PRODUCTION OF LIGHT NUCLEI AND EXOTIC NUCLEI IN RELATIVISTIC NUCLEAR COLLISIONS

Marcus Bleicher Institut für Theoretische Physik Goethe Universität Frankfurt GSI Helmholtzzentrum Germany

In collaboration with J. Steinheimer, A. Botvina, T. Reichert









Extension of the periodic system

- into the direction of extreme iso-spin asymmetry
- into the direction of anti-matter
- into the direction of strangeness
- into the direction of charm
- → need to produce new quarks
 → need to couple them to new nuclei

Time Evolution of Heavy Ion Collisions



$\begin{aligned} & \text{QCD (Quantum Chromo Dynamics)} \\ \mathcal{L}_{QCD} = \sum_{q} \left(\overline{\psi}_{qi} i \gamma^{\mu} \Big[\delta_{ij} \partial_{\mu} + i g \Big(G^{\alpha}_{\mu} t_{\alpha} \Big)_{ij} \Big] \psi_{qj} - m_{q} \overline{\psi}_{qi} \psi_{qi} \Big) - \frac{1}{4} G^{\alpha}_{\mu\nu} G^{\mu\nu}_{\alpha} \end{aligned} \end{aligned}$

- $G^{\mu\nu}_{\alpha} = \partial^{\mu}G^{\nu}_{\alpha} \partial^{\nu}G^{\mu}_{\alpha} gf^{\alpha\beta\gamma}G^{\mu}_{\beta}G^{\nu}_{\gamma}$ color fields tensor
- G^{μ}_{α} four potential of the gluon fields (α =1,..8)
- t_{α} 3x3 Gell-Mann matrices; generators of the SU(3) color group
- • $f^{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ structure constants of the SU(3) color group
- ψ_i Dirac spinor of the quark field (*i* represents color)

•
$$g = \sqrt{4\pi\alpha_s}$$
 ($\hbar = c = 1$) color charge (strong coupling constant)



How do we describe the dynamics?

- QCD has asymptotic freedom
 Allows perturbative calculations at small distances (<<1fm) or at very high temperatures (>>1GeV)
- \rightarrow We are dealing with size \sim 1 10 fm, T \sim 50 200 MeV
- Lattice QCD only in equilibrium (and $\mu_B/T <<1$) \rightarrow no dynamics, no collision, no particle production,...
- Can not use ab-initio QCD
- \rightarrow Need an effective (dynamical) model

E.g., Nucleon transport in N, t A system : Df_N=l_{coll}

$$\frac{\partial f_N}{\partial t} + \frac{1}{2} \cdot \frac{\partial f_N}{\partial t} - \nabla_V U_N \cdot \frac{\partial f_N}{\partial p} = I_{NN+NN} + I_{NN+NN}$$

Taken from Elena Bratkovskaya

Ultra-relativistic Quantum Molecular Dynamics (UrQMD)

Relativistic hadron transport model

- Based on the propagation of hadrons
- Rescattering among hadrons is fully included
- String excitation/decay (LUND picture/PYTHIA) at higher energies
- Provides a solution of the relativistic n-body transport eq.:

 $p^{\mu} \cdot \partial_{\mu} f_i(x^{\nu}, p^{\nu}) = \mathcal{C}_i$

The collision term C includes more than 100x100 hadrons

- Includes interaction potentials
- "Standard Reference" for low and intermediate energy hadron and nucleus interactions

nucleon	Δ	Λ	Σ	[1]	Ω	
N ₉₃₈	Δ_{1232}	Λ_{1116}	Σ_{1192}	Ξ_{1317}	Ω_{1672}	
N_{1440}	Δ_{1600}	Λ_{1405}	Σ_{1385}	Ξ_{1530}		
N_{1520}	Δ_{1620}	Λ_{1520}	Σ_{1660}	Ξ_{1690}		
N_{1535}	Δ_{1700}	Λ_{1600}	\sum_{1670}	Ξ_{1820}		
N_{1650}	Δ_{1900}	Λ_{1670}	Σ_{1775}	Ξ_{1950}		
N_{1675}	Δ_{1905}	Λ_{1690}	Σ_{1790}	Ξ_{2025}		
N_{1680}	Δ_{1910}	Λ_{1800}	Σ_{1915}			
N ₁₇₀₀	Δ_{1920}	Λ_{1810}	Σ_{1940}			
N_{1710}	Δ_{1930}	Λ_{1820}	Σ_{2030}			
N_{1720}	Δ_{1950}	Λ ₁₈₃₀				
N_{1900}		A				
Napage 101990		Λ2100				
N_{2080} N_{2100}	he m	nde	al - Ur(
N2200						
N_{2250}						
	1	•		1	·	
0^{-+}	1-	-	0++	1++		
π	ρ		a_0	a_1		
K	K	*	K_0^*	K_1^*		
η	ω		f_0		f_1	
η'	ϕ		f_0^*	f_1'		
1+-	2^{+-}	+	$(1^{})^*$	$(1^{})^{**}$		
b_1	a_2		$ ho_{1450}$	ρ_{1700}		
K_1		* 2	K_{1410}^{*}	I	K_{1680}^{*}	
h_1	f_2		ω_{1420}	G	ω_{1662}	
h'_1	f_2'		ϕ_{1680}	9	ϕ_{1900}	

.

List of included particles in the hadron cascade

- Binary interactions between all implemented particles are treated individually
- Cross sections are taken from data when available or models
- Resonances are implemented in Breit-Wigner form
- No a priori in-medium modifications, however collisional broadening and mass dependent decay widths are included

Time Evolution of Heavy Ion Collisions



History of Hybrid Approaches

- Started with S. Bass, A. Dumitru, M. Bleicher, Phys.Rev.C60:021902,1999
- Results On Transverse Mass Spectra Obtained With NexSpherio F. Grassi, T. Kodama, Y. Hama, J.Phys.G31:S1041-S1044,2005
- 3-D hydro + cascade model at RHIC.
 C. Nonaka, S.A. Bass, Nucl.Phys.A774:873-876,2006
- Hadronic dissipative effects on elliptic flow in ultrarelativistic heavy-ion collisions. (3d hydro + JAM)
 T. Hirano, U. Heinz, D. Kharzeev, R. Lacey, Y. Nara, Phys.Lett.B636:299-304,2006
- Integrated (open source) UrQMD 3.4
 H. Petersen, J. Steinheimer, M. Bleicher, Phys. Rev. C 78:044901, 2008
- MUSIC+UrQMD@RHIC and LHC
 B. Schenke, S. Jeon, C. Gale, ... (2008/2010)
- EPOS+Hydro+UrQMD at LHC
 K. Werner, M. Bleicher, T. Pierog, Phys. Rev. C (2010)

UrQMD Hybrid model

H.Petersen, et al, PRC78 (2008) 044901 P. Huovinen, H. P. EPJ A48 (2012) 171







- Initial State:
 - Initialization of two nuclei
 - Non-equilibrium hadron-string dynamics
 - Initial state fluctuations are included naturally
- 3+1d Hydro +EoS:
 - SHASTA ideal relativistic fluid dynamics
 - Net baryon density is explicitly propagated
 - Equation of state at finite µв
- Final State:
 - Hypersurface at constant energy density
 - Hadronic rescattering and resonance decays within UrQMD

Why are we interested in the production of normal/hyper/anti-clusters?

- Light (normal) nuclei (at this energy not created by break-up)
 - Production mechanism under debate (thermal? coalescence?)
 - Can tell us about the source size (alternative to HBT)
 - Can tell us about the QCD phase transition
- Strange hyper-matter nuclei are not very well known
 - Interesting by themselves,
 - Y-N interaction relevant for Neutron Star EoS
- Anti-matter clusters (anti-nuclei)
 - Allow for test of matter-anti-matter symmetry
 - May tell us about Dark Matter in the Universe (AMS!)

Fluctuations in quark densities \rightarrow Clusters might be enhanced





Angular distribution, 12 fm/c





→ Strong fluctuations, inhomogeneous quark densities → Cluster enhancement C. Herold, M. Nahrgang, M. Bleicher, I. Mishustin, Nucl.Phys. A925 (2014) 14-24

Similarly...

KJ. Sun, CM. Ko, Eur. Phys. J.A 57 (2021) 11



 $y_2 = 1 + \Delta n$ is enhanced.



Pospelov, Pradler, Ann.Rev.Nucl.Part.Sci.60:539-568,2010

Prof. Dr. Marcus Bleicher

Thermal emission vs. BB nucleosynthesis



- Thermal model provides good description of cluster data, e.g. deuteron, even with protons being slightly off (n_{cluster} = a*exp(-m_{cluster}/T))
- Surprising result, because the binding energy of the deuteron (2.2 MeV) is much smaller than the emission temperature (150-160 MeV)
- Why is it not immediately destroyed? Related to famous deuterium bottleneck in big bang nucleosynthesis: If the temperature is too high (mean energy per particle greater than d binding energy) any deuterium that is formed is immediately destroyed
 → delays production of heavier clusters/nuclei.

Methods to calculate clusters in dynamical models

Just do it ...

- Have proper nuclear potentials
- Have proper interactions
- Run your code...
- Wait until infinity
- Clusters are stable and will show-up at the end of your simulation
- Unfortunately its not so easy... cf. J. Aichelin and E. Bratkovskaya

Methods to calculate clusters

Wigner coalescence

- Projection on (Hulthen) wave function
- No free parameters
- No orthogonality of states

Box coalescence

- Employ cut-off parameters
- E-by-E possible
- 2 free parameters

Cross sections

- Introduce explicit processes,
 e.g. p+n+π→d+π
- Dynamical treatment
- 'Fake' 3-body interactions

Thermal emission

- Put deuterons in partition sum
- No free parameter
- Why should a cluster be in?

Gyulassy, NPA402 (1983), Bleicher PLB (1993), Oliinychenko, PRC99 (2019), Butler, PR129 (1963), Mekijan PRL39 (1977)

Coalescence

$$dN/d\vec{P} = g \int f_A(\vec{x}_1, \vec{p}_1) f_B(\vec{x}_2, \vec{p}_2) \rho_{AB}(\Delta \vec{x}, \Delta \vec{p}) \delta(\vec{P} - \vec{p}_1 - \vec{p}_2) d^3x_1 \ d^3x_2 \ d^3p_1 \ d^3p_2$$

 Propagate particle after freeze-out to the same time in 2-particle rest frame

• If $\Delta p = |(p_2 - p_1)| \le 285 \text{ MeV}$ and $\Delta x = |(x_b - x_a)| \le 3.5 \text{ fm}$

 \rightarrow deuteron forms $\rightarrow p_d = p_1 + p_2, x_d = (x_1 + x_2)/2$



STAR, Nature 527, 345 (2015)

Why do we think coalescence is correct?

- Constituent scaling
- Fluctuations

Can we distinguish thermal emission from coalescence? → Anisotropic Flow

Simplified picture:

Position-space anisotropy → Momentum-space anisotropy



Real picture: Complicated state, mean free paths,...





by MADALus

Fourier expansion of the radial distribution! $\rightarrow v_n$





Adopted from H. Elfner

Can we distinguish thermal emission from coalescence? → Scaling

NCQ scaling at high energies

- discovery of "magical factors" of 2 and 3 in measurements of spectra and the elliptic flow of mesons and baryonsat RHIC (Fries et al, 2003)
- Predicted v2 scaling in case of coalescence

$$v_2^h(P_T) = n \, v_2\left(\frac{1}{n}P_T\right)$$

→ Check scaling to prove coalescence

Fries et al, Phys.Rev. C68 (2003)



RHIC data

Scaling at LHC is a different story...

Can we distinguish thermal emission from coalescence? \rightarrow Scaling



Can we distinguish thermal emission from coalescence? \rightarrow Fluctuations

Au+Au at 2 AGeV



Thermal emission would result in Poisson fluctuations

→ Coalescence leads to wider (non-poisson) distributions

Model A: Correlated p,n, Model B: independent p,n

Moments/Correlations



The full calculation...

KJ. Sun, CM. Ko, Phys.Lett.B 840 (2023) 137864



- Proofs independent fluctuations of p and n
- However: low energies is where it gets interesting !

Proton-proton collisions

Deuteron (anti-deuteron): ratios



Good description of pp by coalescence

Absolute yields

	$\sqrt{s_{NN}}$ (TeV)			ly	
	•		ALICE		UrQMD
	0.9	(1.12 ± 0)	0.09 ± 0.09	$\times 10^{-4}$	$(0.96 \pm 0.05) \times 10^{-4}$
d	2.76	(1.53 ± 0)	$0.05 \pm 0.13)$	$\times 10^{-4}$	$(1.47 \pm 0.06) \times 10^{-4}$
	7	(2.02 ± 0)	$0.02 \pm 0.17)$	$\times 10^{-4}$	$(2.05 \pm 0.09) \times 10^{-4}$
	0.9	(1.11 ± 0)	$0.10 \pm 0.09)$	$\times 10^{-4}$	$(1.00 \pm 0.05) \times 10^{-4}$
\overline{d}	2.76	(1.37 ± 0)	$0.04 \pm 0.12)$	$\times 10^{-4}$	$(1.55 \pm 0.07) \times 10^{-4}$
	7	(1.92 ± 0)	$0.02 \pm 0.15)$	$\times 10^{-4}$	$(2.22 \pm 0.09) \times 10^{-4}$

Absolute yields in line with ALICE data

ŝ

From small to large systems



Rapidity distributions indicate correct coalescence behavior



Also transverse expansion is well captured in the coalescence approach

S

Extension to tritons is straightforward

Rapidity - OK



Transverse momenta - OK



Energy dependence

- Generally good agreement of coalescence with data. except for highest energies (LHC)

- Hybrid and pure transport show similar results in overlap region

- Multifragmentation (hot coalescence is similar)

- Mainly reflects decrease of μ_B with increasing energy



 \bigcirc FOPI \bigtriangledown E802 \bigtriangleup NA49 \bigcirc PHENIX \bigstar STAR (prel.) \bigcirc ALICE (t \rightarrow ³He)

Hillmann et al, J.Phys.G 49 (2022) 5, 055107

Beautiful analysis...

Sun, Wang, Ko, Ma, Nature Commun. 15 (2024) 1



 Consistent analysis confirms that hydro+transport+coalescence is necessary to describe the full breadth of data

Neutron density fluctuations?

 Triton to deuteron ratio might yield information on neutron density fluctuations



Sun et al, Phys.Lett.B 774 (2017) 103-107

$$\frac{N_{^{3}\mathrm{H}}N_{p}}{N_{\mathrm{d}}^{2}} = g \frac{1 + (1 + 2\alpha)\Delta n}{(1 + \alpha\Delta n)^{2}}$$
$$\approx g(1 + \Delta n).$$



g=0.29, α=p-n correlation

Canceling μ_B : B₃/(B₂)² ratios



None of the models provide a full description of the data

- However coalescence + multi-fragmentation seem to work below LHC energies

- Models dont see suggested density fluctuation peak!

Hillmann et al, J.Phys.G 49 (2022) 5, 055107

Fluctuations or not?



- RHIC data has changed!
- What about the LHC data?

Anti-deuterons

Does coalescence also work for more exotic states at high μ_B ?



- Surprisingly good description of anti-deuteron yield
- Same parameters!!

Energy dependence of deuterons and anti-deuterons



Consistent picture over the whole energy range

Spectator hypermatter: A new road to hypernuclei

Time evolution

Hypernuclei



Significant amount of multi-hyper fragments

Hyper and multi-strange matter DiBaryons Hypernuclei



Hybrid model (lines) vs. coalescence (symbols) Interplay of baryon density with strangeness production Steinheimer, M. Bleicher et al, Phys.Lett. B714 (2012

Pion beam experiments for hyper nuclei



- Pion beam allow for copious poduction of (large!) hypernuclei
- With increased beam energy even multi-strange hypernuclei

Charm nuclei (subtreshold)

Charm production

Charm nuclei



Charm production and charmed nuclei are possible in the FAIR/NICA energy range

J. Steinheimer et al, PRC95 (2017) 1, 014911



- Coalescence works very well over a broad energy regime (with one fixed parameter set Δx , Δp)
- Flow scaling supports the coalescence picture
- Also anti-nuclei can be described and predicted
- Predictions for various hyper-nuclei have been made
- Even Charmed nuclei seem possible
- Predictions for hypermatter show that GSI/FAIR and NICA are ideally positioned to explore this new kind of matter.