CERN Summer Student Lectures 2023

Heavy Ions 2/3

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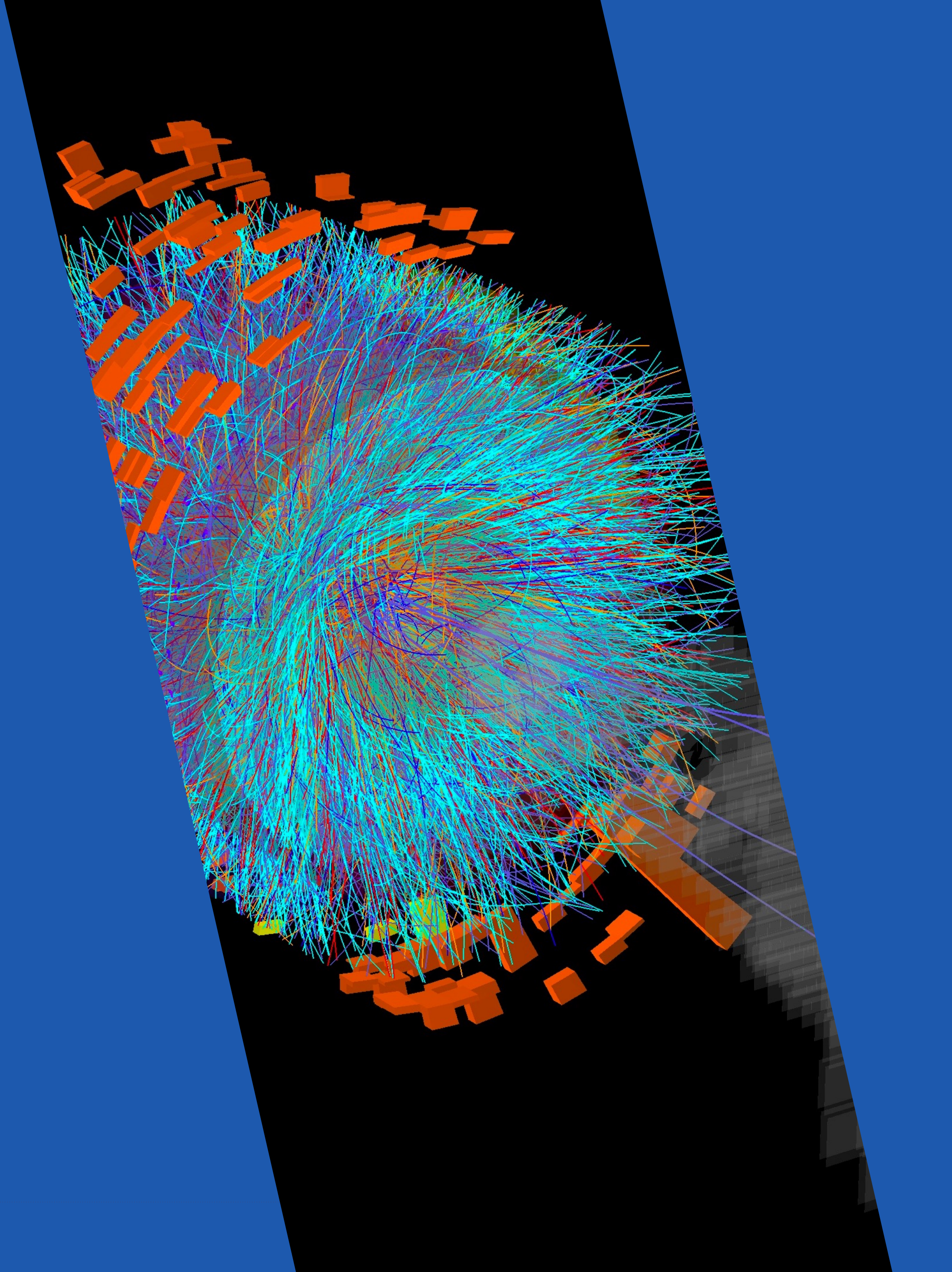


Production and characterization of the QGP at the LHC

Kinematic variables

Momentum and transverse momentum: $p = \sqrt{p_L^2 + p_T^2}$

Transverse mass: $m_T := \sqrt{m^2 + p_T^2}$

Rapidity (generalizes longitudinal velocity $\beta_L = p_L / E$): $y := \operatorname{arctanh} \beta_L = \frac{1}{2} \ln \frac{1+\beta_L}{1-\beta_L} = \frac{1}{2} \ln \frac{E + p_L}{E - p_L}$

- In a collider where 2 beams of different ions: $y_{CM} = \frac{1}{2} \ln \frac{Z_1 A_2}{A_1 Z_2}$
- In fixed-target mode: $y_{CM} = (y_{\text{target}} + y_{\text{beam}})/2 = y_{\text{beam}}/2$

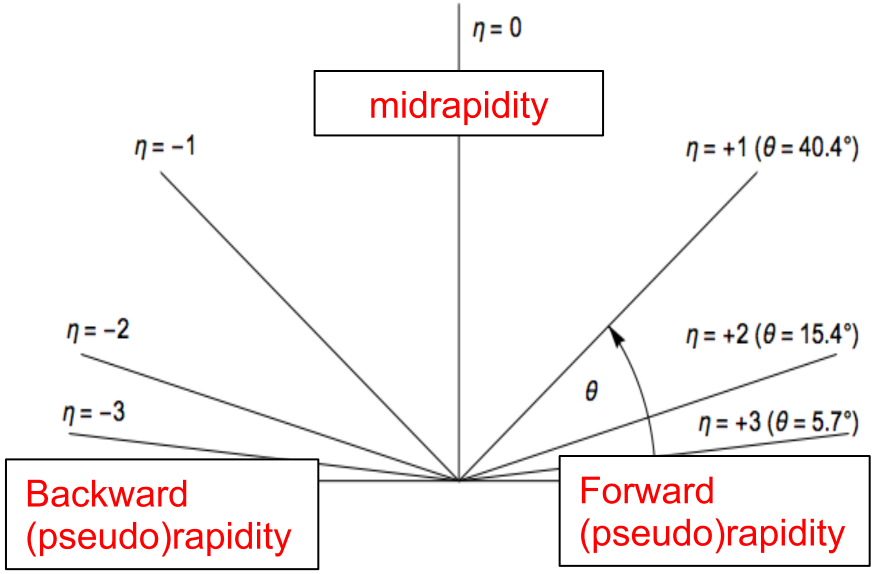
The rapidity can be approximated by **pseudorapidity** in the ultra-relativistic limit (*p>>m):*

$$y = \frac{1}{2} \ln \frac{E + p\cos\vartheta}{E - p\cos\vartheta} \overset{p \gg m}{\approx} \frac{1}{2} \ln \frac{1+\cos\vartheta}{1-\cos\vartheta} = \frac{1}{2} \ln \frac{2\cos^2\frac{\vartheta}{2}}{2\sin^2\frac{\vartheta}{2}} = -\ln\left[\tan\frac{\vartheta}{2}\right] =: \eta$$

$$\cos(2\alpha) = 2\cos^2\alpha - 1 = 1 - 2\sin^2\alpha$$

where ϑ is the angle between the direction of the beam and the particle.

In general y ≠ η, especially at low momenta.



midrapidity

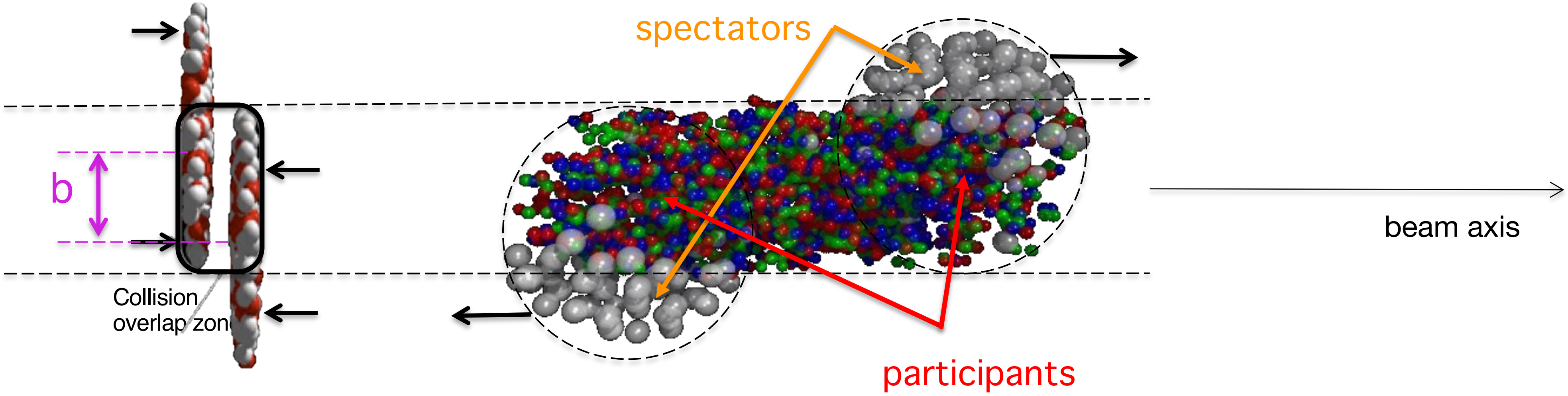
Backward (pseudo)rapidity

Forward (pseudo)rapidity

Geometry of heavy-ion collisions 1/2

We can control **a posteriori** the geometry of the collision by selecting in **centrality**.

Centrality = fraction of the total hadronic cross section of a nucleus-nucleus collision, typically expressed in percentile, and related to the impact parameter (**b**)



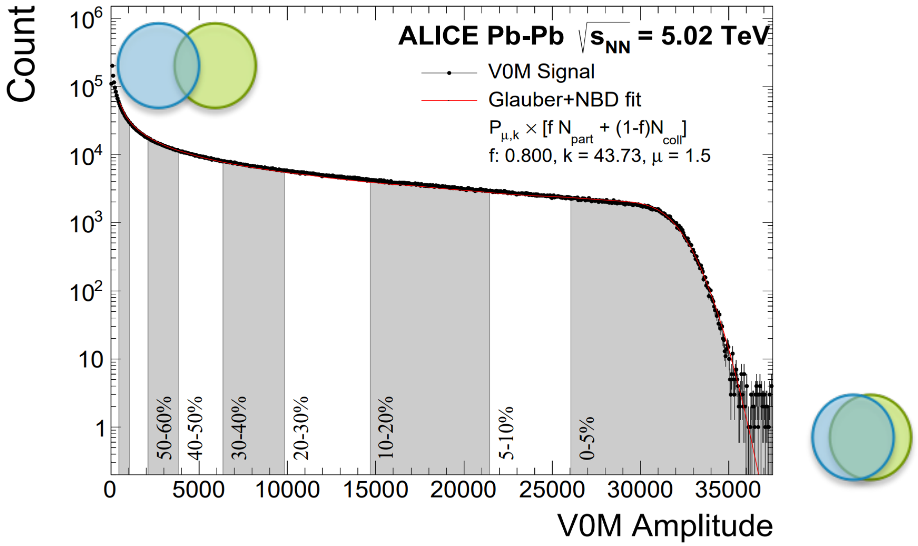
Other variables related to centrality:

- N_{coll}, number of binary nucleon-nucleon collisions
- N_{part} number of participating nucleons

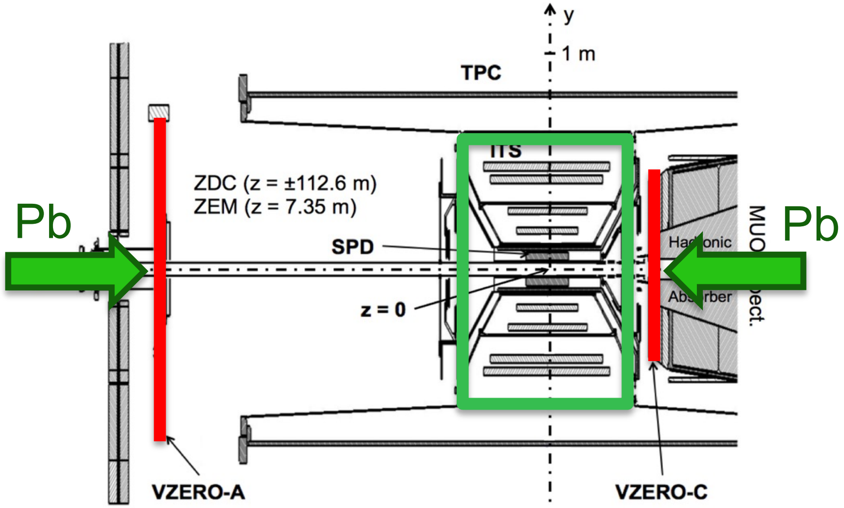
Geometry of heavy-ion collisions 2/2

More **central**, ie. “head-on” collisions
→ smaller impact parameter
→ larger overlap region
→ more participants
→ more particles produced

More **peripheral** collision
→ larger impact parameter
→ smaller overlap region
→ less participants
→ fewer particles produced



ALICE, PRL 106 (2011) 032301, PRC 91 (2015) 064905



Centrality is determined by counting the number of particles (multiplicity) or measuring the energy deposition in a region of phase space *independent* from the measurement, to avoid biases/autocorrelations in the results.

Rapidity distributions in HI collisions

Before the collision: beams with given rapidity

E.g. at RHIC:

- p_{BEAM} = 100 GeV/c per nucleon
- $E_{BEAM} = \sqrt{(m_p^2+p_{BEAM}^2)}$ = 100.0044 per nucleon
- $\beta = 0.999956$, $\gamma_{BEAM} \approx 100$
- $y_{BEAM1} = -y_{BEAM2} = 5.36 \rightarrow \Delta y = 10.8$

After the collision, 2 possible scenarios

1. **Nuclei stopping**
   - For $\sqrt{s_{NN}} \sim 5$ -10 GeV (AGS,…)
2. **Transparency**
   - For $\sqrt{s_{NN}} > 100$ GeV (RHIC, **LHC**)
   - nuclei slow down to lower γ and y
   - particles are produced with a ‘’plateau’’ at midrapidity

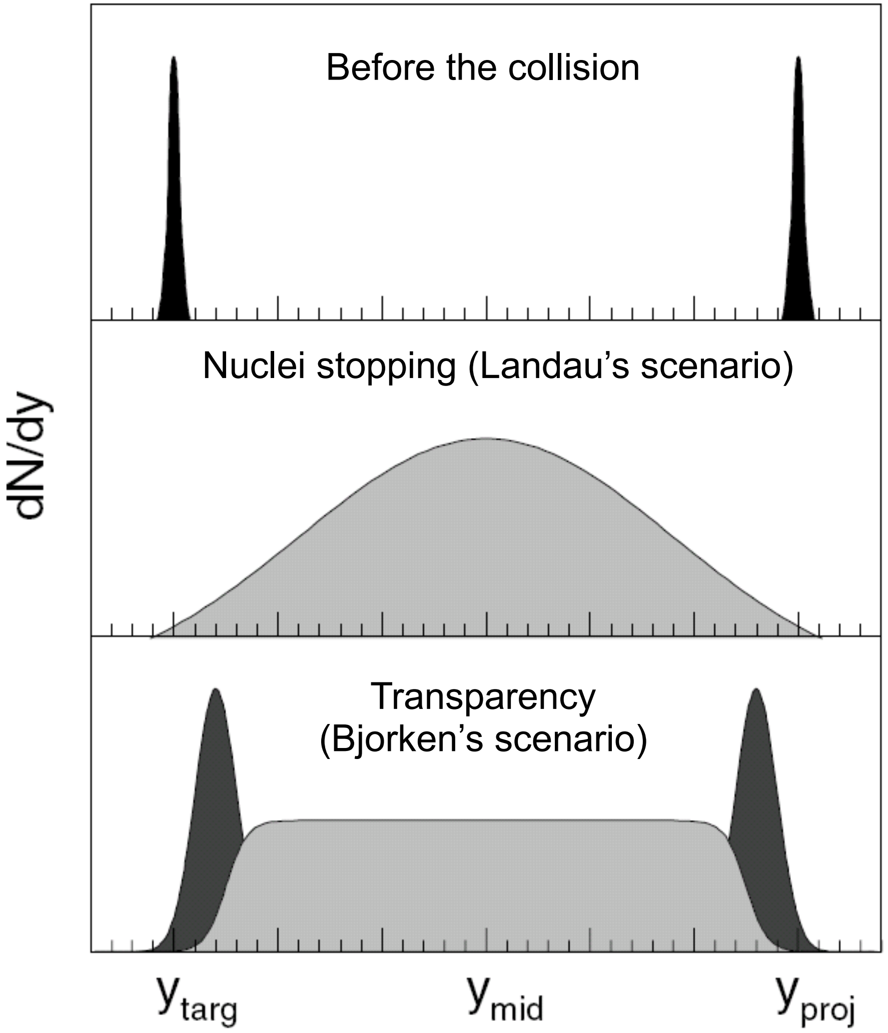
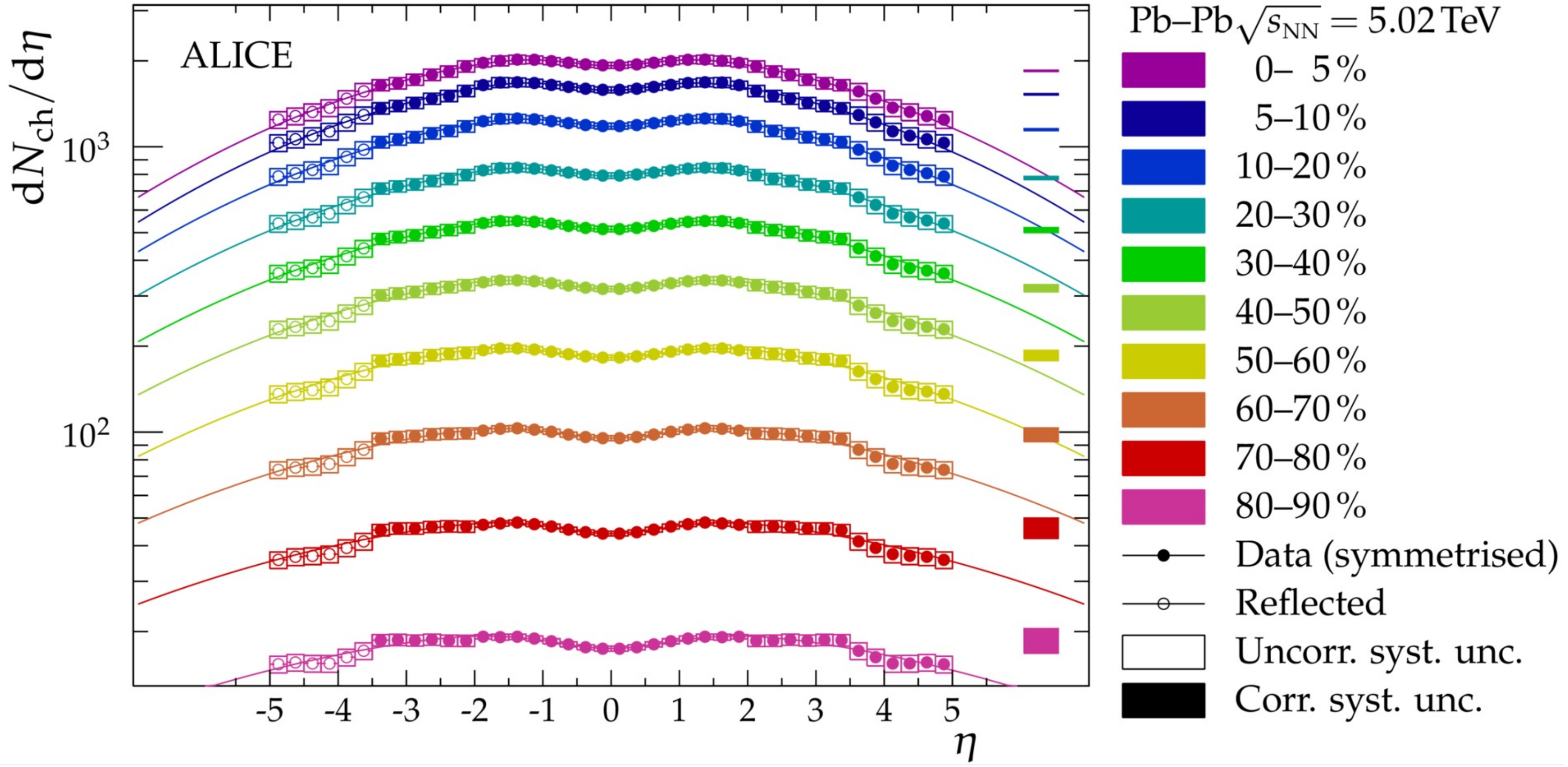


Figure from K. Reygers

Charged particle multiplicity vs centrality

Charged particle pseudorapidity density



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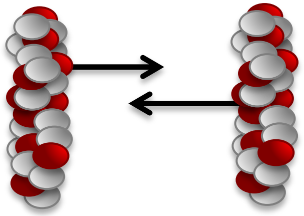
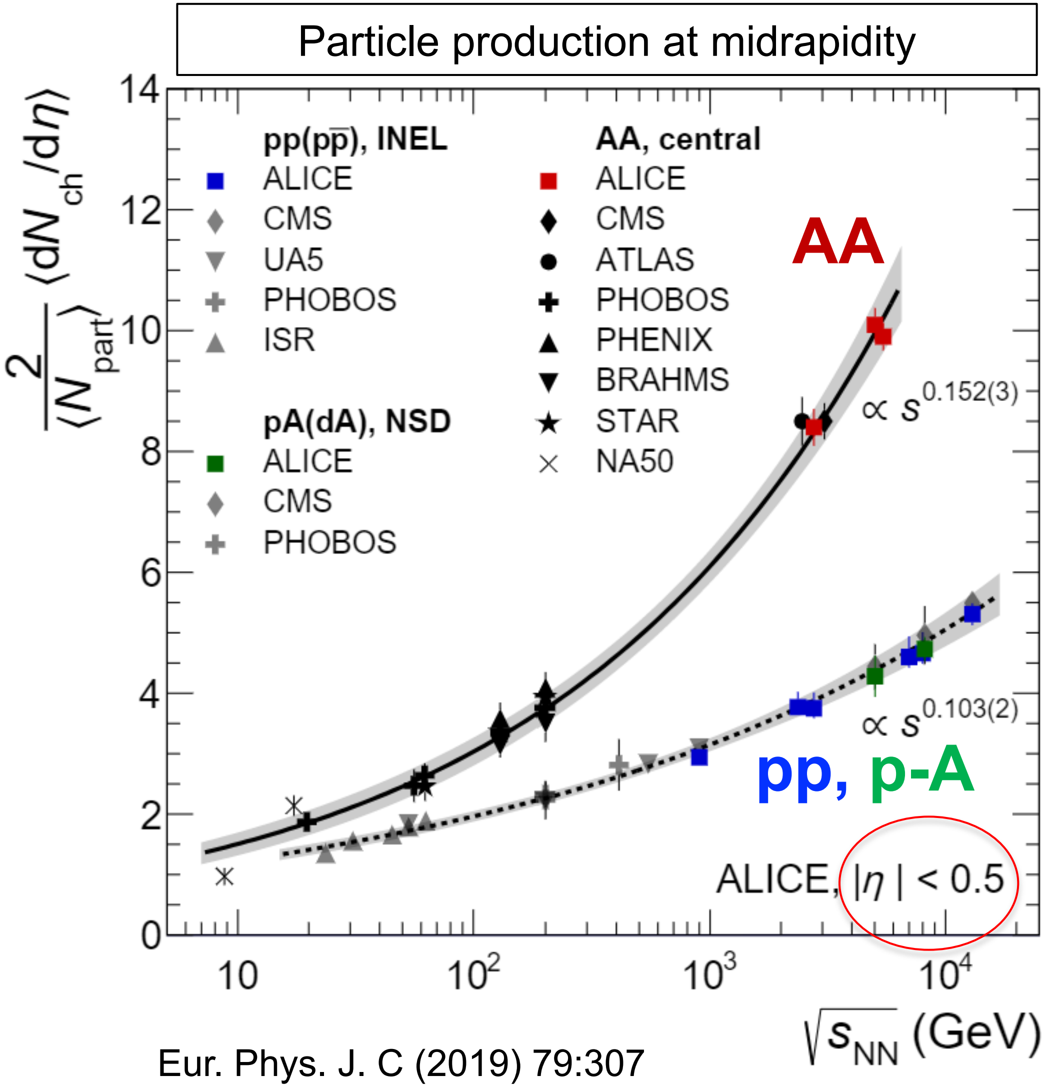
ALICE, Phys.Lett. B 772 (2017) 567-577



Pb-Pb

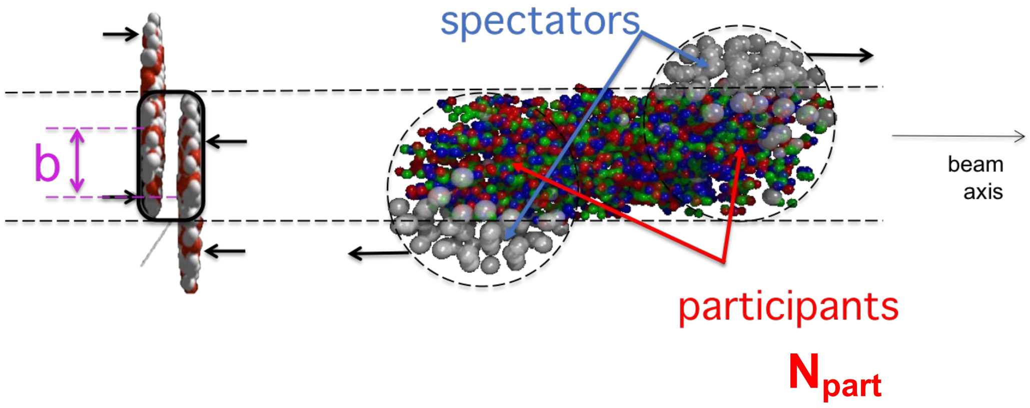
Charged particle production in central HI collisions



Eur. Phys. J. C (2019) 79:307

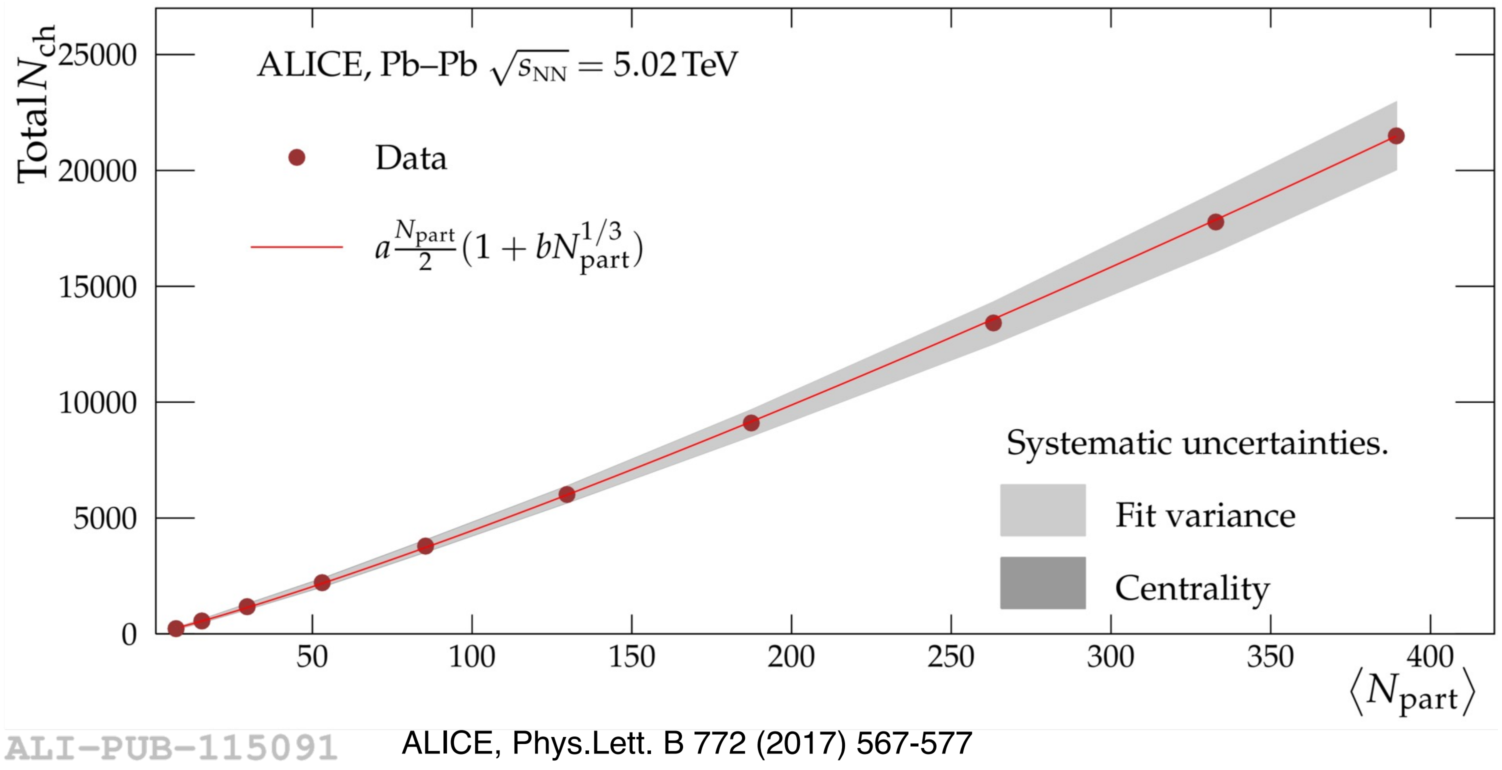
Particle production per participant in HI collisions follows a steeper power law than in pp, pA and increases by 2-3x from RHIC to the LHC

Heavy-ion collisions are more efficient in transferring energy from beam- to mid- rapidity than pp



How many particles are created in a collision?

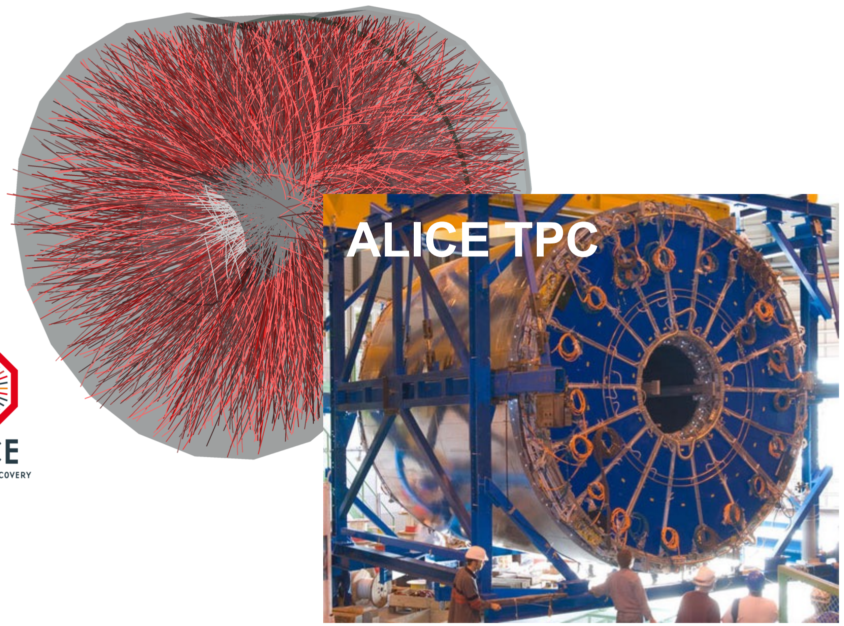
Total Charged particle multiplicity



ALICE, Phys.Lett. B 772 (2017) 567-577

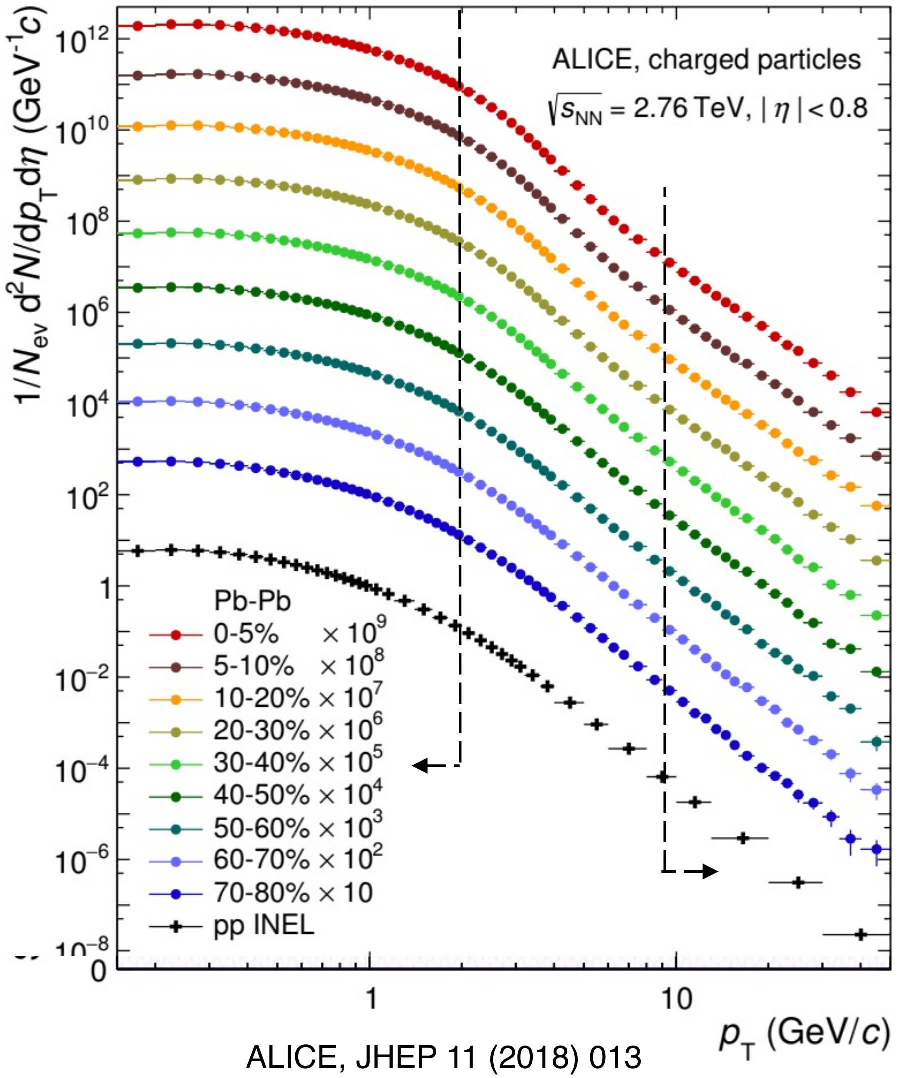
In a central Pb-Pb collision at the LHC, more than 20000 charged tracks must be reconstructed.

→ High granularity tracking systems, primary importance of tracking, vertexing calibration



Particle “spectra”

Charged particle transverse momentum distribution



ALICE, JHEP 11 (2018) 013

Low p_T *(< 2 GeV/c)*

- Particle spectra are described by a Boltzmann distribution → “thermal”, ~ exp(-1/k_BT)
- “Bulk” dominated by light flavor particles
- Non-perturbative QCD regime

High p_T *(> 8-10 GeV/c)*

- Particle spectra described by a power law
- Dominated by parton fragmentation (jets)
- Perturbative QCD regime

Mid p_T *(2 to 8 GeV/c)*

- Interplay of parton fragmentation and recombination of partons from QGP

Heavy-ion and high-energy physics have different goals and thus different detector requirements.

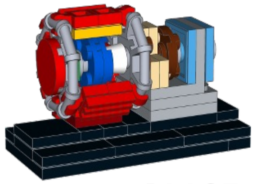
Observables:

- soft (low p_T) and hard (high p_T) probes
- hadron production rates (needs PID)
- flow (needs acceptance coverage)
- photon/W/Z (calorimetry)
- jets (coverage, high p_T)

In HI physics also emphasis on:

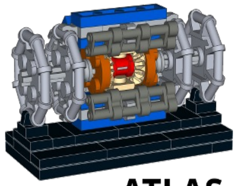
- **midrapidity** measurements
- **identification** of hadron species
- soft (non-perturbative) regime, i.e. **low p_T**
- **minimum bias** events

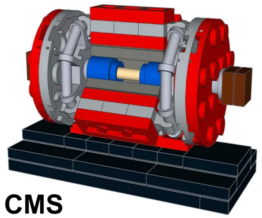
Complementarity of the LHC experiments


ALICE

ALICE

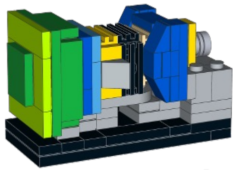
- Low p_T
- PID
- Low material budget next to IP


ATLAS


CMS

ATLAS/CMS

- Wide pseudorapidity coverage
- High $p_{T,}$ jets

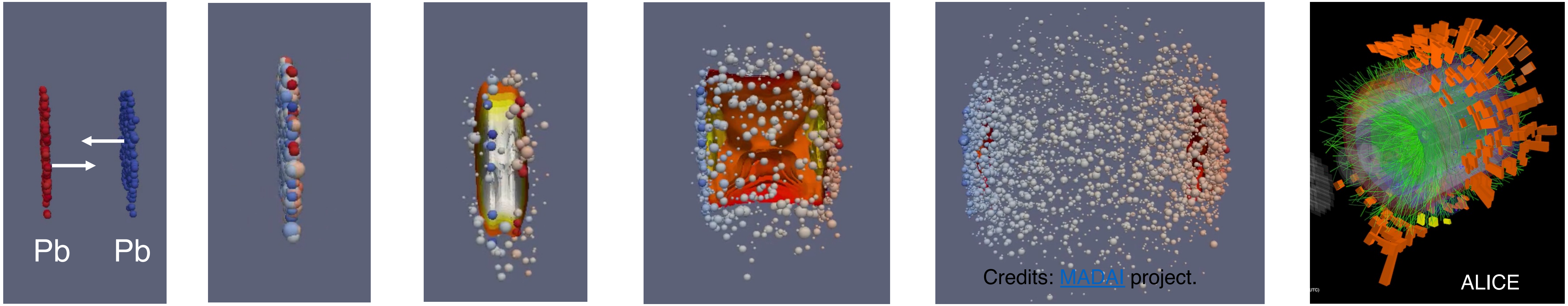

LHCb

LHCb

- Forward pseudorapidity
- PID
- Fixed target

The standard model of heavy-ion collisions

Initial state | Hard scatterings | QGP formation | Hydrodynamic expansion | Hadronization and freeze-out | Detection



Credits: MADAI project.

Time: $\tau = 0$ | $\tau \sim 1$ fm/c | $\tau \sim 10$ fm/c | $\tau > 10$ pm/c

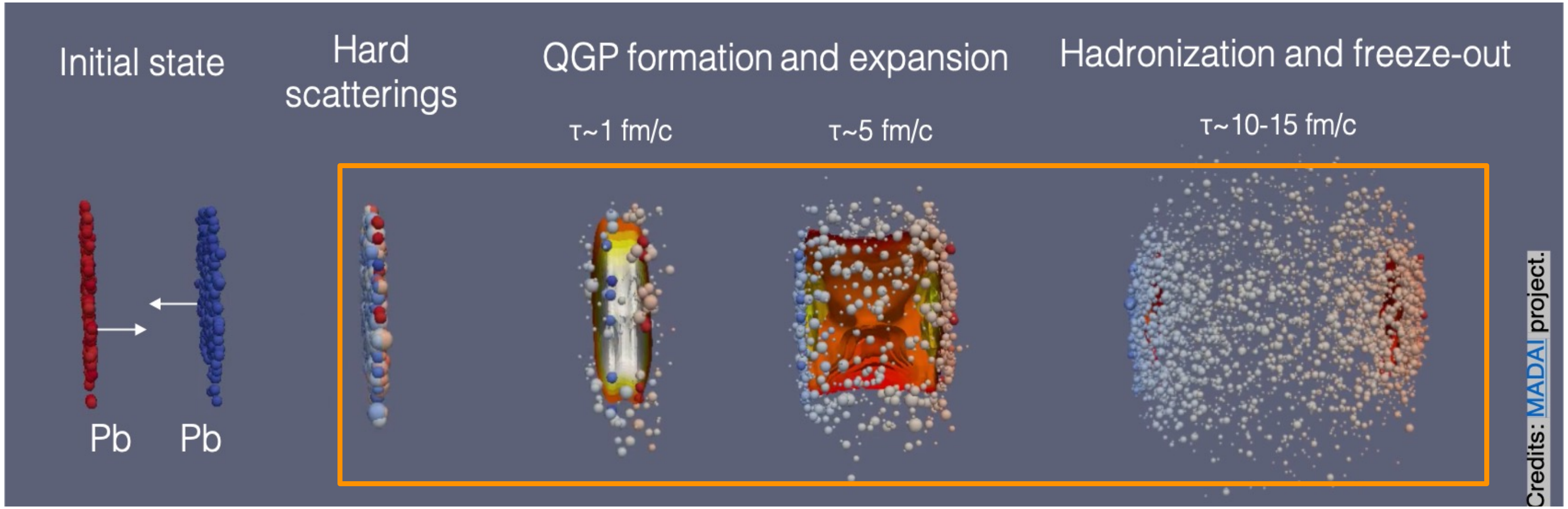
Temperature: T ~ 200-800 MeV [1] | T ~ 155-100 MeV [4]

$T_{c,\,\mathrm{lQCD}} \sim 155\text{-}159$ MeV [2,3]

No direct observation of the QGP is possible
→ rely on emerging particles as "probes"

[1] F. Gardim et al. Nature Phys. 16 (2020) 6, 615-619
[2] A. Bazavov et al., Phys. Lett. B 795 (2019)
[3] Borsaniy et al. PRL 125 (2020) 5, 052001
[4] A. Andronic et al., Nature 561 (2018) 7723, 321-330

Probes 1/2



Credits: MADAI project.

1 fm/c = 3x10^{-24} s, 1 MeV ~ 10^{10} K

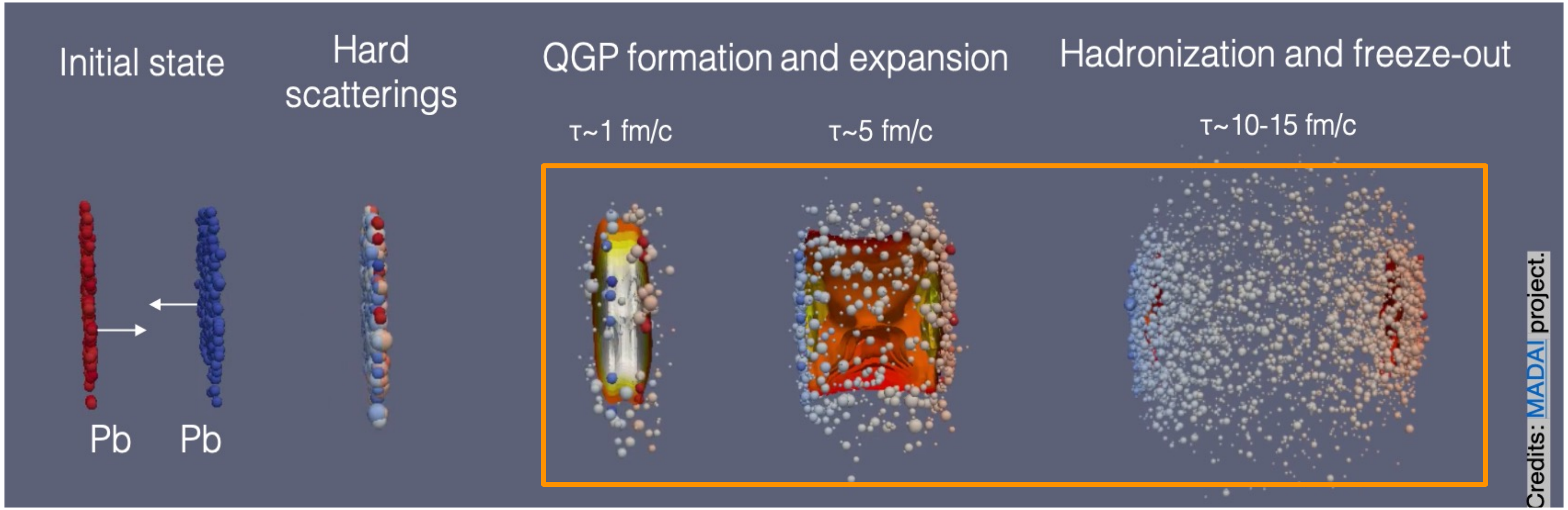
High-p_T partons (→ jets), charm and beauty quarks (→ open HF, quarkonia) produced in the early stages in hard processes,
traverse the QGP interacting with its constituents = colored probes in a colored medium

→ rare, calibrated probes, perturbative QCD

→ in-medium interaction (energy loss) and transport properties

→ in-medium modification of the strong force and of fragmentation

Probes 2/2



Credits: MADAI project.

1 fm/c = 3×10^{-24} s, 1 MeV ~ 10^{10} K

Low-p_T particles, light flavour hadrons (u,d,s, +nuclei)
produced from hadronization of the strongly-interacting, thermalized QGP constitute the bulk of the system

→ **non-perturbative QCD regime**

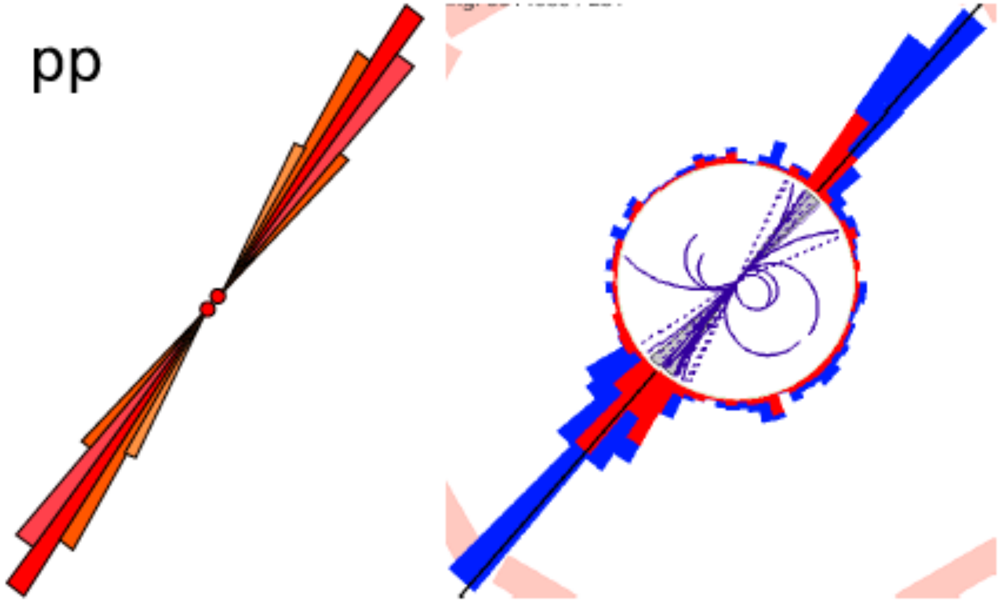
→ **thermodynamical, hydrodynamical and transport properties**

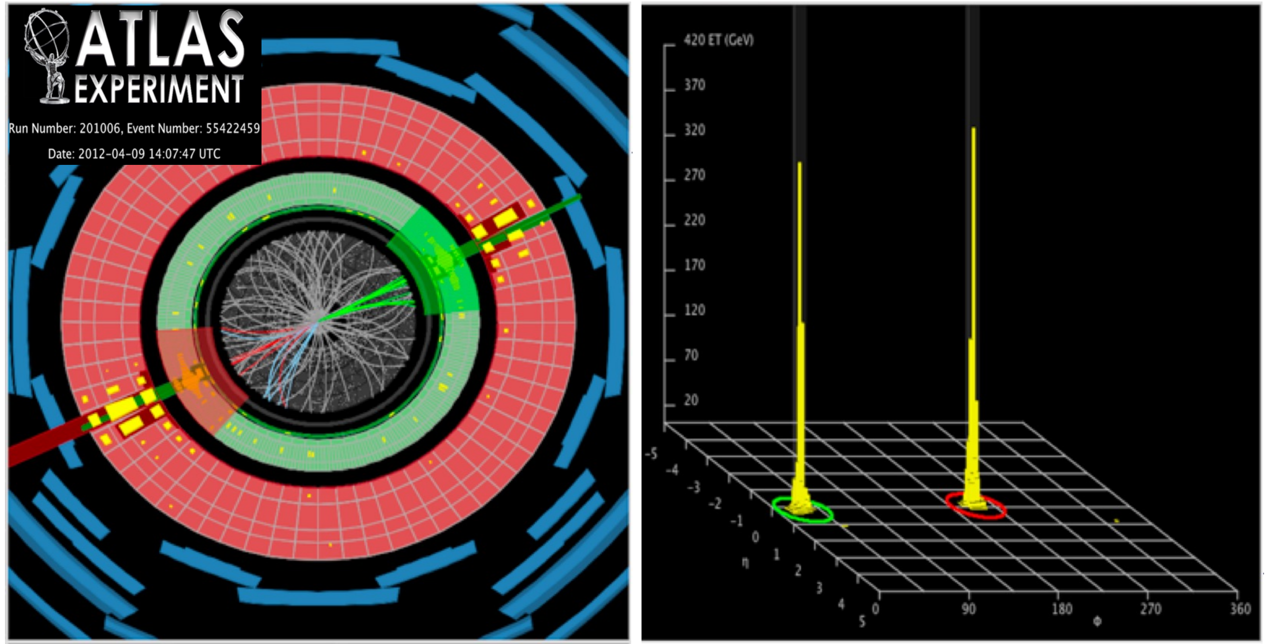
How does the presence of a colored QGP affect particle production?

Jets

In the early stages of the collision, hard scatterings produce back-to-back recoiling partons, which fragment into collimated ‘’sprays’’ of hadrons.

→ **in-vacuum fragmentation**





ATLAS, pp collision event display

Jets

In the early stages of the collision, hard scatterings produce back-to-back recoiling partons, which fragment into collimated ‘’sprays’’ of hadrons.

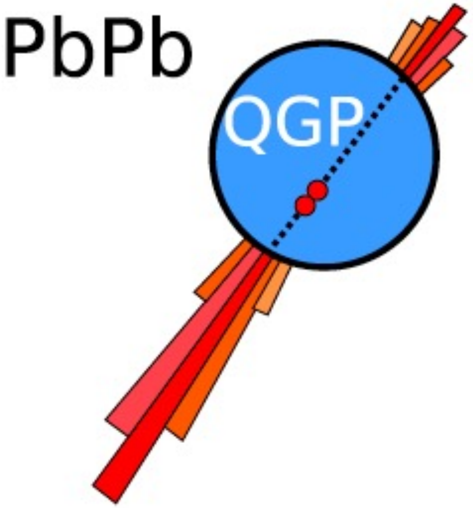
→ **in-vacuum fragmentation**

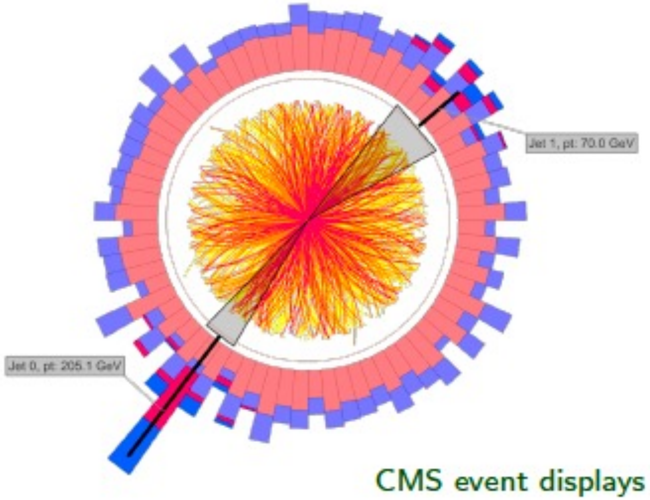
When a QGP is formed, the colored partons traverse and interact with a colored medium.

→ **in-medium fragmentation**

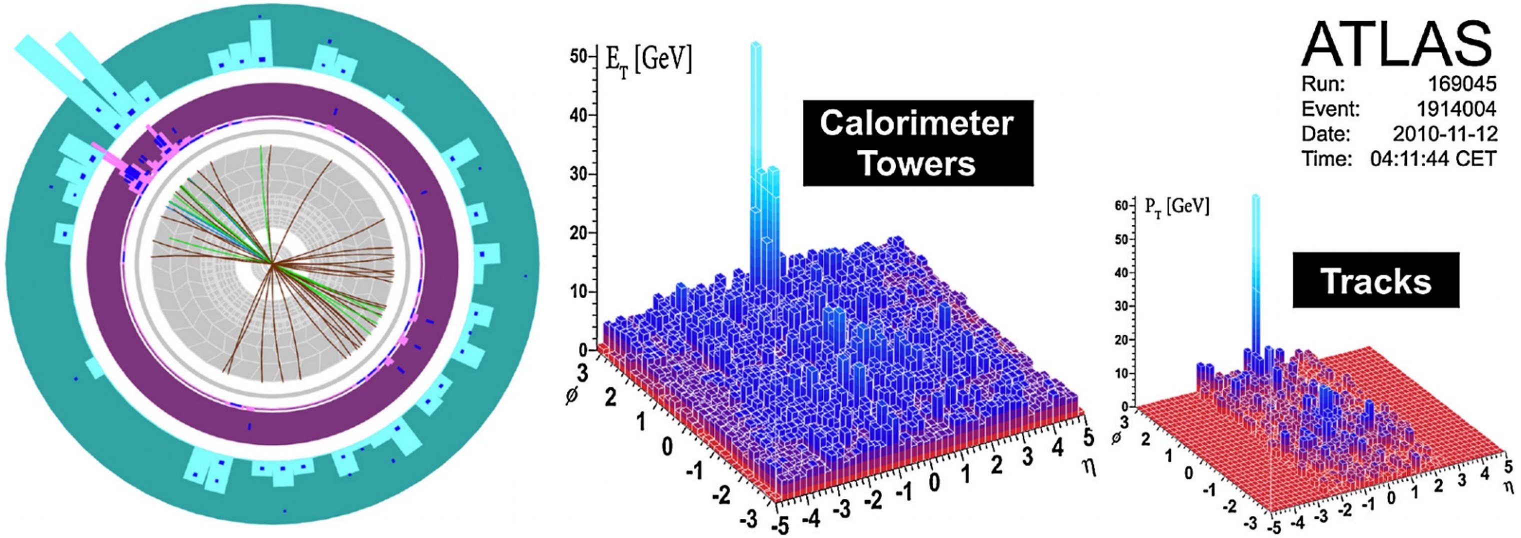
→ **jet ‘’quenching’’ (energy loss)**

Goal: understand the nature of this energy loss to characterize the strongly-interacting QGP



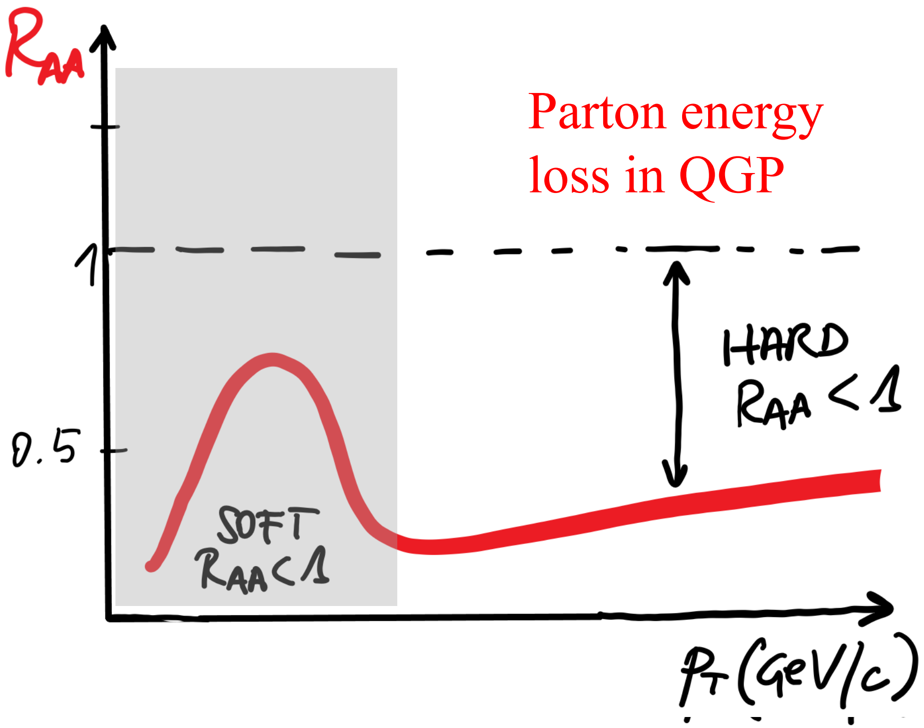


CMS event displays



The nuclear modification factor, R_{AA}

$$R_{AA}(p_T) = \frac{1}{\langle N_{coll} \rangle} \frac{dN_{AA}/dp_T}{dN_{pp}/dp_T}$$



If a AA collision is a incoherent superposition of independent pp collisions, the p_T spectra in AA collisions can be obtained by scaling the p_T spectra in pp collisions by the number of nucleon-nucleon collisions, N_{coll} :

$$\mathrm{d}N_{AA}/\mathrm{d}p_T = N_{coll} \times \mathrm{d}N_{pp}/\mathrm{d}p_T$$

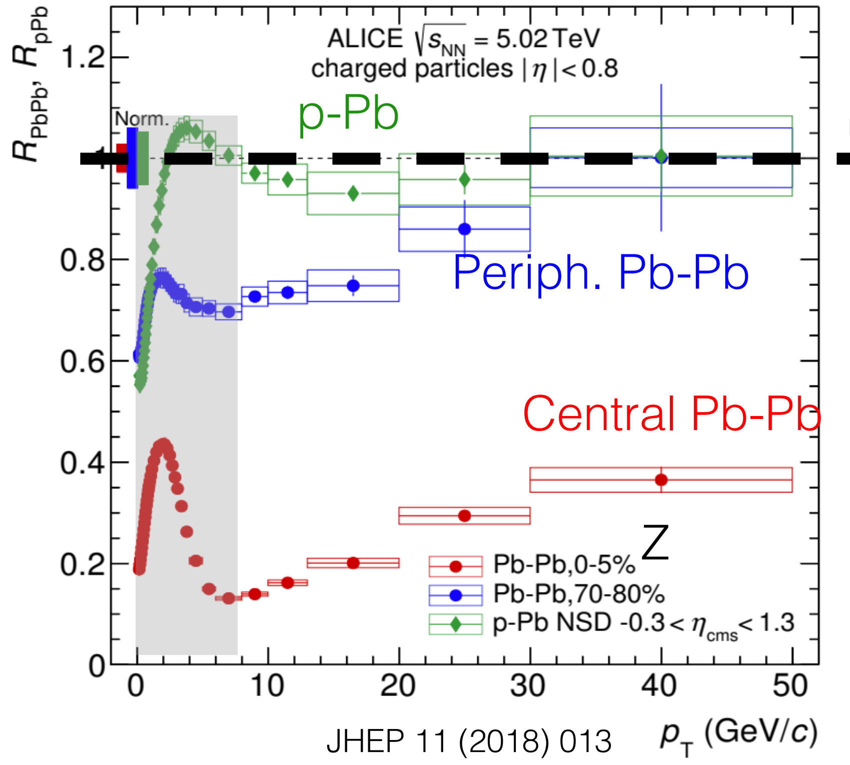
and $R_{AA} = 1$ at high p_T
→ the medium is transparent to the passage of partons

If $R_{AA} < 1$ at high p_T
→ the medium is opaque to the passage of partons
→ **parton-medium final state interactions, energy loss, modification of fragmentation in the medium**

Evidence of parton energy loss in QGP

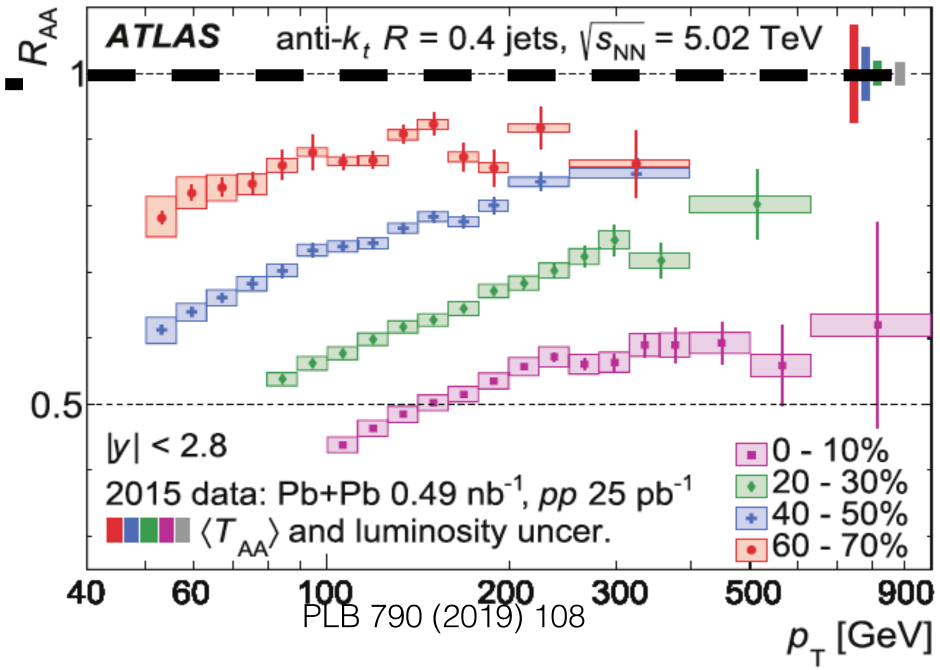
$$R_{AA}(p_T) = \frac{1}{\langle N_{coll} \rangle} \frac{dN_{AA}/dp_T}{dN_{pp}/dp_T}$$

Charged particles



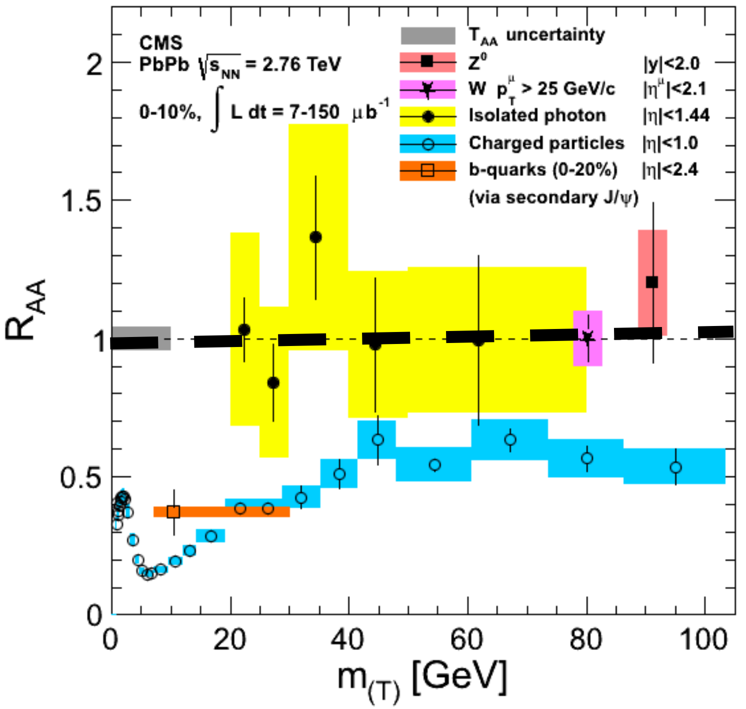
JHEP 11 (2018) 013

Inclusive jets



PLB 790 (2019) 108

EW bosons



A strong suppression of high-p_T hadrons and jets is observed in central Pb-Pb collisions.

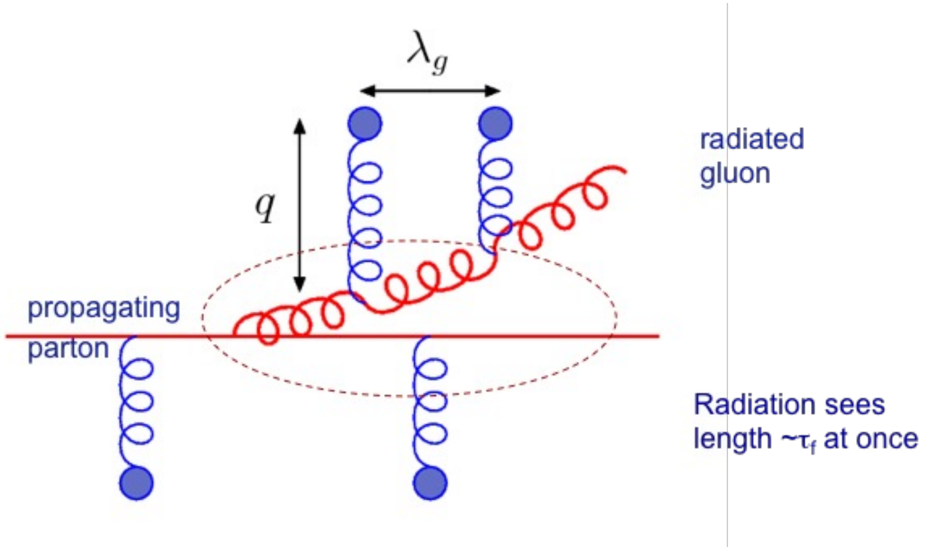
No suppression observed in p-Pb collisions, nor for the color-less Z bosons and photons.

→ Jet quenching is explained as **parton energy loss in a strongly interacting plasma**

Radiative energy loss

In the BDMPS (*Baier-Dokshitzer-Mueller-Peigné-Schiff*) approach, the energy loss depends on

- the **color-charge** via the Casimir factors C_r
  - $C_r = C_A = 3$ for g interactions
  - $C_r = C_F = 4/3$ for q,qbar interactions
- the **strong coupling**
- the **path length** L
- the **transport coefficient** $\hat{q}$ ("q-hat")
  - gives an estimate of the "strength" of the jet quenching
  - is not directly measurable → from data through model(s)



$$\boxed{\frac{dE}{dx} = -C_r \alpha_s \hat{q} L}$$

$$\boxed{\hat{q} = \frac{\mu^2}{\lambda}}$$

Average transverse momentum transfer

Mean free path

$$\boxed{\lambda \propto \frac{1}{\rho}}$$

Density

Baier-Dokshitzer-Mueller-Peigné-Schiff, Nucl. Phys. B. 483 (1997) 291

How much energy is lost?

From the BDMPS formula :

$$\langle \Delta E \rangle = \frac{1}{4} \alpha_s \, C_R \, \hat{q} \, L^2 \xrightarrow{\text{Dimensional analysis}} \langle \Delta E \rangle = \frac{\alpha_s \, C_R \, \hat{q} \, L^2}{4 \hbar c}$$

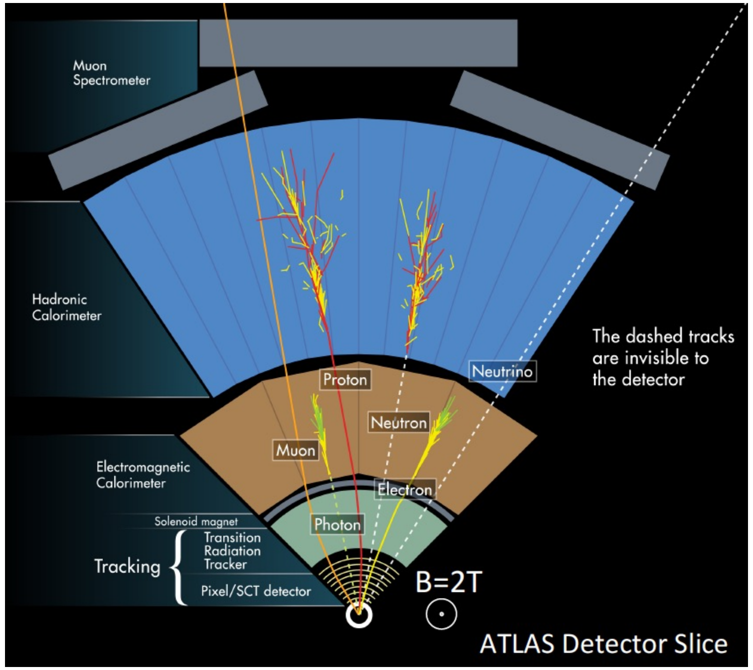
If we take

- $\hat{q} \sim 5$ GeV^2/fm
- $\alpha_S = 0.2$, strong coupling for $Q^2 = 10$ GeV
- $C_R = 4/3$
- L = 7.5 fm

we obtain $<\Delta E> \sim 95$ GeV

Only partons with E $\gtrsim$ 105 GeV can traverse a 7.5 fm radius fireball and exit with $p_T \gtrsim 10$ GeV/c

In other words, it takes a ~7.5 fm radius QGP droplet to stop a jet of ~ 100 GeV (or ~1.5m of hadronic calorimeter)



Jet transport coefficient $\hat{q}$

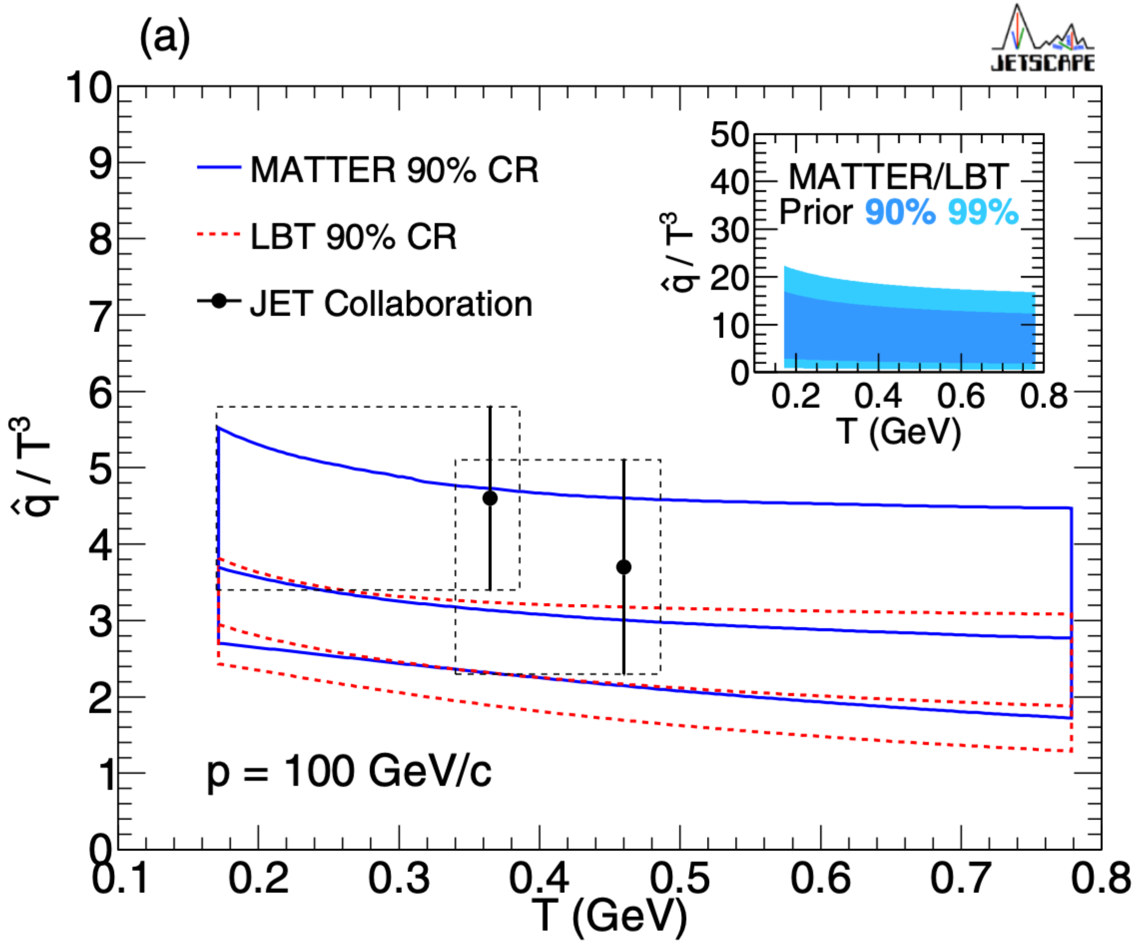
A recent combined analysis of the RHIC and the LHC data on jet quenching (inclusive hadron R_{AA}) allowed to extract a value for the $\hat{q}$ parameter

$$\frac{\hat{q}}{T^3} \approx \begin{cases} 4.6 \pm 1.2 & \text{at RHIC,} \\ 3.7 \pm 1.4 & \text{at LHC,} \end{cases}$$

For a quark jet with E = 10 GeV

$$\hat{q} \approx \begin{cases} 1.2 \pm 0.3 \\ 1.9 \pm 0.7 \end{cases} \mathrm{GeV}^2/\mathrm{fm} \ \ \text{at} \ \ \begin{matrix} \mathrm{T}{=}370\ \mathrm{MeV} \\ \mathrm{T}{=}470\ \mathrm{MeV} \end{matrix}$$

→ Still large uncertainties, but important step **towards a quantitative characterisation** of the QGP.



S. Cao et al., PRC 104, 024905 (2021)

In-medium jets: main questions

Related to the nature and properties of the medium

- Density of the medium and transport properties
- Nature of the scattering centers
- Distribution of the radiated energy
- …

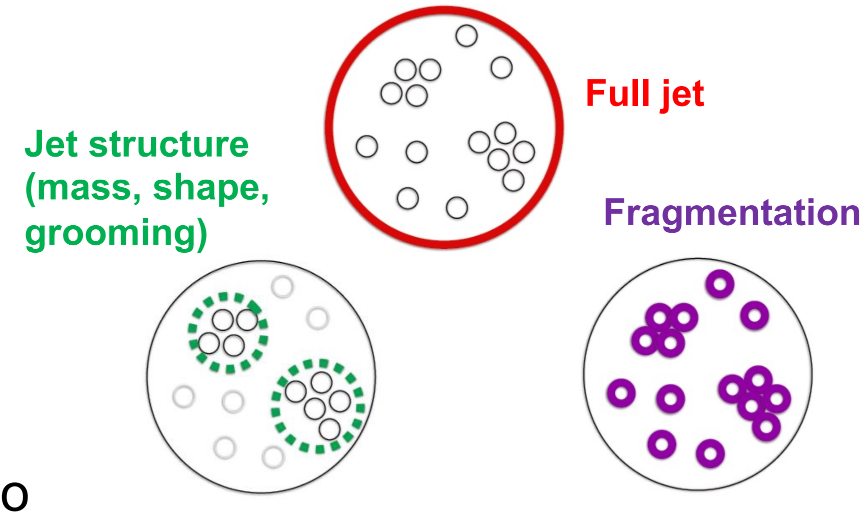
Related to the nature of the energy loss mechanism

- Path length dependence
- Broadening effects
- Microscopic mechanism for energy loss

  → Study the **shape and structure of jets** for insight into the details of jet modification mechanisms due to interactions with the plasma

- Flavour dependence

  → **measure charm and beauty R_{AA}**

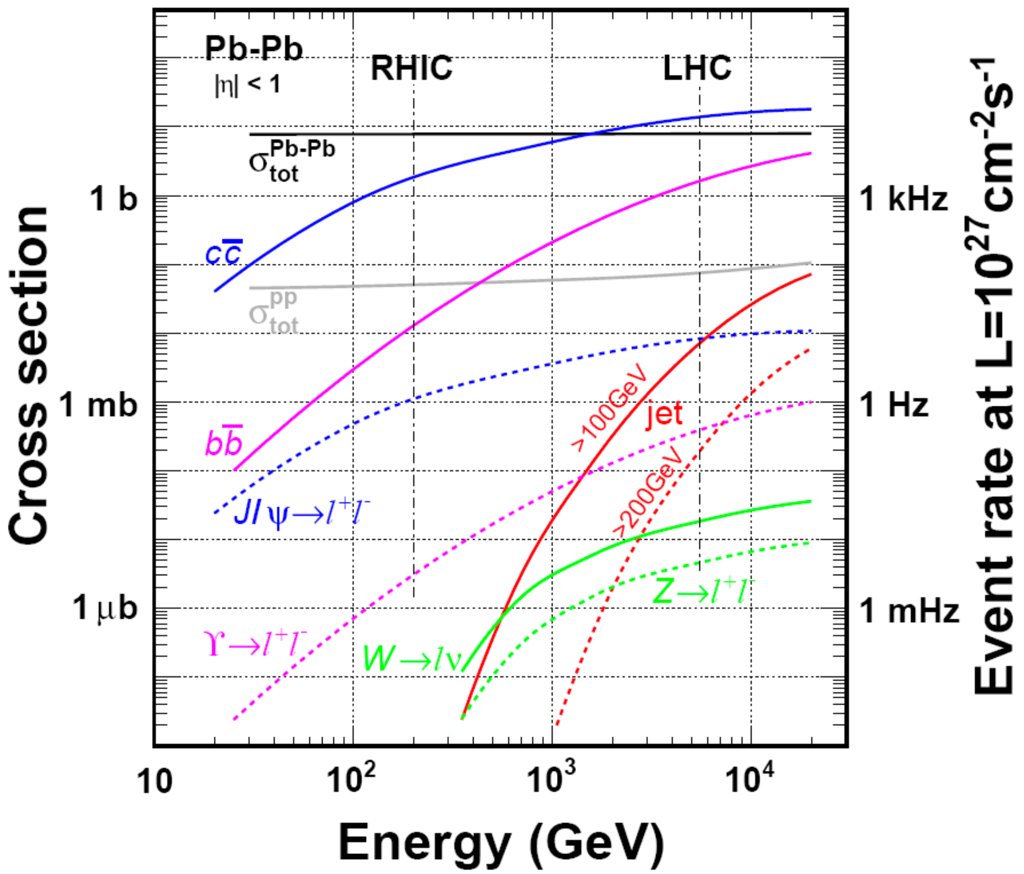


Charm and beauty

Heavy flavours:
m(charm) ~ 1.3 GeV/c^2
m(beauty) ~ 4.7 GeV/c^2

are ideal probes of the QGP at the LHC:

- **large production cross sections**
- Produced in **initial hard** parton scatterings
- **controlled** values of mass and colour charge of the propagating parton
- “brownian” motion through the medium, **diffusion**
- sensitive to QGP **hadronisation** (baryon/meson)



Energy loss of charm and beauty

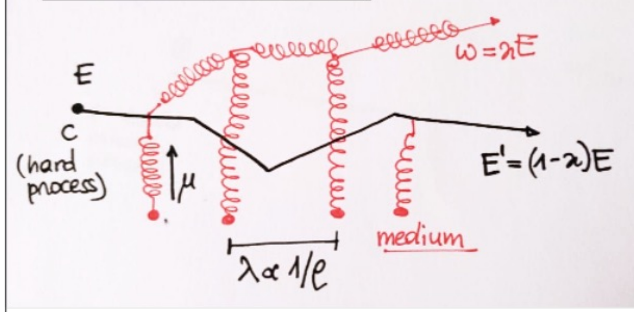
Charm and beauty loose energy via **gluon radiation** + **elastic collisions**

Due to the large masses, radiative energy loss is subject to the **dead cone effect** = suppression of the gluon radiation emitted by a (slow) heavy quark at small angles, $\vartheta < \vartheta_{DC} \sim m_q/E_q$

→ **hierarchy** in energy loss: $\Delta E_g > \Delta E_c > \Delta E_b$

→ radiative energy loss reduced by 25% (c) and 75% (b) [$\mu = 1$ GeV/c^2]

In-medium E_{loss}



Baier-Dokshitzer-Mueller-Peigné-Schiff, Nucl. Phys. B. 483 (1997) 291

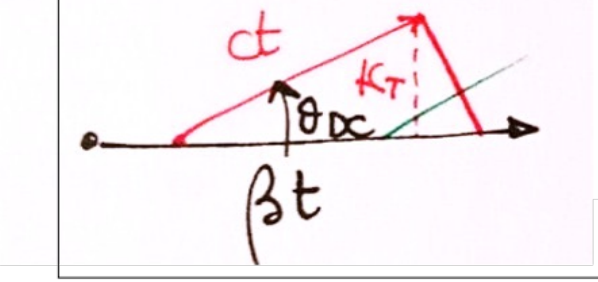
$$\langle \Delta E \rangle \propto \alpha_s C_r \hat{q} L^2$$

$$\hat{q} = \frac{\mu^2}{\lambda}$$

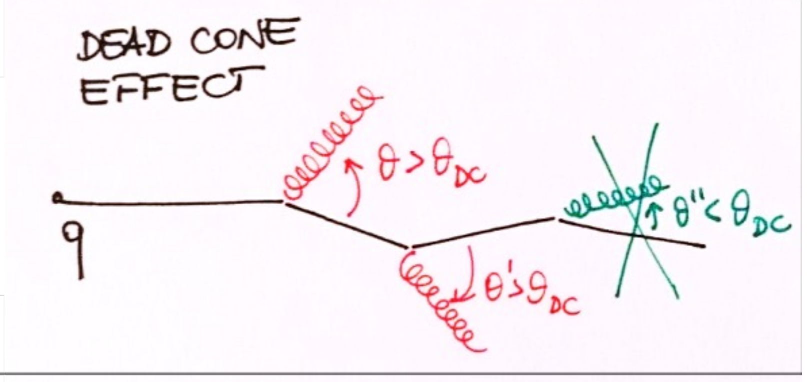
Average transverse momentum transfer

Mean free path ~1/density

Dead cone effect



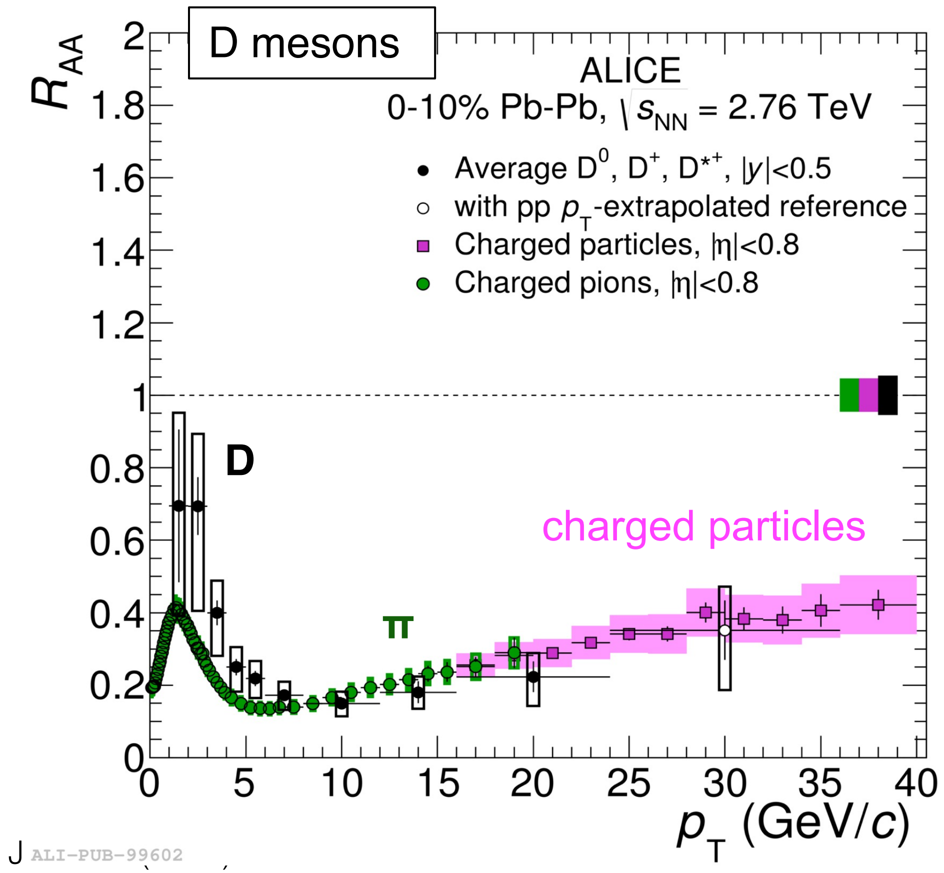
$$\sin\theta_{DC} = 1 - \beta^2 = \left(\frac{M}{E}\right)^2$$

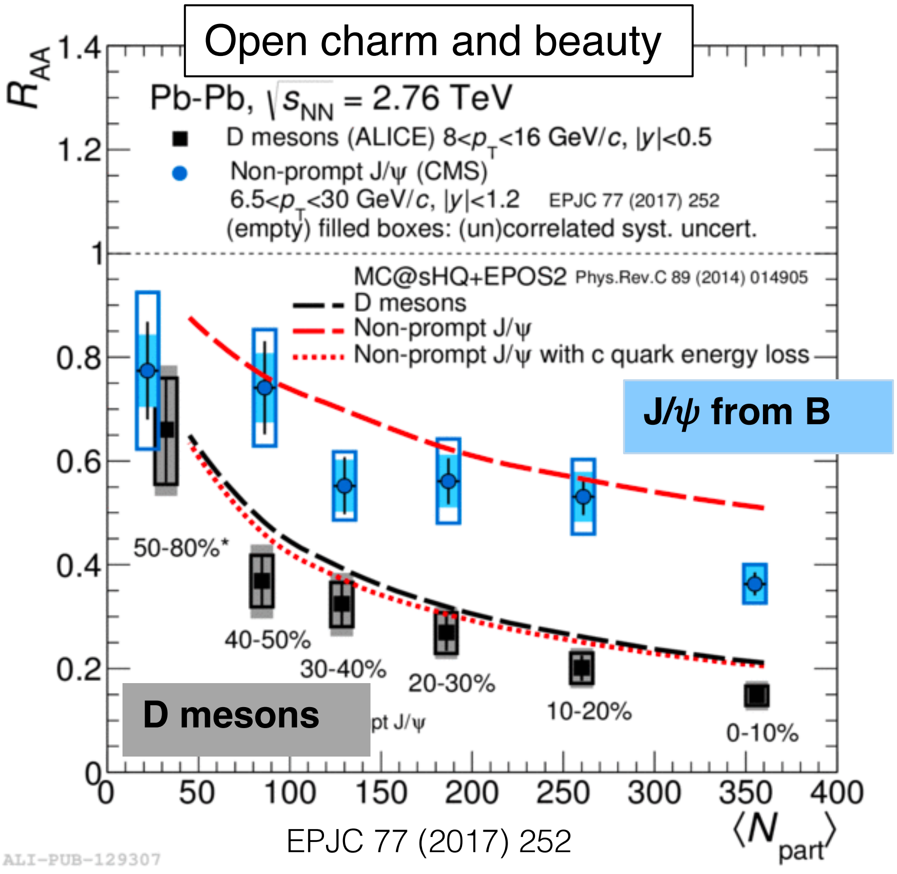


Nuclear modification of charm and beauty

A strong suppression is observed in the R_{AA} of D mesons J/psi from b decay.

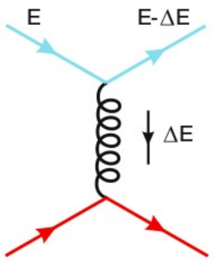
J/ψ from beauty is less suppressed than D mesons from charm → $\Delta E_c > \Delta E_b$





EPJC 77 (2017) 252

Collisional energy loss



It depends on

- **path length** through the medium, L (linearly)
- **parton type**
  - For light quarks

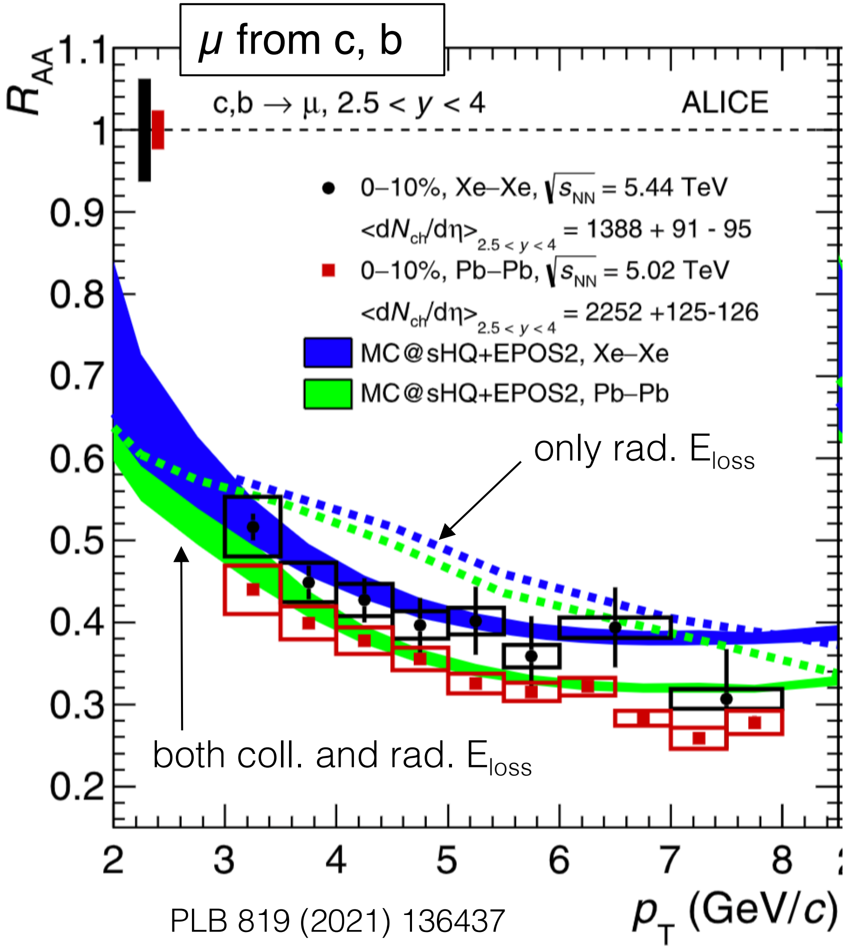
$$\Delta E_{q,g} \sim \alpha_S\, C_R\, \mu^2 \boxed{L} \ln\frac{ET}{\mu^2}$$

  - For heavy quarks

$$+\ \alpha_s^2 T^2\, C_R\, \mu^2 \boxed{L} \ln\frac{ET}{M^2}$$

- **temperature** of the medium, T
- **mass** of the heavy quark M
- average transverse momentum transfer **μ** in the medium

→ Data are well described by models that include both collisional and radiative E_{loss}



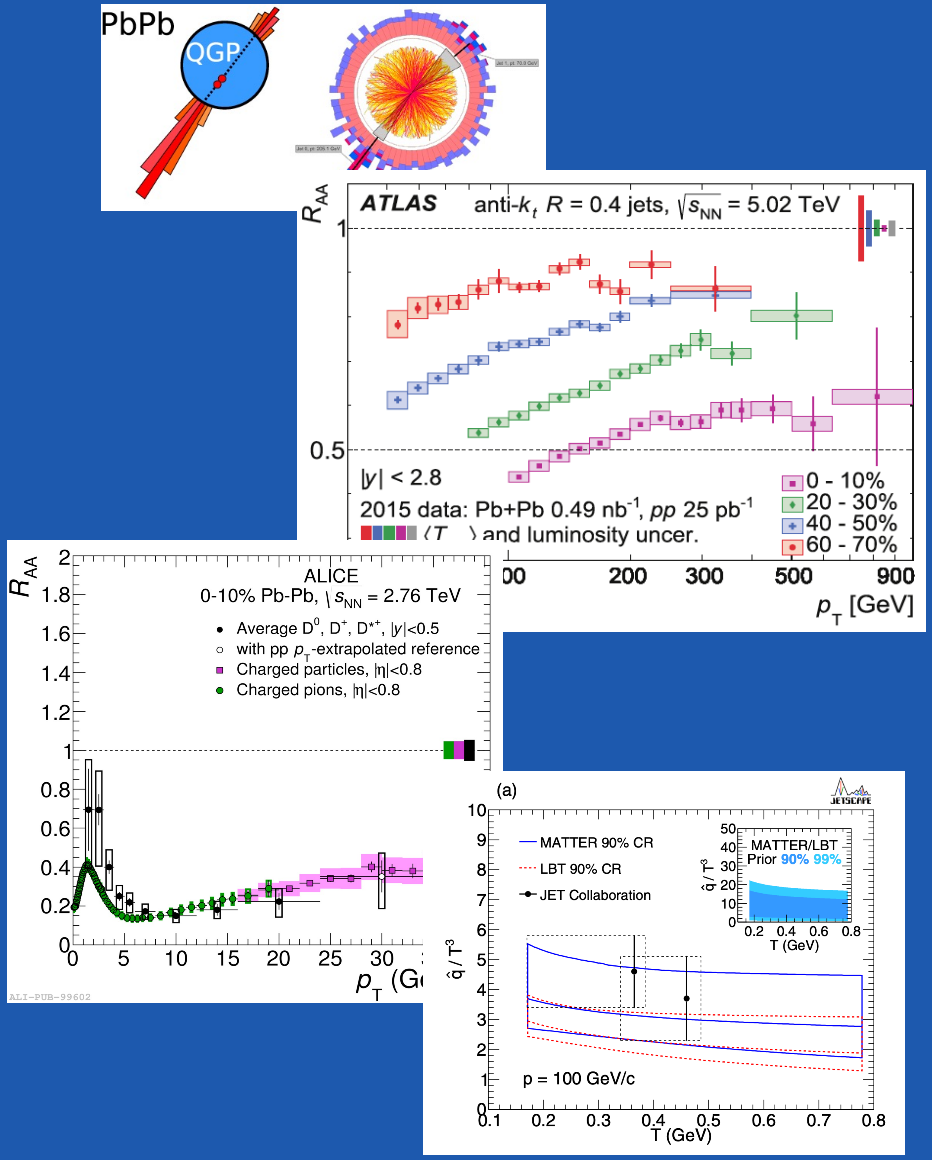
PLB 819 (2021) 136437

Summary 1/2

Evidence of the creation of a strongly-interacting medium in central heavy ion collisions comes from the observed strong suppression of particle production, explained by the energy loss of colored partons in the colored QGP.

- Radiative energy loss dominates at high p_T for light flavours, gluons and charm
- Collisional and radiative energy loss play similar role for beauty

A **quantitative characterization** of the properties of the medium (e.g. transport coefficient, …) requires **models**.



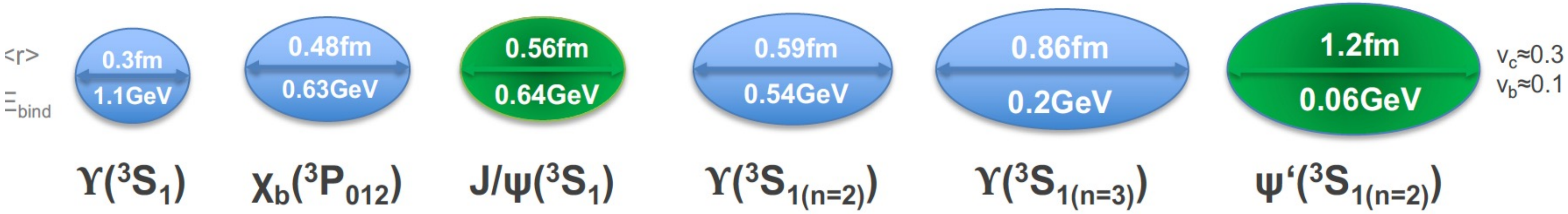
How does the presence of a colored QGP affect hadron formation?

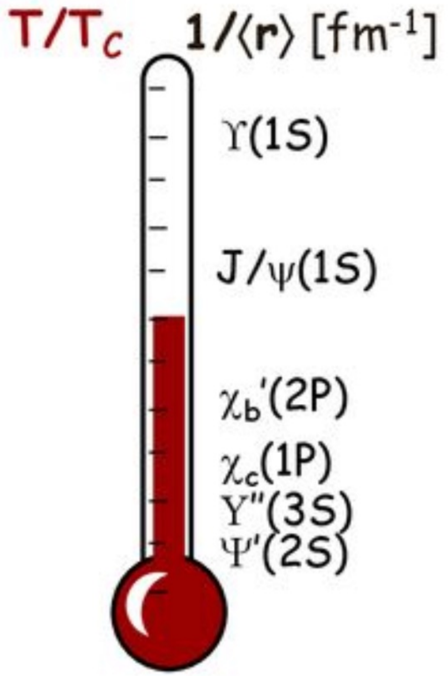
Quarkonia

c-cbar (J/Ψ, Ψ’,..) and b-bar (Υ’, Υ’’, Υ’’’) pairs are a laboratory for QCD:

- Small decay width (~keV), significant BR into dileptons
- Intrinsic separation of energy scales: $m_Q \gg \Lambda_{QCD}$ and $m_Q \gg B_E$
- A variety of states characterized by different binding energies

→ Goal: understand mechanisms of **dissociation and regeneration** in QGP





To larger radius →

To lower binding energy →

Quarkonium as a thermometer for QGP

Charmonium suppression (J/ψ, ψ',…) suggested as ''smoking gun'' signatures for the QGP back in the 1980's.

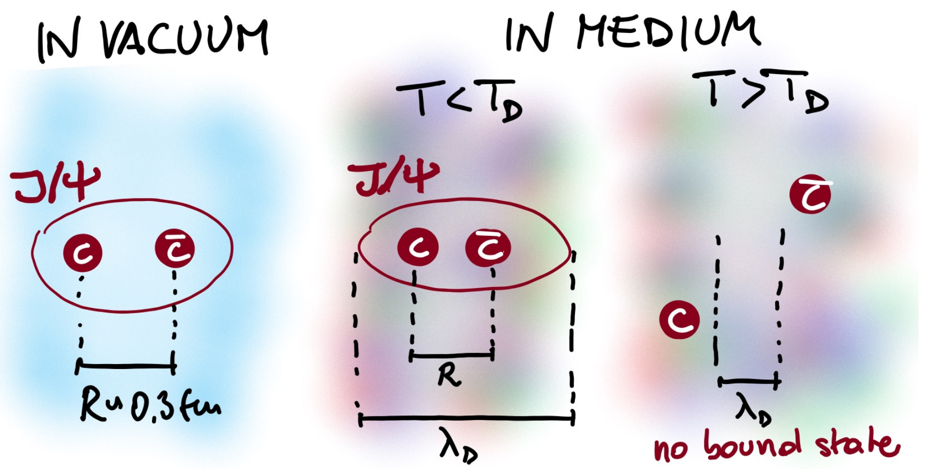
In vacuum (T=0), qqbar is bound by the Cornell potential.

$$V(r) = -\frac{\alpha}{r} + kr$$

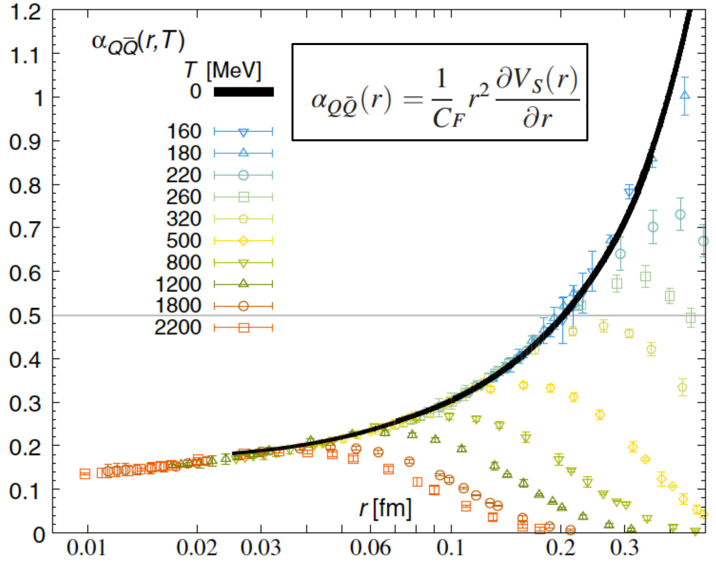
When the qqbar is immersed in the dense and hot QGP (**T>0**), the surrounding color charges screen the binding potentials (color Debye screening), resulting in

$$V(r) = -\frac{\alpha}{r} e^{-r/\lambda_D}$$

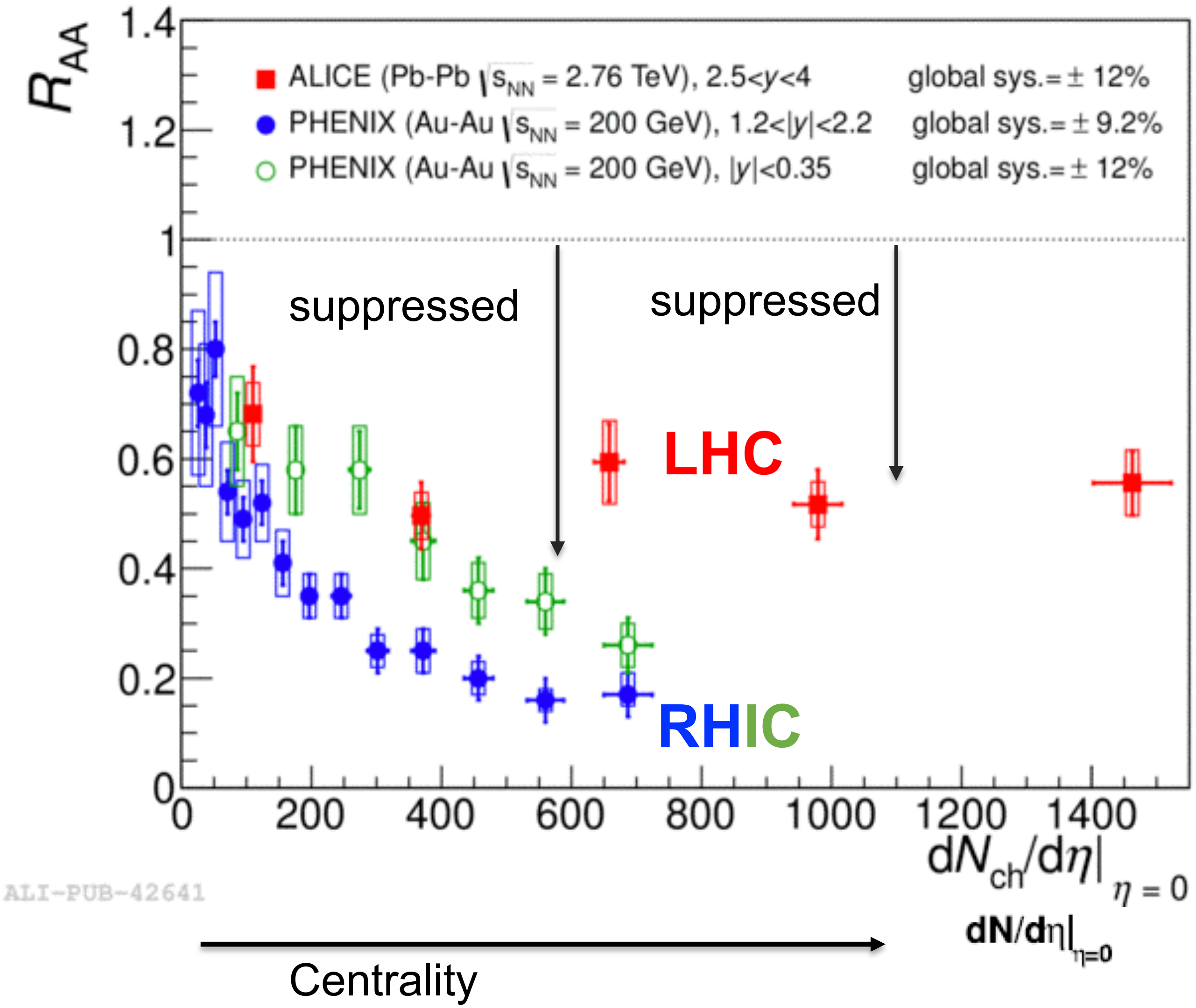
The effective coupling between q and qbar at large distances gets reduced → **q-qbar melting**



Effective coupling from (2+1) QCD at various T



J/ψ suppression

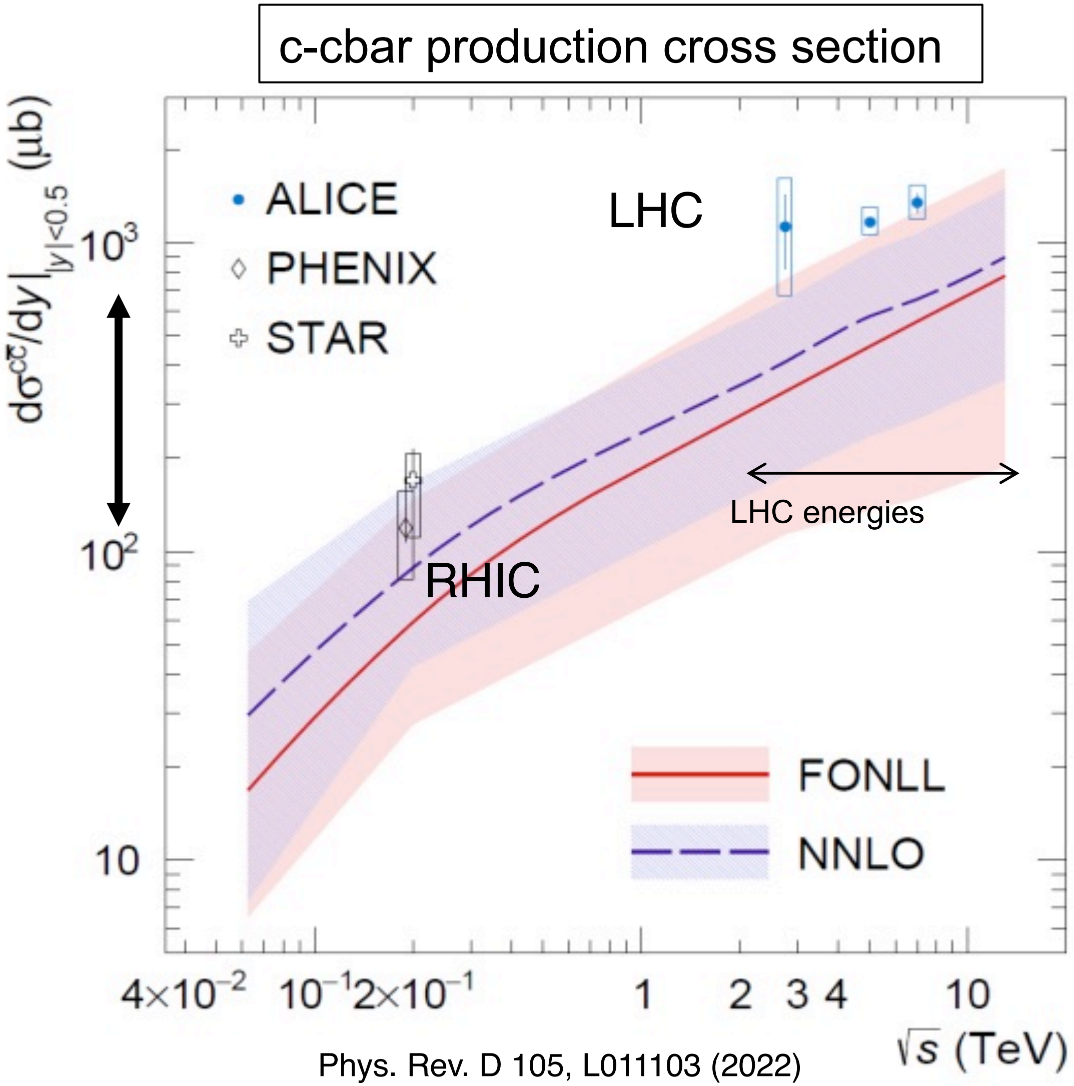


- observed at the SPS ($\sqrt{s_{NN}}$ = 17 GeV)
- later measured at RHIC ($\sqrt{s_{NN}}$=200 GeV) up to very high multiplicities

For similar multiplicities the suppression at SPS is similar to that at RHIC despite the energy difference

At the LHC ($\sqrt{s_{NN}}$ = 2.76 TeV), J/ψ is less suppressed, due to the larger charm cross section.

J/ψ production vs √*s*



Phys. Rev. D 105, L011103 (2022)

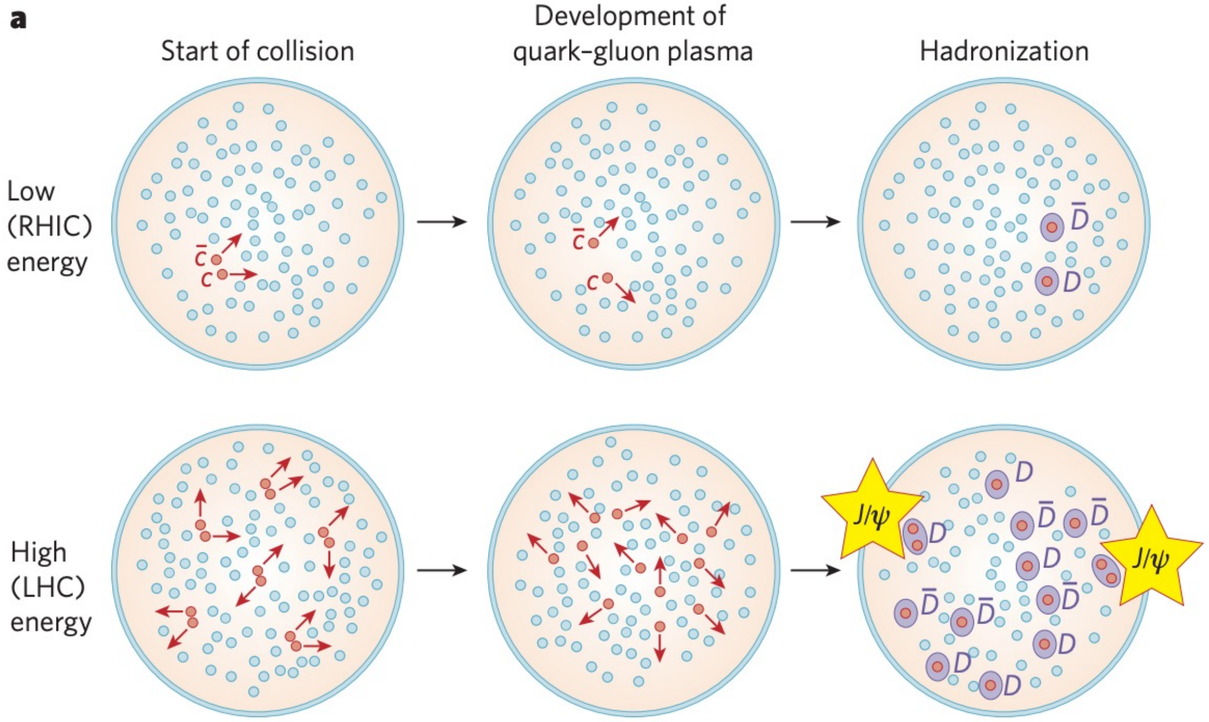
The cross section for producing a c-cbar pair increases with √s

In a central event
At SPS ~0.1 c-cbar
At RHIC ~10 c-cbar
At LHC ~100 c-cbar

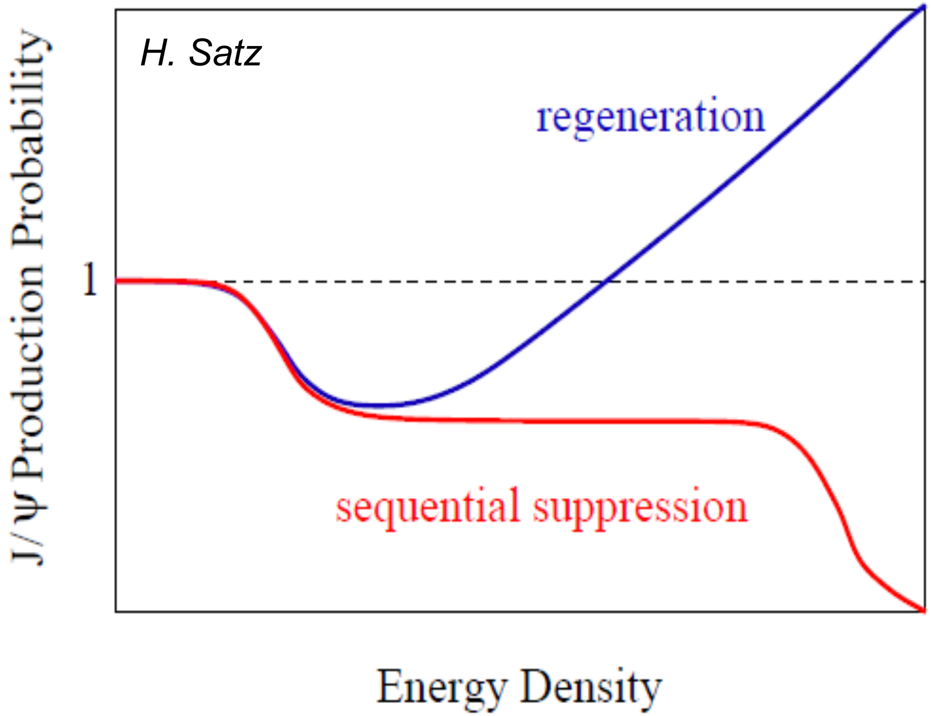
c from one c-cbar pair may combine with cbar from another c-cbar pair at hadronization to form a J/ψ
→ **regeneration!**

J/ψ suppression vs regeneration 1/2

(Re)generation of charmonium and charmed hadron production take place at the phase boundary or in QGP.
Dissociation and regeneration work in opposite directions vs energy density.



P. Braun-Munzinger, J. Stachel., Nature 448, 302–309 (2007)

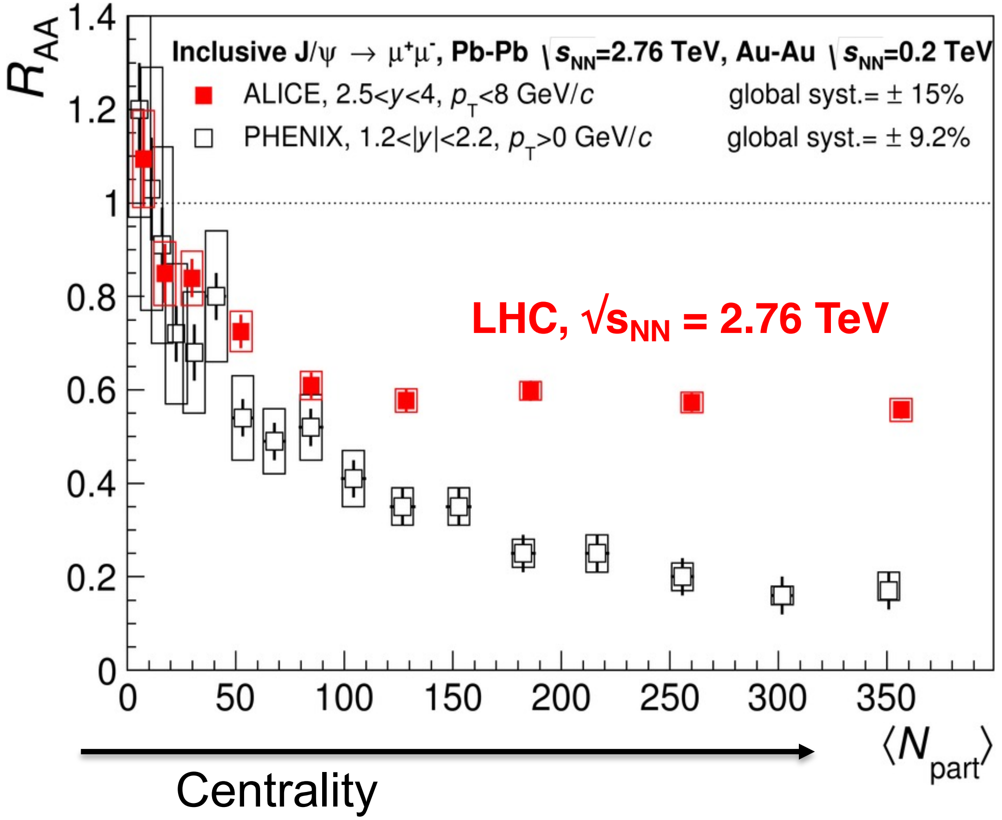


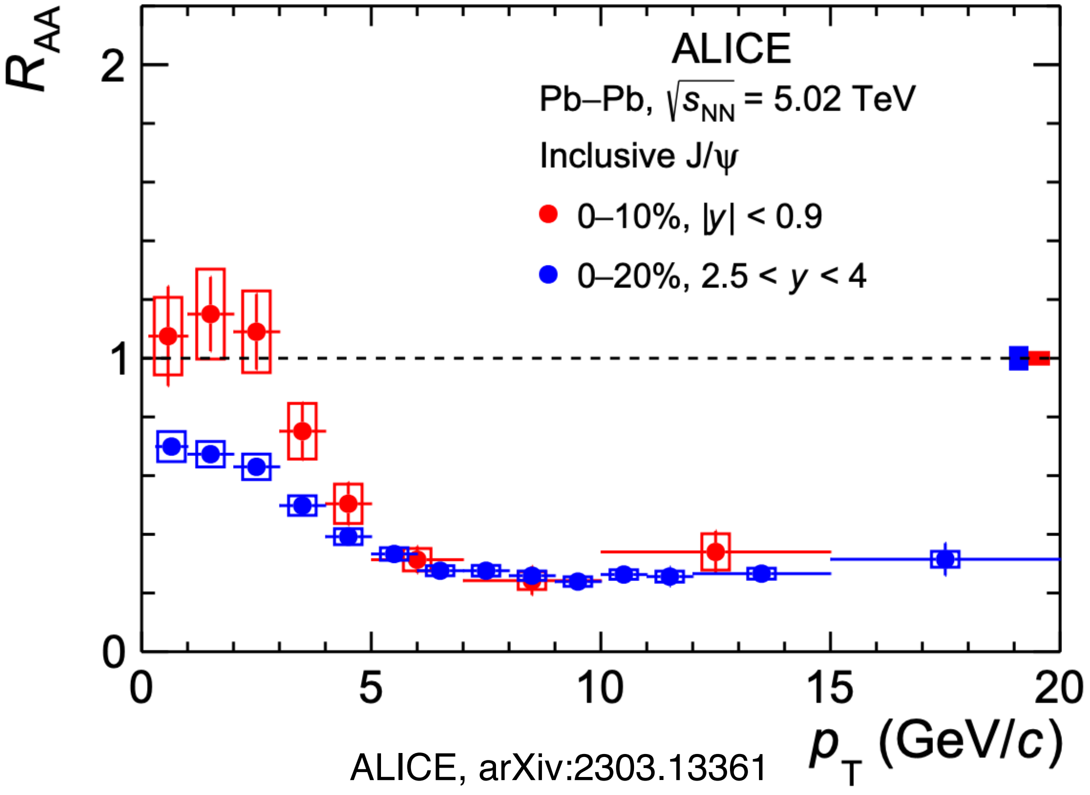
J/ψ suppression vs regeneration 2/2

ALICE data from 5.02 TeV Pb-Pb collisions confirm the J/ψ recombination picture:

- R_{AA}(LHC) > R_{AA}(RHIC)
- R_{AA} midrapidity > R_{AA} forward rapidity

→ **Signature of de-confinement.**

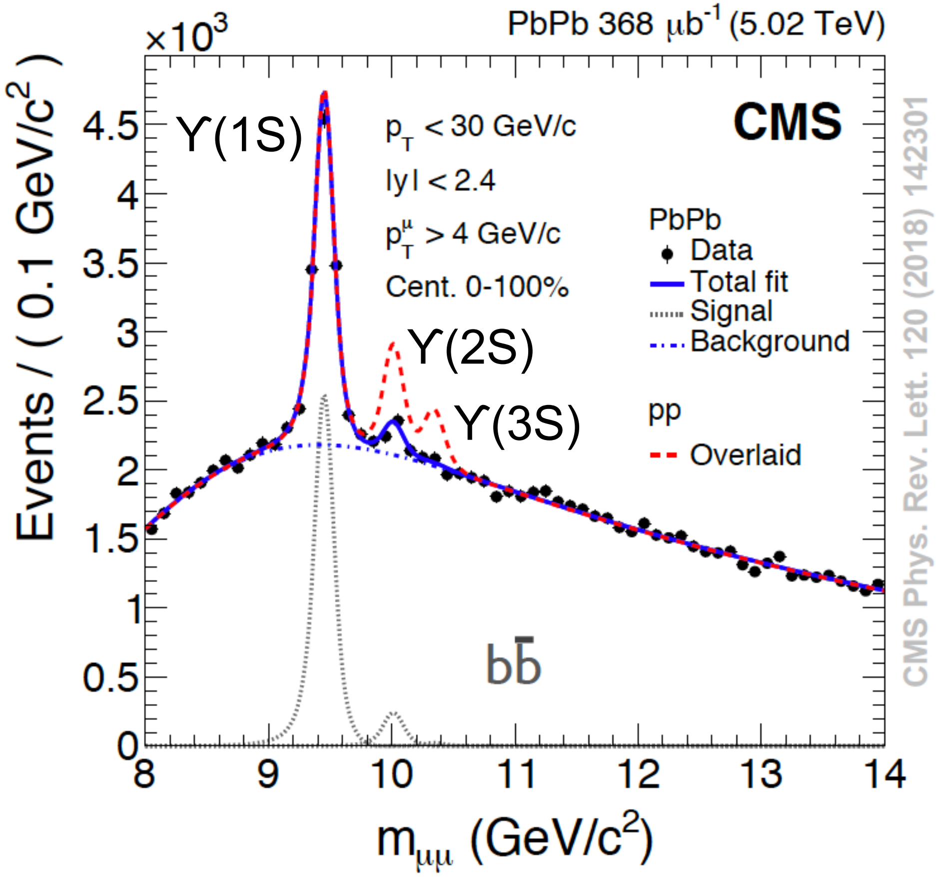


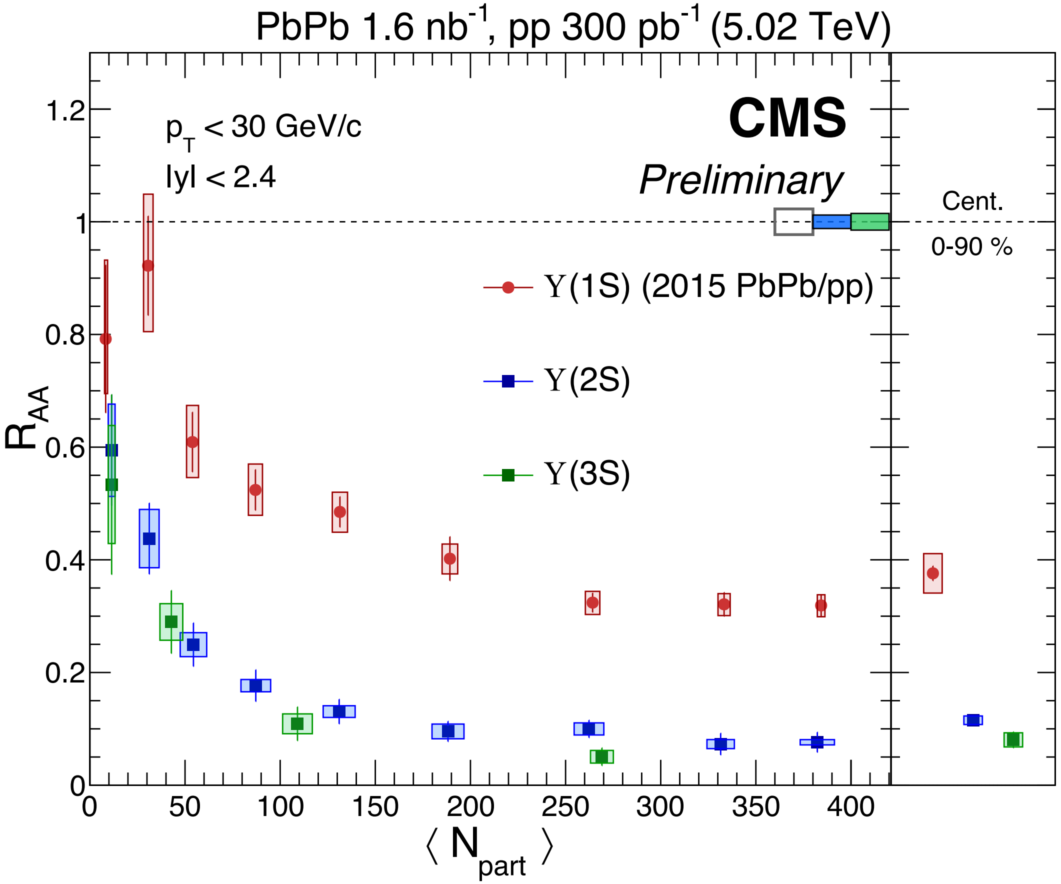


ALICE, arXiv:2303.13361

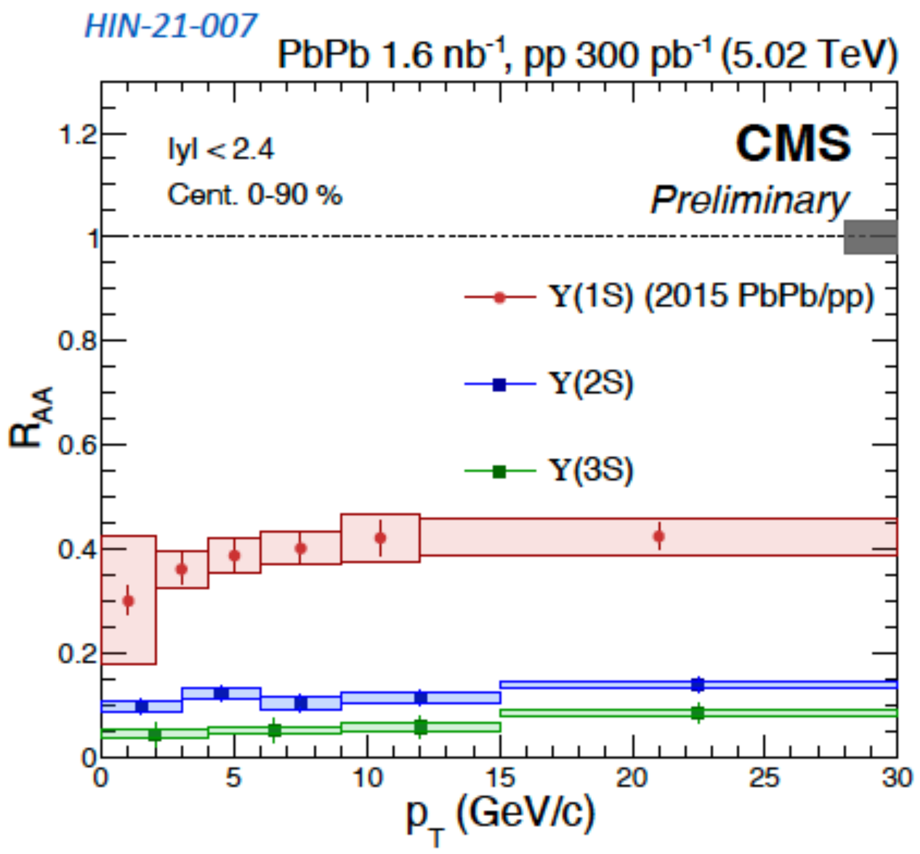
Sequential melting of quarkonia 1/2

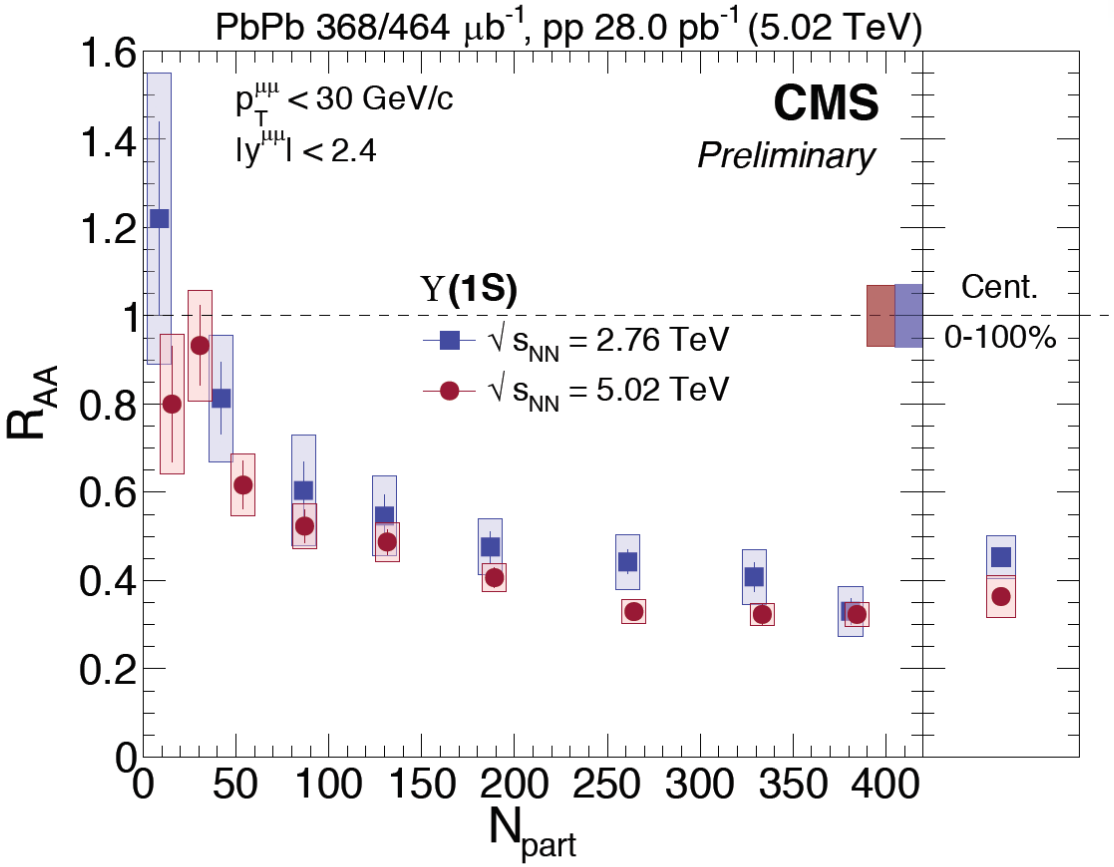
Measurements reveal a sequential suppression of high mass bottomonium states.
The centrality dependence of the suppression is consistent with progressive suppression in a hotter medium.





Sequential melting of quarkonia 2/2



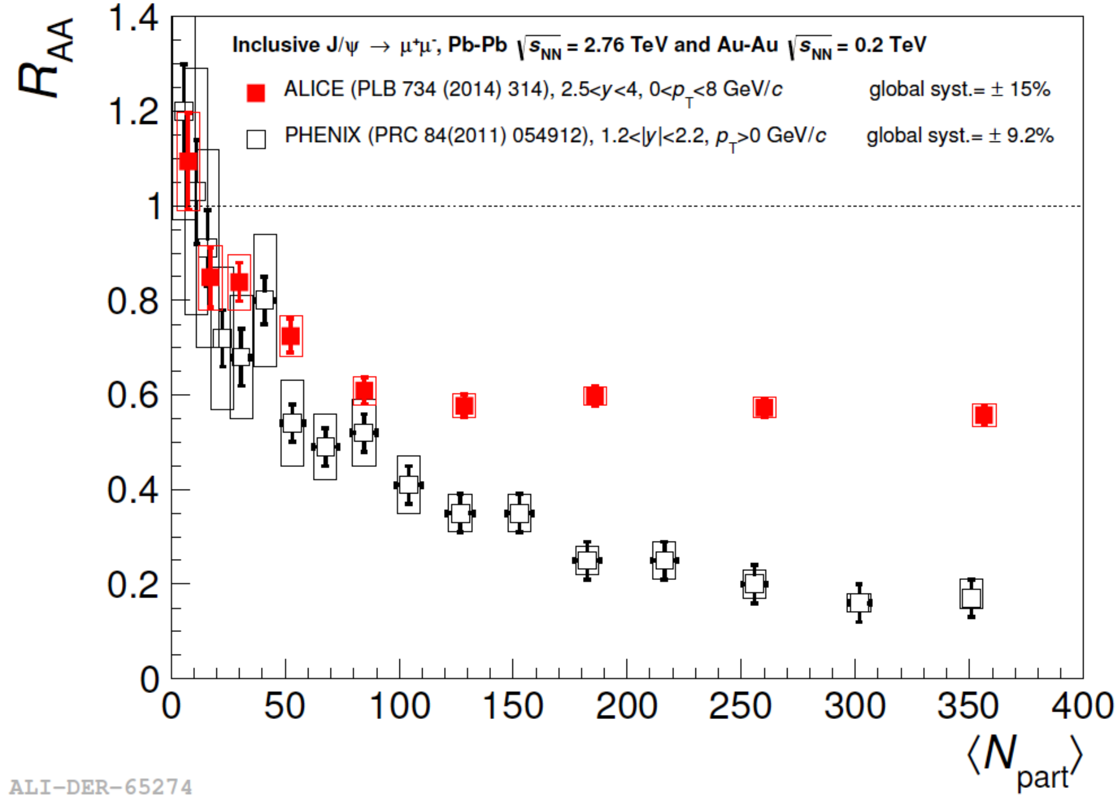


R_{AA}(ϒ(3S) ~ 0.5 R_{AA}(ϒ(2S))
→ Can be used to constrain models!

Increased suppression with increased collision energy
→ no recombination at hadronisation

Heavy quarks in equilibrium?

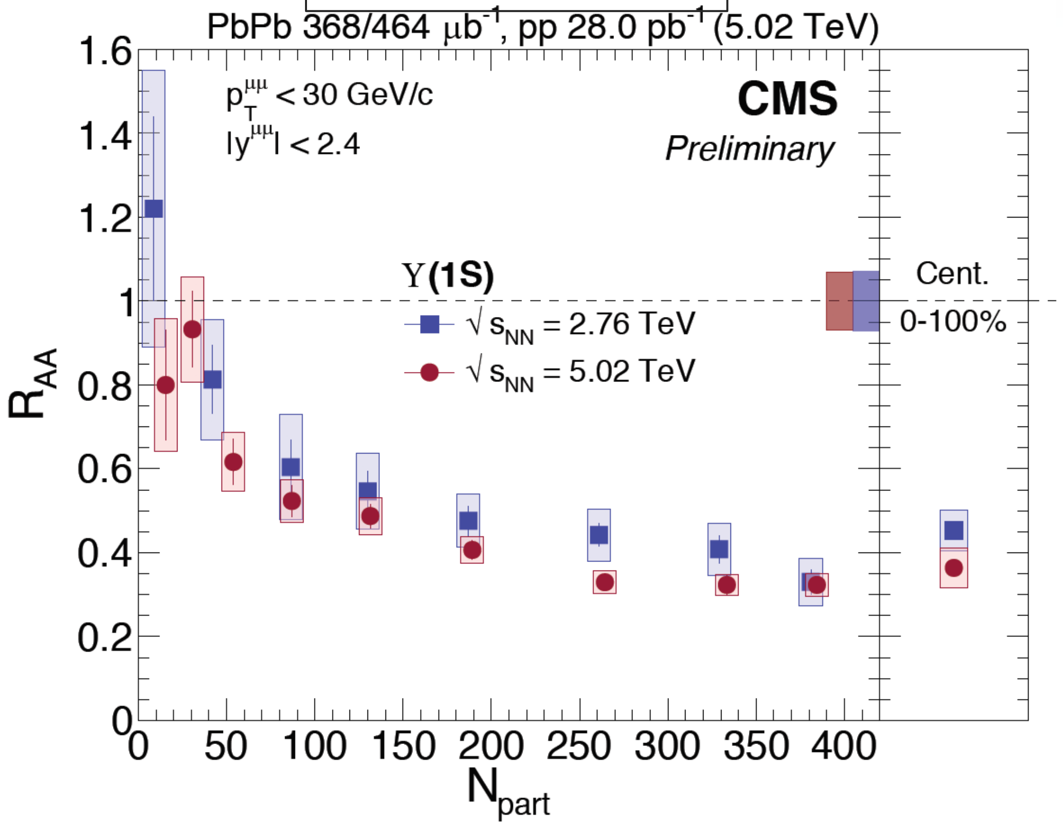
Charmonium R_{AA}



Charm is partially equilibrated (thermalised) with the medium

→ a partially-equilibrated probe of the late hadronization stages

Bottomonium R_{AA}

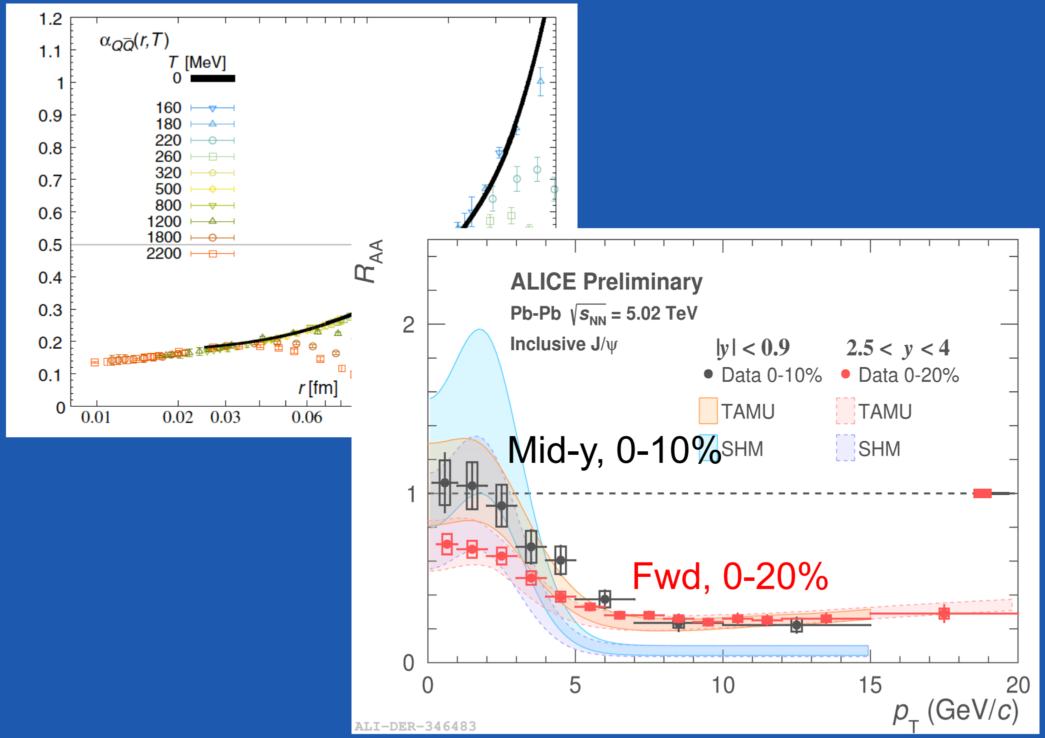


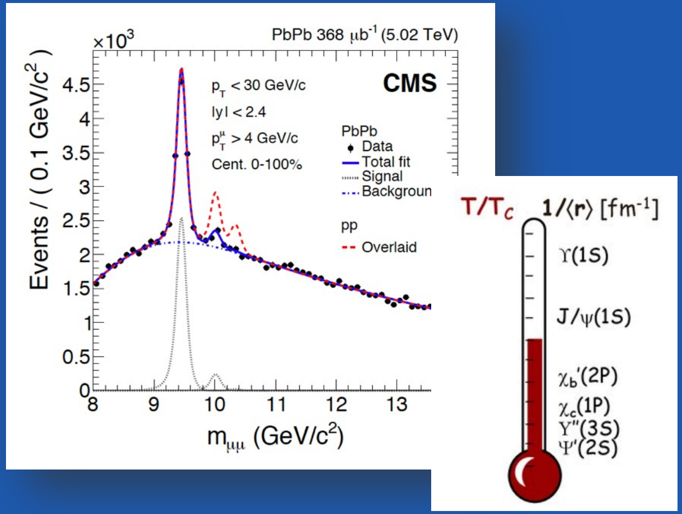
Beauty/bottomonia: no evidence that beauty is even partially equilibrated with the medium **→ non-equilibrium probe**

Summary 2/2

The study of quarkonium (ccbar, bbar) states provides information on the mechanisms of **dissociation and regeneration** of strongly-bound state in a medium (T>0).

- The high density of color charges in the QGP leads to melting of quarkonia
- The large abundance of charm quarks at LHC results in regeneration of the amount of J/ψ
- States with smaller binding energies are more suppressed

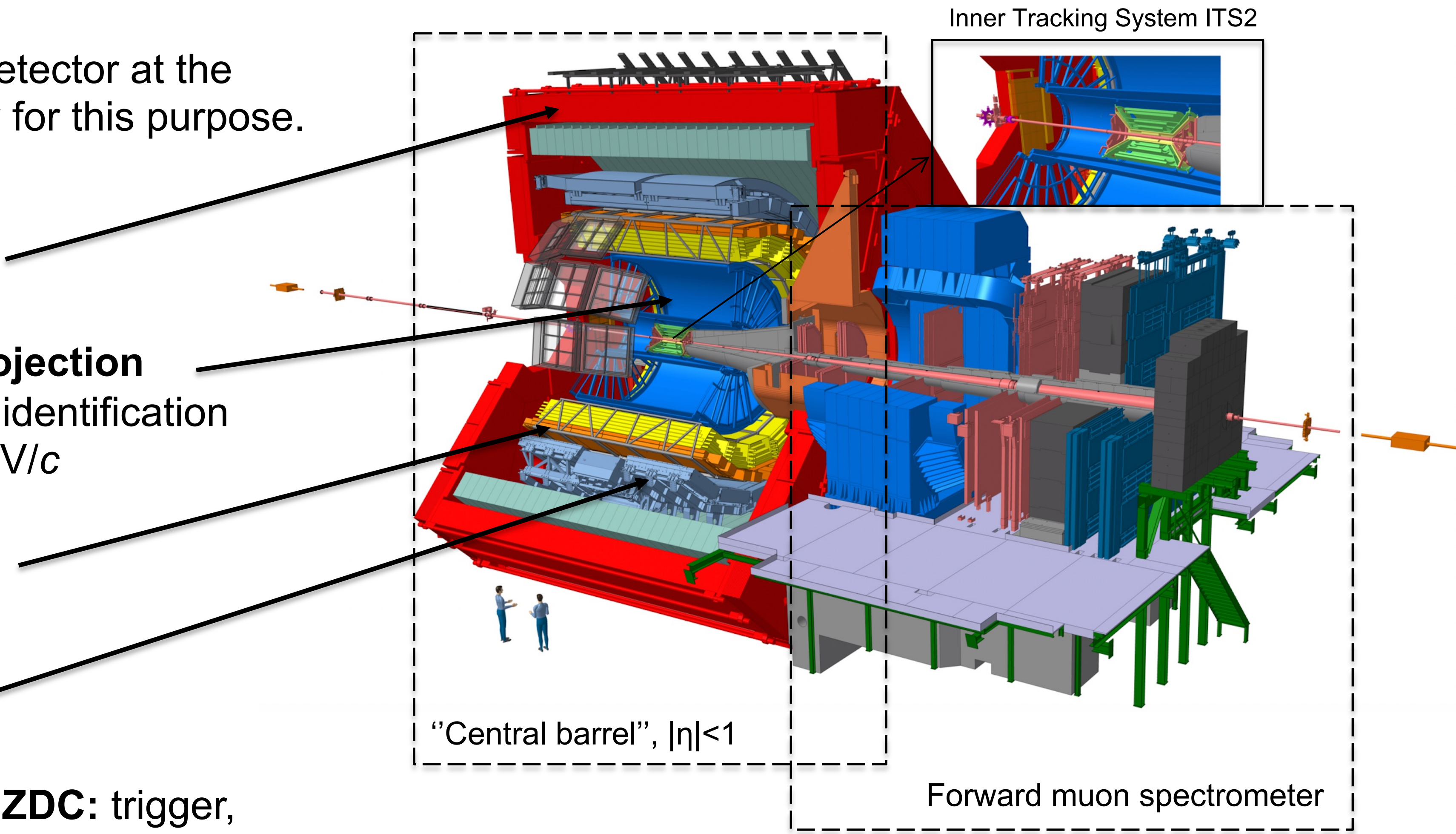




Bonus material

Characteristics of a heavy-ion detector: ALICE

ALICE is the dedicated heavy-ion detector at the LHC, designed and built specifically for this purpose.



Solenoid: magnetic field B = 0.5 T

Inner Tracking System + Time Projection Chamber: vertexing and tracking + identification (TPC) down to very low p_T ~ 0.1 GeV/*c*

Time-Of-Flight, TRD, HMPID, etc.: Particle identification detectors

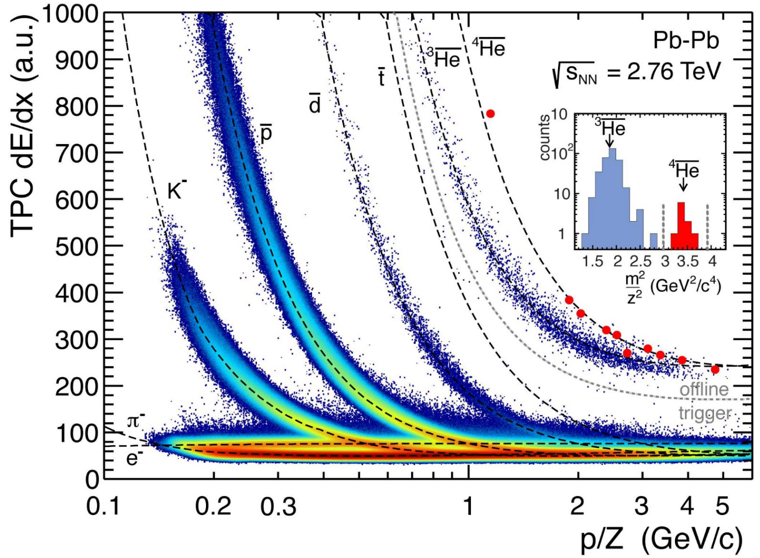
Electromagnetic calorimeters

+ Forward rapidity detectors and ZDC: trigger, centrality, event time determination, …

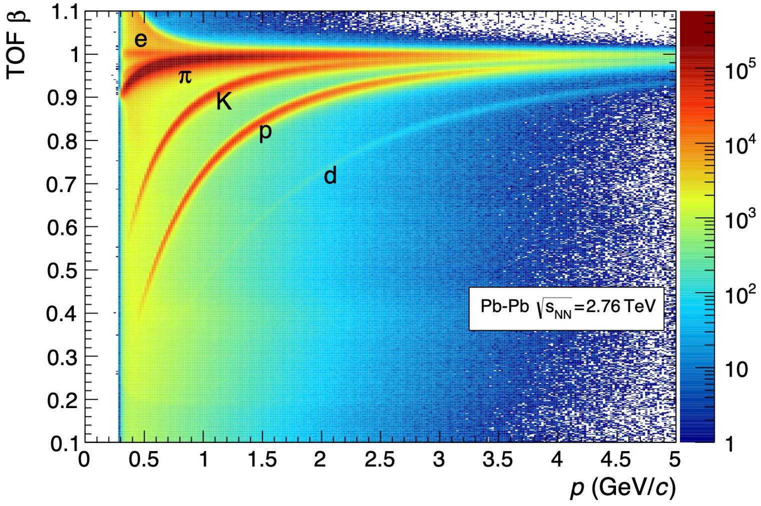
Particle identification

- Direct identification: π, K, p, light (anti)nuclei
- Electron identification using calorimeters and transition radiation detectors
- Strange and heavy-flavour hadrons:
    - reconstruction of secondary vertex and weak decay topology + PID + invariant mass reconstruction
- Photons detected in calorimeters and through pair production
- Quarkonia through leptonic decays

Energy loss of long lived particles in TPC

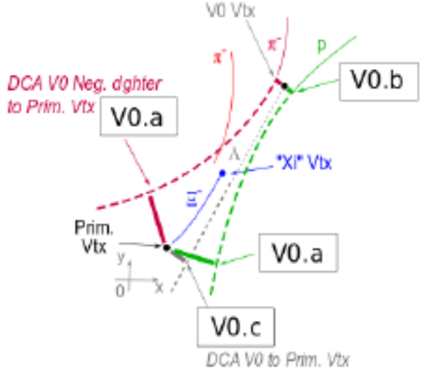


Particle velocity from TOF measurement and momentum



$\Xi \to \Lambda\pi^-$

(similarly for $\Omega \to \Lambda K^-$)



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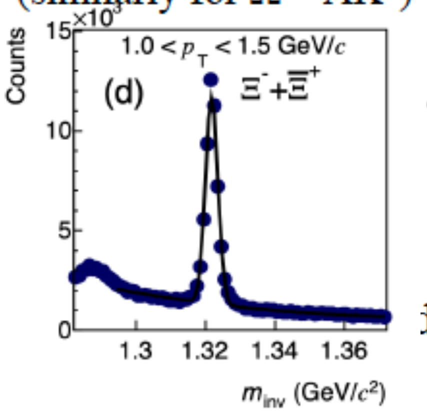
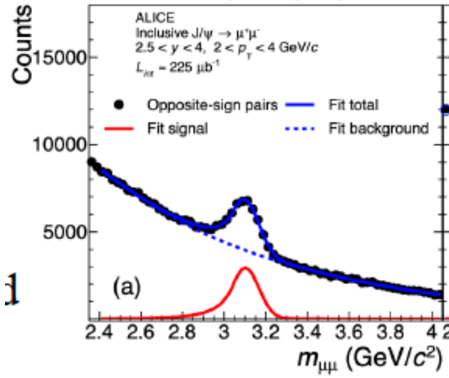
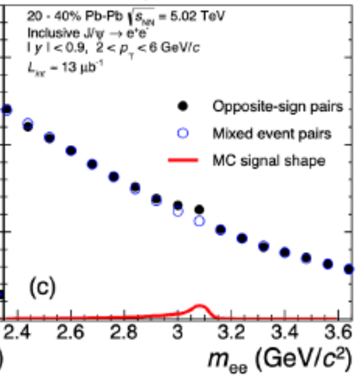


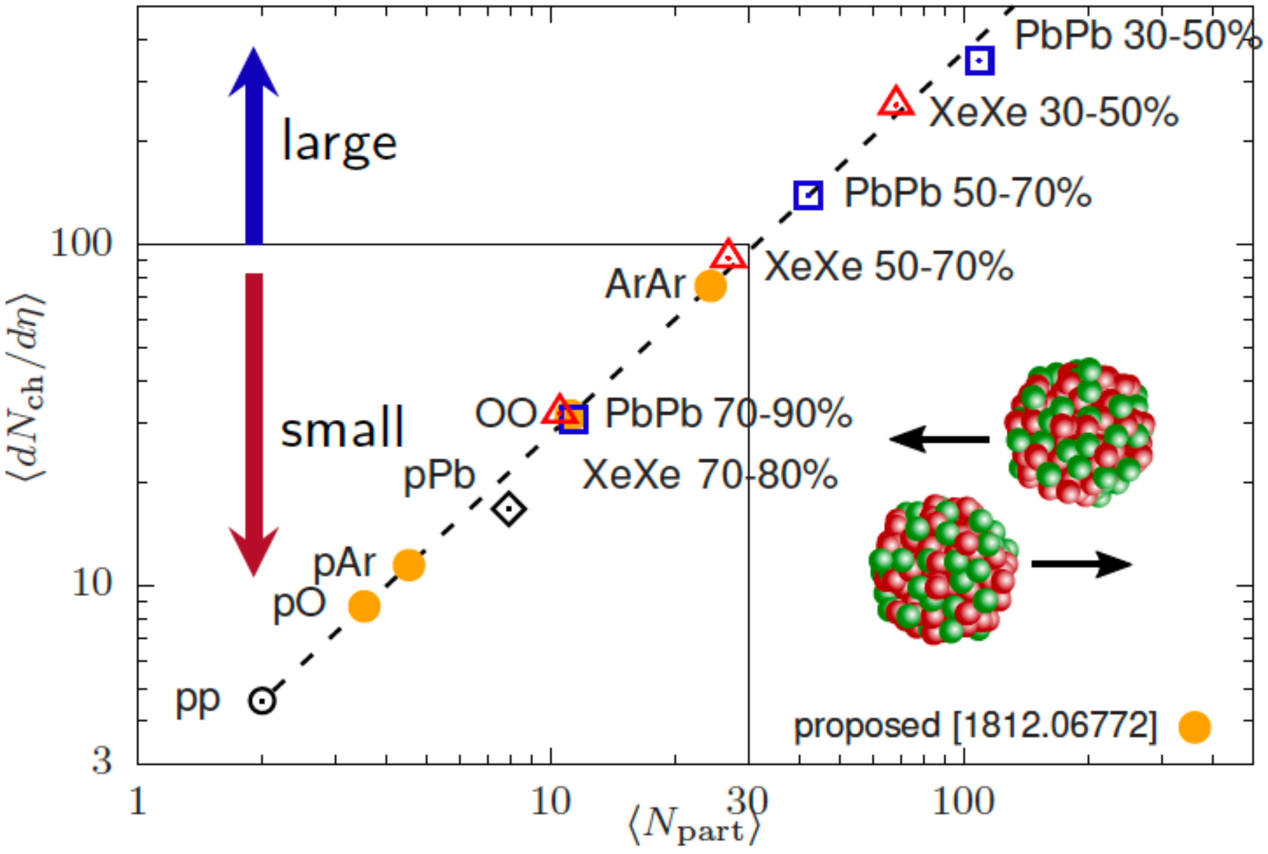
$J/\psi \to \mu^+\mu^-$



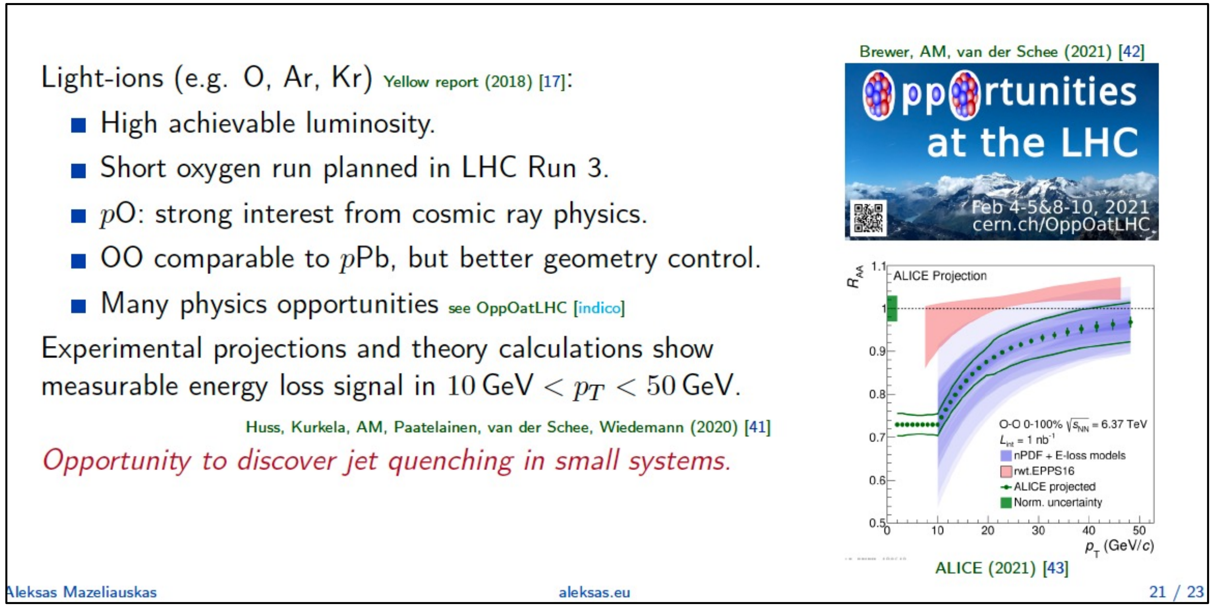
$J/\psi \to e^+e^-$



Light ions at the LHC



From A. Mazeliauskas, EPS-HEP 2021:



Light-ions (e.g. O, Ar, Kr) Yellow report (2018) [17]:

- High achievable luminosity.
- Short oxygen run planned in LHC Run 3.
- pO: strong interest from cosmic ray physics.
- OO comparable to pPb, but better geometry control.
- Many physics opportunities see OppOatLHC [indico]

Experimental projections and theory calculations show measurable energy loss signal in $10\,\text{GeV} < p_T < 50\,\text{GeV}$.

Huss, Kurkela, AM, Paatelainen, van der Schee, Wiedemann (2020) [41]

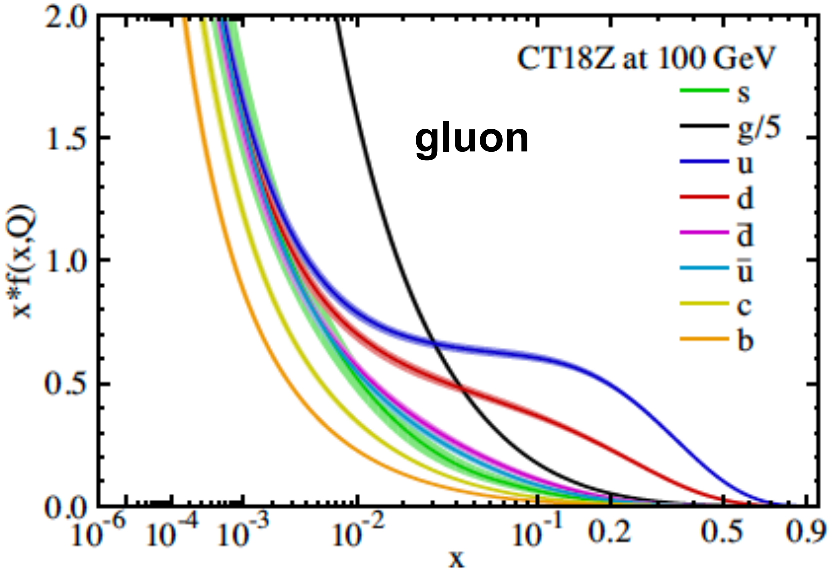
Opportunity to discover jet quenching in small systems.

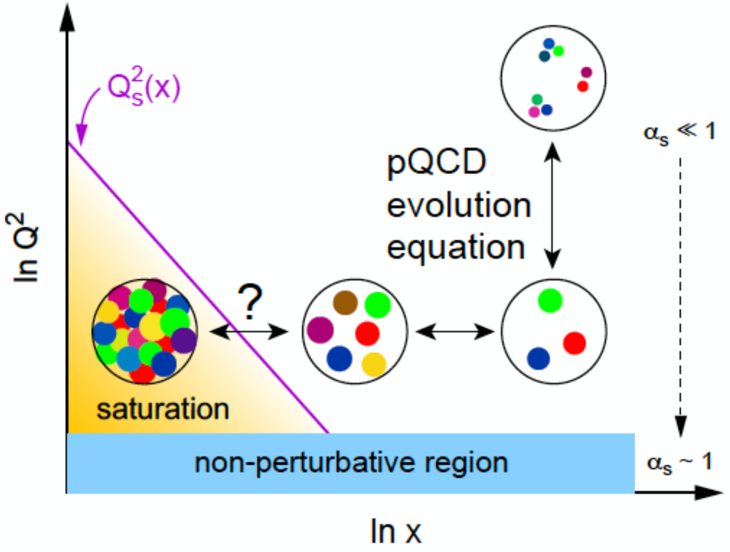
Brewer, AM, van der Schee (2021) [42]

ALICE (2021) [43]

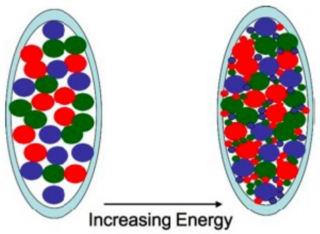
Aleksas Mazeliauskas aleksas.eu 21 / 23

Initial stage of heavy ion collisions

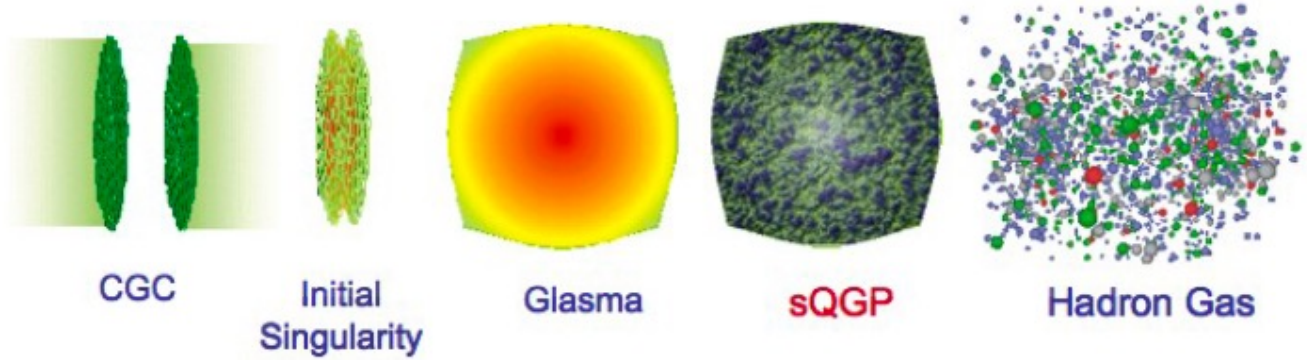




Color Glass Condensate: at high energy and small x, the hadron content is dominated by gluonic matter "packed" into high density



Saturation (momentum) scale Q_{sat} = inverse size scale of smallest gluons which are closely packed
→ gluons of size larger than $1/Q_{sat}$ no longer fit



L. McLerran, https://bib-pubdb1.desy.de/record/296833/files/ismd08_mcl_intro-corr.pdf
+ more reviews in literature,

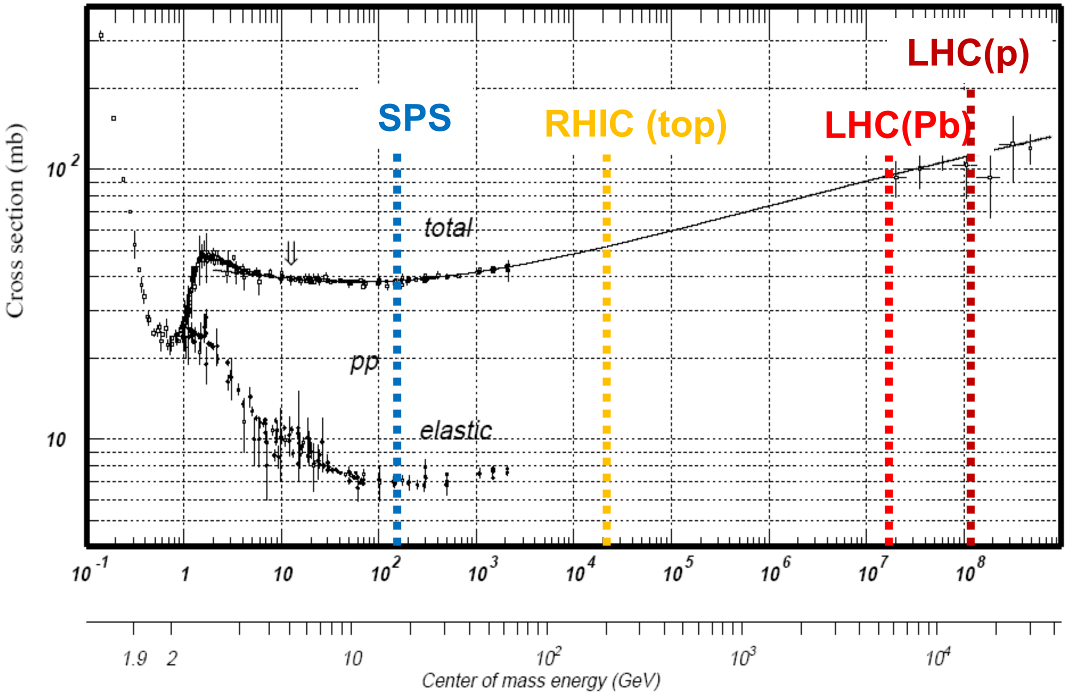
Glauber model

Nucleus-nucleus interaction as **incoherent superposition of nucleon-nucleon collisions** calculated in a probabilistic approach

[M. L. Miller et al., An. Rev. Nucl. Part. Sci. 57 (2007) 205-243]

- nucleons in nuclei are considered as point-like and non-interacting
- nuclei (and nucleons) have straight-line trajectories (no deflection)

Proton-proton cross section (from PDG)



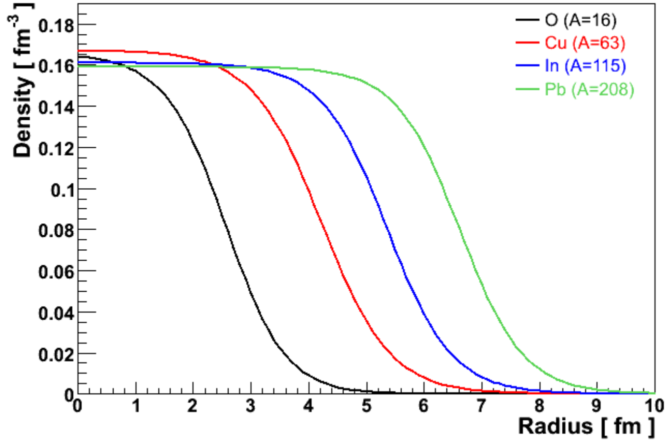
Input:

- Nucleon-nucleon inelastic cross section
- Nuclear density distribution, e.g. Fermi

$$\rho(r) = \rho_0 \frac{1 + w(r/R)^2}{1 + \exp\left(\frac{r-R}{a}\right)}$$

ρ^0 = density in the nucleus center
R = nucleus radius
a = skin depth
w = deviations from spherical shape

Examples of density distributions of nuclei



Glauber model (2)

Output:

- Interaction probability
- **Number of elementary nucleon-nucleon collisions (N_{coll})**
- **Number of participant nucleons (N_{part})**
- **Number of spectator nucleons**
- Size of the nuclei overlap region

These variables are fundamental to study the scaling properties of observables in HIC – **Rule of thumb**:

- ***N_{part}*** scaling of soft particle production
  → bulk of the system

- ***N_{coll}*** scaling of high p_T particle production
  → hard partons produced early in the collision