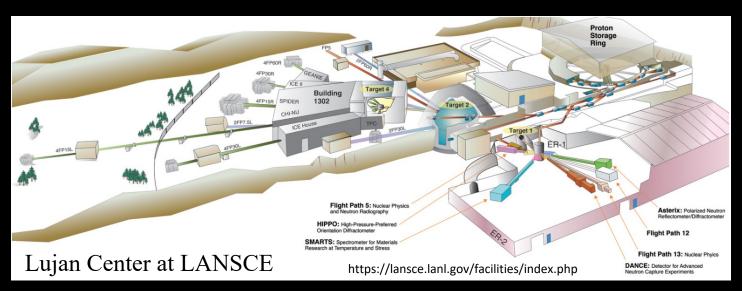
# Unveiling Deep Mysteries with Milli Charges: New Physics & Cosmology Probes at LANL



w/Liu & Kranti (LANL), Citron (UC Davis), Hwang & Yoo (Korea U.)

#### Yu-Dai Tsai

University of California, Irvine (<u>yudait1@uci.edu</u>)

→ Director's Fellow at LANL (2024)

## Outline

Intro & Motivations

Probing "Reheating"Cosmology

• Experimental Searches:

LANL, DUNE, and more



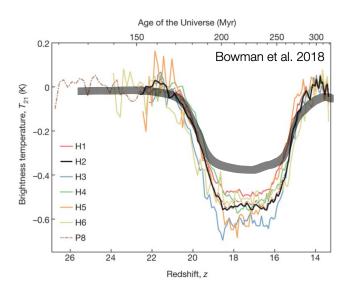
## Theoretical Motivations

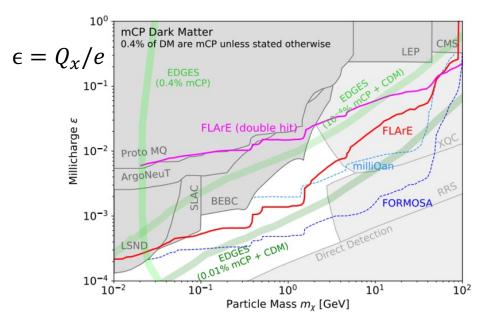
**Millicharged particle (mCP)** is a particle  $\chi$  with {mass, electric charge} =  $\{m_{\chi}, \epsilon e\}$ 

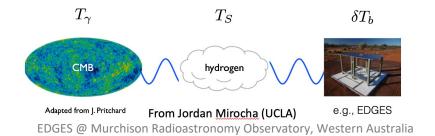
$$\epsilon = Q_x/e$$

- 1. Is electric charge quantized? To what unit? And why? Long-standing questions:
- Inspired Dirac quantization, Grand Unified Theories (GUTs)
- String theory predicts un-confined fractionally charged particles Wen, Witten, Nucl. Phys. B 261 (1985) 651-677
- Link to string compactification & quantum gravity (Shiu, Soler, Ye, PRL '13)
- 2. Millicharged dark matter Implications & explain CMB absorption spectrum

## Motivations: Millicharged Dark Matter (mDM)







- 21 cm CMB absorption spectrum
- EDGES anomaly gives a hint of dark matter property
- Many (upcoming) measurements!
   Voytek et al, APJL (2014),
   Singh et al, arXiv: 1710.01101





SARAS-3 in North Karnataka, India

## Outline

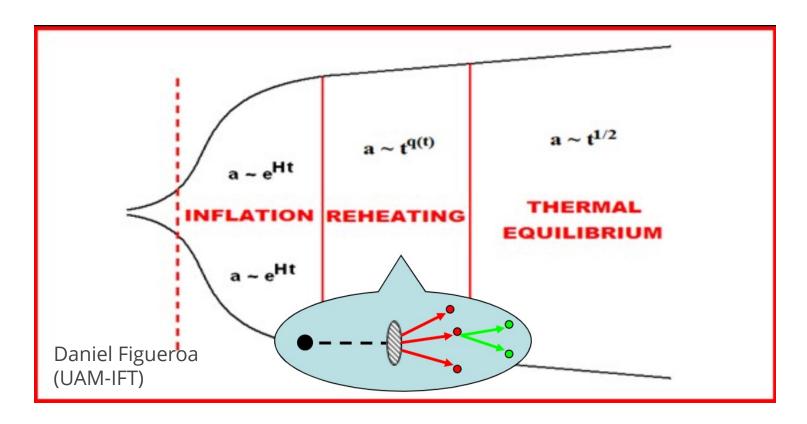
Intro & Motivations

Probing "Reheating"Cosmology

Experimental Searches



## Inflation and Reheating



a: scale factor, basically quantifying the size of the Universe t: time

We know very little about reheating. We don't even know what temperature does it reheat to!

## Two Kinds of mCP

#### "Pure" mCP

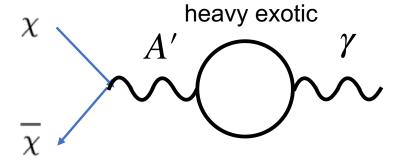
- Theoretical implication of mCP with a small (irrational) charge without a dark photon
- Implications on GUTs models
- Implications on string compactifications
   Shiu, Soler, Ye, PRL (2013)



$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{MCP}} = i\bar{\chi}(\partial \!\!\!/ - i\epsilon' e \!\!\!/ \!\!\!/ + M_{\text{MCP}})\chi$$

#### **Kinetic-mixing mCP**

Compatible with GUTS.



Choose a proper basis: massless dark photon A' decouple from SM

## Cosmic Millicharge Background (CmB) Gan, **Tsai**, 2308.07951

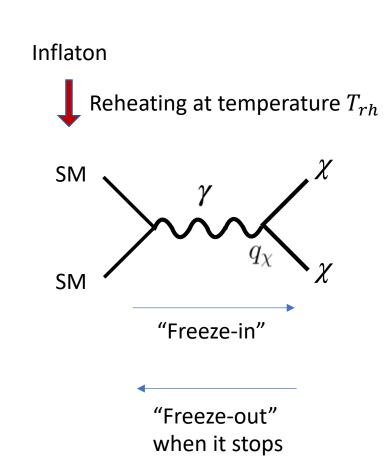
#### "Pure" mCP

- mCP with a small (irrational) charge
   & no dark photon
- Indirect test of GUTs models
- Indirect test of string compactifications

Gan, Shiu, **Tsai**, in progress

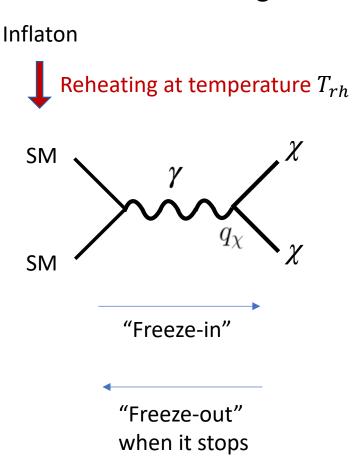
$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{MCP}} = i\bar{\chi}(\partial - i\epsilon' e B + M_{\text{MCP}})\chi$$

#### **Irreducible Production during Reheating**



## Cosmic Millicharge: Overproduction During Reheating Gan, **Tsai**, <u>2308.07951</u>

#### **Irreducible Production during Reheating**



mCP can be easily "overproduced", to more than that of the observed amount of dark matter (DM)

$$\Omega_{\rm DM}h^2 \sim 0.12$$

Currently measured DM abundance

$$\Omega \equiv rac{
ho}{
ho_c}$$

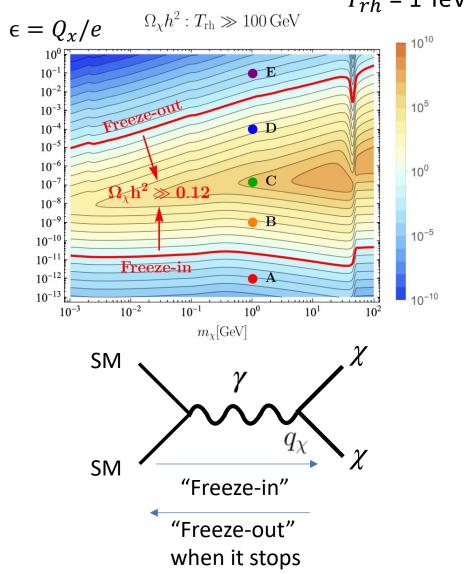
Density is normalized by  $\rho_c$ , the critical density for a flat Universe; h = 0.674

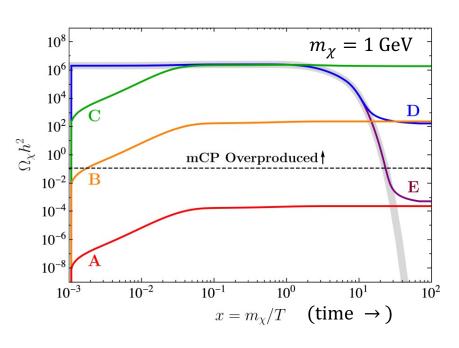
$$ho_{
m c} = rac{3H^2}{8\pi G}$$

α

#### "Pure" CmB Cosmology: Freeze-in and Freeze-out





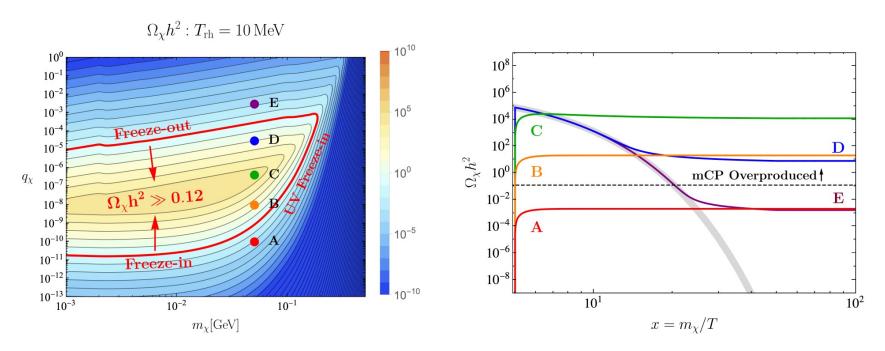


$$\dot{n}_{\chi} + 3H n_{\chi} \simeq \mathcal{C}_n(T) \left( 1 - \frac{n_{\chi}^2}{n_{\chi, \text{eq}}^2} \right),$$

$$\mathcal{C}_n(T) = 2n_Z \langle \Gamma \rangle_{Z \to \chi \bar{\chi}} + 2n_f n_{\bar{f}} \langle \sigma v \rangle_{f\bar{f} \to \chi \bar{\chi}}$$

#### "Pure" CmB Cosmology: Low-Reheat Temperature

$$T_{rh}$$
 = 10 MeV

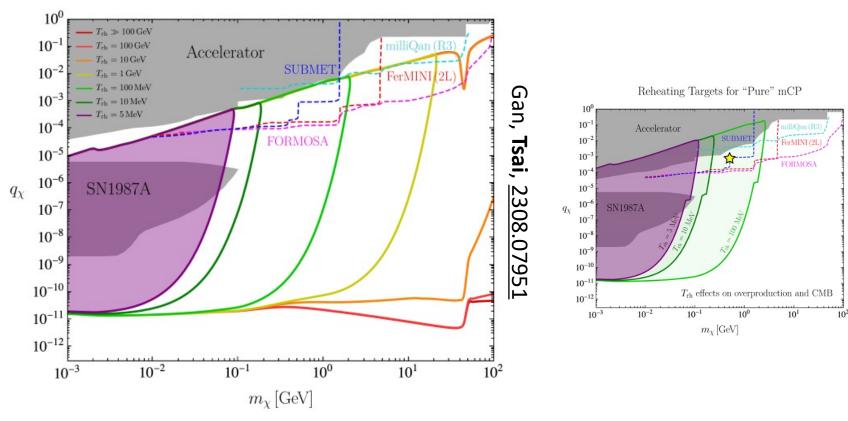


For the freeze-in at low  $T_{\rm rh}$ , mCP-SM interaction is suppressed exponentially: the coupling has to increase exponentially to compensate it

The freeze-in curve holds the approximate relation:  $q_\chi \otimes \exp\left(\frac{m_\chi}{T_{
m rh}}\right)$ 

#### "Pure" CmB from Irreducible Production

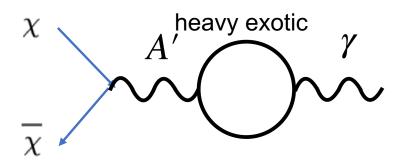
Overproduction Bounds for "Pure" mCP



- Minimal reheating temperature larger than  $T_{BBN}$  (e.g., Hasegawa+, JCAP19; Hannestad, PRD04)
- Our purple bound is covering the SN1987A constraint (gray region from Chang+, JHEP18)

#### Kinetic-Mixing Cosmic Millicharge Background (CmB)

#### **Kinetic-mixing mCP**



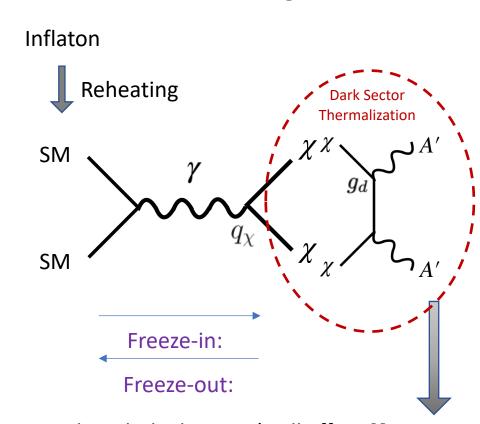
$$\mathcal{L} = \mathcal{L}_{SM} - \frac{1}{4} B'_{\mu\nu} B'^{\mu\nu} - \frac{\kappa}{2} B'_{\mu\nu} B^{\mu\nu} + i\bar{\chi} (\partial \!\!\!/ + ie' B' \!\!\!/ + iM_{MCP}) \chi$$

Choose a proper basis: massless dark photon A' decouple from SM

$$q_{\chi} = \frac{\epsilon g_d}{e}$$

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{MCP}} = i\bar{\chi}(\partial - i\epsilon' e \mathcal{B} + M_{\text{MCP}})\chi$$

#### **Kinetic-mixing mCP**



massless dark photon A' will affect  $N_{eff}$ See Vogel, Redondo, JCAP (2014), Adshead, Ralegankar, Shelton JCAP (2022)

#### Kinetic-Mixing CmB Cosmology:

#### *N<sub>eff</sub>* Effects from Dark Photon

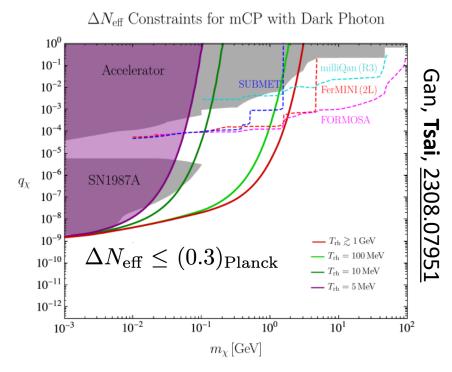
- Freeze-in from the heat bath
- $\chi$  thermalizing with dark photon: Require effective transfer of  $\chi$ entropy to dark radiation A' here

$$rac{n_{\chi}^{\mathrm{FI}} \langle \sigma v \rangle_{\mathrm{dth}}}{H} \sim q_{\chi}^2 \alpha_{\mathrm{em}}^2 \alpha_d^2 \left(\frac{m_{\mathrm{pl}}}{T}\right)^2 \gg 1.$$

$$\alpha_d \gg 10^{-4}$$

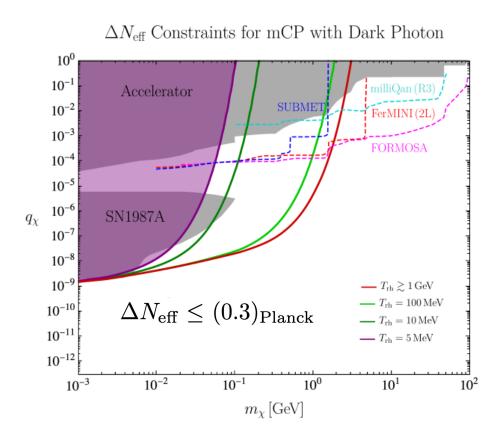
• A quick  $\Delta N_{eff}$  estimation:

$$\Delta N_{
m eff} \sim q_\chi^2 lpha_{
m em}^2 rac{m_{
m pl}}{m_\chi}$$



Our purple bound is again covering the SN1987A constraint

#### Kinetic-Mixing CmB Cosmology



$$q_{\chi} \sim 10^{-7} \left(\frac{m_{\chi}}{1\,\mathrm{GeV}}\right)^{1/2} \left(\frac{\Delta N_{\mathrm{eff}}}{0.3}\right)^{1/2}. \ m_{\chi} \leq \mathrm{T_{rh}}$$
 $q_{\chi} \approx \exp\left(\frac{m_{\chi}}{T_{\mathrm{rh}}}\right). \ m_{\chi} > \mathrm{T_{rh}}$ 

Considering higher reheating temperatures for region to the right of the red curve:

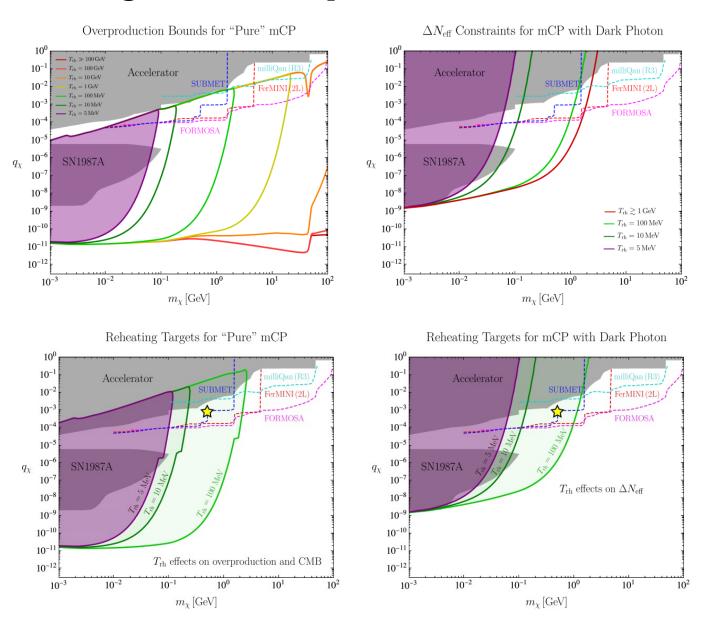
$$\Delta N_{\rm eff} \lesssim g_{A'} \; \frac{4}{7} \left( \frac{g_{*,S}(T \ll T_{\rm QCD})}{g_{*,S}(T \gg T_{\rm QCD})} \right)^{4/3} \simeq 0.1,$$

See Gan, Tsai, 2308.07951 for detailed discussions

Current:  $\Delta N_{\rm eff} \leq (0.3)_{\rm Planck}$ 

Future:  $\Delta N_{\rm eff} \leq (0.06)_{\rm CMB-S4}$ 

#### Testing Reheat Temperatures in Both Cases



## Outline

• Intro

Probing ReheatingCosmology

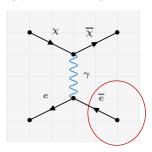
• Experimental Searches

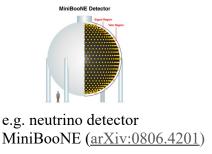


## Two Search Methods: Scattering & Scintillation

#### (A) Electron Scattering

~ energy exchange set by detector threshold (> MeV)



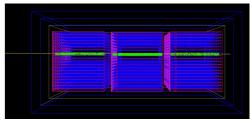


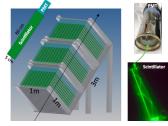
$$\sigma_{e\chi} \simeq 2.6 \times 10^{-25} \text{cm}^2 \times \epsilon^2 \times \frac{1 \text{ MeV}}{E_e^{(\text{min})} - m_e}.$$

Expressed in recoil energy threshold,  $E_e^{(min)}$ 

#### (B) Dedicated Scintillation Searches for Millicharge Particles

~ eV-level energy exchange

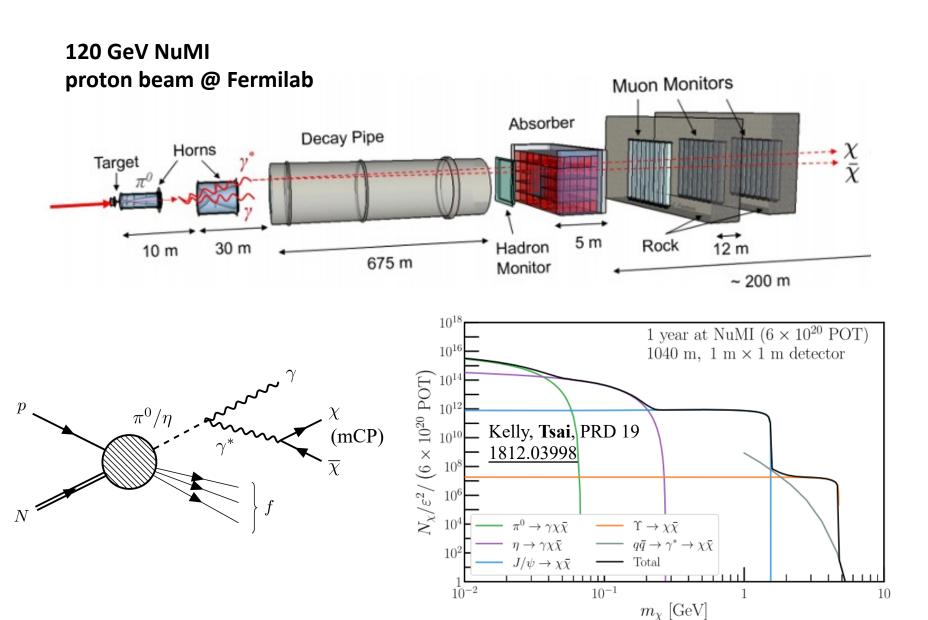




$$\left\langle -\frac{dE}{dx} \right\rangle \propto \epsilon^2.$$

**Energy deposition** 

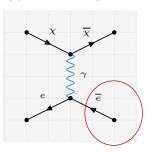
#### **Accelerator Productions**



## Two Search Methods: Scattering & Scintillation

#### (A) Electron Scattering

~ energy exchange set by detector threshold (~ MeV)



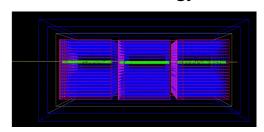


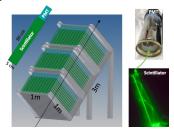
$$\sigma_{e\chi} \simeq 2.6 \times 10^{-25} \text{cm}^2 \times \epsilon^2 \times \frac{1 \text{ MeV}}{E_e^{(\text{min})} - m_e}.$$

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#### (B) Dedicated Scintillation Searches for Millicharge Particles

~ eV-level energy exchange



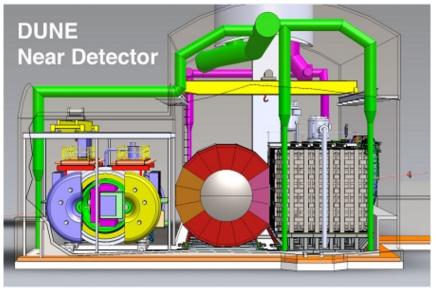


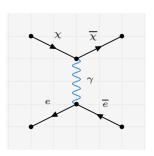
$$\left\langle -\frac{dE}{dx} \right\rangle \propto \epsilon^2.$$

**Energy deposition** 

## **Electron Scattering Searches**

**Electron Scattering** ~ energy exchange set by detector threshold (~ MeV)





$$\sigma_{e\chi} \simeq 2.6 \times 10^{-25} \text{cm}^2 \times \epsilon^2 \times \frac{1 \text{ MeV}}{E_e^{(\text{min})} - m_e}.$$

Expressed in recoil energy threshold,  $E_e^{(min)}$ 

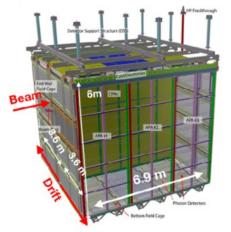
120 GeV NuMI proton beam @ **Fermilab** 



ArgonCube 2x2 (4 modules)

Weber (U of BERN), PAC-2x2-June-2021

400 GeV SPS proton beam @ CERN



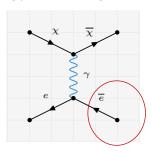
ProtonDune-SP

DUNE col., JINST 15 (2020)

## Two Search Methods: Scattering & Scintillation

#### (A) Electron Scattering

~ energy exchange set by detector threshold (~MeV)



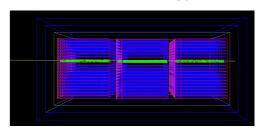


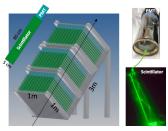
$$\sigma_{e\chi} \simeq 2.6 \times 10^{-25} \text{cm}^2 \times \epsilon^2 \times \frac{1 \text{ MeV}}{E_e^{(\text{min})} - m_e}.$$

Expressed in **recoil energy threshold**,  $E_e^{(min)}$ 

#### (B) Dedicated Scintillation Searches for Millicharge Particles

~ eV-level energy exchange





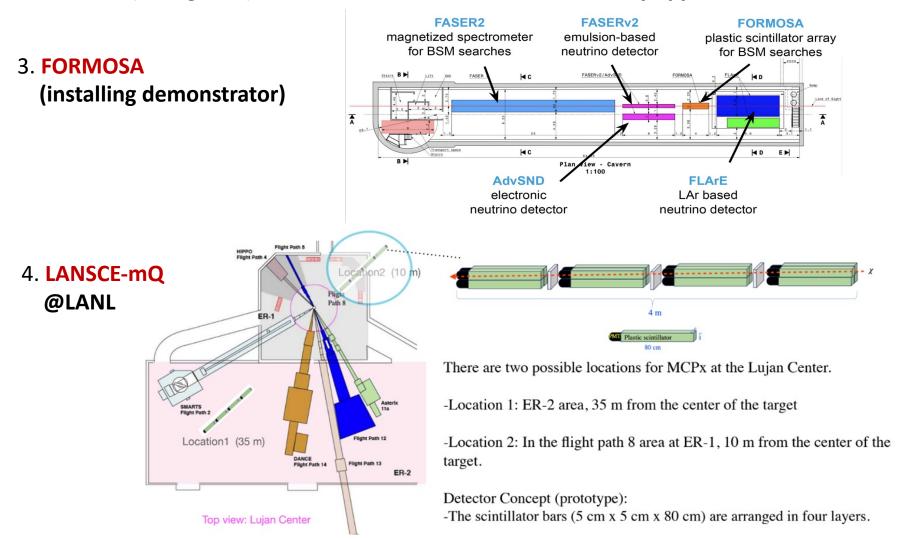
$$\left\langle -\frac{aE}{dx} \right\rangle \propto \epsilon^2$$

**Energy deposition** 

e.g., Haas, Hill, Izaguirre, Yavin, 1410.6816 milliQan design, 1607.04669 (MilliQan Collaboration)

#### Dedicated mCP Searches (next 3 years)

1. milliQan (taking data); 2. SUBMET: mCP search at J-PARC; fully approved

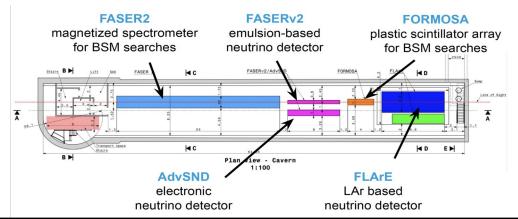


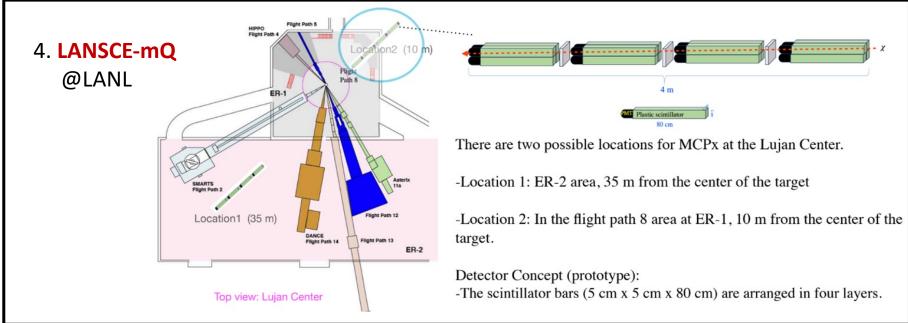
5. FerMINI@Fermilab: updating sensitivity projection

#### **Dedicated mCP Searches (next 3 years)**

1. milliQan (taking data); 2. SUBMET: mCP search at J-PARC; fully approved

3. FORMOSA (installing demonstrator)



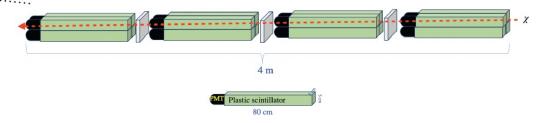


5. FerMINI@Fermilab: updating sensitivity projection

#### **Detector Placement**



- Numbers of layers to be determined
- May only need one or two.

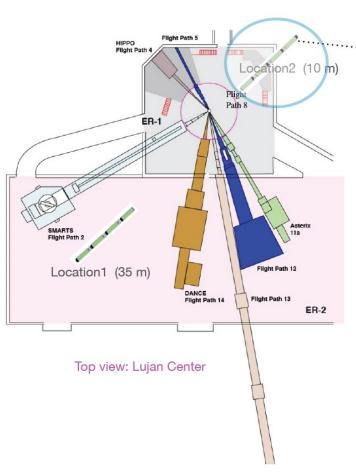


There are two possible locations for MCPx at the Lujan Center.

- -Location 1: ER-2 area, 35 m from the center of the target
- -Location 2: In the flight path 8 area at ER-1, 10 m from the center of the target.

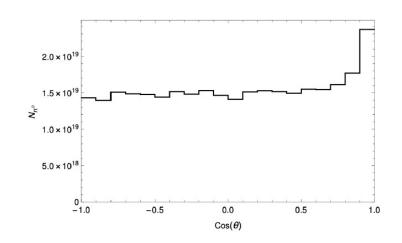
Detector Concept (prototype):

- -The scintillator bars (5 cm x 5 cm x 80 cm) are arranged in four layers.
- -A photomultiplier tube (PMT) is attached to one end of each bar.
- -This detector will be 90 degrees w.r.t. the proton beam.



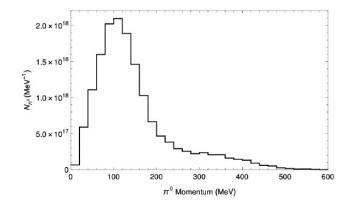
Kranti Gunthoti (LANL)

## Lujan Center: Meson Productions



-The  $\pi^0$  angular distributions produced at the Lujan target, assuming POT=2.71  $\times$  10<sup>21</sup>.

-The total number of  $\pi^0$ s,  $N\pi^0$ , scales linearly with Protons on Target (POT), based on the simulations  $N\pi^0 = 0.115 \times POT$ .



-The momentum distribution peaks between 100 and 120MeV, with a mean momentum of 146MeV.

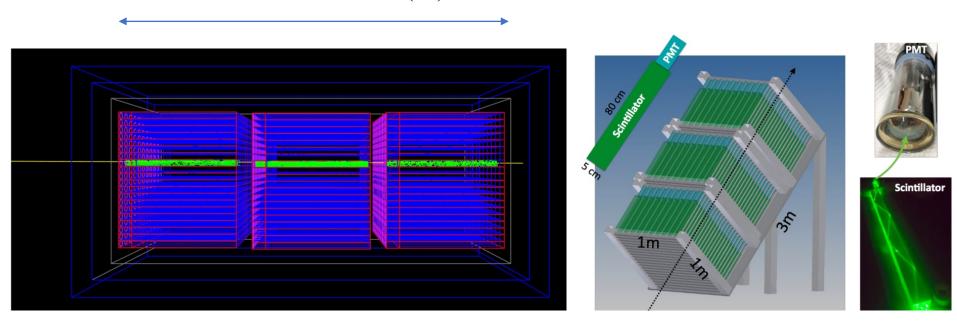
Phys. Rev. D 106, 012001

CCM Collaboration, PRD, Vol. 106, No. 1 (2022)

https://arxiv.org/abs/2105.14020

## Detector Concept

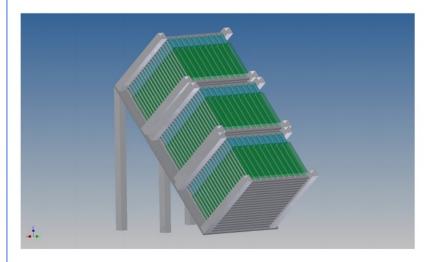
 $\Delta t \sim 20$  nanoseconds (ns)



See arXiv:1607.04669; arXiv:1810.06733

## Detector: Some Details of the Nominal Design

- Nominal: 1 m × 1 m (transverse plane) × n (3) m (longitudinal) plastic scintillator array.
- n layers each containing ~ 100 scintillator bars optically coupled to
   high-gain photomultiplier (PMT).
- A n-coincidence within a 20 ns time window along longitudinally contiguous bars in each of the layers required to reduce the dark-current noise (the dominant background).



See arXiv:1607.04669; arXiv:1810.06733

## Photoelectrons (PE) from Scintillation

 The averaged number of photoelectron (PE) seen by the detector from single MCP is:

$$N_{PE} \propto \left\langle -\frac{dE}{dx} \right\rangle \times l_{scint}, \ \left\langle -\frac{dE}{dx} \right\rangle \propto \epsilon^2.$$

 $\langle dE/dx \rangle$  is the "mass stopping power" (PDG 2018)

One can use Bethe-Bloch Formula to get a good approximation

•  $N_{PE} \sim \epsilon^2 \times 10^6$ ,  $\epsilon \sim 10^{-3}$  roughly gives one PE in one meter plastic scintillation bar

## Signature: N-Layers Coincidence

 Based on Poisson distribution, zero event in each bar correspond to

 $P_0 = e^{-N_{PE}}$ , so the probability of seeing triple incident of one or more photoelectron is:

$$P = (1 - \exp[-N_{\rm PE}])^{n_{\rm layers}}$$

•  $N_{x,detection} = N_{x,passing detector} \times P$ 

## Dark Current Background @ PMT

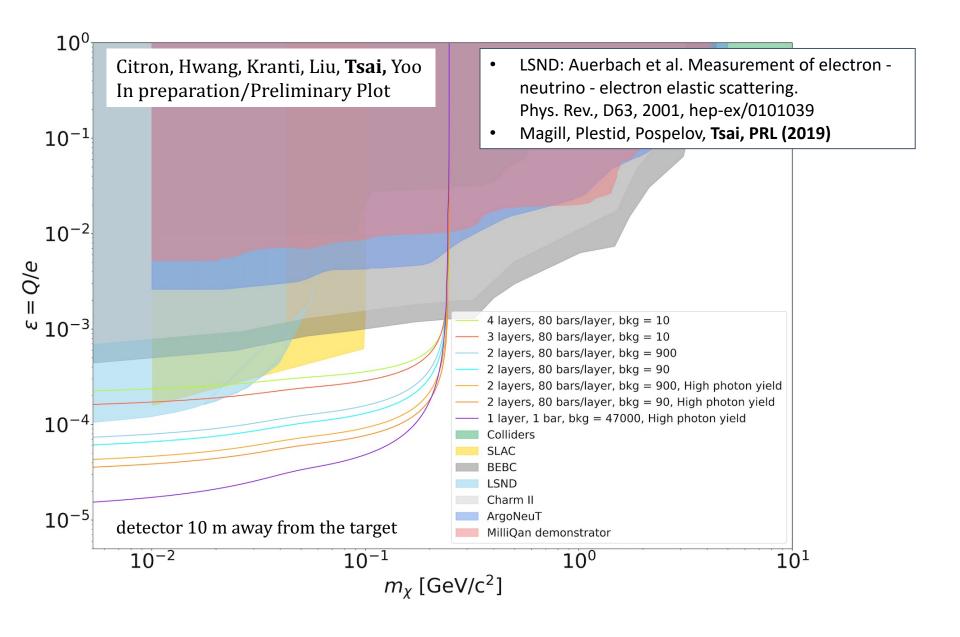
- dark-current frequency to be  $v_B \sim 50$  500 Hz for estimation (2005.06518) (Hamamatsu R7725 can reach 50 Hz during recent testing)
- For each tri-PMT set (using 500 Hz as a conservative estimation), the background rate for triple incidence is  $v_B^3 \Delta t^2 = 5 \times 10^{-8} \text{ Hz}$ , for  $\Delta t = 20 \text{ ns}$ .
- Consider 100 sets as a nominal design.
- The total background rate is  $100 \times 5 \times 10^{-8} \sim 5 \times 10^{-6} \text{ Hz}$
- $\sim$  160 background events in one year of trigger-live time
- Fixed-target experiment trigger-live time can be way shorter!
- FerMINI: Kelly, Tsai, PRD (2019), <u>1812.03998</u>
   SUBMET: Kim, Hwang, Yoo, JHEP (2021), 2102.11493

## Fixed Target Live Time (LANSCE Beam)

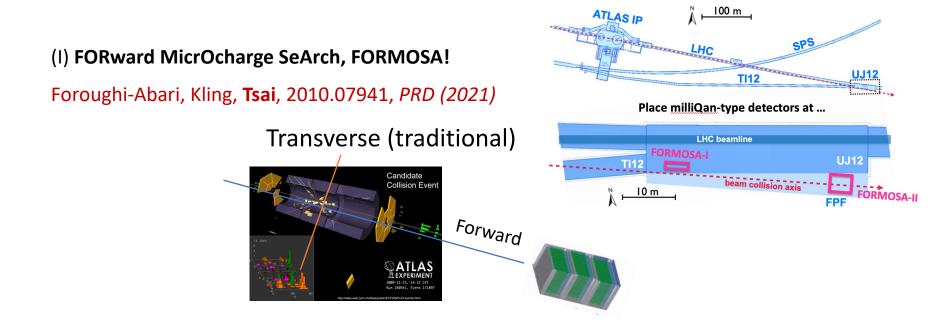
- Width of a single proton bunch: triangular pulse  $\sim 270$  ns wide
- Set acquisition time window = 500 ns
- Live time/year = 500ns x 20Hz x 86400s x 365d ~ 315 seconds
- Dark current background per year  $\sim 0.002$  for 3 layers
- We can afford N = 1 or 2 layers for fixed-target searches: larger signal rate

$$P = (1 - \exp[-N_{\rm PE}])^{n_{\rm layers}}$$

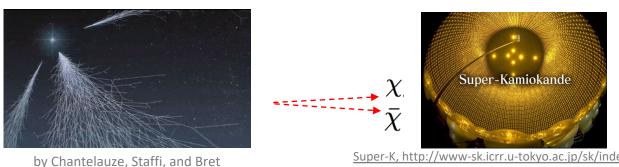
#### mCP Sensitivity Reach



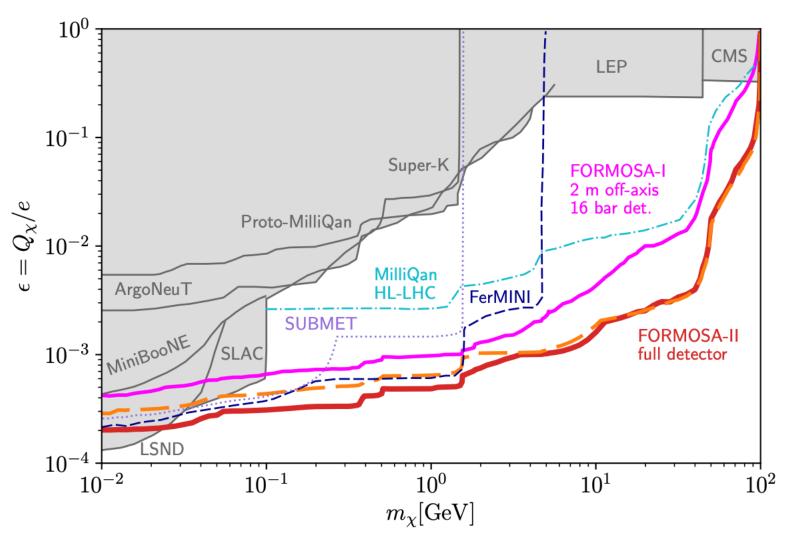
## Some Other Ways to Study mCPs



(II) Cosmic-ray production and detection in large neutrino observatories (Super-K), Plestid, Takhistov, **Tsai** et al, 2002.11732, *PRD* 20.

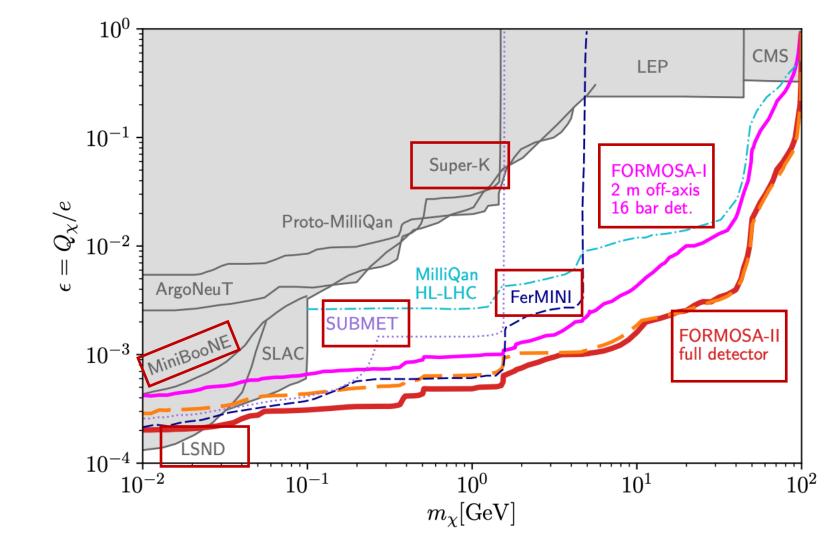


## Compilation of Sensitivity Reaches



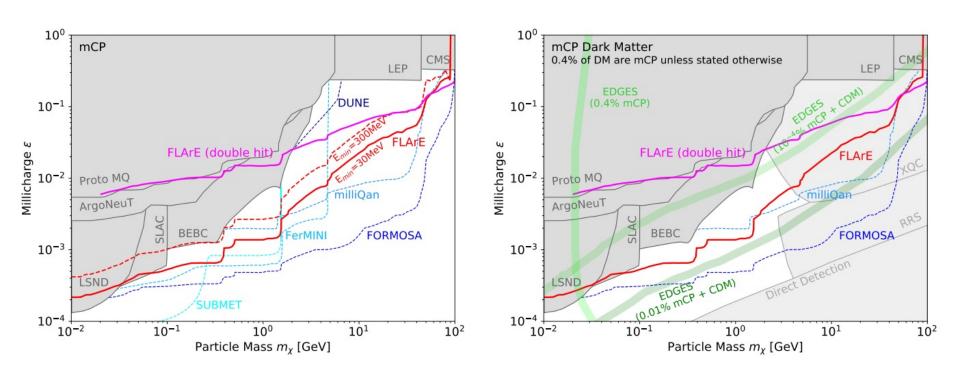
Foroughi-Abari, Kling, **Tsai**, Phys. Rev. D 104, 035014 (2021), <u>2010.07941</u>

## Compilation of Sensitivity Reaches



Foroughi-Abari, Kling, **Tsai**, Phys. Rev. D 104, 035014 (2021), <u>2010.07941</u>

#### mCP Searches vs mDM Searches



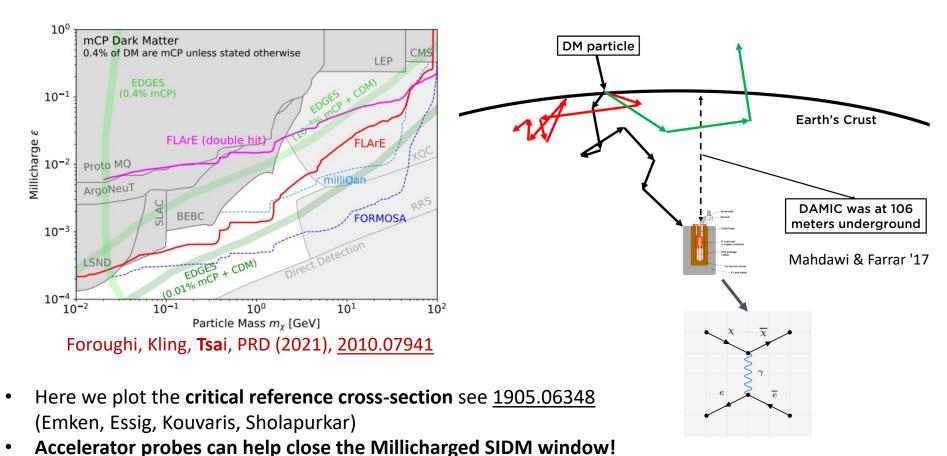
Kling, Kuo, Trojanowski, Tsai, NPB (2023), 2205.09137

Shows two advantages of accelerator searches

#### Motivation: Accelerator Searches for mDM

MCP / LDM with ultralight dark photon mediators

$$\bar{\sigma}_e \simeq \frac{16\pi\alpha^2 \epsilon^2 \mu_{\chi e}^2}{q_{ref}^2}, \ q_{ref} = \alpha m_e$$



Cosmic-ray production & Super-K detection 2002.11732

#### Outlook

- mCPs are excellent targets to fundamental theories, cosmology, & dark matter physics
- Excellent experimental target at
   LANL, milliQan, FORMOSA, J-PARC +DUNE, SHIP, CCM.
- 3. Study dark photons (Tsai, deNiverville, Liu, PRL 21, 1908.07525)
  other dark matter candidates (CCM, PRD 22, 2105.14020)
  and milli-magnetic monopoles (Graesser et al., JHEP 22, 2105.05769)
  for further cosmology & accelerator searches at LANL



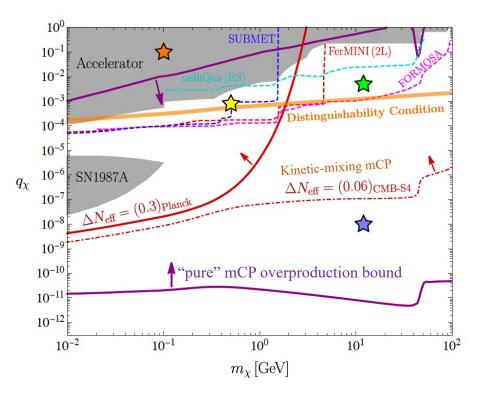
#### Frederick Reines

Nobel Prize Laureate @ LANL; Professor at UC Irvine Utilized a nuclear reactor to study free neutrinos

We have an opportunity to explore the millicharge dark sector and unveil deep mysteries of the Universe at LANL

Thank you!

## Other Regions of Interests

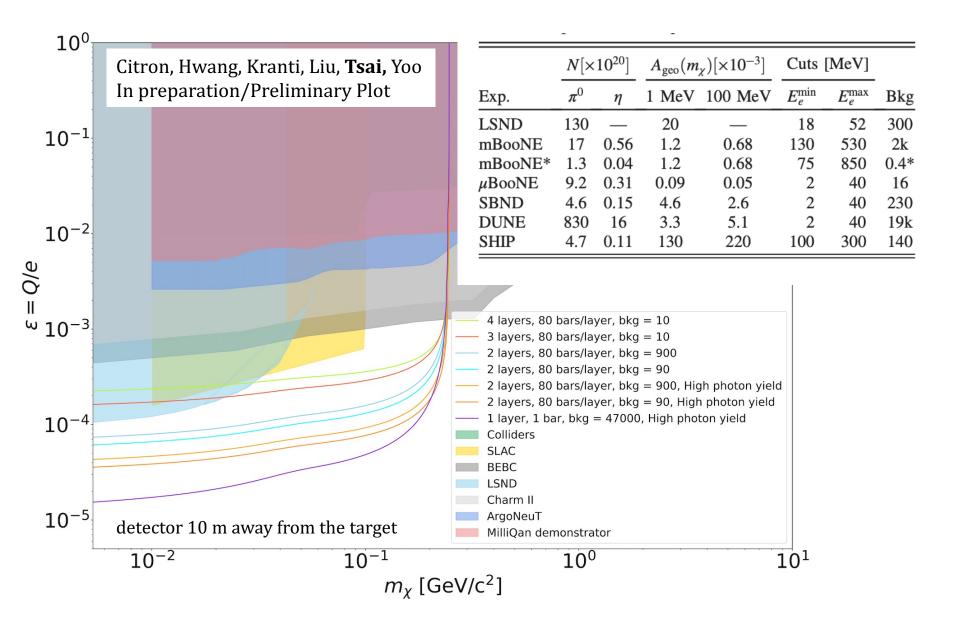


- Orange Star: favoring "pure" mCP
- testing reheat temperatures
- Green Star:

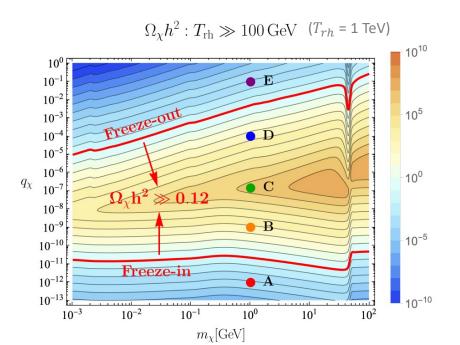
**Yellow Star:** 

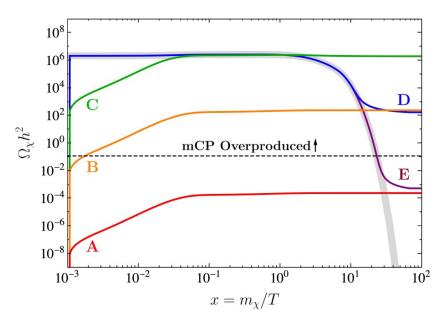
- 1) testing reheat temperatures with CMB-S4
- 2) currently favoring kinetic-mixing mCP
- **Purple Star:** favoring kinetic-mixing mCP (can be reached by direct-detection exps.)

#### mCP Sensitivity Reach



#### "Pure" CmB Cosmology: Freeze-in and Freeze-out





Freeze-in:  $Y_\chi^{
m FI} \sim q_\chi^2 lpha_{
m em}^2 rac{m_{
m pl}}{T}, \ T \gtrsim m_\chi.$ 

$$\dot{n}_\chi + 3Hn_\chi \simeq \mathcal{C}_n(T) \left( 1 - rac{n_\chi^2}{n_{\chi, \mathrm{eq}}^2} 
ight),$$

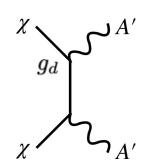
Freeze-out:  $Y_\chi^{
m FO} \sim rac{1}{q_\chi^2 lpha_{
m em}^2} rac{m_\chi}{m_{
m pl}},$ 

$$C_n(T) = 2n_Z \langle \Gamma \rangle_{Z \to \chi \bar{\chi}} + 2n_f n_{\bar{f}} \langle \sigma v \rangle_{f\bar{f} \to \chi \bar{\chi}}$$

See, e.g., Vogel, Redondo, JCAP (2014), Dvorkin+, PRD (2019)

## Objectives:

## Differentiate Two Types of MCPs





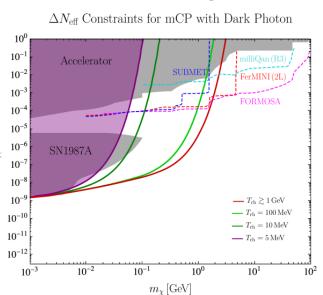
 $m_\chi [{
m GeV}]$ 

 $10^{-3}$ 

Overproduction Bounds for "Pure" mCP  $\frac{10^0}{10^{-1}} = \frac{10^0}{7_{t_h} = 10150} = \frac{10^{-1}}{7_{t_h} = 105040} = \frac{10^{-1}}{10^{-1}} = \frac{10^{-1}}{10^{-10}} = \frac{10^{-10}}{10^{-11}} = \frac{10^{-10}}{10^{-12}} = \frac{10^{-10$ 

 $10^{1}$ 

Sizable  $g_d$ 



Theoretically, there is a limit on how small  $g_d$  can be, for a given  $q_{\chi}$ 

## "Distinguishability" Condition

Gan, **Tsai**, <u>2308.07951</u>

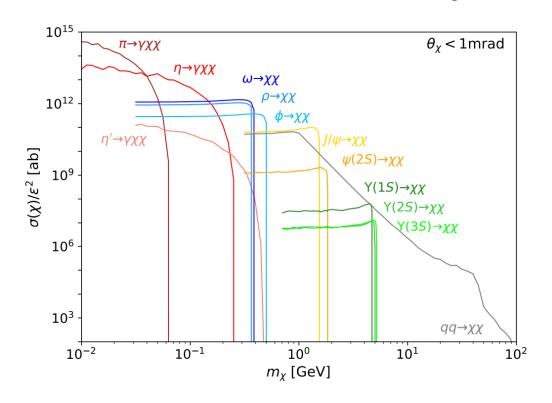
• Turning down thermalization between  $\chi$  — A':  $g_d \lesssim (16\pi^2 m_\chi/\mathcal{F} m_{\rm pl})^{1/4}$ 

- Requirement for kinetic mixing:  $\epsilon < 1 \Rightarrow g_d > eq_{\chi}$ ,  $q_{\chi} = \frac{\epsilon g_d}{e}$  Burgess *et al*, JCAP (2008)
- Considering these two inequalities for gd, we can roughly determine that:

$$q_\chi \gtrsim rac{1}{lpha_{
m em}^{1/2}} \left(rac{m_\chi}{\mathcal{F} m_{
m pl}}
ight)^{1/4}$$

One CANNOT de-theramlize  $\chi$  — A' interaction rate to mimic "pure" mCP!

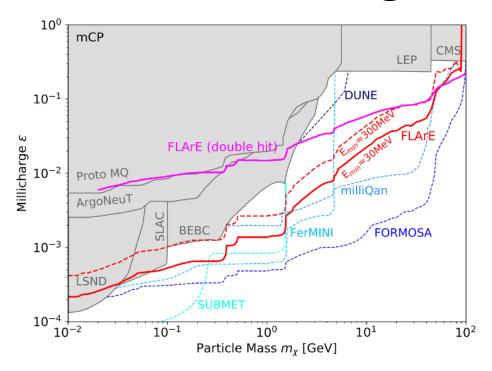
#### mCP Productions @ Forward Physics Facility



Foroughi-Abari, Kling, and **Tsai**, arXiv:2010.07941, PRD 20

MCP production was added to FORESEE by Felix Kling

#### mCP @ FLArE



- FLArE experiment by Jianming Bian: <a href="https://indico.cern.ch/event/1110746/contributio">https://indico.cern.ch/event/1110746/contributio</a> <a href="https://indico.cern.ch/event/1110746/contributio">https://indico.cern.ch/event/1110746/contributio</a> ns/4701719/
- Nev = 3 expected new physics events in the detector
- A. Scattering a-la DM signal: consider  $\chi e \to \chi e$ , and set electron recoil energy Er within 30 MeV  $\lesssim$  Er  $\lesssim$  1 GeV in FLArE
- B. Double-hit with softer recoils: setting Er,min  $\simeq$  2 MeV but with double-hit point back to the target

