Measurement of the nuclear modification factor R_{AA} with ALICE

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March 24, 2017

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1 Physics Motivation

1.1 The ALICE Detector System

ALICE (A Large Ion Collider Experiment) is one of the four large experiments at the CERN Large Hadron Collider. ALICE has been designed to study heavy-ion collisions. It also investigates proton-proton (pp) collisions, which primarily provide reference data for the heavy-ion program but, in addition, allow for a number of genuine proton-proton physics studies.

The ALICE detector has been designed to cope with the highest particle multiplicities anticipated for collisions of lead nuclei at the extreme energies of the LHC. It is composed out of different subdetectors. In the Central Barrel these are the Inner Tracking System (ITS), consisting out of three high resolution silicon detectors systems featuring two layers each, the Time Projection Chamber (TPC), the Transition Radiation Detector (TRD), the Time Of Flight detector (TOF), the High Momentum Particle Identification Detector (HMPID), two electomagnetic calorimeters EMCal and PHOS, and ACCORDE, a dedicated cosmic ray detector. In the following analysis mainly the TPC and to some extent the ITS will be used.

1.2 Nuclear Modification Factor R_{AA}

In the year 2010, data from the first heavy-ion collisions at the LHC have been recorded by the experiments. The ALICE experiment, which is well suited for the measurement of the properties of particles in high particle density environments, has measured the nuclear modification factor R_{AA} for unidentified charged particles. R_{AA} is a measure for the difference in particle production in pp and nucleus-nucleus collisions, taking into account the different collision geometries. R_{AA} is defined as:

$$R_{AA} = \frac{Y(PbPb)}{\langle N_{coll} \rangle Y(pp)} \tag{1}$$

where Y(PbPb) and Y(pp) are the yield (or number of particles per event) in PbPb and pp collisions, respectively, and $\langle N_{coll} \rangle$ is the average number of so-called binary nucleon-nucleon collisions, which have taken place in the collision of two lead ions. Since each lead nucleus consists of 208 nucleons, i.e. protons and neutrons, it is clear that a typical Pb-Pb collisions can be seen as a superposition of many pp collisions. $\langle N_{coll} \rangle$, which can be determined in the experiment, measures how many pp collisions should be equivalent on average to one Pb-Pb collision.

If the nuclear modification factor is equal to one, the production of particles in one Pb-Pb collision on average is the same as in $\langle N_{coll} \rangle$ independent pp collisions. Naively, this could be interpreted such that the physics of pp and Pb-Pb collisions is the same.

1.3 Centrality

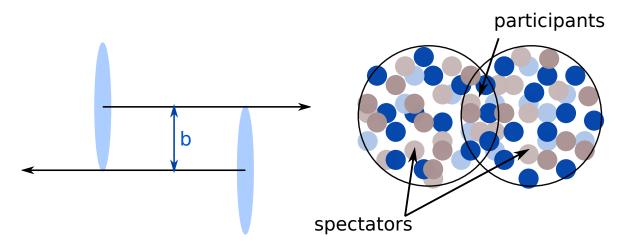


Figure 1: Illustration of two colliding atomic nuclei, indicating the impact parameter b (left), as well as the the participating nucleons and the spectators (right).

Nuclei of lead atoms are large compared to protons. This results in the fact that not all Pb-Pb collisions are the same in terms of the collision geometry. The parameter which controls the geometry in the first place is the so-called impact parameter b, which is the distance of the centers of the two colliding Pb nuclei in the

transverse direction as indicated in the left panel of Fig. 1. A collision with small impact parameter b (which can be as small as zero) is called a central collision, while more grazing collisions with large b (which can be as large as two times the radius of the colliding nuclei) is called a peripheral collision. In general, the energy density reached in nucleus-nucleus collisions is larger in central collisions than in perpiheral collisions. If the energy density becomes large enough a new state of matter, the quark gluon plasma (QGP) is created. In a QGP, the matter does not consist of protons and neutrons any more but the relevant particles that determine the properties of this phase of matter are the quarks and gluons themselves.

In order to be able to study this phase transition from ordinary nuclear matter to the QGP one first has to be able to distinguish central and peripheral collisions from each other, i.e. one has to measure the collision centrality on an event by event basis. How can this be done? Ideally one would like to measure directly the impact parameter b but that, unfortunately, is not possible.

A quantity that is related to the collision centrality and which can be measured is the number of particles produced in a collision. In a central collision essentially all neutrons and protons in the lead nuclei collide with each other at least ones. They are all so-called participants. Many collisions of participating protons and nucleons take place and, consequently, a lot of particles are produced in central Pb-Pb collisions. In contrast, in more peripheral collisions there is a number of protons and neutrons in the colliding lead nuclei which do not fly through the collision zone and, consequently, do not collide with another proton and neutron. These are the so-called spectators. Obviously, in a peripheral Pb-Pb collision less collisions of individual protons and neutrons take place than in a central Pb-Pb collision and, therefore, less particles are produced. In summary, the number of produced particles is a good measure for the centrality of a collision. The number of participating nucleons N_{part} and the number of proton-proton like binary nucleon-nucleon collisions N_{coll} they suffer can be modeled in a so-called Glauber calculation. Without going into any details, one can say that, with the help of the Glauber model, the measured number of produced particles with various detectors in the ALICE setup can be translated into a measure of the centrality of each individual Pb-Pb collision.

With ALICE it is possible to measure the number of produced particles and, via that, the event centrality in a number of ways: via the multiplicities measured in the SPD, the VZERO, or the TPC detectors. The correlation of the VZERO amplitude, which is a measure of the number of charged particles hitting the VZERO detectors, and the TPC track multiplicity, which is the number of tracks reconstructed in one event in the TPC, is shown in the upper panel of Fig. 2. Not surprisingly, these quantities are nicely correlated.

For the present analysis the centrality measurement will be taken from the VZERO amplitude. The recorded Pb-Pb collisions are grouped into so-called centrality classes, which are defined by a minimum and a maximum percentile of the VZERO amplitude distribution. For example, the centrality class 0-10% contains those 10% of all events which have the largest VZERO amplitudes and, therefore, are the most central events. The centrality class 30-40% also contains 10% of all the events, but 30% of all events have larger VZERO amplitudes (they are more central) and 60% of all events have smaller VZERO amplitudes (they are more peripheral).

The lower panel of Fig. 2 shows the distributions of the number of charged particle tracks recorded in all collisions independent of centrality, which is called the minimum bias multiplicity distribution. In addition, the multiplicity distributions are shown for the most central, a mid-central, and a peripheral centrality class selected as described above. As expected, on average events contain more charged particle tracks if they are more central collisions.

For each given centrality class the corresponding number of participating nucleons N_{part} and the number of binary collisions N_{coll} can be determined using a Glauber model calculation as mentioned above.

1.4 R_{AA} as function of the transverse momentum

For all ecentrality classes the nuclear modification factor R_{AA} can be measured as a function of the transverse momentum p_T of charged particles. p_T is the momentum component of the particle in the xy-plane perpendicular to the beam axis z. It can be calculated:

$$p_T = \sqrt{p_x^2 + p_y^2}$$

It is an interesting question whether R_{AA} depends on the transverse momentum of a particle. Charged particle with large p_T typically originate from violent scattering processes of quarks or gluons in the incoming nuclei (called hard processes). These quarks or gluons propagate through the hot and dense medium produced in the collision and they interact with this medium. This interaction, in general, will lead to energy loss of the fast moving quark or gluon and that could leave its footprint on R_{AA} .

Clearly, one would expect that for the most peripheral collisions, i.e. the centrality class 70-80% in the current case, R_{AA} is close to one because a peripheral Pb-Pb collision should not be too different in terms of particle production from a pp collision. To find out what happens in more central collisions is the purpose of the current analysis.

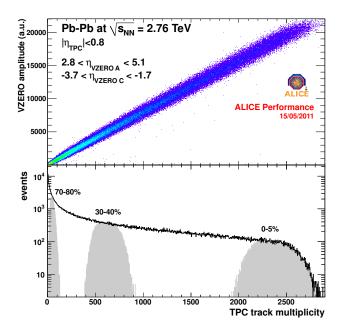


Figure 2: Correlation between the VZERO amplitude and the TPC track multiplicity measured with ALICE (upper panel). Distribution of the TPC track multiplicity for all (minimum bias) Pb-Pb collisions (histogram) and for the centrality classes 0-5%, 30-40%, and 70-80% (grey distributions) as selected by cutting on the VZERO distribution.

2 Visual Analysis

2.1 The Task

The goal of this visual analysis is to make you familar with the concepts of:

- clusters: electronic signature left by a particle traversing a detector, with additional information about time or space
- track: Path of a praticle trough the detectors ystem, reconstructed on the basis of the space and time information of individual clusters. The path of the particle is straight in an environment without additional forces (i.e. no magnetic (B) or electric fields (E)). If a charged particle is traversing a magnetic field it will be influenced by the magnetic field due to the Lorentz force and the tracks will be curved.
- primary vertex: collision vertex selected for the analysis
- sattelite collisions/pile-up vertices: not selected collisions vertices seen in the detector due to high intensity of the LHC-beam
- primary track: track originating from the selected collision vertex (for this analysis: distance of closest approach < 1 cm)
- secondary track: track not originating from the primary vertex but from a secondary decay vertex (for example strange particle decays)

Furthermore your task will be to count for the 30 pp events at center of mass energy (\sqrt{s}) = 2.76 TeV at a magnetic field of 0.5 T the number of tracks originating from the primary vertex (*multiplicity*) by clicking on each primary tracks. The tool will count for you the total number of tracks in an event and will publish it to a histogram, from which you then can read of the mean of the distribution after having analysed the 30 events. Additionally you should count the multiplicity in one peripheral, one semi-central and one central Pb-Pb event and calculate an integrated R_{AA} for these events.

For the integrated R_{AA} calculation you need to divide the number of charged particle tracks in the three Pb-Pb events by 0.6 (why?) by the number of binary collisions N_{coll} as given in Table 1.

Classification	centrality class	N_{coll}
peripheral	80 - 90 %	6.32
semicentral	20 - 40 %	438.80
central	0 - 5 %	1686.87

Table 1: Classification of the Pb-Pb events for the visual analysis and their corresponding number of binary collisions N_{coll} according to the Glauber model.

2.2 The Tool

For this purposes a software has been developed based on the ROOT (http://root.cern.ch/). This software tool can visualize the clusters in the main detectors of the central barrel (ITS, TPC, TRD and TOF) and show the reconstructed tracks which pass some general quality cuts. Furthermore, it can show you the primary vertex and the primary tracks originating from this vertex and it will help you count them. The tool can be started from a terminal in the directory MasterClass2012/Part1 with the command:

root masterclass.C

The window shown in Fig. 3 will pop up and, in addition, you will see a short version of the instructions. There are three things which you can do:

- Start the analysis.
- Select the data set which you would like to analyse (the selection field). Please ask your tutor which data set you should be taking.
- Exit finish the analysis.

After having pressed the button "Start", it will take a moment, due to compiling, until the window shown in Fig. 4 will pop up with a shorter version of the full instructions for the visual analysis.

This window is divided into two main sections: a left column with the options and a right bigger column with the event display. You can see at the top three different tabs "Viewer 1", "Multi View", and "Event Characteristics". The first two of them are event displays. "Viewer 1" allows you to see the event in 3D as a single view, while the "Multi View" already presents it to you in two projections ($r\phi$ projection: right upper corner, and rz projection: right lower corner) and in the 3D-view in the middle. In the event display you can click on anything you want and can navigate either with the mouse by holding the right mouse botton (turning the 3D-view), or by just using the arrows on your keyboard. To zoom in or out please click in the corresponding view and use the "+" or "-" keys on your keyboard. By clicking on the tracks you can count them for you multiplicity distribution, if the counter is open. In addition, several properties of the track will be displayed in the upper part of the counter. If you have clicked on a track it turns red. However, if you change something in your display settings, e.g. switching on and off the tracks it will be shown in grey/blue again.



Figure 3: Startup window for the ALICE master class.

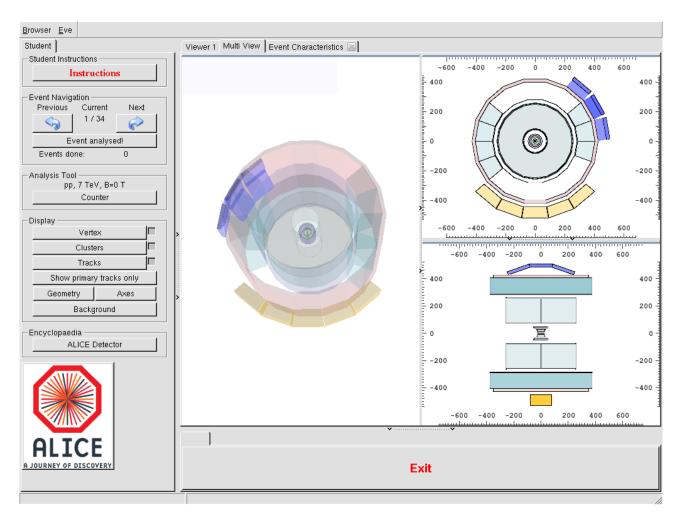


Figure 4: Main window for the visual analysis directly after start-up

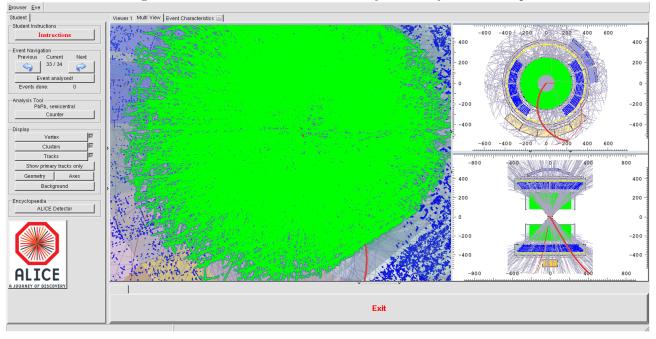


Figure 5: Pb-Pb event seen in the Master Class visualisation tool.

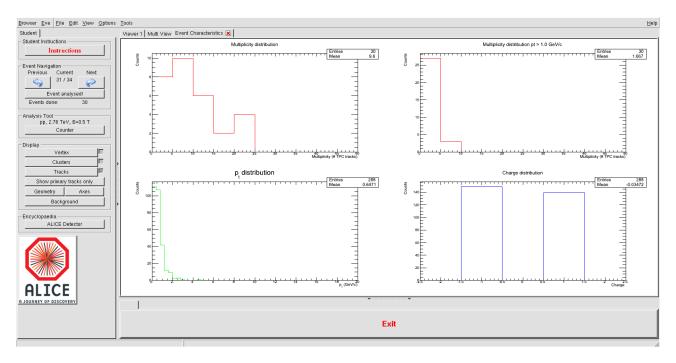


Figure 6: Histograms for the event and track characteristics for pp events at $\sqrt{s} = 2.76$ TeV.

For counting the primary tracks please select the "Show primary tracks only" button first, it will make your life much easier. In case of Pb-Pb events you should probably turn the clusters off as it will take a lot of time otherwise and you will not see anything anymore. In Fig. 5 you can see a semicentral Pb-Pb event with everything switched on. The multiplicities in the three Pb-Pb events need to be written down on the prepared sheet of paper, as they will not be stored anywhere.

In the "Event Characteristics" tab (Fig. 6) you can see four histograms. These will be filled for pp at $\sqrt{s} = 2.76$ TeV only. The left column of the main window offers the following options:

• Instructions:

This button will again display the shorter version of these instructions.

• Event navigation:

You can navigate between the different events with "next" and "previous" while the current event number will be displayed in the middle. If you click on the "Event analysed" button the multiplicity will be published to the corresponding histogram. (will be explained later) In addition, this will increase the number of analysed events in the row below the button.

• Analysis Tool:

In this part you can start the counting tool according to the event type being analysed. There are 5 different types of the events:

- 1 pp event at $\sqrt{s} = 7$ TeV with zero magnetic field
- -30 pp events at $\sqrt{s} = 2.76$ TeV with a magnetic field of B = 0.5 T
- -1 peripheral Pb-Pb event (32nd event)
- -1 semi-central Pb-Pb event $(33^{rd}$ event)
- 1 central Pb-Pb event (34th event)

Please close the previous counter if the event type changes and open a new one by clicking on the button "Counter". The two different types shown in Fig. 7 will show up according to the chosen collision conditions. For the first class of events $(B=0\ \mathrm{T})$ there exists no counting tool. In both counters some properties either of the tracks or the event in total can be displayed, like p_x, p_y, p_z, p_t ,, charge for tracks, or multiplicity for the event. The modes are slightly different for the different counters. In case of pp (2.76 TeV, B= 0.5 T) the p_T and charge will be automatically published to the histograms in the tab "Event Characteristics". The multiplicities in this case can be either published by the clicking the button "Event analysed" in the main window or by pressing "Publish to Mult Histogram". This should only be done if you are sure you counted really all primary tracks, as this is not reversable and will screw up your mean

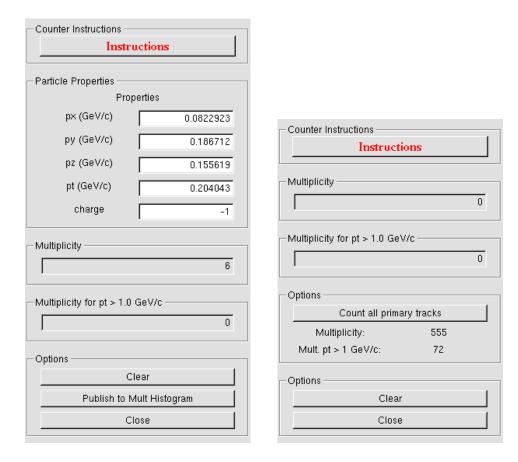


Figure 7: Counting tool for pp (left) and Pb-Pb (right) collisions.

multiplicity otherwise. The "Clear" button resets all entries to zero. However, all track properties which have already been published will remain in the histograms. For the Pb-Pb case there exists the possibilty of automatically counting the primary tracks. Please reduce the tracks to the primary tracks only before (Clicking button "Show primary tracks only" in the main window). For Pb-Pb there exists no automatic storing of the multiplicities. Therefore, please keep track of these yourself on a sheet of paper.

• Display:

This part allows you to switch on and off several features of the event display (like primary vertex - "Vertex", clusters - "Clusters", tracks - "Tracks", geometry of the detectors - "Geometry", coordinate axis - "Axis" and change the background color "Background"). Furthermore, it allows you to reduce the tracks to the tracks originating from the primary vertex by pressing "Show primary tracks only". If you press it twice it will return to the full number of good tracks in the event.

• Encyclopaedia:

In this section you can learn a little more about the ALICE detector. Furthermore, information about the individual detectors will pop up by clicking at the detector volumes in the event display. If you want to close this again just click in the window.

3 The Large Scale Analysis

3.1 The Task

In this part of the ALICE master class you will be introduced to a large scale analysis based on real Pb-Pb data. Your task will be to implement the extraction of the Pb-Pb transverse momentum spectra in a given centrality class from a prepared data sample (called a tree), which contains the centrality of the event, the track multiplicity, and the transverse momentum of each track. Furthermore, you are supposed to write a simple program which calculates the R_{CP} (what's that? ask your tutor!) and R_{AA} and plots the transverse momentum spectra, the track multiplicity, the R_{CP} and R_{AA} for different centralities in one plot.

3.2 Building the Transverse Momentum Spectra

For this part of the analysis you need to program approximately 10-15 lines of code in a prepared ROOT macro. The macro is called "AnalyseTreeForRAAStudents.C" and can be found in the folder MasterClasses2012/Part2. It can be started with the command in this directory:

```
1 root -x -q -b -l 'AnalyseTreeForRAAStudents.C++("MasterClassesTree_LHC10h_Run139036.root"," PbPb", "kFALSE", 0, 5) '
```

The options after the ROOT call ("-x -q -b -l") are some settings for running root in quiet mode and executing the macro which is following afterwards. The real function call follows. First, there is the name of the macro "AnalyseTreeForRAAStudents.C". Then the "++" stands for compiled mode and afterwards several options are given to the macro itself.

- 1 filename = "MasterClassesTree_LHC10h_Run139036.root" This is the name of the file you would like to analyse.
- 2 collision system = "PbPb"

 This is the selected collision system which you will be analysing, in your case this will always be "PbPb".
- 3 test mode = "kFALSE"

 If you set this variable to "kTRUE" the macro will be run in test mode and only 1000 events and 1000 tracks are processed. This makes the execution much faster.
- 4 start of centrality class = 0
 This variable determines the starting value of your centrality class.
- 5 end of centrality class = 5 This variable determines the end value of your centrality class. In this example the most central bin from 0 to 5% will be analysed.

The macro is structured as follows:

First there are two functions to make the plots look nicer

```
void StyleSettings()
void HistoSetMarkerAndColor( TH1* histo1 , Style_t markerStyle , Size_t markerSize , Color_t
markerColor , Color_t lineColor )
```

These two you should not modify however you should read the comments above them to get an idea how to use them. Comments in ROOT/C++ are starting with "//" or the look like this: "/* — text —-*/". Comment statements will never be executed. Afterwards the main function starts. It has the same name as the macro itself just without the ".C" in the end. The code belonging to a function is always within these brackets { }. The same is true for loops or conditional statements.

The options of the main function are already explained above. Here, just the variable names and the standard settings are given in addition.

In this main function the first task is to attach the file with the input and set the correct variable names

Afterwards these are related to the quantities in the corresponding parts of the input tree (Line 142 - 155) and the number of entries in each tree is evaluated (Line 161 - 183). Then the binning in transverse momentum is determined and the histograms are created.

```
// Definition of bins in transverse momentum pt, due to steply falling spectrum
   // and not enough statistics at high pt
   Int_t fNBinsPt = 54:
  2\,,\ \ 2.2\,,\ \ 2.4\,,\ \ 2.6\,,\ \ 2.8\,,\ \ 3\,,\ \ 3.2\,,\ \ 3.4\,,\ \ 3.6\,,\ \ 3.8\,,
                   4, 4.5, 5, 5.5, 6, 6.5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15};
194
196
   // Defintion of histograms:
     * to be filled with trackpt and number of charged tracks in the TPC (TH1*)
     * correlation between centrality an nTracks TPC (TH2F)
204
  TH1D *htrackPt = new TH1D("htrackPt","track pt",fNBinsPt,fBinsPt);
  TH1F *hNTPC = new TH1F("hNTPC", "Number of TPC tracks ",200,0,2000);
  TH2F *hNTPCvsCent = new TH2F("hNTPCvsCent", "Number of TPC tracks
                                                                     ,200,0,2000,100,0,100);
   // Definition of correction histogram in order to normalise for the binwidth in
  THID* fDeltaPt = new THID("deltaPt","",fNBinsPt,fBinsPt);
   for(Int_t iPt=1;iPt < fNBinsPt+1;iPt++){
     fDeltaPt->SetBinContent(iPt,fBinsPt[iPt]-fBinsPt[iPt-1]);
     fDeltaPt->SetBinError(iPt,0);
```

After that, the event quantities are read from the event tree and filled in the corresponding histograms. To accomplish that a loop over all entries in this tree has to be created (line 230) and for each event one has to check whether it belongs to the correct centrality class (line 232). The lines 233 and 234 fill the one and two dimensional histograms for the number of tracks (versus centrality).

```
* Reading the entries form the event tree (extract nTracksTPC) and filling
220
          it in the multiplicity histograms (hNTPC, hNTPCvsCent)
       * Distinction between PbPb and pp as for PbPb you need to fill them with
          restriction in centrality
         nEntriesPerCent will give you the normalization value for the different
           centralities
     ULong_t nEntriesPerCent= 0:
     ULong64_t nbytes2 = 0;
     for (ULong_t i=0; i<nEntriesEvent; i++) {</pre>
       nbytes2 += Event->GetEvent(i);
       if (eventCentrality > startCentrality && eventCentrality < endCentrality) {
         hNTPC->Fill(eventMult);
         hNTPCvsCent->Fill(eventMult, eventCentrality);
         nEntriesPerCent++;
236
          give an output for every 10Mio events processed to see that is working
       if (i\%10000000 = 0) 
238
         cout << i/10000000 << " * 10^7 events have been processed" << endl;
     }
```

A similar loop has to be created for the track tree as the "/// To do: " in line 254 indicates. Afterwards the filled histograms need to be plotted and saved. For the plotting an example is given in lines 269 - 300, and a similar plot should be produced for the transverse momentum as indicated in line 312. Please don't forget

to uncomment the lines 315-319. Otherwise the scaling will not be done correctly. Also, line 341 needs to be uncommented to save the histogram in a file.

3.3 Building the R_{AA} and R_{CP}

For this part of the analysis you need to program approximately the same amount of code as in the exercise before. Again a ROOT macro gives you a starting point. The macro is called "BuildRAAStudents.C" and can be found in the same directory as the previous one. It can be started by running the following command in this directory:

```
1 root -x -q -b -l 'BuildRAAStudents.C++("RAABaseOutput.root")'
```

As already described in the previous section, the first commands are just some ROOT settings. The macro name follows, which should be executed in compiled mode as the "++" indicates. The only option which you can hand over is the file name of the input file for the Pb-Pb results, which were produced in the previous exercise. This file will contain the results for different centralities. You just need to find out how to read them from the file.

The first part in the macro "BuildRAAStudents.C" contains again the functions for the styling of the plots. Then follows the main-routine:

```
void BuildRAAStudents(TString filename = "RAABaseOutput.root")
```

In this function the first few lines are for general setting. Then follows the definition of the variable for the number of collisions in each centrality, $nColl_-0_-5$, where the first number indicates the start centrality and the second one the end of the centrality bin (lines 111-123).

Afterwards the Pb-Pb and pp spectra are read from the corresponding files and scaled to the number of binary collisions. Here you need to add the other centrality classes as indicated in line 132 and 140. The pp spectrum gives you the baseline for the R_{AA} .

```
//Attaching & reading the input-file
     TFile fileInput (filename.Data());
128
            reading the number of TPC tracks for pp events & 0-5% PbPb events_
     TH1D *hNTracksTPCPbPb_0_5 =
                                       (TH1D*) fileInput.Get(Form("nTracksTPC_PbPb_%i-%i",0,5));
130
                                         (TH1D*) \ file Input. \ Get (Form("nTracksTPC\_PbPb\_\%i-\%i", 70,80));
     TH1D *hNTracksTPCPbPb\_70\_80 =
     /// To do: Do the same for the other centralities
     //____reading the pt-spectrum for 0-5\% & 70-80\% PbPb events, scaling it_____
       ____by corresponding number of Collisions (nColl)___
     THID *hTrackPtPbPb_0_5 = (THID*) fileInput. Get(Form("trackPt_PbPb_%i-%i",0,5));
     hTrackPtPbPb\_0\_5->Scale\left(1./nColl\_0\_5\right);
     TH1D *hTrackPtPbPb_70_80 =
                                      (THID*) fileInput.Get(Form("trackPt_PbPb_%i-%i",70,80));
138
     hTrackPtPbPb_70_80 \rightarrow Scale(1./nColl_70_80);
     /// To do: Do the same for the other centralities
140
       Attaching and Reading pp-reference file
144
                              new TFile("PP_2760GeV_BaseLine.root");
     TFile* fileInputPP =
     TH1F *hNTracksTPCpp =
                                 (TH1F*) fileInputPP ->Get("nTracksTPC_pp");
146
                              (TH1D*) fileInputPP->Get("trackPt_pp");
     TH1D* hTrackPtpp =
```

Then the R_{CP} is calculated from the most central (0-5%) and the most peripheral bin (70-80%). Therefore, you need to divide the most central spectrum scaled with N_{coll} by the most peripheral spectrum scaled with the corresponding N_{coll} . As seen in lines 149 ff, this should be done in a similar manner for the other centralities and the R_{AA} where the pp reference is used as divisor ("To do" in line 161).

The lines 166 to the end then just contain the routines for plotting as already explained in the previous section. Here, you should add the other centralities as well as the plot for the R_{AA} . Don't forget to put the axis labels as well as the legends. An example for the legend is given in line 189ff.