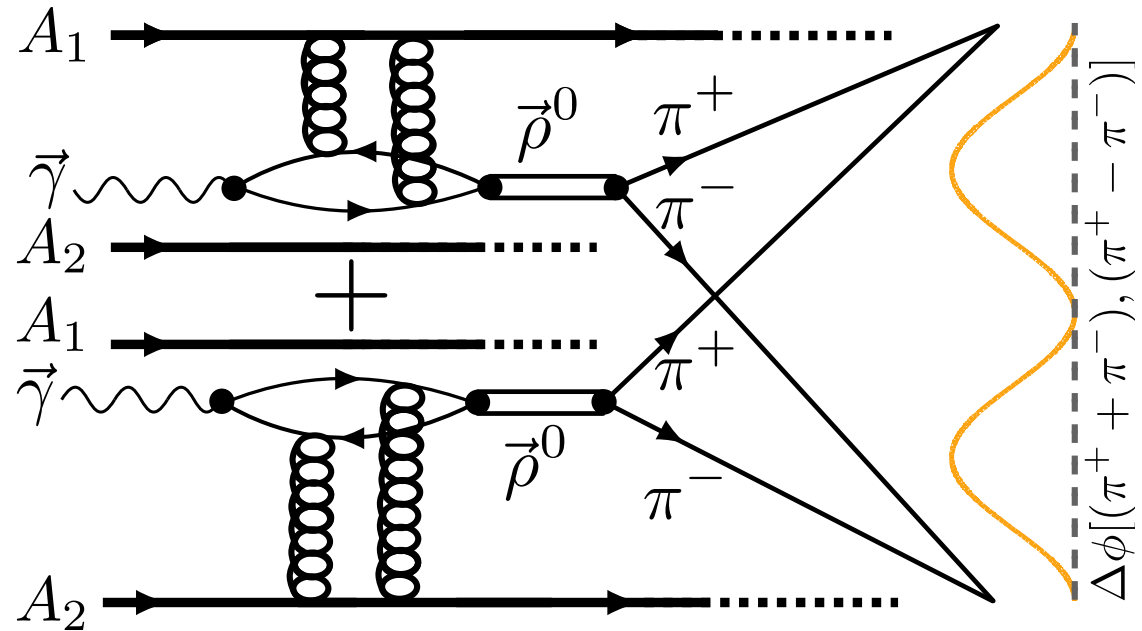
- Photon polarization vector aligned radially with the “emitting” source
 - Measured ρ (otherwise identical) virtual partner polarization is exactly 180° out of sync
 - Hadronically produced ρ s (+pions) have no such spin correlation
 - HBT interference, but not polarization-dependent interference
- Polarization dictates final-state distribution of the $\pi^+\pi^-$ pairs – allows for measurement



$$\Delta \phi = \phi(\pi^+ + \pi^-) - \phi(\pi^+ - \pi^-)$$

Double-slit modulation

- Analogous to double-slit pattern
- Expected modulation in $\Delta\phi$ is $\cos(2\Delta\phi)$ [1]
- Interference strength depends on
 - Nuclear geometry (gluon distribution)
 - Impact parameter (detailed spatial distribution)



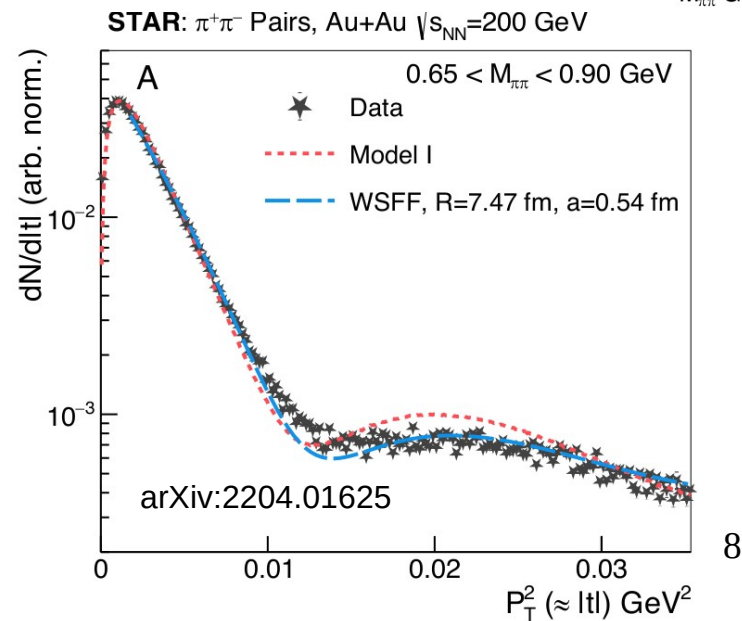
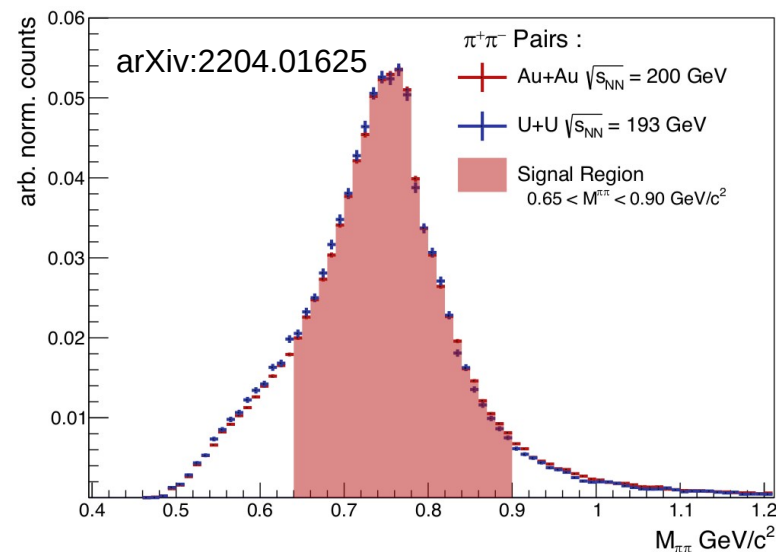
[1] Xing, H et.al. *J. High Energ. Phys.* **2020**, 64 (2020).

$$\Delta\phi = \phi(\pi^+ + \pi^-) - \phi(\pi^+ - \pi^-)$$

Interference in UPCs

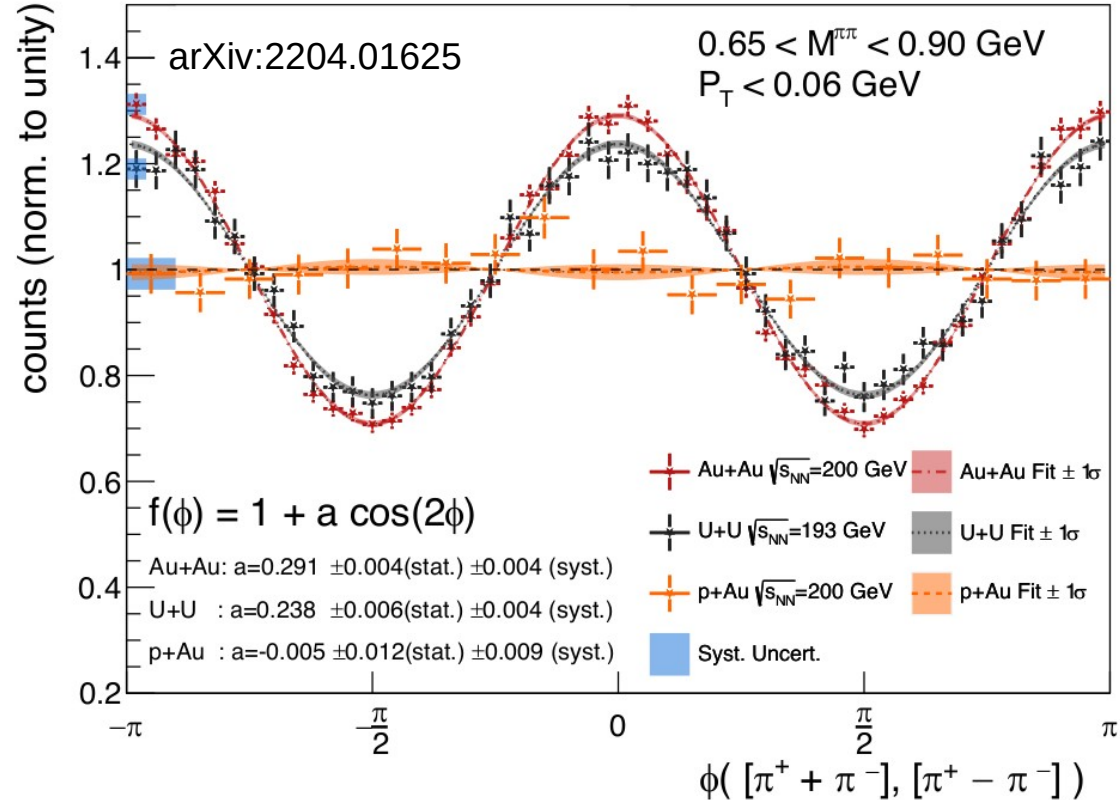
Measurement in UPC

- Combine $\pi^+\pi^-$ from events collected by the STAR UPC trigger
- Extremely clean ρ^0 peak and obvious low- p_T peak
- The p_T peak comes from a diffractive pattern
 - ρ s are coherently photoproduced
 - This peak is consistent with models estimating the photoproduction and can only be explained with this production mechanism
 - Second peak of diffraction pattern visible



UPC results

- Strong modulation in A+A collisions
- Difference in Au+Au and U+U demonstrates sensitivity to nuclear geometry
- This can be falsified in p+A, where effect is not expected

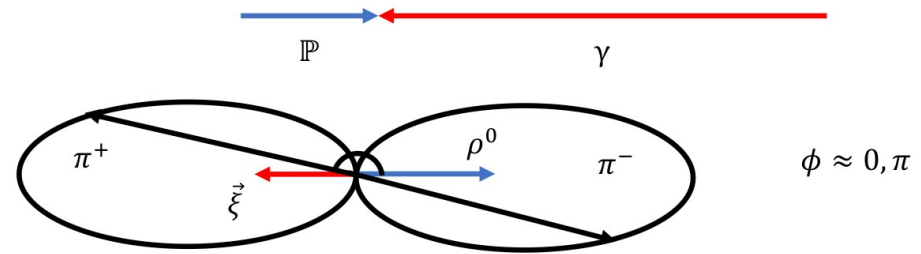


Measuring the Nuclear Radius

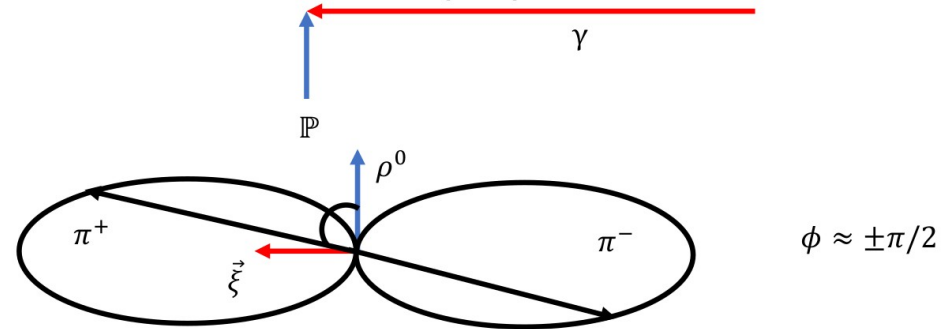
Interference gives event config.

- Polarization is always determined by photon direction, ρ momentum by pomeron direction
- Circles represent harmonic angular probability distribution of pions
- “Case 1” \rightarrow max interference, “Case 2” \rightarrow no interference

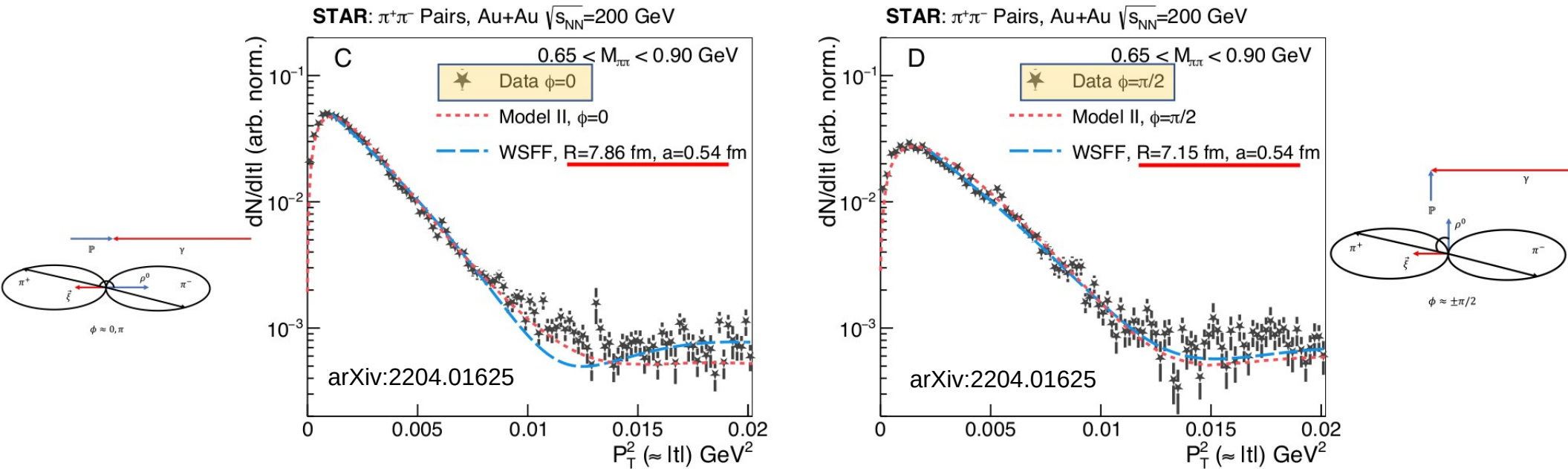
- Case I : Photon & Pomeron are (anti-) parallel



- Case II : Photon & Pomeron are perpendicular



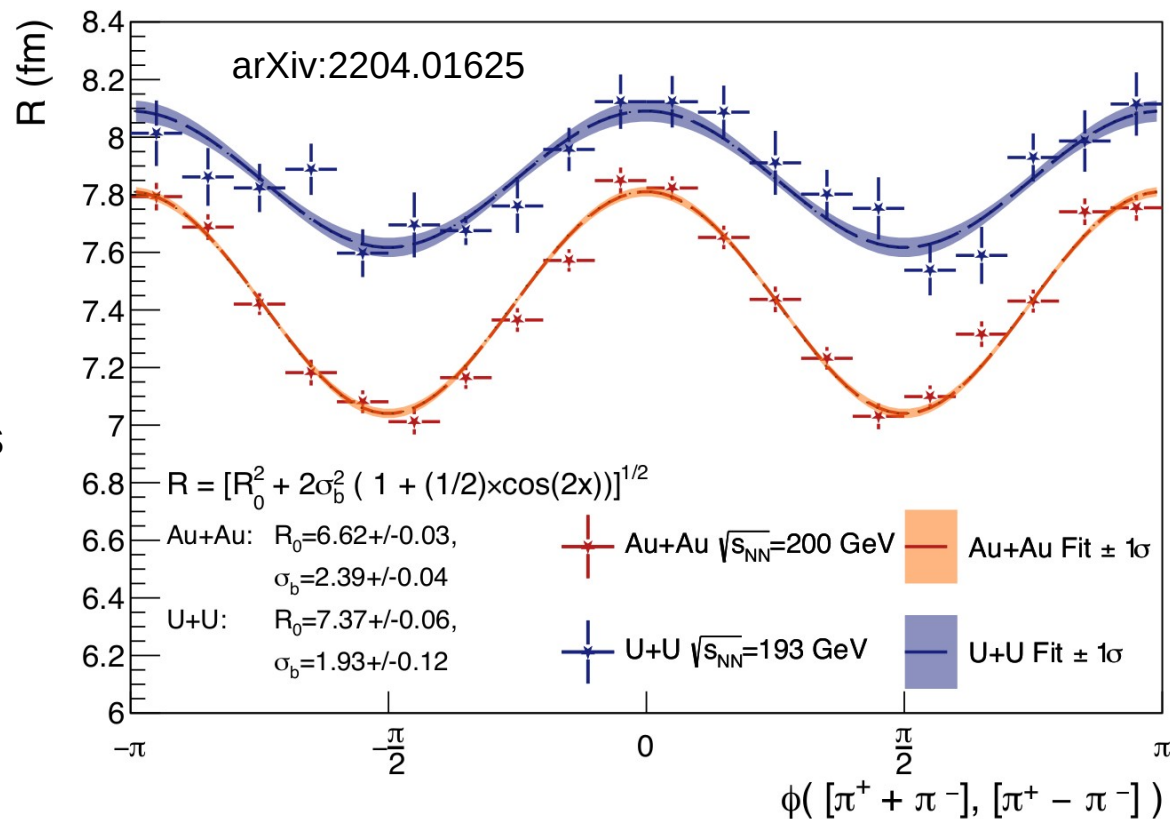
Test of $|t|$ slope



- Extracted slope depends *significantly* on interference!
- Demonstrates flaw in direct extraction of radius from $|t|$

Radius from interference

- Radius can be extracted directly from harmonic fit
- At $\pm \pi/2$ smearing from finite photon momentum disappears
- Correct for
 - Smearing from decay kinematics
 - Depolarization from finite size nuclei (4%) and size of probe (transverse size of the ρ wavefunction)
- Extraction removes known effects



Comparison of radii

	Au+Au (fm)	U+U (fm)
Charge Radius	6.38 (long: 6.58, short: 6.05)	6.81 (long: 8.01, short: 6.23)
Inclusive t slope (STAR 2017) [1]	7.95 ± 0.03	--
Inclusive t slope (WSFF fit)*	7.47 ± 0.03	7.98 ± 0.03
Tomographic technique*	6.53 ± 0.03 (stat.) ± 0.05 (syst.)	7.29 ± 0.06 (stat.) ± 0.05 (syst.)
DESY [2]	6.45 ± 0.27	6.90 ± 0.14
Cornell [3]	6.74 ± 0.06	--
Neutron Skin (Tomographic Technique)*	0.17 ± 0.03 (stat.) ± 0.08 (syst.) $\sim 2\sigma$	0.44 ± 0.05 (stat.) ± 0.08 (syst.) $\sim 4.7\sigma$ (Note: for Pb ≈ 0.3)
		*arXiv:2204.01625

- Precision measurement of nuclear interaction radius at high energy
- Uranium shows evidence of (relatively) thick neutron skin, gold consistent with previous measurements

[1] STAR Collaboration, L. Adamczyk, *et al.*, *Phys. Rev. C* 96, 054904 (2017).

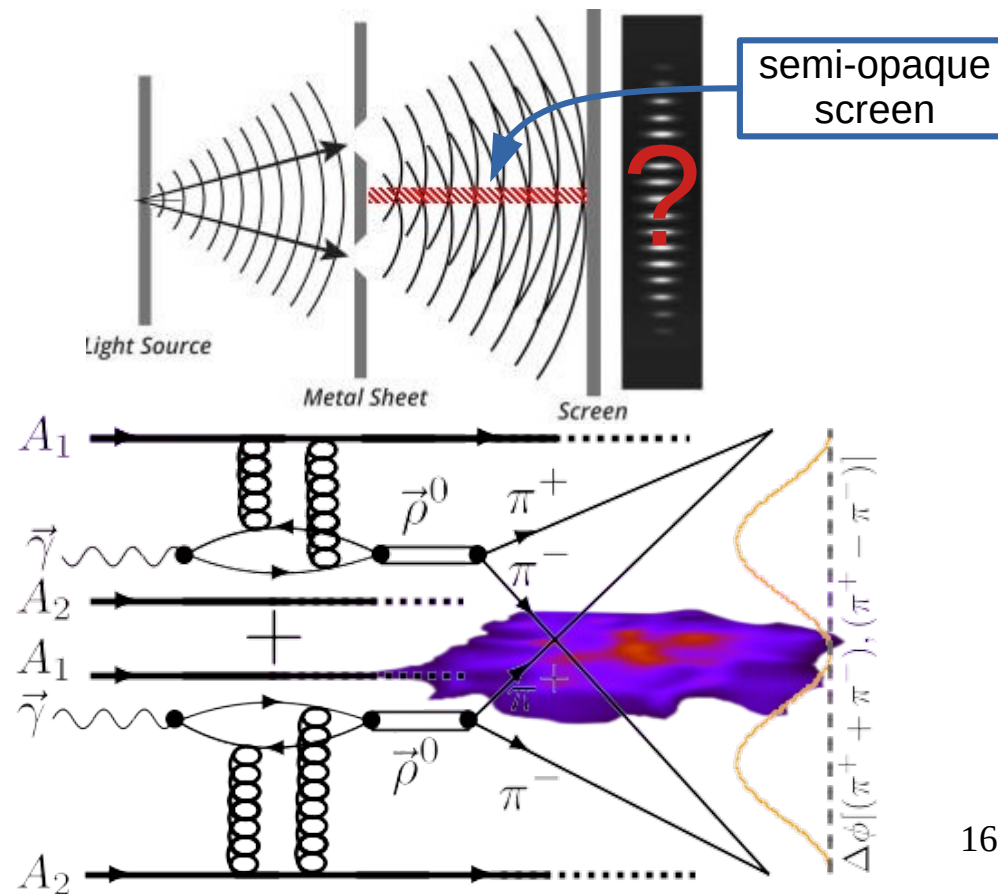
[2] H. Alvensleben, *et al.*, *Phys. Rev. Lett.* 24, 786 (1970).

[3] G. McClellan, *et al.*, *Phys. Rev. D* 4, 2683 (1971).

Limits of coherent diffractive production in nuclear medium

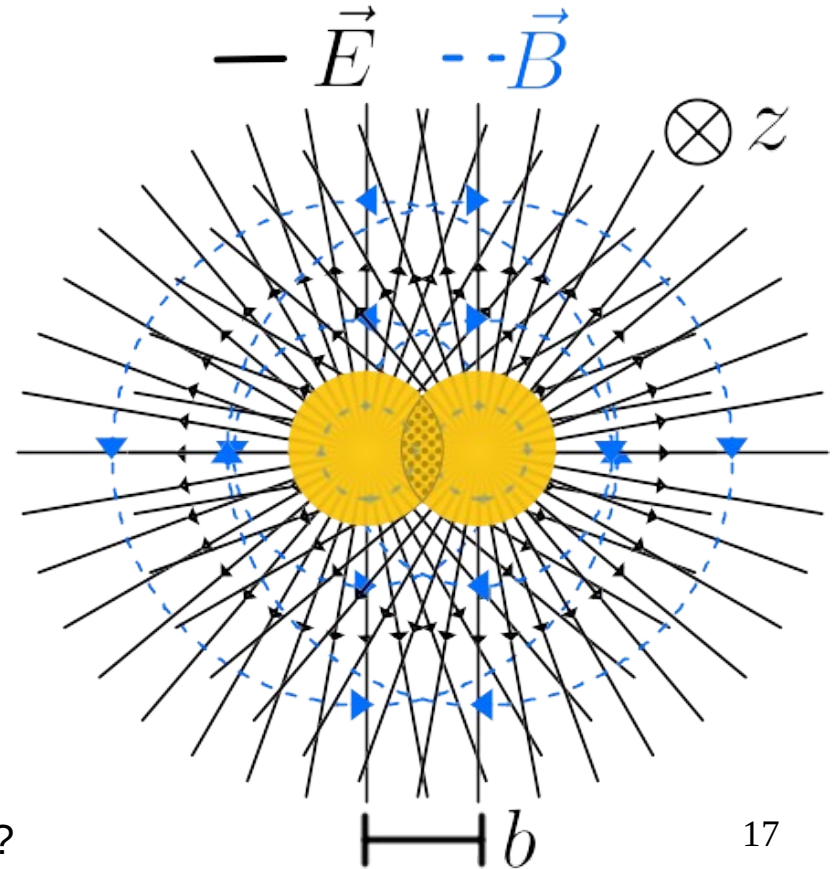
Modification of double-slit

- In double-slit analogy hadronic interactions might be semi-opaque screen dividing the holes
- J/ψ measurements demonstrate coherent photoproduction in central collisions, but do not investigate how these hadronic interactions affect the wave function



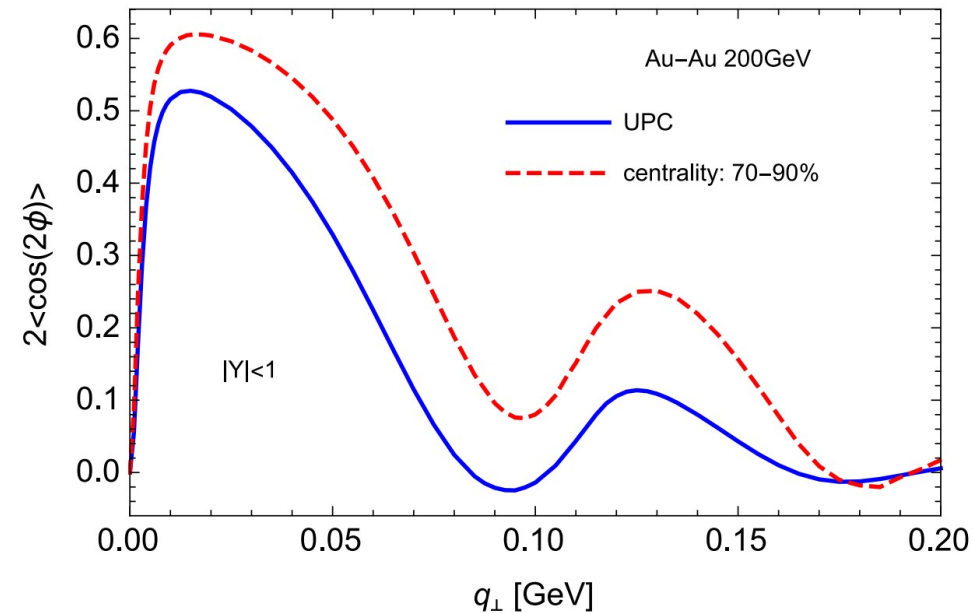
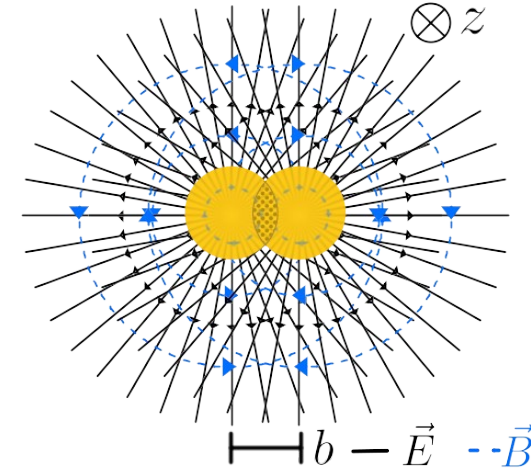
EM studies and non-UPC

- UPC studies
 - Clean signal representative of only photon production
 - Unmuddled by effects of hadronic interactions
 - Ideal environment for studying pure photon interactions
- Non-UPCs: greater degree of polarization overlap between photons from their respective nuclei (larger initial signal)
- Signals from pure photoproduction may be modified by the collision medium
- Studying this process in non-UPCs tests our understanding of what “coherent” really means
 - How much can a nucleus break up and still have coherent interactions?
 - How might this breakup affect the overall wave function?



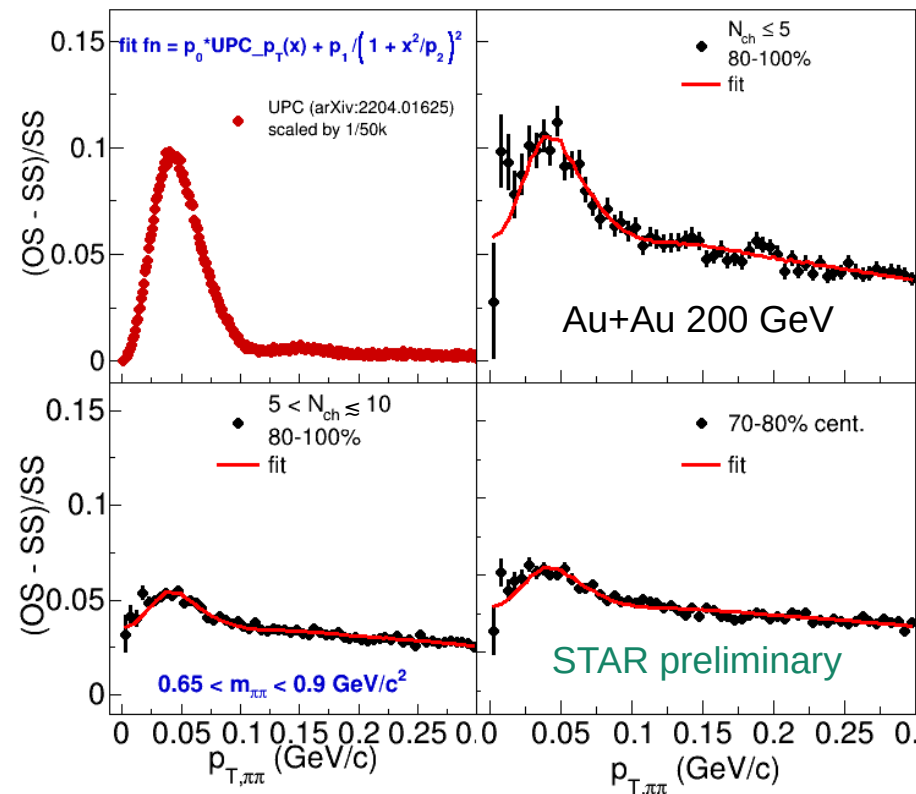
Non-UPC collisions

- Photoproduction signal expected to increase in non-UPCs
 - Theory plot is a prediction of the size of this effect with **no hadronic interactions**
- Measures both polarization and quantum interference. These have been measured in A+A (global polarization + HBT), but not yet together
- Can polarization and quantum entanglement survive the abundant hadronic interactions of a non-UPC?
 - If so, how might they be modified?



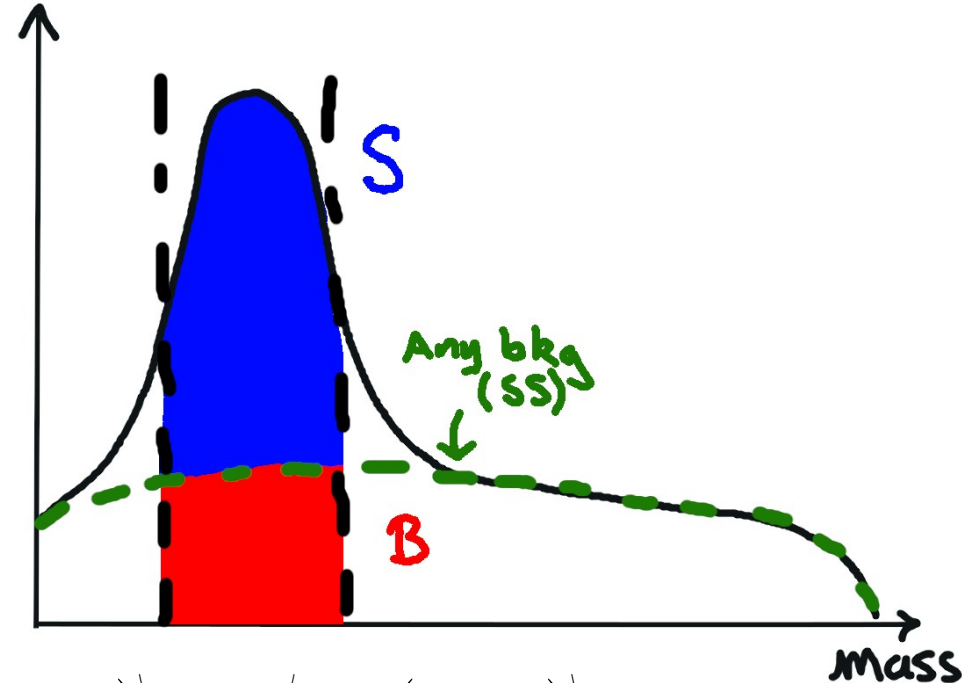
Divided p_T distributions

- Au+Au 200 GeV (taken in 2014 and 2016)
- ρ^0 swamped by combinatorics in central collisions \rightarrow focus on peripheral collisions
- Hadronic component of the p_T distribution can be divided out $(OS - SS)/SS$
- Clear signal of coherent photoproduction!
- Distributions fit using UPC results to demonstrate this effect
 - Coherent part of fit from UPC (p_0 parameter) is ~ 8 standard deviations for each fit



Subtracting background in $\Delta\phi$

- Dominant background makes it much more important than in the UPC data
- Background estimated by same-sign pairs
- Subtraction method:

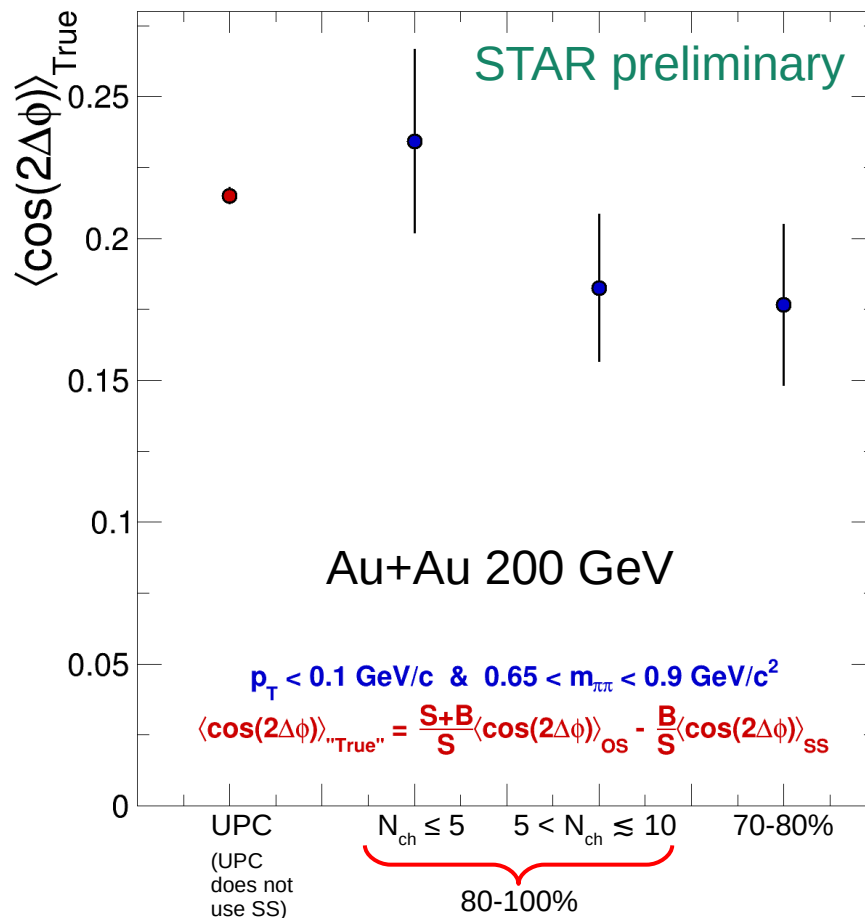


$$(S+B)\langle\cos(2\Delta\phi)\rangle_{OS} = B\langle\cos(2\Delta\phi)\rangle_{SS} + S\langle\cos(2\Delta\phi)\rangle_{\text{True}}$$

$$\longrightarrow \langle\cos(2\Delta\phi)\rangle_{\text{True}} = \frac{S+B}{S}\langle\cos(2\Delta\phi)\rangle_{OS} - \frac{B}{S}\langle\cos(2\Delta\phi)\rangle_{SS}$$

Comparison to UPC

- Signal persists in peripheral events
- Wavefunction is surviving potential hadronic interference
- There does not appear to be a strong centrality dependence
 - Though expectation is increasing signal



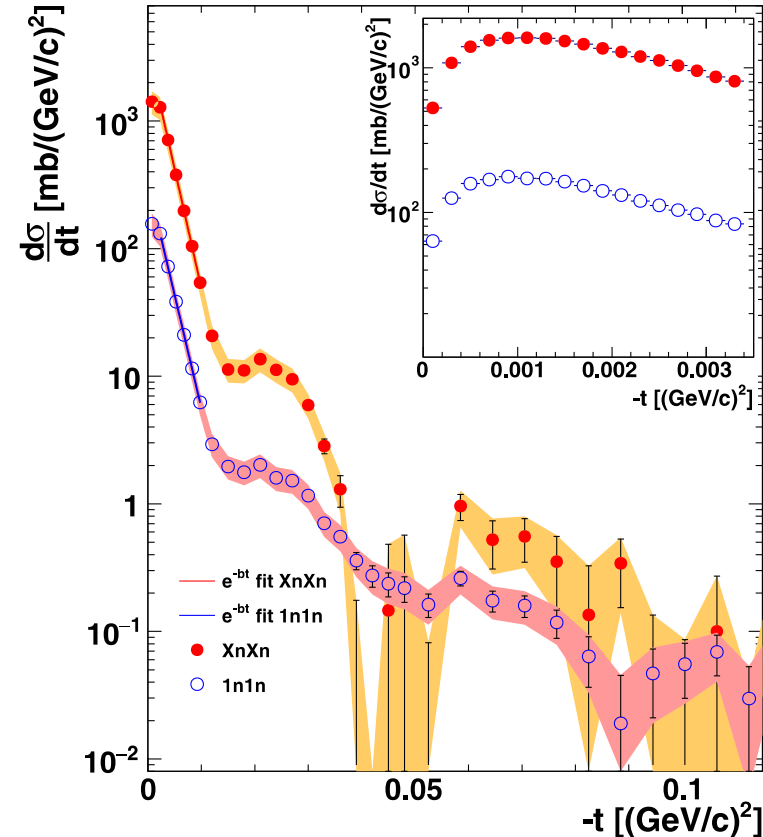
Conclusions

- Clear excess at low p_T is evidence of coherent production
- First measurements of a $\cos(2\Delta\phi)$ modulation in the angular distribution of ρ daughters from photon polarization
 - Strong modulation in measurements of Au+Au and U+U UPC events
 - Interference is also excellent tool for measuring nuclear size
 - This interference survives the strongly-interacting medium of a peripheral HIC (Au+Au data)
 - Possible effects from wave function collapse are relatively small

Backup

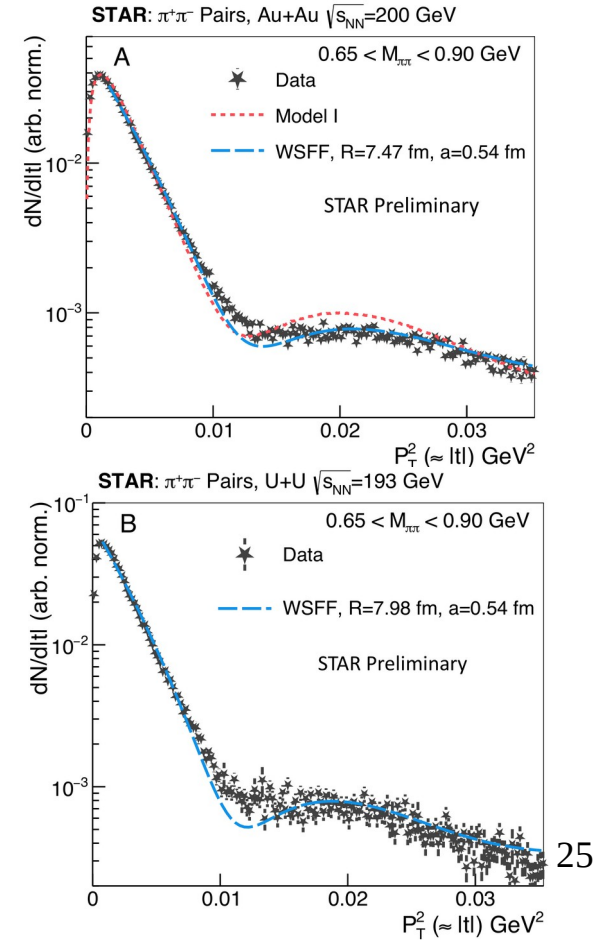
Nuclear radius is too large!

- Photo-nuclear measurements have historically produced a $|t|$ slope that corresponds to a mysteriously large source!
- Charged radii for Au and Pb are 6.38 fm and 6.62 fm respectively
- $|t|$ slopes measured in HICs:
 - STAR (2017): $407.8 \pm 3 \text{ (GeV/c)}^{-2}$
 - ALICE (Pb): $426 \pm 6 \pm 15 \text{ (GeV/c)}^{-2}$
- These correspond to an effective radius of $> 8 \text{ fm}$!
- Where is this discrepancy coming from?



Measurements using Woods Saxon

- New STAR measurements also a large radius
- Is this a deficiency of the exponential fit?
- Use a Woods-Saxon instead, radius is still >1 fm too big
- Uranium has the same issue, >1 fm larger than charge radius



New method

- Two-source interference takes place in x-axis (impact parameter direction)
- Interference pattern disappears in y direction
- Can select event orientations

