

Hard/Soft Correlations in Small Systems

Ismail Soudi

University of Jyväskylä
Helsinki Institute of Physics

Based on:

- » IS, A. Majumder [PRC 111 \(2025\)](#)
- » IS, A. Majumder [PLB 859 \(2024\)](#)
- » IS, et al. [arXiv:2407.17443](#)

High energy probes of the initial stages 2025, CERN, Geneva



Centre of Excellence
in Quark Matter



Yoctoscale imaging of QCD Collectivity
Using Jet Characterisation
An ERC Advanced Grant 2018 - 2024



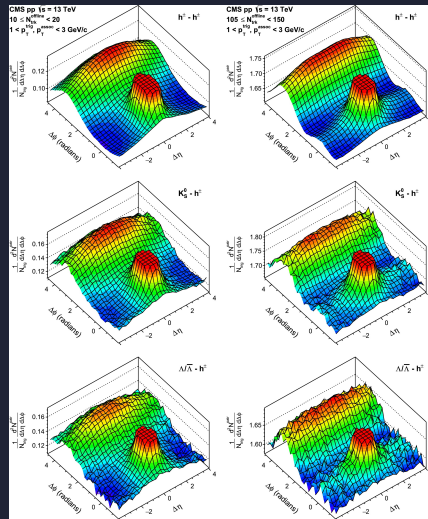
European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

Apr 03, 2025

Introduction

“Evidence for collectivity in pp collisions at the LHC”:

- Collective flow

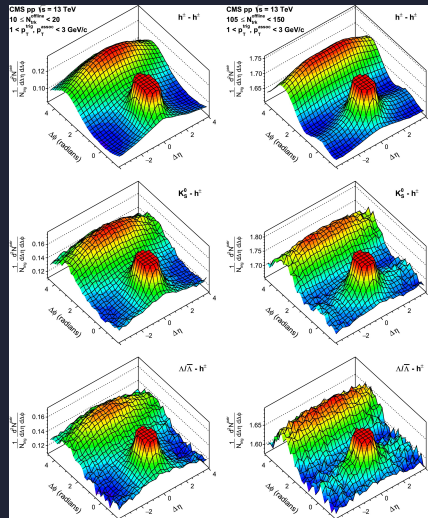


Introduction

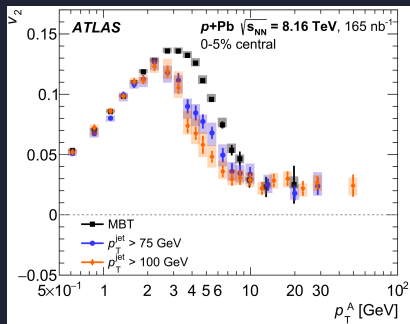
“Evidence for collectivity in pp collisions at the LHC”:

- Collective flow

! No Jet quenching observed



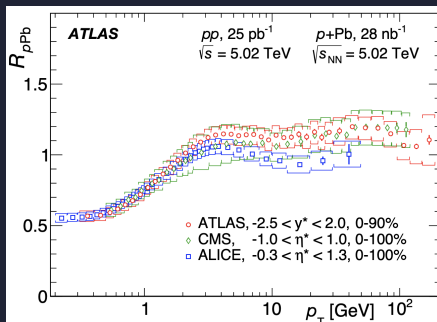
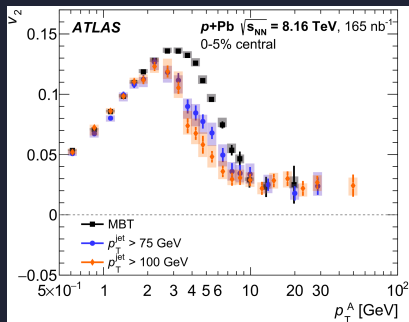
Jet quenching vs Flow



ATLAS [EPJ C80 \(2020\)](#)

Jet quenching vs Flow

- R_{pPb} vs v_2 puzzle



ATLAS [EPJ C80 \(2020\)](#)

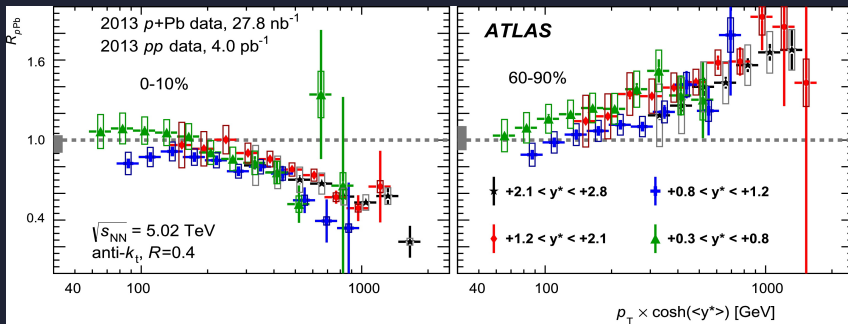
ATLAS [JHEP07 \(2023\)](#)

CMS [JHEP04 \(2017\)](#)

ALICE [JHEP11 \(2018\)](#)

Jet quenching vs Flow

- R_{pPb} vs v_2 puzzle
- R_{pPb} vs centrality

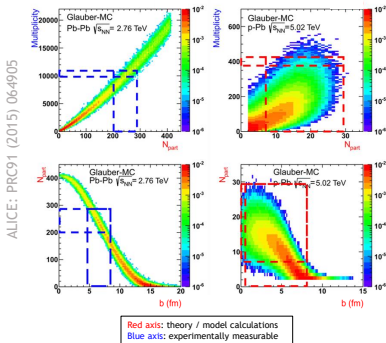


ATLAS [PLB748 \(2015\)](#)

Multiplicity? I

Daniel Firak (for the PHENIX collaboration) - HP2024 PHENIX [Phys. Rev. Lett.134 \(2025\)](#)

Is the Glauber Model good both in small and large systems?



$$\frac{dN_{ch}}{d\eta} \Rightarrow N_{coll} \xRightarrow{\text{Model/Theory}} N_{par} \xRightarrow{\text{Theory}} b$$

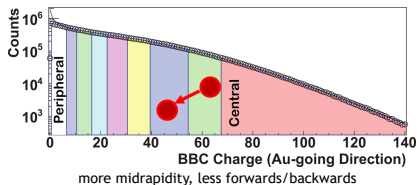
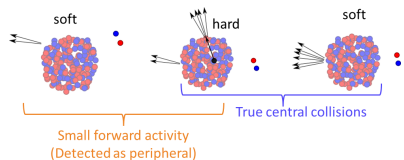
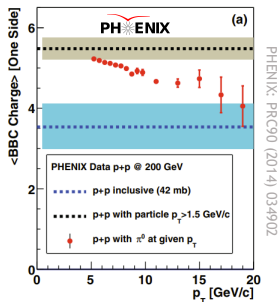
- Multiplicity window = centrality class
 - Measurable
- $N_{coll}^{GL} \propto \left(\frac{dN_{ch}}{d\eta}\right)^a$: Not directly measurable!
 - Obtained through Glauber model

Multiplicity? II

Daniel Firak (for the PHENIX collaboration) - HP2024 PHENIX [Phys. Rev. Lett.134 \(2025\)](#)

There IS bias in small systems!

Centrality is determined by event activity in the BBC, on the Au going direction (PHENIX)



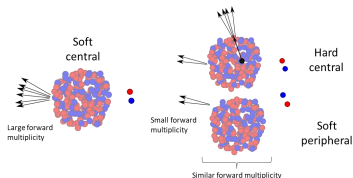
Daniel Firak

5

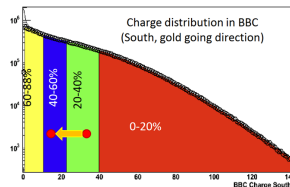
Multiplicity? III

Daniel Firak (for the PHENIX collaboration) - HP2024 PHENIX [Phys. Rev. Lett.134 \(2025\)](#)

Bias in Centrality determination



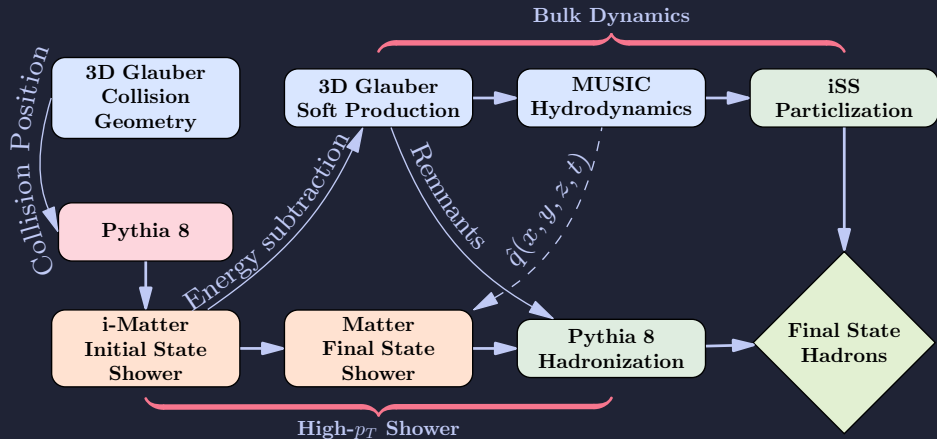
- Since the event activity is measured in the forward region of the detector, a hard event (think jets) can deplete the forward activity, and would have a high p_T event on the central detectors
- This can drive central events to appear as peripheral, explaining a source of “peripheral enhancement” at high p_T



Introduction

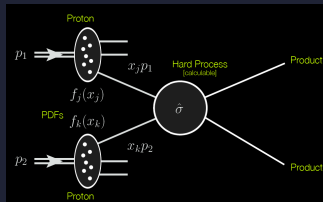
Correlation due to Energy Conservation

Transverse Momentum Correlations

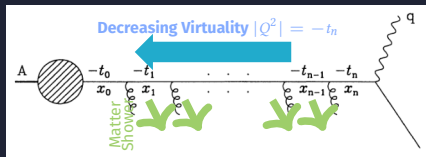


Hard

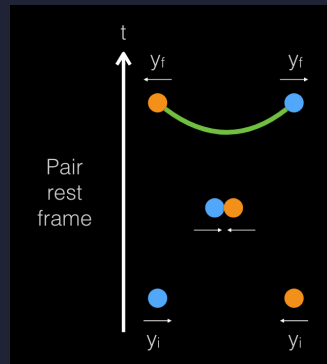
- Pythia Hard Process



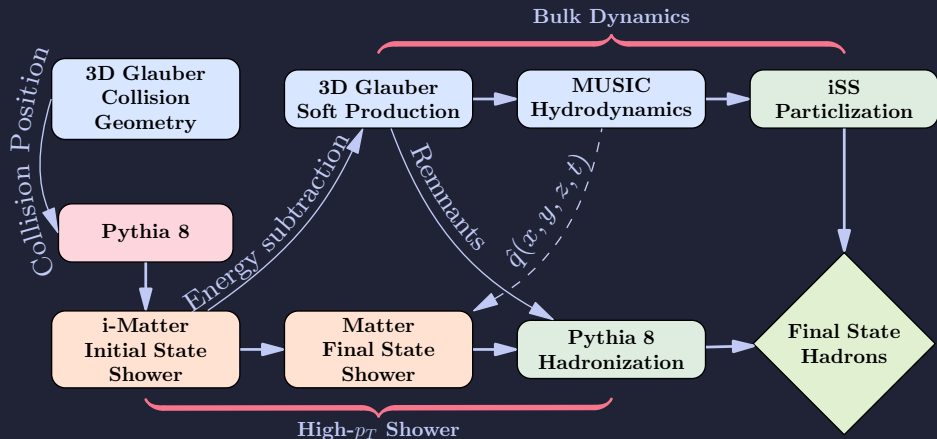
- i-Matter ISR + Matter FSR



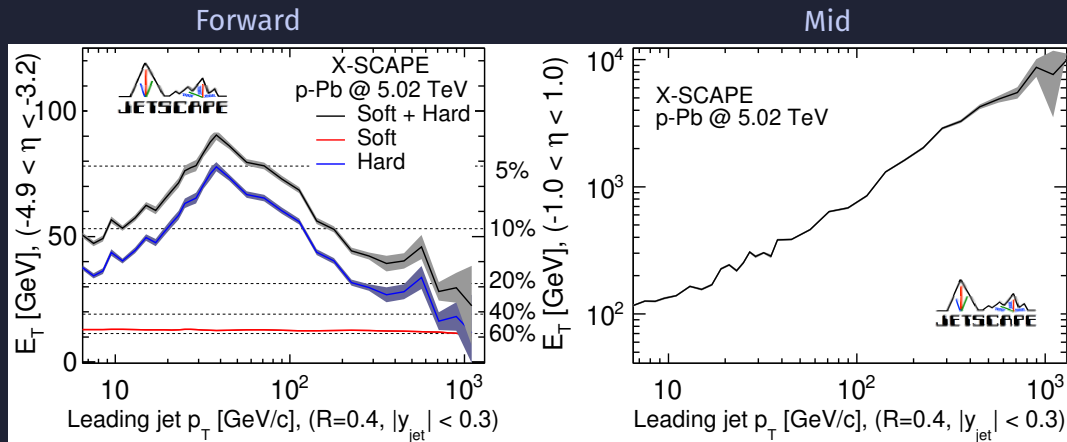
Soft



$$\frac{dE}{dz} = -\sigma, \quad \frac{dp_z}{dt} = -\sigma \quad (1)$$



Correlations

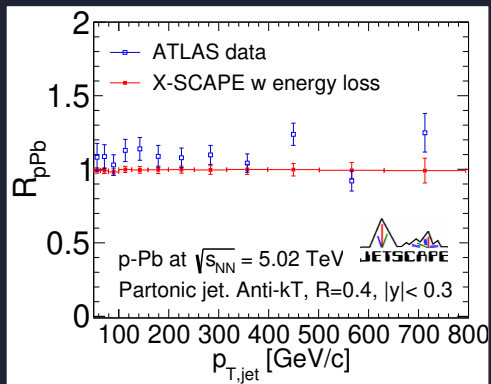


Competing effects

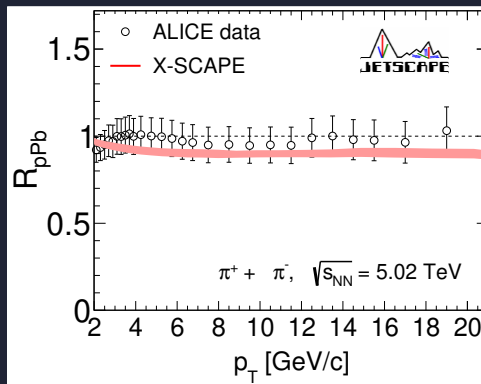
- » E_T increases with leading jet p_T
- » At higher p_T energy conservation leads to decrease in E_T

Energy Loss?

Jets



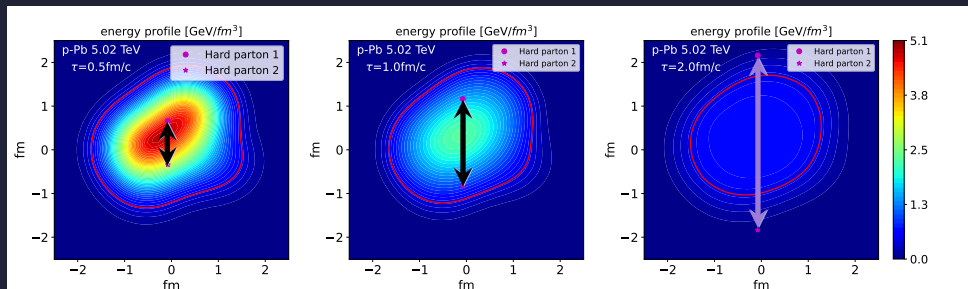
Pions



Matter Energy loss in p -Pb collisions

» No evidence for jet quenching

Energy Loss: Explanation



Medium extent small

» Hard partons spend limited time in medium

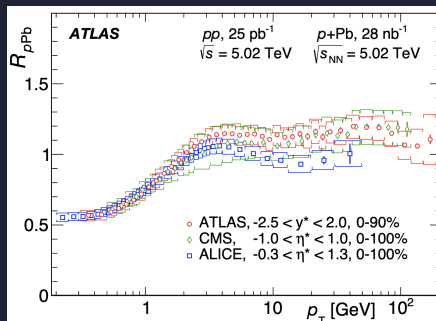
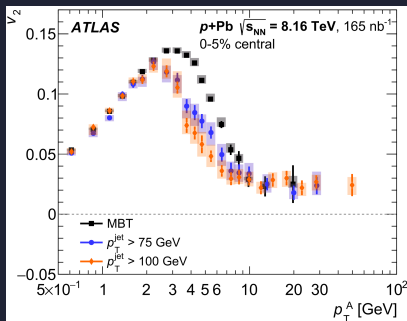
Introduction

Correlation due to Energy Conservation

Transverse Momentum Correlations

Jet quenching vs Flow

- R_{pPb} vs v_2 puzzle



ATLAS [EPJ C80 \(2020\)](#)

ATLAS [JHEP07 \(2023\)](#)

CMS [JHEP04 \(2017\)](#)

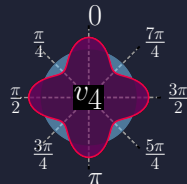
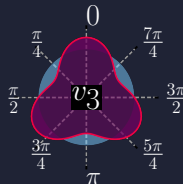
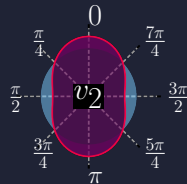
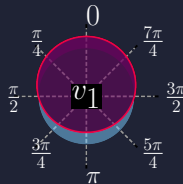
ALICE [JHEP11 \(2018\)](#)

v_n Azimuthal Anisotropy

Azimuthal momentum correlated with soft bulk (event plane)

$$\frac{dN}{d\phi} \propto 1 + \sum_n 2v_n \cos[n(\phi - \Psi_n)] \quad (2)$$

$$v_n = 1 + 0.25 \cos(n\theta)$$



Transverse Dependent Distributions

Table of TMD PDFs

 nucleon (N)

 unpolarized quark (Q)

 nucleon spin

 quark spin

 quark k_T

N \ Q	U	L	T
U	f_1 number density 		$h_1^\perp$ Boer-Mulders 
L		g_1 helicity 	$h_{1L}^\perp$ worm-gear 
T	$f_{1T}^\perp$ Sivers 	$g_{1T}^\perp$ worm-gear 	h_1 transversity  $h_{1T}^\perp$ pretzelosity 

=> Collins

¹Fig from PHENIX Spin Physics Overview

⁰D. Boer, P. J. Mulders, J. C. Collins, J. Rodrigues, C. Pisano, S. J. Brodsky, M. Anselmino, M. Boglione, U. D'Alesio, E. Leader, D.W. Sivers, F. G. Celiberto...

Transverse Dependent Distributions

Table of TMD PDFs

nucleon (N)

unpolarized quark (Q)

nucleon spin

quark spin

quark k_T

N \ Q	U	L	T
U	f_1 number density 		$h_1^\perp$ Boer-Mulders -
L		g_1 helicity -	$h_{1L}^\perp$ worm-gear -
T	$f_{1T}^\perp$ Sivers -	$g_{1T}^\perp$ worm-gear -	h_1 transversity -
			$h_{1T}^\perp$ pretzelosity -

=> Collins

¹Fig from PHENIX Spin Physics Overview

⁰D. Boer, P. J. Mulders, J. C. Collins, J. Rodrigues, C. Pisano, S. J. Brodsky, M. Anselmino, M. Boglione, U. D'Alesio, E. Leader, D.W. Sivers, F. G. Celiberto...

Cross Section

Cross section for¹ $p + p \rightarrow \pi + X$:

$$\frac{d\sigma}{dyd^2P_T} = \sum_{a,b,c,d} \int \frac{dx_a dx_b dz}{2\pi^2 z^3 s} d^2k_{\perp a} d^2k_{\perp b} d^3k_{\perp C} \delta(\mathbf{k}_{\perp C} \cdot \hat{p}_c) \mathcal{J}(\mathbf{k}_{\perp C}) \Gamma^{\sigma\mu}(x_a, k_{\perp a}) \Gamma^{\alpha\nu}(x_b, k_{\perp b})$$
$$\hat{M}_{\mu\nu\rho} (\hat{M}_{\sigma\alpha\beta})^* \Delta^{\rho\beta}(z, k_{\perp C}) \delta(\hat{s} + \hat{t} + \hat{u}) , \quad (3)$$

With generalized correlators:

$$\Gamma_P^{\mu\nu}(x, k_{\perp}) = \int \frac{d(\xi \cdot P) d^2\xi_T}{(2\pi)^3} e^{i(p \cdot \xi)} \frac{\langle P | \text{Tr} [F^{\mu\rho}(0) F^{\nu\sigma}(\xi)] | P \rangle n_{\rho} n_{\sigma}}{(p \cdot n)^2}$$
$$= \frac{-g_T^{\mu\nu} f_g(x, k_{\perp}) + \left(\frac{k_{\perp}^{\mu} k_{\perp}^{\nu}}{M_p^2} + g_T^{\mu\nu} \frac{k_{\perp}^2}{2M_p^2} \right) h_g^{\perp}(x, k_{\perp}^2)}{2x} , \quad (4)$$

¹ M. Anselmino et al. [PRD71 \(2005\)](#), M. Anselmino et al. [PRD73 \(2006\)](#)

Transverse Momentum Dependent Distributions



$$\Phi^{\alpha\beta} \epsilon_{\alpha}^{\lambda_1}(k) \epsilon_{\beta}^{\lambda_2}(k) = \frac{1}{2x} \left\{ \delta^{\lambda_1, \lambda_2} f_g(x, k_{\perp}) + \delta^{\lambda_1, -\lambda_2} \frac{k_{\perp}^2}{2M^2} h_g^{\perp}(x, k_{\perp}) \right\}$$

The **Boer-Mulders/Collins** flips helicity between amplitude and conjugate

Requires two flips for unpolarized pion production =>

For $gg \rightarrow gg$:



: Unpolarized gluon/unpolarized hadron



: Polarized gluon/unpolarized hadron

Transverse Momentum Dependent Distributions



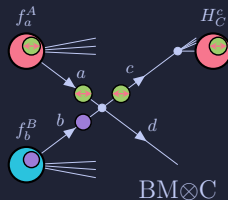
$$\Phi^{\alpha\beta} \epsilon_{\alpha}^{\lambda_1}(k) \epsilon_{\beta}^{\lambda_2}(k) = \frac{1}{2x} \left\{ \delta^{\lambda_1, \lambda_2} f_g(x, k_{\perp}) + \delta^{\lambda_1, -\lambda_2} \frac{k_{\perp}^2}{2M^2} h_g^{\perp}(x, k_{\perp}) \right\}$$

The **Boer-Mulders/Collins** flips helicity between amplitude and conjugate

Requires two flips for unpolarized pion production =>

For $gg \rightarrow gg$:

$$\bullet \quad BM \otimes C \Rightarrow M_{\lambda, \lambda}^{\lambda, \lambda} \left(M_{-\lambda, \lambda}^{-\lambda, \lambda} \right)$$



: Unpolarized gluon/unpolarized hadron



: Polarized gluon/unpolarized hadron

Transverse Momentum Dependent Distributions

$$\Phi^{\alpha\beta} \epsilon_{\alpha}^{\lambda_1}(k) \epsilon_{\beta}^{\lambda_2}(k) = \frac{1}{2x} \left\{ \delta^{\lambda_1, \lambda_2} f_g(x, k_{\perp}) + \delta^{\lambda_1, -\lambda_2} \frac{k_{\perp}^2}{2M^2} h_g^{\perp}(x, k_{\perp}) \right\}$$

The **Boer-Mulders/Collins** flips helicity between amplitude and conjugate

Requires two flips for unpolarized pion production =>

For $gg \rightarrow gg$:

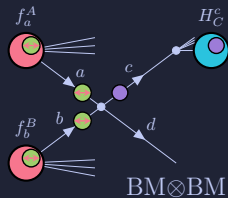
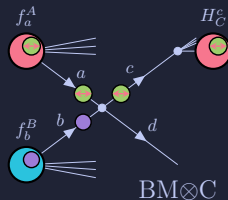
- $BM \otimes C \Rightarrow M_{\lambda, \lambda}^{\lambda, \lambda} \left(M_{-\lambda, \lambda}^{-\lambda, \lambda} \right)$
- $BM \otimes BM \Rightarrow M_{\lambda, \lambda}^{\lambda, \lambda} \left(M_{-\lambda, -\lambda}^{\lambda, \lambda} \right)$



: Unpolarized gluon/unpolarized hadron



: Polarized gluon/unpolarized hadron



Spin-Helicity Formalism

Matrix element for $BM \otimes C$ Naturally contains asymmetries

$$\Sigma^{\text{BM} \otimes C} = \hat{H}^{\perp(1)}(z, k_{\perp C}) 2 \left[\hat{h}_{g/A}^{\perp(1)}(x_a, k_{\perp a}) \hat{f}_{g/B}(x_b, k_{\perp b}) \hat{M}_1^0 \hat{M}_2^0 \cos(4(\phi_{ab} - \phi_{bc})) \right. \\ \left. + \hat{f}_{g/A}(x_a, k_{\perp a}) \hat{h}_{g/B}^{\perp(1)}(x_b, k_{\perp b}) \hat{M}_1^0 \hat{M}_3^0 \cos(4(\phi_{ab} - \phi_{ac})) \right] , \quad (5)$$

$$\text{with } \hat{M}_1^0 \hat{M}_2^0 = g_s^4 \frac{N_c^2}{N_c^2 - 1} \frac{t^2 + tu + u^2}{t^2} ,$$

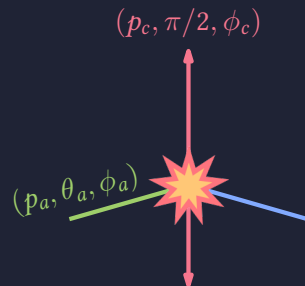
$$\hat{M}_1^0 \hat{M}_3^0 = g_s^4 \frac{N_c^2}{N_c^2 - 1} \frac{t^2 + tu + u^2}{u^2} ,$$

$$\text{and } \tan \phi_{ij} = \tan \frac{\phi_j - \phi_i}{2} \frac{\sin \frac{\theta_j + \theta_i}{2}}{\sin \frac{\theta_j - \theta_i}{2}} .$$

Spin Independent

TMD matrix element contains angular correlations as well

$$\frac{\hat{s}}{\hat{t}} \stackrel{\theta_1 \ll 1}{\simeq} \frac{-\hat{s}}{2p_a p_c (1 - \theta_a \cos(\phi_a - \phi_c))}$$
$$\simeq \frac{-\hat{s}}{4p_a p_c} \left[2 + \theta_a^2 + 2\theta_a \cos(\phi_a - \phi_c) + \theta_a^2 \cos[2(\phi_a - \phi_c)] \right] .$$

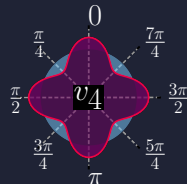
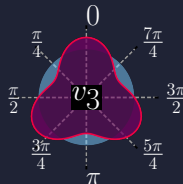
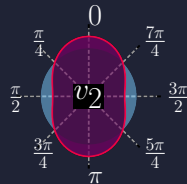
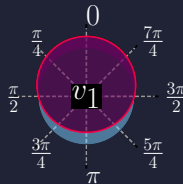


v_n Azimuthal Anisotropy

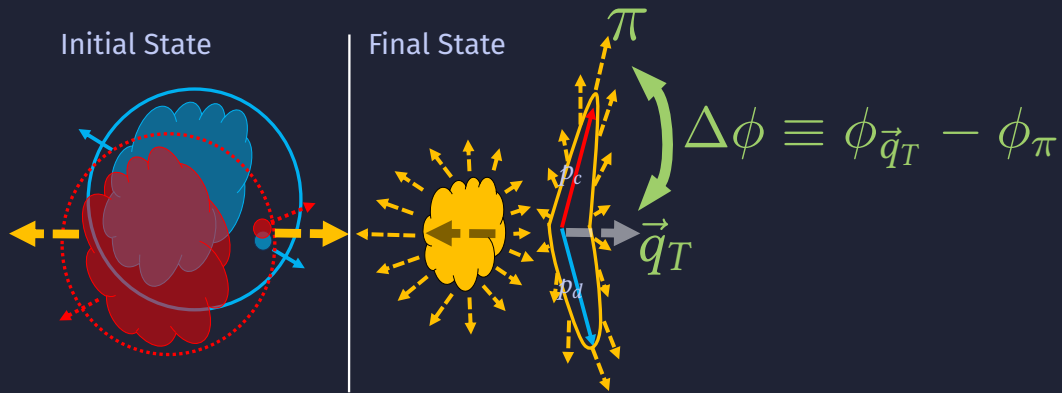
Azimuthal momentum correlated with soft bulk (event plane)

$$\frac{dN}{d\phi} \propto 1 + \sum_n 2v_n \cos[n(\phi - \Psi_n)] \quad (6)$$

$$v_n = 1 + 0.25 \cos(n\theta)$$



TMD Scattering



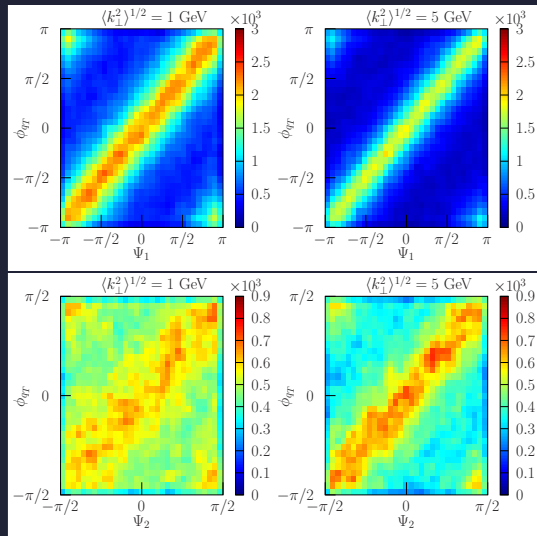
Simple Pythia Simulation:

- Single Hard Scattering => 2 initiating partons + 2 remnants
- Generate k_T for each initiating parton => Each balanced by its remnant
- Lund String Hadronization connects final parton to remnant

Pythia Simulation

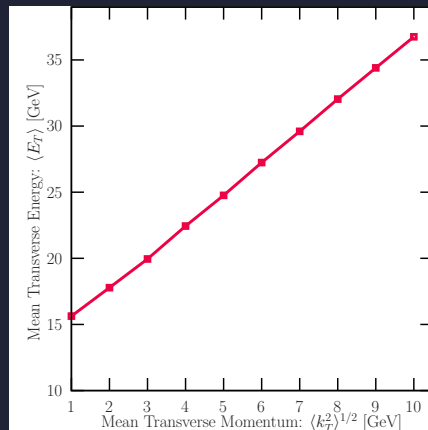
Correlation:

- » Event plane $\Psi = \frac{1}{n} \arg[Q]$
with $Q_n = \frac{1}{\sqrt{M}} \sum_j^M e^{in\phi_j}$,
- » Balance momentum $\phi_{\vec{q}}$.



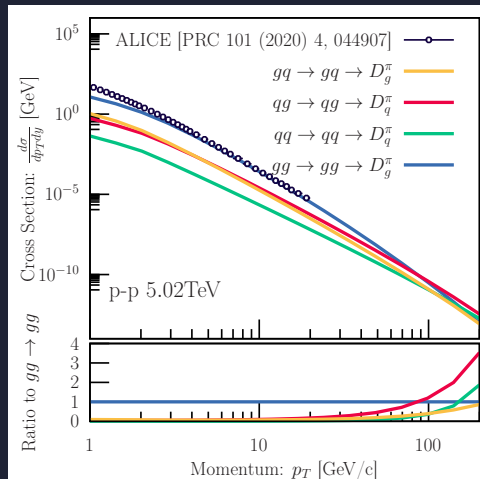
Correlation:

- » $\langle E_T \rangle$ at FoCal $3.9 \leq \eta \leq 5.0$
- » Mean transverse momentum $\langle k_T^2 \rangle$ of hard parton



Setup

$gg \rightarrow gg \Rightarrow$ Most relevant for kinematics



⁰ X. Guo [PRD58 \(1998\)](#), R. J. Fries [PRD68 \(2003\)](#), A. Majumder and B. Muller [PRC77 \(2008\)](#)

Setup

Factorization $x \otimes k_{\perp} \Rightarrow$ Approximate to $p - A$

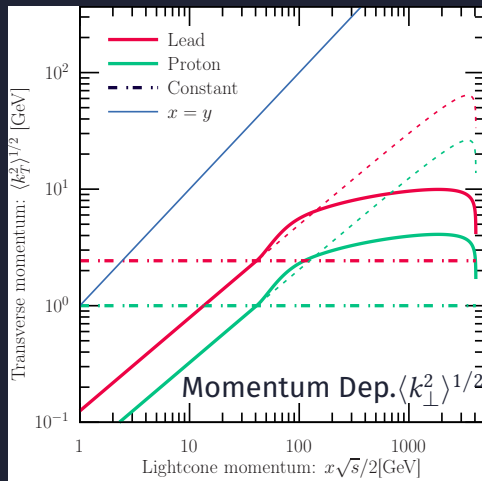
$$f(x, k_{\perp}) = \frac{4\pi}{\langle k_{\perp}^2 \rangle} e^{-k_{\perp}^2 / \langle k_{\perp}^2 \rangle} f(x), \quad (7)$$

$$\langle k_{\perp}^2 \rangle_{p-Pb} = A^{1/3} \langle k_{\perp}^2 \rangle_{p-p}. \quad (8)$$

Soffer Bound: $b \leq 1$ and $B \leq 1$

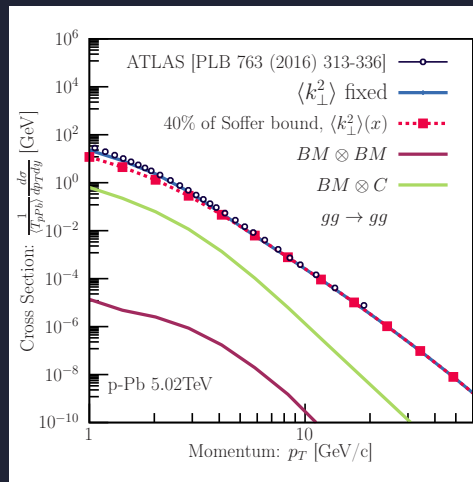
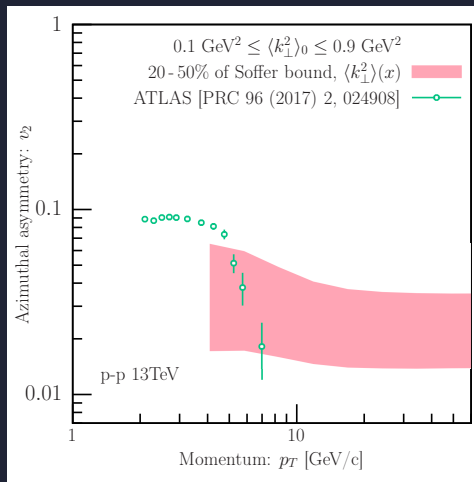
$$\frac{k_{\perp}^2}{2M^2} \left| h^{\perp g}(x, k_{\perp}) \right| = b \cdot f(x, k_{\perp}), \quad (9)$$

$$\frac{k_{\perp}^2}{2M^2} \left| H^{\perp g}(x, k_{\perp}) \right| = B \cdot D(x, k_{\perp}). \quad (10)$$

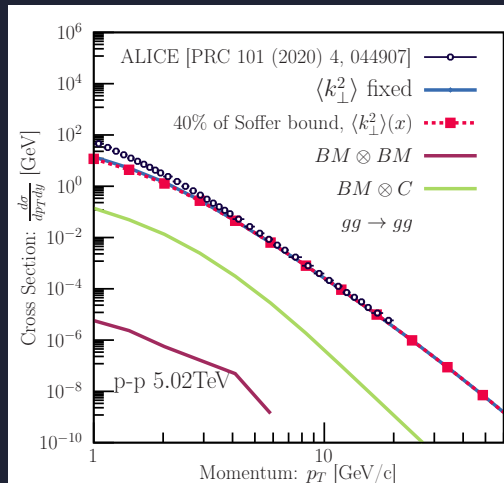
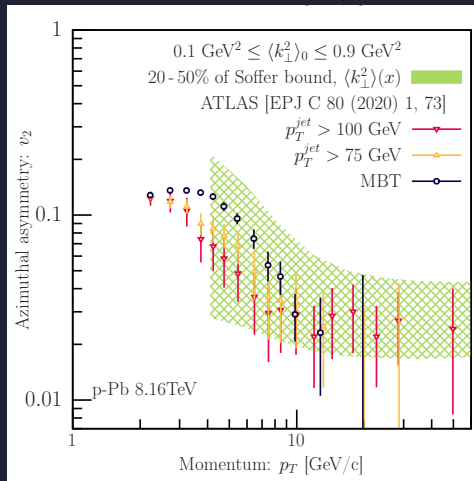


⁰ X. Guo [PRD58 \(1998\)](#), R. J. Fries [PRD68 \(2003\)](#), A. Majumder and B. Muller [PRC77 \(2008\)](#)

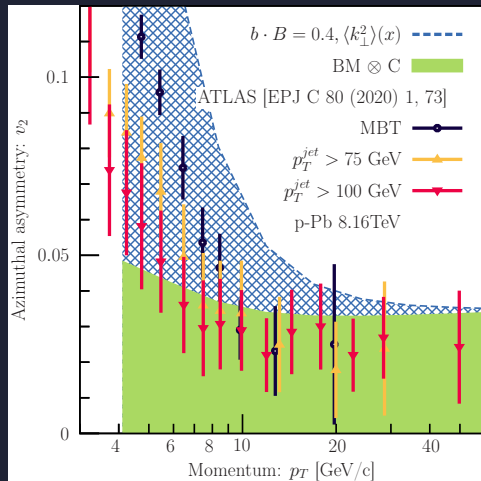
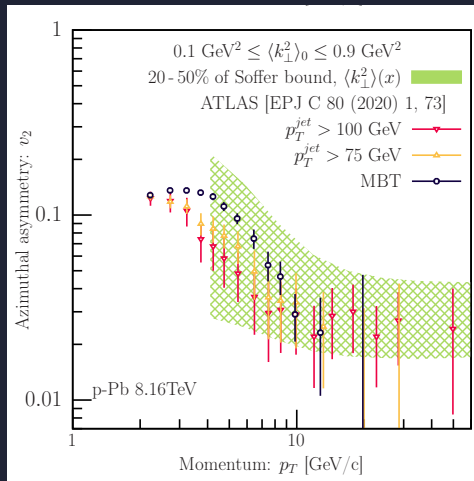
$p - p$ Results



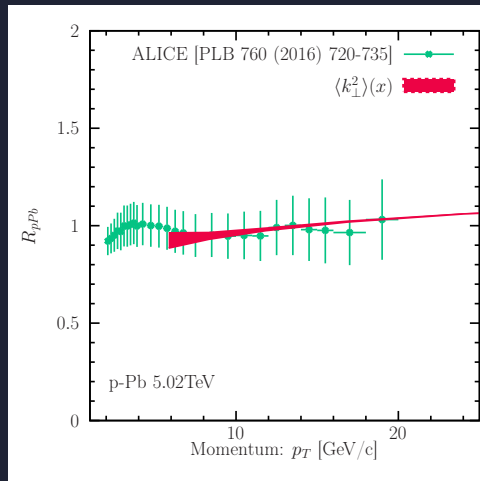
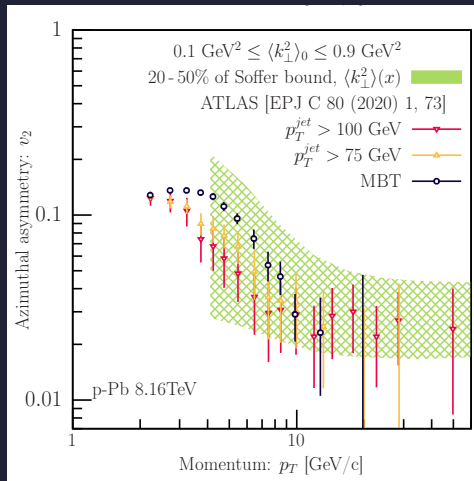
$p - Pb$ Results



$p - Pb$ Results



$p - Pb$ Results

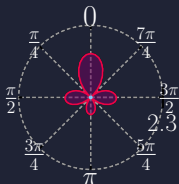


Angular Distribution $\Delta\phi = \phi_q - \phi_\pi$

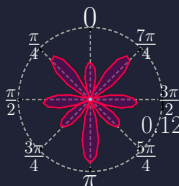
pp



Unpolarized



$\text{BM} \otimes \text{C}$



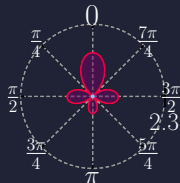
$\text{BM} \otimes \text{BM}$

Angular Distribution $\Delta\phi = \phi_q - \phi_\pi$

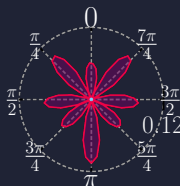
pp



Unpolarized



$\text{BM} \otimes \text{C}$

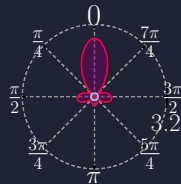


$\text{BM} \otimes \text{BM}$

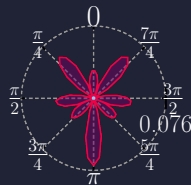
pPb



Unpolarized

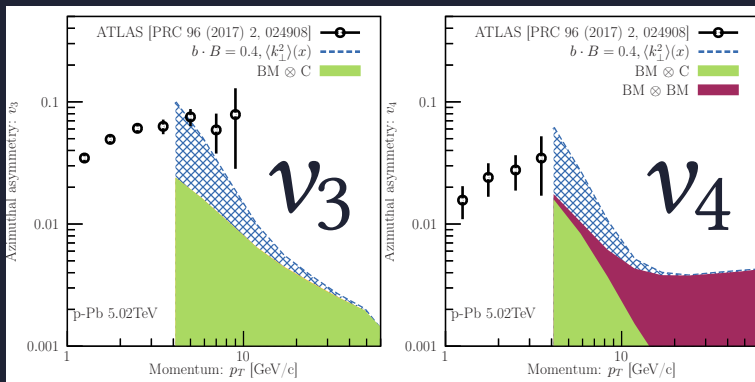


$\text{BM} \otimes \text{C}$



$\text{BM} \otimes \text{BM}$

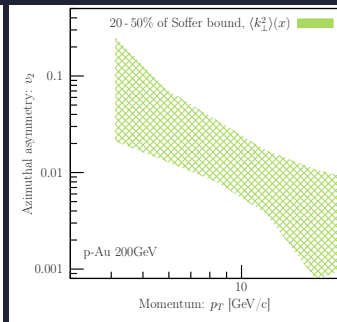
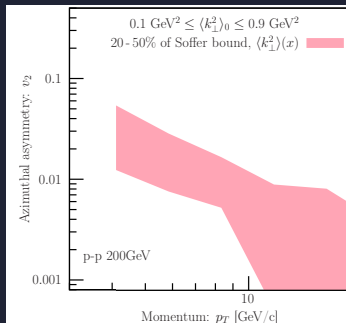
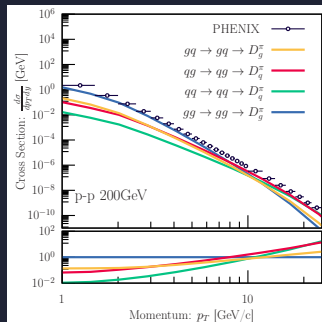
Higher Harmonics: v_3 & v_4



Non-zero v_3 and v_4 at high- p_T

- » BM $\otimes$ C important for v_3
- » BM $\otimes$ BM becomes more important for v_4

RHIC Predictions



- Quark becomes more important at RHIC
- Contributions from $\text{BM} \otimes \text{BM}$ for quarks

Conclusions

- Small systems constitute a unique opportunity to understand hard/soft correlation in the initial state
- Initial state correlations can allow for access to TMDs
- Going beyond simple $A^{1/3}$ approximation => Compute Spin-Dependent rescatterings