

Perturbative and colorful lectures on **Strong Interactions**

lecture 2/3

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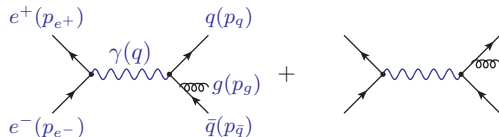
August 20, 2026



- 1 A few words about QCD
 - 1 running of α_s
 - 2 asymptotic freedom and confinement
- 2 quarks and gluons from e^+e^- annihilation
 - 1 quark electric charges
 - 2 quark and gluon spins
 - 3 QCD gauge parameters
- 3 Structure of hadrons
 - 1 elastic scattering
 - 2 deep inelastic scattering
 - 3 proton structure functions
 - 4 DGLAP evolution equation
- 4 hadron - hadron interactions
 - 1 jet production
 - 2 Drell-Yan process

First pQCD correction

- up to now, what we saw was driven by EW ME + hadronisation
- additional jets are due to pQCD effects: gluon radiation from the quark lines



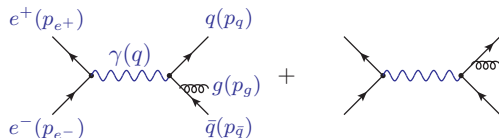
$$e^+ e^- \rightarrow q \bar{q} : \quad |\overline{\mathcal{M}}|^2 = 8(4\pi)^2 \alpha^2 N_c Q_i^2 \frac{(p_{e^+} \cdot p_q)(p_{e^-} \cdot p_{\bar{q}}) + (p_{e^+} \cdot p_{\bar{q}})(p_{e^-} \cdot p_q)}{q^4}$$

$$e^+ e^- \rightarrow q \bar{q} g : \quad |\overline{\mathcal{M}}|^2 = 8(4\pi)^3 \alpha^2 \alpha_S C_F N_c Q_i^2 \frac{(p_{e^+} \cdot p_q)(p_{e^-} \cdot p_{\bar{q}}) + (p_{e^+} \cdot p_{\bar{q}})(p_{e^-} \cdot p_q)}{(p_{e^+} \cdot p_{e^-})(p_q \cdot p_g)(p_{\bar{q}} \cdot p_g)}$$

1) couplings: $\alpha^2 \rightarrow \alpha^2 \alpha_S$ - first QCD correction

First pQCD correction

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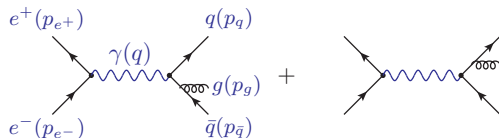
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2) factors: $N_c \rightarrow C_F N_c$

C_F is the color combinatority for one gluon radiation from a quark with a given color, $C_F = 4/3$ (coming from the λ^a)

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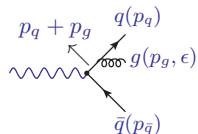
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3) kinematics:

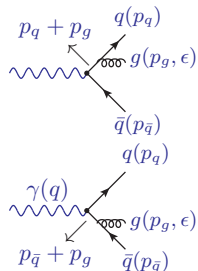
- note that: $q^4 = 4(p_{e^+} \cdot p_{e^-})(p_q \cdot p_{\bar{q}})$
- so, the kin effect is: $(p_q \cdot p_g) \rightarrow (p_q \cdot p_g)(p_{\bar{q}} \cdot p_g)$ - where does it come from ?

- adding a **quark propagator** in the ME calculation
- neglecting masses and in **soft gluon** approximation:



$$\sim \frac{(p_q + p_g) + m_q}{(p_q + p_g)^2 - m_q^2} \not{\epsilon} \stackrel{m_q=0}{\simeq} \frac{p_q + p_g}{2(p_q \cdot p_g)} \not{\epsilon} \stackrel{|p_g| \ll |p_q|}{\simeq} \frac{1}{2} \frac{\epsilon \cdot p_q}{p_q \cdot p_g}$$

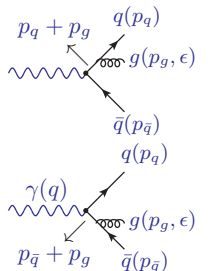
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- putting them together and after sum over the gluon polarisation states (only 2 transverse states):

$$d\sigma_{q\bar{q}g} = \frac{\alpha_S}{2\pi} C_F \left[\frac{p_{\bar{q}}}{p_{\bar{q}} \cdot p_g} - \frac{p_q}{p_q \cdot p_g} \right]^2 \frac{d^3 p_g}{(2\pi)^3 p_g^0} d\sigma_{qq}$$

- note : the sign difference comes from the orientation of $\vec{\epsilon}$

$$\dots \left[\frac{p_{\bar{q}}}{p_{\bar{q}} \cdot p_g} - \frac{p_q}{p_q \cdot p_g} \right]^2 d\sigma_{qq} \simeq \dots 2 \frac{p_{\bar{q}} \cdot p_q}{(p_{\bar{q}} \cdot p_g)(p_q \cdot p_g)} d\sigma_{qq}$$

- with the term from $d\sigma_{qq}$:

$$2 \frac{p_{\bar{q}} \cdot p_q}{(p_{\bar{q}} \cdot p_g)(p_q \cdot p_g)} \frac{1}{4(p_{e^+} \cdot p_{e^-})(p_q \cdot p_{\bar{q}})} \overset{1/q^4}{=} \frac{1}{2(p_{e^+} \cdot p_{e^-})(p_{\bar{q}} \cdot p_g)(p_q \cdot p_g)}$$

$\Rightarrow$ we find back:

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⚠ it presents singularities 💣

if $p_q \cdot p_g \rightarrow 0$ and/or $p_{\bar{q}} \cdot p_g \rightarrow 0$

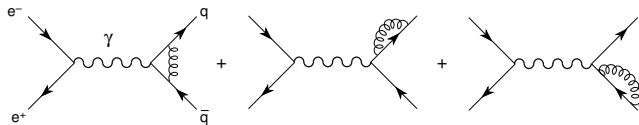
two singularities

$$\begin{aligned} p_q \cdot p_g &= E_q E_g - \vec{p}_q \cdot \vec{p}_g = E_q E_g - |\vec{p}_q| |\vec{p}_g| \cos \theta_{qg} \\ &\simeq E_q E_g (1 - \cos \theta_{qg}) \end{aligned}$$

$\Rightarrow$ singularities for $p_q \cdot p_g \rightarrow 0$ (same for $\bar{q}g$):

- $E_g \rightarrow 0$ (soft gluon limit)
- $\theta_{qg} \rightarrow 0$ (collinear limit)

- they correspond to a double pole (when both limits occur at the same time) and a single pole.
- these IR poles are **exactly cancelled** by the virtual corrections



comparison to data

$$d\sigma_{q\bar{q}g} = \frac{\alpha_S}{2\pi} C_F \left[\frac{p_{\bar{q}}}{p_{\bar{q}} \cdot p_g} - \frac{p_q}{p_q \cdot p_g} \right]^2 \frac{d^3 p_g}{(2\pi)^3 p_g^0} d\sigma_{q\bar{q}}$$

- the cross section has **2 physical degrees of freedom** :

+9 free variables ($d^3 p_q, d^3 p_{\bar{q}}, d^3 p_g$)

−4 relations ($E, \vec{P}$ conservation)

−3 independent (non relevant here - unpolaratised case) Euler angles

= 2

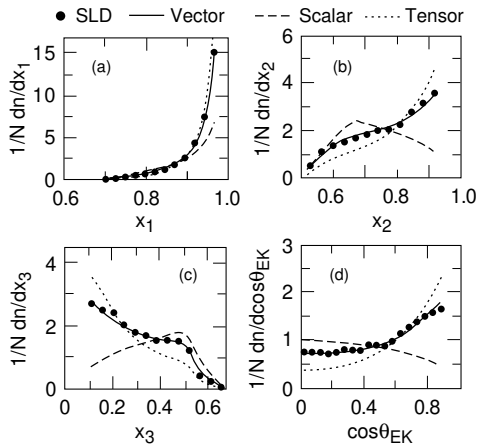
- we choose : $x_q = 2E_q/\sqrt{s}$ $x_{\bar{q}} = 2E_{\bar{q}}/\sqrt{s}$ $x_g = 2E_g/\sqrt{s}$

related by $x_q + x_{\bar{q}} + x_g = 2$ and $1 - x_i = \frac{1}{2} x_j x_k (1 - \cos \theta_{jk})$

$$\frac{d^2 \sigma_{q\bar{q}g}}{dx_q dx_{\bar{q}}} = \frac{\alpha_S}{2\pi} C_F \frac{x_q^2 + x_{\bar{q}}^2}{(1 - x_q)(1 - x_{\bar{q}})} \sigma_{q\bar{q}}$$

- 2 singularities correspond to $x_q \rightarrow 1$ and $x_{\bar{q}} \rightarrow 1$

- in data we don't know which is q jet, ...
- sort the 3 jets by decreasing energy :
 - $E_1 > E_2 > E_3$
 - define: $x_i = 2E_i/\sqrt{s}$
- **jet 1**: $q/\bar{q}$ jet almost unaffected ($x_1 \rightarrow 1$ pole)
- **jet 2**: $q/\bar{q}$ jet with significant energy loss + g jet such that $E_{q/\bar{q}} > E_g > E_{q/\bar{q}}$
- **jet 3**: mainly the gluon jet (falling distribution) + $q/\bar{q}$ jet of the above case
- $\cos \theta_{EK} = \frac{\sin \theta_2 - \sin \theta_3}{\sin \theta_1}$

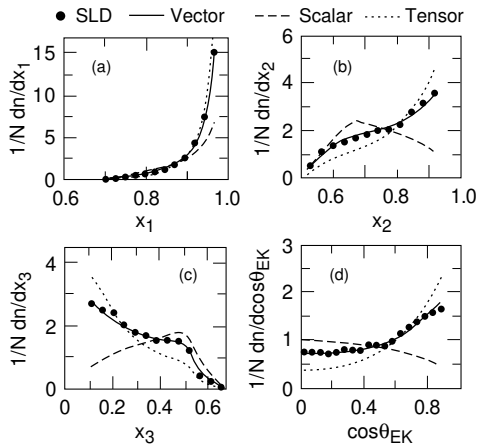


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$$-\cos\theta_{EK} = \frac{\sin\theta_2 - \sin\theta_3}{\sin\theta_1}$$

gluons are spin 1 !

pure vectorial current (γ^μ)



collinear approximation $\frac{d^2\sigma_{q\bar{q}g}}{dx_q dx_{\bar{q}}} = \frac{\alpha_s}{2\pi} C_F \frac{x_q^2 + x_{\bar{q}}^2}{(1-x_q)(1-x_{\bar{q}})} \sigma_{q\bar{q}}$

- let's express the cross section as a function of $z = x_g$ and θ_{qg}
- in the **limit of small angles** θ_{qg} (such as $1 - \cos \theta \simeq \theta^2/2$), one finds:

$$d^2\sigma_{q\bar{q}g} = \sigma_{q\bar{q}} C_F \frac{\alpha_s}{2\pi} [1 + (1-z)^2] \frac{dz}{z} \frac{d\theta^2}{\theta^2}$$

- the singularity $\theta \rightarrow 0$ is avoided by the non zero quark masses
- **dead cone effect**: radiations are suppressed in a cone $\theta < \theta_{min}$
- we integrate over the angle, and keep only the leading term, corresponding to $\theta_{min} = m_q/E_e$ we get the famous **Leading Log approximation (LL)**:

$$d\sigma_{q\bar{q}g} = \sigma_{q\bar{q}} C_F \frac{\alpha_s}{2\pi} [1 + (1-z)^2] \ln \frac{E_e^2}{m_q^2} \frac{dz}{z}$$

- this approximation is used in many **Monte Carlo simulation for the parton shower**

Jet multiplicity

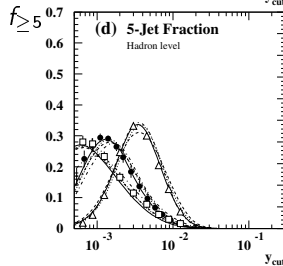
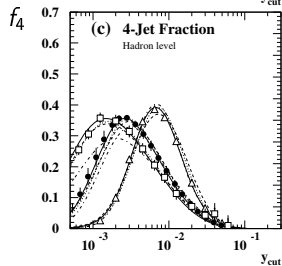
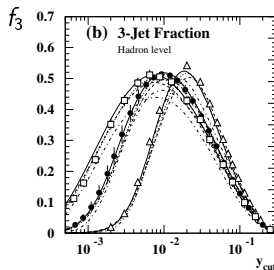
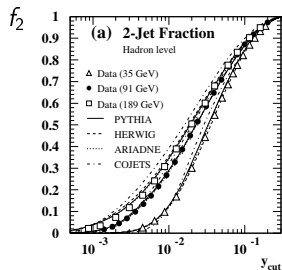
- let's come back to $e^+e^- \rightarrow q\bar{q}g$ - the 3 jet rate defined as $f_3 = \sigma_{3jet}/\sigma_{tot}$ can be computed

$$\sigma_{tot} f_3 = \int d\sigma_{q\bar{q}g} = C_F \frac{\alpha_S}{2\pi} \int_{2y_{cut}}^{1-y_{cut}} \frac{dx_q}{1-x_q} \int_{1+y_{cut}-x_q}^{1-y_{cut}} \frac{dx_{\bar{q}}(x_q^2 + x_{\bar{q}}^2)}{1-x_{\bar{q}}}$$

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 &= C_F \frac{\alpha_S}{2\pi} \left(4Li_2\left(\frac{y_{cut}}{1-y_{cut}}\right) + (3-6y_{cut}) \log\left(\frac{y_{cut}}{1-2y_{cut}}\right) + 2\log^2\left(\frac{y_{cut}}{1-y_{cut}}\right) \right. \\
 &\quad \left. - 6y_{cut} - \frac{9}{2}y_{cut}^2 - \frac{\pi^2}{3} + \frac{5}{2} \right)
 \end{aligned}$$



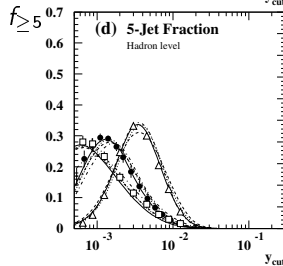
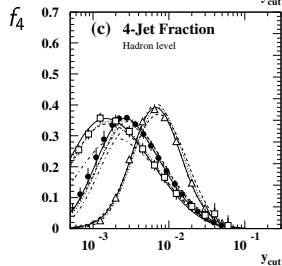
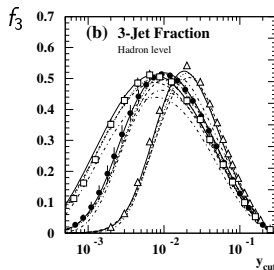
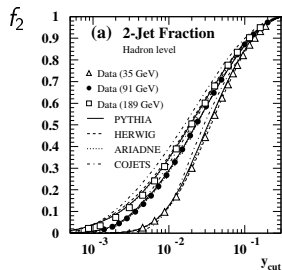
$$f_i = \sigma_{i \text{ jets}} / \sigma_{\text{tot}}$$

$$- N_{\text{jet}} \geq 2$$

$$- \text{if } y_{\text{cut}} \nearrow \Rightarrow N_{\text{jet}} \searrow$$

(because each jet includes a larger fraction of s)

- depends on s ! - why ?



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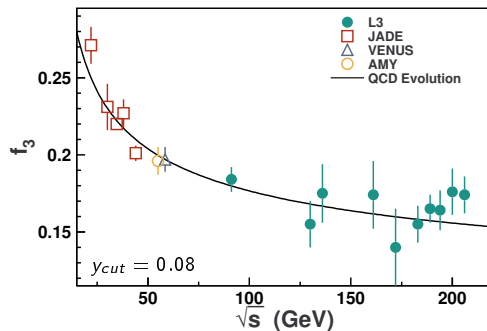
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$\Rightarrow$ way to measure α_S !

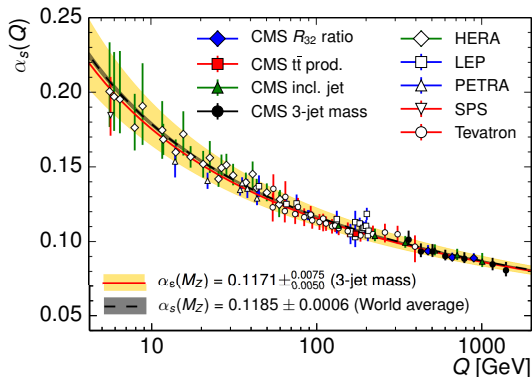
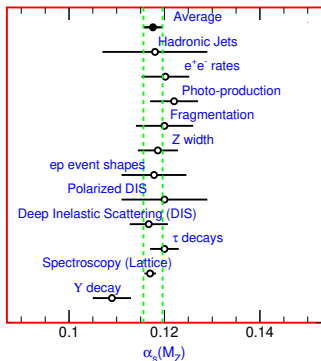
- sensitivity to $\alpha_S \nearrow$ with $N_{\text{jet}} \nearrow$ but stat $\searrow$



- energy scale dependence in good agreement with the QCD predicted evolution

$$\alpha_s(Q^2) = \frac{\alpha_s(\mu_R^2)}{1 + \frac{23}{6\pi}\alpha_s(\mu_R^2)\ln\frac{Q^2}{\mu_R^2}}.$$

Comparison of worldwide α_s measurements

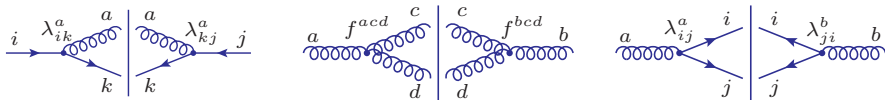


- precision at ‰ level
- it has been measured that α_s is independent of the quark flavor.

great success

Test of QCD gauge structure

- what are the **free parameters** of the different QCD couplings ?



$$(1) \sum_a (\lambda_{ik}^a \lambda_{kj}^a) = 4 C_F \delta_{ij}$$

$$C_F = T_F \frac{N^2 - 1}{N} = \frac{4}{3}$$

$$(2) \sum_{cd} f^{acd} f^{bcd} = C_A \delta_{ab}$$

$$C_A = 2 T_F N = 3$$

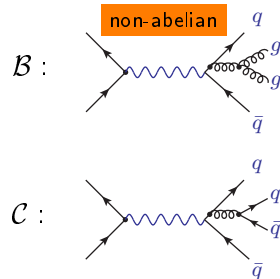
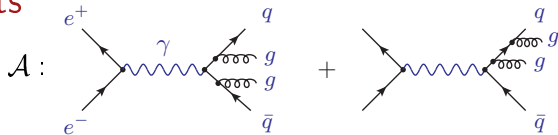
$$(3) \text{Tr}(\lambda^a \lambda^b) = 4 T_F \delta^{ab}$$

$$T_F = \frac{1}{2}$$

- to confirm that QCD has the correct gauge structure

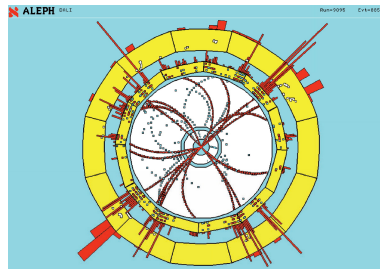
$\Rightarrow$ to access the gauge parameters C_F , C_A and T_F , we need to study **4-jet events**.

4-jet events

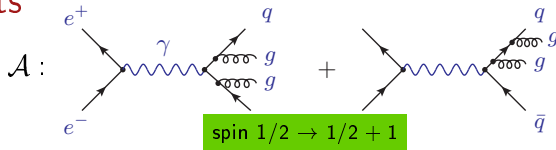


$$d\sigma = \left(\frac{\alpha_S}{2\pi}\right)^2 [C_F^2 \mathcal{A} + C_F C_A \mathcal{B} + C_F T_F n_f \mathcal{C}]$$

- $\mathcal{A}$, $\mathcal{B}$ and $\mathcal{C}$ are kinematic functions corresponding to the diagrams

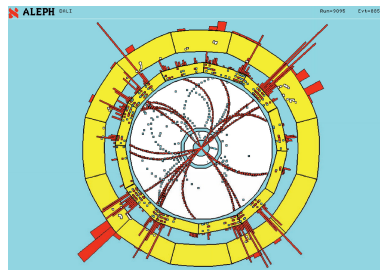
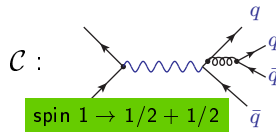
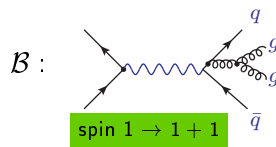


4-jet events



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- $\mathcal{A}$, $\mathcal{B}$ and $\mathcal{C}$ are **kinematic functions** corresponding to the diagrams
- constraints on the gauge parameters can be obtained from **angular distributions**



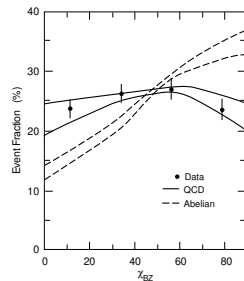
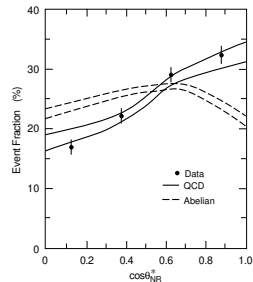
4-jet events

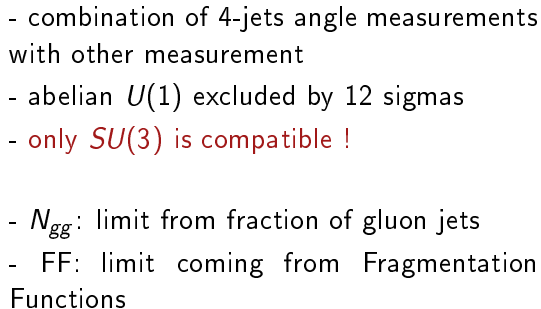
$$E_1 > E_2 > E_3 > E_4$$

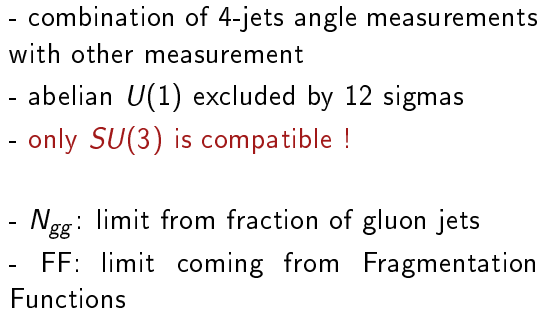
$$\cos \Theta_{NR^*} = \left| \frac{(\vec{p}_1 - \vec{p}_2) \cdot (\vec{p}_3 - \vec{p}_4)}{|\vec{p}_1 - \vec{p}_2| |\vec{p}_3 - \vec{p}_4|} \right|$$

$$\cos \chi_{BZ} = \left| \frac{(\vec{p}_1 \times \vec{p}_2) \cdot (\vec{p}_3 \times \vec{p}_4)}{|\vec{p}_1 \times \vec{p}_2| |\vec{p}_3 \times \vec{p}_4|} \right|$$

⇒ confirms the need a the non-abelian term







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section conclusions

- ✓ quark electric charges
- ✓ quark spin $1/2$
- ✓ gluon spin 1
- ✓ α_S running
- ✓ need non-abelian term
- ✓ $SU(3)$ gauge parameters

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complete success !

- ⇒ QCD is a (the ?) good theory to describe strong interactions
- ⇒ can it be used to study the **hadron structure** (next section)
- ⇒ is it portable in **hadron-hadron interactions** ? (next-to-next section)

- Part 3 -

Structure of hadrons

Structure of the proton

- proton in the quark model: **2 up quarks, 1 down quark.**
- the picture seems consistent: up-charge = $+\frac{2}{3}$; down charge = $-\frac{1}{3}$

$$2 \times \frac{2}{3} - 1 \times \frac{1}{3} = +1$$

- but is this **right?** Is it **all?**

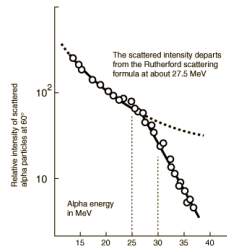
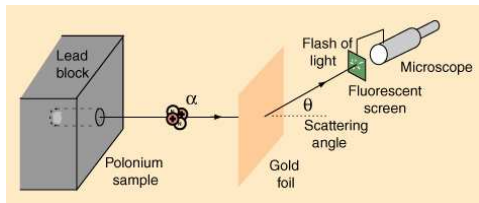
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- but is this **right?** Is it **all?**
 - do we see interactions between them or are they free particles?
 - the colour field (gluons) between the quarks fluctuates in $q\bar{q}$ pairs
 $\Rightarrow$ **gluons and sea quarks**
they carry a small fraction of the proton momentum
 $\Rightarrow$ **small x physics**
i.e. the study of a colour field inside the proton.
 - How can we study that? $\Rightarrow$ **scattering experiments**

- 1909: Geiger and Marsden and Rutherford : Rutherford scattering - Atomic nucleus

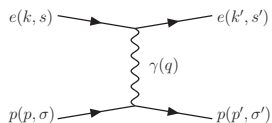


$$\langle r_{nucleus} \rangle < 10^{-14} m$$

$\Rightarrow$ let see use the same principle but using an elementary particle (e^-) scattered off a p

$$e^- + p \rightarrow e^- + p$$

Mott Scattering: point-like spin 1/2 off point-like spin 1/2

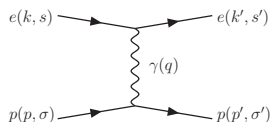


$$\mathcal{M} = \langle k', s' | J_e^\mu | k, s \rangle \frac{g_{\mu\nu}}{q^2} \langle p', \sigma' | J_p^\nu | p, \sigma \rangle$$

$$J_e^\mu = -ie \bar{u}(k', s') \gamma^\mu u(k, s)$$

$$J_p^\mu = -ie \bar{u}(p', \sigma') \gamma^\mu u(p, \sigma)$$

Mott Scattering: point-like spin 1/2 off point-like spin 1/2



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$$|\overline{\mathcal{M}}|^2 = \frac{1}{4} \sum_{s, s', \sigma, \sigma'} |\mathcal{M}|^2 = \frac{e^4}{q^4} L^{\mu\nu} W_{\mu\nu}$$

$$\begin{aligned} L^{\mu\nu} &= \frac{1}{2} \sum_{s, s'} J_e^\mu J_e^\nu \\ &= 2 (k'^\mu k^\nu + k^\mu k'^\nu - (k \cdot k' + m_e^2) g^{\mu\nu}) \end{aligned}$$

$$W^{\mu\nu} = 2 (p'^\mu p^\nu + p^\mu p'^\nu - (p \cdot p' + m_p^2) g^{\mu\nu})$$

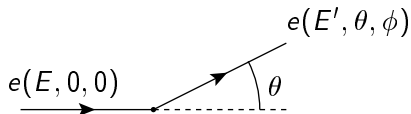
Using $p' = p + k - k'$ and $q^2 = -2 k \cdot k'$ ($m_e \ll k, k'$) the tensor product gives:

$$\overline{|\mathcal{M}|^2} = \frac{8e^4}{q^4} \left[\frac{-q^2}{2} (k - k') \cdot p + 2(k \cdot p)(k' \cdot p) + \frac{m_p^2 q^2}{2} \right]$$

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in the lab frame (fixed target - $p = (m_p, 0, 0, 0)$)



$$p \cdot k = m_p E, \quad p \cdot k' = m_p E'$$

$$k \cdot k' = E E' (1 - \cos \theta)$$

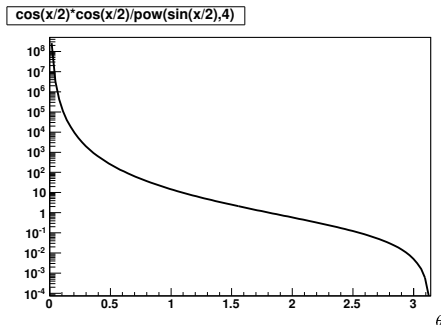
$$\text{and } E - E' = -\frac{q^2}{2m_p}$$

$$\overline{|\mathcal{M}|^2} = \frac{16e^4}{q^4} E E' m_p^2 \left(\cos^2(\theta/2) - \frac{q^2}{2m_p^2} \sin^2(\theta/2) \right)$$

$$\Rightarrow \boxed{\frac{d^2\sigma}{dE' d\Omega} = \frac{4\alpha^2}{Q^4} E'^2 \left[\cos^2(\theta/2) - \frac{q^2}{2m_p^2} \sin^2(\theta/2) \right] \delta(E - E' + \frac{q^2}{2m_p^2})}$$

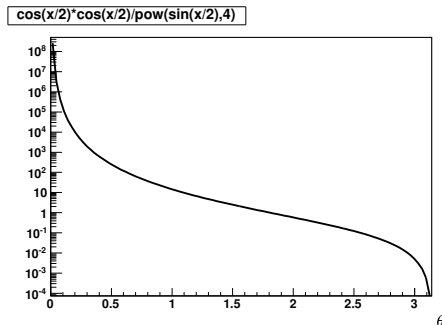
Note 1: the first term corresponds to the classic calculation called the Mott scattering cross section:

$$\frac{d\sigma_{Mott}}{d\Omega} = \frac{4\alpha^2}{Q^4} E'^2 \cos^2(\theta/2) = \frac{\alpha^2}{4E^2} \frac{\cos^2(\theta/2)}{\sin^4(\theta/2)}$$



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the **second term** vanishes for $Q^2 \rightarrow 0$, i.e. real photons (purely transverse).

Note 2: in the ultra relativistic limit, using Mandelstam variables:

$$s = (k + p)^2 = 2 p \cdot k,$$

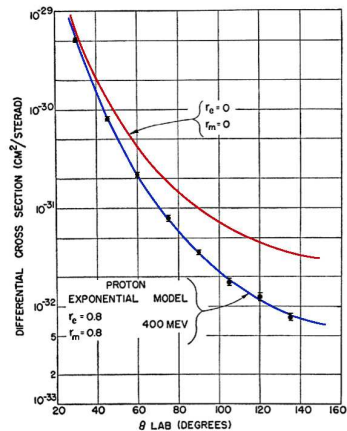
$$t = (k - k')^2 = q^2 = -2 k \cdot k',$$

$$u = (k - p')^2 = (k' - p)^2 = -2 p \cdot k',$$

$$|\overline{\mathcal{M}}|^2 = 2e^4 \frac{s^2 + u^2}{t^2}$$

Form Factors: elastic point-like spin 1/2 off hadronic target

1953 Hofstadter et al. (SLAC)

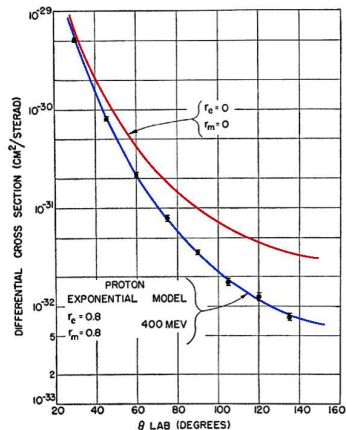


$$e^- + N \rightarrow e^- + N$$

Deviation w.r.t point-like scattering

Form Factors: elastic point-like spin 1/2 off hadronic target

1953 Hofstadter et al. (SLAC)



$$e^- + N \rightarrow e^- + N$$

Deviation w.r.t point-like scattering

Experimentalist way to introduce the FF:

$$\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega_e} = \frac{d\sigma_{Mott}}{d\Omega_e} \times \left[G_E(Q)^2 + \frac{\tau}{\epsilon} G_M(Q)^2 \right] \frac{1}{1+\tau}$$

$$\tau = \frac{Q^2}{4mp^2} \text{ and } \epsilon : \text{virtual photon polarisation}$$

$$\frac{1}{1+\tau} = \frac{E_e}{E_e'} : \text{recoil factor}$$

$$Q^2 = -q^2 = -(k' - k)^2 \simeq 2E E' (1 - \cos \theta)$$

G_E : Fourier transform of the target electric charge distribution (resp. G_M : distribution of the magnetisation current densities)

$$G_E(Q) = \int d^3r \rho(r) e^{i\mathbf{r} \cdot \mathbf{Q}} \quad \text{with} \quad G_E(0) = 1$$

for small $|q|$

$$G_E(Q) = \int \left(1 + i\mathbf{Q} \cdot \mathbf{r} - \frac{(\mathbf{Q} \cdot \mathbf{r})^2}{2} + \dots \right) \rho(r) d^3r$$

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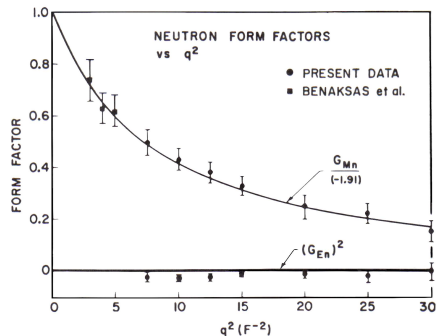
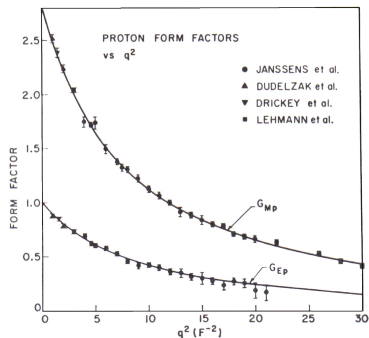
Average squared radius :

$$\langle r^2 \rangle = \int r^2 \rho(r) d^3r = 4\pi \int r^2 \rho(r) r^2 dr$$

Assuming spherical symmetry $\Rightarrow \rho(r) = \rho(-r)$:

$$G_E(Q) \simeq 1 + 0 - \frac{Q^2}{6} \langle r^2 \rangle + \dots$$

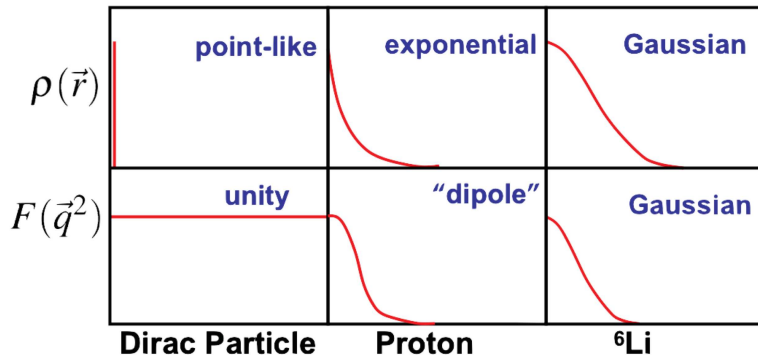
$$\langle r^2 \rangle^{1/2} \simeq 0.74 \pm 0.24 \cdot 10^{-15} \text{ m}$$



Fitted with a dipole shape:

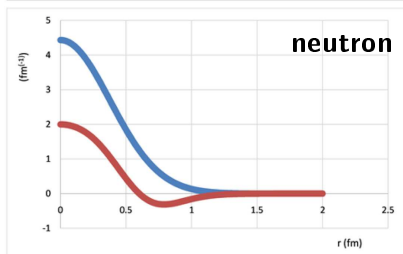
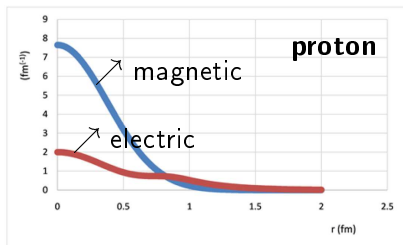
$$|G_D(Q)| \sim \frac{1}{(1 + Q^2/\mu_0^2)^2}$$

with $\mu_0^2 \simeq 0.71 \text{ GeV}^2$



Example of recent work:

Kurai [2020]



transverse charge distributions as a function of the **impact parameter b**

⇒ negative charge densities at the neutron center

⇒ contradicts the negative pion cloud surrounding a positively charged core.