

# Towards a unification of gluon distributions at small and moderate $x$

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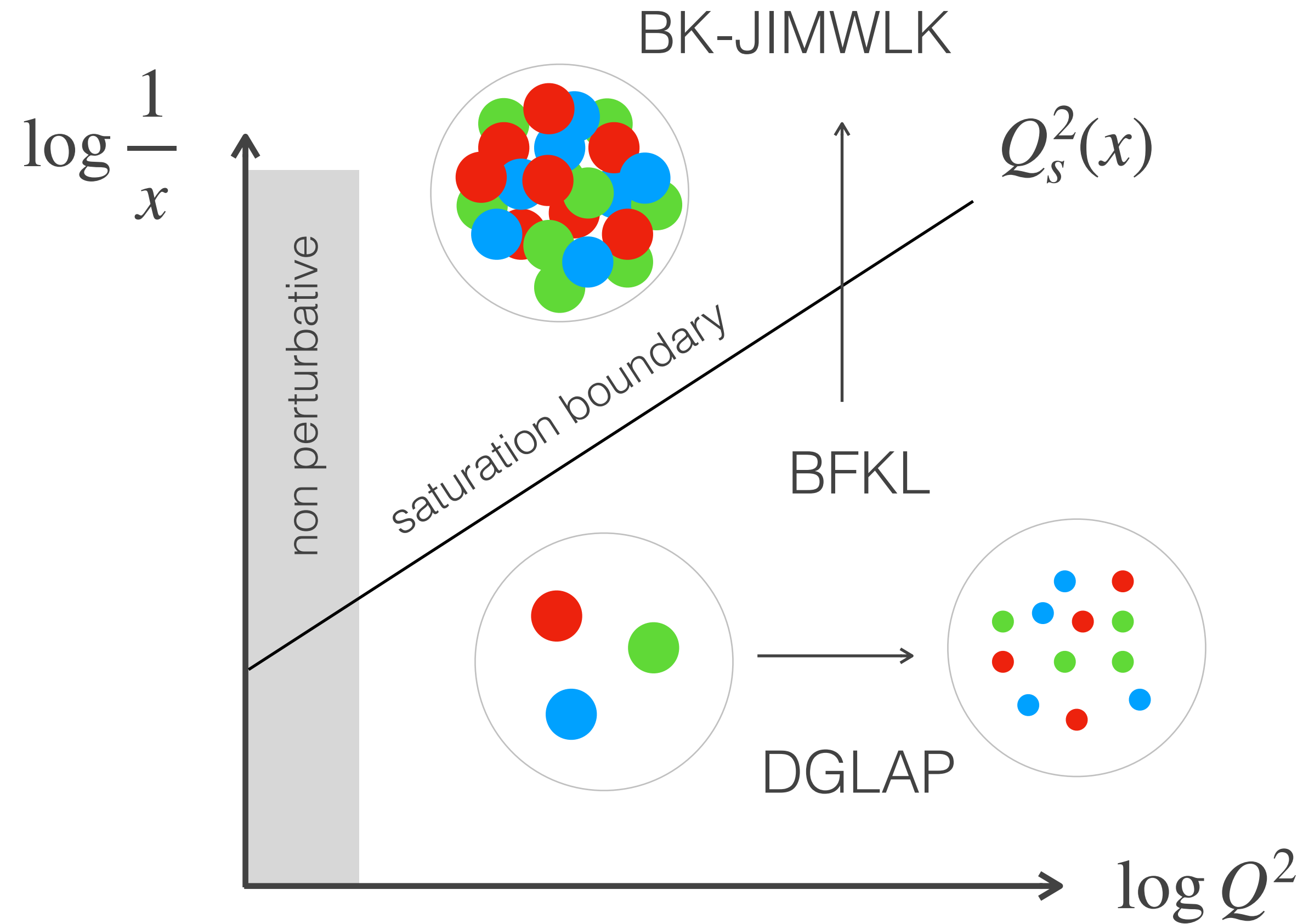
# Outline

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- Introduction
- BK equation and the NLO crisis
- Where is  $x$  hiding?
- Digression: transverse gauge links at small  $x$
- Revisiting the shock-wave approximation
- Road test: inclusive DIS
- A novel unintegrated gluon distribution
- Summary and outlook

# Introduction

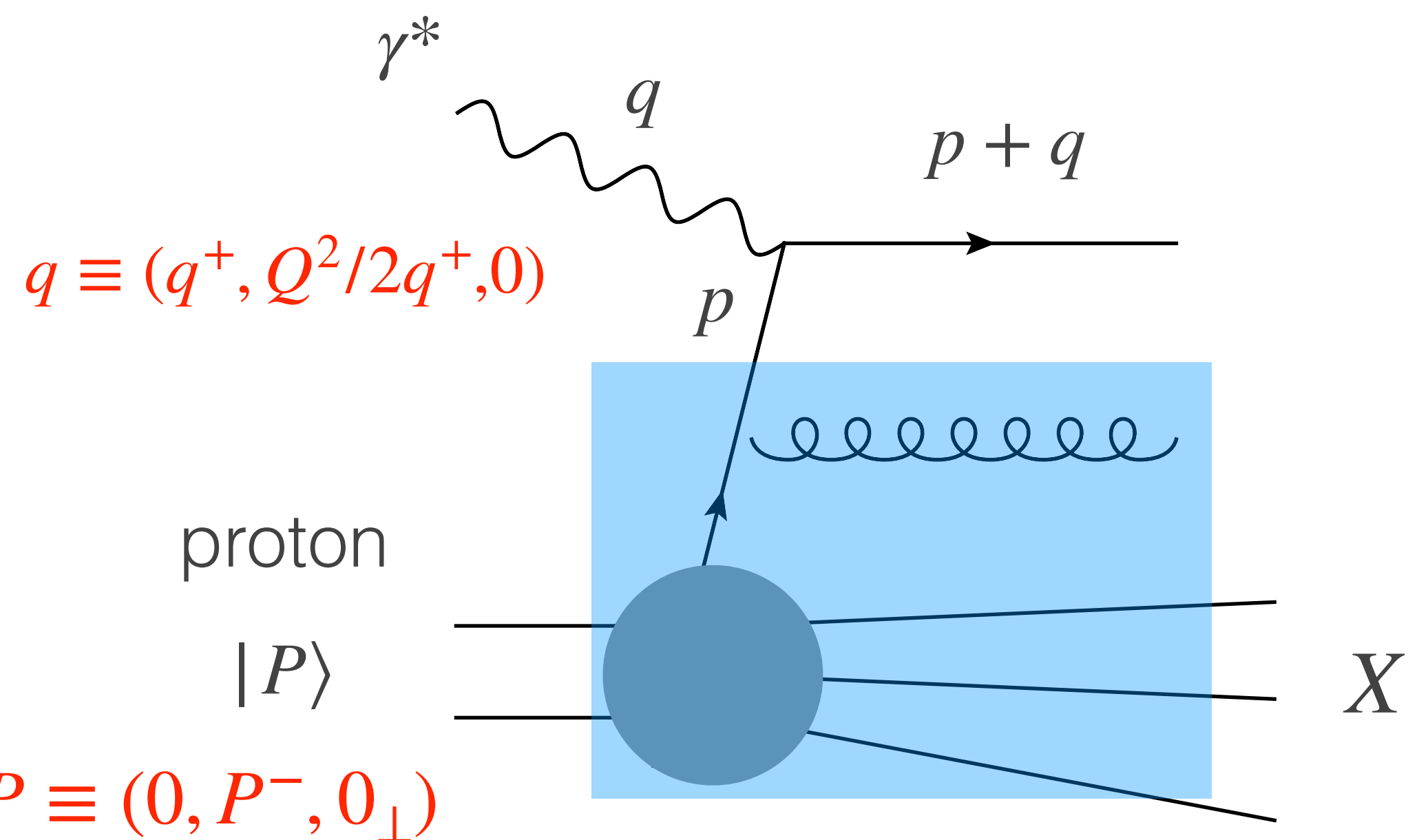
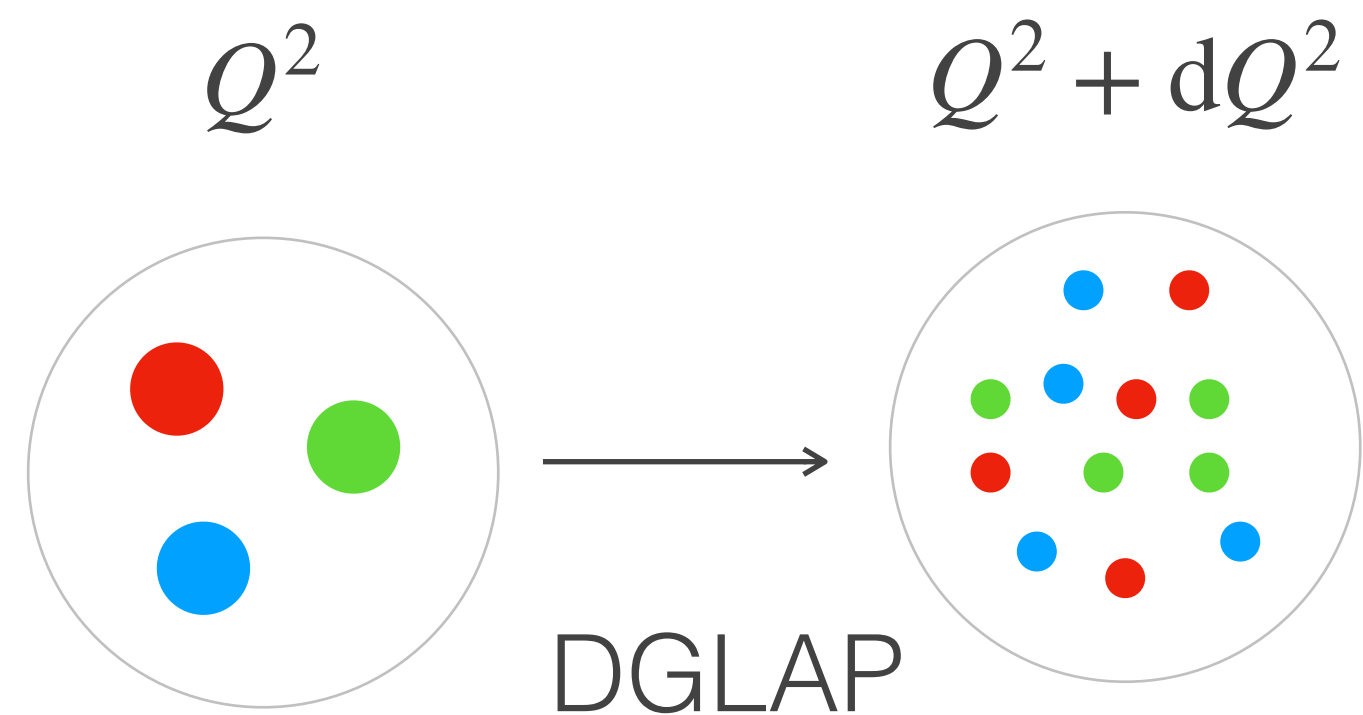
# Proton structure and QCD evolution



- at large  $Q^2$  and moderate  $x \sim Q^2/s$  the proton can be described as a collection of weakly interacting partons
- partonic interpretation breaks down beyond leading twist
- at small  $x$  gluon occupation number increases and eventually saturates due to non-linear effects (gluon recombination)

[Venugopalan, McLerran (MV), Balitsky, Kovchegov (BK)  
Jalilian-Marian, Iancu, McLerran, Weigert, Leonidov, Kovner (JIMWLK) (1993-2001)]

# DIS kinematics



- DIS kinematics: hadronic part

$$Q^2 = -q^2 > 0$$

$$x_{Bj} \equiv \frac{Q^2}{2P \cdot q} = \frac{Q^2}{s}$$

- Mass condition

$$p = xP + k_\perp$$

$$k_\perp \ll Q$$

$$(p + q)^2 = 0$$

$$\Rightarrow -Q^2 + xP^- q^+ \simeq 0 \Rightarrow$$

$$x = x_{Bj}$$

- At leading order we recover the Parton model:

$$F_2(x) \sim xq(x)$$

- Light-cone variables:

$$q^+ = \frac{q^0 + q^3}{\sqrt{2}}$$

$$q^- = \frac{q^0 - q^3}{\sqrt{2}}$$

# DGLAP: Bjorken limit $Q^2 \sim s$

[Dokshitzer, Gribov, Lipatov, Altarelli, Parisi (1972-77)]

- DGLAP evolution resums large collinear logarithms  $\bar{\alpha} \log Q/\mu = \bar{\alpha} \int_{\mu}^Q \frac{dk_{\perp}}{k_{\perp}}$
- successive emissions are strongly ordered in transverse momentum

$$Q \gg k_{\perp_1} \gg k_{\perp_2} \gg \dots \gg \mu$$

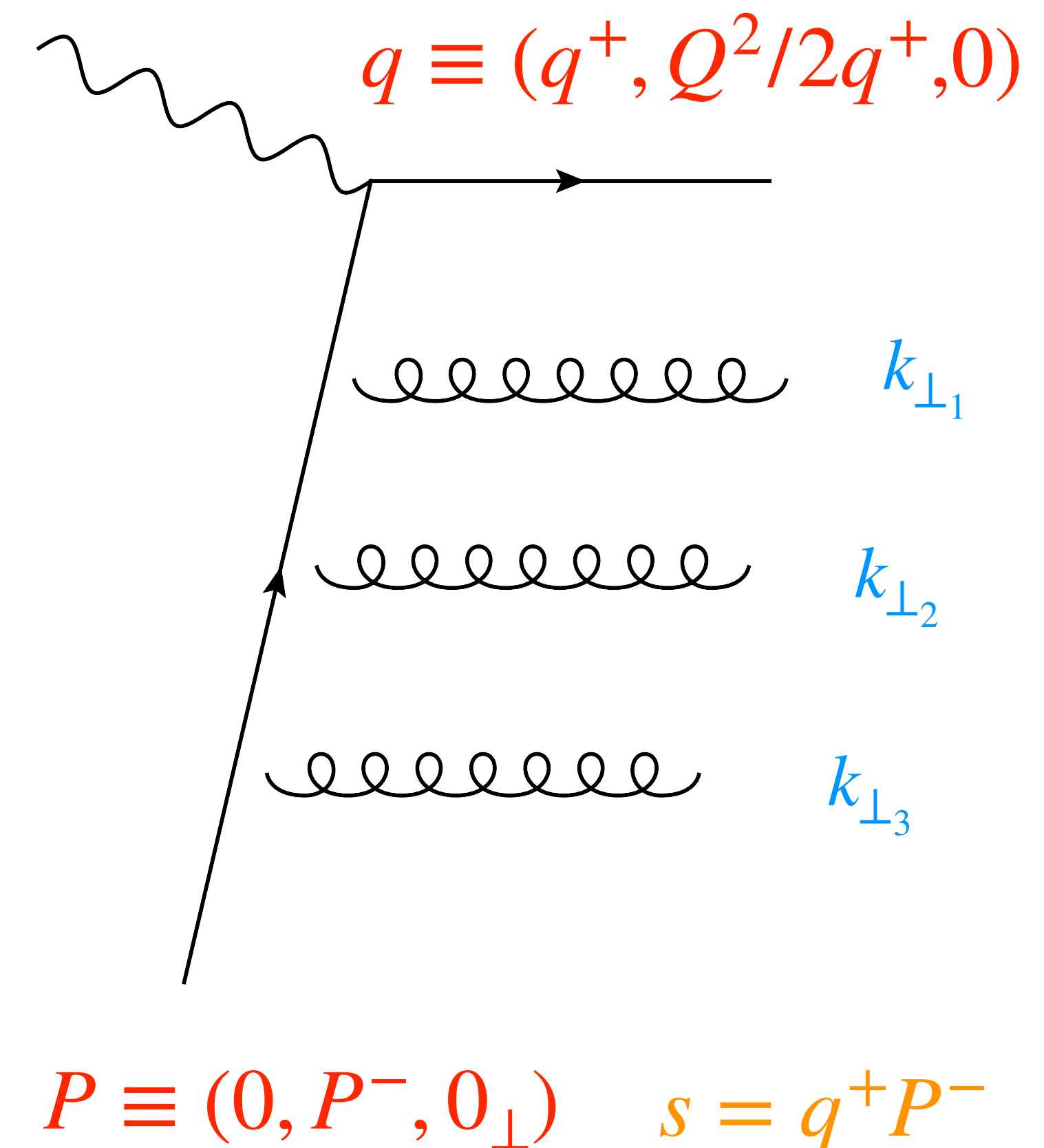
- The variable related to  $x = k^-/P^- \sim 1$

$$k_1^- \sim k_2^- \sim \dots \sim P^- \sim \sqrt{s}$$

- $k^- \sim t_f^{-1}$  is the inverse formation time scale

- It follows that  $k^+ = k_{\perp}^2/k^-$  's are strongly ordered

$$q^+ \gg k_1^+ \gg k_2^+ \gg \dots \gg \frac{\mu^2}{P^-}$$



# BFKL: Regge limit $Q^2 \ll s$

[Balitsky, Fadin, Kuraev, Lipatov, (1976-78)]

- BFKL evolution resums large soft logarithms  $\bar{\alpha} \log s^{-1} = \bar{\alpha} \int_{q_0^+}^{q^+} \frac{dk^+}{k^+}$
- successive emissions are strongly ordered in longitudinal momenta

$$\sqrt{s} \sim q^+ \gg k_1^+ \gg k_2^+ \gg \dots \gg q_0^+$$

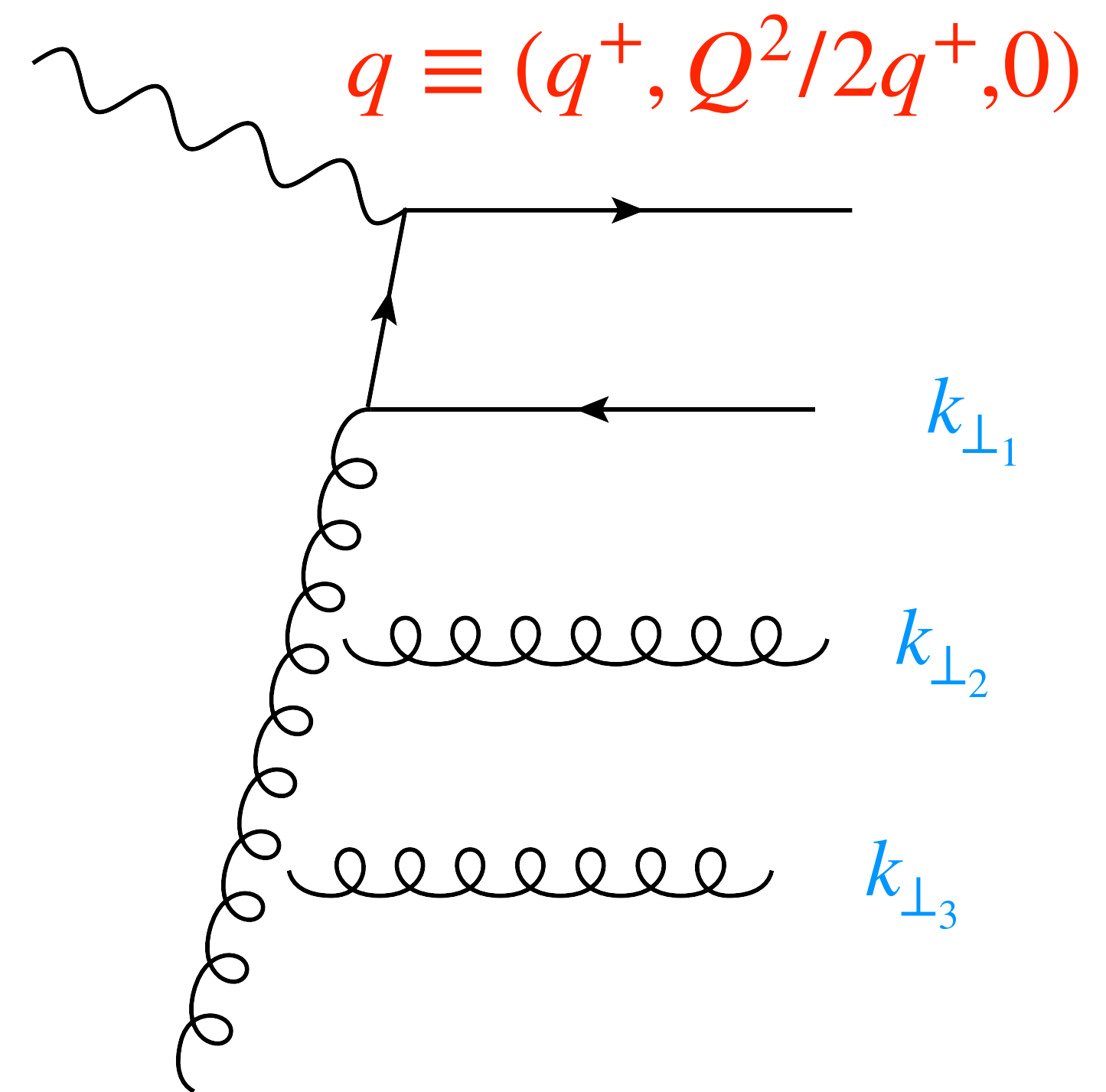
- And the variable  $x = k^-/P^- \ll 1$

$$k_1^- \ll k_2^- \ll \dots \ll P^- \sim \sqrt{s}$$

- $k^- \sim t_f^{-1}$  is the inverse formation time scale

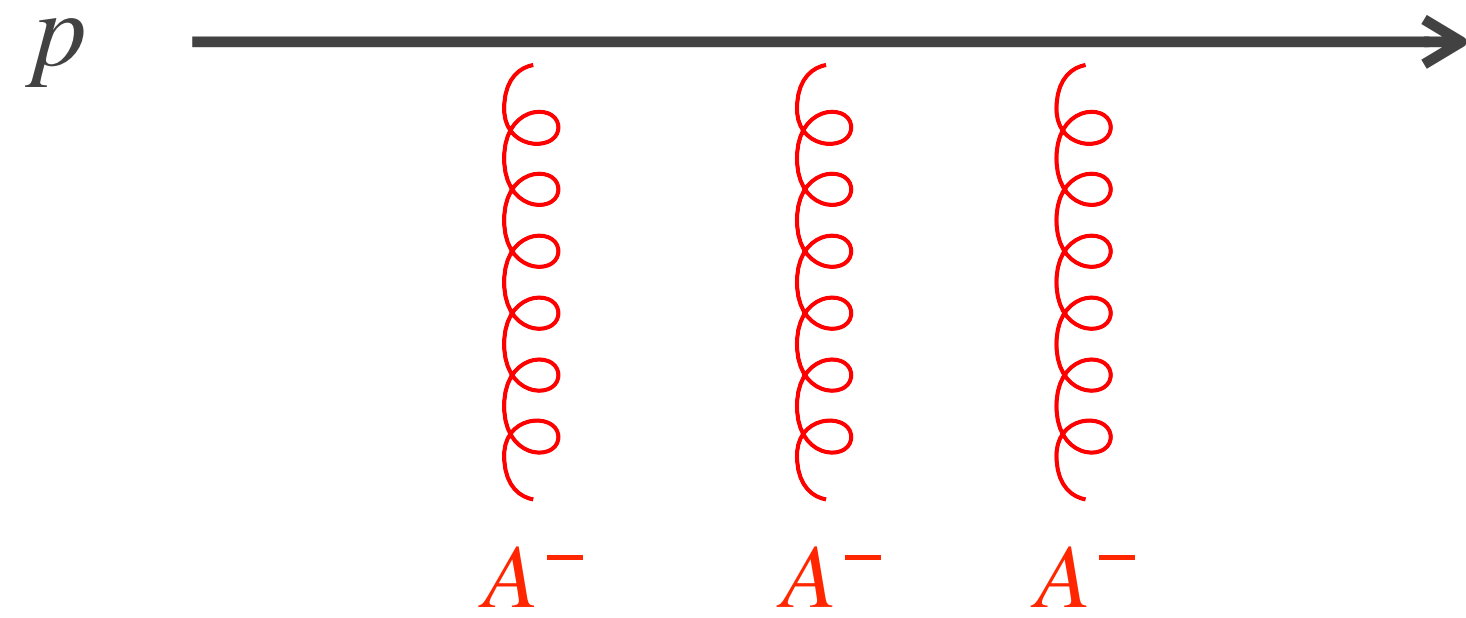
- Transverse momenta are of same order

$$Q \sim k_{\perp 1} \sim k_{\perp 2} \sim \dots \sim \mu$$



$$P \equiv (0, P^-, 0_{\perp}) \quad s = q^+ P^-$$

# The dipole model in DIS



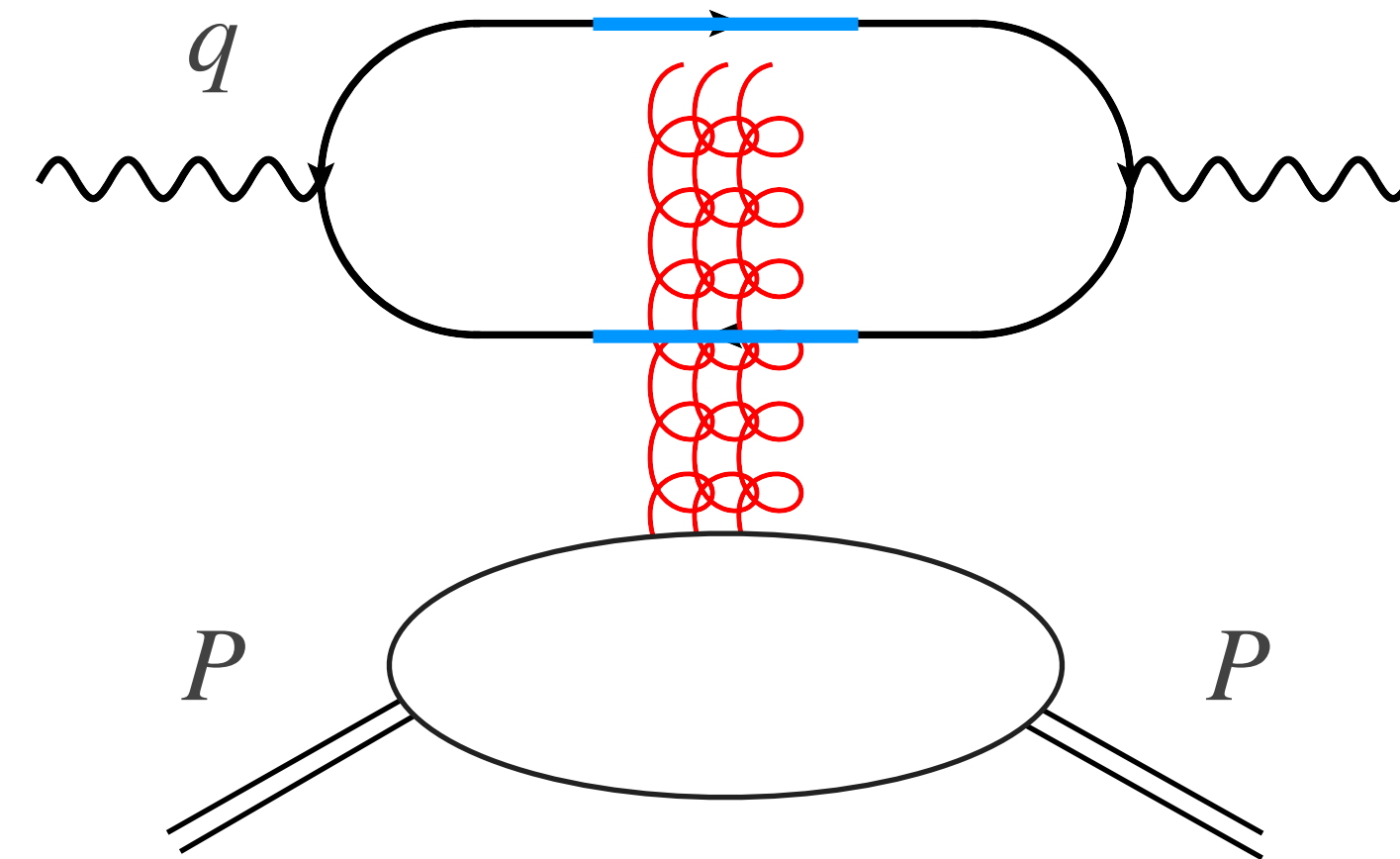
- the relevant d.o.f. in the saturation regime are strong classical fields  $gA^- \sim 1$
- eikonal lines:  $p^+ \gg k^+$  and  $k^- \ll P^-$

- path ordered Wilson line

$$U_x \equiv [+ \infty, - \infty]_x = P \exp \left[ ig \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} dx^+ A^-(x^+, \mathbf{x}) \right]$$

- dominant contribution in DIS: dipole scattering

$$\langle P | \text{Tr} U_{x_1} U_{x_2}^\dagger | P \rangle$$



shock wave limit:  $t_f \equiv Q^2/q^+ \gg 1/P^- \rightarrow x = Q^2/s \ll 1$



# **BK and the NLO crisis**

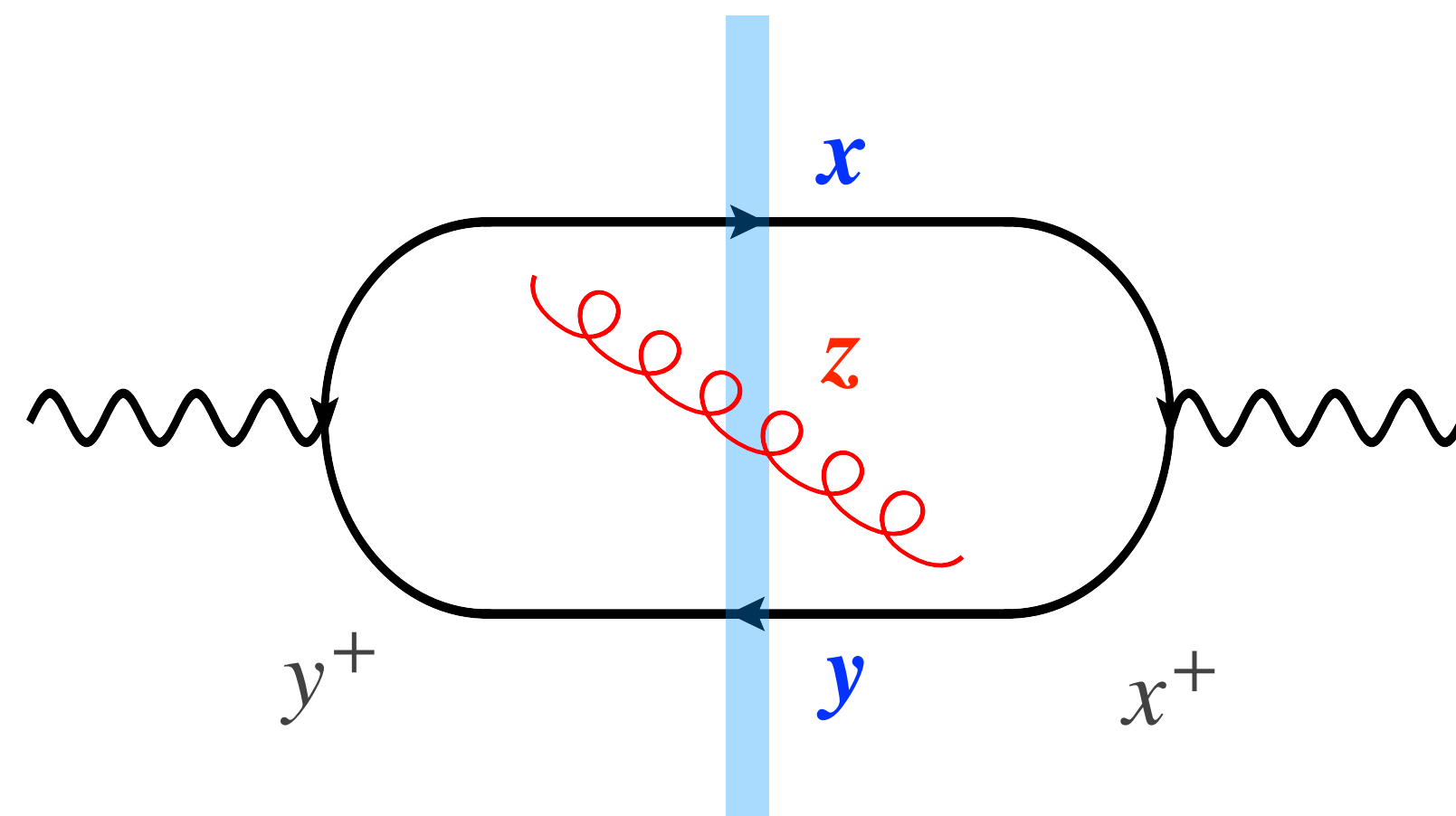
# BK equation at LO

- **Balitsky-Kovchegov (1996-1999)** equation describes the non-linear evolution of the dipole scattering amplitude as function of the rapidity

$$Y \equiv \log \frac{q^+}{\Lambda^+}$$

$$S_Y(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y}) \equiv \frac{1}{N_c} \langle \text{Tr } U(\mathbf{x}) U^\dagger(\mathbf{y}) \rangle_Y$$

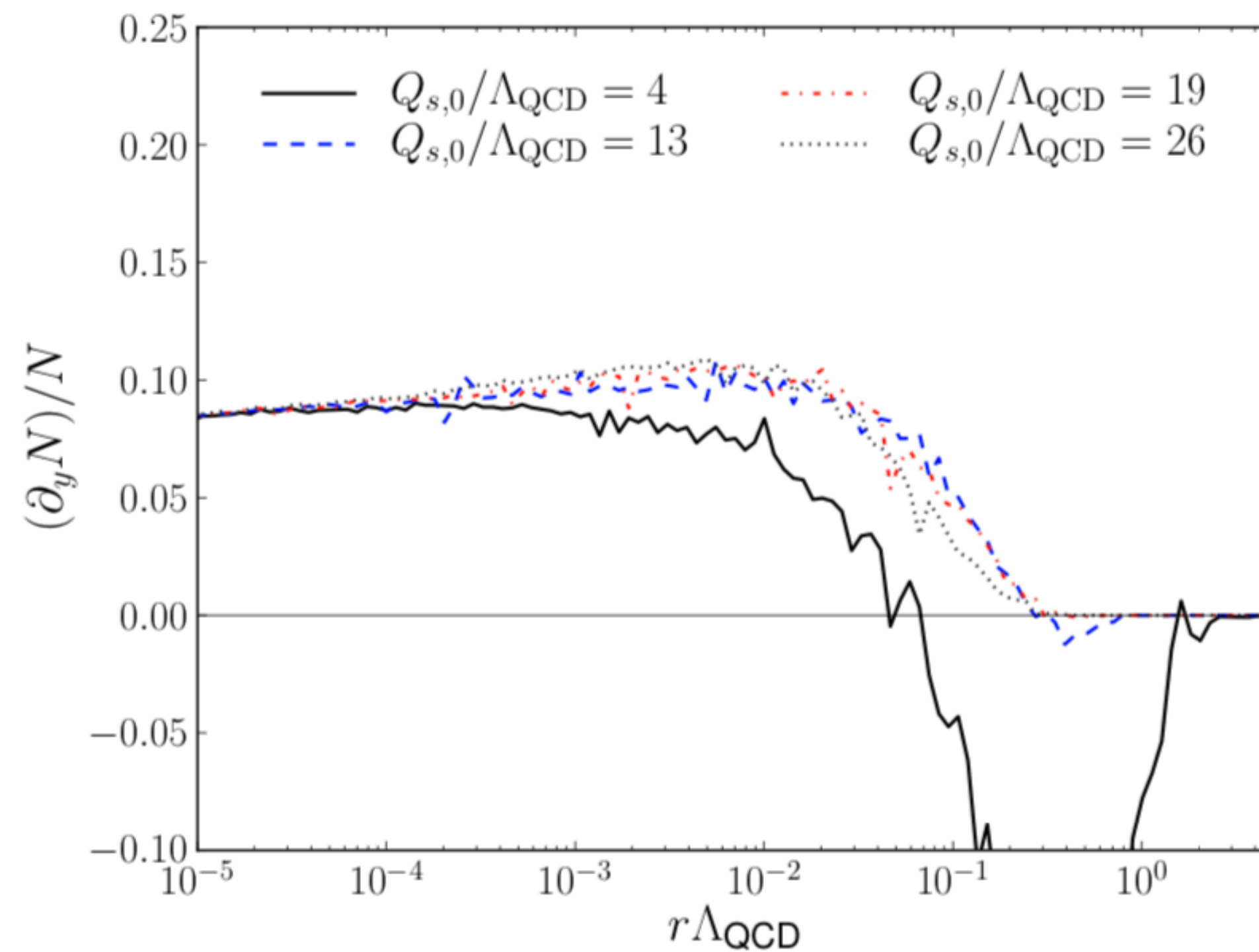
$$\frac{\partial}{\partial Y} S_Y(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y}) = \bar{\alpha} \int dz \frac{(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y})^2}{(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{z})^2 (\mathbf{z} - \mathbf{y})^2} [S_Y(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{z}) S_Y(\mathbf{z} - \mathbf{y}) - S_Y(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y})]$$



# BK and the NLO crisis

[Balitsky and Chirilli (2008)]

- At NLO BK equation was found to be numerically unstable



[Lappi and Mäntysaari (2015)]

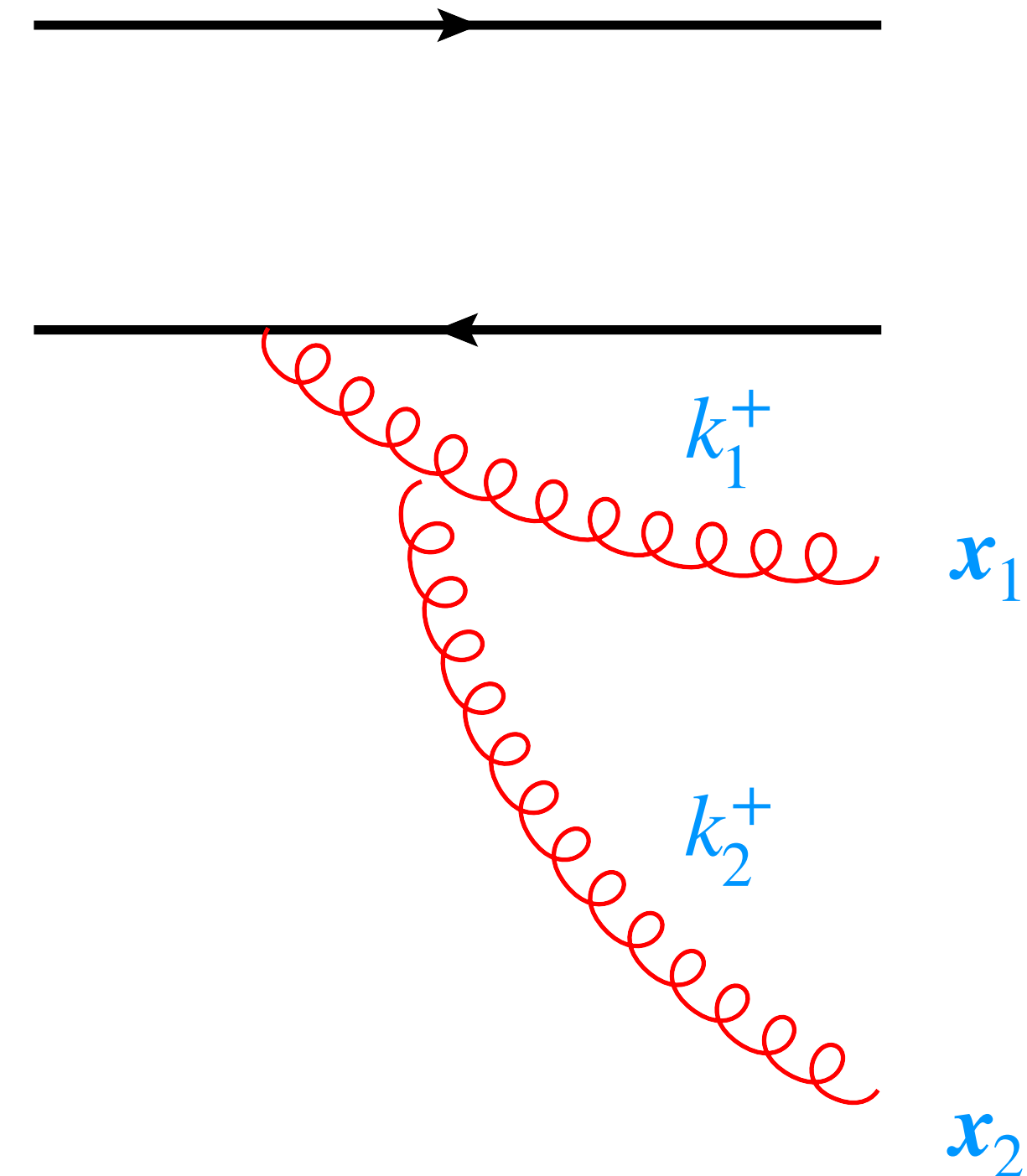
# BK and the NLO crisis

- This is due to the fact that the rapidity variable  $a$   
 $Y \equiv \log \frac{q^+}{\Lambda^+}$  evolves independently from  $x$
- As a result small dipoles that radiate larger dipoles generate large collinear logarithms when  
 $k_1^- \sim k_2^- \Rightarrow \text{NLO} > \text{LO}$

formation time ordering

$$k_1^- = x_1^2 k_1^+ < k_2^- = x_2^2 k_2^+ \quad \Rightarrow \quad \frac{x_1^2}{x_2^2} < \frac{k_2^+}{k_1^+} \ll 1$$

$$k_1^+ \gg k_2^+$$



[Beuf (2014) Ducloué, Iancu, Mueller, Soyez, Triantafyllopoulos (2015-2019)]

# BK and the NLO crisis

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[Beuf (2014) Ducloué, Iancu, Mueller, Soyez, Triantafyllopoulos (2015-2019)]

- Several solutions have been proposed: implementing kinematic bound, resummation of double logarithms. However,
  - ▶ they spoil the renormalization picture established at LO
  - ▶ exhibit scheme dependence
  - ▶ no operator definition for systematic order by order calculations
  - ▶ not discussed at the level of observables: inclusive DIS

**Where is  $x$  hiding?**

# Where is x hiding?

- In the shock wave [Balitsky (1996)] approach there is no explicit dependence on the longitudinal momentum fraction of the gluons in the target
- The standard trick is to identify rapidity variables  $Y = \eta$

$$\eta \equiv \log \frac{1}{x_{Bj}}$$

$$Y \equiv \log \frac{q^+}{q_0^+}$$

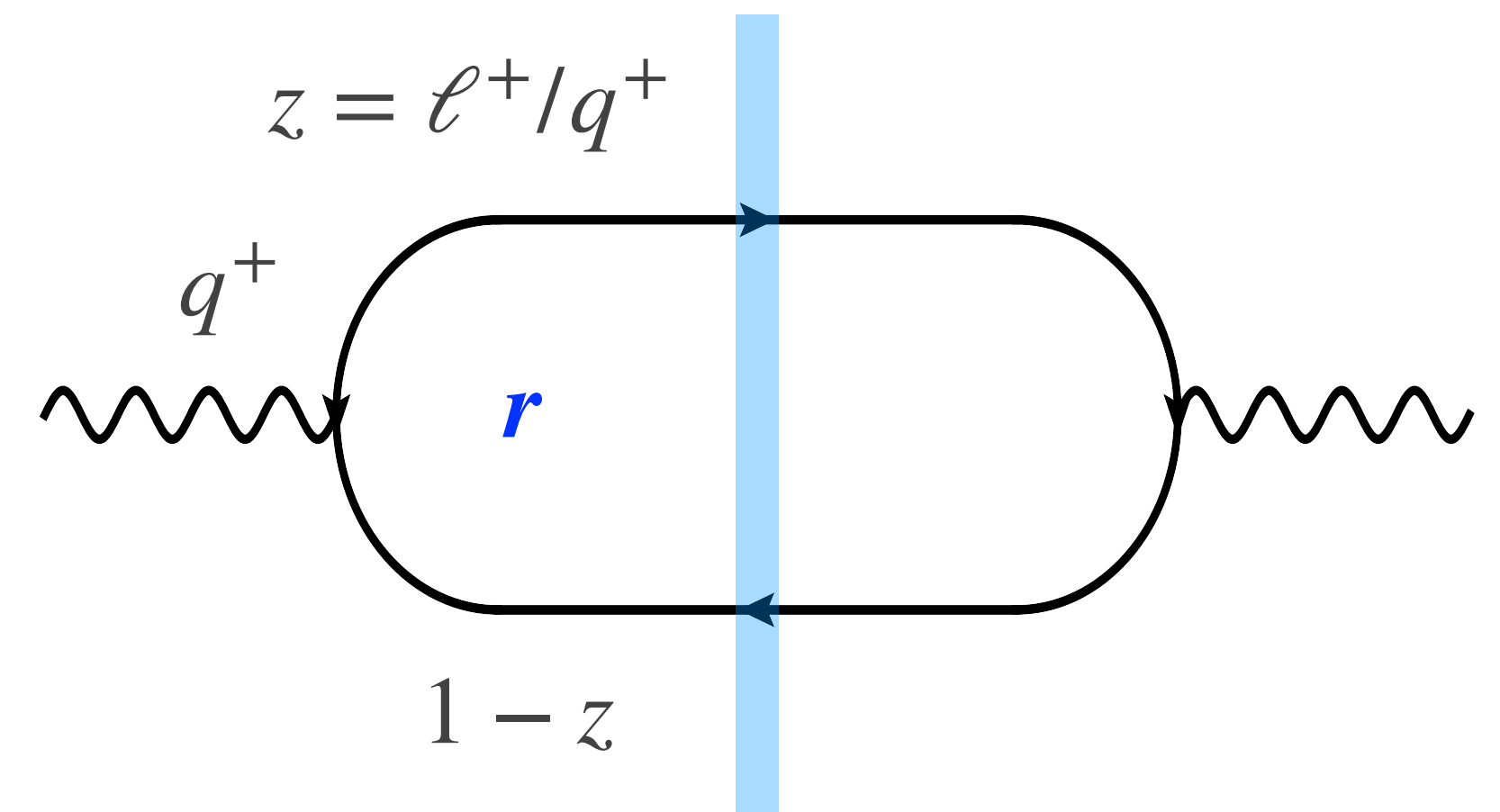
transverse photon wave function

$$\varphi(\mathbf{r}) = \frac{\mathbf{r} \cdot \boldsymbol{\epsilon}_\lambda}{|\mathbf{r}|} K_1 \left( \sqrt{z(1-z)} |\mathbf{r}|^2 Q^2 \right)$$

cross-section

$$\sigma(x_{Bj}, Q^2) \sim e^2 \int_0^1 dz P(z) |\varphi(\mathbf{r})|^2 \langle \text{Tr} U(\mathbf{r}) U^\dagger(0) \rangle_Y$$

- It is instructive to check the collinear limit



# Where is $x$ hiding?

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- In the leading twist: expanding for small dipoles  $r_{\perp} \sim 1/Q \ll b_{\perp}$

$$U(\mathbf{b} + \frac{\mathbf{r}}{2}) = U(\mathbf{b}) + r^i \partial^i U(\mathbf{b})$$

$$\partial^i U(\mathbf{b}) = \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} dx^+ \left( [ +\infty, x^+ ] \partial^i A^-(x^+) [ +\infty, x^+ ] \right)_{\mathbf{b}} \quad \text{where} \quad \partial^i A^- \equiv F^{i-}$$

- we recover the gluon PDF ...

$$\int d\mathbf{b} \left\langle \text{Tr} U(\mathbf{b} + \frac{\mathbf{r}}{2}) U^\dagger(\mathbf{b} - \frac{\mathbf{r}}{2}) \right\rangle_Y \approx r^2 xg(1/r^2, x) + O(r^4)$$



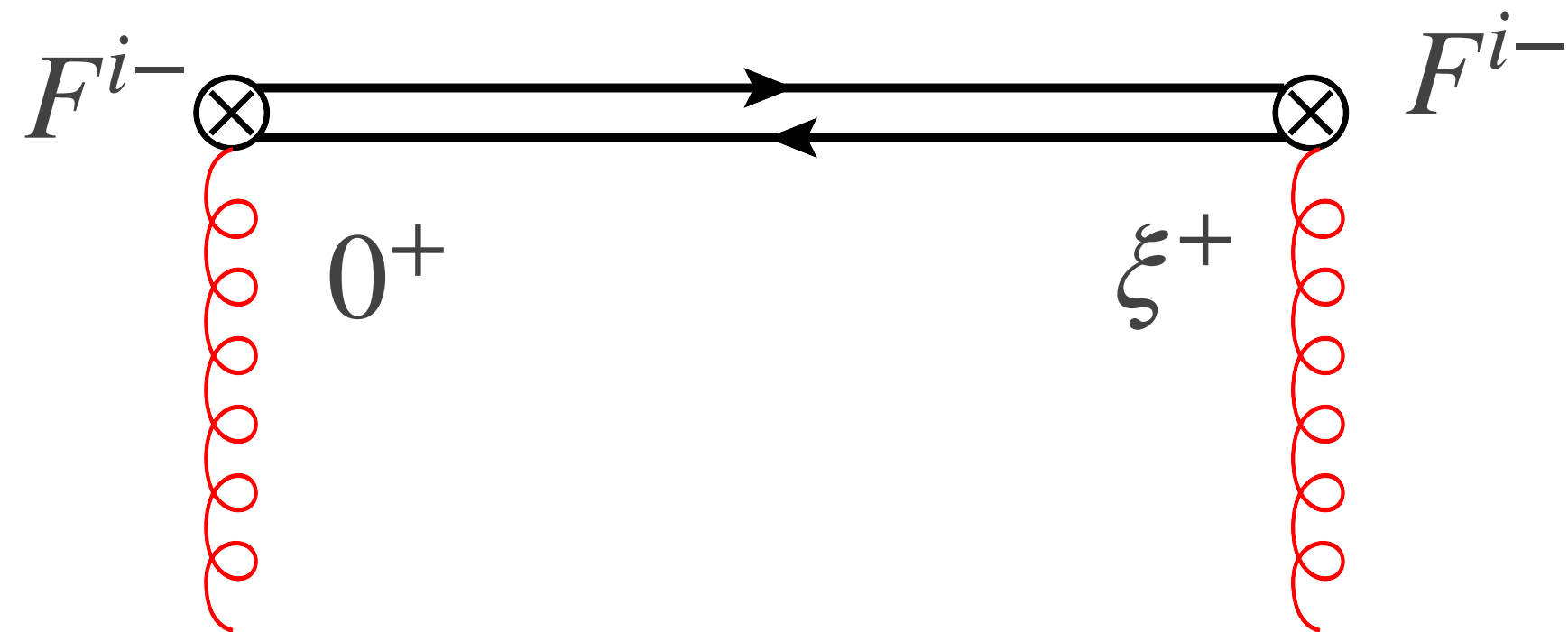
# Where is $x$ hiding?

- ...except for the phase that encodes to  $x = k^-/P^-$  dependence

$$xg(x, \mu^2) = \frac{2}{P^-} \int_{\mathbf{b}} \int_{x^+, y^+} \langle \text{Tr} [y^+, x^+] F^{i-}(x^+) [y^+, x^+] F^{i-}(y^+) \rangle_Y$$

- the complete gluon PDF writes (the integral over  $x^+$  and  $\mathbf{b}$  cancel against  $\langle P | P \rangle$ )

$$xg(x, \mu^2) = 2 \int \frac{d\xi^+}{(2\pi)P^-} e^{ixP^-\xi^+} \langle P | \text{Tr} [0, \xi^+] F^{i-}(\xi^+) [\xi^+, 0] F^{i-}(0) | P \rangle$$



# Where is $x$ hiding?

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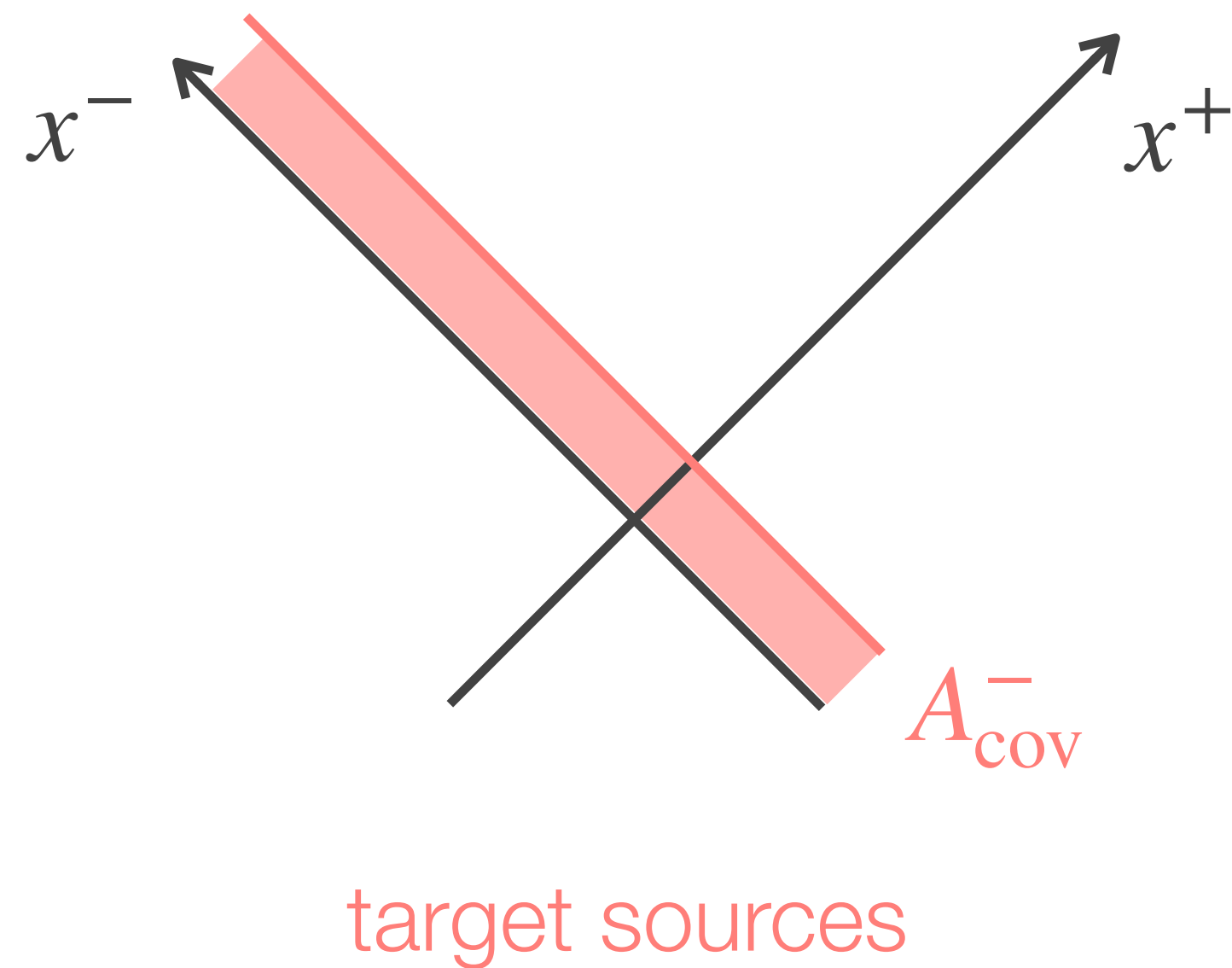
- Parametrically we have.  $\xi^+ = x^+ - y^+ \sim 1/P^-$
- Then the phase scales as.  $i x P^- \xi^+ \sim x$
- In **shock wave** one assumes:  $x_{Bj} \ll x \ll 1 \Rightarrow$  one can neglect the phase.

This is the BFKL-BK phase space

- On the other hand a potentially large collinear logarithm lives in the region  $x_{Bj} \ll x \sim 1$
- This might not be so relevant at leading order but at NLO dilute spots in the proton wave function may generate large collinear logarithms

**Digression:  
background field and  
transverse gauge links**

# Background field and transverse gauge links



- consider a target boosted along the  $-z$  direction close to the light cone. Due to time dilation the target **color sources are “frozen”** in the  $-$  direction
- **Yang-Mills** equations  $[D_\mu, F^{\mu\nu}] = J^\nu$  can be solved exactly (together with the continuity equation  $[D_\mu, J^\mu] = 0$ ) in covariant gauge  $\partial \cdot A = 0$  (or light-cone gauge  $A^+ = 0$ )

$$J^\nu(x) \rightarrow J^-(x^+, x_\perp)$$

and  $J^+ = J_\perp = 0$

$$A_{\text{cov}}^- = -\frac{1}{\partial_\perp^2} J^- \quad \text{and} \quad A^+ = A_\perp = 0$$

# Background field and transverse gauge links

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- under an arbitrary gauge rotation  $\Omega(x^+, x_\perp)$  the target field transforms as

$$A^- \rightarrow \Omega_x(x^+) A_{\text{cov}}^-(x^+, \mathbf{x}) \Omega_x^{-1}(x^+) - \frac{1}{ig} \Omega_x(x^+) \partial^- \Omega_x^{-1}(x^+)$$

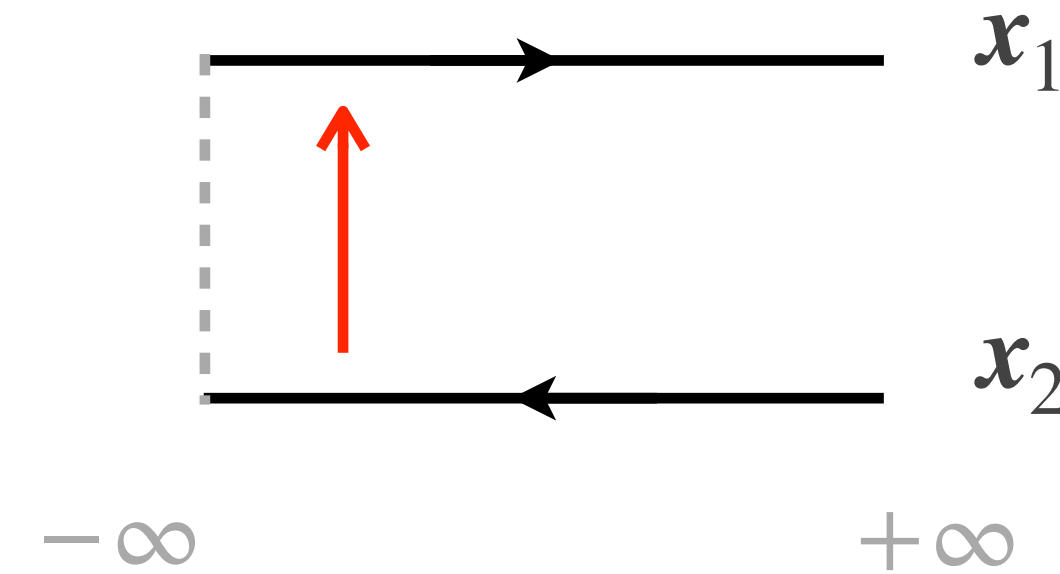
$$A^i \rightarrow -\frac{1}{ig} \Omega_x(x^+) \partial^i \Omega_x^{-1}(x^+)$$

- exploiting the **residual gauge freedom** we can generate a transverse pure gauge
- N.B.: the **partonic picture** is manifest in the LC-gauge  $A^- = 0$  (with  $A_\perp \neq 0$ )
- small  $x$  observables are (in the dilute/dense limit) more naturally expressed in the wrong LC-gauge  $A^- \neq 0$  (with  $A_\perp = 0$ ).
- in order to connect to the partonic interpretation one needs to deal with transverse fields

# Background field and transverse gauge links

- geometric interpretation of the all twist resummation

$$U_{x_1} = U_{x_2} - r^i \int_0^1 ds (\partial^i U_{x_2+sr})$$



- and noticing that  $\frac{1}{ig}(\partial^i U_x)U_x \equiv A^i(\mathbf{x})$ , one can express the **dipole operator** (in the background field  $A^-$ ) as a transverse gauge link:

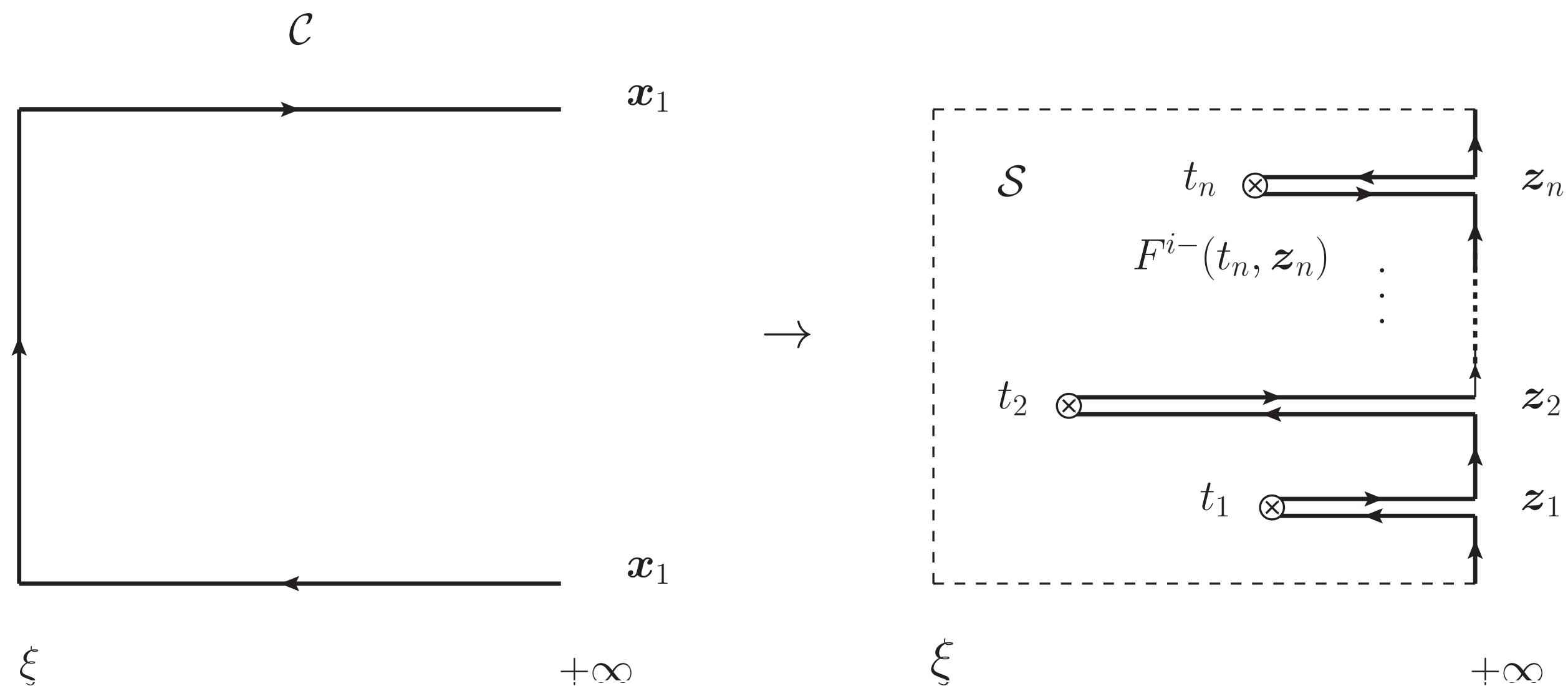
$$U_{x_1} U_{x_2}^\dagger = [x_1, x_2] = 1 - ig \int_{x_2}^{x_1} dz A^i(z) [z, x_2]$$



- dipole operator can be expressed in terms of transverse link operators

# Background field and transverse gauge links

- **non-Abelian Stokes theorem:** more generally, the dipole operator can be written as a path ordered tower of “twisted” field strength tensor (i.e. dressed with future pointing Wilson lines)



[Fishbane, Gasiorowicz, Kaus (1981) Wiedemann (2000)  
YMT, Boussarie (2020)]

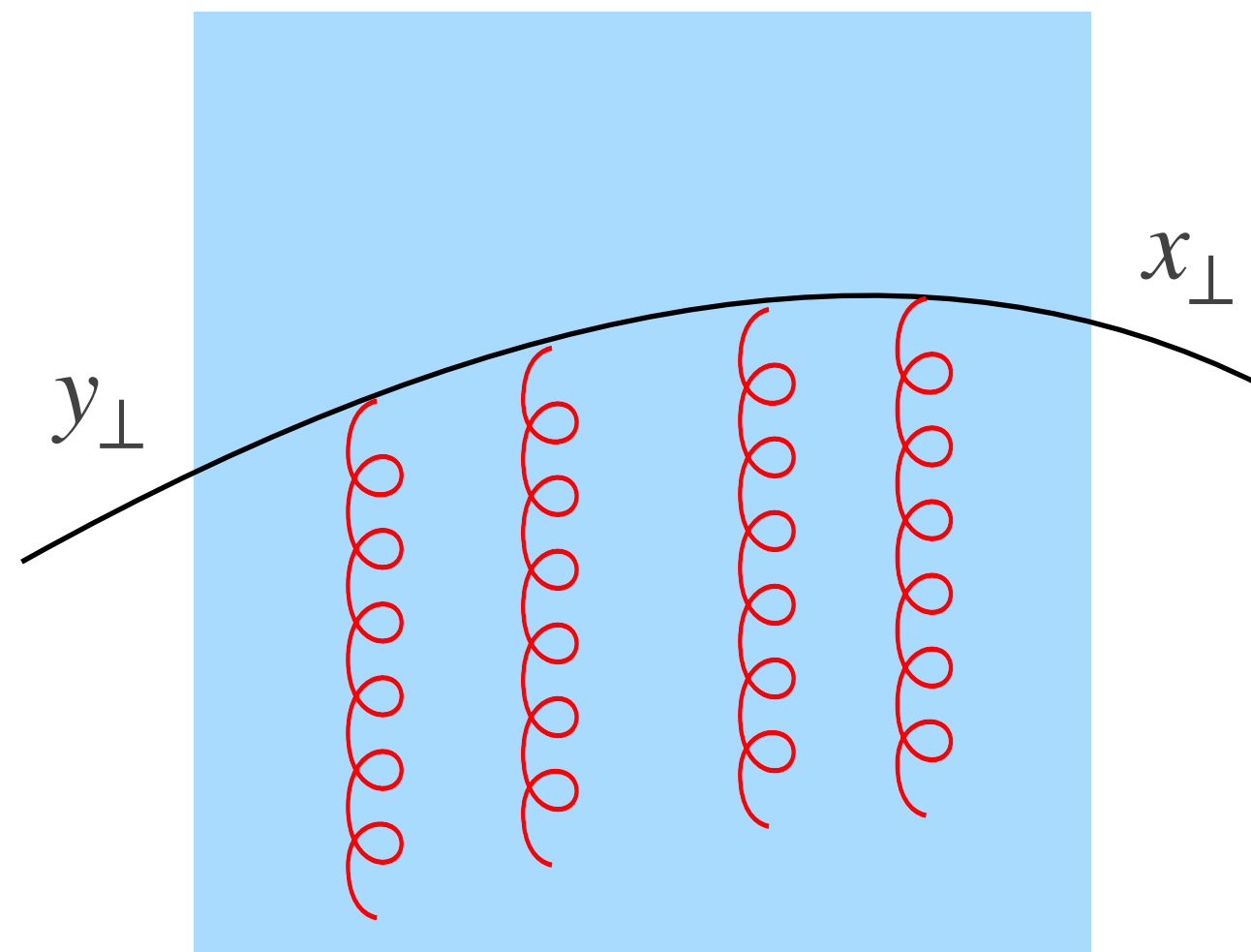
$$U_{x_2} U_{x_1}^\dagger \equiv P \exp \left[ -ig \int_S dt dz [ +\infty, x^+ ]_x F^{i-}(x^+, \mathbf{x}) [x^+, +\infty]_x \right]$$

# Revisiting the Shock Wave Approximation



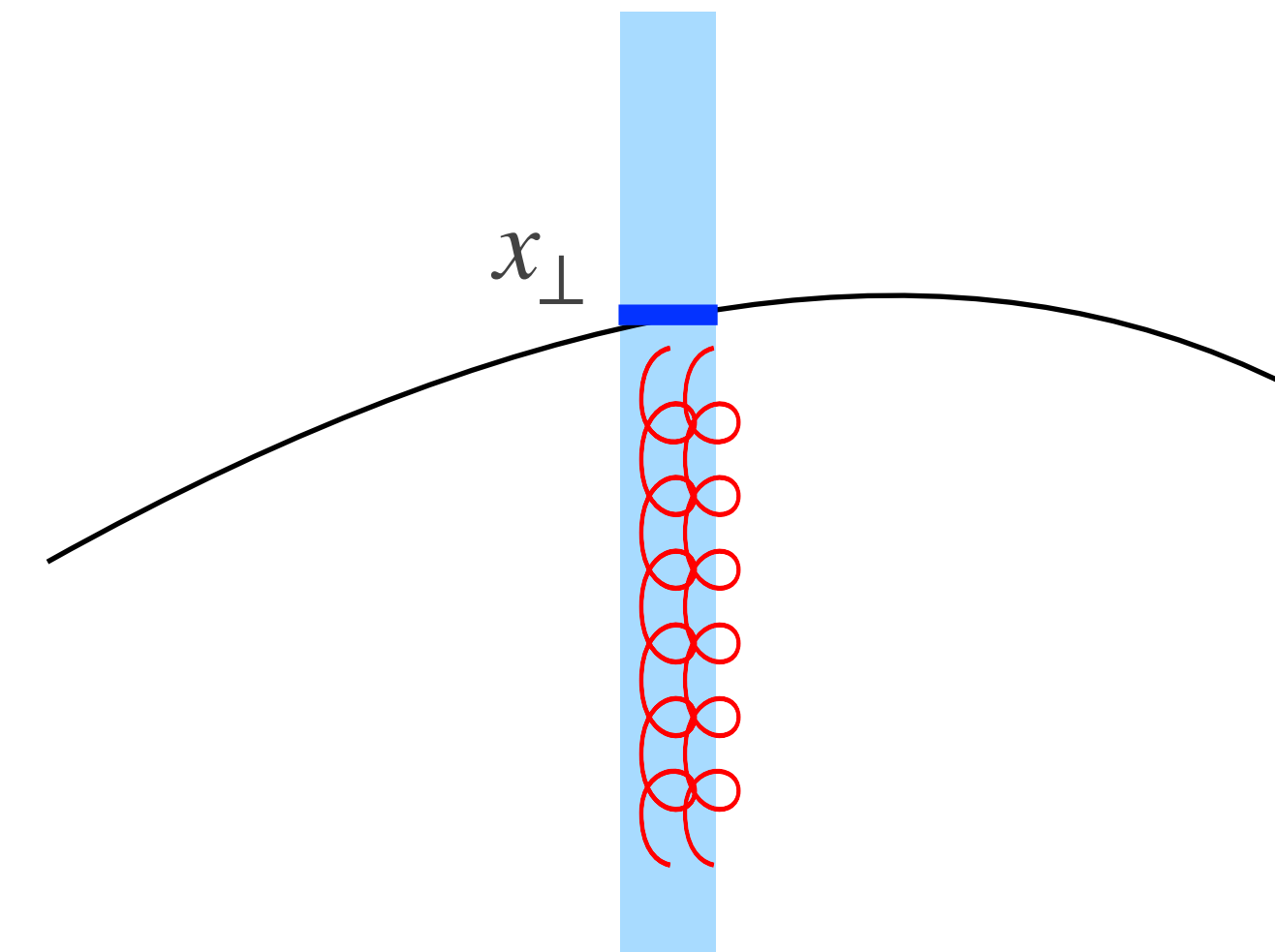
# Revisiting the Shock Wave Approximation

- Under the assumption that all transverse momenta are of same order along the ladder, the leading power  $1/s$  is obtained letting  $p^+ \rightarrow \infty$  for any particle propagating inside the shock wave



propagator

$$\mathcal{G}_{p^+}(x^+, y^+) = \left[ i \frac{\partial}{\partial x^+} - \frac{\hat{p}_\perp^2}{2p^+} - gA^- \right]^{-1}$$



shock wave limit

$$\lim_{p^+ \rightarrow +\infty} \mathcal{G}_{p^+}(x^+, \mathbf{x}; y^+, \mathbf{y}) = \delta(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y}) U_x(x^+, y^+)$$

# Revisiting the Shock Wave Approximation

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- This limit neglects **quantum diffusion**

$$\mathcal{G}_{p^+}^0(x^+, \mathbf{x}; y^+, \mathbf{y}) = \frac{p^+}{2i\pi \Delta x^+} e^{i \frac{(x-y)^2 p^+}{\Delta x^+}}$$

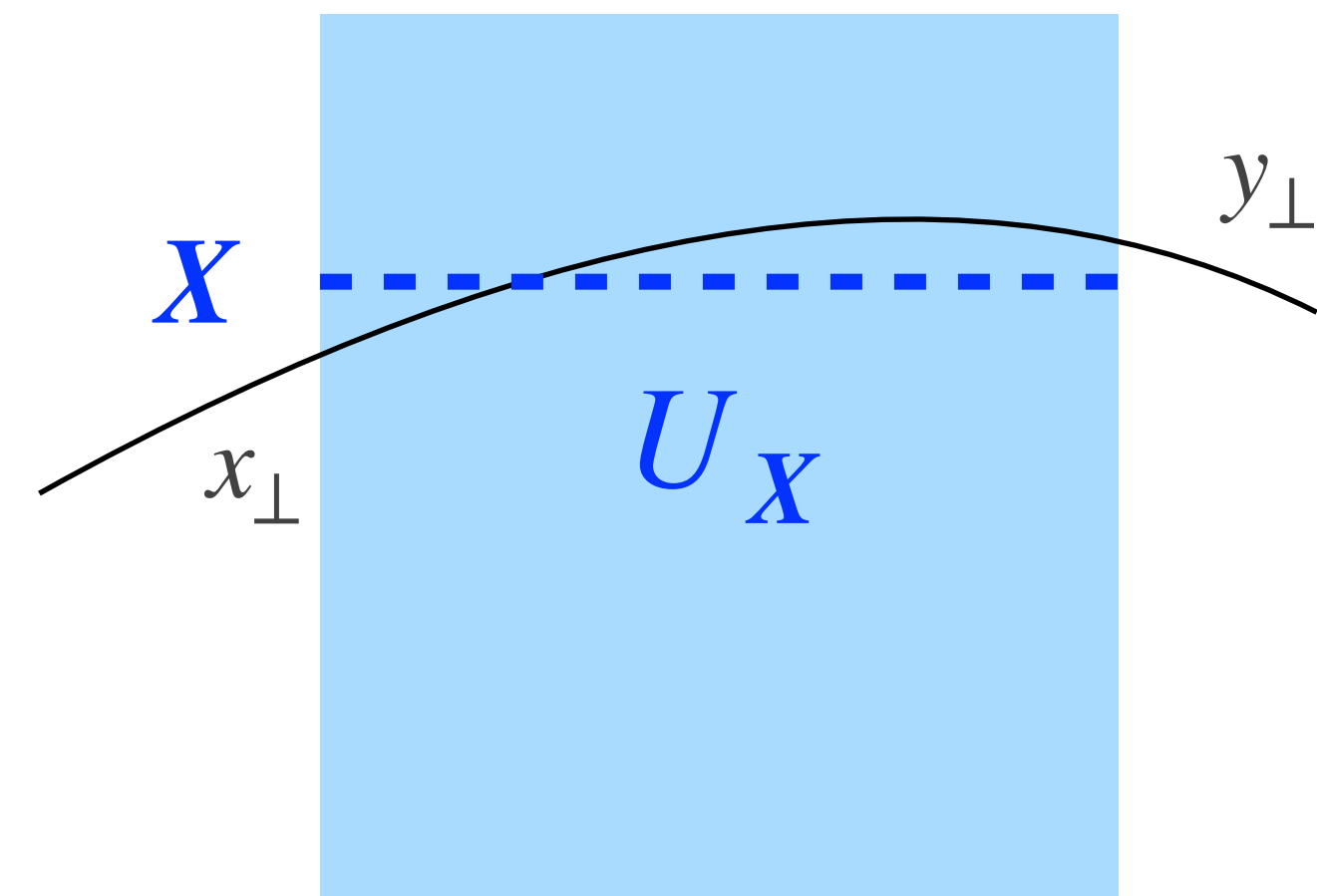
- it is important when  $(\Delta \mathbf{x})^2 \sim \Delta x^+ / p^+ \sim s^{-1}$
- In effect, the **phase** relates the transverse dynamics to longitudinal dynamics, this is the phase that appears in the definition of PDF's
- It encodes the information about  $k^-$ 's in the target. It is expected to be non-negligible away from the strongly ordered region in  $k^-$ .

# Revisiting the Shock Wave Approximation

- Instead of taking the limit  $p^+ \rightarrow +\infty$  we can simply expand around the constant transverse coordinate (classical trajectory)

$$X \equiv \frac{\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{y}}{2}$$

- At leading power we we recover a Wilson line multiplied by a phase



$$\mathcal{G}_{p^+}(\mathbf{x}^+, \mathbf{x}; \mathbf{y}^+, \mathbf{y}) = \mathcal{G}_0(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y}, \mathbf{x}^+ - \mathbf{y}^+) U_X(\mathbf{x}^+, \mathbf{y}^+) + \dots$$

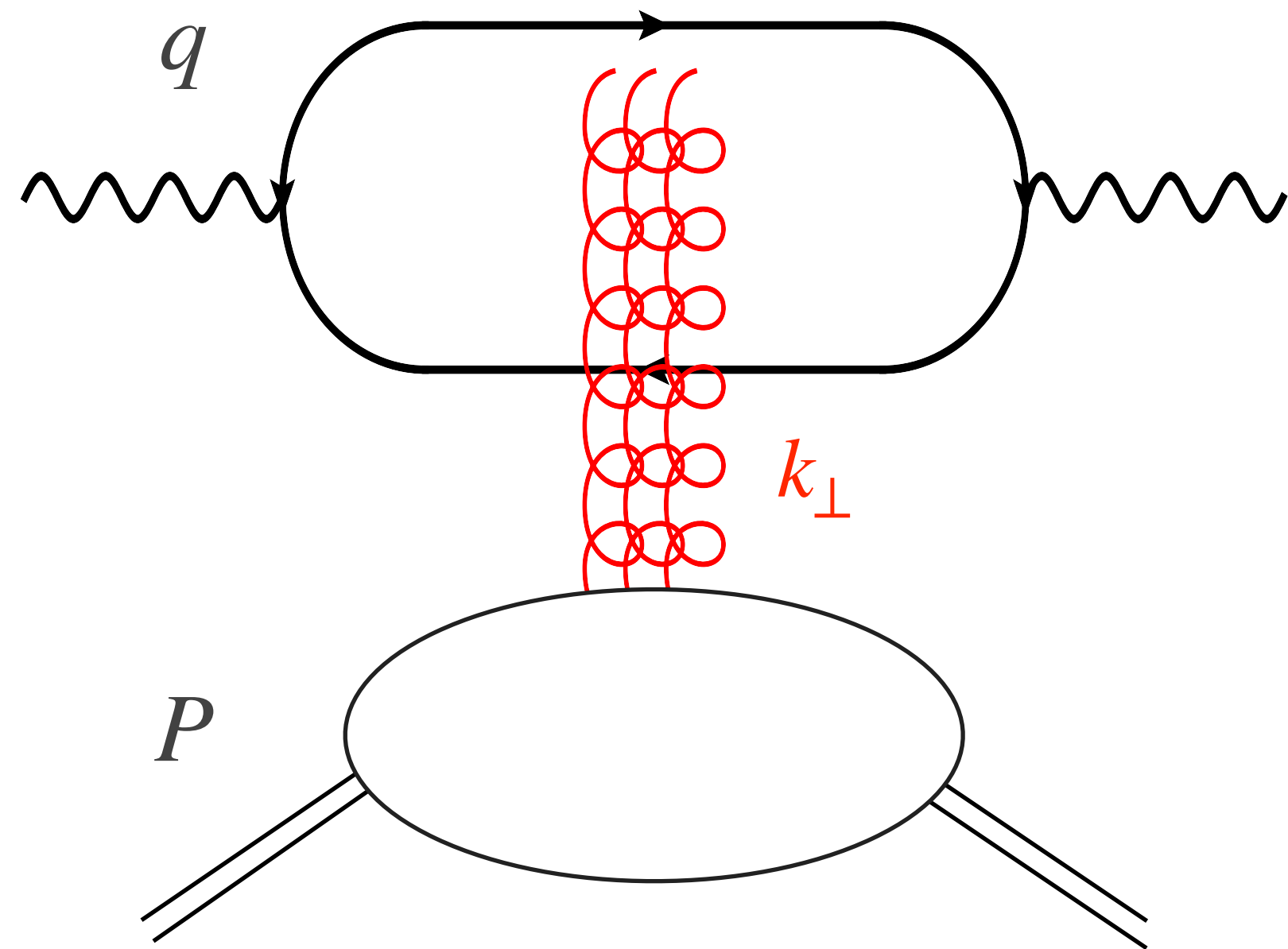
- Taking again the limit  $p^+ \rightarrow +\infty$  we recover the shock wave
- The ellipses are subleading terms suppressed as  $(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y})^i (\partial^i U)_X$

# **Road Test: Inclusive DIS**

# Inclusive DIS beyond shock wave

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$$q \equiv (q^+, q^-, 0_\perp)$$



$$P \equiv (0^+, P^-, 0_\perp)$$

1. ordering in  $k^+$
2. gluonic target
3. leading power in  $k_\perp^2/s$

# Inclusive DIS beyond shock wave

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- Working assumptions:

- We shall assume a large separation between the **target modes** and the **quantum fluctuations** (here the quark dipole)

[Balitsky and Braun (1988)]

$$k^+ > \Lambda^+$$

quantum

$$\psi_q(x)$$

$$k^+ < \Lambda^+$$

classical

$$A_c^-(x^+, \mathbf{x}) \sim \delta(k^+)$$

NB: strong ordering in  $k^+$  is common to small  $x$  and leading twist DGLAP

$$k_1^+ = \frac{k_1^-}{k_{\perp 1}^2} \ll k_2^+ = \frac{k_2^-}{k_{\perp 2}^2}$$

[Balitsky and Trasov (2015)]

# Inclusive DIS beyond shock wave

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- Working assumptions:

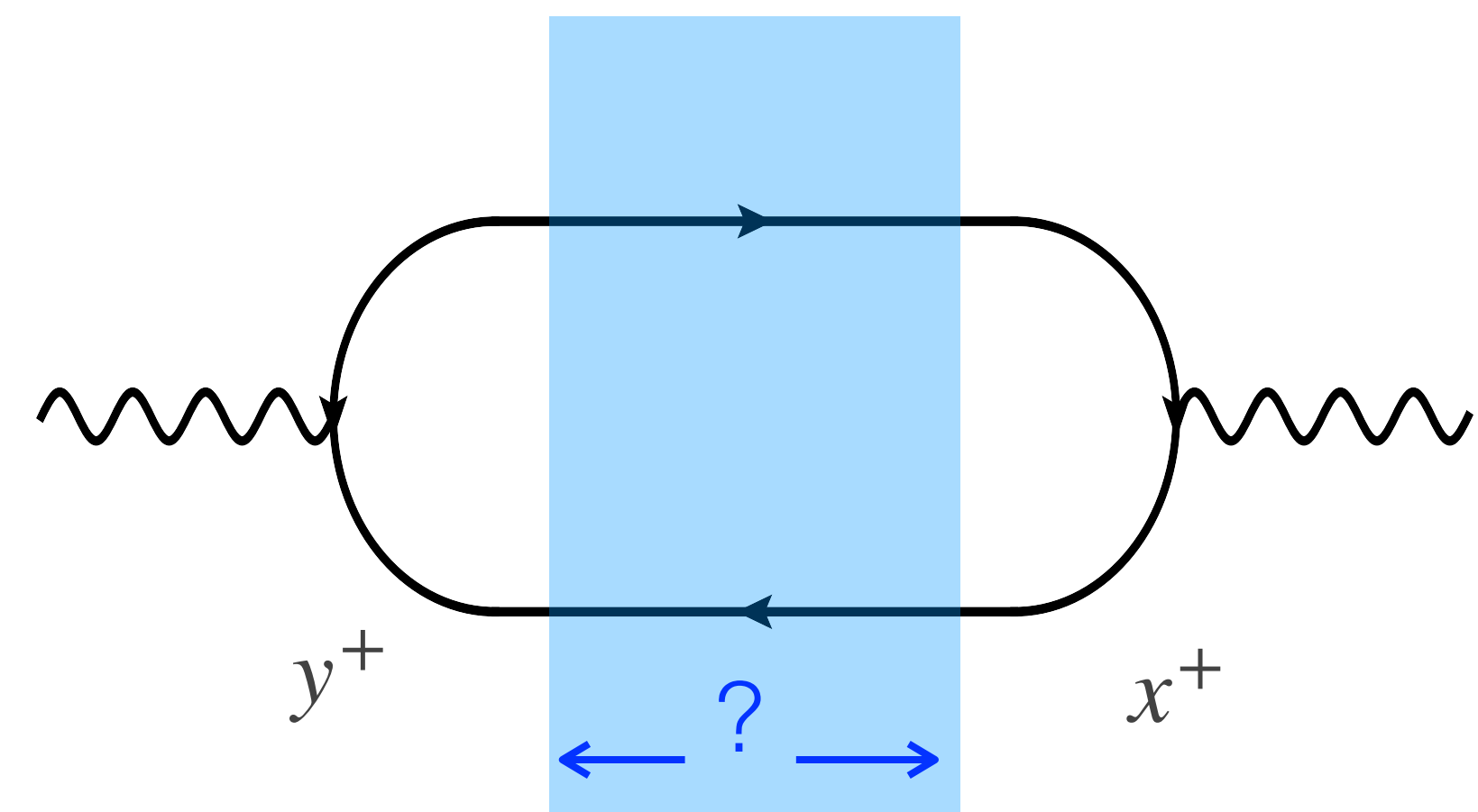
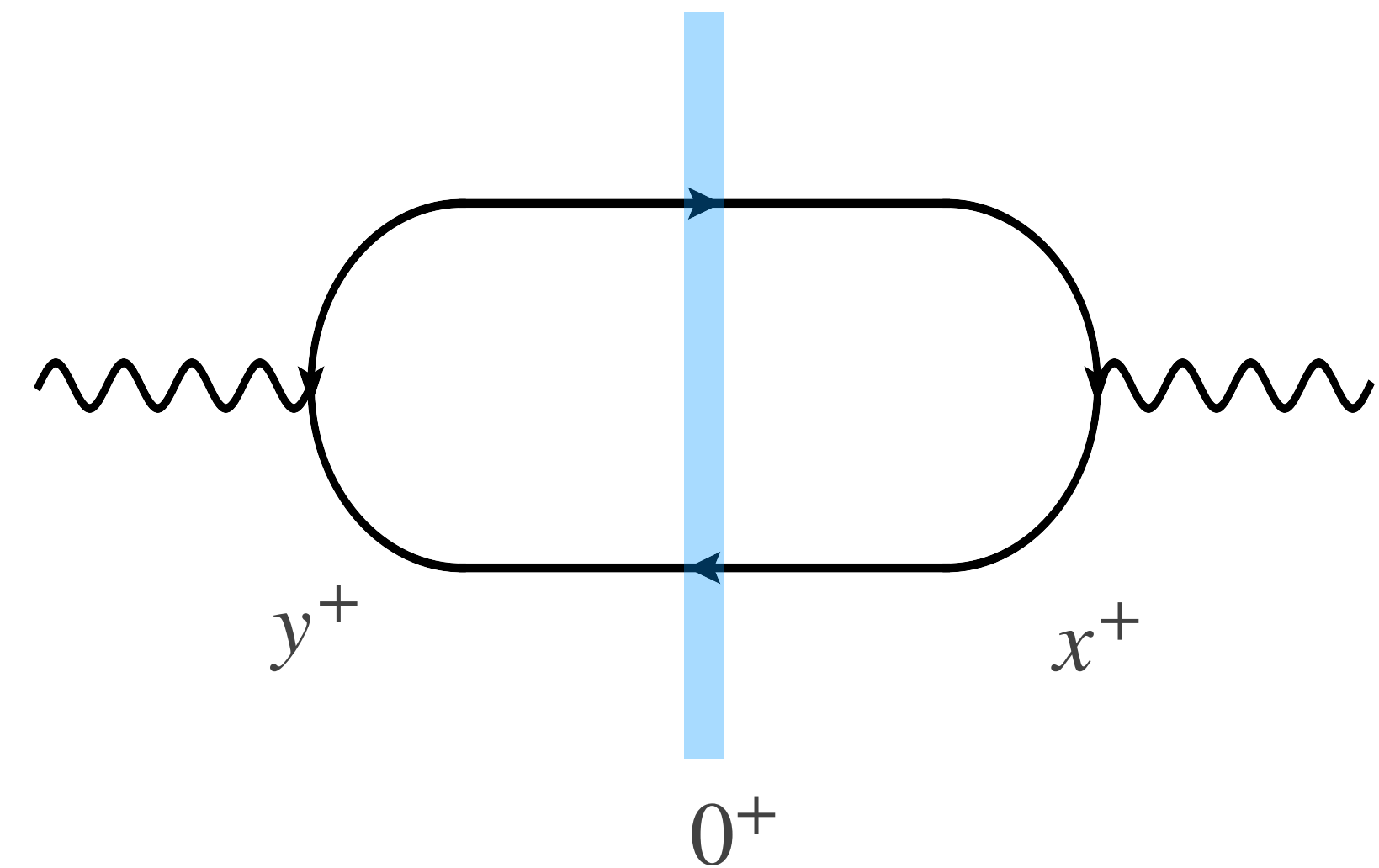
2. We shall neglect power suppressed terms of the form

$$o\left(\frac{k_{\perp}^2}{s}\right)$$

- Bjorken limit: If  $s \sim Q^2$  it is higher twist  $k_{\perp}/Q$
- Regge limit: If  $s \gg Q^2$  it is suppressed by a powers of the energy

# Inclusive DIS beyond shock wave

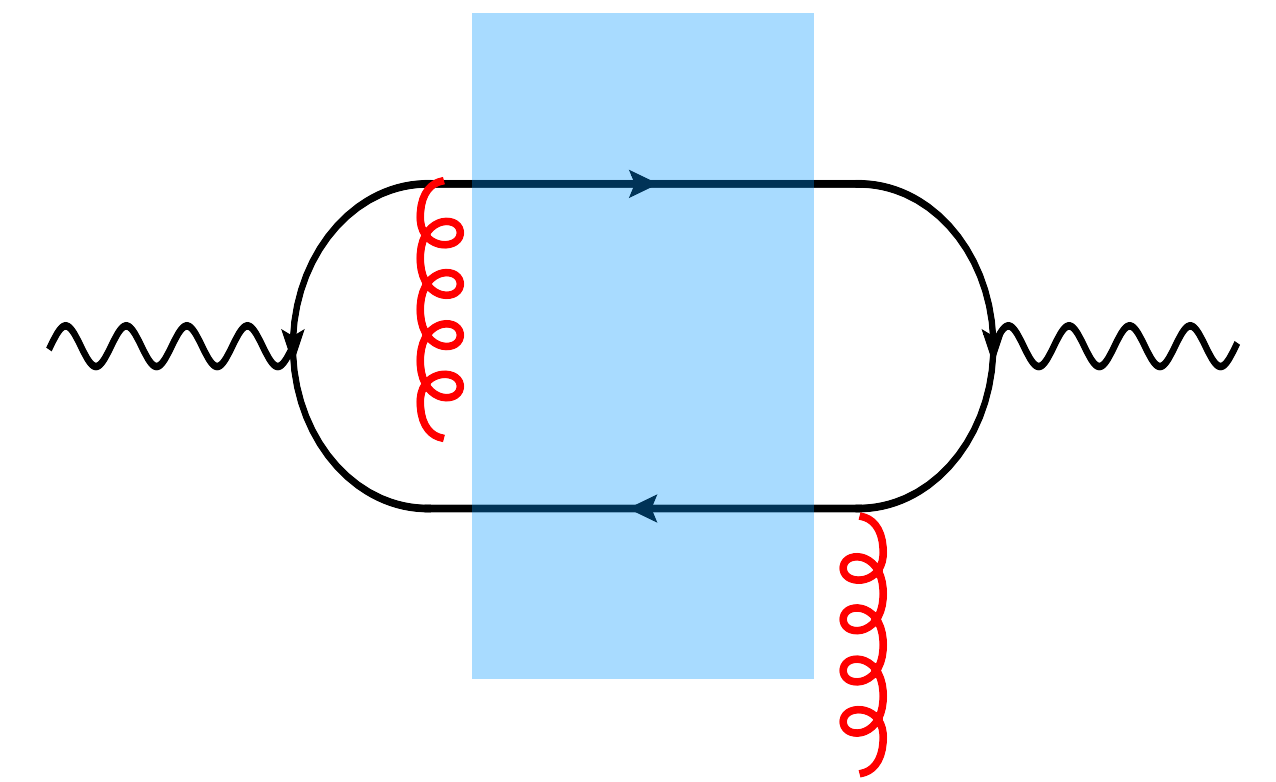
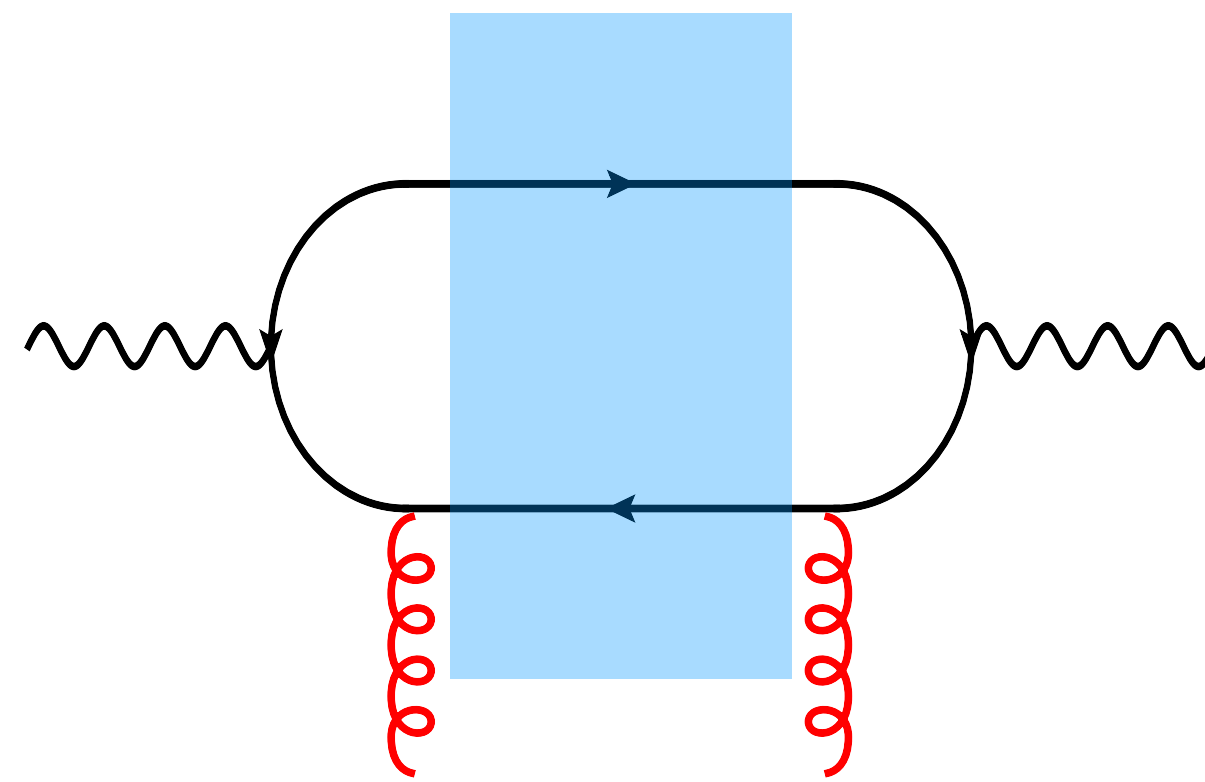
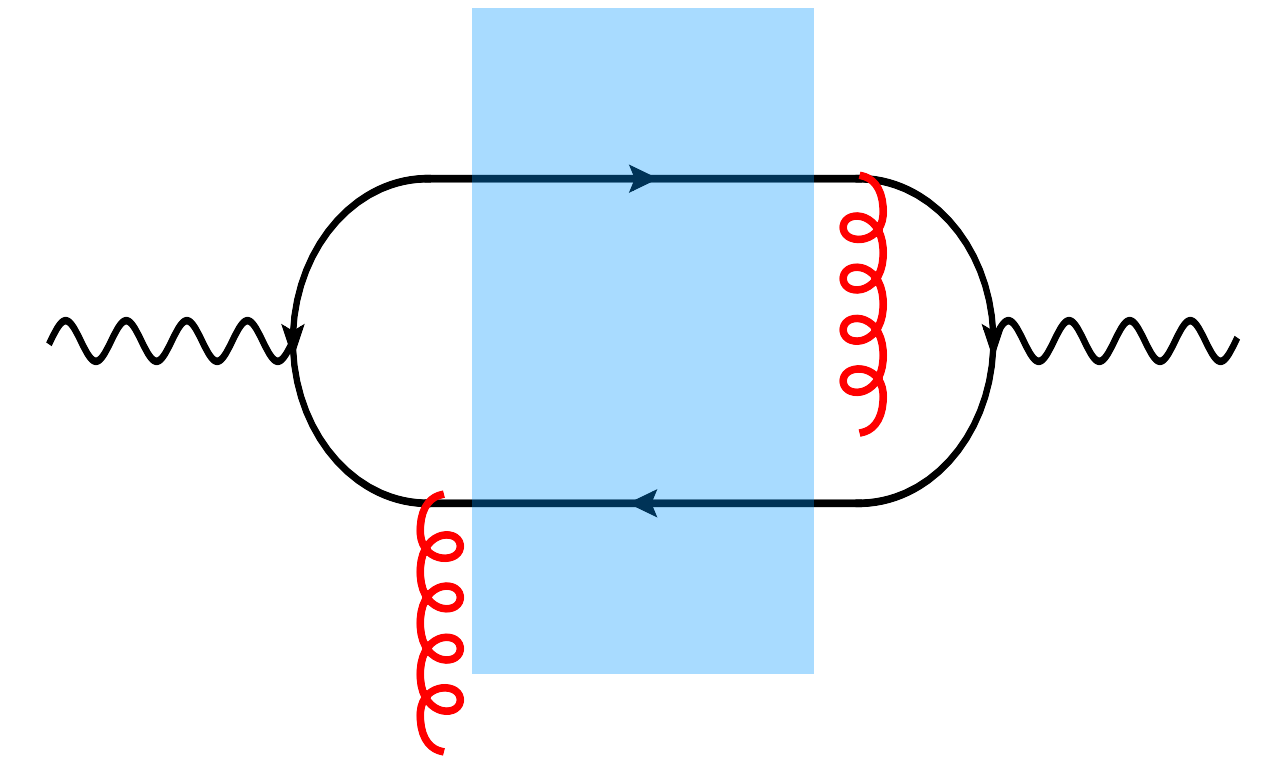
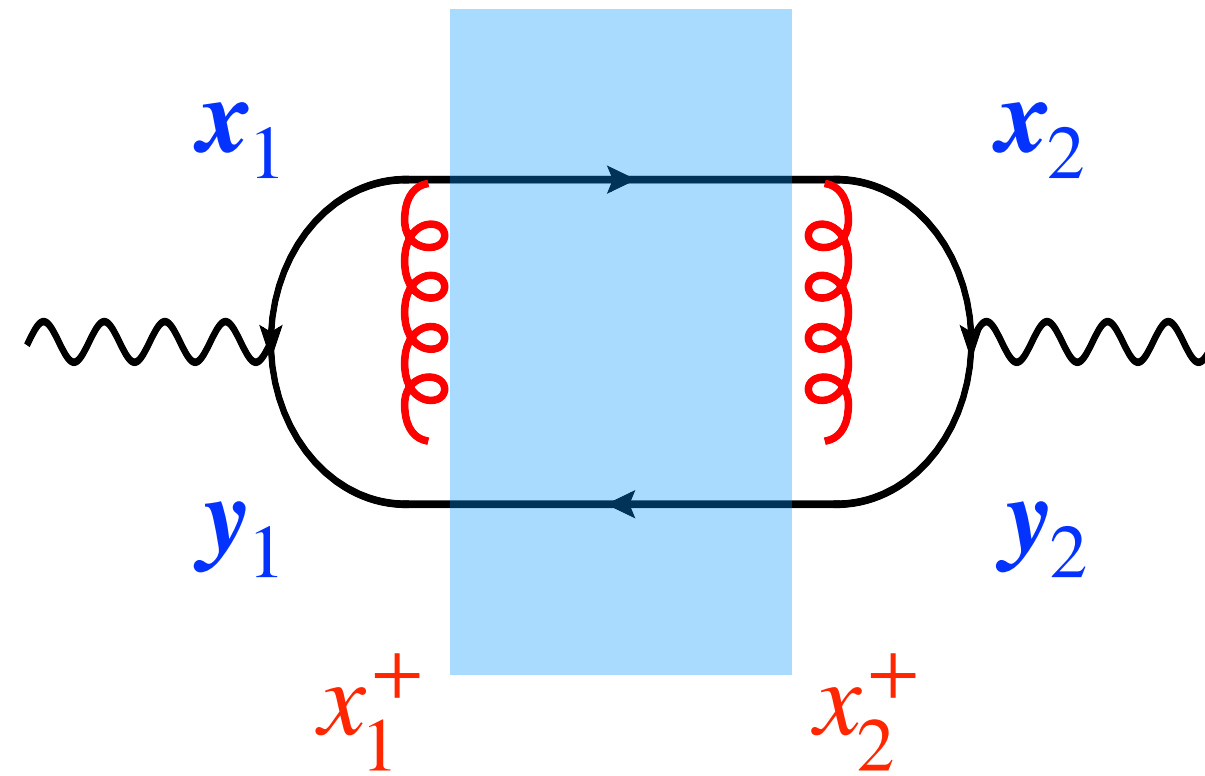
- In the shock wave approximation the times of the photon splitting into quark antiquark pair are integrated from  $0 < x^+ < +\infty$  and  $-\infty < y^+ < 0$  which yields the photon wave functions
- What are the integration limits of the vertices if one relaxes the shock wave approximation?
- What is the longitudinal extent of the shock wave?





# Inclusive DIS beyond shock wave

- **Solution:** extracting the first and last interactions provides a physical boundary to the shock wave
- we have 4 contributions
- This seems involved at first glance

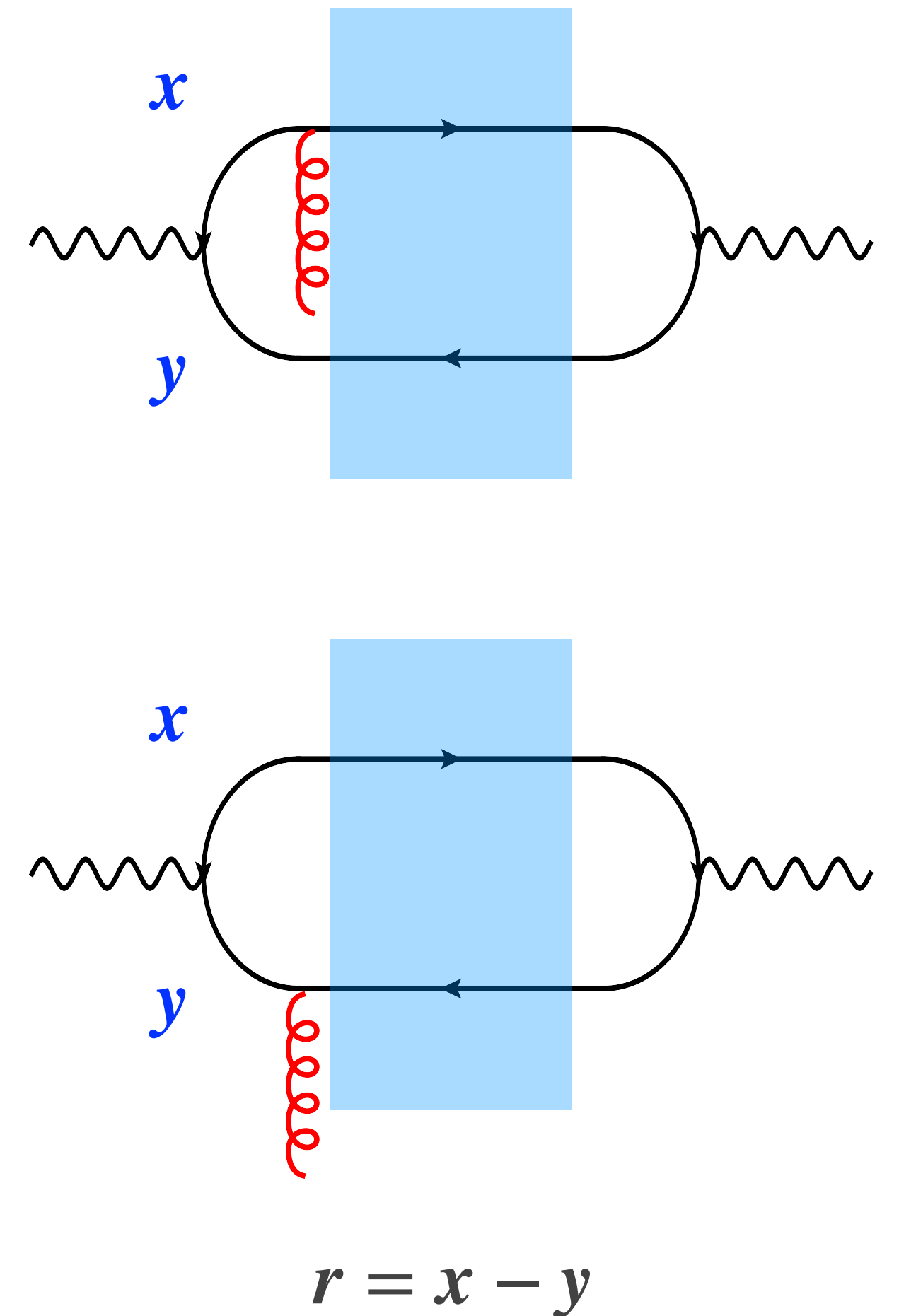


# Inclusive DIS beyond shock wave

- Consider the left side of the diagram first
- The two gluon fields combine to generate field strength tensor

$$\begin{aligned}
 A^-(\mathbf{x}) - A^-(\mathbf{y}) &= \int_0^1 ds r^i \partial^i A^-(\mathbf{y} + s\mathbf{r}) \\
 &= \int_0^1 dz^i F^{i-}(\mathbf{z})
 \end{aligned}$$

- Where  $\mathbf{z}(s) \equiv s\mathbf{x} + (1-s)\mathbf{y}$  is a straight line trajectory in the transverse plane



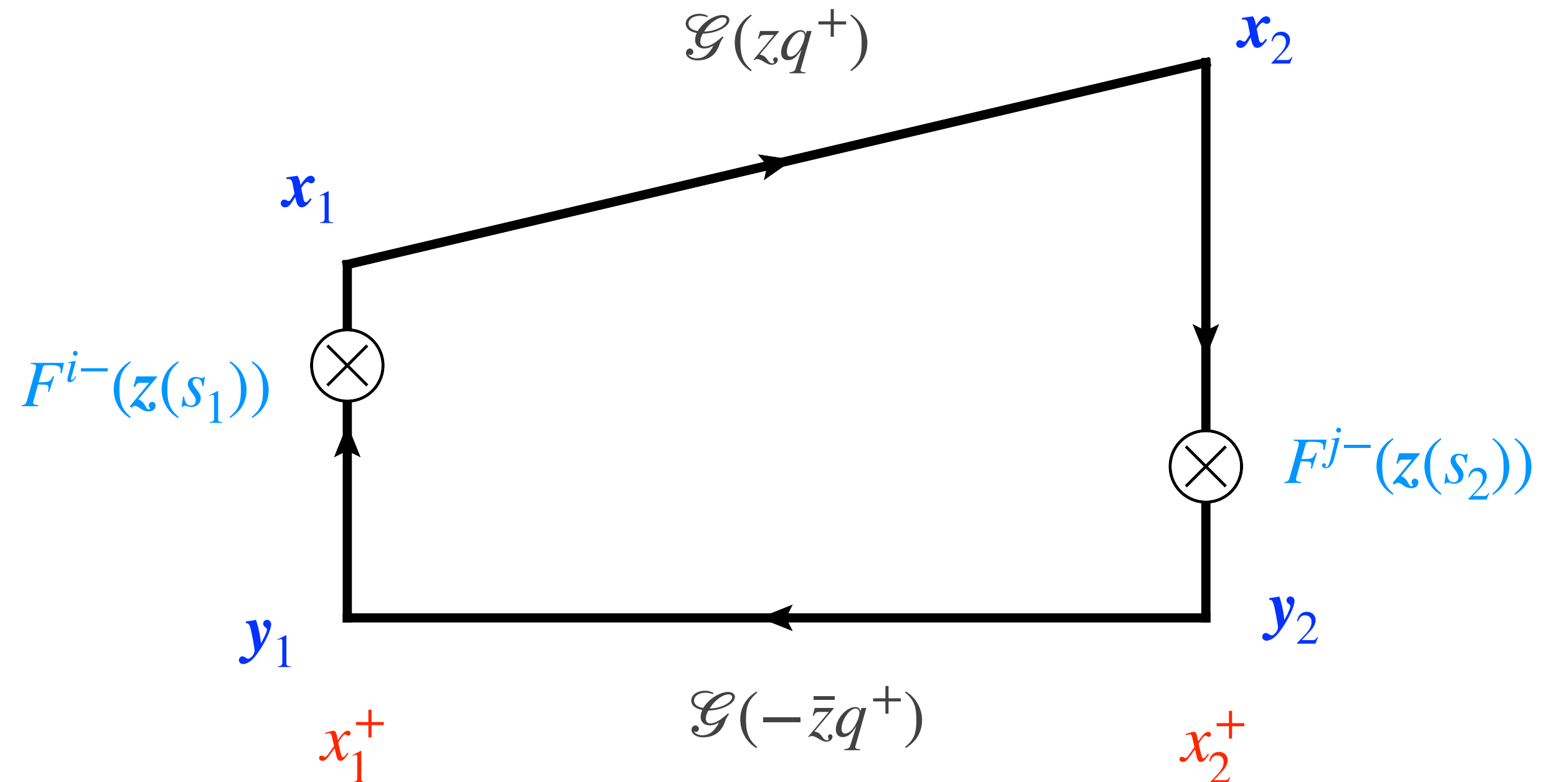
# Inclusive DIS beyond shock wave

- applying the same trick to the r.h.s. we obtain the following hadronic operator

$$O_{\text{dipole}}(\mathbf{x}_1, \mathbf{x}_2, \mathbf{y}_1, \mathbf{y}_2, x_1^+, x_2^+) \equiv \int_{\mathbf{y}_1}^{\mathbf{x}_1} dz_1^i \int_{\mathbf{y}_2}^{\mathbf{x}_2} dz_2^j$$

$$\langle P | \text{Tr} \mathcal{G}(\mathbf{y}_2, x_2^+; \mathbf{y}_1, x_1^+ | (1-z)q^+) F^{j-}(x_1^+, \mathbf{z}_1) \mathcal{G}(\mathbf{x}_1, x_1^+; \mathbf{x}_2, x_2^+ | zq^+) F^{i-}(x_2^+, \mathbf{z}_2) | P \rangle$$

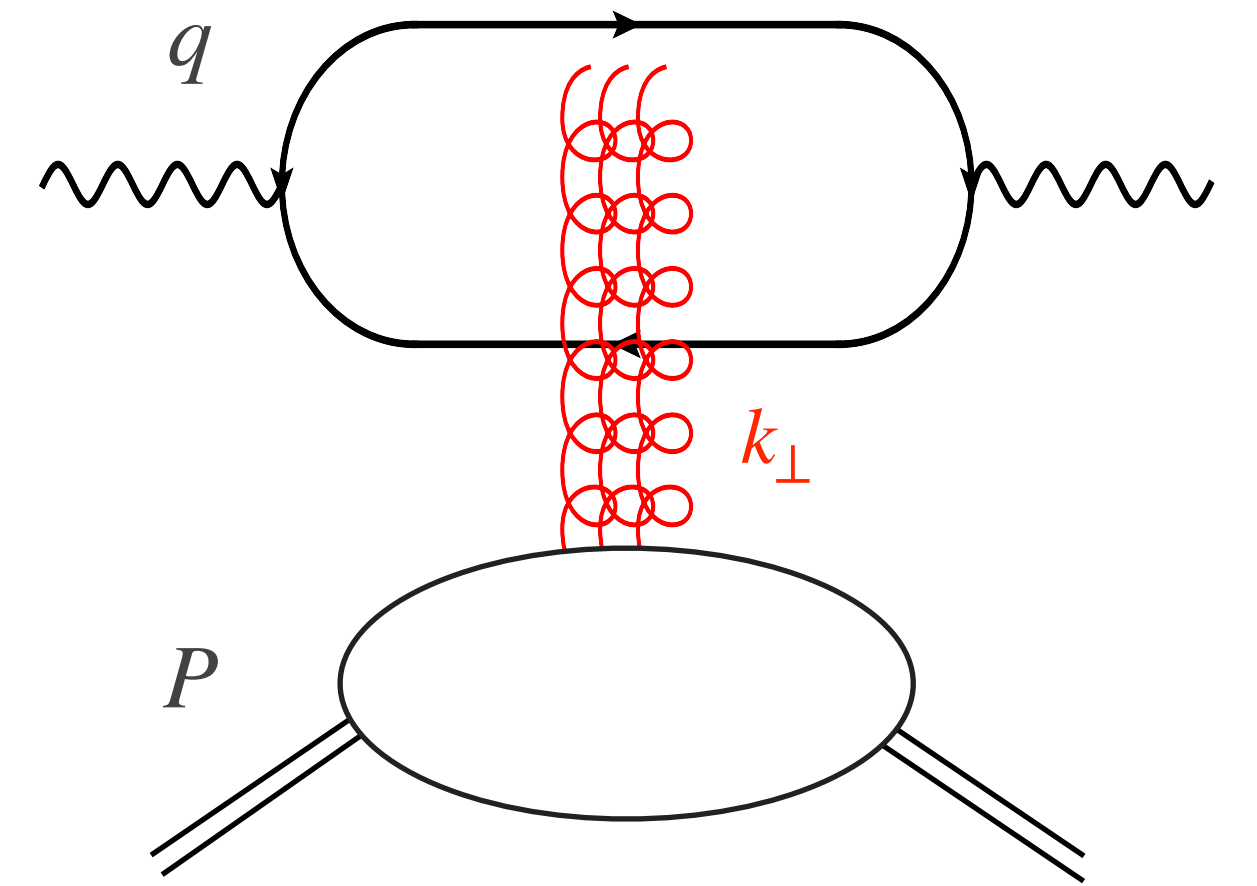
- performing a gauge rotation leads to transverse gauge links: explicit gauge invariance
- explicit dependence on + momenta of the dipole  $zq^+$  and  $(1-z)q^+$



# Inclusive DIS beyond shock wave

- DIS cross-section takes now a form similar to that of the shock wave. The wave functions are identical

$$\sigma(x_{Bj}, Q^2) \sim e^2 \int_0^1 dz P(z) \int_{r,b} d\mathbf{r} |\varphi(z(1-z)|\mathbf{r}|^2 Q^2)|^2 \langle \text{Tr} U(\mathbf{r}) U^\dagger(0) \rangle_Y$$



$$\sigma(x_{Bj}, Q^2) \sim e^2 \int_0^1 dz P(z) \int_{r_1, r_2, b_1, b_2} \varphi(z(1-z)|\mathbf{r}_1|^2 Q^2) \varphi^*(z(1-z)|\mathbf{r}_2|^2 Q^2) \times e^{i x_{Bj} P^-(x_2^+ - x_1^+)} \langle P | O_{\text{dipole}}(\mathbf{r}_1, \mathbf{r}_2, \mathbf{b}_1, \mathbf{b}_2, x_1^+, x_2^+ | z) | P \rangle$$

# Inclusive DIS beyond shock wave

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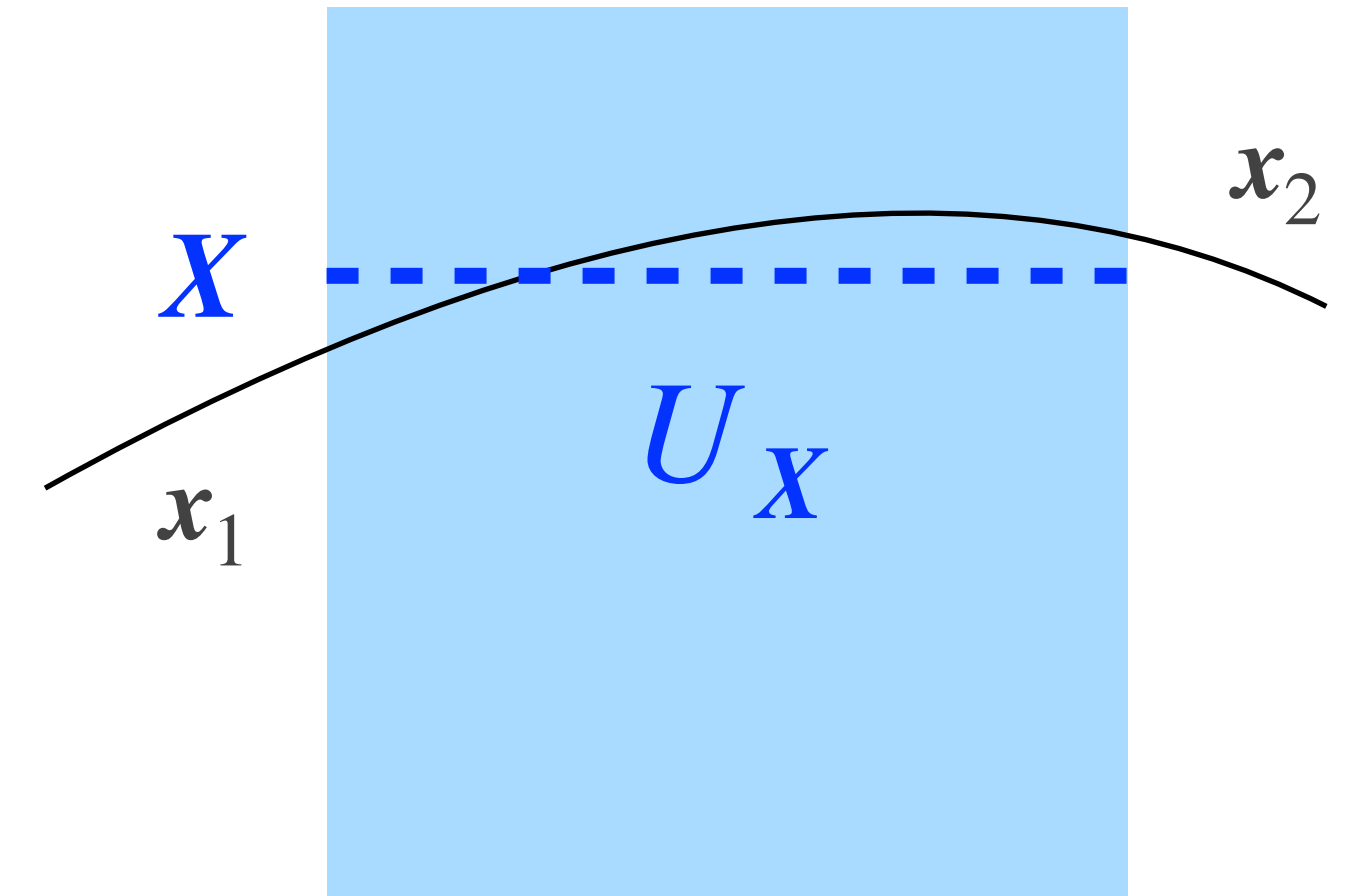
- We have constructed a gauge invariant hadronic operator that has explicit dependence on longitudinal variables
- The hard matrix element is composed of the same wave functions as in shock wave albeit non-local in transverse position space: dipole transverse size a  $x_1^+$  and  $x_2^+$  are not equal  $r_1 \neq r_2$
- [Bialas, Navlet and Peschanski \(2000\)](#) noticed that the dipole model (with locality in transverse space) is inconsistent with x dependence

# **A Novel Unintegrated Gluon Distribution**

# Unintegrated Gluon Distribution

- Now we apply the third working assumption, that is the (modified) eikonal propagation

$$\mathcal{G}_{p^+}(x^+, \mathbf{x}_2; y^+, \mathbf{x}_1) = \mathcal{G}_0(\mathbf{x}_2 - \mathbf{x}_1, x_2^+ - y_1^+) U_X(x_2^+, x_1^+) + \dots$$



- One may Fourier transform w.r.t.  $\mathbf{u} = \mathbf{x}_2 - \mathbf{x}_1$

$$\mathcal{G}_{p^+}(x_2, x_1^+, \mathbf{X}; \ell) = e^{i \frac{\ell^2}{2zq^+} \Delta x^+} U_X(x_2^+, x_1^+) + \dots$$

- Note the factorization of the phase that encodes the dependence on the longitudinal momentum
- $\ell$  is the average transverse momentum of the quark

# Factorization formula for DIS at arbitrary $x$

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- Combining all three phases we obtain

$$ik^- \Delta x^+ \equiv i \frac{\ell^2 + z\bar{z}Q^2}{2z\bar{z}q^+} \Delta x^+$$

- This is nothing but Feynman  $x$  that we encountered when deriving the DGLAP limit

$$x_F \equiv \frac{\ell^2 + z\bar{z}Q^2}{2z\bar{z}s}$$

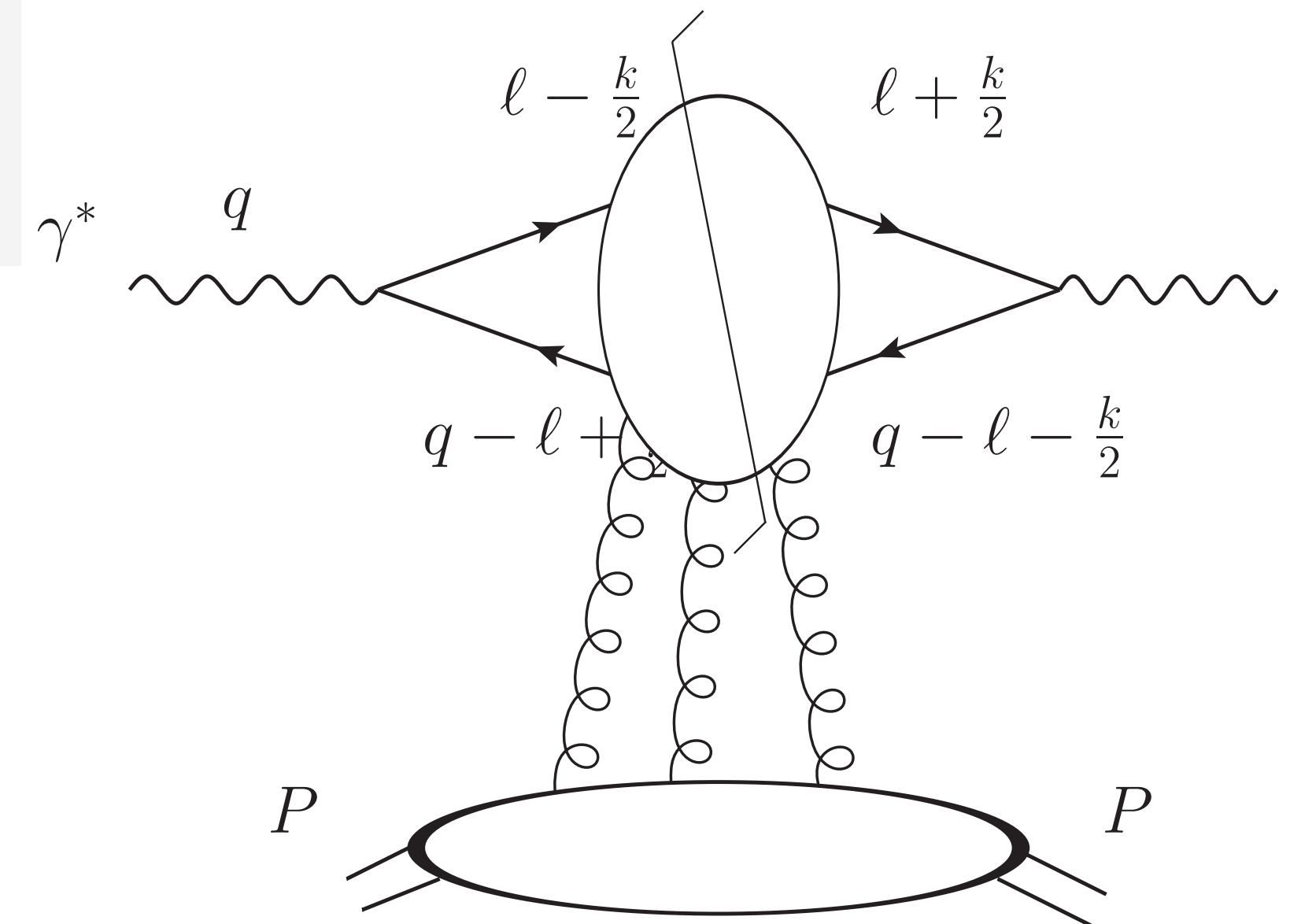


# Factorization formula for DIS at arbitrary $x$

- After integration over the factorized free propagators that lead to the Feynman  $x$  phase, we obtain the factorization formula (for the transverse photon cross-section), in momentum space,

$$\sigma(x_{Bj}, Q^2) \sim e^2 \int_0^1 dz P(z) \int_0^1 dx \int_{\ell, k} \partial^i \varphi \left( \ell - \frac{k}{2} \right) \partial^j \varphi^* \left( \ell + \frac{k}{2} \right) \delta \left( x - x_{Bj} - \frac{\ell^2}{2z\bar{z}q^+} \right) \times x G^{ij}(x, k) + O(k_{\perp}^2/s)$$

- $\varphi(\ell)$  is the Fourier transform of the photon wave function (shock wave)
- The **delta function** relates  $x$  in the gluon distribution to  $x_{Bj}$



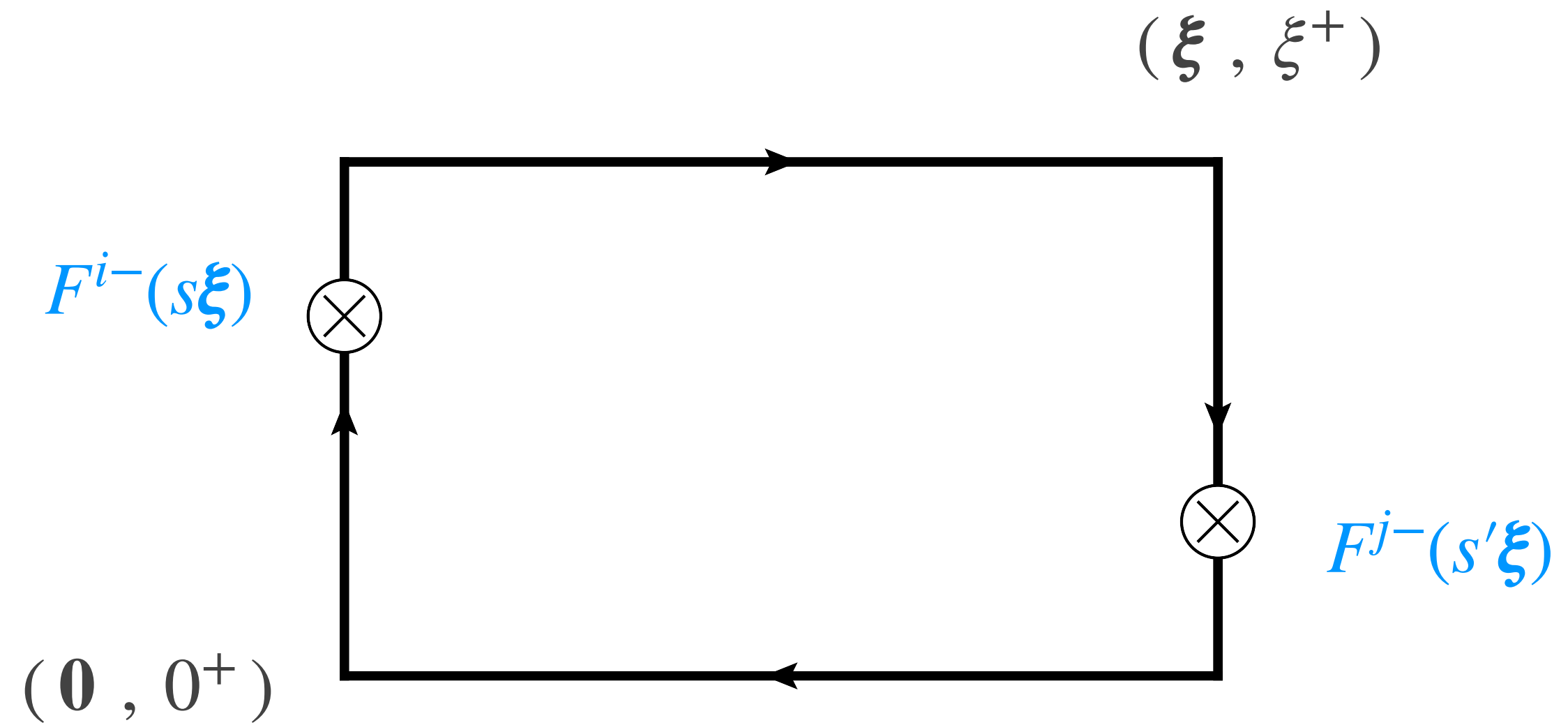
# Factorization formula for DIS at arbitrary $x$

- The unintegrated gluon distribution  $xG^{ij}(x, \mathbf{k})$  writes

$$xG^{ij}(x, k_{\perp}) \equiv 2 \int \frac{d\xi^+ d\xi}{(2\pi)^3 P^-} e^{ixP^- \xi^+ - ik \cdot \xi} \langle P | \text{Tr} [0, \xi^+]_{\xi} F^{j-}(\xi^+, s'\xi) [\xi^+, 0]_0 F^{i-}(0, s\xi) | P \rangle$$

- integrating over  $k_{\perp}$  yields  $\xi_{\perp} = 0$  and we recover the gluon PDF
- at small  $x$  we recover shock wave

$$\xi^i \xi^j G^{ij}(x=0, \xi) \rightarrow \langle P | \text{Tr} U_{\xi} U_0^{\dagger} | P \rangle$$



# **Summar and Outlook**

# Summary and outlook

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- We revisited the shock wave approximation in high energy scattering by performing a gradient expansion around the classical trajectory of partons
- The leading power accounts for both small and moderate  $x$  limit
- We have calculated in this framework gluon induced DIS. We have obtained in particular a new factorization formula involving a novel unintegrated gluon distribution
- **Outlook:** quantum evolution, application to other observables such as DVCS
- Potential probe of gluon saturation on the lattice