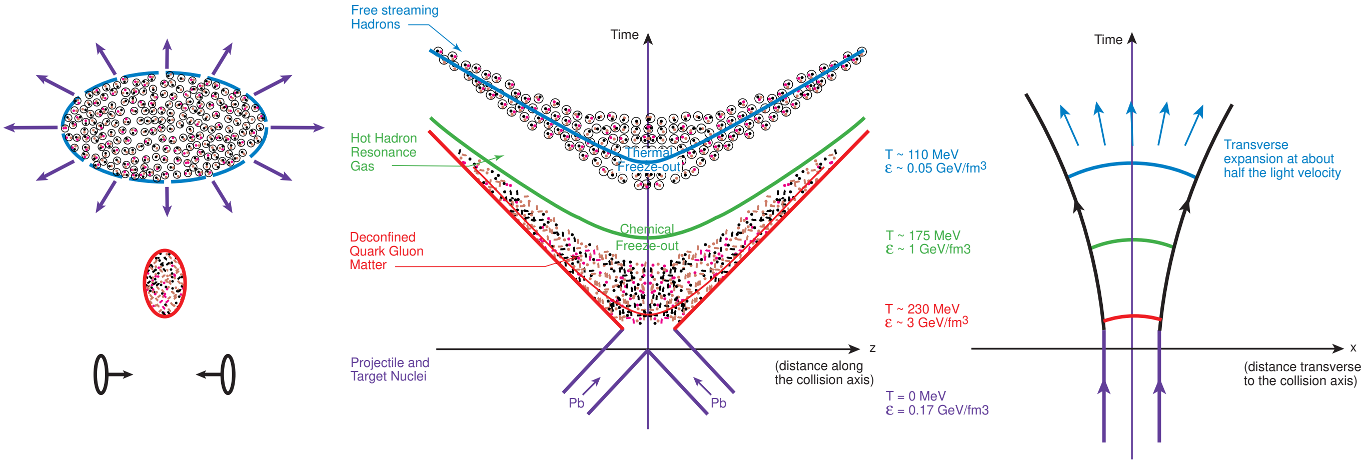
Schematic of Ultrarelativistic Nucleus-Nucleus collisions



no solid knowledge of prehadronic phase

- string excitation between constituent partons, fragmentation modelled after e^+e^- annihilations
- perturbative QCD-based gluon/quark cascade, coalescence into hadrons
- hydrodynamic QGP evolution, hydrodynamic or cascade hadron phase

small volume, rapid expansion, short lifetime

- formation of distinct, equilibrated QGP phase ?
- relaxation times $\tau_{kin} \sim 1 fm/c$, $\tau_{chem} \sim 4 fm/c$

conventional hadronic reference ?