

# Recent theory developments on the physics of quark gluon plasma

---

**Paolo Parotto**, Università di Torino e INFN Torino

27 Febbraio 2024, Trento

Sesto Incontro Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare, INFN-TIFPA



**UNIVERSITÀ  
DI TORINO**



Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare

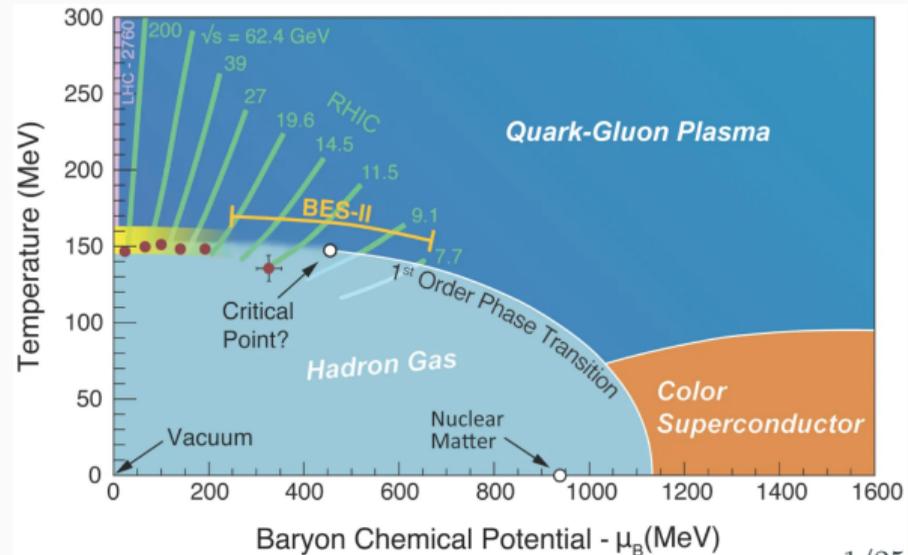
# The quark gluon plasma and the QCD phase diagram

**What:** deconfined and chirally restored medium

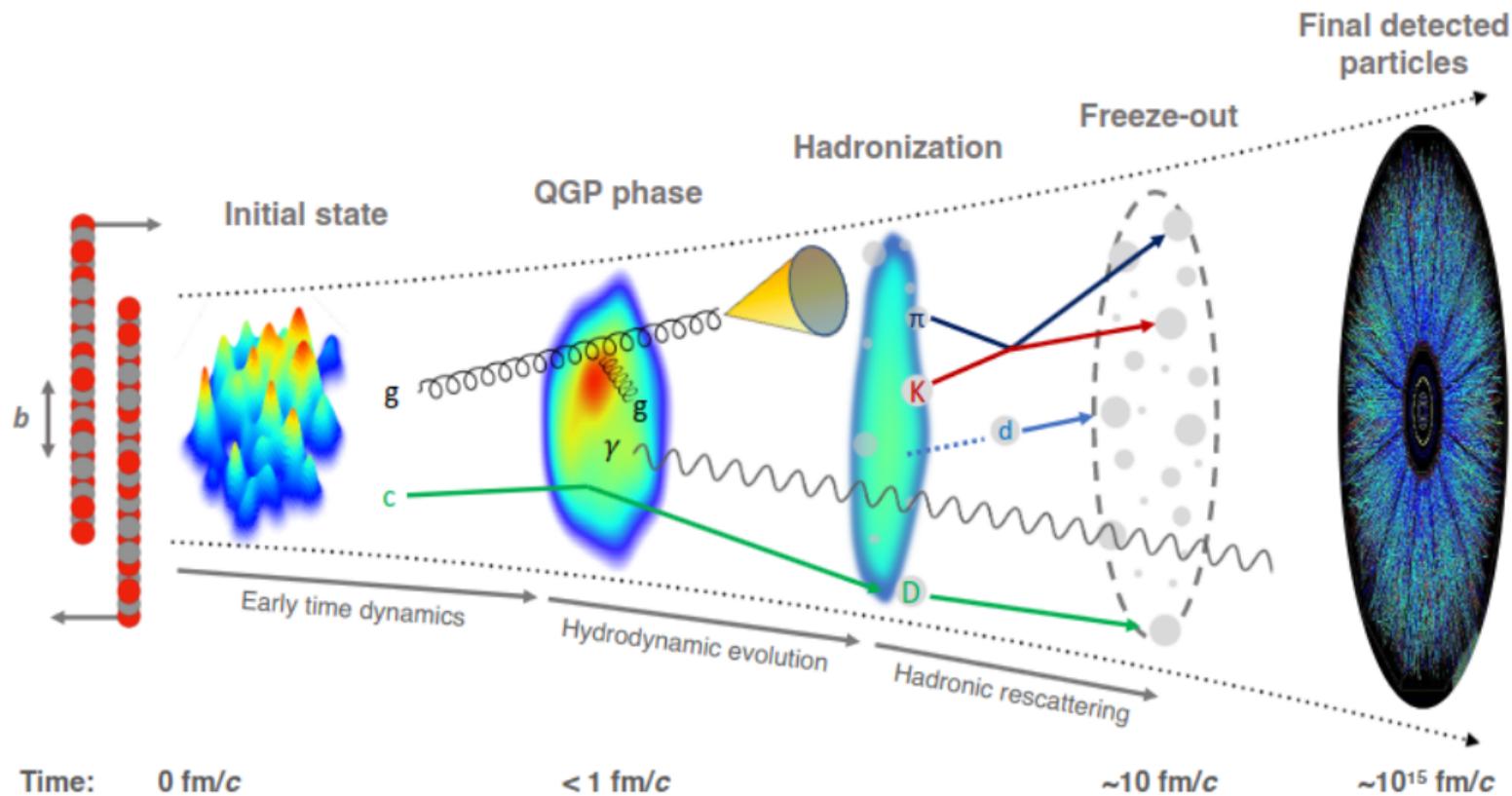
**Where/when:** early Universe down to  $\sim 10^{-6} - 10^{-5}$  s after the Big Bang, AND even sufficient energy, we can re-create it in relativistic heavy-ion collisions

Summarize our knowledge in the **QCD phase diagram**, with evidence from experiment + theory

- Hadron phase at low  $T/\mu$ , QGP at high  $T/\mu$
- Crossover at zero density at  $T \simeq 160$  MeV
- **Heavy-ion collisions** probe high  $T$ , varying density with energy scans
- Ordinary nuclear matter at  $T \simeq 0$  and  $\mu_B \simeq 922$  MeV
- Critical point? Exotic phases?



# Heavy-ion collisions: the “standard model”



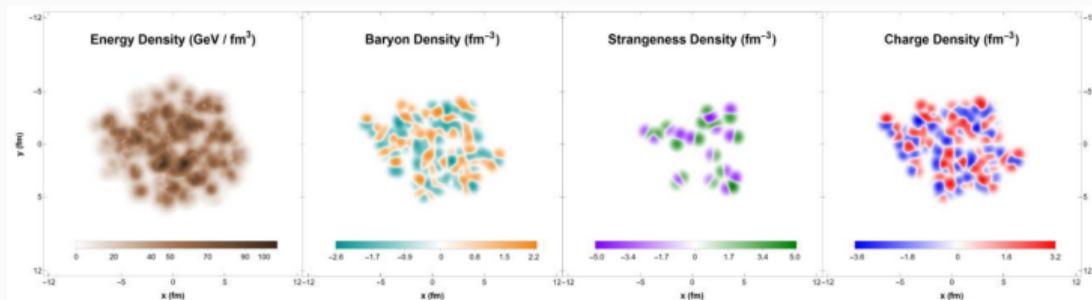
# Hydrodynamic simulations

The bulk evolution of the system is described by **relativistic viscous hydrodynamics**:

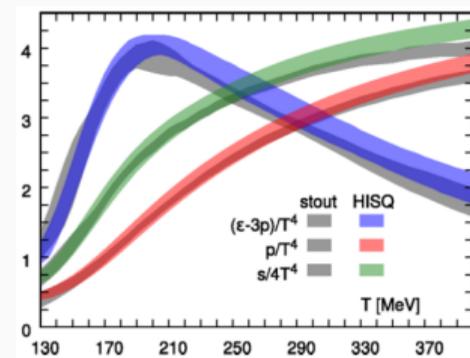
$$\partial_\mu T^{\mu\nu} = 0 \quad \partial_\mu N^\mu = 0$$

→ evolution from conservation equations

Properties of the medium is encoded in **transport coefficients**: shear viscosity  $\eta/s$ , bulk viscosity  $\zeta/s$ , ...



Plumberg *et al.*, 2312.07415



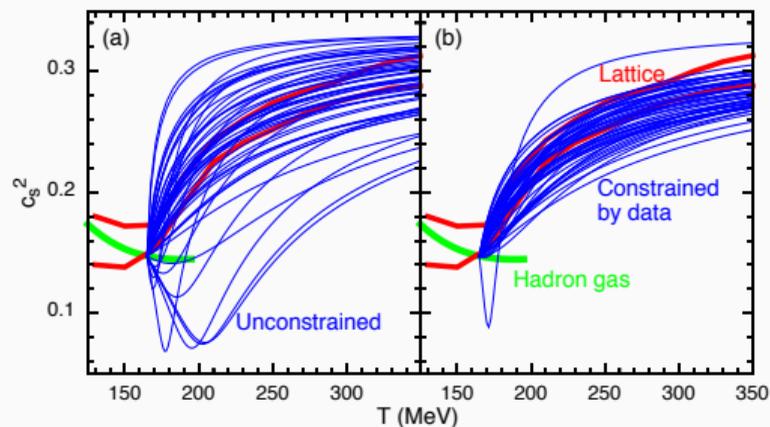
Borsanyi *et al.*, PLB 730 (2014) 99

**Input:** initial conditions, equation of state (to close the set of equations)

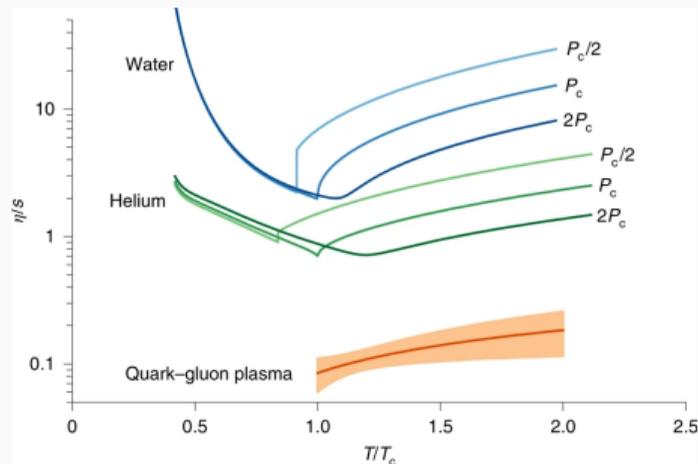
**Output:** after hadronization and an afterburner, particle spectra →  $R_{AA}$ ,  $v_2$ , ...

# Hydrodynamic simulations

Hydrodynamic simulations can reproduce experimental data and constrain the physics  
Bayesian analyses have been used to constrain e.g. the **equation of state** and the **viscosity**



Pratt *et al.*, PRL 114 (2015) 202301

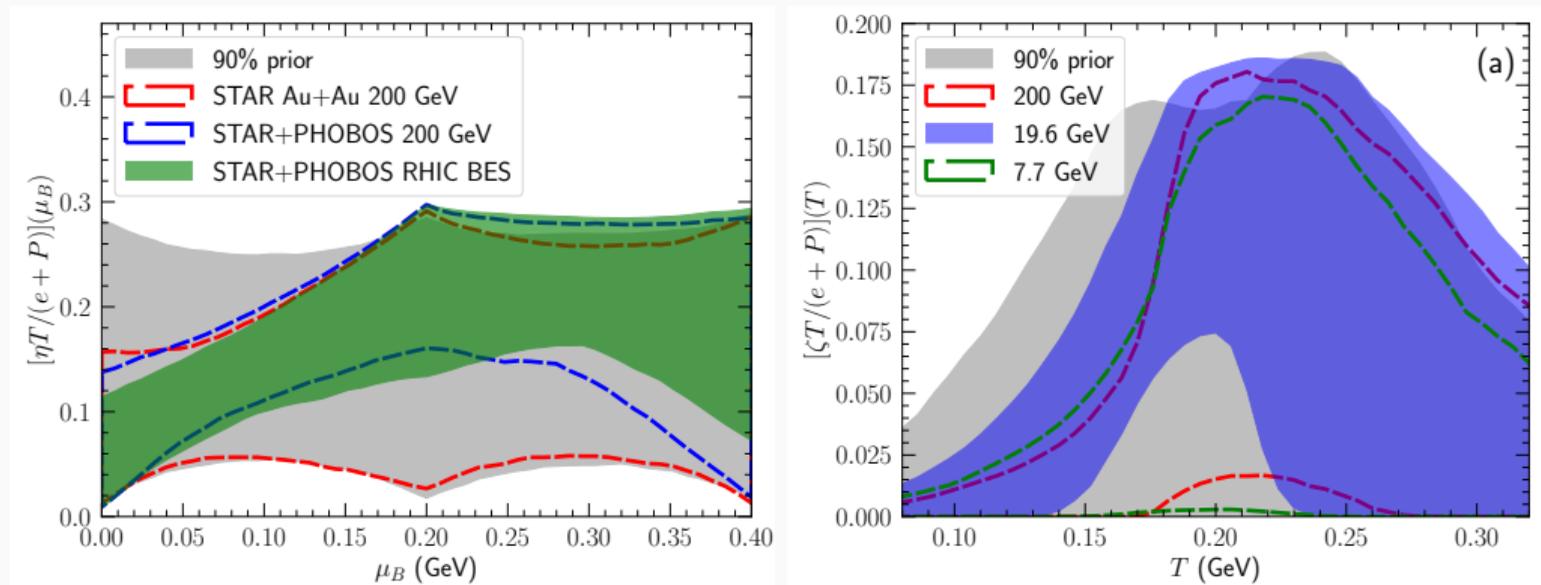


Bernhard *et al.*, Nature Phys. 15 (2019) 1113

- Posterior equation of state in agreement with theoretical calculations
- QGP is the most perfect fluid known to humanity!

# Hydrodynamic simulations: shear and bulk viscosity

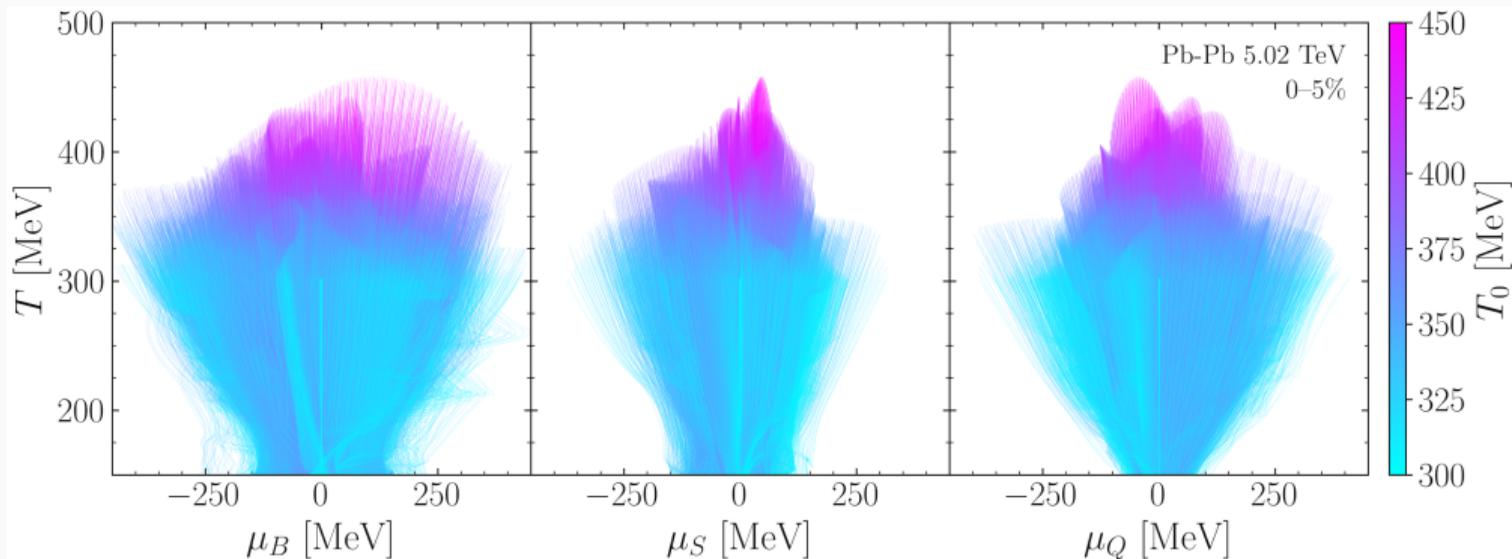
Large scale Bayesian analysis on Au+Au RHIC data @  $\sqrt{s} = 200, 19.6, 7.7$  GeV



**Very tight constraints** on the chemical potential dependence of shear and bulk viscosity

# Hydrodynamic simulations: $B, Q, S$ conserved charges

Full trajectories of hydro cells until hadronization. We can have a picture of density fluctuations in all  $B, Q, S$ , as a function of  $T$



Plumberg *et al.*, 2312.07415

Results obtained with a 4D lattice QCD-based equation of state. Big challenge for eos, very large  $\mu$  needed even at LHC, where  $\langle \mu_i \rangle = 0$

# Thermodynamic description of QCD

The thermodynamics of QCD is of fundamental interest, in itself and as input for a number of applications

- **Transition line** necessary for models, information on phase structure

$$\frac{T_c(\mu_B)}{T_c(\mu_B = 0)} = 1 + \kappa_2 \left( \frac{\mu_B}{T_c(\mu_B)} \right)^2 + \kappa_4 \left( \frac{\mu_B}{T_c(\mu_B)} \right)^4 + \mathcal{O}(\mu_B^6)$$

- **Equation of state:**  $p, s, n_i, \epsilon$ , input for hydro and models, from zero to large density
- **Fluctuations of conserved charges**

$$\chi_{ijk}^{BQS}(T) = \left. \frac{\partial^{i+j+k} (p/T^4)}{\partial (\mu_B/T)^i \partial (\mu_Q/T)^j \partial (\mu_S/T)^k} \right|_{\mu=0}$$

- Connection to experiment (cumulants of net-proton, net-charge, etc.)
- Signatures for the QCD critical point



# The equation of state of QCD

- Lattice QCD is the most robust tool to determine QCD thermodynamics
- Known at  $\mu_B = 0$  to high precision for a few years now (continuum limit, physical quark masses)  $\rightarrow$  Agreement between different calculations (2013-2014)

From grandcanonical partition function  $\mathcal{Z}$

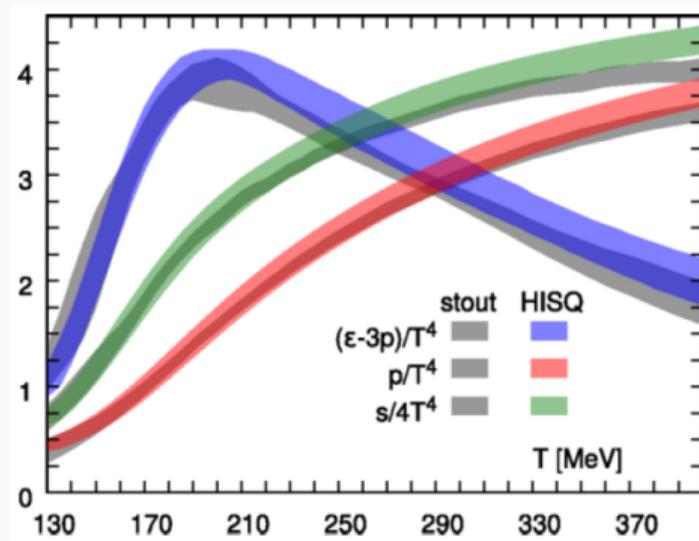
\* **Pressure:**  $p = -k_B T \frac{\partial \ln \mathcal{Z}}{\partial V}$

\* **Entropy density:**  $s = \left( \frac{\partial p}{\partial T} \right)_{\mu_i}$

\* **Charge densities:**  $n_i = \left( \frac{\partial p}{\partial \mu_i} \right)_{T, \mu_{j \neq i}}$

\* **Energy density:**  $\epsilon = Ts - p + \sum_i \mu_i n_i$

\* **Speed of sound:**  $c_s^2 = \left( \frac{\partial p}{\partial \epsilon} \right)_{s/n_B}$



Borsányi *et al.*, PLB 730 (2014) 99  
Bazavov *et al.*, PRD 90 (2014) 094503

# Finite density: the sign/complex action problem

Statistical weight becomes complex if  $\mu_B$  is real  $\Rightarrow$  sampling algorithms break down

$$Z(V, T, \mu) = \int \mathcal{D}U \det M(U, \mu) e^{-S_G(U)}$$

Not if  $\mu = 0$ , and not for imaginary chemical potential ( $\mu^2 < 0$ ).

Several alternatives nowadays:

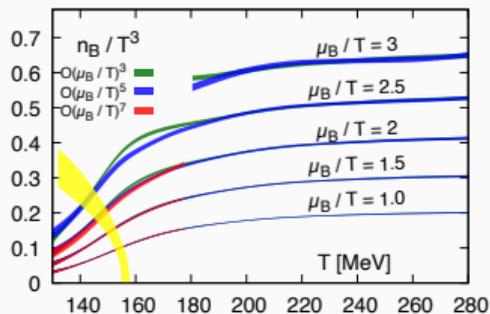
- Taylor expansion:

$$\frac{p(T, \mu_B)}{T^4} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} c_{2n}(T) \left(\frac{\mu_B}{T}\right)^{2n}, \quad c_n(T) = \frac{1}{n!} \chi_n^B(T, \mu_B = 0)$$

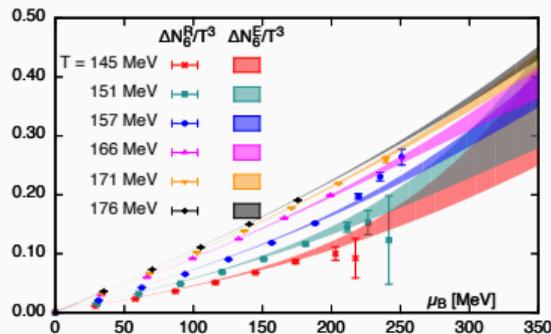
- Analytical continuation from imaginary  $\mu_B$
- Reweighting: single parameter, multi-parameter, phase quenched, sign quenched

# Taylor, analytic continuation, reweighting

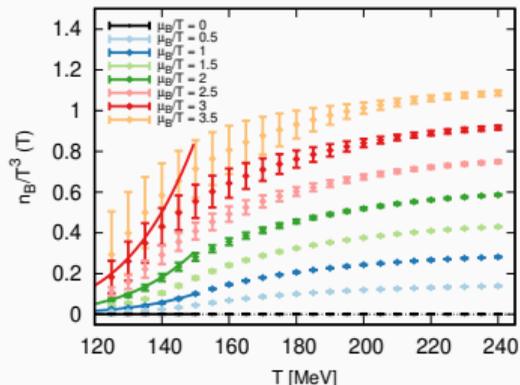
## Taylor expansion Bollweg+ '22



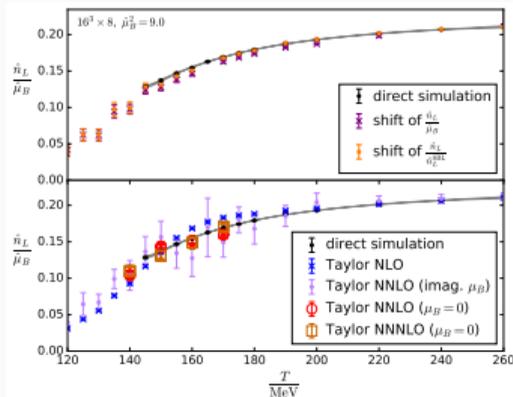
## Approximate reweighting Mondal+ '21



## Alternative expansion Borsanyi+ '21, '22



## Reweighting Borsanyi+ '22

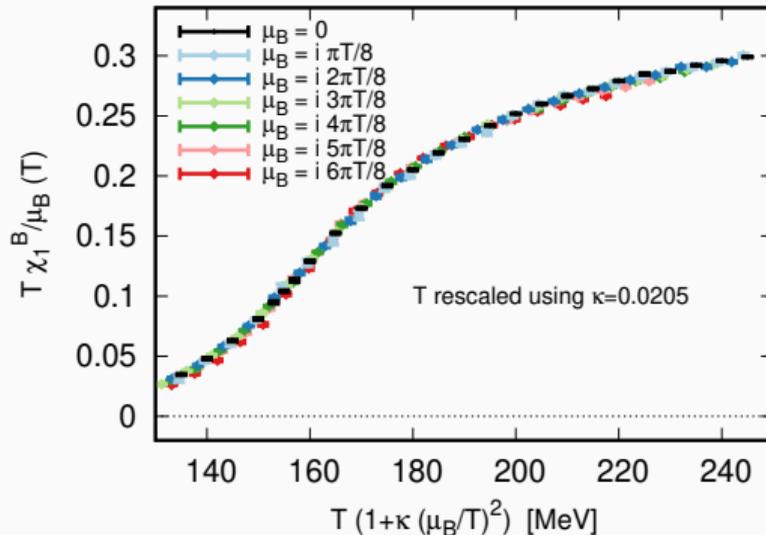
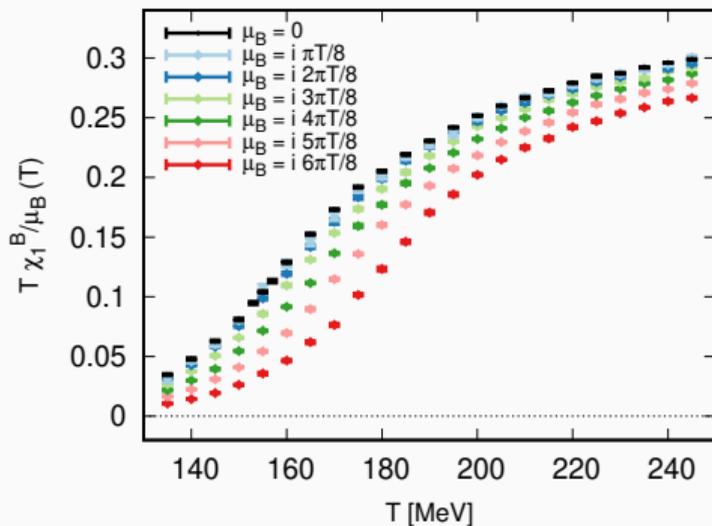


# Finite density: an alternative expansion scheme

One *observes* in imaginary  $\mu_B$  simulations that  $\chi_1^B(T, \hat{\mu}_B)$  differs from  $\chi_2^B(T, 0)$  only by a redefinition of  $T$ :

$$\frac{\chi_1^B(T, \hat{\mu}_B)}{\hat{\mu}_B} = \chi_2^B(T', 0),$$

$$\text{with } T' = T (1 + \kappa \hat{\mu}_B^2)$$



## Equation of state at finite $\hat{\mu}_B$

- Allow for more than  $\mathcal{O}(\hat{\mu}^2)$  expansion of  $T'$  and let the coefficients be  $T$ -dependent:

$$\frac{\chi_1^B(T, \hat{\mu}_B)}{\hat{\mu}_B} = \chi_2^B(T', 0), \quad \text{with} \quad T' = T(1 + \kappa_2(T) \hat{\mu}_B^2 + \kappa_4(T) \hat{\mu}_B^4)$$

(we are simply re-organizing the Taylor expansion via an expansion in  $\Delta T = T - T'$ )

- Determine  $\kappa_2(T)$ ,  $\kappa_4(T)$  (from  $\mu_B = 0$  or imaginary)
- Thermodynamics at finite  $\mu_B$  is reconstructed from the same ansatz:

$$\frac{n_B(T, \hat{\mu}_B)}{T^3} = \hat{\mu}_B \chi_2^B(T', 0)$$

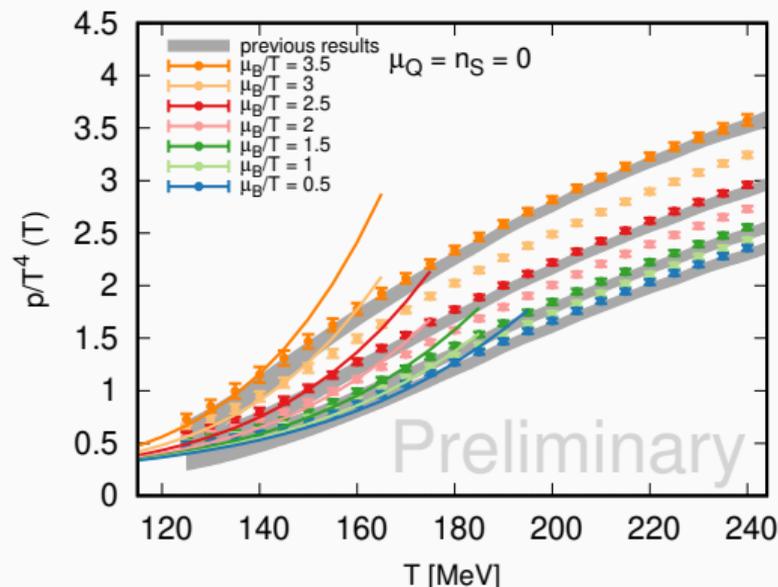
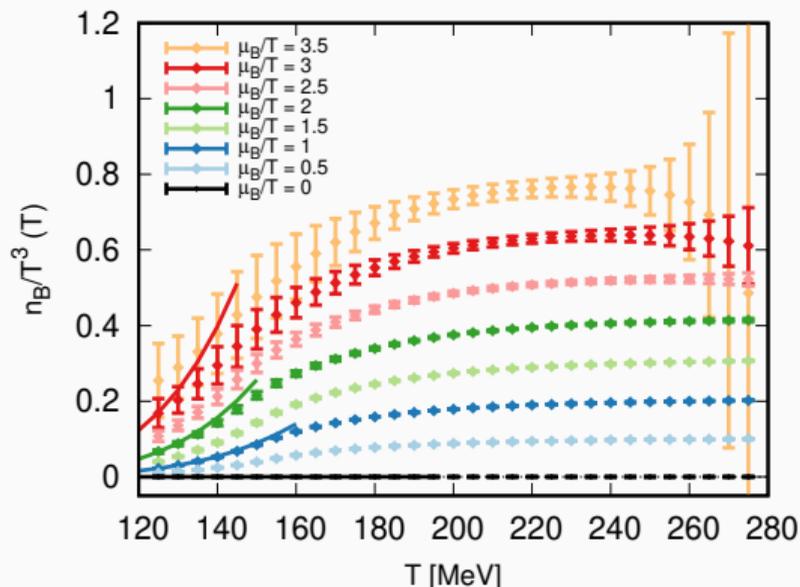
From the baryon density  $n_B$  one finds the pressure, then all other quantities

$$\frac{p(T, \hat{\mu}_B)}{T^4} = \frac{p(T, 0)}{T^4} + \int_0^{\hat{\mu}_B} d\hat{\mu}'_B \frac{n_B(T, \hat{\mu}'_B)}{T^3} \quad \longrightarrow \quad s, \epsilon, c_s^2, \dots$$

# Equation of state at finite $\hat{\mu}_B$

Thermodynamic quantities have uncertainties well under control up to  $\hat{\mu}_B \simeq 3.5$

No pathological (non-monotonic) behavior typical of other expansions

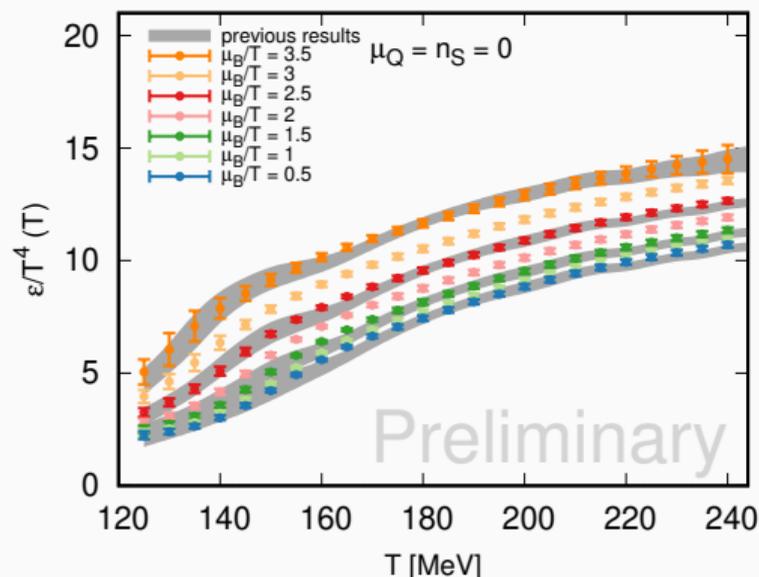
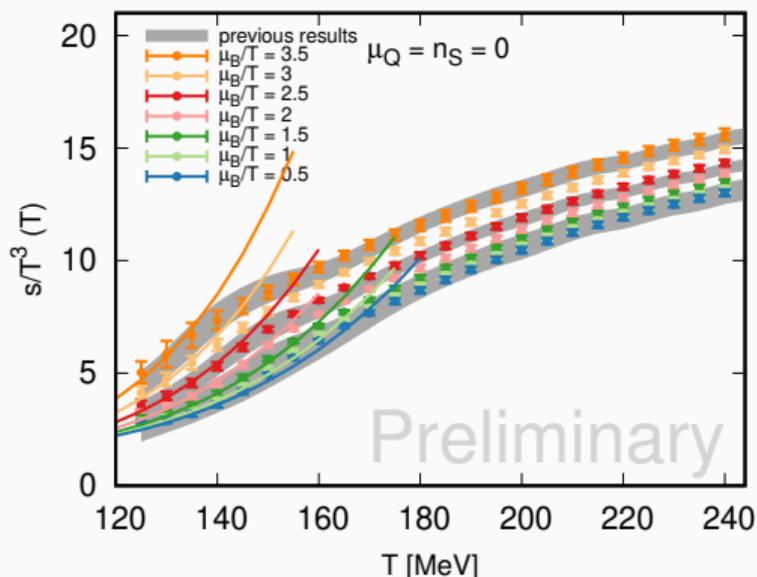


**Note:** recently reduced errors by improving precision at  $\mu_B = 0$

# Equation of state at finite $\hat{\mu}_B$

Thermodynamic quantities have uncertainties well under control up to  $\hat{\mu}_B \simeq 3.5$

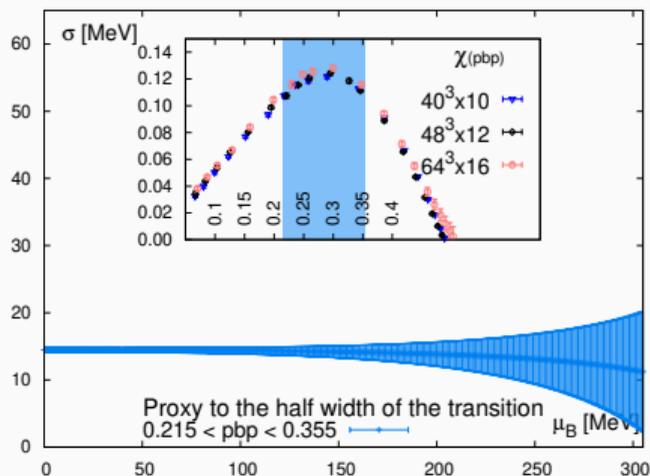
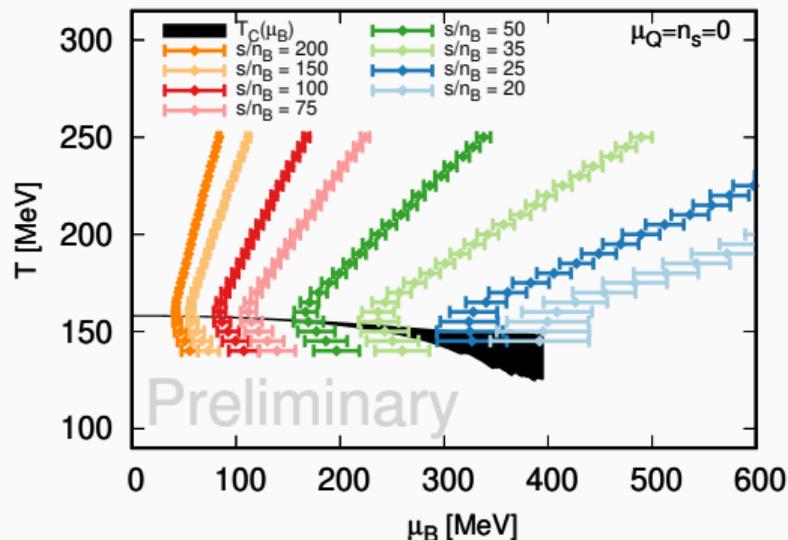
No pathological (non-monotonic) behavior typical of other expansions



**Note:** recently reduced errors by improving precision at  $\mu_B = 0$

# Equation of state at finite $\hat{\mu}_B$

Very broad coverage in  $\mu_B$  with small errors, no sign of critical lensing



Borsányi *et al.*, PRL 125 (2020) 052001

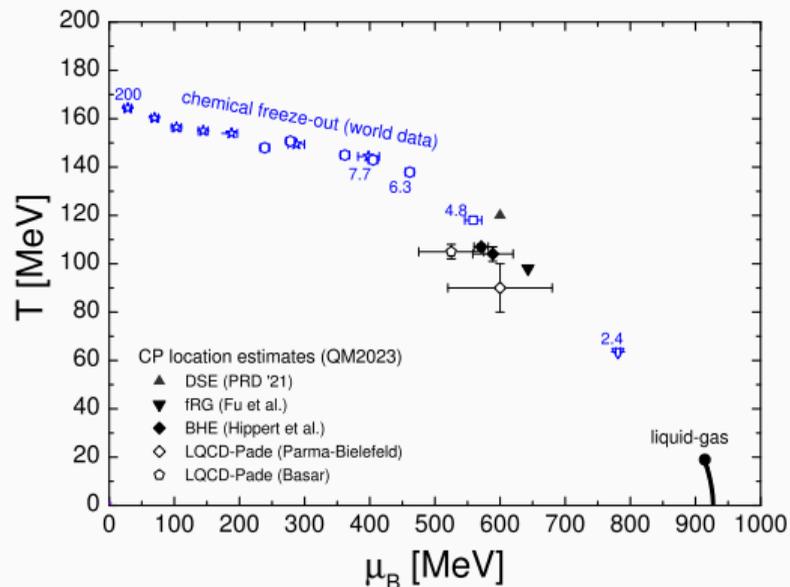
Compatible with results on the width of crossover transition at finite  $\mu_B$

Hydro with BQS has shown the need to extend to 4D eos Abuali, PP *et al.*, in preparation

# The QCD critical point

The crossover is “expected” to turn first order at larger  $\mu_B$

Critical point would be in the same universality class as 3D Ising model

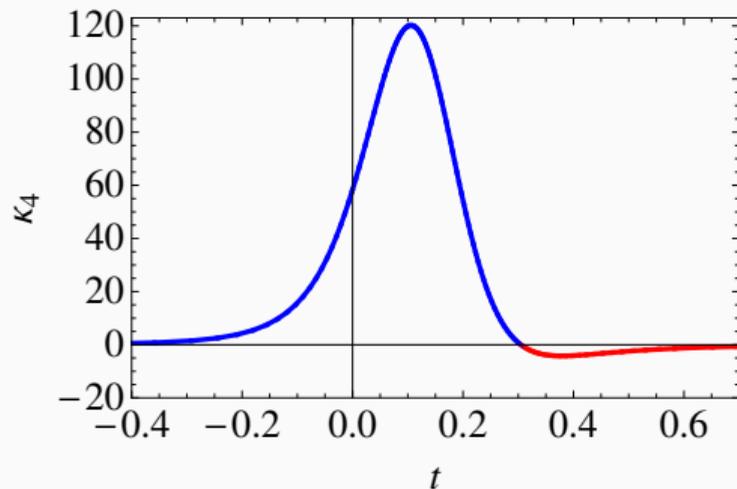
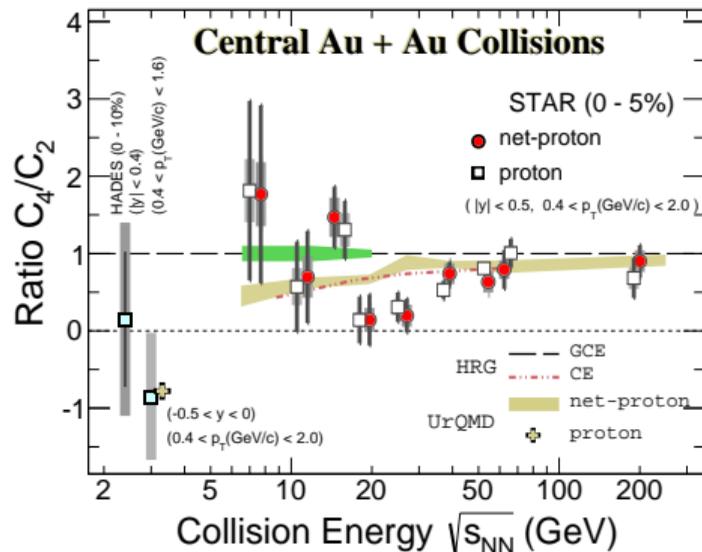


Vovchenko, 2312.09528

→ recent estimates seem to “converge”

# Looking for critical behavior: experiment

Baryon fluctuations diverge at the critical point with increasing powers of the correlation length  $\rightarrow$  higher order net-proton fluctuations are most promising

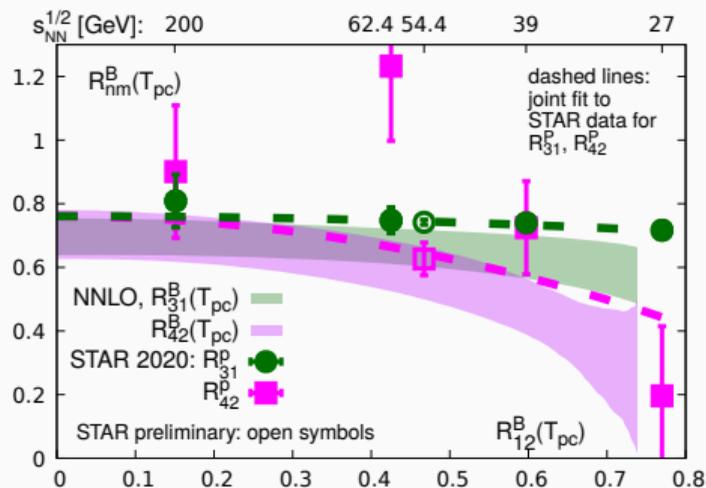
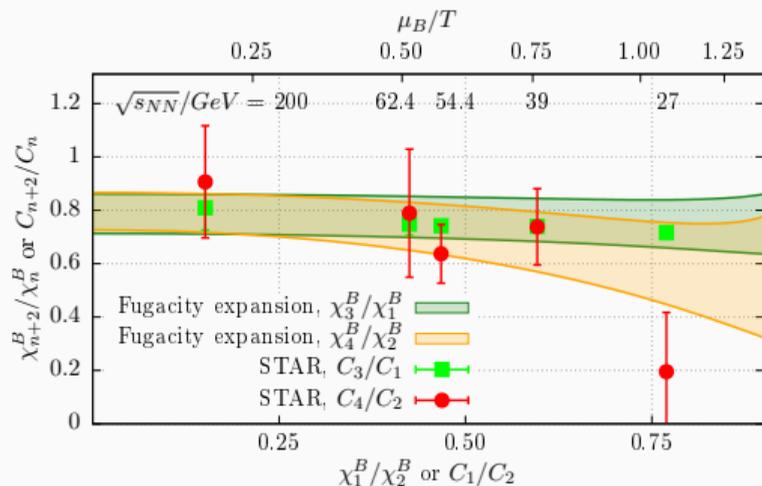


Suggestive behaviour, though errors are still large  $\rightarrow$  STAR data coming soon

# Looking for critical behavior: extrapolations

Extrapolations from lattice can be made for fluctuations too, e.g.:

$$\chi_2^B(T, \mu_B) = \chi_2^B(T) + \frac{1}{2}\chi_4^B(T) + \frac{1}{24}\chi_6^B(T) + \dots$$



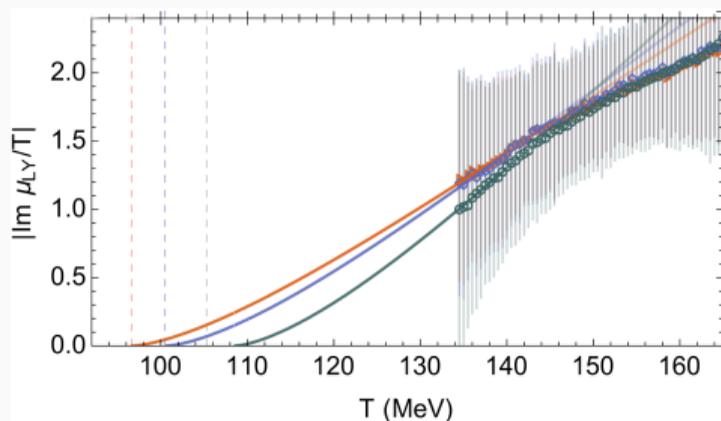
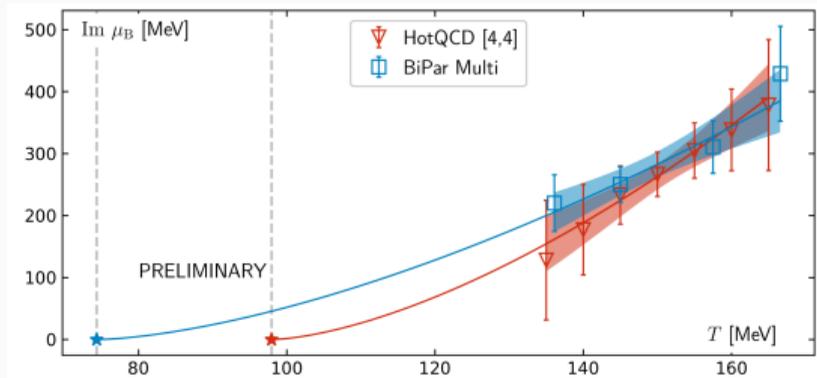
Lattice results similar to experiment, hard to draw conclusions for now

# Looking for critical behavior: Lee-Yang edge singularities

Complex zeroes of partition function (LYE edges) move to real  $\mu$  at critical point

Zeroes from Padé fits to lattice QCD fluctuations, then universality-motivated  $T$ -fit

$$\text{Im}(\mu_{LY})(T) = A(T - T_c)^{\beta\delta}$$

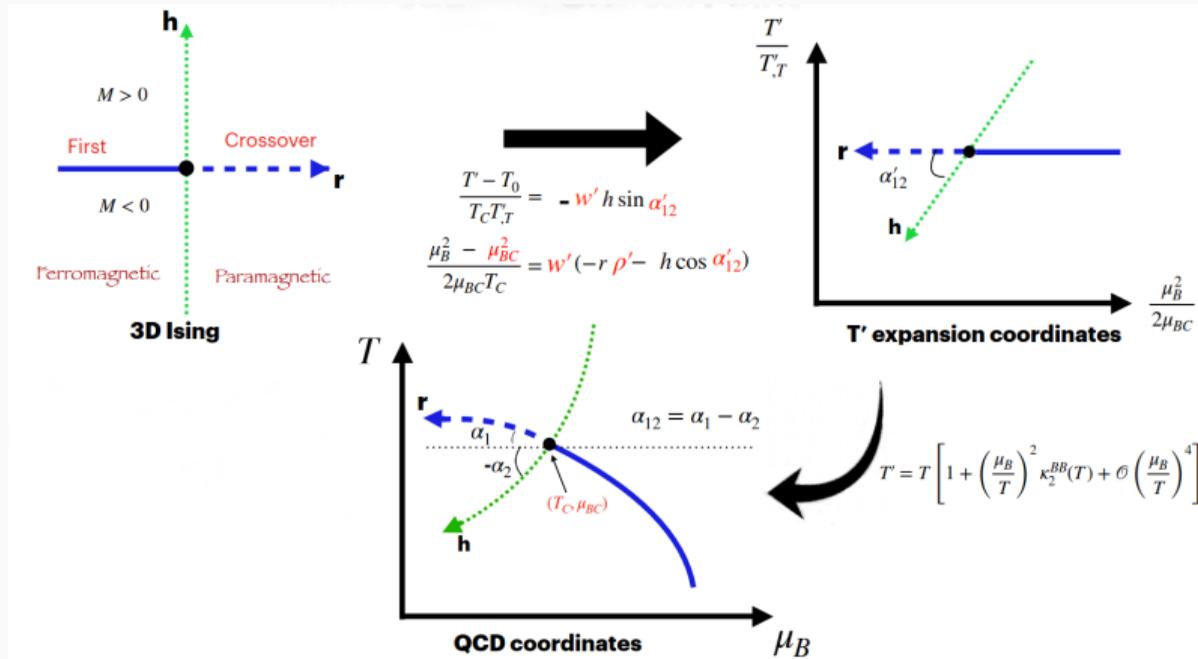


$$\Rightarrow T_c \sim 100 \pm 30 \text{ MeV}$$

- Assumes critical point exists and we are close to it
- Errors are large and hard to constrain

# Looking for critical behavior: critical equation of state

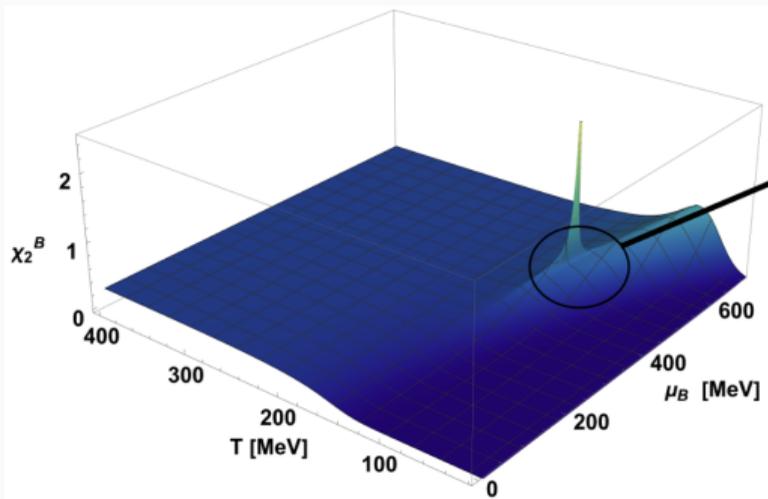
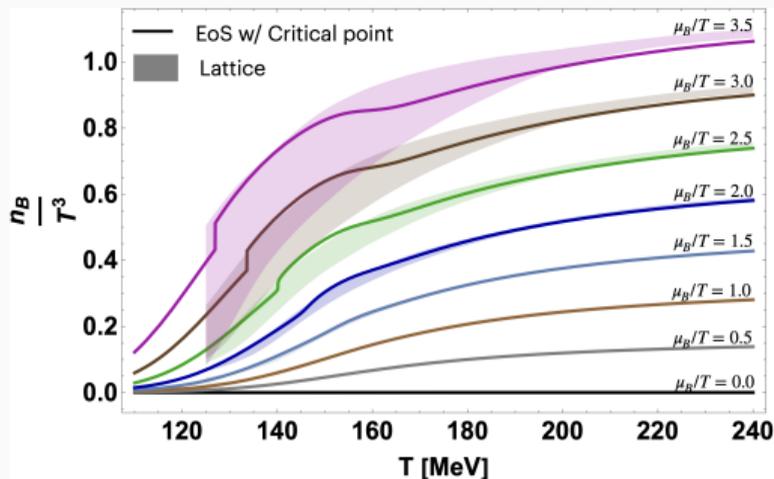
Combine lattice QCD alternative expansion scheme with 3D Ising critical behaviour



Family of equations of state for  $T = 10 - 800 \text{ MeV}$ ,  $\mu_B = 0 - 700 \text{ MeV}$

# Looking for critical behavior: critical equation of state

By construction, the equations of state agree with lattice QCD at low  $\mu_B$ , AND have the correct critical behavior near the CP

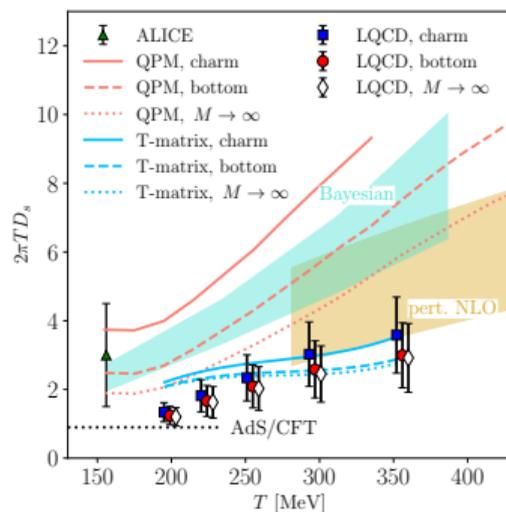
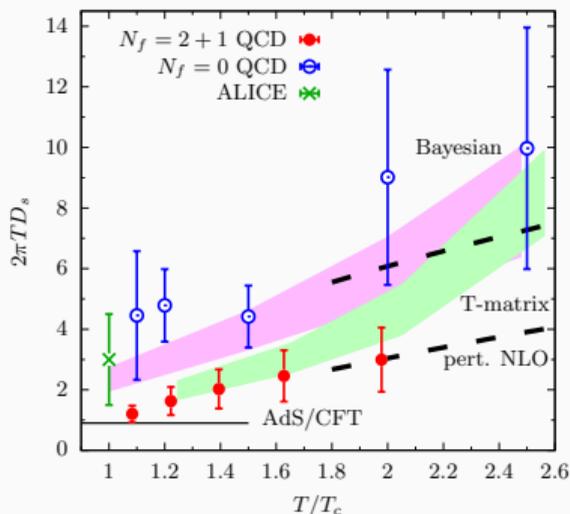


- **Thermodynamic consistency** constrains parameters, including location of CP
- As **input to hydro simulations**  $\rightarrow$  comparison with data provides further constraints

# A touch on heavy-flavour: heavy quark diffusion

Influence of the medium on heavy quarkonium encoded in **transport coefficients**

First dynamical lattice results for spatial diffusion coefficient  $D_s$

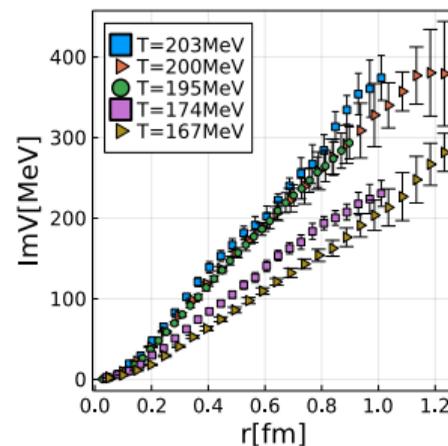
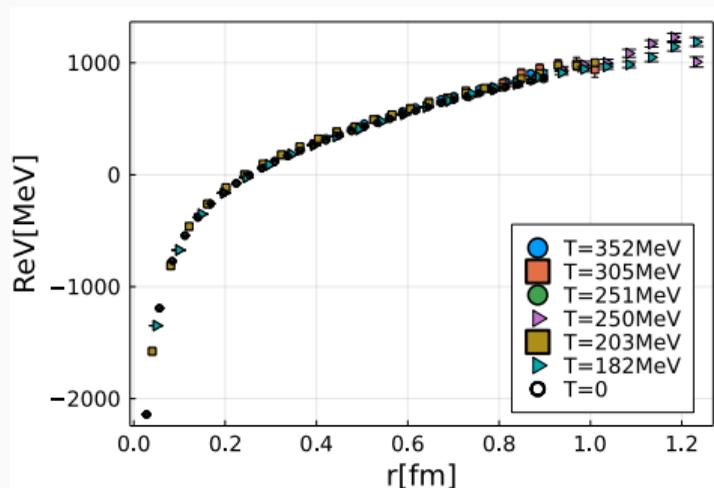


Even smaller than previous (quenched) calculations and than phenomenological estimates  
⇒ **very fast thermalization** of heavy quarks in the medium

# Heavy $Q\bar{Q}$ potential

Quarkonium is suppressed in the medium compared to vacuum (pp) events

Standard picture (Matsui, Satz) is that of dissolution by screening



New results on heavy quark-antiquark potential show no screening in the real part of the potential

The imaginary part of the potential still accounts for dissolution

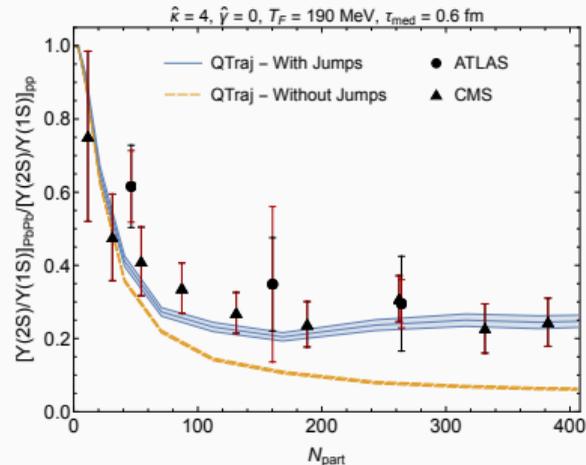
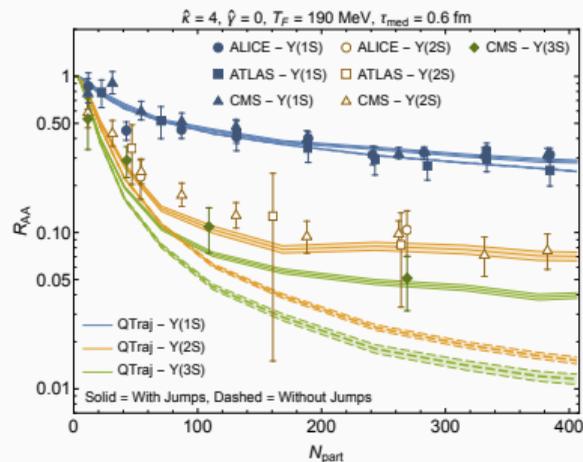
# Quarkonium: open quantum systems

Quarkonium is treated as an open quantum system in contact with the environment

Evolution of the density matrix  $\rho$  encodes all the information on the system. Lindblad equation with jump operators  $L_n$  that encode the non-unitary evolution of the system (imaginary potential)

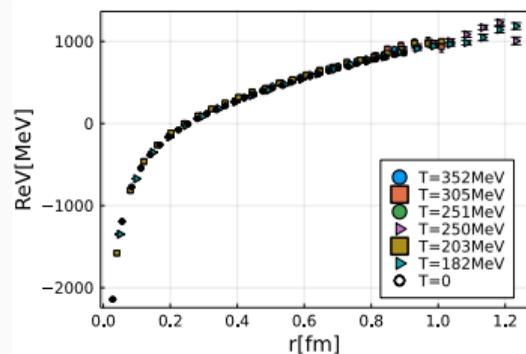
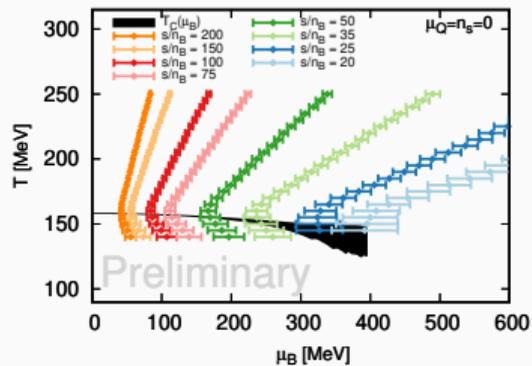
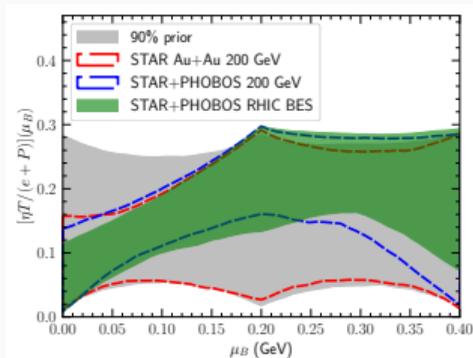
$$\frac{d\rho}{dt} = -i[H, \rho] + \sum_n \left( L_n \rho L_n^\dagger - \frac{1}{2} \{ L_n^\dagger L_n, \rho \} \right)$$

Inclusion of jumps needed for quantitative agreement with data



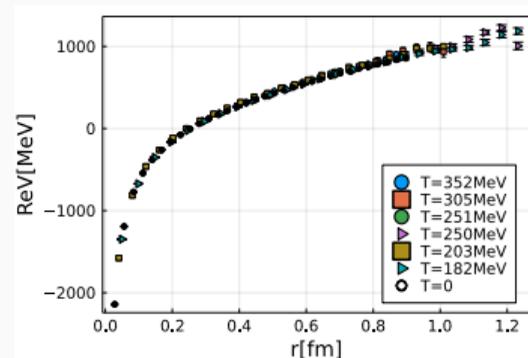
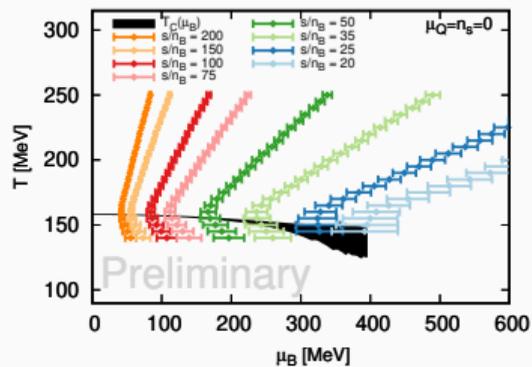
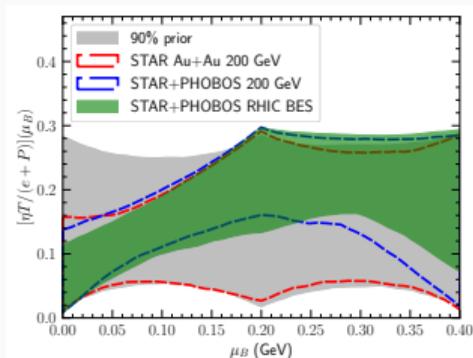
# Summary

New exciting results in all areas of QGP theory!



# Summary

New exciting results in all areas of QGP theory!

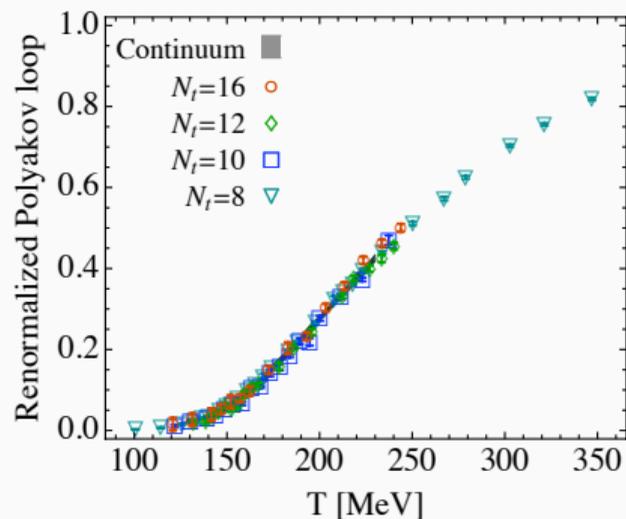
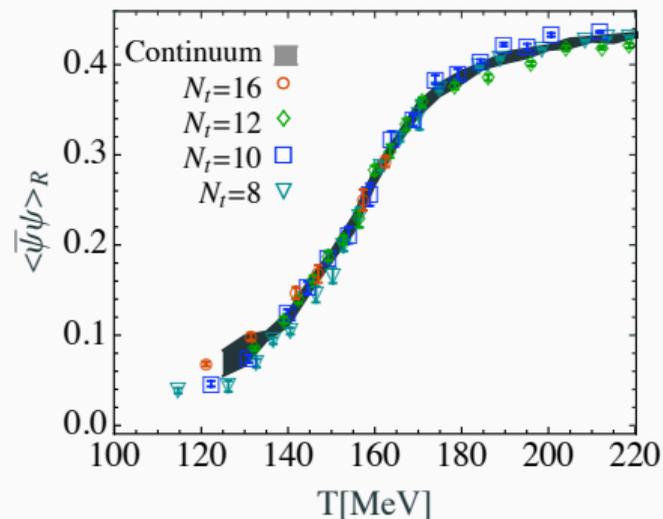


THANK YOU!

**BACKUP**

# Confinement and chiral symmetry breaking

At low temperature and density, quarks and gluons are **confined** inside hadrons. The approximate **chiral symmetry** of QCD is **spontaneously broken**

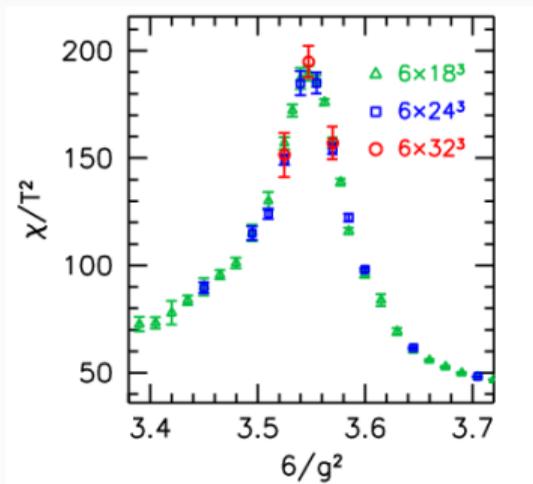


At large temperature and/or density, a **deconfined medium** is formed, with quasi-free quarks and gluons, with **effectively restored chiral symmetry**

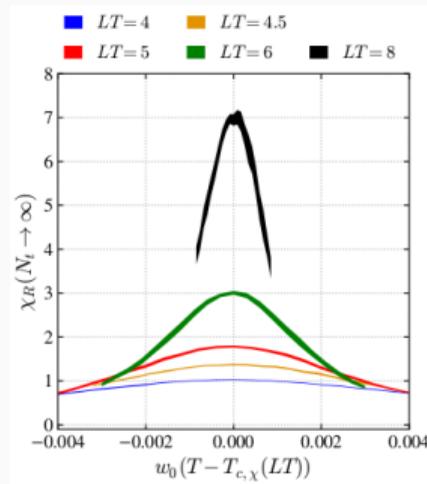
# The QCD transition: crossover vs. first order

On the lattice we study the volume scaling of certain quantities to determine the order of the transition

**Left:** physical masses



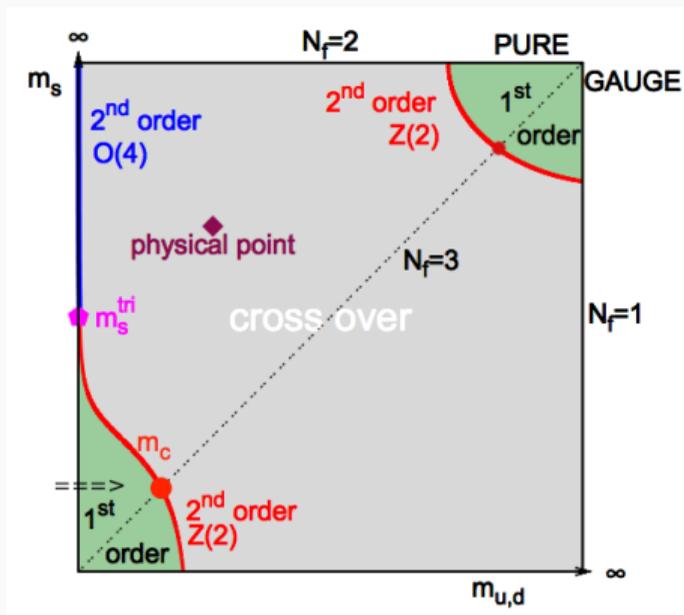
**Right:** infinite masses (pure gauge)



- For a crossover (left), the peak height is independent of the volume
- For a first order transition, it scales linearly with the volume

# The QCD transition: Columbia plot

As a function of the light (u,d) and strange quark masses, the order of the transition changes



- At the physical point  $m_s/m_{ud} \simeq 27$ , the transition is a smooth crossover!
- In the heavy-quark limit (pure gauge), the transition is first order

# Fluctuations of conserved charges

- **Theory:** grand canonical fluctuations are derivatives of the free energy:

$$Z(V, T, \mu_B, \mu_Q, \mu_S) = \sum_{B, Q, S} e^{B\mu_B} e^{Q\mu_Q} e^{S\mu_S} Z_C(V, T, B, Q, S)$$

wrt the associated chemical potentials:

$$\chi_{ijk}^{BQS}(T, \mu_B, \mu_Q, \mu_S) = \frac{1}{VT^3} \frac{\partial^{i+j+k} \ln Z(T, \mu_B, \mu_Q, \mu_S)}{\partial (\mu_B/T)^i \partial (\mu_Q/T)^j \partial (\mu_S/T)^k}$$

- **Experiment:** moments/cumulants  $\langle (\Delta N)^n \rangle_{\text{events}}$  of net-particle distributions:

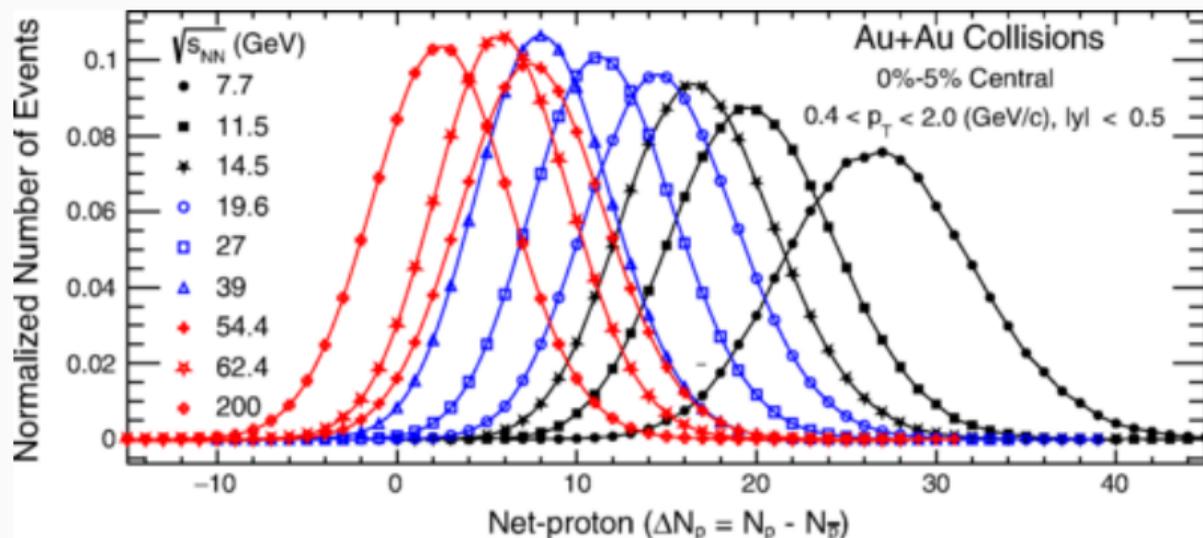
$$\langle B \rangle = \frac{1}{VT^3} \frac{\partial \ln Z(T, \mu_B, \mu_Q, \mu_S)}{\partial (\mu_B/T)} = \chi_1^B$$

$$\langle B^2 \rangle - \langle B \rangle^2 = \frac{1}{VT^3} \frac{\partial^2 \ln Z(T, \mu_B, \mu_Q, \mu_S)}{\partial (\mu_B/T)^2} = \chi_2^B$$

$$\langle BS \rangle - \langle B \rangle \langle S \rangle = \frac{1}{VT^3} \frac{\partial^2 \ln Z(T, \mu_B, \mu_Q, \mu_S)}{\partial (\mu_B/T) \partial (\mu_S/T)} = \chi_{11}^{BS}$$

# Heavy-ion collisions: event-by-event fluctuations

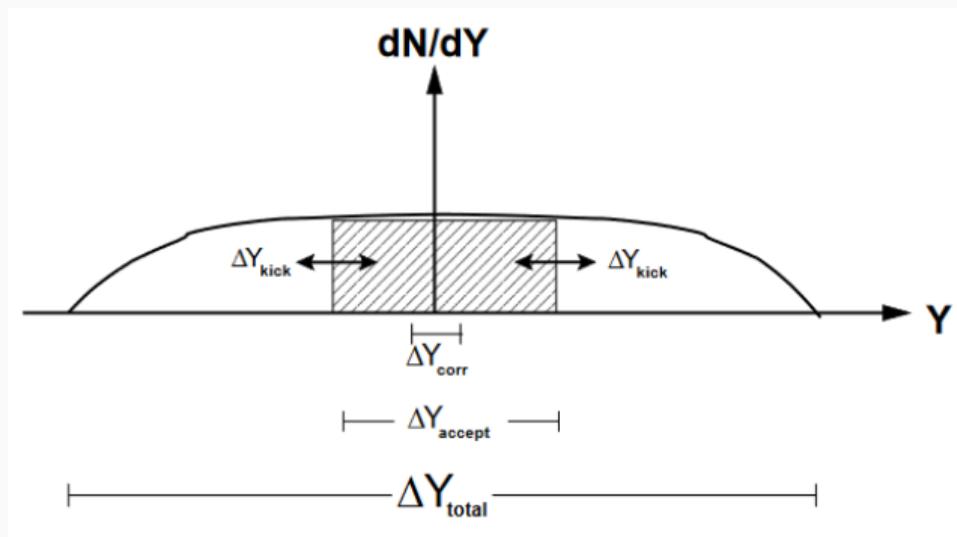
- Conserved charges in QCD are all quark numbers  
→ B (baryon number), Q (electric charge), S (strangeness)
- Weak effects are not considered (time's too short)
- Charm is ignored (might not thermalize)
- Conserved charges are conserved only on average in experiment



# Fluctuations of conserved charges

## How can CONSERVED CHARGES fluctuate?

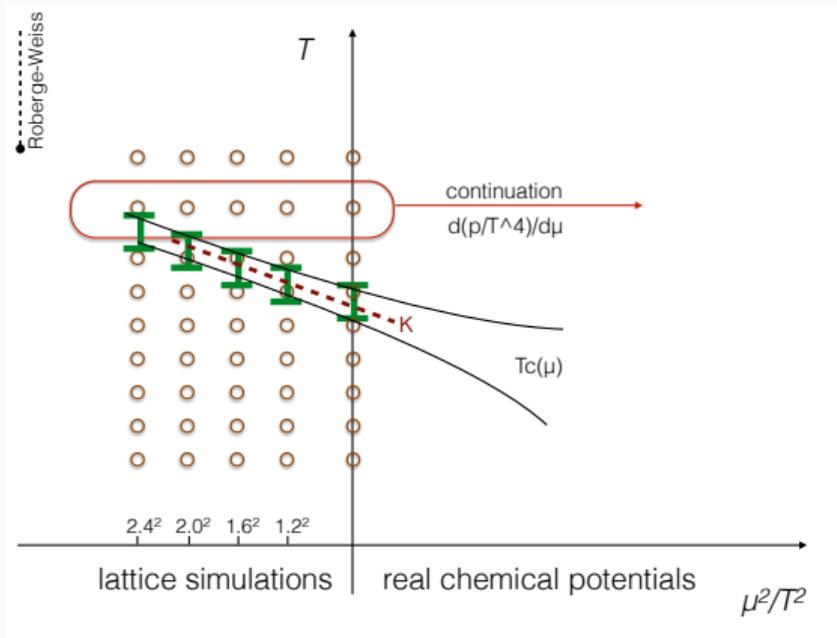
- If we could measure ALL particles in a collision, they would not
- If we look at a small enough subsystem, fluctuations occur and become meaningful



# Simulations at imaginary chemical potential

- While for real chemical potential ( $\mu^2 > 0$ )  $\det M(U)$  is complex, for **imaginary** chemical potential ( $\mu^2 < 0$ )  $\det M(U)$  is real
- We perform simulations at imaginary chemical potentials:

$$\hat{\mu}_B = i \frac{j\pi}{8} \quad j = 0, 1, 2, \dots$$



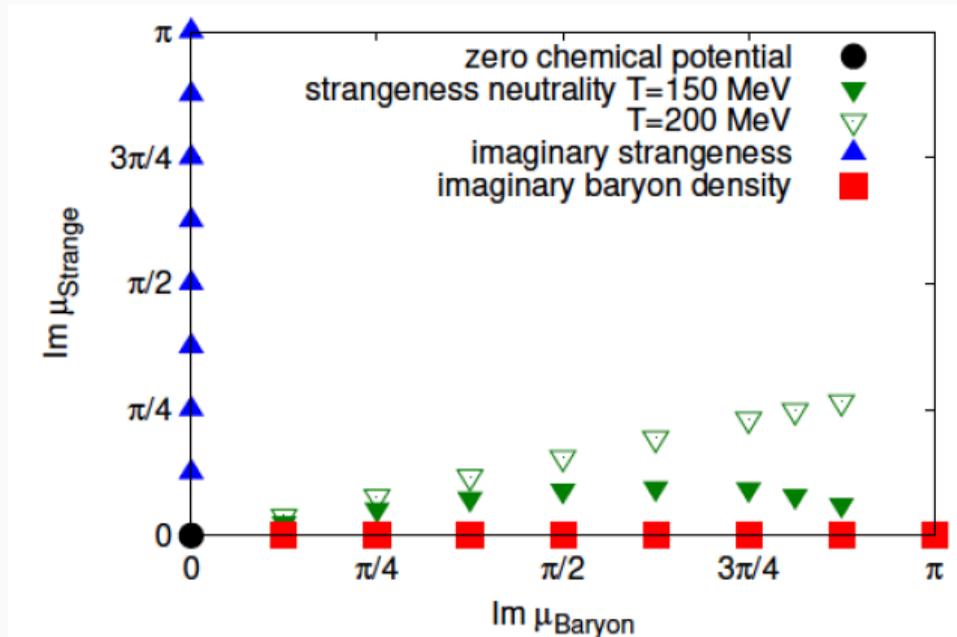
We then analytically continue to  $\mu^2 > 0$  by means of suitable extrapolation schemes

# Simulations at imaginary chemical potential

Strangeness neutrality (or not)

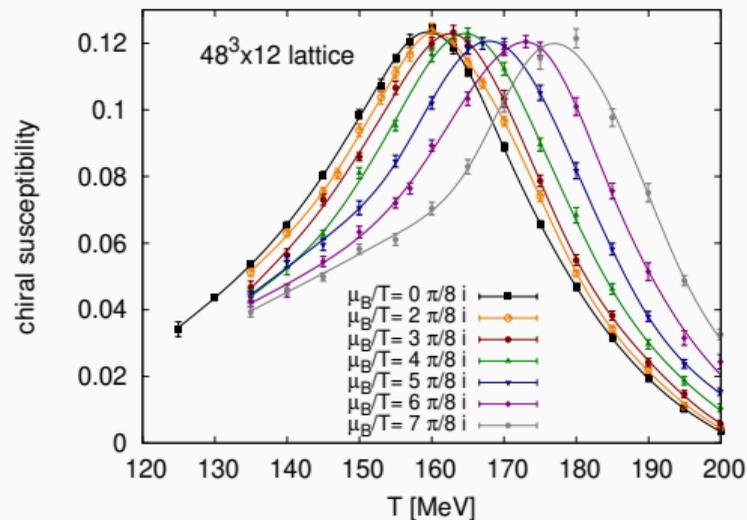
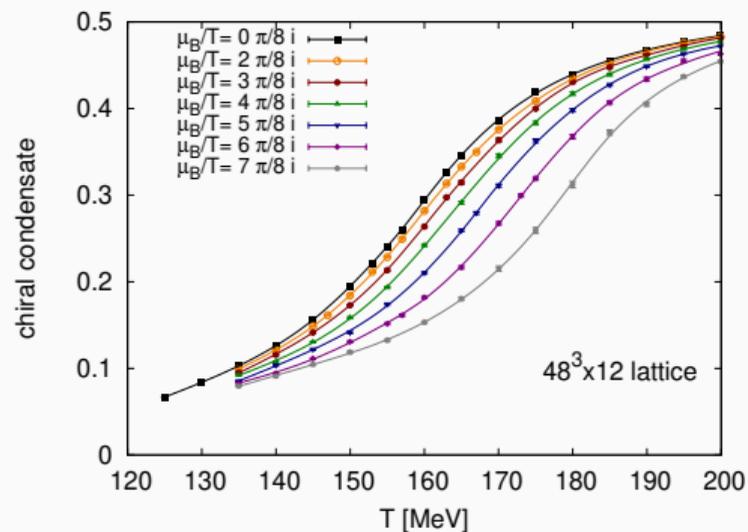
Set the chemical potentials for heavy-ion collisions scenario, or simpler setup:

$$\langle n_S \rangle = 0 \quad \langle n_Q \rangle = 0.4 \langle n_B \rangle \quad \text{or} \quad \mu_Q = \mu_S = 0$$



# Chiral observables at imaginary $\mu_B$

Chiral condensate and chiral susceptibility at imaginary chemical potential



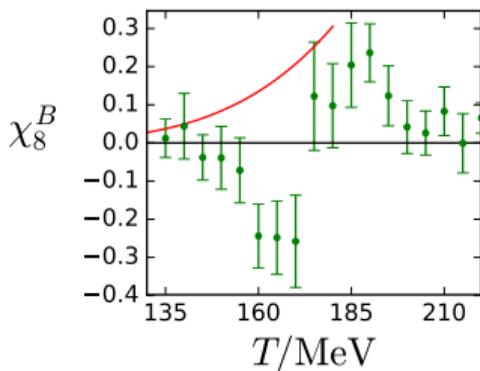
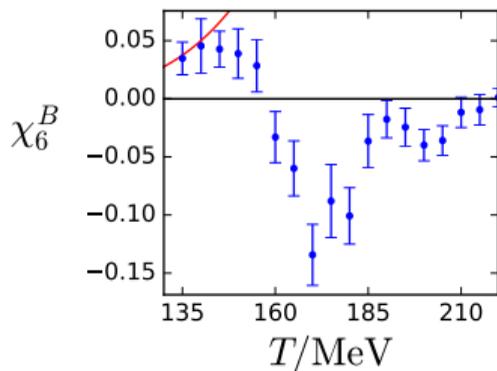
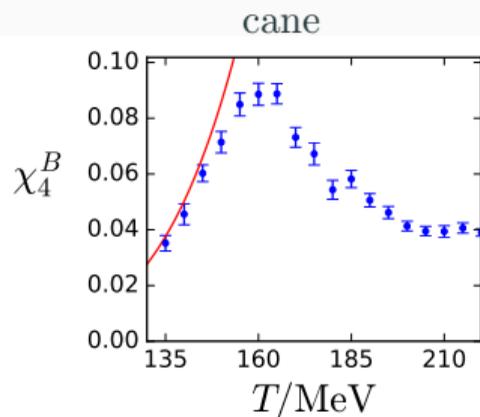
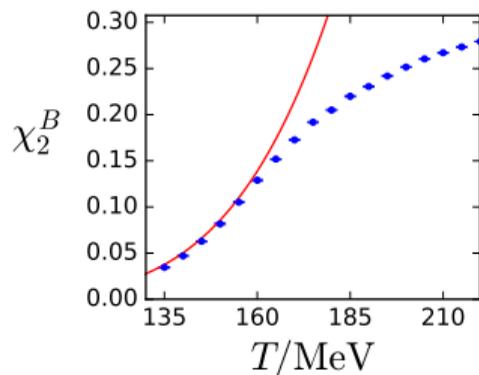
# Lattice QCD at finite $\mu_B$ - Taylor coefficients

cane

- Fluctuations of baryon number are the Taylor expansion coefficients of the pressure

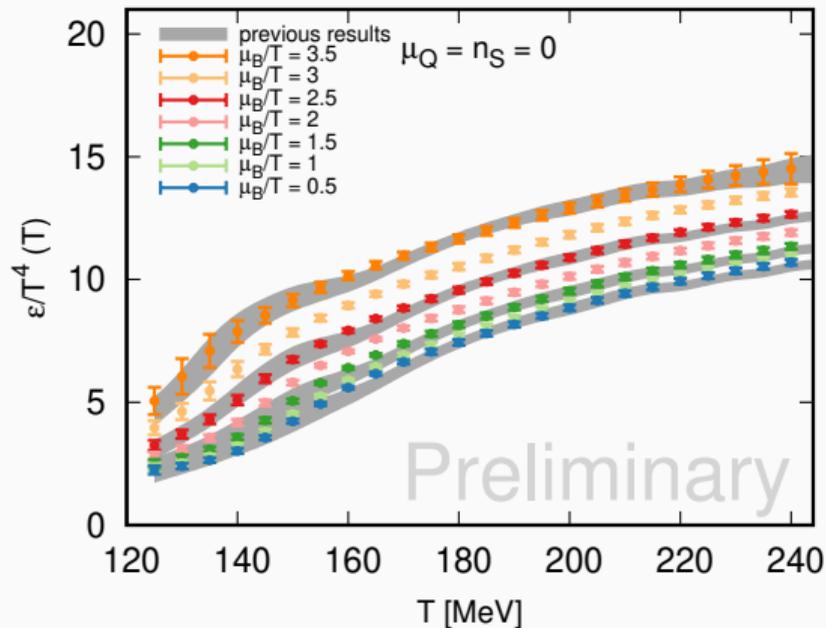
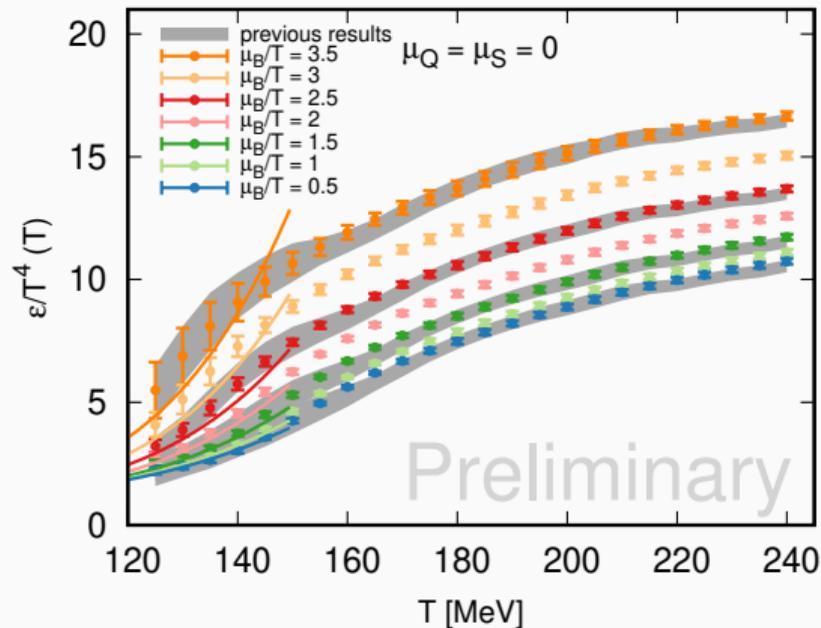
$$\chi_{ijk}^{BQS}(T) = \left. \frac{\partial^{i+j+k} p/T^4}{\partial \hat{\mu}_B^i \partial \hat{\mu}_Q^j \partial \hat{\mu}_S^k} \right|_{\bar{\mu}=0}$$

- Signal extraction is increasingly difficult with higher orders, especially in the transition region
- Higher order coefficients present a more complicated structure



# Equation of state at finite $\hat{\mu}_B$

Energy density up to  $\hat{\mu}_B = 3.5$  with  $\mu_S = 0$  and  $n_S = 0$



# Observables

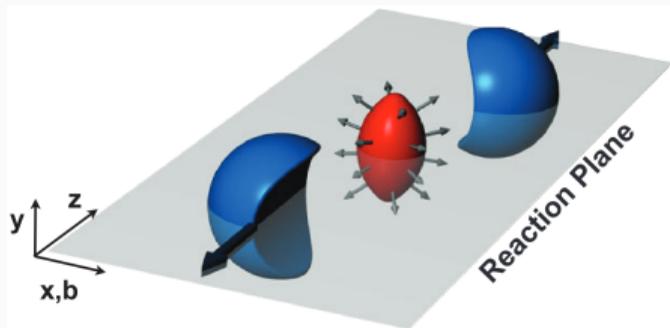
## Nuclear modification factor

$$R_{AA} = \frac{1}{N_{\text{coll}}} \frac{\frac{dN^{AA}}{dp_T}}{\frac{dN^{PP}}{dp_T}} \quad (= 1 \text{ if no medium})$$

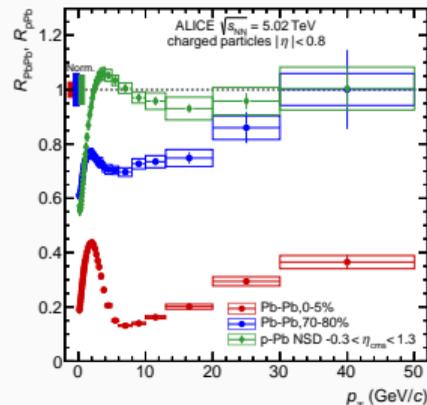
## Anisotropic flow

Fourier coefficients of azimuthal distribution

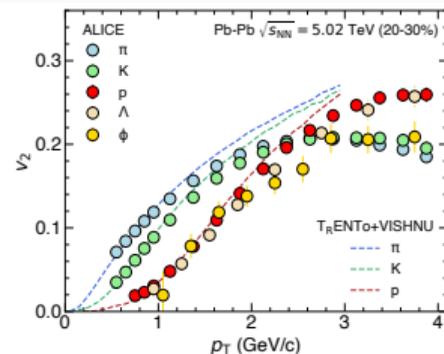
$$\rho(\phi) = \frac{1}{2\pi} \left[ 1 + 2 \sum_n v_n \cos(n(\phi - \psi_s)) \right] \quad (= 0 \text{ if no medium})$$



Snellings, New J. Phys. 13 055008



ALICE, JHEP 11 (2018) 013

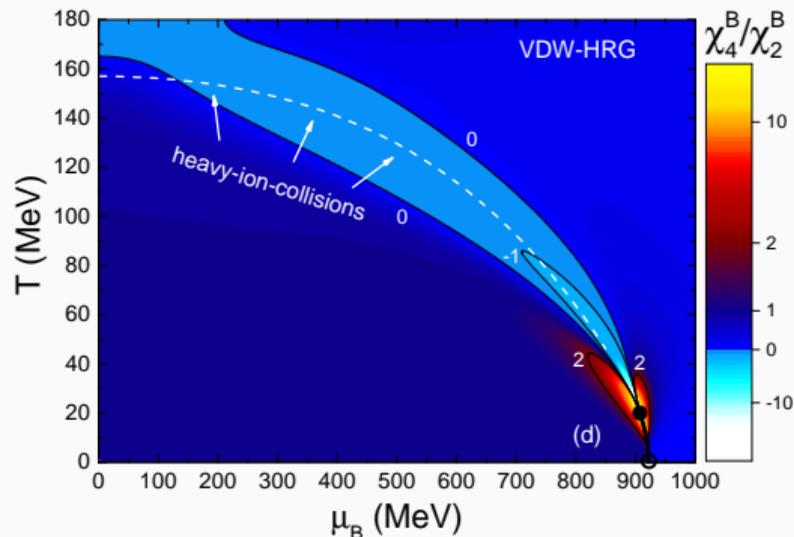
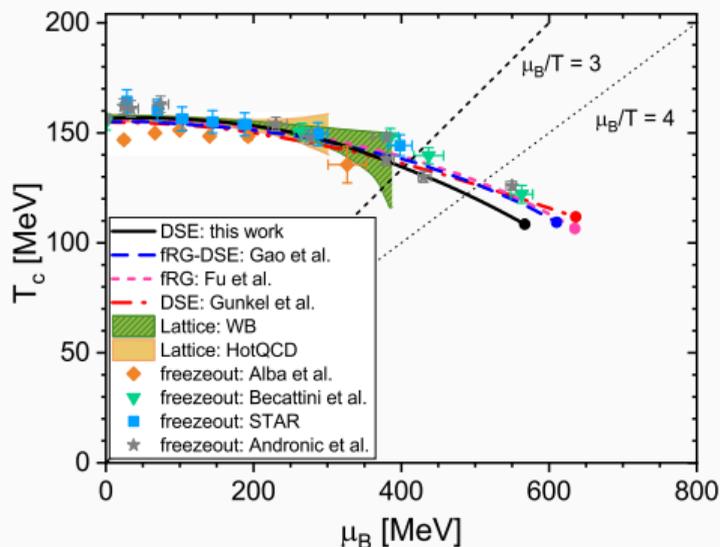


Arslandok et al., 2303.17254

# QCD critical point: an additional problem

Critical behaviour in QCD is present independently of this “high- $T$ ” critical point

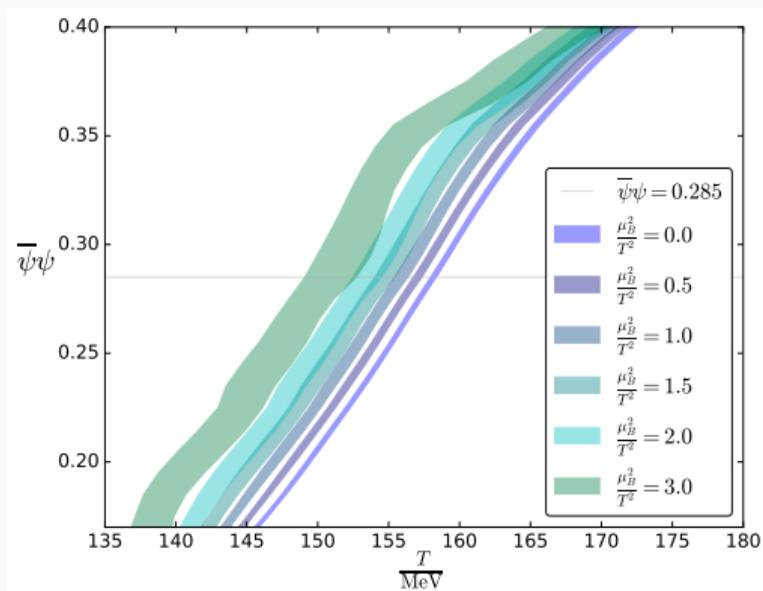
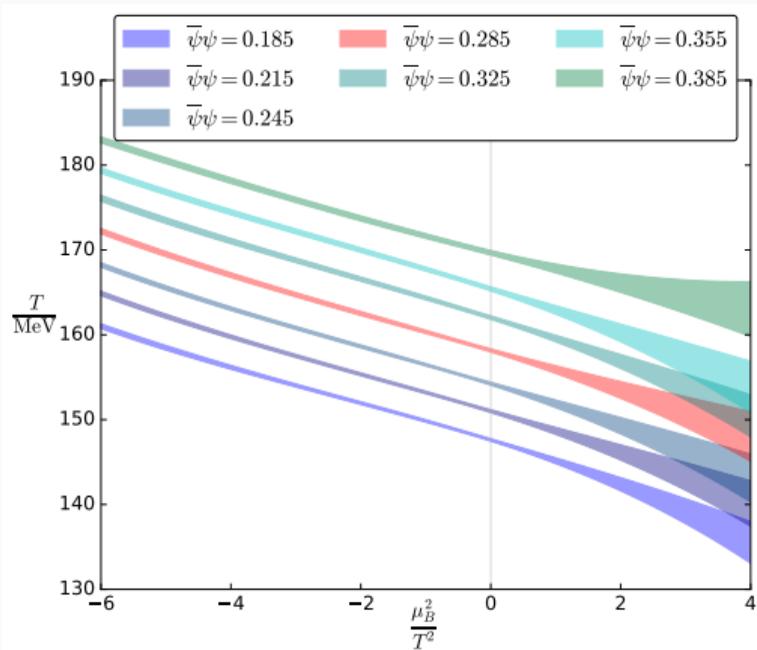
Critical point at the liquid-gas transition  $T \simeq 20$  MeV,  $\mu_B \simeq 900$  MeV



Additional (different) critical behaviour in the limit  $m_q \rightarrow 0$  at  $\mu_B = 0$

# The width of the transition at finite chemical potential

We can extrapolate our results for  $\langle \bar{\psi}\psi \rangle$  along contours of constant  $\langle \bar{\psi}\psi \rangle$  (left) or constant  $\mu_B/T$  (right)



The extrapolated  $\langle \bar{\psi}\psi \rangle$  at finite  $\mu_B$  is quite precise for  $\mu_B < 3T$

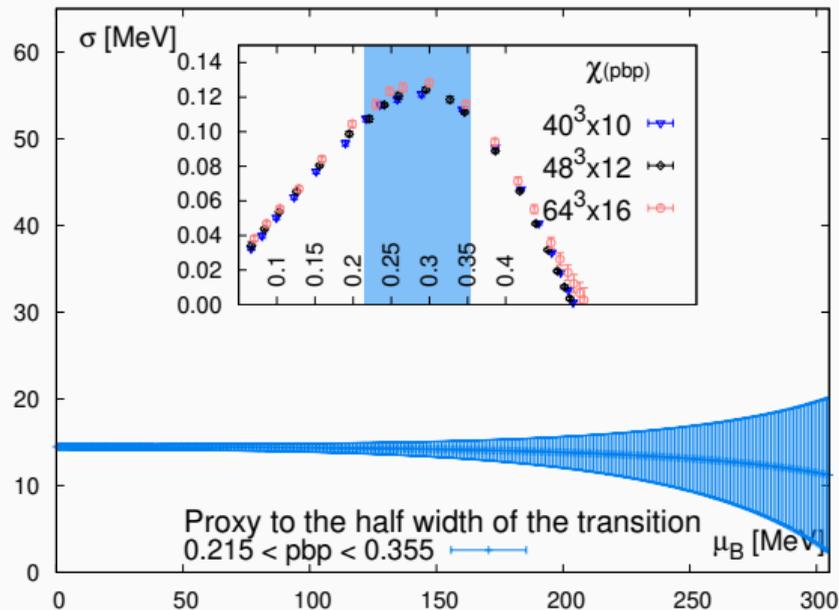
# The width of the transition at finite chemical potential

As a side product of our analysis, we get at  $\mu_B = 0$  the most accurate determination of  $T_c$ :

$$T_c(LT = 4, \mu_B = 0) = 158.0 \pm 0.6 \text{ MeV}$$

while for the width we obtain

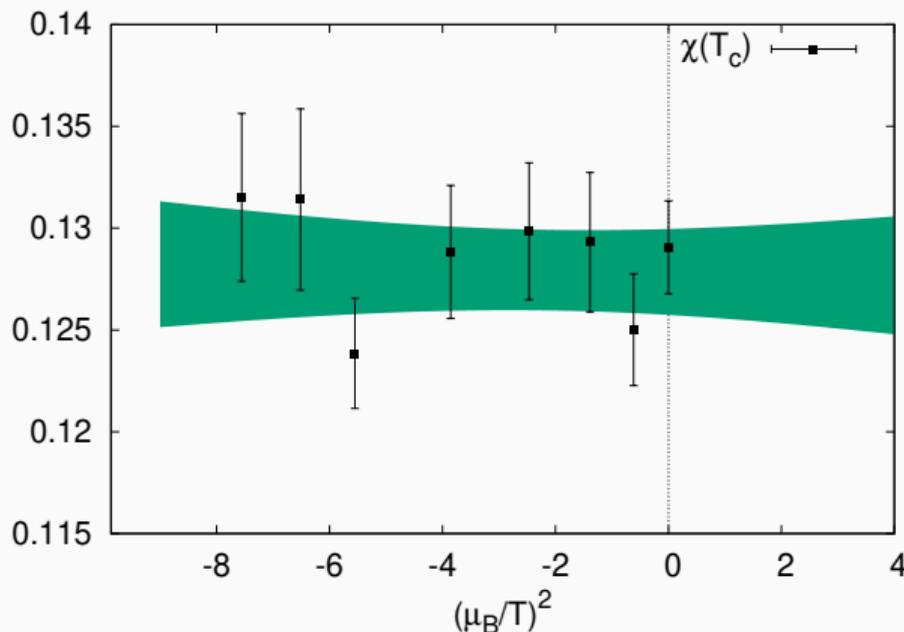
$$\Delta T(LT = 4, \mu_B = 0) = 15.0 \pm 1.0 \text{ MeV}$$



We also note that the width of the transition has a very mild chemical potential dependence

# The strength of the transition at finite chemical potential

- We can look at the strength of the transition by looking at the peak value of  $\chi(T)$
- In the case of a true transition, this peak value would diverge for  $V \rightarrow \infty$
- We see again an extremely mild dependence on  $\hat{\mu}_B$ , suggesting that the strength of the transition does not change



# Equation of state from the lattice

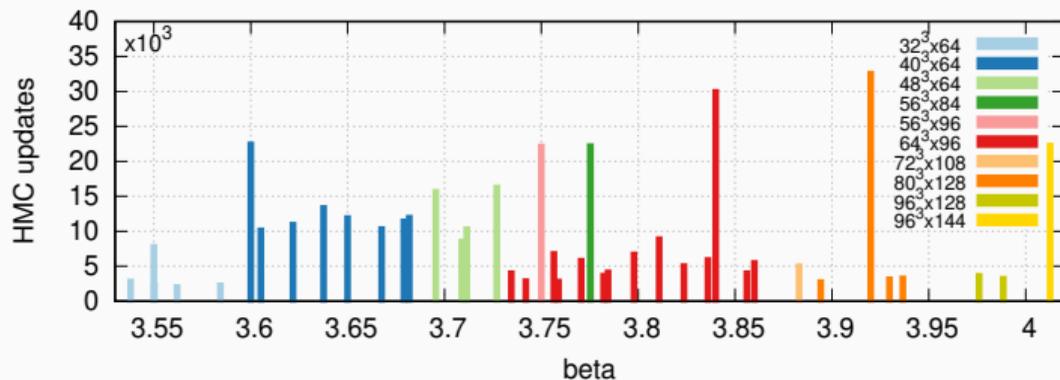
The pressure cannot be determined directly (not a derivative of  $\ln Z$  wrt to a parameter), but via an integral of the trace anomaly  $I(T)$ :

$$\frac{p(T)}{T^4} = \frac{p(T_0)}{T_0^4} + \int_{T_0}^T \frac{dT'}{T'} \frac{I(T')}{T'^4}$$

where the trace anomaly  $I(T)$  can be determined directly on the lattice:

$$\frac{I(T)}{T^4} = N_\tau^4 \left( \boxed{T > 0} - \boxed{T = 0} \right)$$

but **needs renormalization**, which means (a lot of) **simulations at  $T = 0$  are needed**



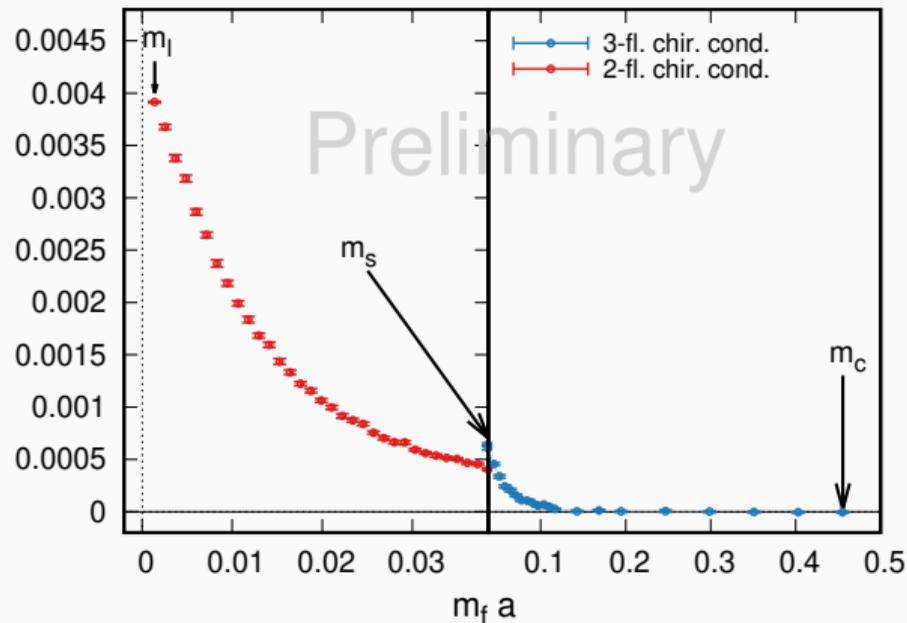
# I. Pressure constant

We calculate the integration constant  $\frac{p(T_0)}{T_0^4}$  at a chosen  $T_0 = 185$  MeV.

The pressure is determined as an integral in the quark masses down from infinity (where  $p = 0$ ):

$$\frac{p(T_0)}{T_0^4} = \int_{m_s}^{m_l} dm_2 \langle \bar{\psi}\psi \rangle_{R,2}(m_2) + \int_{\infty}^{m_s} dm_3 \langle \bar{\psi}\psi \rangle_{R,3}(m_3)$$

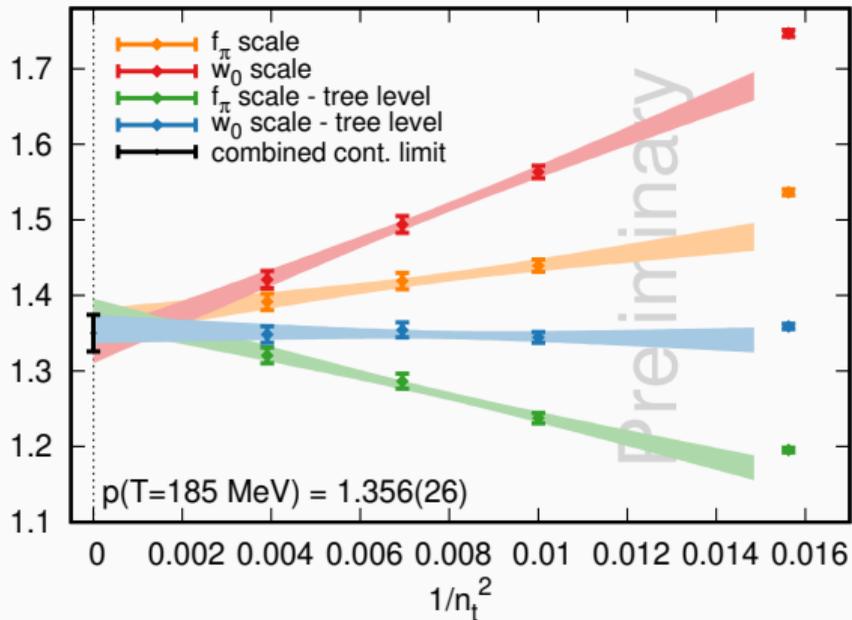
We first integrate in the two light flavours up to  $m_s$ , then the three flavours up to infinity by fitting an exponential.



**Note:** the chiral condensates  $\langle \bar{\psi}\psi \rangle_{R,i}$  are the renormalized ones

# I. Pressure constant

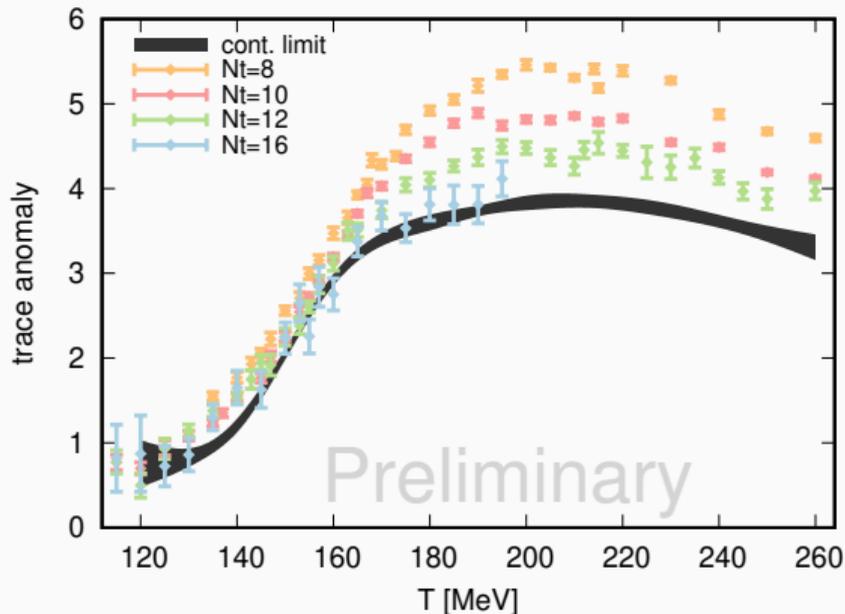
We calculate the integration constant with two settings of the scale, with and without applying the tree level improvement on the observables  $\rightarrow$  4x systematics



For the first time, we have results for up to  $N_t = 16$  which allow us to discard  $N_t = 8$  in the continuum extrapolation.  $\Rightarrow$   $\sim 2x$  improvement in uncertainty

## II. Trace anomaly

We determine on our lattices  $32^3 \times 8$ ,  $40^3 \times 10$ ,  $48^3 \times 12$ ,  $64^3 \times 16$  the trace anomaly:



then perform a global continuum extrapolation + spline fit in  $T$ .

## Equation of state at $\hat{\mu}_B = 0$

Now we have both ingredients to determine the equation of state at  $\mu_B = 0$ , as shown previously:

$$\boxed{\frac{p(T)}{T^4} = \frac{p(T_0)}{T_0^4} + \int_{T_0}^T \frac{dT'}{T'} \frac{I(T')}{T'^4}}$$

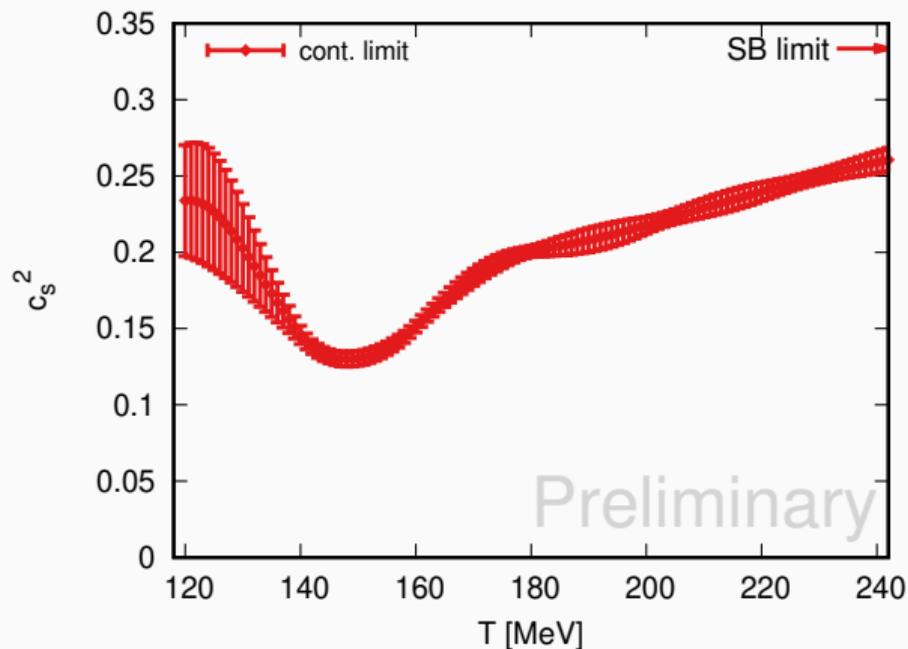
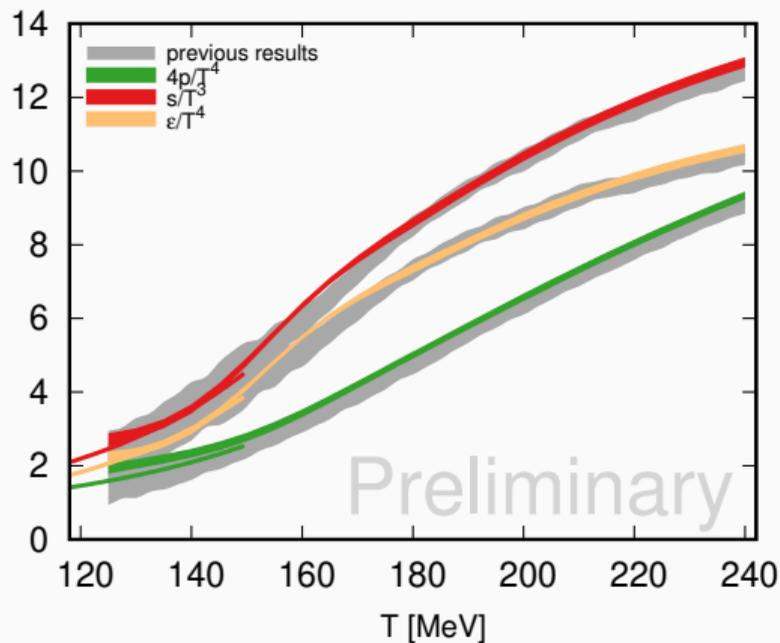
From the pressure, the other quantities follow. At  $\mu_B = 0$ , normalized quantities  $\hat{O}(T)$ :

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{s} &= 4\hat{p}(T) + T \frac{d\hat{p}(T)}{dT} \\ \hat{\epsilon}(T) &= \hat{s}(T) - \hat{p}(T) \\ c_s^2(T) &= \frac{\hat{I}(T) + 4\hat{p}(T)}{7\hat{I}(T) + 12\hat{p}(T) + T \frac{d\hat{I}(T)}{dT}}\end{aligned}$$

# Equation of state at $\hat{\mu}_B = 0$

We can compare the resulting equation of state at  $\mu_B = 0$  to our previous result from 2014

Borsányi+ '14



**Note:** full systematics analysis still in the making, more statistics coming at  $N_\tau = 16$