### Tracking the Baryon Number in Heavy-ion Collisions



### Zhangbu Xu (Brookhaven National Lab)

- Introduction to QCD at RHIC
- Three Measurements
- Previous Results and Future Perspectives







Zímanyí Wínter School, 12/05/2023





### The four fundamental interactions in Nature

Interaction	Strong Interaction	Electromagnetism	Weak Interaction	Gravitation
Year Formulated	<b>1970</b> s	1860s	1960s	1680s
Relative strength at 2 proton distance	1	10-2	<b>10</b> <sup>-6</sup>	<b>10</b> <sup>-38</sup>
Interaction range (m)	10-15	∞	10 <sup>-18</sup>	$\sim$
Mediator	gluons	photon	Z/W Bosons	graviton



### Quantum Chromodynamics (QCD)

### Using relativistic heavy-ion collisions to investigate the simplest QCD topology

In nuclei, 99% of the matter mass is generated by the strong interaction



### **QCD** strange behavior

#### Confinement and Asymptotic freedom Discovered in 1973 and Nobel Prize in 2004





### Free quarks in excited vacuum



### Our Experiment: the STAR Collaboration at RHIC

RHIC

STAR

My term as spokesman (2014-17), co-spokesperson (17-20), institutions from 48-> 70

Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC) is 3.8km in length STAR Collaboration: 700+ scientists from 14 countries Established in 1993, and operational since 2000 www.star.bnl.gov

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### Ultra-relativistic heavy-ion collisions



### Little Big Bang

BIG; All 4 forces at work; Gravitation dominates; QGP@10<sup>-6</sup>s; Slow expansion; Antimatter-matter annihilate;



Little; Strong force at work; QGP@10<sup>-23</sup>s; Fast expansion; Antimatter-matter decouple; repeat trillion times

# Baryon Number (B) Carrier

- Textbook picture of a proton
  - Lightest baryon with strictly conserved baryon number
  - Each valence quark carries 1/3 of baryon number
  - Proton lifetime >10<sup>34</sup> years
  - Quarks are connected by gluons
- Alternative picture of a proton
  - Proposed at the Dawn of QCD in 1970s
  - A Y-shaped gluon junction topology carries baryon number (B=1)
  - The topology number is the strictly conserved number
  - Quarks do not carry baryon number
  - Valence quarks are connected to the end of the junction always

[1]: Artru, X.; String Model with Baryons: Topology, Classical Motion. Nucl. Phys. B 85, 442–460 (1975).

[2]: Rossi, G. C. & Veneziano, G. A; Possible Description of Baryon Dynamics in Dual and Gauge Theories. Nucl. Phys. B 123, 507–545 (1977)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quark



ELSEVIER

20 June 1996

PHYSICS LETTERS B

Physics Letters B 378 (1996) 238-246

#### Can gluons trace baryon number?

D. Kharzeev Theory Division, CERN, CH-1211 Geneva, Switzerland and Fakultät für Physik, Universität Bielefeld, D-33501 Bielefeld, Germany

> Received 15 March 1996 Editor: R. Gatto

#### Abstract

QCD as a gauge non-Abelian theory imposes severe constraints on the structure of the baryon wave function. We point out that, contrary to a widely accepted belief, the traces of baryon number in a high-energy process can reside in a non-perturbative configuration of gluon fields, rather than in the valence quarks. We argue that this conjecture can be tested experimentally, since it can lead to substantial baryon asymmetry in the central rapidity region of ultra-relativistic nucleus-nucleus collisions.

In QCD, quarks carry colour, flavour, electric charge and isospin. It seems only natural to assume that they also trace baryon number. However, this latter assump-



#### There is only one way to construct a gauge-invariant on the naive quark model classification. But any physical of at x, The 4 tensor then opnomed local Stateon Vector solid a reaction of the figure of the state of

which is ignored in most of the naive quark model formulations. This constraint turns out to be very severe; in fact, there is only one way to construct a gaugeinvariant state vector of a baryon from quarks and gluons [1] (note however that there is a large amount of freedom in choosing the paths connecting x to  $x_i$ ):

 $B = \epsilon^{ijk} \left[ P \exp\left( ig \int_{x_1}^{x_1} A_{\mu} dx^{\mu} \right) q(x_1) \right]_i$  $\times \left[ P \exp\left( ig \int^{x} A_{\mu} dx^{\mu} \right) q(x_{2}) \right]_{i}$ 

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of gauge invariant operators representing a baryon in QCD. With properly optimised parameters tice Monte Carlo attempting to determine the mass. The purpose of this work is to study nomenological impact on baryon number p in the central region of nucleus-nucleus colli of barvon number should be associated not valence guarks, but with a non-perturbative of

tion of gluon fields located at the point x - tjunction" [1]. This can be nicely illustrat

we expect that the string junctions will interact and extensively in the first principle computations villase evident from the structure of that the trace of baryon number should It is evident from the structure of (1) that tibe associated not with the ivalence quarks, but with a non-perturbative string picture: let us pull all of the quarks a we configuration of gluon fields located at the point x - the "string a junction" dumber of antibaryon a



of the produced baryons will in general differ from the composition of colliding protons.

Why then is the leading baryon effect a gross feature of high-energy pp collisions? The reason may be the following. The string junction, connected to all three of the valence quarks, is confined inside the baryon, whereas *pp* collisions become on the average more and more peripheral at high energies. Therefore, in a typical high-energy collision, the string junctions of the colliding baryons pass far away from each other in the impact parameter plane and do not interact. One can however select only central events, triggering on high multiplicity of the produced hadrons. In this case,

[4]. These two observations combined indicate the existence of an appreciable baryon stopping in central pp collisions even at very high energies [3].

Where else do we encounter central baryon-baryon collisions? In a high energy nucleus-nucleus collision, the baryons in each of the colliding nuclei are densely packed in the impact parameter plane, with an average inter-baryon distance

$$r \simeq (\rho r_0)^{-1/2} A^{-1/6},$$
 (4)

where  $\rho$  is the nuclear density,  $r_0 \simeq 1.1$  fm, and A is the atomic number. The impact parameter b in an individual baryon-baryon interaction in the nucleusnucleus collision is therefore effectively cut off by the packing parameter: b < r. In the case of a lead nucleus, for example, r appears to be very small:  $r \simeq$ 0.4 fm, and a central lead-lead collision should therefore be accompanied by a large number of interactions among the string junctions. This may lead to substantial baryon stopping even at RHIC and LHC energies.

We shall now proceed to more quantitative considerations. In the topological expansion scheme [1], the separation of the baryon number flow from the flow of valence quarks in baryon-(anti)baryon interaction can be represented through a t-channel exchange of the quarkless junction-antijunction state with the wave function given by

$$M_0^J = \epsilon_{ijk} \epsilon^{i'j'k'} \left[ P \exp\left(ig \int_{x_1}^{x_2} A_\mu dx^\mu\right) \right]_{i'}^i$$
$$\times \left[ P \exp\left(ig \int_{x_1}^{x_2} A_\mu dx^\mu\right) \right]_{j'}^j$$
$$\times \left[ P \exp\left(ig \int_{x_1}^{x_2} A_\mu dx^\mu\right) \right]_{k'}^k. \tag{5}$$

The structure of the wave function (5) is illustrated in Fig. 1b - it is a quarkless closed string configuration composed from a junction and an antijunction. In the topological expansion scheme, the states (5) lie on a Regge trajectory; its intercept can be related to the baryon and reggeon intercepts [1]:

$$\int_{0}^{J}(0) \simeq 2\alpha_{B}(0) - 1 + 3(1 - \alpha_{R}(0)) \simeq \frac{1}{2}, \quad (6)$$

# Y-Shaped Baryon Flux-Tube in Lattice QCD



- Some lattice calculations have suggested the formation of a Y-shaped color flux tube among the three quarks at long distances T. T. Takahashi, *et al* Phys. Rev. Lett. **86**, 18 (2001).
  T. Takahashi, *et al*, Phys. Rev. D **65**, 114509 (2002)
- Still under investigation



### Measurements of quark electric charges

Scattering cross section  $\sigma \propto e_q^2$ (2/3)<sup>2</sup>+(1/3)<sup>2</sup>+(1/3)<sup>2</sup>=2/3 (2/3)<sup>2</sup>+(2/3)<sup>2</sup>+(1/3)<sup>2</sup>=1 (1/3)<sup>2</sup>+(1/3)<sup>2</sup>+(1/3)<sup>2</sup>=1/3



**Figure 53.2:** World data on the total cross section of  $e^+e^- \rightarrow hadrons$  and the ratio  $R(s) = \sigma(e^+e^- \rightarrow hadrons, s)/\sigma(e^+e^- \rightarrow \mu^+\mu^-, s)$ .  $\sigma(e^+e^- \rightarrow hadrons, s)$  is the experimental cross section corrected for initial state radiation and electron-positron vertex loops,  $\sigma(e^+e^- \rightarrow \mu^+\mu^-, s) = 4\pi\alpha^2(s)/3s$ . Data errors are total below 2 GeV and statistical above 2 GeV. The curves are an educative guide: the broken one (green) is a naive quark-parton model



**Fig. 8.** Comparison of structure functions measured in deep inelastic neutrino-nucleon scattering experiments on the Gargamelle heavy-liquid bubble chamber with the MIT-SLAC data  $[(\bullet), \text{Gargamelle}, F_2^{\nu N}; (\times), \text{MIT-SLAC}, (18/5)F_2^{e N}]$ . When multiplied by 18/5, a number specified by the quark-parton model, the electron scattering data coincide with the neutrino data.

# Measurements of quark baryon number?

- Textbook picture of a proton
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### Neither of these postulations has been verified experimentally

### Three approaches toward tracking the origin of the baryon number D. Brandenburg, N. Lewis, P. Tribedy,

### 1. STAR Method:

Charge (Q) stopping vs baryon (B) stopping: if valence quarks carry Q and B, Q=B at middle rapidity

#### Kharzeev-STAR Method: 2.

If gluon topology (J) carries B as one unit, it should show scaling according to Regge theory

 $= \sim e^{-\alpha_B y}$  $\alpha_{B} \simeq = 0.5$ 

3. Artru Method: In  $\gamma$ +Au collision, rapidity asymmetry can reveal the origin

Z. Xu, arXiv:2205.05685



### Baryons from target to midrapidity



### Example of versatile colliders and detectors

major upgrades over the last twenty years to improve particle identification and vertex reconstruction and is still evolving with an extension to forward rapidity as of today. pioneered in using new technologies: MRPC, MAPS, GEM and siPM. Estimate 35M(initial) +75M(upgrades)\$.



Detector	primary functions	DOE+(in-kind)	year
TPC+Trigger	$ \eta  < 1$ Tracking		1999-
Barrel EMC	$ \eta  < 1$ jets/ $\gamma/\pi^0/e$		2004-
FTPC	forward tracking	(Germany)	2002-2012
L3	Online Display	(Germany)	2000-2012
SVT/SSD	V0/charm	(France)	2004-2007
PMD	forward photons	(India)	2003-2011
EEMC	$1 < \eta < 2$ jets/ $\pi^0/e$	(NSF)	2005-
Roman Pots	diffractive		2009-
TOF	PID	(China)	2009-
FMS/Preshower	$2.5 < \eta < 4.2$	(Russia)	2008-2017
DAQ1000	x10 DAQ rate		2008-
HLT	Online Tracking	(China/Germany)	2012-
FGT	$1 < \eta < 2 W^{\pm}$		2012-2013
GMT	TPC calibration		2012-
HFT/SSD	open charm	(France/UIC)	2014-2016
MTD	muon ID	(China/India)	2014-
EPD	event plane	(China)	2018-
RHICf	$\eta > 5 \pi^0$	(Japan)	2017
iTPC	$ \eta  < 1.5$ Tracking	(China)	2019-
eTOF	-2< η <-1 PID	(Germany/China)	2019-
FCS	2.5< $\eta$ <4 calorimeter	(NSF)	2021-
FTS	2.5< $\eta$ <4 Tracking	(NCKU/SDU)	2021-

8 new detectors added to STAR since 2014





### Identified hadron spectra to low momentum



#### Net-charge difference (Ru+Ru – Zr+Zr)

• 
$$R2_{\pi} = \frac{(N_{\pi}^{+}/N_{\pi}^{-})_{Ru}}{(N_{\pi}^{+}/N_{\pi}^{-})_{Zr}} \approx \frac{[1+(N_{\pi}^{+}-N_{\pi}^{-})/N_{\pi}]_{Ru}}{[1+(N_{\pi}^{+}-N_{\pi}^{-})/N_{\pi}]_{Zr}} = \frac{1+\Delta R_{Ru}}{1+\Delta R_{Zr}} \approx 1+\Delta R_{Ru}-\Delta R_{Zr}$$
  
•  $\Delta Q = [(N_{\pi}^{+}+N_{K}^{+}+N_{p})-(N_{\pi}^{-}+N_{K}^{-}+N_{p})]_{Ru}-[]_{Zr}$ 

• Focus on pion terms,

• 
$$(N_{\pi}^{+} - N_{\pi}^{-})_{Ru} - (N_{\pi}^{+} - N_{\pi}^{-})_{Zr} = N_{\pi,Ru} \times \Delta R_{Ru} - N_{\pi,Zr} \times \Delta R_{Zr}$$
  
•  $\approx N_{\pi}(\Delta R_{Ru} - \Delta R_{Zr}) = N_{\pi} \times (R2_{\pi} - 1)$ 

• Where  $N_{\pi} = 0.5 \times (N_{\pi}^{+} + N_{\pi}^{-})$ 

• Therefore, 
$$\Delta Q = N_{\pi}(R2_{\pi}-1) + N_{K}(R2_{K}-1) + N_{p}(R2_{p}-1)$$



### Separate charge and baryon transports



UrQMD matches data on charge stopping better in peripheral; better on baryon stopping in central overpredicts charge stopping in central; underpredicts baryon stopping in peripheral

# Ratio of baryon over charge transports

#### • Experimental data:

More baryon transported to C.O.M than charge by about a factor of 2

• Model simulations:

Less baryon transported to C.O.M frame than charge

• Pure geometry: with neutron skin predicts the right centrality dependence (Trento)

#### Tommy Tsang (KSU) for STAR, APS GHP, QM 2023



### Low-energy baryon rapidity loss



Figure 3: Rapidity losses from AGS, SPS and RHIC as a function of beam rapidity. The solid line is a fit to SPS and RHIC data, and the band is the statistical uncertainty of this fit. The dashed line is a linear fit to AGS and SPS data from [15].



# Quantifying baryon number transport

- RHIC Beam Energy Scan (BES-I) span large range of rapidity shift
- Exponential with slope of  $\alpha_B = 0.61 \pm 0.03$
- Consistent with the baryon junction transport by gluons:  $\alpha_B \sim = 0.5 + \Delta$  $\Delta \sim = 0.1$

STAR, Phys. Rev. C **79** (2009) 34909; **96** (2017) 44904D. Brandenburg, N. Lewis, P. Tribedy, Z. Xu, arXiv:2205.05685



# Quantifying baryon number transport

- Striking scaling for all centralities and collision beam energies from central A+A to p+p
- Expect slope to change if stopping is through multiple scattering of quarks
- New heavy-ion simulation require baryon junction to match data

C. Shen and B. Schenke, Phys. Rev. C,105 (2022), 064905.



### Photonuclear Events Are Selected With Rapidity Gaps



Similar technique used by LHC photonuclear measurements:

ATLAS Collaboration, Phys. Rev. C 104, 014903 (2021) and CMS Collaboration, arXiv:2204.13486 (2022)

For data collected in 2017, Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 54.4$  GeV, trigger did not require coincidence in both sides of the detector

STAR

### Rapidity asymmetry in photonnucleus collision

- Selection of photon+Au collisions from Au+Au at 54.4GeV ultra-peripheral collisions
- Antiproton shows flat rapidity distribution
- Proton shows the characteristic asymmetry increase toward nucleus side
- Slope is closer to the slope of the beam energy dependence
- PYTHIA shows much larger slope





# Three approaches toward tracking the origin of the baryon number 2.0 STAR Preliminary USDBT (Ru + Ru, Zr + Zr) USDBT (Ru + Ru, Zr + Zr)

### 1. STAR Method:

Charge (Q) stopping vs baryon (B) stopping: if valence quarks carry Q and B, Q=B at middle rapidity B/Q=2

2. Kharzeev-STAR Method:

If gluon topology (J) carries B as one unit, it should show scaling according to Regge theory  $\alpha_{\rm B}$ =0.61  $p = \sim e^{-\alpha_{B}y}$ 

3. Artru Method:  $\ln \gamma$ +Au collision, rapidity asymmetry can reveal the origin  $\alpha_{\rm B}(A+A)=0.61 < \alpha_{\rm B}(\gamma+A)=1.1 < \alpha_{\rm B}(PYTHIA)$ 



NET BARYON NUMBER TRANSPORT VIA GLUONIC JUNCTIONS vs SPS data



8/18/22

NA49 [5] collaborations.

### What do we know about pp collisions?



# "Final-State" baryon junction in PYTHIA 8.x

#### Junction treatment (PYTHIA MANUAL 8.x)

A junction topology corresponds to an Y arrangement of strings i.e. where three string pieces have to be joined up in a junction. Such topologies can arise if several valence quarks are kicked out from a proton beam, or in baryon-number-violating SUSY decays. Special attention is necessary to handle the region just around the junction, where the baryon number topologically is located. The junction fragmentation scheme is described in [Sjo03, 2003]. The parameters in this section should not be touched except by experts.



### What do we know about $\mu$ +p (d) collisions

Diquark Lund model predicts a flavor dependence of backward proton production (20%) while data shows little-to-no dependence

Fig. 5a-d. Average multiplicities from the  $H_2$  (full circles) and the  $D_2$  target (open circles) vs. W for backward protons a, backward antiprotons b. The histograms show the Lund model predictions (full line:  $H_2$  target, dashed line:  $D_2$  target, full line only where both are the same)

the Lund model (JETSET62) predicts a higher yield of backward going protons from hydrogen than from deuterium, an effect which is less pronounced in the data.

Total citations: 19



### EIC simulation of baryon vs charge transports



## Tracking the origin of baryon number at EIC

(A.U.)

dN/dy

- RHIC nuclear energy is at a sweet spot
  - U+U, Au+Au, O+O, Cu+Au, Cu+Cu, He3+Au, d+Au,p+Au, p+p
- LHC and HERA energy are too high with small baryon excess (<1%)</li>
- Isobar collisions at EIC with low Q<sup>2</sup> and low-p<sub>t</sub> PID to study the charge and baryon transports
- EIC: extend to large range of rapidity shift from 2.5 to 6 at the same time, measure the charge (model, RHIC) transport as well as baryon transport (BeAGLE B/Q=0.2, Niseem)

#### **STAR** Preliminary Au + Au ■ 0-5% (x 1/6) ★ 10-20% (x 1/6) 30-40% (x 1/4) ▲ 50-60% (x 1/2) 70-80% (x 3/2) d-d ♦ γ+Au-rich Fit to $\gamma$ +Au-rich —∝ exp( -(1.13 ± 0.32) δy) Average Slope from Au+Au Fits $10^{-1}$ - ·∝ exp( -(0.63 ± 0.02) δy) 2.5 3 3.5 2 4.5 5 5.5

Nicole Lewis (BNL) for STAR, DIS2023

### Conclusions and Perspectives

- Baryon number is a strictly conserved quantum number, keeps the Universe as is
- We did not know what its carrier is; It has not been experimentally verified one way or the other until now
- RHIC Beam Energy Scans provide unique opportunity in studying baryon number transport over large unit of rapidity
- RHIC Isobar collisions provide unique opportunity in studying charge and baryon transport
- Experimental verification of the simplest QCD topology

- Baryon junction (if exists) is a nonperturbative object
- Need small Q<sup>2</sup>, large rapidity coverage and low-momentum hadron particle identification

 $Q^2 \leq 1 \; GeV^2$ 

 $\pi/k/p \ \mathrm{PID} \ p_t \geq \sim 100 \ MeV$ 

- Isobar collisions to measure charge transport (quark transports), Zr/Ru; <sup>7</sup>Li/<sup>7</sup>Be
- EIC can measure the baryon junction distribution function
- Explore other signatures at EIC

### Solenoidal Tracker at RHIC (25 years of Operation)

Artistic rusty representation of past and present



Still an indispensable discovery detector Exciting time with all the new facilities!

#### Crystal Ball prediction of future (literately)



