Influence of a temperature-dependent shear viscosity on the azimuthal asymmetries of transverse momentum spectra in ultrarelativistic heavy-ion collisions

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We study the influence of a temperature-dependent shear viscosity over entropy density ratio $\eta/s$, different shear relaxation times $\tau_\eta$, as well as different initial conditions on the transverse momentum spectra of charged hadrons and identified particles. We investigate the azimuthal flow asymmetries as a function of both collision energy and centrality. The elliptic flow coefficient turns out to be dominated by the hadronic viscosity at RHIC energies. Only at higher collision energies the impact of the viscosity in the QGP phase is visible in the flow asymmetries. Nevertheless, the shear viscosity near the QCD transition region has the largest impact on the collective flow of the system. We also find that the centrality dependence of the elliptic flow is sensitive to the temperature dependence of $\eta/s$.

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\section{I. INTRODUCTION}

Determining the properties of the quark-gluon plasma (QGP) is nowadays one of the most important goals in high-energy nuclear physics. For a system of weakly interacting particles reliable results can be obtained from first-principle quantum field-theoretical calculations. Unfortunately, for strongly interacting matter these tools provide only a limited amount of information.

It is, however, possible to calculate the thermodynamical properties of such matter numerically from the theory of strong interactions, quantum chromodynamics (QCD). These lattice QCD calculations show that if the temperature is sufficiently high, the matter undergoes a transition from a confined phase where the relevant degrees of freedom are hadrons, to a deconfined phase where the degrees of freedom are quarks and gluons, the so-called QCD transition \cite{11}.

In recent years, experiments at the Relativistic Heavy-Ion Collider (RHIC) at Brookhaven National Laboratory \cite{2} and the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at CERN have provided a wealth of data from which one could in principle obtain information about the QGP. However, to compare these data with lattice QCD results is not straightforward. So far, lattice calculations have provided reliable results for static thermodynamical properties of QCD matter, e.g. the equation of state (EoS). The system created in heavy-ion collisions is, however, not static but dynamical, because it expands and cools in a very short time span of order $10^{-23}$ seconds. Obviously, in order to be able to properly interpret the experimental results and infer the properties of QCD matter, we also need a good understanding of the dynamics of heavy-ion collisions.

Fluid dynamics is one of the most commonly used frameworks to describe the space-time evolution of the created fireball, because the complicated microscopic dynamics of the matter is encoded in only a few macroscopic parameters like the EoS and the transport coefficients.

Currently, fluid-dynamical models give a reasonably good quantitative description of transverse momentum spectra of hadrons and their centrality dependence \cite{3, 7}. So far, most calculations assume that the shear viscosity to entropy density ratio $\eta/s$ is constant, and they show that, in order to describe the azimuthal asymmetries of the spectra, e.g. the elliptic flow coefficient $v_2$, this constant must be very small, of order 0.1. However, for real physical systems, $\eta/s$ depends (at least) on the temperature \cite{5}. A constant value of $\eta/s$ can only be justified as an average over the space-time evolution of the system. It is not clear how this average is related to the temperature dependence of $\eta/s$.

In previous work \cite{9, 10}, we have studied the consequences of relaxing the assumption of a constant $\eta/s$. We found that the relevant temperature region where the shear viscosity affects the elliptic flow most varies with the collision energy. At RHIC the most relevant region is around and below the QCD transition temperature, while for higher collision energies the temperature region above the transition becomes more and more important. In this work we shall extend our previous study and provide a more detailed picture of the temperature regions that affect elliptic flow as well as higher harmonics at a given collision energy.

This paper is organized in the following way. In Sec. II, we describe our fluid-dynamical framework and its numerical implementation. In Sec. III, we specify the EoS, the transport coefficients, and the initialization. Sections IV and V contain a detailed compilation of our results, some of which were already shown in Refs. \cite{9, 10}. We present the transverse momentum spectra and the elliptic flow of hadrons at various centralities with different parameterizations of $\eta/s$ as function of temperature. We also study the impact of different initial conditions and
of the choice of the relaxation time for the shear-stress tensor. In Sec. VI, we investigate evolution of the elliptic flow in more detail and, in Sec. VII, find the temperature regions where \( v_2 \) and \( v_4 \) are most sensitive to the value of \( \eta/s \). Finally, we summarize our results and give some conclusions. We use natural units \( \hbar = c = k = 1 \) throughout the paper.

II. FLUID DYNAMICS

A. Formalism

In order to describe the evolution of a system on length scales much larger than a typical microscopic scale, for instance the mean-free path, it is sufficient to characterize the state of matter by a few macroscopic fields, namely the energy-momentum tensor \( T^{\mu\nu} \) and, possibly, some charge currents \( N^a_{\mu} \). Fluid dynamics is equivalent to the local conservation laws for these fields,

\[
\partial_\mu T^{\mu\nu} = 0 , \quad \partial_\mu N^a_{\mu} = 0 .
\]

In the absence of conserved charges and bulk viscosity, the energy-momentum tensor \( T^{\mu\nu} \) can be decomposed as

\[
T^{\mu\nu} = eu^\mu u^\nu - P \Delta^{\mu\nu} + \pi^{\mu\nu} ,
\]
where \( u^\mu = T^{\mu\nu} u_\nu / e \) is the fluid four-velocity, \( e \) is the energy density in the local rest frame of the fluid, i.e., in the frame where \( u^\mu = (1, 0, 0, 0) \), and \( P \) is the thermodynamic pressure. The shear-stress tensor is defined as \( \pi^{\mu\nu} = T^{(\mu\nu)} \), where the angular brackets \( (\cdot) \) denote the symmetric and traceless part of the tensor orthogonal to the fluid velocity. With the \((-,-,-,-)\) convention for the metric tensor \( g^{\mu\nu} \), the projector \( \Delta^{\mu\nu} = g^{\mu\nu} - u^\mu u^\nu \).

If the system is sufficiently close to local thermodynamical equilibrium, the energy-momentum conservation equations can be closed by providing the EoS, \( P(T) \), the equations determining \( \pi^{\mu\nu} \), and the transport coefficients entering these equations, e.g., the shear viscosity \( \eta(T) \). The EoS \( P(T) \) and the shear viscosity \( \eta(T) \) can in principle be computed by integrating out the dynamics on microscopic length scales.

While the conservation laws are exact for any system, the equations determining the shear-stress tensor require certain approximations, so that the only variables entering the equations of motion are those that appear in the energy-momentum tensor, namely \( e, u^\mu \), and \( \pi^{\mu\nu} \). In the so-called relativistic Navier-Stokes approximation, the shear-stress tensor is directly proportional to the gradients of the four-velocity,

\[
\pi^{\mu\nu} = 2\eta \sigma^{\mu\nu} = 2\eta \partial(\mu u^\nu) .
\]

We note that in this approximation the shear-stress tensor is not an independent dynamical variable.

Unfortunately, this approximation results in parabolic equations of motion, and subsequently the signal speed is not limited in this theory. In relativistic fluid dynamics this violation of causality leads to the existence of linearly unstable modes, which make relativistic Navier-Stokes (NS) theory useless for practical applications.

A commonly used approach that cures these instability and acausality problems is Israel-Stewart (IS) theory. In this approach the shear-stress tensor, the heat flow and bulk viscous pressure are introduced as independent dynamical variables and fulfill coupled, so-called relaxation-type differential equations of motion. Assuming vanishing heat-flow and bulk viscosity, the relaxation equation for the shear-stress tensor can be written as

\[
\tau_{\pi} \pi^{(\mu\nu)} + \pi^{\mu\nu} = 2\eta \sigma^{\mu\nu} + \lambda_1 \pi^{\mu\nu} \theta + \lambda_2 \sigma^{(\mu\nu)} \sigma_{\alpha\beta} \pi^{\alpha\beta} + \lambda_3 \pi^{(\mu\nu)} \alpha + \lambda_4 \omega^{(\mu\nu)} \alpha ,
\]

where \( \dot{A} = u^\mu \partial_\mu A \) denotes the comoving derivative of \( A \) and \( \theta = \partial_\mu u^\mu \) is the expansion scalar. The shear-relaxation time \( \tau_{\pi} \) is the slowest time scale of the underlying microscopic theory. Formally, IS theory can be derived by neglecting all faster microscopic time scales. Like \( \tau_{\pi} \), the coefficients \( \lambda_i \) can in principle be calculated from the underlying microscopic theory, i.e., in our case QCD. Unfortunately, for QCD the transport coefficients appearing in Eq. (1) are still largely unknown. For the sake of simplicity, in this work we use \( \lambda_1 = -4/3 \), obtained from the Boltzmann equation for a massless gas, and \( \lambda_2 = \lambda_3 = \lambda_4 = 0 \). The shear-relaxation time and the shear viscosity are left as free parameters.

Instead of the full \((3+1)\)-dimensional treatment we consider a simplified evolution where the expansion in the \( z \)-direction is described by boost-invariant scaling flow \( T^{(0)} \), i.e., the longitudinal velocity is given by \( v_z = z/t \), and the scalar densities are independent of the space-time rapidity \( \eta_s = \frac{1}{2} \log \left( \frac{v_z + 1}{v_z - 1} \right) \). Here, \( t \) is the time measured in laboratory coordinates. In this approximation the full evolution depends only on the coordinates \( (\tau, x, y) \), where \( x \) and \( y \) are the transverse coordinates and \( \tau = \sqrt{\tau^2 - \tau_z^2} \) is the longitudinal proper time.

B. Numerical implementation

Once the initial values of the components of the energy-momentum tensor are specified at a given initial time \( \tau_0 \), the space-time evolution of the system is obtained by solving the conservation laws together with the IS equations.

The conservation laws are solved using the algorithm developed in Refs. and generalized to more than one dimension in Ref. This method, known as SHASTA for "SHand Stich Smooth Transport Algorithm", solves equations of the type

\[
\partial_\tau U + \partial_i (v_i U) = S(t, x) ,
\]

where \( U = U(t, x) \) is for example \( T^{00}, T^{0i}, \ldots \), \( v_i \) is the \( i \)-th component of three-velocity, and \( S(t, x) \) is a source term, for more details see Ref.
We can further stabilize SHASTA by letting the antidiffusion coefficient \(A_{ad}\) which controls the amount of numerical diffusion to be proportional to

\[
\frac{1}{(k/e)^2 + 1},
\]

where \(e\) is the energy density in the local rest frame, and \(k\) is some constant of order \(10^{-5}\) GeV/fm\(^5\). In this way, \(A_{ad}\) goes smoothly to zero near the boundaries of the grid, i.e., we increase the amount of numerical diffusion in that region. We have checked that this neither affects the solution nor produces more entropy inside the decoupling surface.

The relaxation equation \(\mathbf{4}\) could also be solved using SHASTA. However, we noticed that solving it by replacing the spatial gradient at grid point \(i\) on the left-hand side of Eq. \(\mathbf{4}\) by a centered second-order difference,

\[
\partial_x U_i = \frac{U_{i+1} - U_{i-1}}{2\Delta x},
\]

where \(U = \pi^\mu\nu\), yields a more stable algorithm. Time derivatives in the source terms are simply taken as first-order backward differences. Like in SHASTA, all spatial gradients in the source terms are discretized according to Eq. \(\mathbf{7}\).

**III. PARAMETERS**

**A. Equation of State**

As EoS we use the recent s95-p-PCE-v1 parameterization of lattice QCD results \([23]\). In this parameterization, the high-temperature part is matched to recent results of the hotQCD collaboration \([24, 25]\) and smoothly connected to the low-temperature part described as a hadron resonance gas. All hadrons listed in Ref. \([26]\) up to a mass of 2 GeV are included in the hadronic part of the EoS. The system is assumed to chemically freeze-out at \(T_{chem} = 150\) MeV. Below this temperature the EoS is constructed according to Refs. \([27, 29]\). This construction assumes that the evolution below \(T_{chem}\) is isentropic. Strictly speaking this is not the case in viscous hydrodynamics since dissipation causes an increase in entropy. However, we have checked that in our calculations the viscous entropy production from all fluid cells with temperatures below \(T_{chem} = 150\) MeV is less than 1\% of the initial entropy, whereas the entropy production during the entire evolution ranges from 3 − 14 \%, depending on the collision energy and the \(\eta/s\) parameterization.

**B. Transport coefficients**

The temperature-dependent shear viscosity is parameterized as follows. In all cases, we take the minimum of \(\eta/s\) to be at \(T_{tr} = 180\) MeV. Unless otherwise stated, the value of \(\eta/s\) at the minimum is assumed to equal the lower bound \(\eta/s = 0.08\) conjectured in the framework of the AdS/CFT correspondence \([31]\).

![FIG. 1. (Color online) Different parameterizations of \(\eta/s\) as a function of temperature. The \((LH-LQ)\) line is shifted downwards and the \((HH-HQ)\) line upwards for better visibility.](image)

The parameterization of the hadronic viscosity is based on Ref. \([32]\) where the authors consider a hadron resonance gas with additional Hagedorn states. In practice, we use a temperature dependence of \(\eta/s\) of the following...
functional form \[9, 33\],

\[
\frac{\eta}{s}_{\text{HRG}} = 0.681 - 0.0594 \frac{T}{T_{tr}} - 0.544 \left( \frac{T}{T_{tr}} \right)^2.
\] (9)

At \( T = 100 \) MeV this coincides with the \( \eta/s \) value given in Ref. \[32\], and decreases smoothly to the minimum value \( \eta/s = 0.08 \) at \( T_{tr} \). We note that many authors obtain considerably larger values for the shear viscosity of hadronic matter, see e.g. Refs. \[34\]. Our motivation here is to illustrate the effects of hadronic viscosity rather than to use a parameterization that is as realistic as possible. We shall see that even this low \( \eta/s \) leads to considerable effects for hadronic observables in Au + Au collisions at RHIC. We further note that, since we are considering effects for hadronic observables in Au + Au collisions at RHIC, we shall use the following four parameterizations of the shear viscosity:

- \((LH-LQ)\) \( \eta/s = 0.08 \) for all temperatures,
- \((LH-HQ)\) \( \eta/s = 0.08 \) in the hadron gas, and above \( T = 180 \) MeV \( \eta/s \) increases according to Eq. \[10\],
- \((HH-LQ)\) below \( T = 180 \) MeV, \( \eta/s \) is given by Eq. \[9\], and above we set \( \eta/s = 0.08 \),
- \((HH-HQ)\) we use Eqs. \[9\] and \[10\] for the hadron gas and the QGP, respectively.

These parameterizations are shown in Fig. \[1\]. Besides these four cases we also study the effect of varying the value of the minimum of \( \eta/s \), see Secs. \[V\] and \[VII\].

In order to complete the description, we also need to specify the relaxation time. In this work we use a functional form suggested by kinetic theory,

\[
\tau_{\eta} = c_{\tau} \frac{\eta}{e + p},
\] (11)

where \( c_{\tau} \) is a constant. Causality requires that \( c_{\tau} \geq 2 \) \[12\]. Unless otherwise stated, we shall use the value \( c_{\tau} = 5 \) which coincides with the value obtained from the Boltzmann equation in the 14-moment approximation for a massless gas of classical particles \[30\]. The relaxation times corresponding to the parameterizations above are shown in Fig. \[2\]. The effect of varying the relaxation time separately from \( \eta \) is also studied in Sec. \[V\].

\begin{figure}[ht]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure2.png}
\caption{(Color online) Relaxation times corresponding to the different parameterizations of \( \eta/s \), for \( c_\tau = 5 \). The \((LH-LQ)\) line is shifted downwards and the \((HH-HQ)\) line upwards for better visibility.}
\end{figure}

\section{Initial state}

We still need to specify the initial state at some proper time \( \tau_0 \). For a boost-invariant system it is sufficient to provide the components of the energy-momentum tensor in the transverse plane at \( z = 0 \), i.e., \( n_z = 0 \). Within our approximations these are the local energy density, the initial transverse velocity, and the three independent components of the shear-stress tensor. Here, we will assume that the initial transverse velocity is zero and, unless otherwise stated, the initial shear-stress tensor is also assumed to be zero.

For the initial time we choose \( \tau_0 = 1 \) fm. The energy density \( e(\tau_0, x, y) \) is based on the optical Glauber model by assuming that the energy density is a function of the density of binary nucleon-nucleon collisions \( n_{BW} \), or the density of wounded nucleons \( n_{WN} \), or both,

\[
e(\tau_0, x, y) = C_e f(n_{BC}, n_{WN}).
\] (12)

The overall normalization, \( C_e \), is fixed in order to reproduce the observed multiplicities in the most central \( \sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200 \) GeV Au+Au collisions at RHIC, and in \( \sqrt{s_{NN}} = 2.76 \) GeV Pb+Pb collisions at LHC.

The centrality dependence of the multiplicity is reproduced in this work in two different ways:

- \textit{BCfit}: choosing \( f \) to be a polynomial in \( n_{BC} \),
  \[
f(n_{BC}) = n_{BC} + c_1 n_{BC}^2 + c_2 n_{BC}^3.
\] (13)

- \textit{GLmix}: using a superposition of \( n_{BW} \) and \( n_{WN} \),
  \[
f(n_{BC}, n_{WN}) = d_1 n_{BC} + (1 - d_1) n_{WN}.
\] (14)

Here, the coefficient \( c_2 \) is introduced in order to guarantee that the parameterizations are monotonically increasing with increasing binary-collision or wounded-nucleon density. This ensures that the highest energy density is in the center of the system, i.e., at \( x = y = 0 \).
TABLE I. Initialization parameters for different collision energies. The maximum temperature $T_{\text{max}}$ is given for the BCfit initialization with the (LH-LQ) parameterization of $\eta/s$. For the other initializations $T_{\text{max}}$ differs less than 5%.

| $\sqrt{s_{\text{NN}}}$ [GeV] | $c_1$ [fm$^{-1}$] | $c_2$ [fm$^{-1}$] | $d_1$ | $T_{\text{max}}$ [MeV] |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------|-----------------|
| 200             | $-0.032$        | 0.00035         | 0.4  | 313             |
| 2760            | $-0.01$         | 0.0001          | 0.7  | 430             |
| 5500            | 0               | 0               | 1.0  | 504             |

For a given impact parameter, the optical Glauber model yields a different number of participants and different centrality classes than the Monte Carlo Glauber models commonly used by the experimental collaborations. Using the optical Glauber model, we can either choose to reproduce the multiplicity as a function of the number of participants or as a function of centrality classes. In general, this leads to different coefficients $c_i$ and $d_i$. Here, we choose to determine the initial conditions by requiring that the centrality dependence of the charged particle multiplicity as a function of the number of participants is reproduced. We have checked that, if we determine the centrality dependence by matching to the centrality classes given by the optical Glauber model, the elliptic flow is more suppressed in central and enhanced in peripheral collisions at RHIC energies, while at LHC energies it remains practically unchanged. In order to be fully consistent with the experimental determination of the centrality classes, one would need to generate fluctuating initial conditions via a Monte Carlo Glauber model, see e.g. Refs. 39, 40.

For $\sqrt{s_{\text{NN}}} = 5.5$ TeV Pb+Pb collisions we use the multiplicity in the most central collisions as predicted by the EKRT model. In this case the centrality dependence is assumed to follow binary scaling, i.e., $c_1 = c_2 = 0$ in Eq. (13). All initialization parameters are shown in Table I.

Different parameterizations of $\eta/s$ lead to different entropy production and therefore different final multiplicity, even if the initial state is kept the same. This is especially true for different parameterizations of the high-temperature shear viscosity, since most of the entropy is produced during the early stages of the collision. We compensate this using different overall normalizations e.g. between the (HH-LQ) and (HH-HQ) parameterizations. Entropy production during the hadronic evolution is small and not compensated. The centrality dependence of the entropy production is also different for different $\eta/s$ parameterizations. Since it leads to at most a 5% difference in the final multiplicities and is hardly visible in the results, it is not corrected here.

IV. RESULTS AND COMPARISON WITH EXPERIMENTAL DATA

In this section we use the initializations and parameterizations of $\eta/s$ given above, and compare the results with experimental data from RHIC and LHC.

A. Transverse momentum spectra and elliptic flow at RHIC

In Fig. 3 we show the $p_T$-spectra of pions for different centrality classes for RHIC $\sqrt{s_{\text{NN}}} = 200$ GeV Au+Au collisions and compare them with PHENIX data 47. We only show results using the BCfit initialization; those for the GLmix initialization are very similar. The freeze-out temperature is chosen as $T_{\text{dec}} = 100$ MeV. This choice reproduces the slopes of the $p_T$-spectra quite well.

Once we correct the normalization of the initial energy density profile for different entropy production, the slopes of the $p_T$-spectra are practically unaffected by the $\eta/s$ parameterizations. We note that in our earlier work this correction was not made, and the different $\eta/s$ parameterizations lead not only to different multiplicities but also to different slopes for the $p_T$-spectra. This effect was even more pronounced at LHC than at RHIC, due to an increase in entropy production caused by larger gradients appearing with an earlier initialization time $\tau_0 = 0.6$ fm.

![Figure 3](image-url) (Color online) Pion spectra at RHIC, with BCfit initialization.

The kaon spectra are shown in Fig. 4 and the proton spectra in Fig. 5 with the BCfit initialization. Both are compared with PHENIX data 47. Because we do not consider net-baryon number in our calculations, the proton and anti-proton spectra are identical. For this reason we show both the proton and the anti-proton data in Fig. 5.

For both kaons and protons the calculated spectra are slightly more curved than the data and they also lie above the data. As for the pions, the slopes of the spectra are
practically independent of the $\eta/s$ parameterization.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig4}
\caption{(Color online) Kaon spectra at RHIC, with BCfit initialization.}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig5}
\caption{(Color online) Proton spectra at RHIC, with BCfit initialization.}
\end{figure}

Figure 4 shows the $p_T$-differential elliptic flow $v_2(p_T)$ for protons with the BCfit initialization compared to the two-particle cumulant data from the STAR collaboration [44]. The protons show qualitatively the same response to the different $\eta/s$ parameterizations as all charged hadrons, i.e., $v_2(p_T)$ depends strongly on the hadronic viscosity, but is almost independent of the high-temperature $\eta/s$. Since we use a smooth initialization, with no initial-state fluctuations included, quantitative comparisons with two- or four-particle cumulant data are not straightforward.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig6}
\caption{(Color online) Charged hadron $v_2(p_T)$ at RHIC, with BCfit initialization.}
\end{figure}

\section*{B. Transverse momentum spectra and elliptic flow at LHC}

Transverse momentum spectra of charged hadrons in most central Pb+Pb collisions with $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 2.76$ TeV at LHC are shown in Fig. 9. At LHC, both initializations BCfit and GLmix give very similar results for both elliptic flow and the spectra, because the contribution at RHIC. This holds for all centrality classes. The suppression of the elliptic flow due to the hadronic viscosity is even more enhanced in more peripheral collisions. Note that with the BCfit initialization, the elliptic flow in the most central collision class is reproduced by the parameterizations with a large hadronic viscosity, while with the GLmix initialization the elliptic flow in the same centrality class is better described by taking a constant $\eta/s = 0.08$. However, with the latter choice the elliptic flow tends to be overestimated in more peripheral collisions. On the other hand, the temperature-dependent hadronic $\eta/s$ gives the centrality dependence correctly down to the 30 – 40 % centrality class. In even more peripheral collisions a large hadronic viscosity tends to suppress the elliptic flow too much.

As was observed in Ref. 9, the differential elliptic flow is largely independent of the high-temperature $\eta/s$ parameterization, but highly sensitive on the hadronic $\eta/s$.
The $p_T$-differential elliptic flow for all charged hadrons is shown in Fig. 10 and for protons in Fig. 11. The charged hadron elliptic flow is compared with ALICE four-particle cumulant data [46]. We can see that in the 10 – 20 % centrality class, changing the hadronic $\eta/s$ or changing the high-temperature $\eta/s$ has quite a similar impact on the elliptic flow, e.g. the difference between the LH-LQ and LH-HQ and between the LH-LQ and HH-LQ curves is nearly the same. However, the more peripheral the collision is, the more the viscous suppression is dominated by the hadronic $\eta/s$. This is confirmed by comparing the grouping of the flow curves in the 40 – 50 % centrality class at LHC with that at RHIC, cf. Figs. 6 and 10. As was the case in Au+Au collisions at RHIC, also here the grouping of the curves for the protons is similar to that of all charged hadrons, cf. Fig. 11.

As was the case with the $p_T$-spectrum, decoupling at a lower temperature from binary collisions is large, of order $\sim 70 \%$, see Table I. Therefore, we show only results with the BCfit initialization; these are compared to data from the ALICE collaboration [45]. The calculated spectra are somewhat flatter than the data. Here, we have used the same decoupling temperature as at RHIC, i.e., $T_{\text{dec}} = 100$ MeV. We could improve the agreement with the data by decoupling at even lower temperature than at RHIC. Another way to improve the agreement is changing a larger chemical freeze-out temperature. This would give steeper spectra, but the proton multiplicity at RHIC would then be overestimated. However, we have tested that the dependence of the spectra and the elliptic flow on $\eta/s$ is unchanged by these details.

The $p_T$-differential elliptic flow for all charged hadrons is shown in Fig. 10 and for protons in Fig. 11. The charged hadron elliptic flow is compared with ALICE four-particle cumulant data [46]. We can see that in the 10 – 20 % centrality class, changing the hadronic $\eta/s$ or changing the high-temperature $\eta/s$ has quite a similar impact on the elliptic flow, e.g. the difference between the LH-LQ and LH-HQ and between the LH-LQ and HH-LQ curves is nearly the same. However, the more peripheral the collision is, the more the viscous suppression is dominated by the hadronic $\eta/s$. This is confirmed by comparing the grouping of the flow curves in the 40 – 50 % centrality class at LHC with that at RHIC, cf. Figs. 6 and 10. As was the case in Au+Au collisions at RHIC, also here the grouping of the curves for the protons is similar to that of all charged hadrons, cf. Fig. 11.

Note that, within our set-up, the best agreement with the ALICE data is obtained with the HH-HQ parameterization, i.e., with a temperature-dependent $\eta/s$ in both hadronic and high-temperature phases. However, in the low-$p_T$ region our calculations systematically underestimate the elliptic flow in all centrality classes. As was the case with the $p_T$-spectrum, decoupling at a lower tem-
perature and choosing a higher chemical freeze-out temperature would improve the agreement, without changing the grouping of the elliptic flow curves with the $\eta/s$ parameterizations.

![Graph](image1)

**FIG. 10.** (Color online) Charged hadron $v_2(p_T)$ at LHC, with BCfit initialization.

In Fig. 12 we show the $p_T$-differential elliptic flow for $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.5$ TeV Pb+Pb collisions. In this case the viscous suppression of $v_2(p_T)$ is dominated by the high-temperature $\eta/s$ in central collisions, while peripheral collisions resemble more the lower-energy central collisions at LHC, i.e., both hadronic and high-temperature viscosity contribute similarly to the suppression. Furthermore, the higher the $p_T$, the more the hadronic viscosity contributes to the suppression. This happens mainly because $\delta f$ increases with both viscosity and $p_T$.

![Graph](image2)

**FIG. 11.** (Color online) Proton $v_2(p_T)$ at LHC, with BCfit initialization.

![Graph](image3)

**FIG. 12.** (Color online) Charged hadron $v_2(p_T)$ at LHC 5.5 A TeV, with BC initialization.

**V. EFFECTS OF SHEAR INITIALIZATION, MINIMUM OF $\eta/s$ AND RELAXATION TIME**

One of the main results of Ref. [9] is that, at RHIC, the high-temperature shear viscosity has very little effect on the elliptic flow. In this section we elaborate more on this analysis, and explicitly show that this statement holds for an out-of-equilibrium initialization of the shear-stress tensor as well. We also study the effect of varying the relaxation time.

![Graph](image4)

**FIG. 13.** (Color online) Charged hadron $v_2(p_T)$ at RHIC, with BCfit and NS initialization.

Figure 13 shows the elliptic flow of charged hadrons in the 20 − 30 % centrality class at RHIC. Instead of setting $\pi^{\mu\nu}$ to zero initially, here the so-called Navier-Stokes
(NS) initialization where the initial values of the shear-stress tensor are given by the first-order, asymptotic solution of IS theory, Eq. (3). For all $\eta/s$ parameterizations, the NS initialization increases the entropy production (up to 30%), especially for the parameterizations with a large high-temperature viscosity. This is corrected by adjusting the initial energy density to produce approximately the same final multiplicity. Although for the parameterizations with a large hadronic $\eta/s$ the different shear initializations give slightly different $v_2(p_T)$ curves, the grouping of these curves remains intact. We emphasize that the NS initialization gives very different initial conditions for each viscosity parameterization. If we use the same non-zero initial shear stress, e.g., $\pi^{\mu\nu} = \text{const.} \times \sigma^{\mu\nu}$, for each parameterization, the resulting $v_2(p_T)$ curves in each group in Fig. 13 would be even closer to each other.

The NS initialization with a constant $\eta/s = 0.08$ has a relatively short relaxation time, see Fig. 2. Hence for $\tau_\pi \ll \tau_0$ the NS initialization is not a completely unrealistic assumption for the initial values of $\pi^{\mu\nu}$. However, for larger values of $\eta/s$ the relaxation times are considerably larger, $\tau_\pi \gg \tau_0$, and there is no reason to assume that the asymptotic solution could have been reached already at very early times.

Fig. 14 shows three $v_2(p_T)$ curves for Au+Au collisions at RHIC: one with the original HH-HQ parameterization, one with the larger minimum value of $\eta/s$, and the last one with the same large minimum value of $\eta/s$, but with a larger relaxation time, i.e., the constant in the relaxation time formula is $c_r = 10$ instead of $c_r = 5$. We note that even a relatively small change in the $\eta/s$ parameterization near the minimum produces quite a visible change in $v_2(p_T)$. At RHIC, this change can be almost completely compensated by adjusting the relaxation time. This shows that in small, rapidly expanding systems like the one formed in heavy-ion collisions, transient effects have considerable influence on the evolution. In other words, the relaxation time cannot be merely considered as a way to regularize the unstable Navier-Stokes theory: it has real physical effects that cannot be completely distinguished from the effects of $\eta/s$. In $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 2.76$ TeV Pb+Pb collisions at LHC, the effect of changing the minimum or the relaxation time is practically the same.

![FIG. 15. (Color online) Charged hadron $v_2(p_T)$ at RHIC, with BCfit initialization and for different minima of $\eta/s$ and relaxation times.](image)

**VI. TIME EVOLUTION OF THE ELLIPTIC FLOW**

One way to probe the effects of shear viscosity on the elliptic flow is to calculate the time evolution of the latter. Typically this is done by calculating the so-called momentum-space anisotropy from the energy-momentum tensor,

$$\varepsilon_p = \frac{\langle T^{xx} - T^{yy} \rangle}{\langle T^{xx} + T^{yy} \rangle},$$

where the $\langle \cdots \rangle$ denotes the average over the transverse plane. The problem is, however, that one cannot make a direct connection of $\varepsilon_p$ to the actual value of $v_2$ obtained from the decoupling procedure. Also, this way of studying the time evolution does not take into account that, at fixed time, part of the matter is already decoupled, i.e., the average over the transverse plane includes also matter that is outside the decoupling surface.

To overcome these two shortcomings of $\varepsilon_p$, we instead calculate the $v_2$ of pions from a constant-time hypersurface that is connected smoothly to a constant-temperature hypersurface at the edge of the fireball, see Fig. 16 for examples of such hypersurfaces. Although, the pions do not exist as real particles before hadronization, the advantage is that the final $v_2$ we obtain matches the one of thermal pions from the full decoupling calculation.

Fig. 17 shows the time evolution of $v_2$ in Au+Au collisions at RHIC, in $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 2.76$ TeV Pb+Pb colli-
sions at LHC, and in $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.5$ TeV Pb+Pb collisions at LHC. In all cases, the evolution is calculated in the 20–30% centrality class. These results confirm our earlier conjecture: at RHIC, the different $\eta/s$ parameterizations create very little difference in the elliptic flow in the early stages of the collision, while at later stages the suppression due to the hadronic viscosity takes over and groups the $v_2$ curves according to the hadronic viscosity. At the intermediate LHC energy the impact of the QGP viscosity is larger, and the final $v_2$ still has a memory of this difference. The hadronic viscosity has a similar impact on $v_2$ as the QGP viscosity. At the highest LHC energy the hadronic suppression is small and the effect of the QGP viscosity clearly dominates the grouping of the $v_2$ curves. Interestingly, both LHC evolutions show an increase of $v_2$ around $\tau = 10$ fm/c. This is when the system is going through the chemical decoupling stage. In the chemically frozen system $v_2$ tends to increase more rapidly than in chemical equilibrium [29, 30]. At RHIC, the chemical decoupling happens earlier, and also the hadronic suppression is stronger, and the increase in $v_2$ is washed out.
VII. PROBING THE EFFECTS OF A TEMPERATURE-DEPENDENT $\eta/s$ ON THE $v_n$'S

In this section, we try to probe the effects of a temperature-dependent $\eta/s$ on the azimuthal asymmetries in a more detailed way. To this end, we introduce a modified $\eta/s$. Our baseline is a constant $\eta/s|_c = 0.08$ that we then modify near some temperature $T_i$ according to

$$\frac{\eta}{s}(T) = \frac{\eta}{s}|_c \left[ 1 + 2 \left( \exp \left( \frac{|T - T_i| - \delta T}{\Delta} \right) + 1 \right)^{-1} \right],$$

(16)

where the parameters are taken to be $\delta T = 10$ MeV and $\Delta = 1.5$ MeV. One example of this $\eta/s$ parameterization is shown in Fig. 18. We note that, although we use smooth initial conditions from the optical Glauber model, we still get non-zero $v_n$ for all even $n$. Although these are much smaller than the ones obtained with the fluctuations included, we can still probe the effects of viscosity on these coefficients. By changing the temperature $T_i$ and comparing the simulations with a constant $\eta/s$ we can find the temperature regions where $v_2$ or $v_4$ are most sensitive to changes of $\eta/s$ at different collision energies.

![Figure 18](image1.png)

**FIG. 18.** (Color online) Shear viscosity with a modified temperature dependence.

Figure 19 shows the results for $v_2$ and $v_4$ in the 20 – 30% centrality class for RHIC and for both LHC energies considered earlier. We plot the relative difference $\delta v_n/v_n$, where $\delta v_n = v_n(\eta/s(T)) - v_n(\eta/s|_c)$. Each point in the figure corresponds to a different calculation, with a different value of $T_i$ in Eq. (16). Similarly, Fig. 20 shows the same result, but without the $\delta f$ contribution to the freeze-out.

The viscosity can affect $v_n$ in two ways: by changing the space-time evolution of the integrated quantities like the energy density, or by changing the local particle-distribution function at freeze-out. With our small baseline viscosity the effect on the local distribution function is quickly washed out during the evolution below the temperature $T_i$. Therefore, in these simulations, in most of the temperature points, the change in $\eta/s$ affects $v_n$ through the space-time evolution, except at the lowest-temperature point $T_i = 110$ MeV, where the peak in $\eta/s$ is close to the freeze-out temperature $T_{\text{dec}} = 100$ MeV. If we exclude the lowest temperature point in $v_4$ at RHIC, we can read off from the figures that the temperature region where viscosity affects both $v_2$ and $v_4$ most is around the transition region $T \sim 150 \ldots 200$ MeV. For $v_2$ this temperature region shifts slightly towards higher temperatures with increasing collision energy, while for $v_4$ the temperature where the effect is maximal is practically unchanged. Other than this, the overall behavior of $v_2$ and $v_4$ is quite similar. At high temperatures, the effect of $\eta/s$ increases with increasing collision energy, while at low temperatures the viscous suppression decreases with increasing collision energy, which is most notable for the $T_i = 110$ MeV point where the viscosity effects on the freeze-out distribution are strongest.

For $v_2$ we observed earlier that the suppression due to the hadronic viscosity practically vanishes at the highest-energy LHC collisions. This is again confirmed in Fig. 19. This is, however, not true for higher harmonics. For $v_4$ there is still a significant contribution from hadronic viscosity at the full LHC energy. In this sense, higher harmonics do not give direct access to the high-temperature viscosity, but can rather help in constraining the hadronic dynamics and viscosity as well as the correct form of $\delta f$. 

![Figure 19](image2.png)

**FIG. 19.** (Color online) Effects of modified $\eta/s$ on $v_2$ and $v_4$. 

amplitude tends to shadow the effects of the properties of the high-temperature matter.

This is also important since the hadronic evolution always tends to shadow the effects of the properties of the high-temperature matter.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

We have studied the effects of a temperature-dependent $\eta/s$ on the azimuthal asymmetries of hadron transverse momentum spectra. We found earlier [2] that the viscous suppression of the elliptic flow is dominated by the hadronic viscosity in $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$ GeV Au+Au collisions at RHIC, while in Pb+Pb collisions at the full LHC energy $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.5$ TeV the suppression is mostly due to the high-temperature shear viscosity. In this work we have supplemented these earlier studies with more details.

First, we found that the suppression of the elliptic flow due to the shear viscosity becomes more important in more peripheral collisions. At least in our set-up, for RHIC energies a temperature-dependent shear viscosity improves the centrality dependence of the elliptic flow compared to the data, similarly to what was found in the hybrid approach of Ref. [3]. With a constant $\eta/s = 0.08$ and with the $GLmix$ initialization, the measured $v_2(p_T)$ is reproduced in the most central collisions, but the calculations give a too large elliptic flow for peripheral collisions. However, with the $BCfit$ initialization the elliptic flow in the most central collisions is reproduced with a temperature-dependent viscosity, and also the centrality dependence is reproduced down to the 30–40\% centrality class. Similarly, in Pb+Pb collisions at LHC both a temperature-dependent hadronic $\eta/s$ as well as an increasing $\eta/s$ in the high-temperature phase help in reproducing the centrality dependence. Although there are lots of uncertainties associated with the decoupling and the initial state, at RHIC the centrality dependence of $v_2(p_T)$ may give access to the temperature dependence of $\eta/s$ in hadronic matter.

Furthermore, we have studied the effects of a temperature-dependent $\eta/s$ in a more detailed way. We found that for a given collision energy both $v_2$ and $v_4$ are most sensitive to the shear viscosity near the transition temperature, i.e., $T \sim 150 – 200$ MeV. For $v_2$, this region moves slightly to higher temperature and widens with increasing collision energy, while for $v_4$ it remains practically unchanged. Other than that, the dependence of $v_2$ and $v_4$ on $\eta/s$ is similar with increasing collision energy: the effect of the hadronic viscosity decreases and the effect of the high-temperature viscosity increases.

For $v_2$ the effect of $\delta f$ almost vanishes at the highest collision energies, but for $v_4$ it always remains significant. At RHIC the $\delta f$ corrections clearly dominate $v_4$, and even at the highest collision energies this effect is comparable to the effects due to the modified space-time evolution. In this sense, higher harmonics give access to the $\delta f$ corrections and the hadronic viscosity rather than the high-temperature viscosity.

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