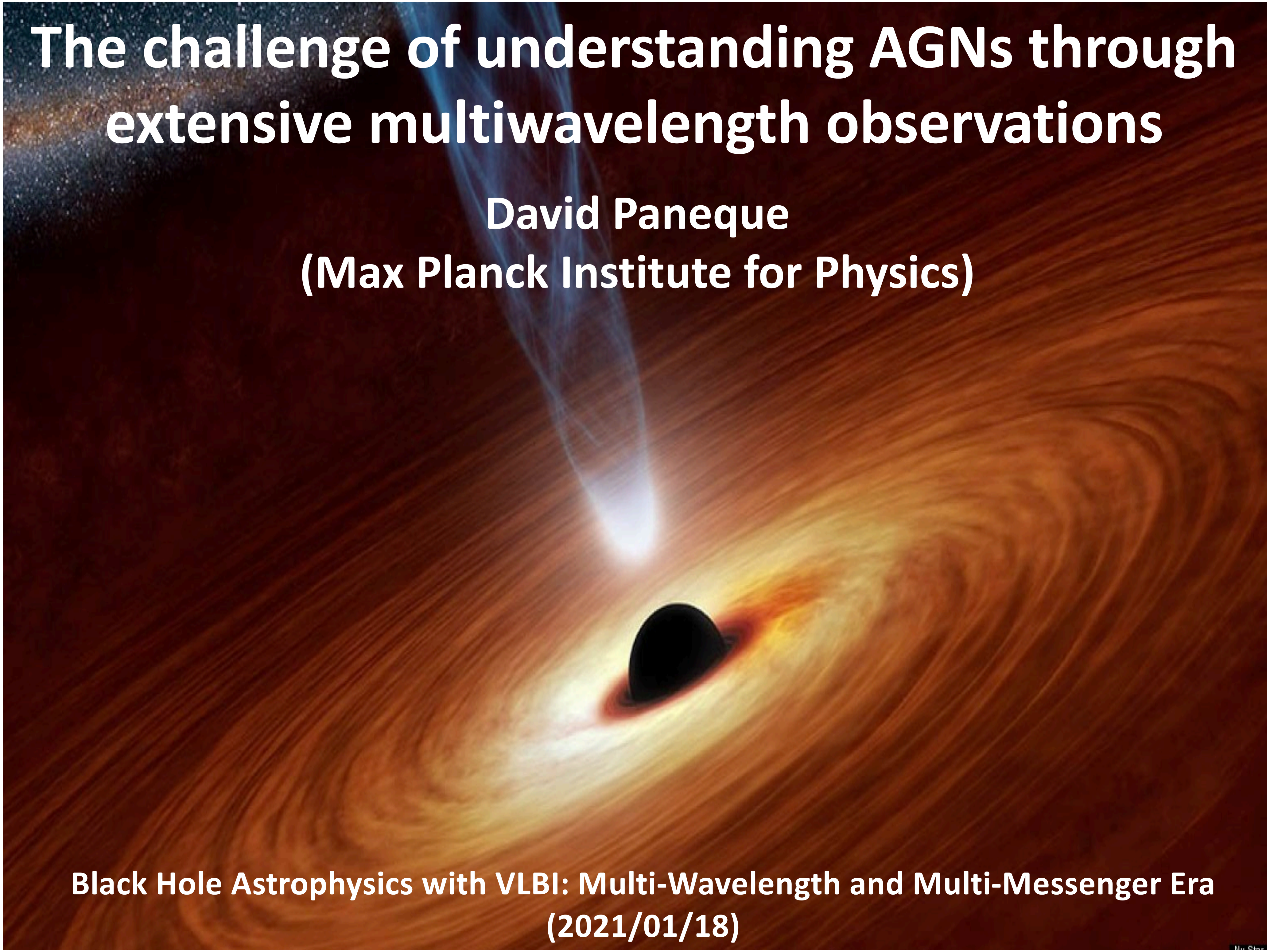
The challenge of understanding AGNs through extensive multiwavelength observations

David Paneque
(Max Planck Institute for Physics)



Black Hole Astrophysics with VLBI: Multi-Wavelength and Multi-Messenger Era
(2021/01/18)

The challenge of understanding AGNs through extensive multiwavelength observations

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with the help of many people:
A. Babić, M. Baloković, B. Banerjee, P. Becerra, D. Dorner, L. Fortson, T. Hassan, M. Giroletti, G. Hughes, A. Lahtenmaki, P. Majumdar, M. Perri, K. Shahinyan, A. Shukla, T. Terzić, A. Tramacere, C. Wendel, S. Jorstad, V. Larionov, G. Madejski, F. Verrecchia, M. Villata, P. Smith, J. Finke, M. Petropoulou …

1- Observational challenges when studying AGNs
- → Advances in instrumentation for high-energy multi-messenger astronomy

2- Extensive MW campaigns on Mrk421 and Mrk501
- → A few recent highlight results
  - → *Peculiar behaviors (during low and high activity)*

3 – Conclusions and outlook

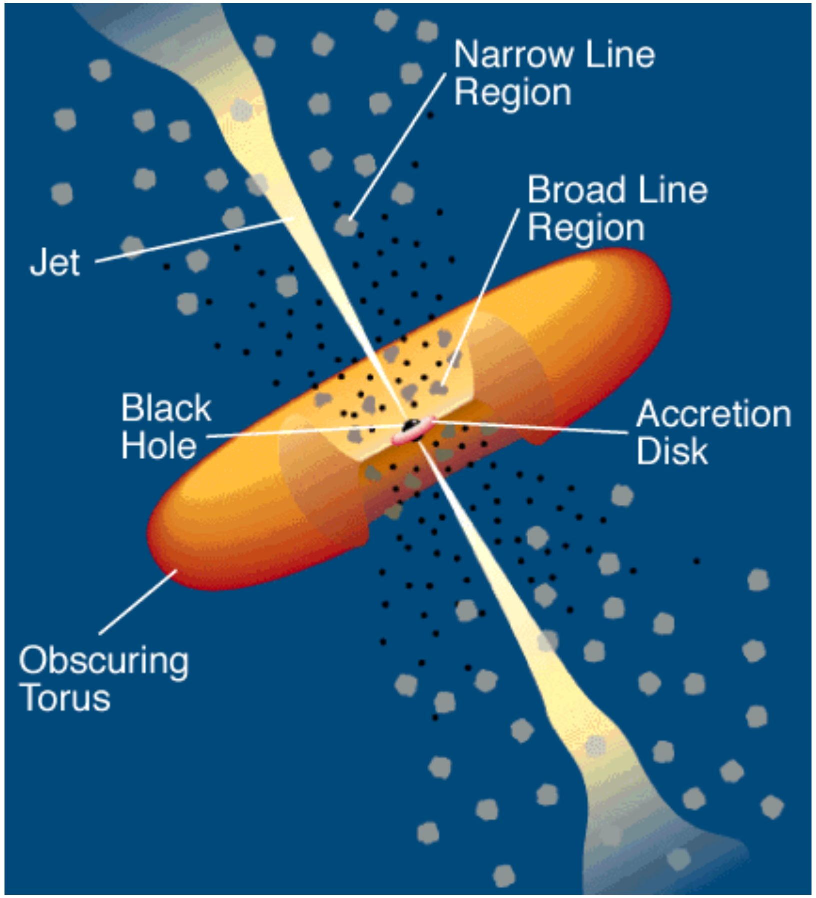
1- Observational challenges when studying AGNs

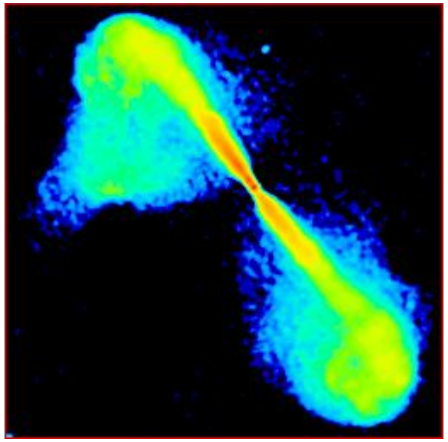
→ Advances in instrumentation for high-energy multi-messenger astronomy

AGNs are powerful particle accelrators

Pictorial description of an AGN

Image Credit: C.M.Urry & P. Padovani





AGN jets are collimated streams of plasma forming **<u>the largest structures in the Universe</u>**, reaching even Mpc scales.

Jets are produced by rapidly rotating supermassive (~ 10^6-10^9 $M_\odot$) black holes surrounded by magnetized accretion disks. Thus, jets **<u>are direct probes of black hole physics</u>**.

Jets are **<u>extremely efficient accelerators of particles</u>** to ultrarelativistic energies. Known to produce electrons with 10^{14} eV energies, and claimed to accelerate protons up to the highest observed energies $\geq 10^{20}$ eV

AGNs are powerful particle accelrators

AGNs (→ Jets) are extremely interesting cosmic sources

Although widely studied during the last half century at different frequencies (from low-frequency radio up to very high γ-ray photon energies) they are still superficially understood objects.

Many key questions regarding extragalactic jets remain open:

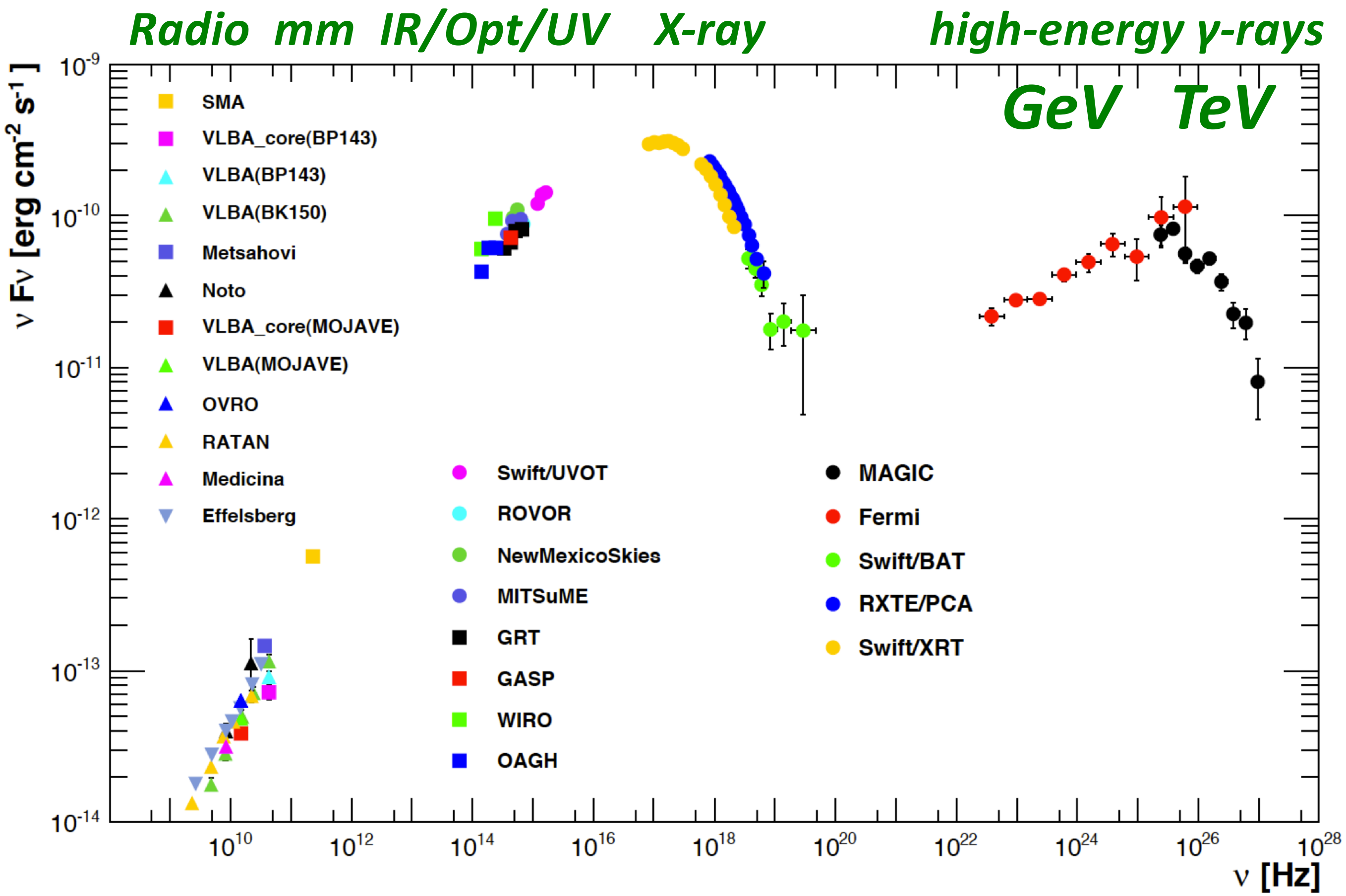
- Jet composition *(B and ultrarelativistic e-e+; something else?)*
- Jet magnetic field *(how strong? what is its structure?)*
- Jet launching *(rotating SMBHs vs accretion disks)*
- Jet evolution and energetics *(kinetic power, lifetimes, „feedback")*
- Particle acceleration *(shocks? turbulence? reconnection?)*
- What produces variability on various timescales (years down to minutes)

Challenges when studying AGNs

AGNs (→ blazars) emit radiation over a large energy range

Emission at different energies could be due to same particle population

→ *Need many instruments to fully characterize emission in these objects*



Spectral energy distribution (SED) of the Blazar Mrk 421

Abdo et al 2011, ApJ 736, 131

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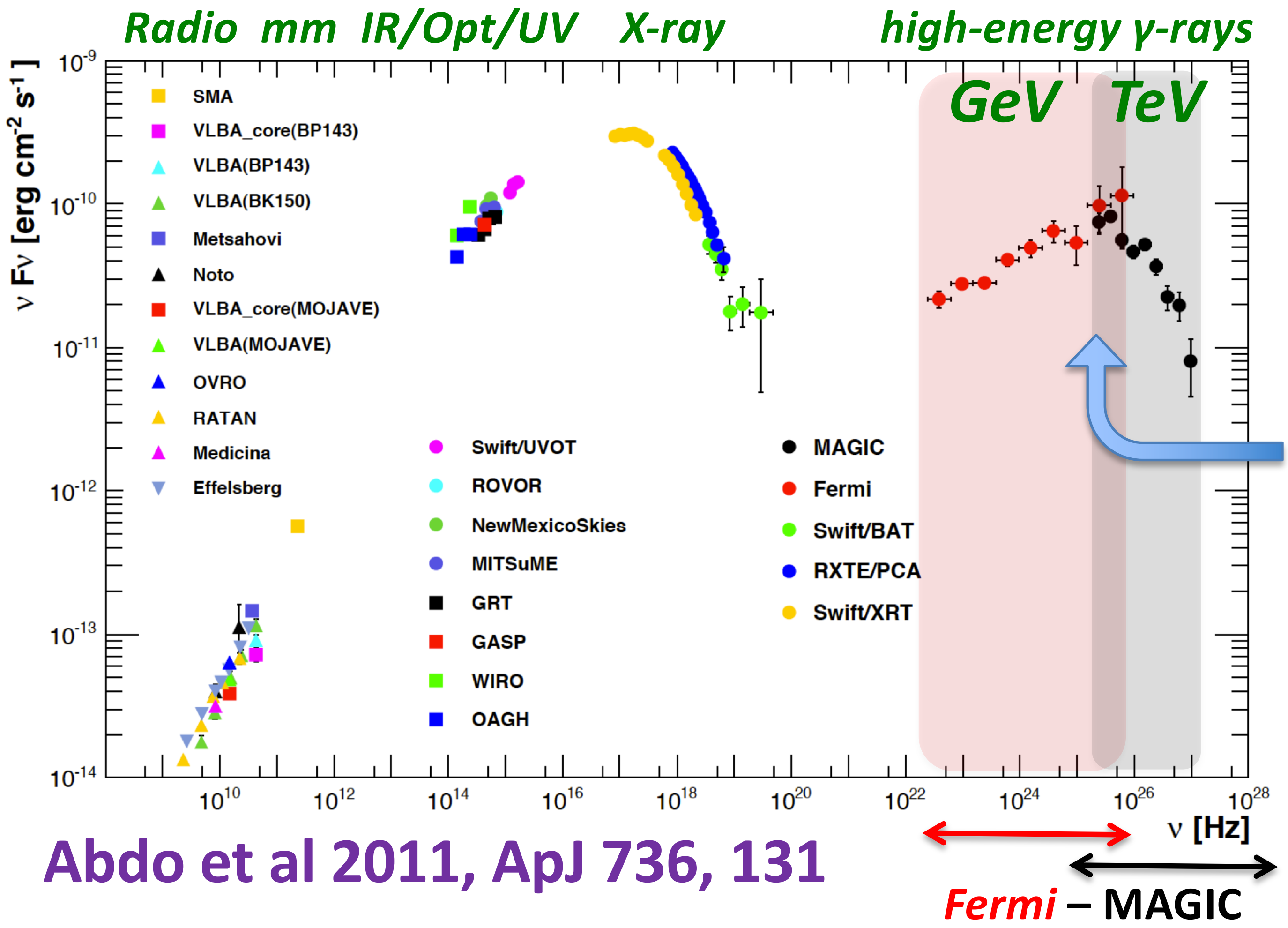


Abdo et al 2011, ApJ 736, 131

Spectral energy distribution (SED) of the Blazar Mrk 421

Gamma-ray bump of many sources could only be measured recently, with *Fermi*-LAT + modern IACTs like HESS/MAGIC/VERITAS

→ *Crucial for the theoretical modeling of the broadband emission*

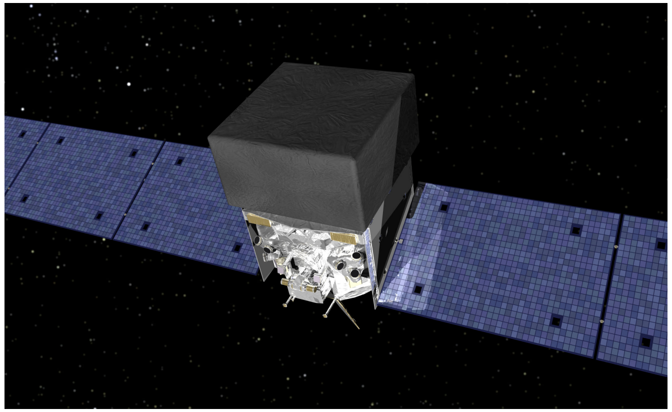
Instrumentation for gamma-ray astronomy

The last 10-15 years have seen large improvement in gamma-ray instrumentation

Pair production telescopes

e.g. EGRET, AGILE, *Fermi*

Direct detection of gamma



Space-based

Large duty cycle (~85%)

Large field of view (20-60 deg)

Excellent bkg rejection

Small effective areas (~m^2)

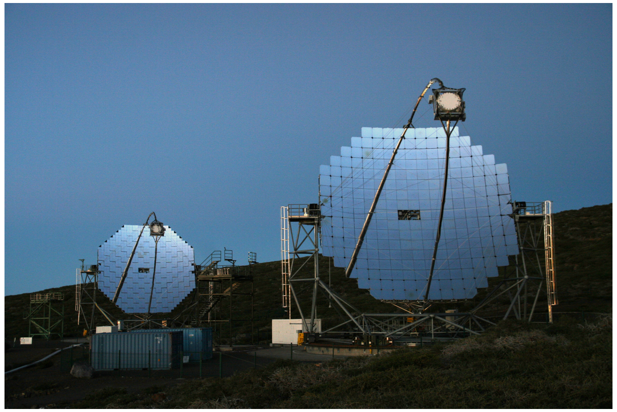
Energy range ~0.02 – 300 GeV

Good sensitivity

Imaging Atmospheric Cherenkov Telescopes (IACTs)

e.g. HESS, MAGIC, VERITAS

Indirect detection of gamma through Cherenkov Light



Ground-based

Low duty cycle (~10%)

Small FoV (2-4 deg)

Very Good bkg rejection

Large effective area (~10^5 m^2)

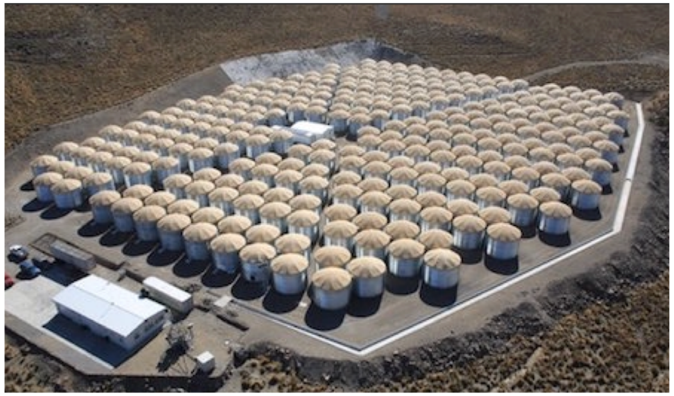
Energy ~50 GeV– 100 TeV

Excellent sensitivity

Extensive Air Shower (EAS) arrays

e.g. Milagro, HAWC, Tibet, ARGO

Indirect detection of gamma through secondaries



Ground-based

Large duty cycle (~90%)

Big FoV (30-40 deg)

Moderate bkg rejection

Good effective area (~10^2 m^2)

Energy ~100 GeV– 100 TeV

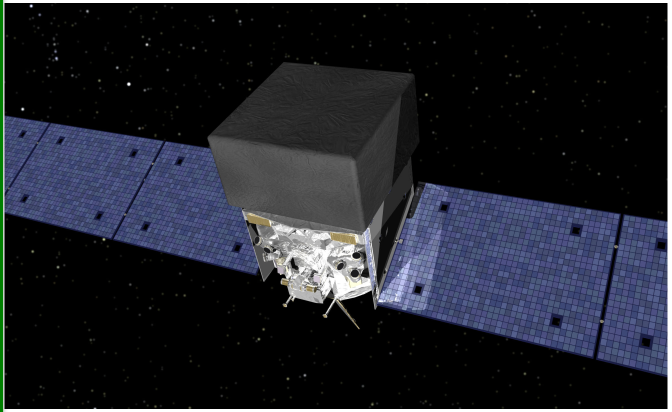
Moderate sensitivity

Instrumentation for gamma-ray astronomy

Most productive instrumentation at current times

Pair production telescopes
e.g. EGRET, AGILE, *Fermi*

Direct detection of gamma



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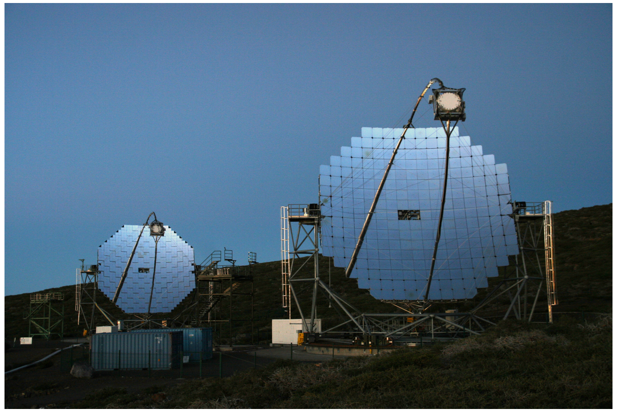

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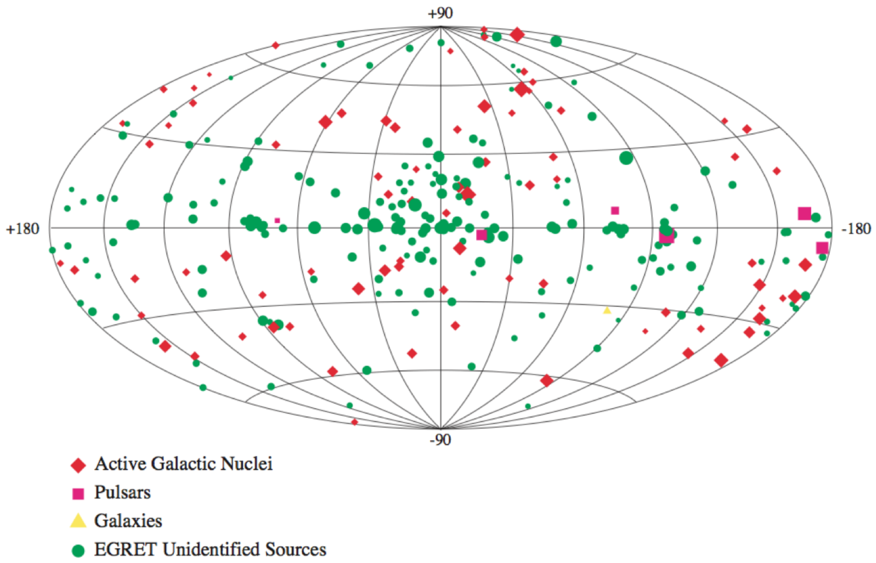
Excellent sensitivity

But EAS arrays are becoming more and more competitive, and LHAASO expected to be completed in 2021

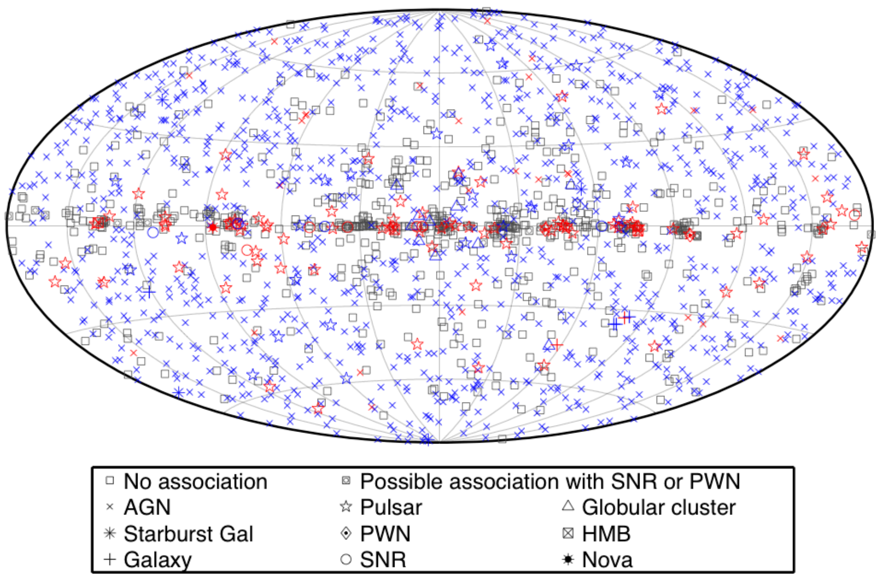
Complementary in operational energy range

The “GeV” gamma-ray sky : Gamma-rays above 100 MeV



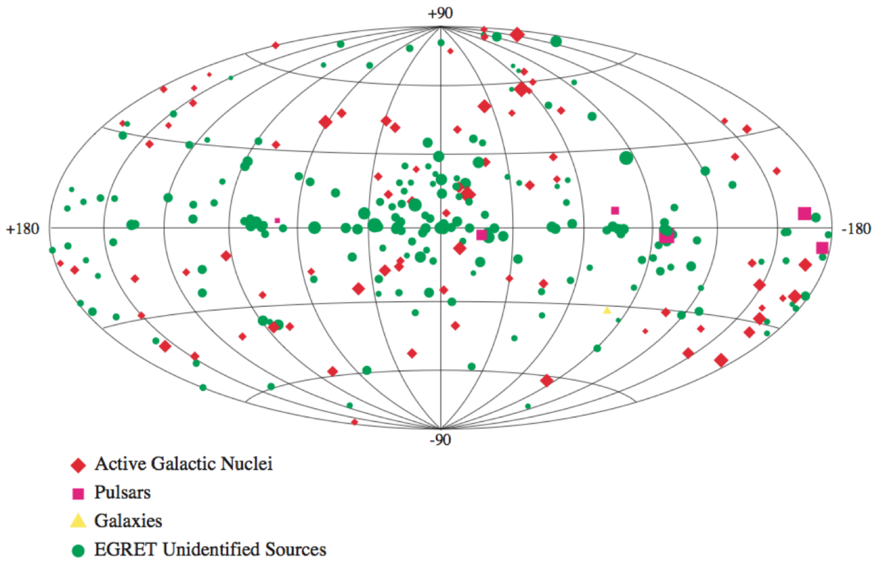
3rd EGRET Catalog
Hartman et al., 1999, ApJS, 123, 79
271 sources
170 unidentified
101 identified/associated
→ 66 blazars

Large improvement in the knowledge of the gamma-ray sky in only ~10 years



2nd Fermi-LAT Catalog (2FGL, 2 years of data)
Nolan et al., 2012, ApJS, 199, 31
1873 sources
576 unidentified
1297 identified/associated
→ 886 AGNs (862 blazars)

The “GeV” gamma-ray sky : Gamma-rays above 100 MeV



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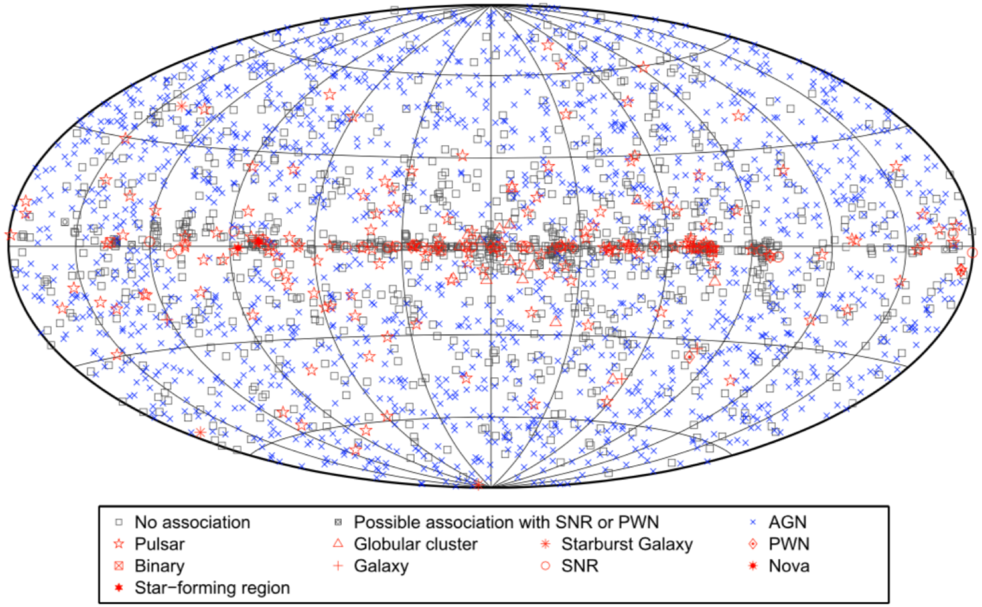
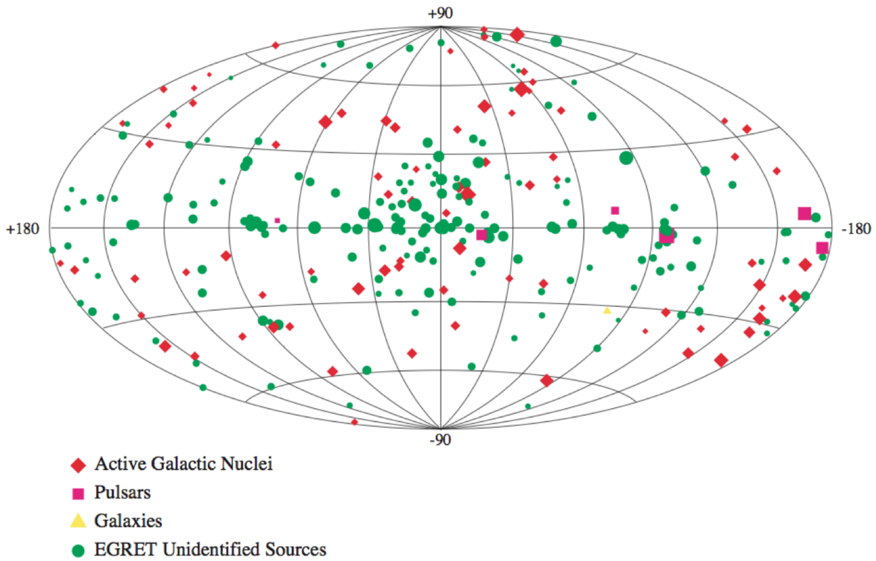


3rd Fermi-LAT Catalog (3FGL, 4 years of data)
Acero et al ., 2015, ApJS 218, 23
3033 sources
- **1010 unidentified**
- **2022 identified/associated**
  - **→ 1745 AGNs (1718 blazars)**

The "GeV" gamma-ray sky : Gamma-rays above 100 MeV



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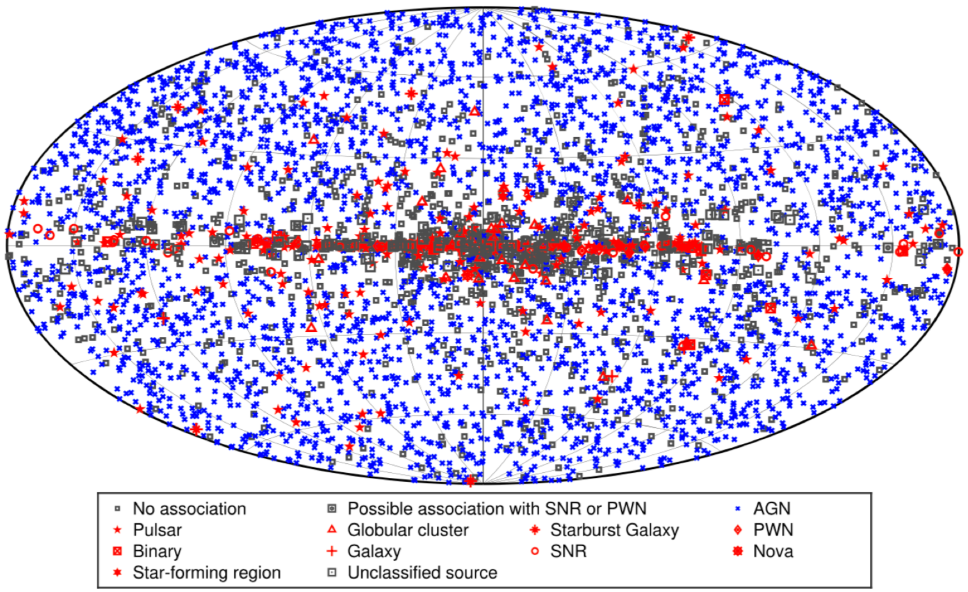
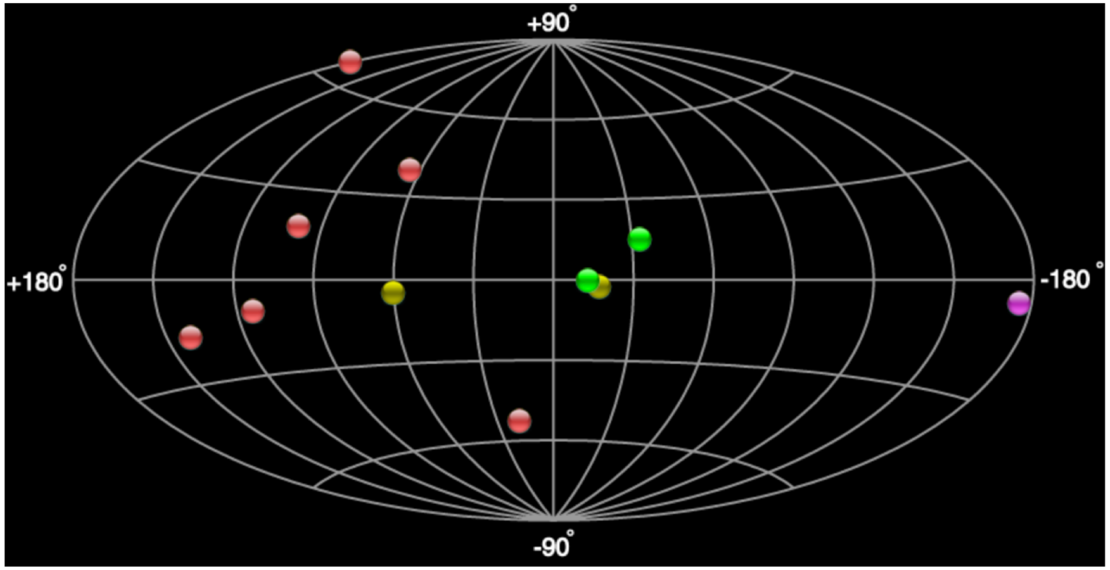


4th Fermi-LAT Catalog (4FGL, 8 years of data)
Abdollahi et al ., 2020, ApJS 247, 33
5064 sources
- **1336 unidentified**
- **3728 identified/associated**
  - **→ 3207 AGNs (3137 blazars)**

Number of sources increase faster than sqrt(Time) !!!

The "TeV" gamma-ray sky : Gamma-rays above 100 GeV



Plots obtained from the TeVCat
http://tevcat.uchicago.edu/

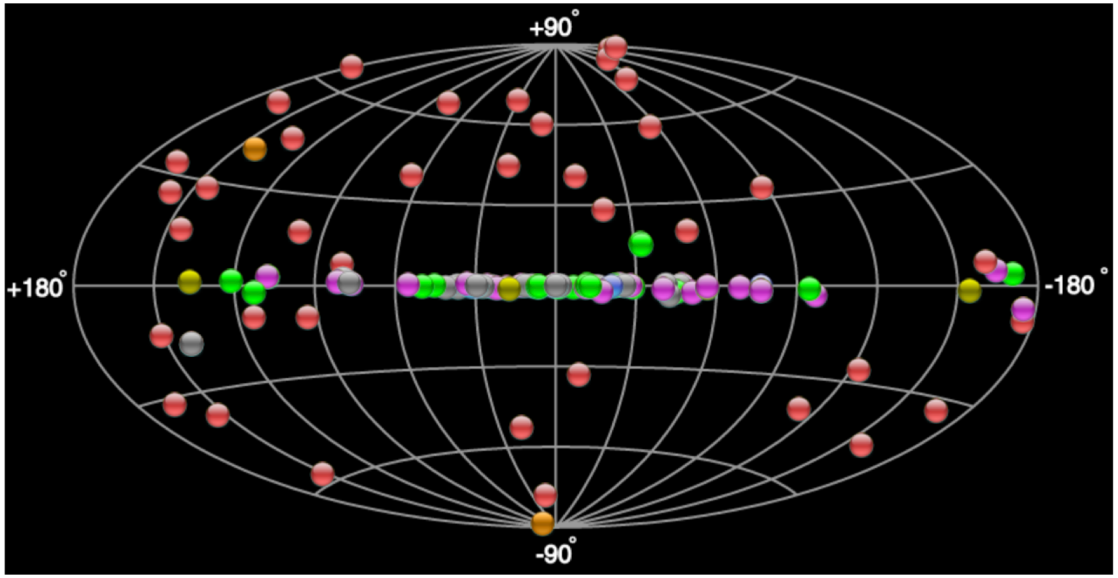
Similar improvements in the GeV and TeV energy domains

Sep. 2000 (~20 years ago) :

11 sources

6 AGNs

Large improvement in the knowledge of the TeV sky in only ~10 years



Sep. 2010 (~10 years ago) :

135 sources

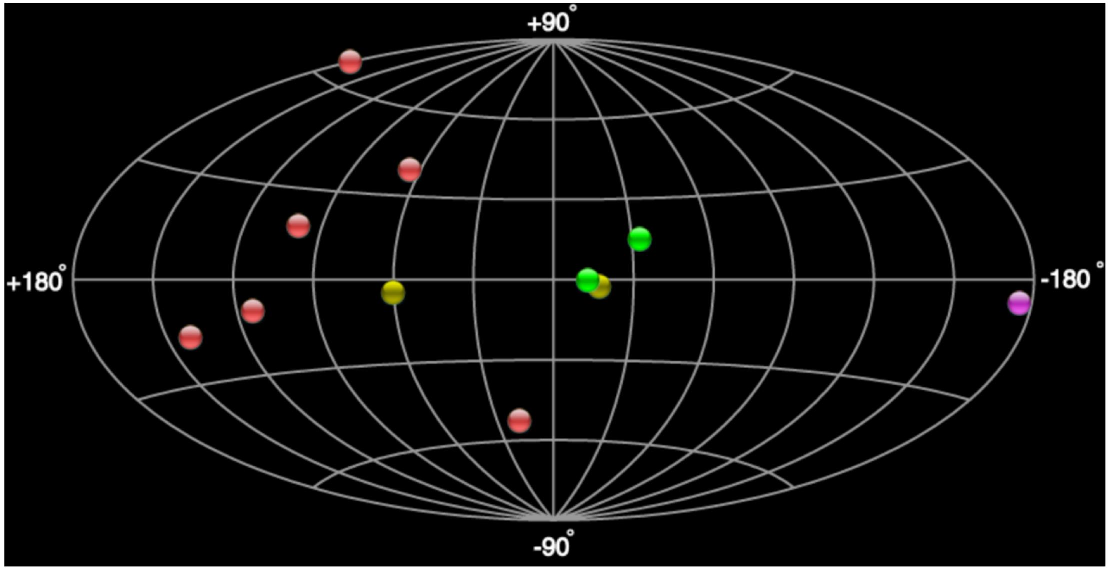
24 unidentified

40 AGNs

The “TeV” gamma-ray sky : Gamma-rays above 100 GeV

Plots obtained from the TeVCat
http://tevcat.uchicago.edu/

Similar improvements in the GeV and TeV energy domains



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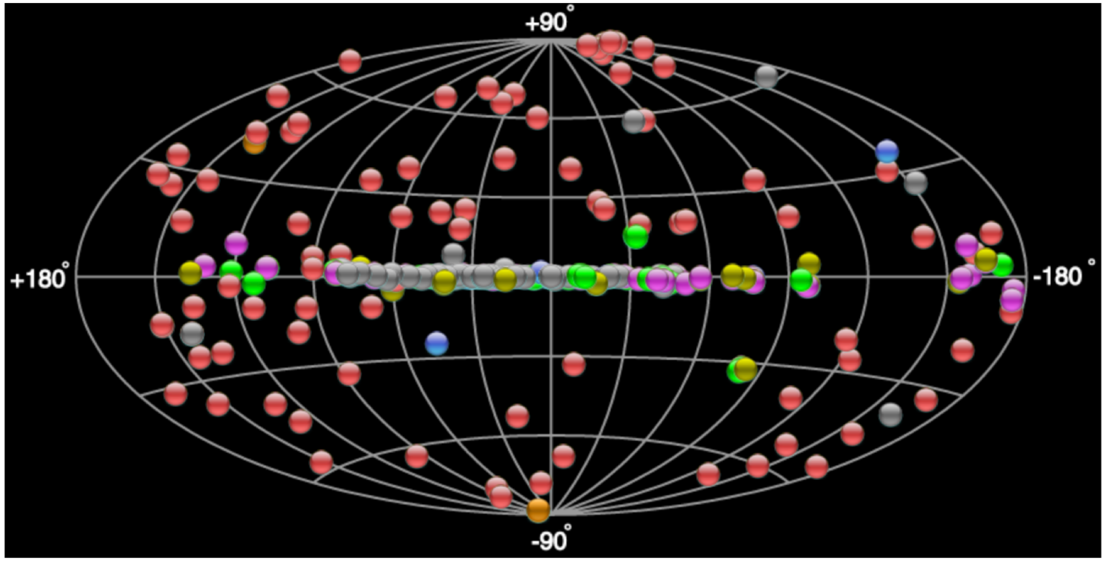
6 AGNs

Large improvement in the knowledge of the TeV sky in ~20 years



Jan. 2021 (~ TODAY) :

253 sources

65 unidentified

82 AGNs

Number of sources increase faster than sqrt(Time) !!!

Instrumentation for gamma-ray astronomy (the big picture)

	Exploration phase	Established field	"Ultimate" (?) generation (*population + precision studies*)
	~ 10 sources	~ 100 sources	~ 1000-10000 sources
Pair conversion experiments (MeV-GeV) **Space**	*70s (SAS-2, COS-B)*	*90s (EGRET)*	Now **Fermi-LAT**
Ground *Cherenkov Telescopes (GeV-TeV)*	*90s (WHIPPLE, HEGRA,CAT)*	*00s (**Cangaroo, H.E.S.S., MAGIC, VERITAS**)*	Future **CTA**

Novel discipline

Now

MAGIC II, H.E.S.S. II
VERITAS upgraded

HAWC, LHAASO …

lots of room for improvement and potential discovery

Instrumentation for gamma-ray astronomy (the big picture)

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Ground *Cherenkov Telescopes (GeV-TeV)*	*90s (WHIPPLE, HEGRA,CAT)*	*00s* ***(Cangaroo, HESS, MAGIC, VERITAS)***	Future **CTA**

Novel discipline

CTA currently under construction (*North+ South*)
CTA-North will be completed first (*approx. 2025*)
- → **LST-1 currently in commissioning**
- → **See Teshima's talk on Wednesday**

lots of room for improvement and potential discovery

Challenges when studying AGNs

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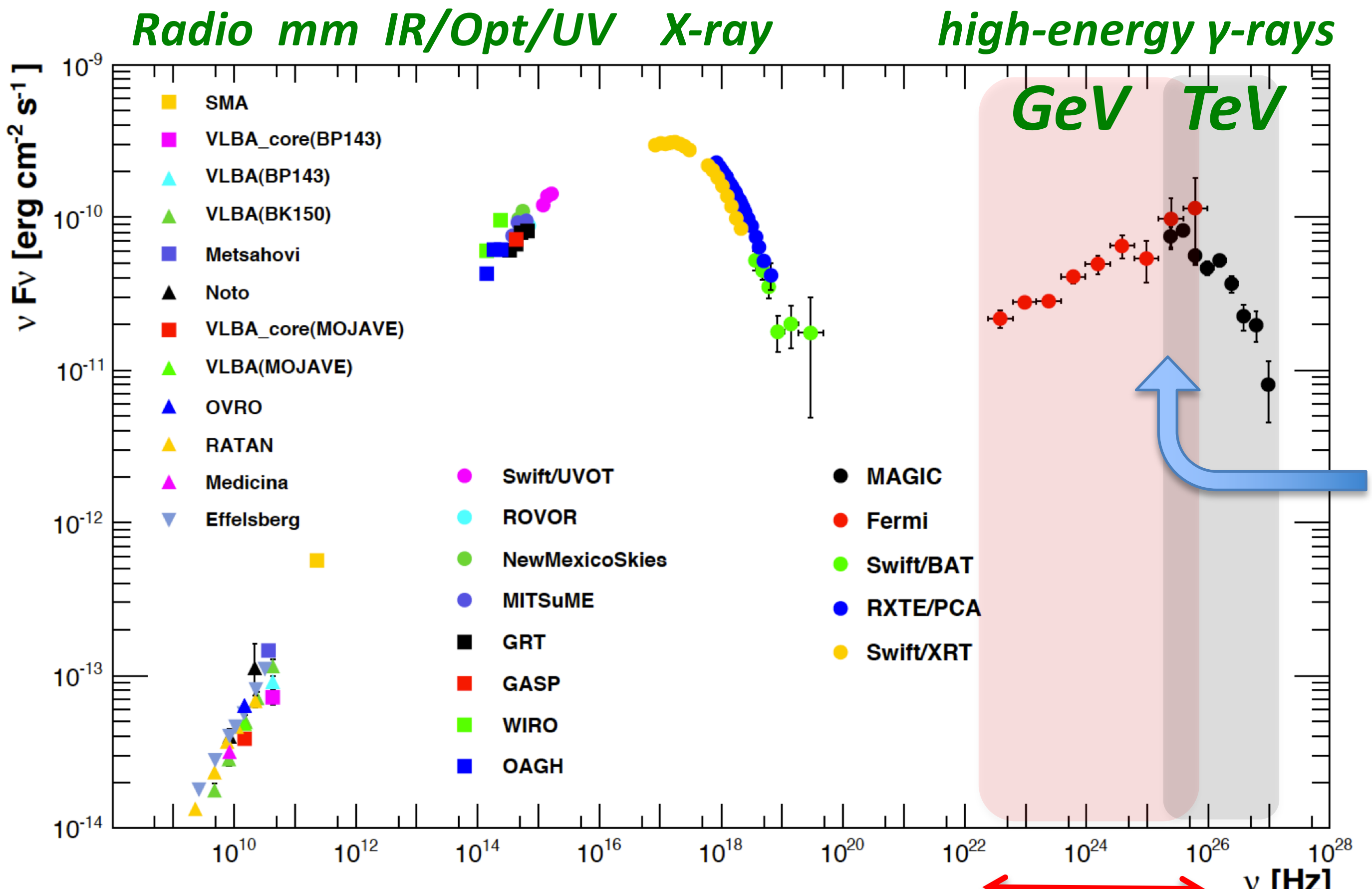
Emission at different energies could be due to same particle population

→ *Need many instruments to fully characterize emission in these objects*



Abdo et al 2011, ApJ 736, 131

Fermi **– MAGIC**

Spectral energy distribution (SED) of the Blazar Mrk 421

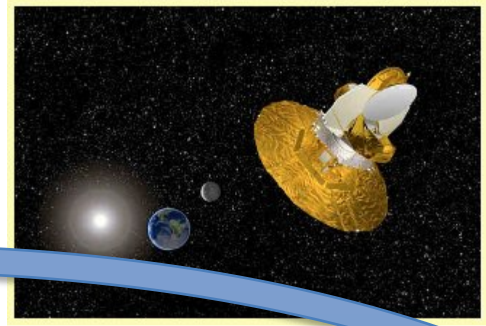
Gamma-ray bump of many sources could only be measured recently, with *Fermi*-LAT + modern IACTs like HESS/MAGIC/VERITAS

→ *Crucial for the theoretical modeling of the broadband emission*

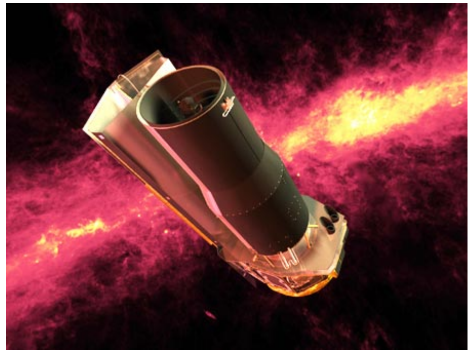
Gamma ray range benefited from large technical improvements in last years, but other energy bands are also critical for the study of AGNs

Precision Multi-wavelength astronomy for >10 years

Radio: beginning of Sync. Bump, high resolution imaging of jets AGN host galaxies…



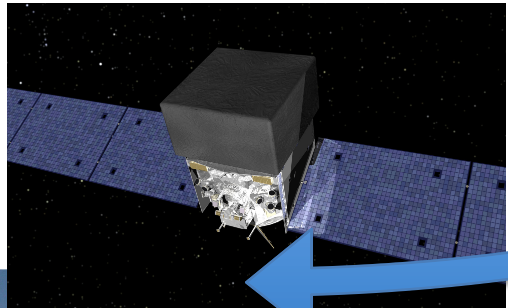
Microwave:
Connection of low-E and high-E segments of the Sync. bump

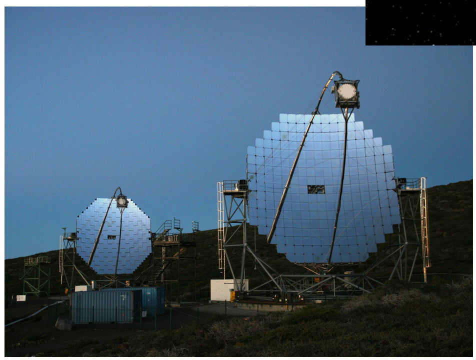


IR:
host galaxies, spectral information…

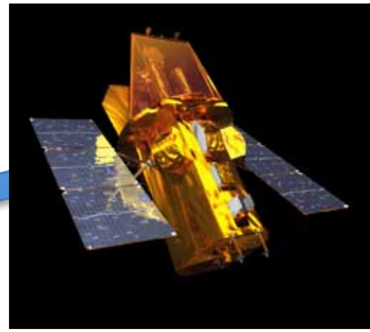
Energy

TeV: High-energy spectral breaks,





GeV: Flares, spectral breaks, morphology, time domain …



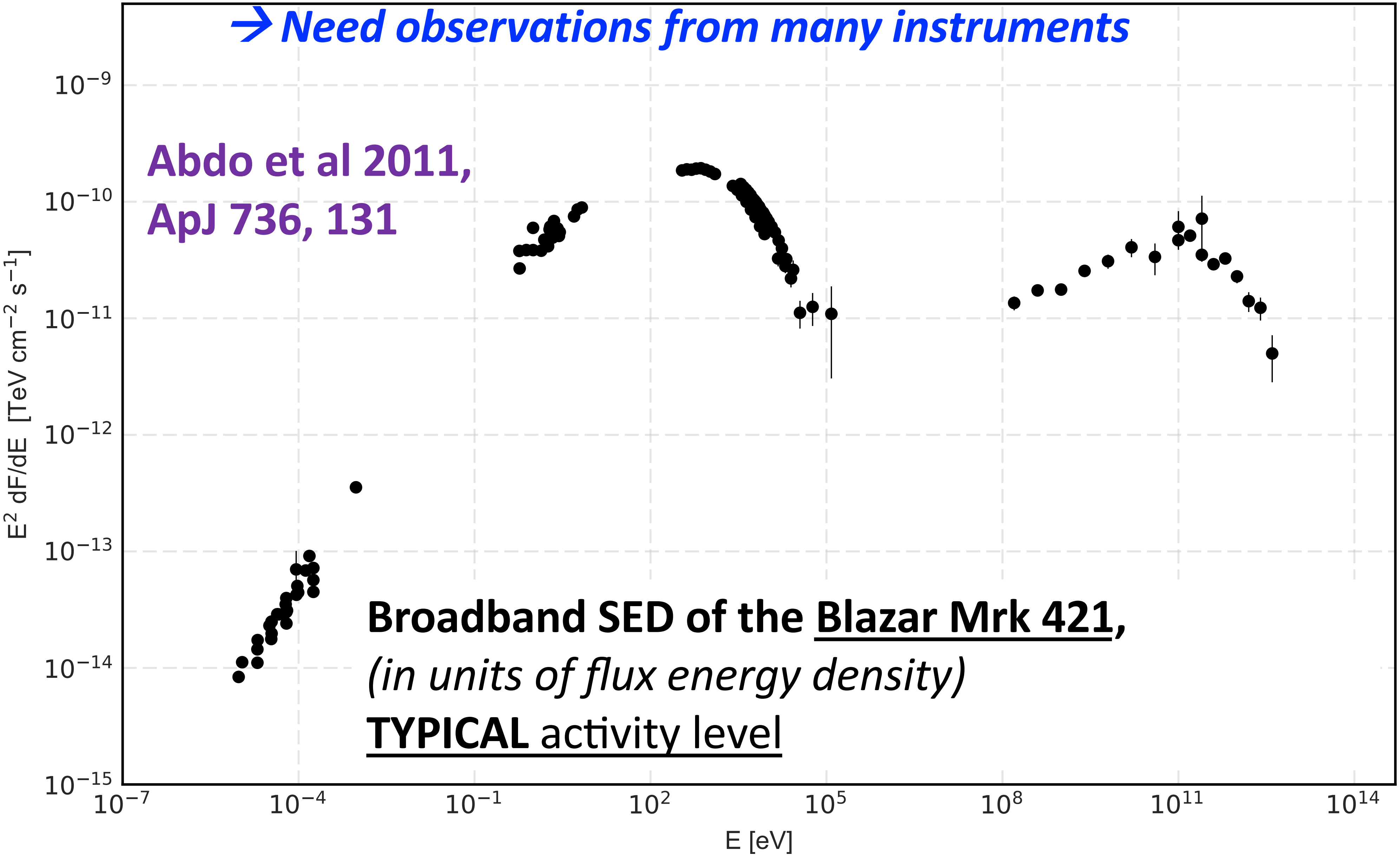
X-ray:
Flares,
Spectral breaks, morphology and associations…

Optical:
Flares, redshits…

Observational challenge 1:

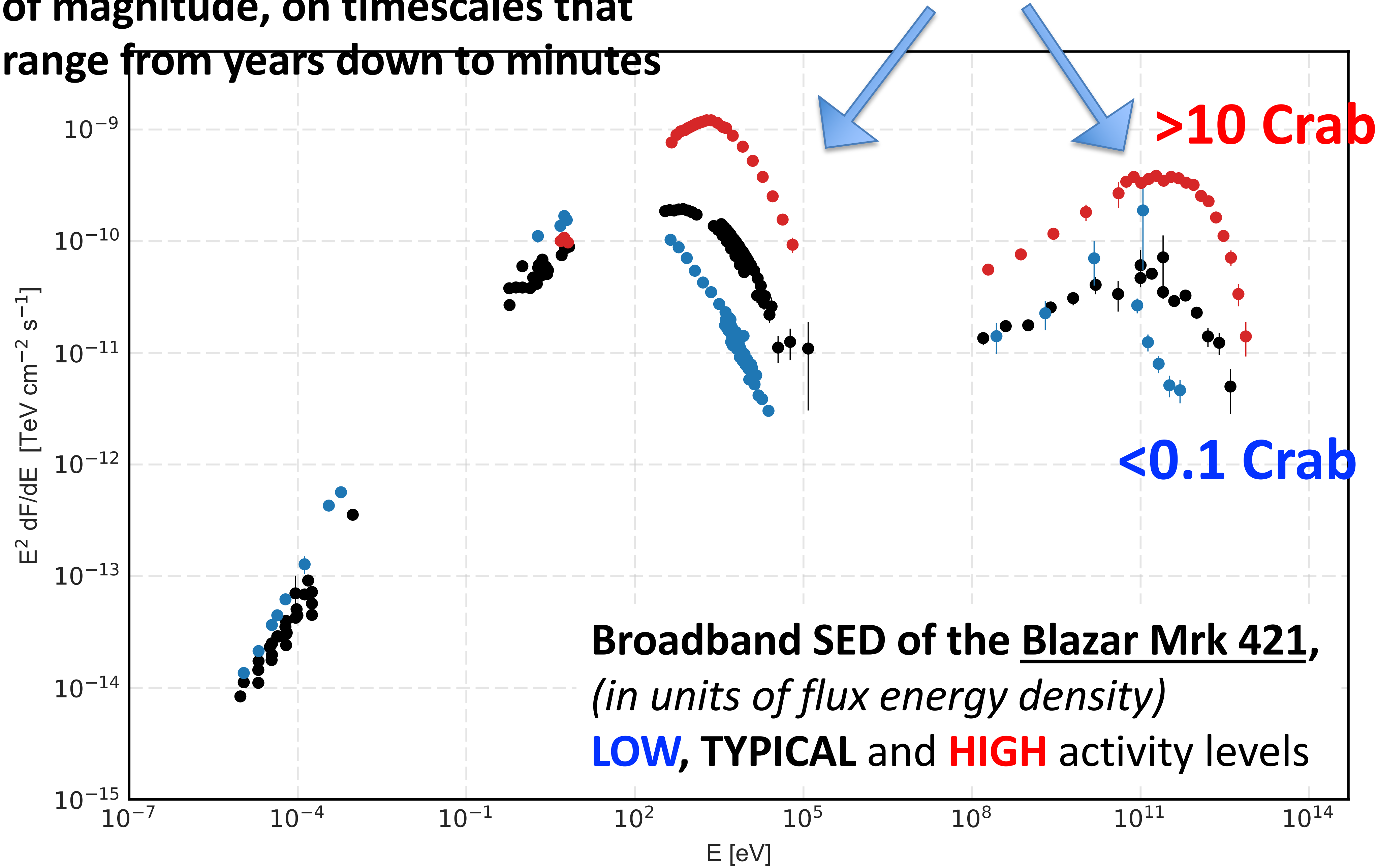
AGNs emit over a very wide energy range

Emission at different energies could be produced by same particles

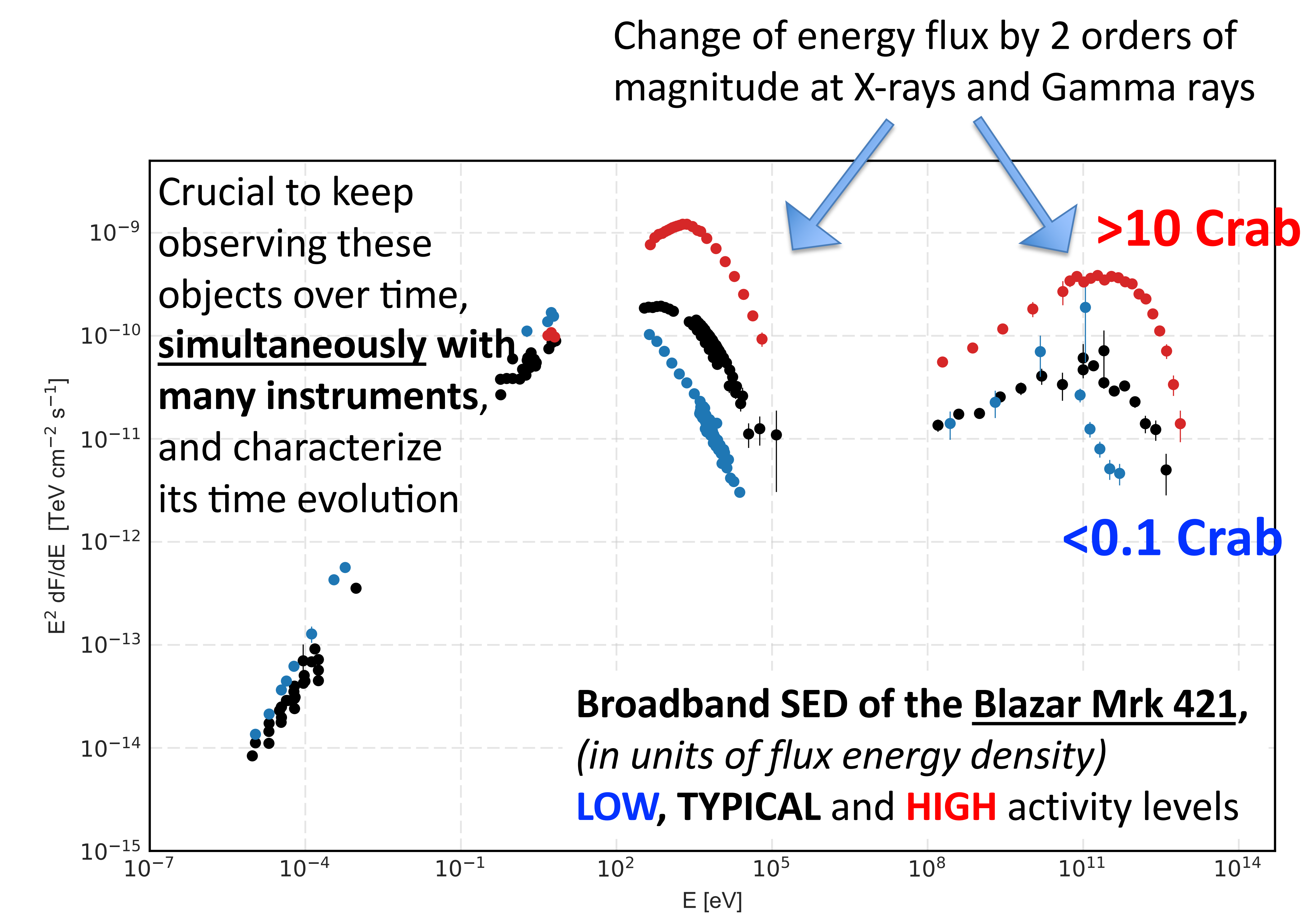


<u>Observational challenge number 2:</u>
AGNs show flux variations by orders of magnitude, on timescales that range from years down to minutes

Change of energy flux by 2 orders of magnitude at X-rays and Gamma rays



Broadband SED of the <u>Blazar Mrk 421</u>,
(in units of flux energy density)
LOW, TYPICAL and **HIGH** activity levels

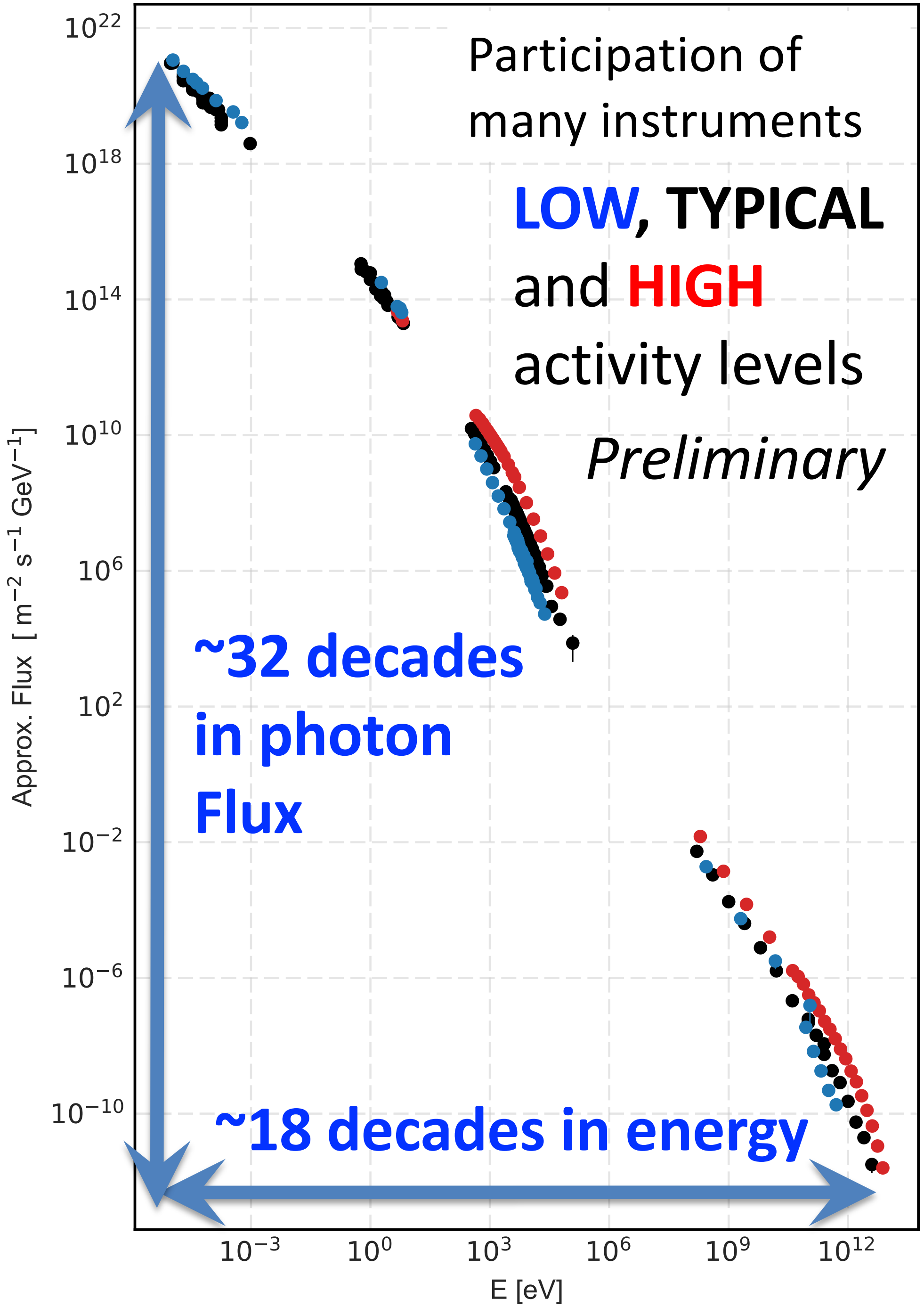


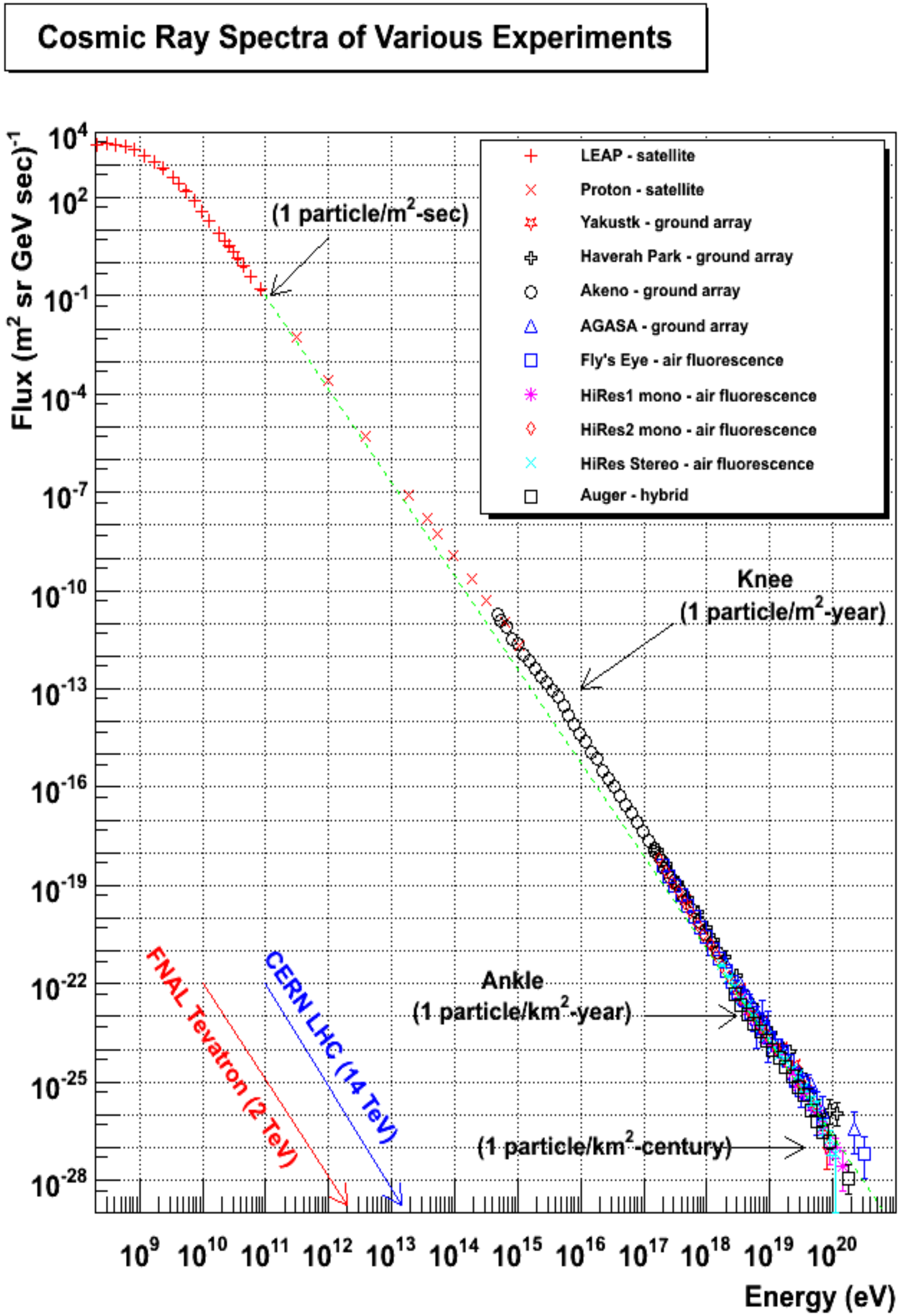
Change of energy flux by 2 orders of magnitude at X-rays and Gamma rays
Crucial to keep observing these objects over time, simultaneously with many instruments, and characterize its time evolution
>10 Crab
<0.1 Crab
Broadband SED of the Blazar Mrk 421,
(in units of flux energy density)
LOW, TYPICAL and HIGH activity levels
E² dF/dE [TeV cm⁻² s⁻¹]
E [eV]

Broadband SED can be converted into a photon flux spectrum *(representation often used to display the CR particle flux)*

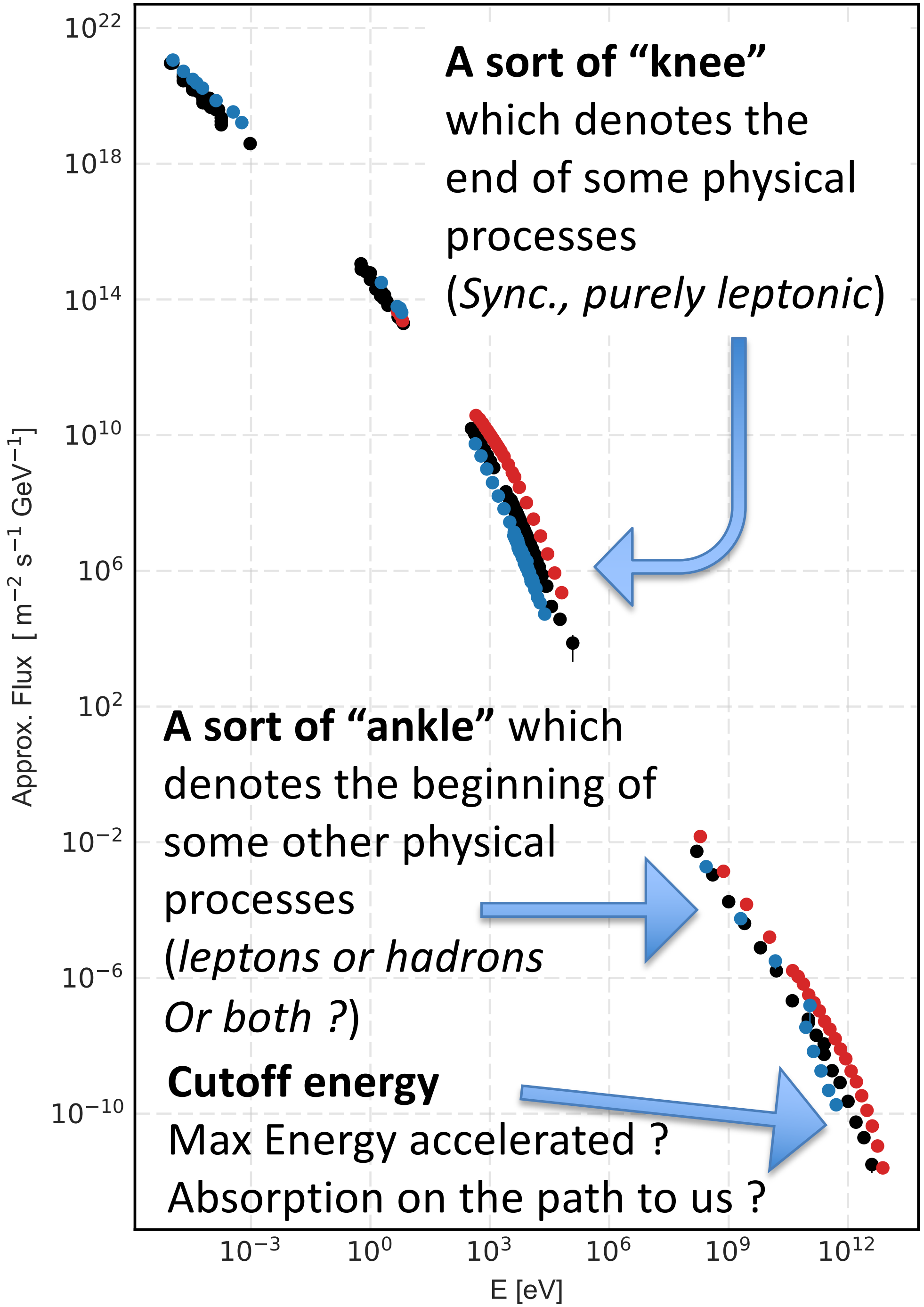
In this representation, the **Low**, **Typical** and **High** activities do not "look" that different ...

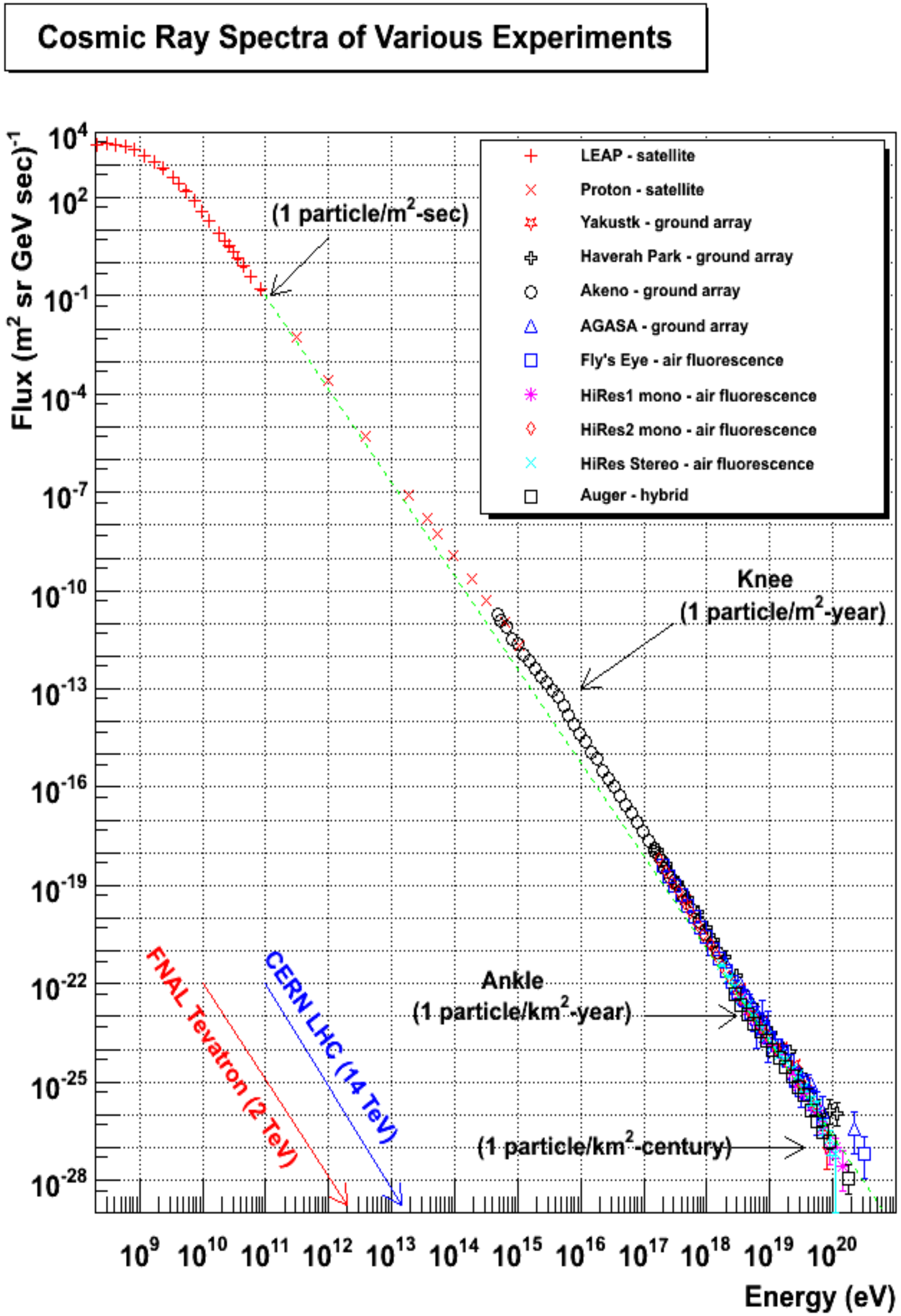
Mrk421 photon flux spectrum



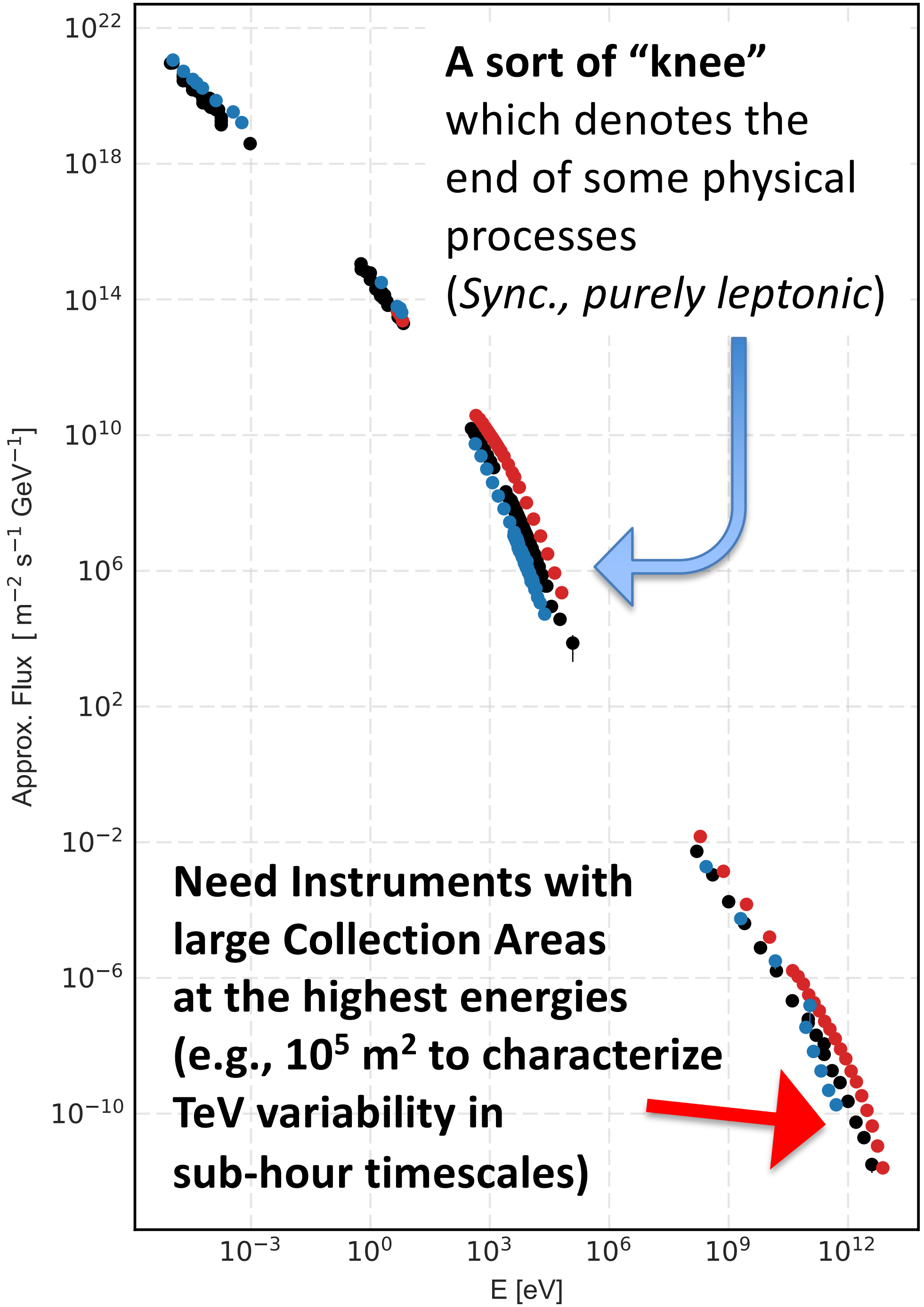


Mrk421 photon flux spectrum

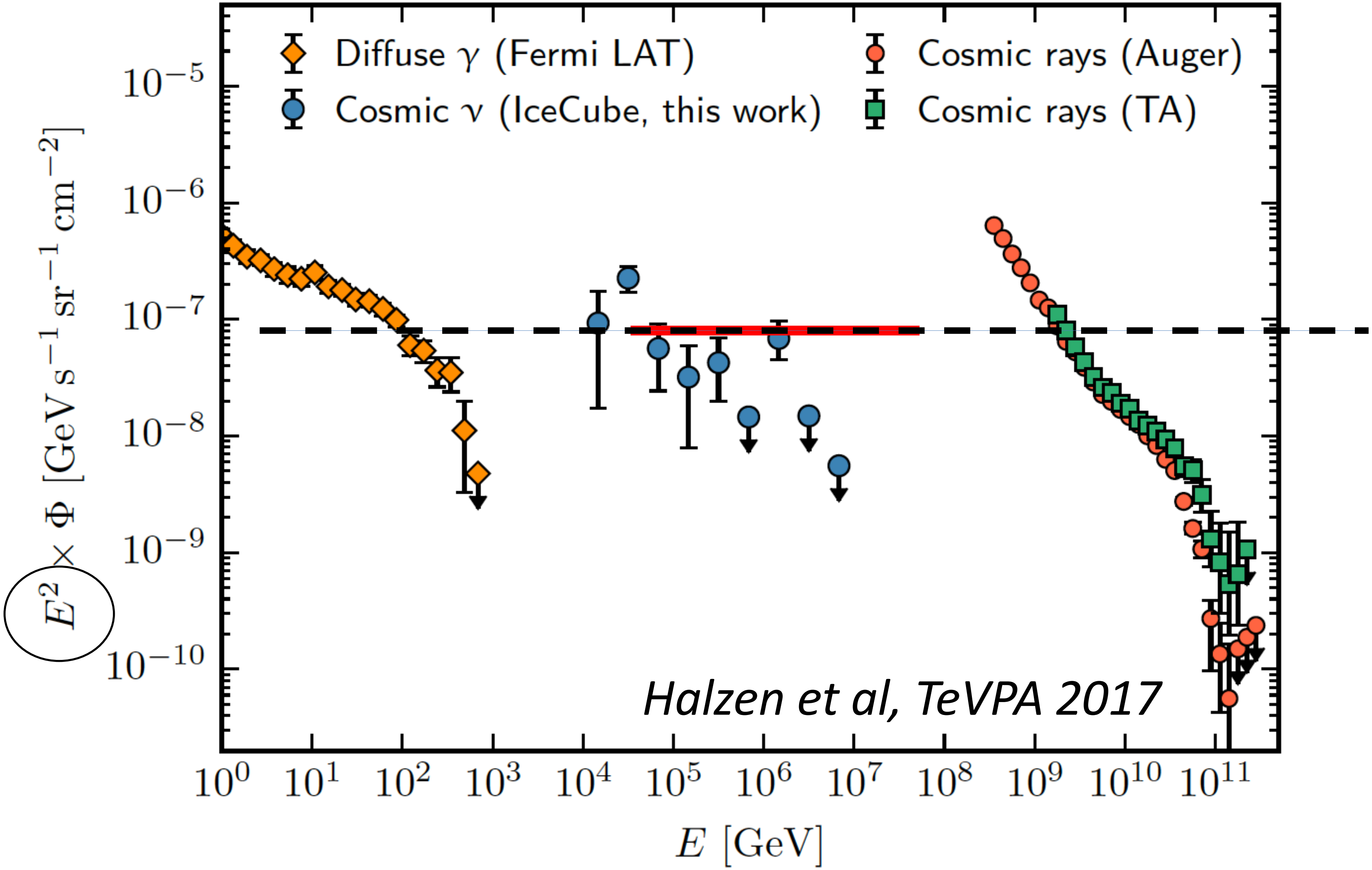




Mrk421 photon flux spectrum



Energy in the Universe in
gamma rays, neutrinos, and Cosmic Rays



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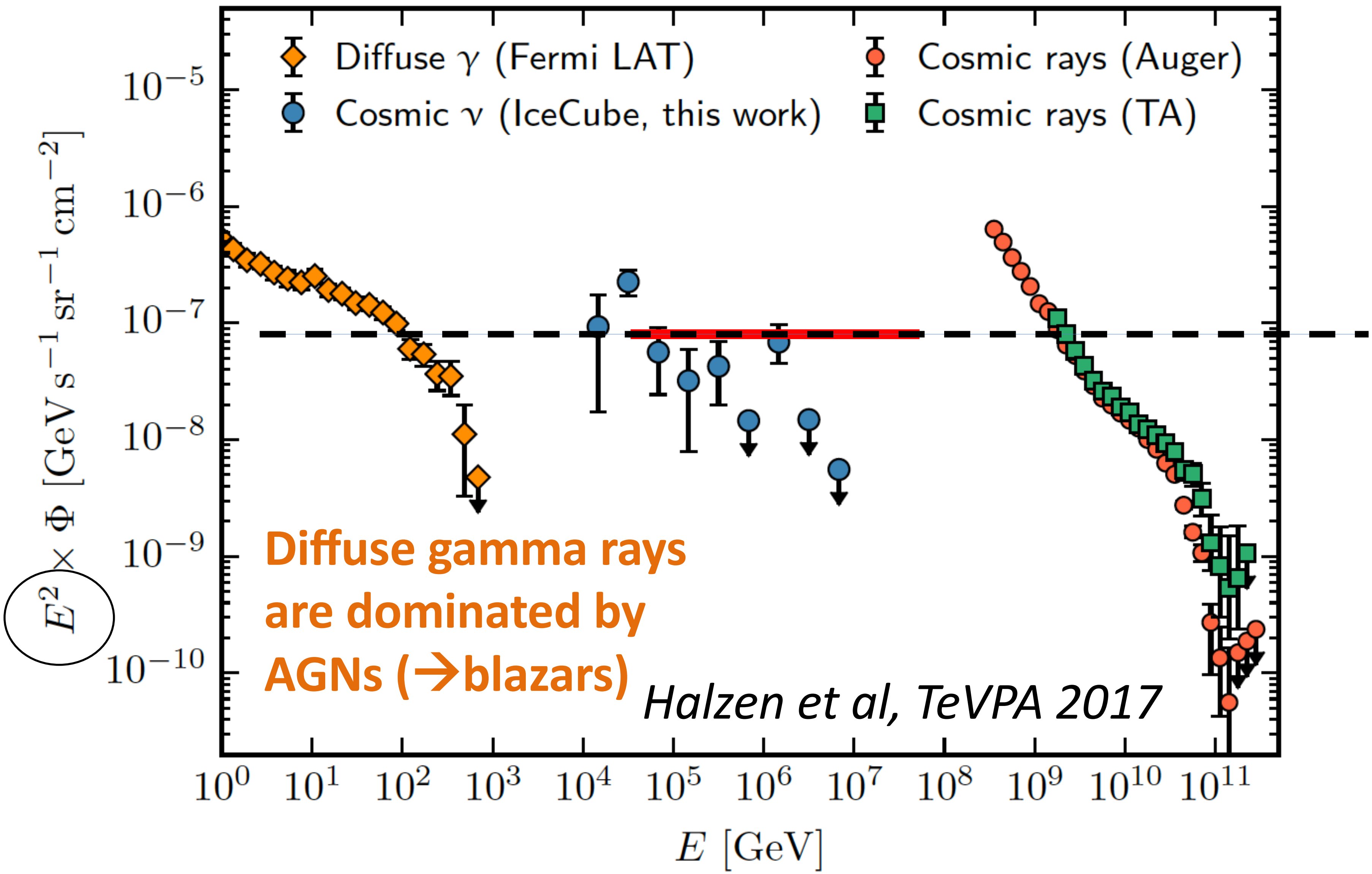
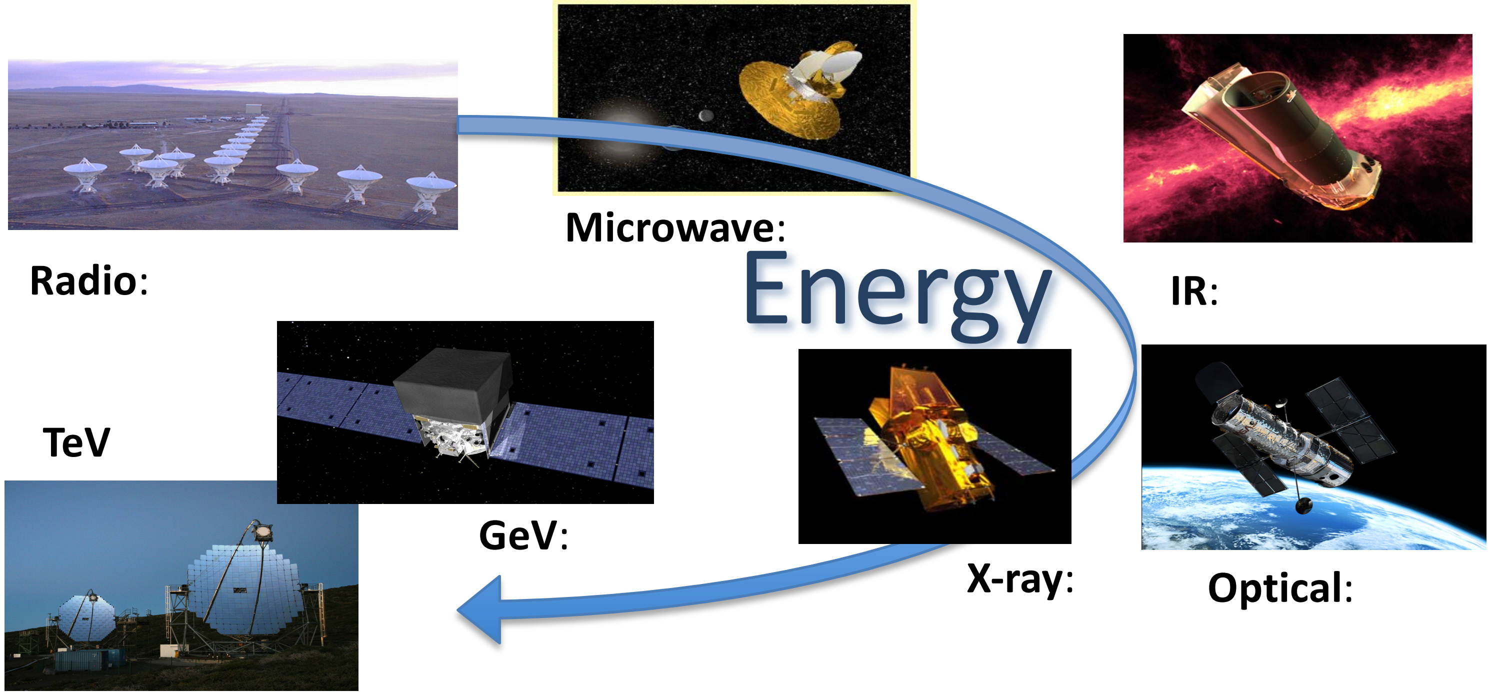
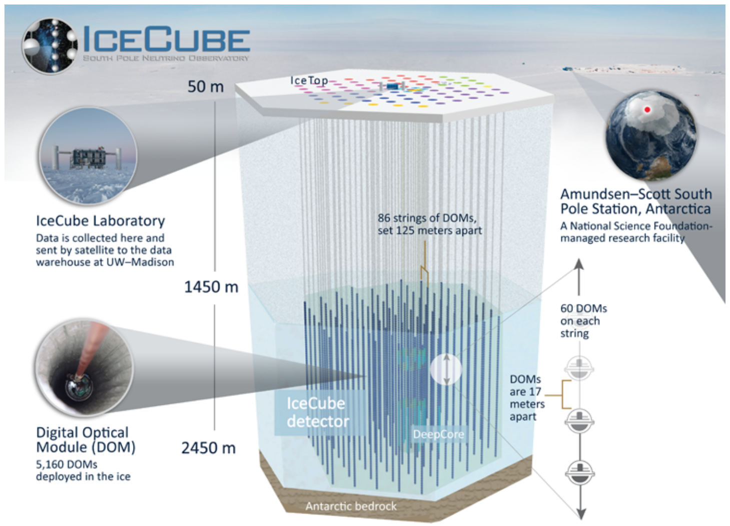


Multi-messenger astronomy helpful to break degeneracies



Electromagntic emission (from radio to VHE gamma rays)

High-Energy Cosmic Rays (e.g. Pierre Auger and Telescope Array)



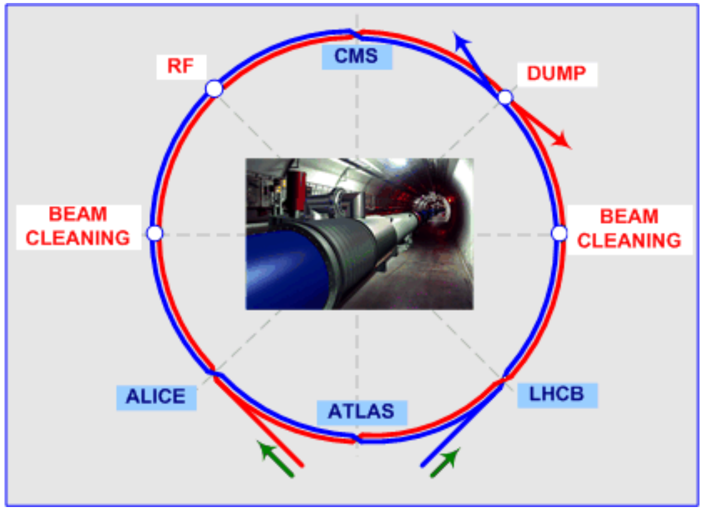
High-Energy Neutrinos (e.g. IceCube)

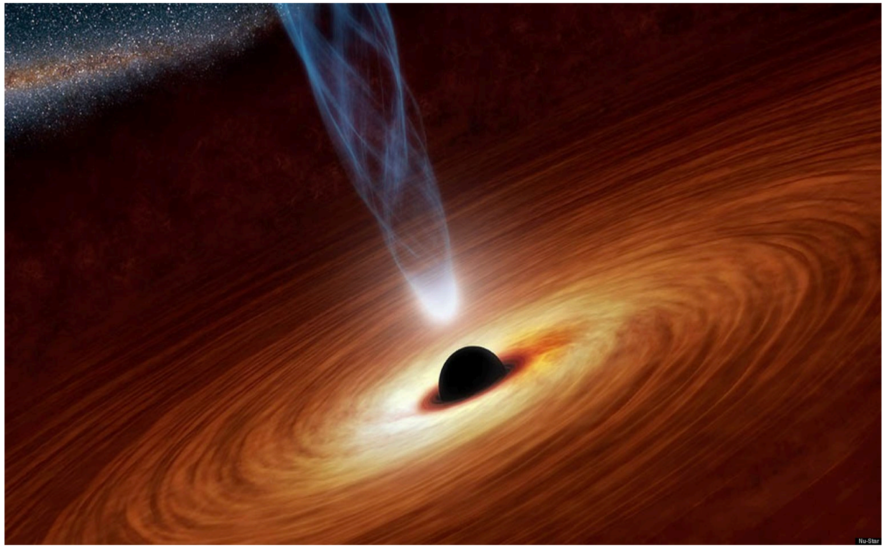
AGNs as our Extreme Particle Accelerators

LHC **vs** **bright AGN**

ATLAS/CMS
LHCb + Alice

MAGIC/VERITAS/HESS/Fermi,++
NuSTAR/Swift , Optical/radio, IceCube…





Physics studies with cosmic particle accelerators

Disadvantage: Cannot play with knobs in controlled environment

Advantage: Study extreme processes and environments

Much cheaper (*no need to build the accelerator…)*

The project requires "observing" over many years in order to integrate over sufficient data/effects → **long-term multi-instrument observations.**

It is VERY CHALLENGING to study AGNs

From <u>observational perspective</u>, there are two major practical challenges

a) AGNs emit over a very wide energy range
(from radio to very high energy gamma-rays)

b) AGN emission is variable on very different timescales
(from years down to minutes)

Accurate AGN studies require wide broadband (radio to gamma-rays) AND temporal (years down to minutes) coverage, <u>done in coordination</u>

It is like making Mochi: need <u>persistency</u> and <u>coordination</u> among different parties

a+b
→Requirement for MW campaigns lasting years
→ Difficult to perform these accurate studies on many AGNs

2- Extensive MW campaigns on Mrk421 and Mrk501

→ A few recent highlight results

→ *Peculiar behaviors (low and high activity)*

Mrk421 and Mrk501 are excellent "blazar probes"

→ **3 reasons to study these blazars**

- Bright blazars

→ Easy to detect with IACTs, *Fermi*, and X-rays, Optical, radio instruments in short times

→ "Relatively Easy" to characterize the entire SED in every "shot"

→ See things that cannot be seen for other blazars (less bright)

→ <u>Can study the evolution of the entire SED</u>

- Nearby blazars (z~0.03; ~140 Mpc)

→ Imaging with VLBA possible down to scales of <0.01-0.1 pc (<100-1000 r_g)

→ Minimal effect from EBL (among VHE blazars), which is not well known

→ systematics for VHE blazar science

- No strong BLR effects (another unknown… composition, shape…)

→ Fewer additional uncertainties than in FSRQs

Mrk421 and Mrk501 are excellent "blazar probes"

→ 3 reasons to study these blazars

- **Bright blazars**
  - → Easy to detect with IACTs, *Fermi*, and X-rays, Optical, radio instruments in short times
    - → "Relatively Easy" to characterize the entire SED in every "shot"
    - → See things that cannot be seen for other blazars (less bright)
      - → Can study the evolution of the entire SED

- **Nearby blazars (z~0.03; ~140 Mpc)**
  - → Imaging with VLBA possible down to scales of <0.01-0.1 pc (<100-1000 r_g)
  - → Minimal effect from EBL (among VHE blazars), which is not well known
    - → systematics for VHE blazar science

- **No strong BLR effects (another unknown… composition, shape…)**
  - → Fewer additional uncertainties than in FSRQs

In summary:

→ **Mrk421 and Mrk501 are among the "easiest" blazars to study**

It is more difficult to study other blazars that are farther away, dimmer, or have more complicated structures

They can be used as high-energy physics laboratories to study blazars

Extensive MW Campaigns on Mrk421 and Mrk501

A multi-instrument and multi-year project

Since 2009, we have substantially **improved TEMPORAL and ENERGY coverage** of the sources in order to obtain SEDs as simultaneous as possible, as well as to be able to perform multi-frequency variability/correlation studies over a long baseline and correlate with high resolution radio images and polarizations (to learn about the jet structure)

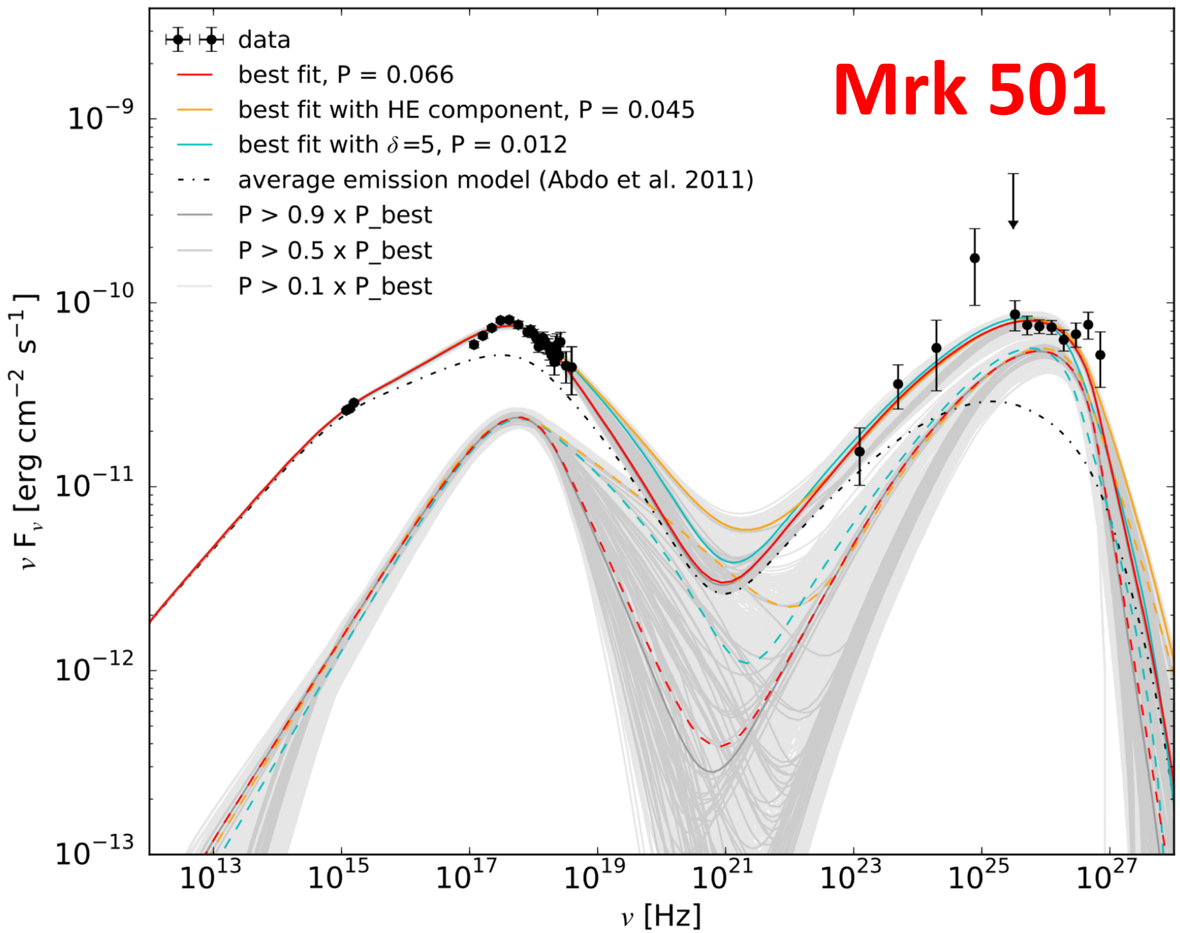
•More than 25 instruments participate, covering frequencies from radio to VHE

Radio: VLBA, OVRO, Effelsberg, Metsahovi…
mm: SMA, IRAM-PV
Infrared: WIRO, OAGH
Optical: GASP-WEBT, KVA, Liverpool, Kanata…
UV: Swift-UVOT
X-ray: (RXTE), Swift-XRT, NuSTAR
Gamma-ray: *Fermi*-LAT
VHE: MAGIC, VERITAS, FACT

Monitored regardless of activity (*increase coverage during flares*)
→ observed every few days for about half year (*every year* !)

Large intra-model degeneracy for broadband SEDs

Broadband emission (*solid lines*) described with a "quiescent" region (*black dot-dashed line*) responsible for the average state reported in Abdo et al. 2011 (*ApJ 727, 129*), plus a **second emission region (*dashed lines*) modelled with grid-scan strategy using 10^8 realizations.**



Ahnen et al 2017
***A&A* 603 , A31**

The SED plot shows in different shades of grey all model curves (1684) with a data-model agreement better than 10% of that of the best model.

Large inter-model degeneracy for broadband SEDs

Leptonic scenario
→ need electrons with **E>10^{13} eV**

Hadronic scenario
→ need protons with **E>10^{18} eV**

Abdo et al., ApJ 736 (2011) 131

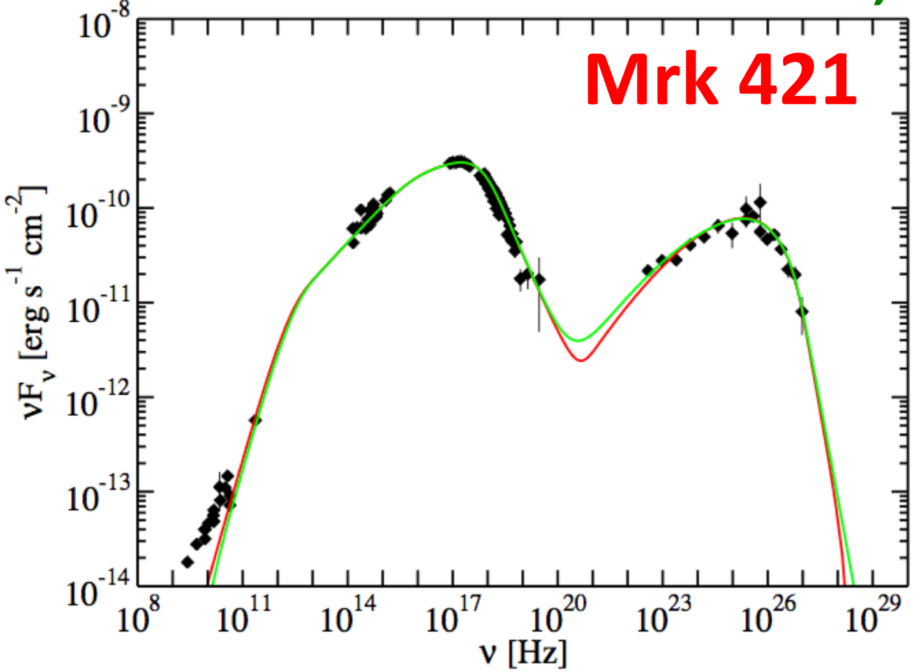


Figure 11. SED of Mrk 421 with two one-zone SSC model fits obtained with different minimum variability timescales: $t_{\rm var} = 1$ day (red curve) and $t_{\rm var} = 1$ hr (green curve). The parameter values are reported in Table 4. See the text for further details.

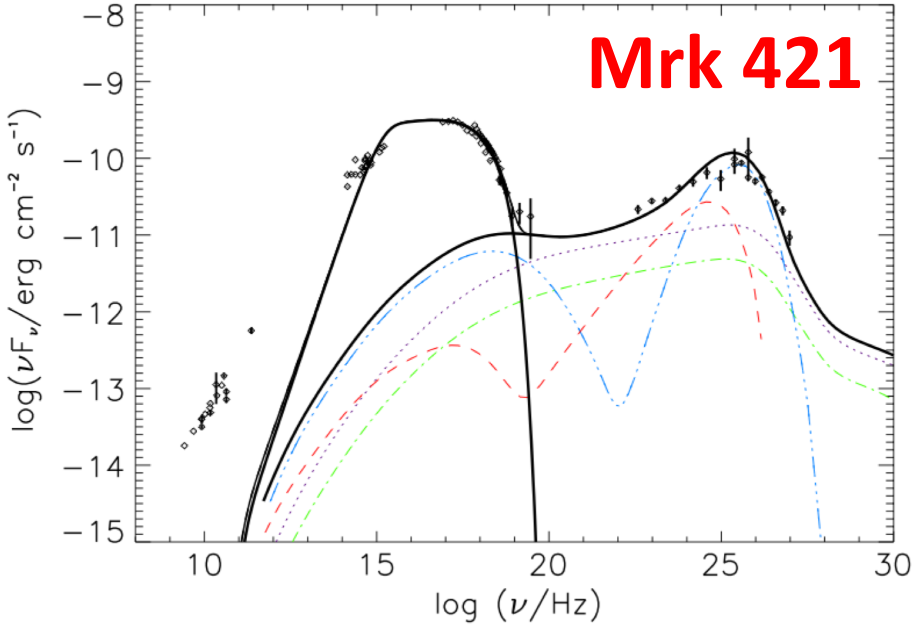


Figure 9. Hadronic model fit components: π^0-cascade (black dotted line), $\pi^\pm$ cascade (green dash-dotted line), μ-synchrotron and cascade (blue triple-dot-dashed line), and proton synchrotron and cascade (red dashed line). The black thick solid line is the sum of all emission components (which also includes the synchrotron emission of the primary electrons at optical/X-ray frequencies). The resulting model parameters are reported in Table 3.

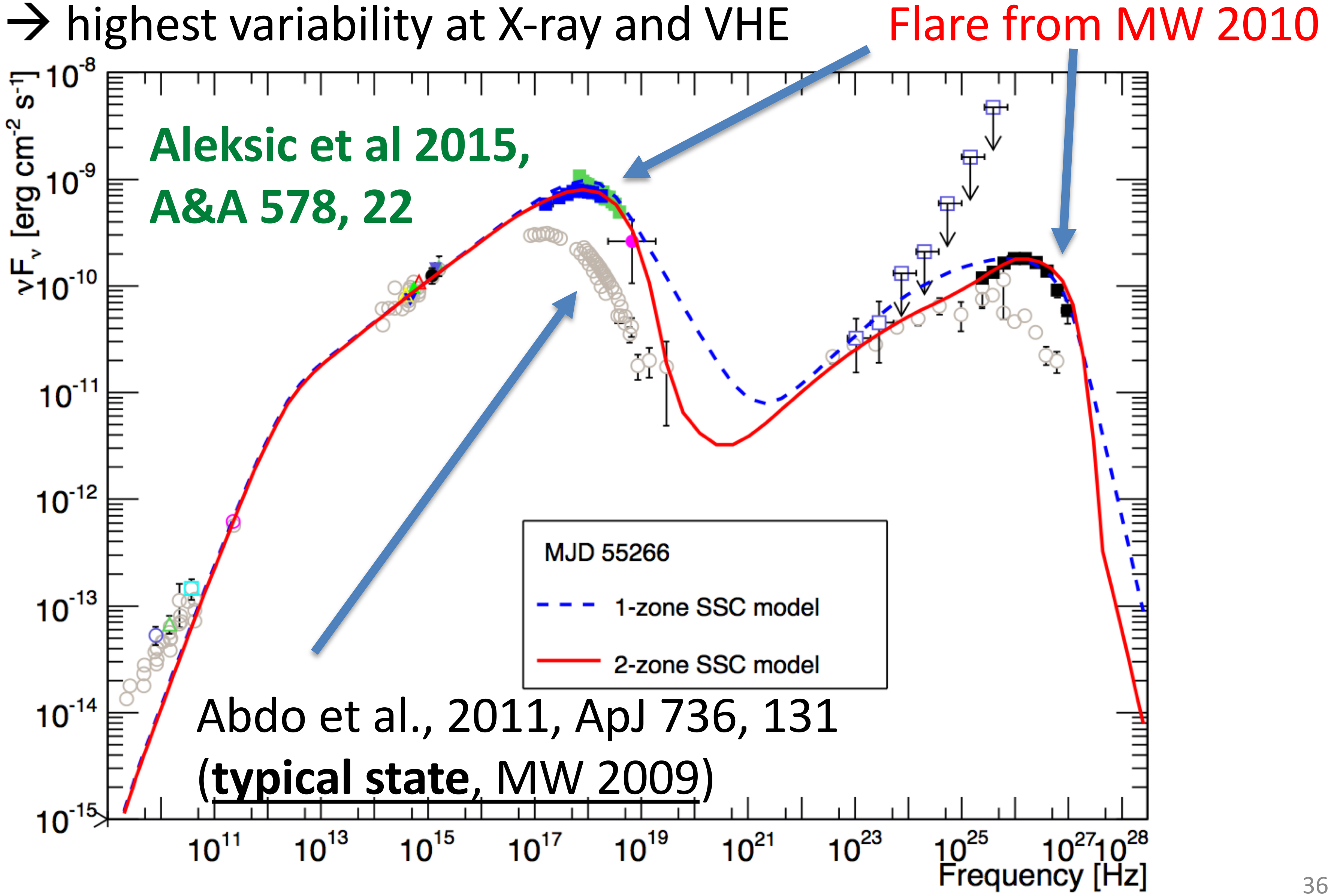
Multi-band variability is key to distinguish between models

Mrk421 has shown X-ray and VHE spectral variability during flares

X-ray and VHE spectra becomes harder when flaring

→ SED bumps shift to high energies

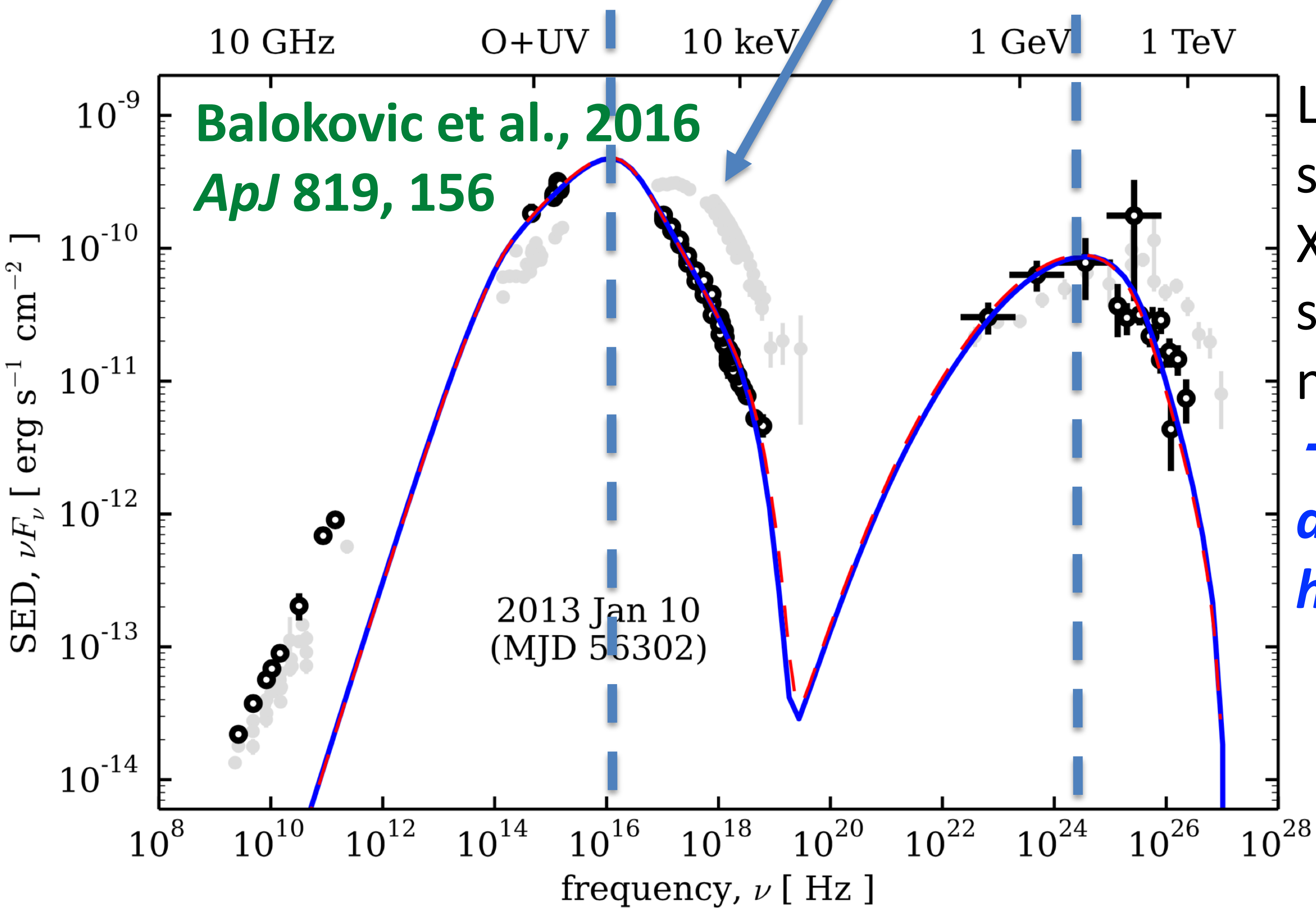
→ highest variability at X-ray and VHE



Mrk421 suffers a personality crisis (in 2013)

Peak position at ~10^{16} Hz (~40 eV)
Factor 10 lower than typical
→ *"HBL moving towards IBL"*

-Abdo et al., 2011, ApJ 736, 131
(**typical state**)

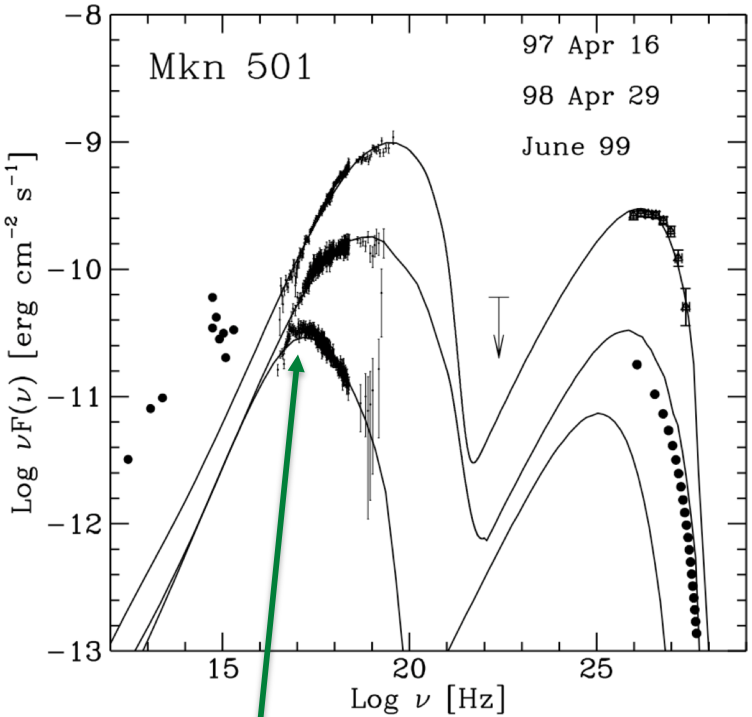


Low activity softened the X-ray and VHE spectra, but did not bring cutoffs
→ Electrons accelerated to highest energies

Mrk501 has shown X-ray and VHE spectral variability during flares

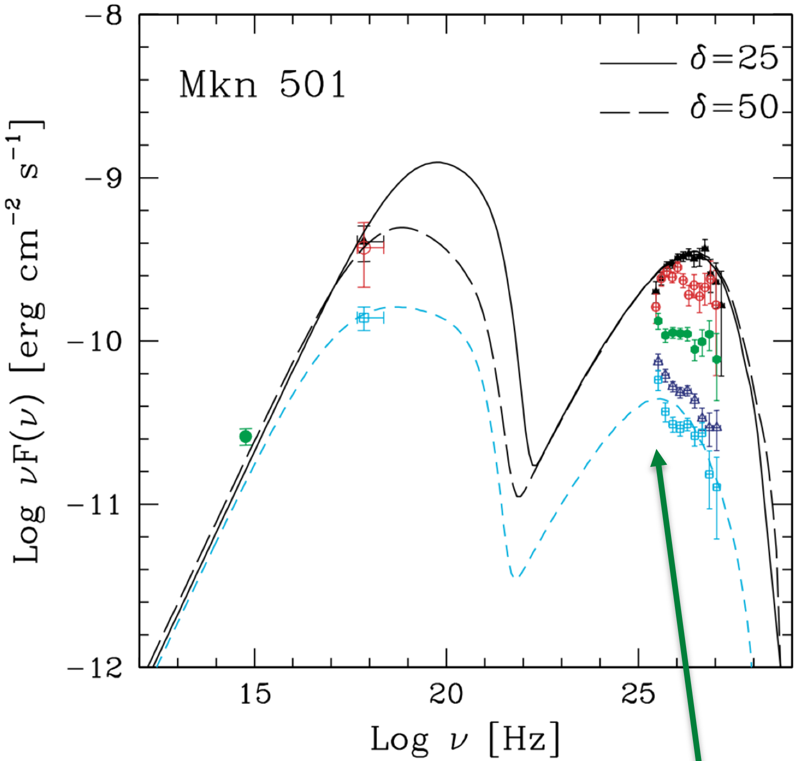
(Historical) flare in 1997

Tavecchio et al., 2001, ApJ 554,725



(fast variability) flare in 2005

Albert et al., 2007, ApJ 669,862



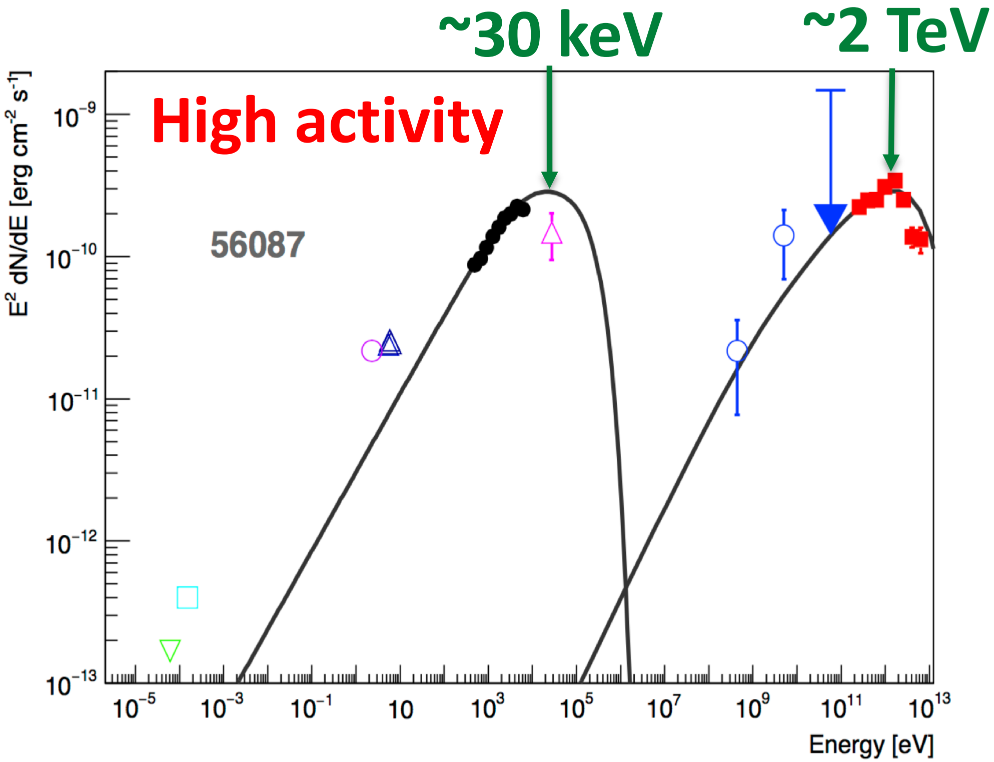
Hard spectra in Mrk501 <u>not observed</u> during low states,

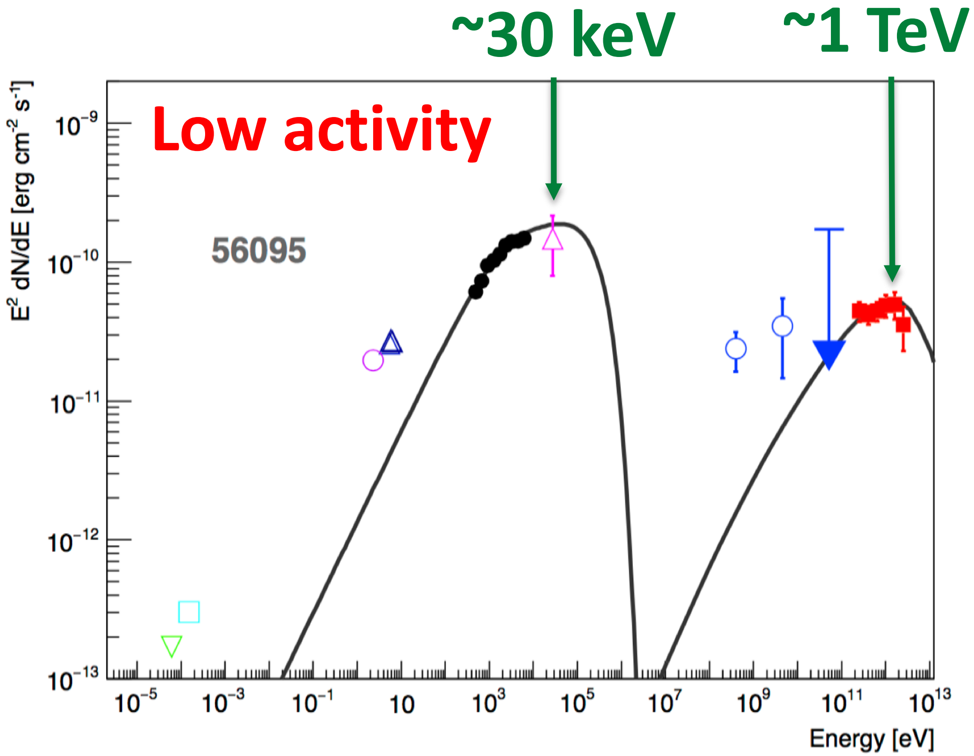
< 1 keV

< 0.1 TeV

Mrk501 suffers a personality crisis (in 2012)

VERY hard spectral index in X-rays and VHE gamma rays, regardless of activity (during MW 2012)





Radio:
OVRO
Metsahovi

X-ray:
Swift/XRT
Swift/BAT

Gamma ray:
Fermi-LAT
MAGIC

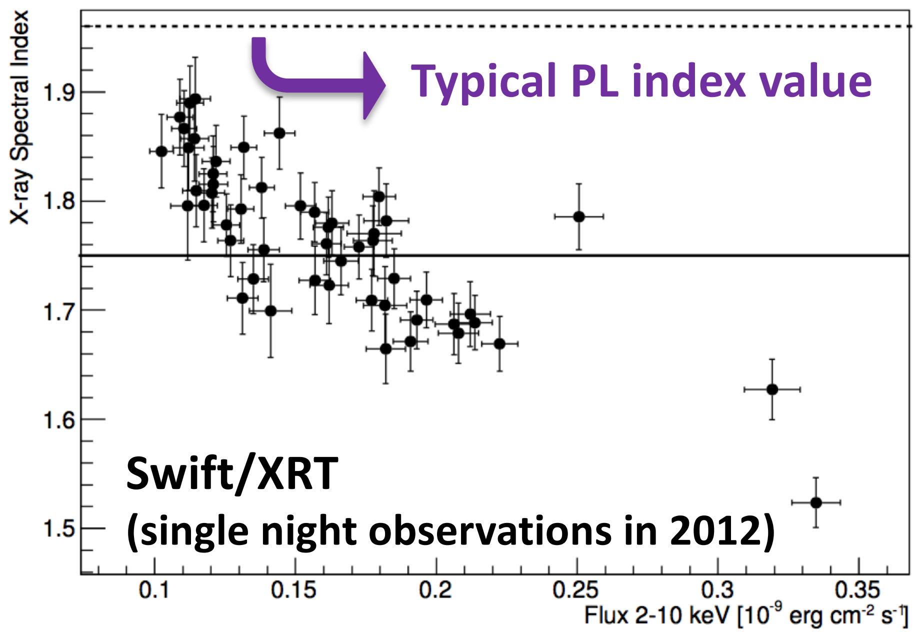
Optical/UV:
R-band (WEBT+)
Swift/UVOT

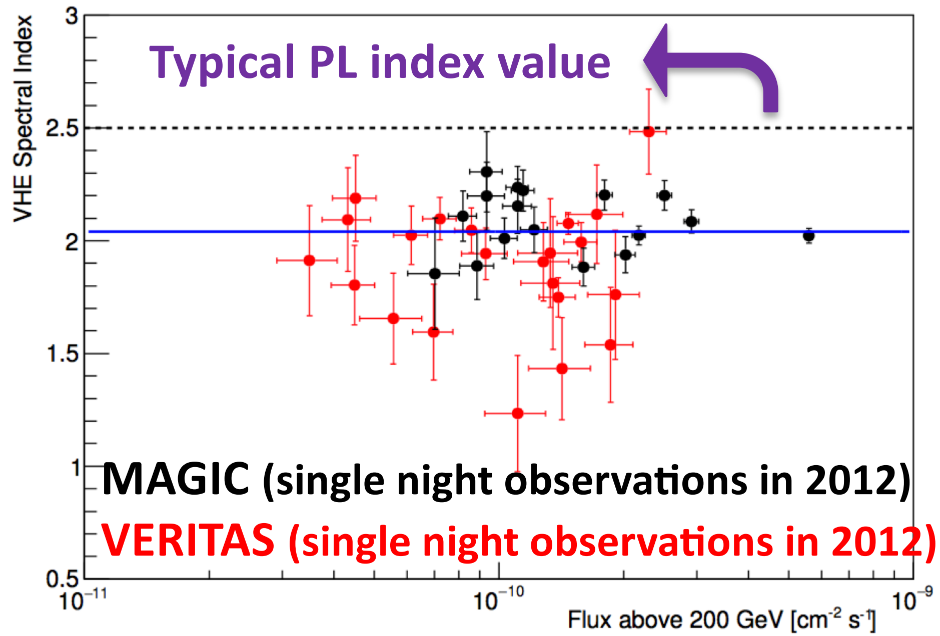
Ahnen et al., 2018
A&A 620 , 181

Mrk501 suffers a personality crisis (in 2012)

VERY hard spectral index in X-rays and VHE gamma rays, regardless of activity (during MW 2012)

Ahnen et al., 2018 A&A 620 , 181





→ <u>Mrk 501 behaved as Extreme HBL!</u>

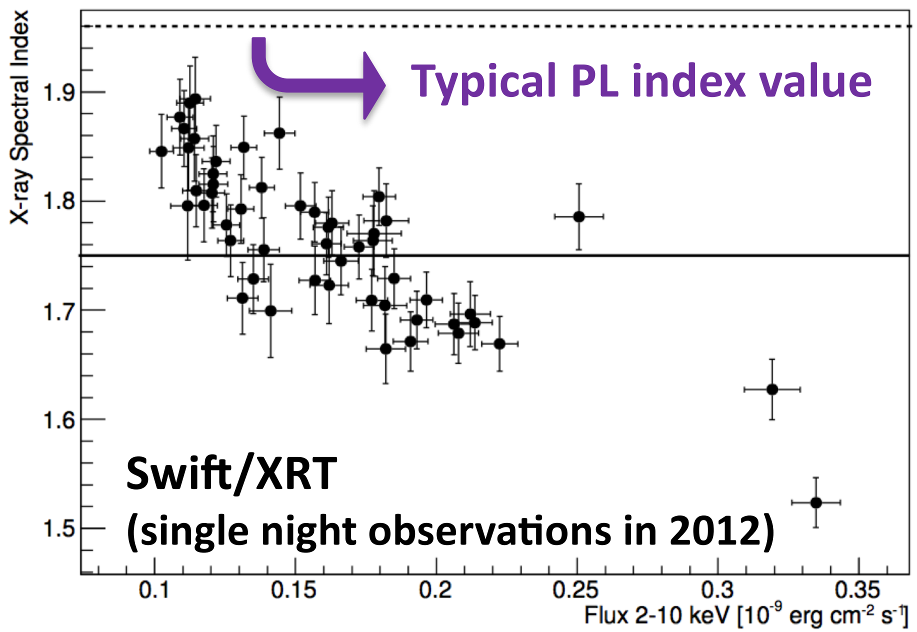
Similar X-ray/VHE spectra as
1ES 0229+200, 1ES 0347-121
(Peaks at ~10 keV and ~1TeV)

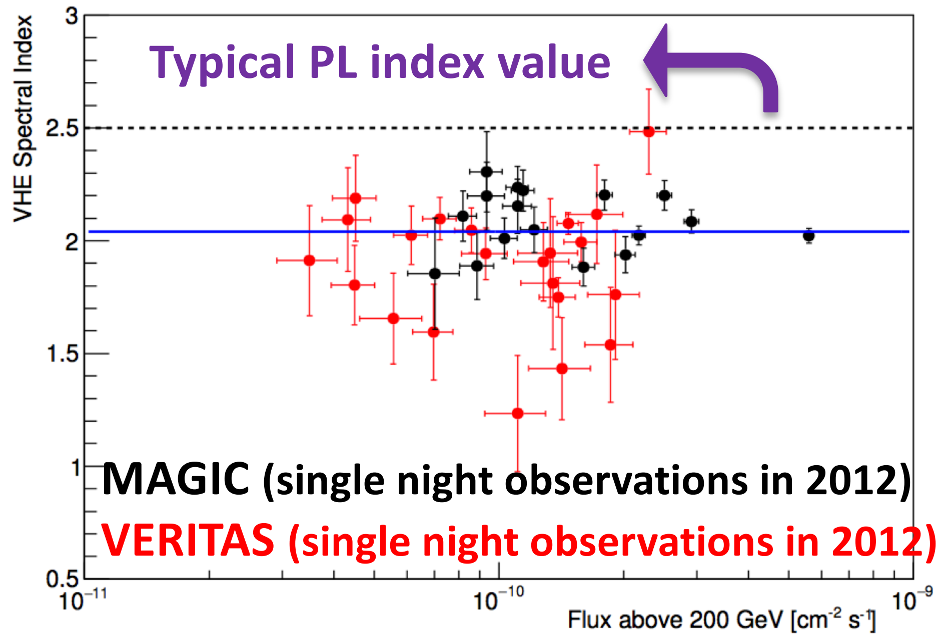
Being "extreme HBL" may be a temporal state, rather than intrinsic blazar characteristic

Mrk501 suffers a personality crisis (in 2012)

VERY hard spectral index in X-rays and VHE gamma rays, regardless of activity (during MW 2012)

Ahnen et al., 2018 A&A 620 , 181





<u>Mrk501_F^{TeV} > ~10 x 1ES0229_F^{TeV}</u>

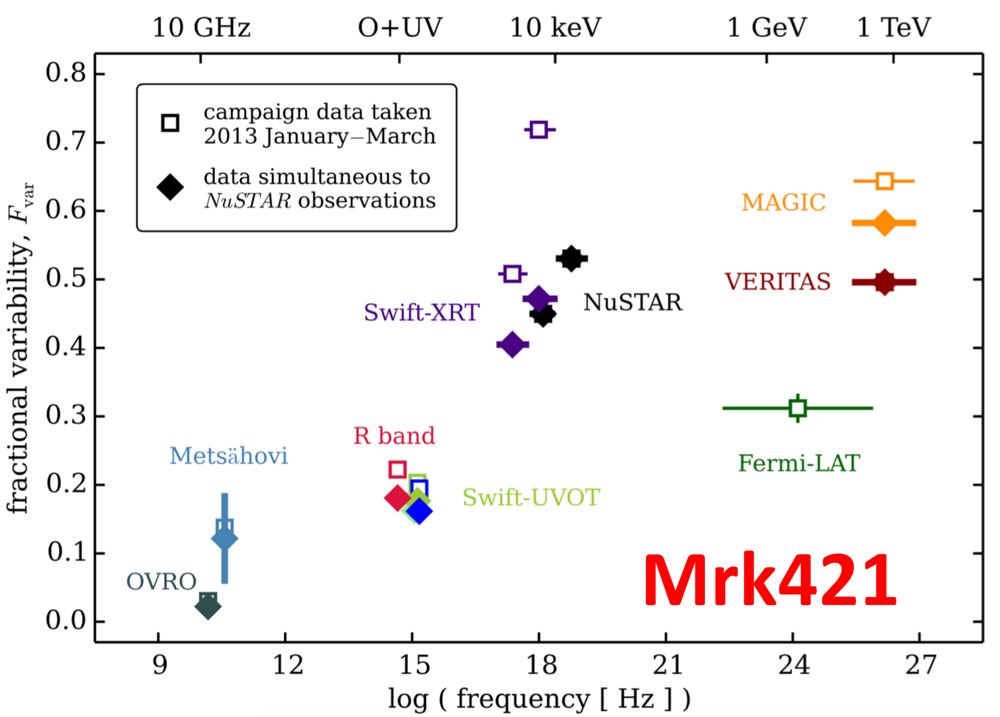
Similar quality spectra need observations 100 time longer than those needed for Mrk501

Precision on 1ES 0229 needs CTA !!

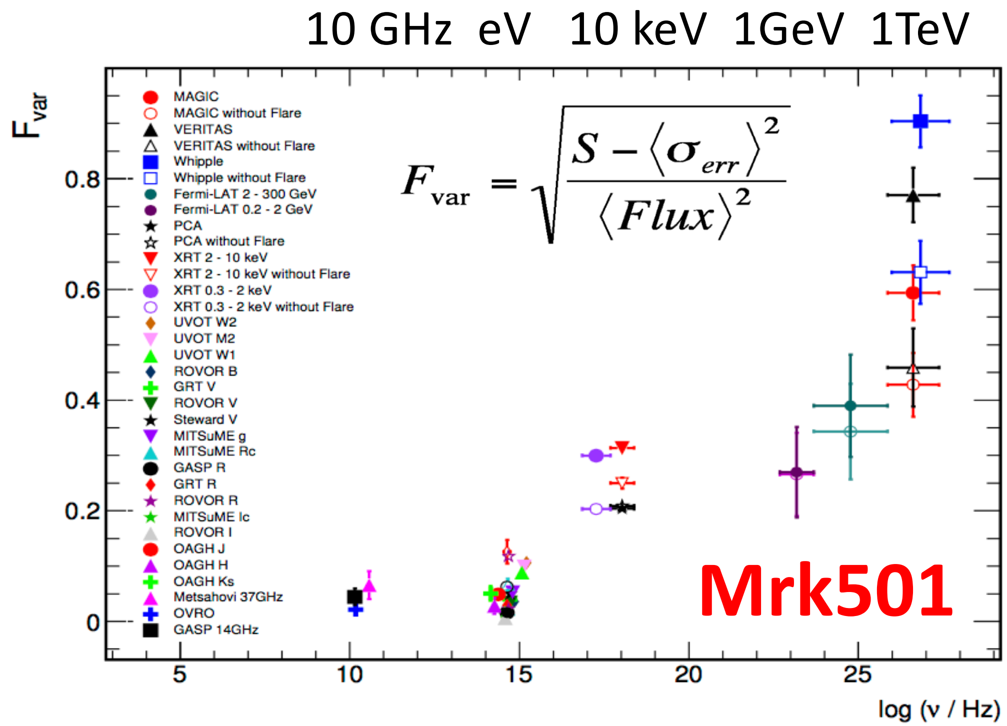
Being "extreme HBL" may be a temporal state, rather than intrinsic blazar characteristic

Comparison of variability between the two archetypical TeV blazars: Mrk421 vs. Mrk501

Balokovic et al., 2016 *ApJ* 819, 156



Ahnen et al 2017 *A&A* 603 , A31



Typically:

Fvar (**Mkr421**): clear double-peaked structure, **Fvar (X-rays) ~ Fvar(VHE)**

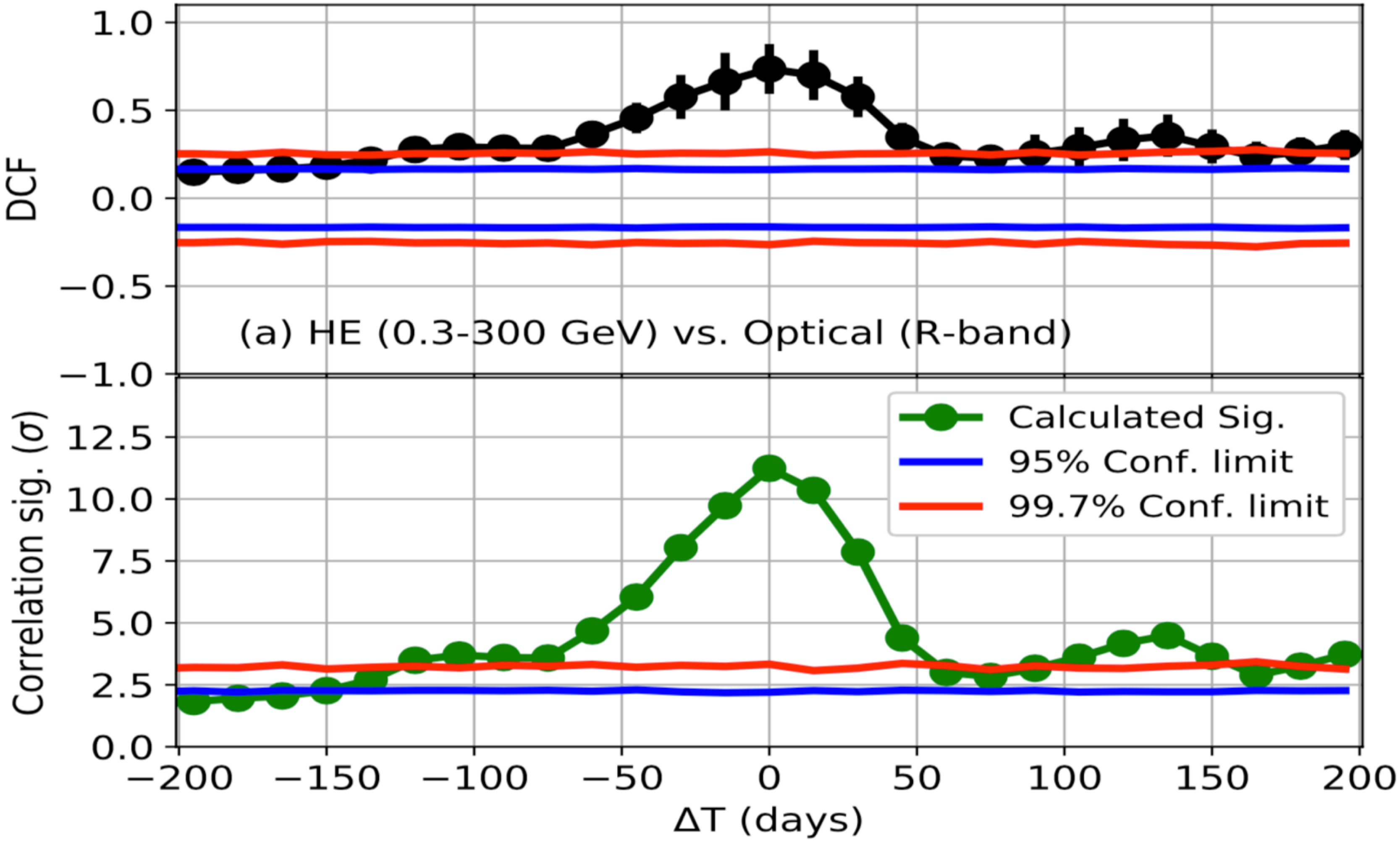
Fvar (**Mrk501**): general increase with energy, **Fvar(X-rays) < Fvar(VHE)**

Fundamental difference in variability of these two "sister sources"

GeV-optical correlation in Mrk421 (2007-2016)

Clear correlation between HE and optical over a wide range of time-lags of about 60 days, and centered at a time-lag of zero

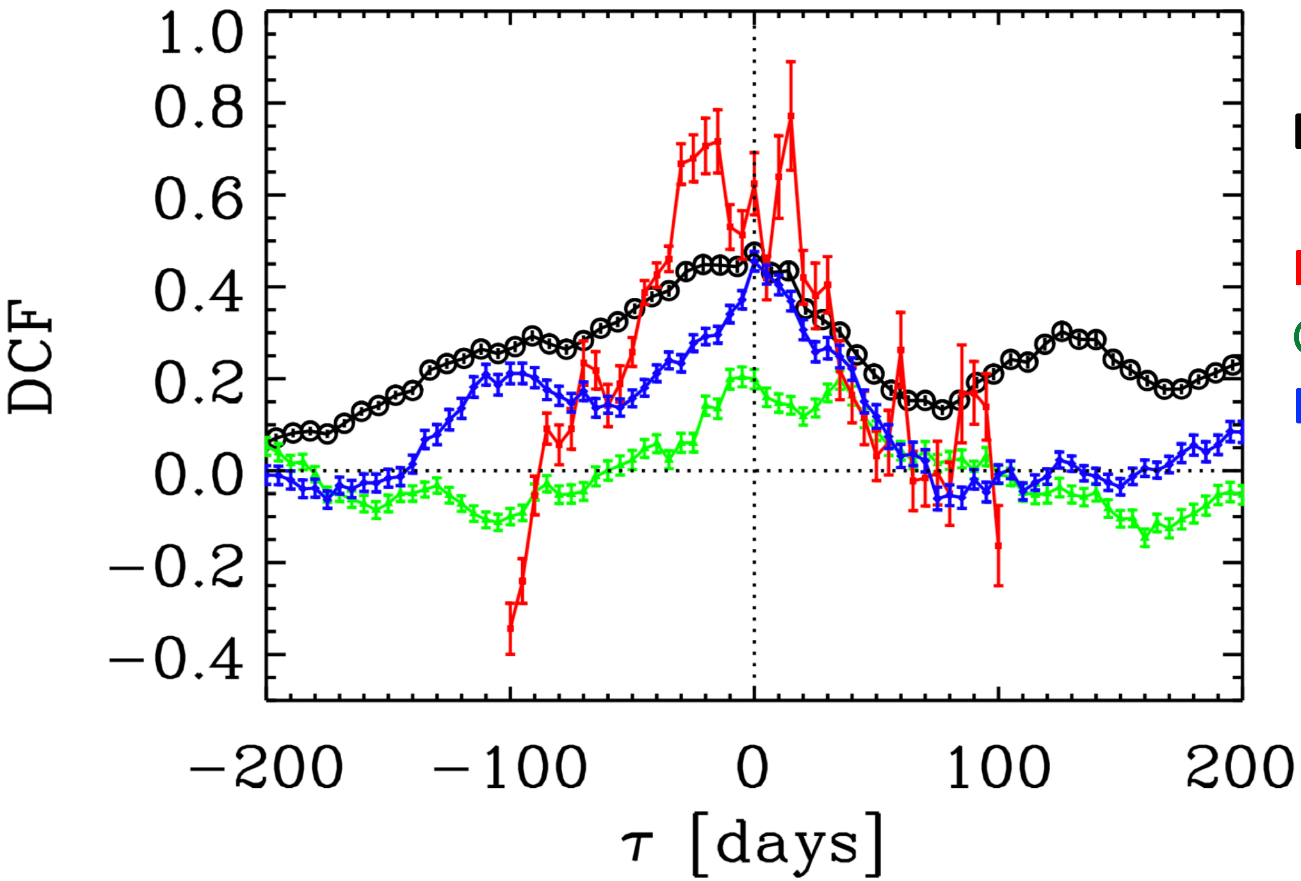
Acciari et al 2020, MNRAS in press (arXiv:2012.01348)



GeV-optical correlation in Mrk421 (2007-2016)

HE-optical correlation over a large range of time-lags was also reported in another long-term (**2007-2015**) Mrk421 study, that also used 15 days time bins

Carnerero et al. 2017, MNRAS, 472, 3789



Black- All data

Red – Around Flare 2012

Green – Before Flare 2012

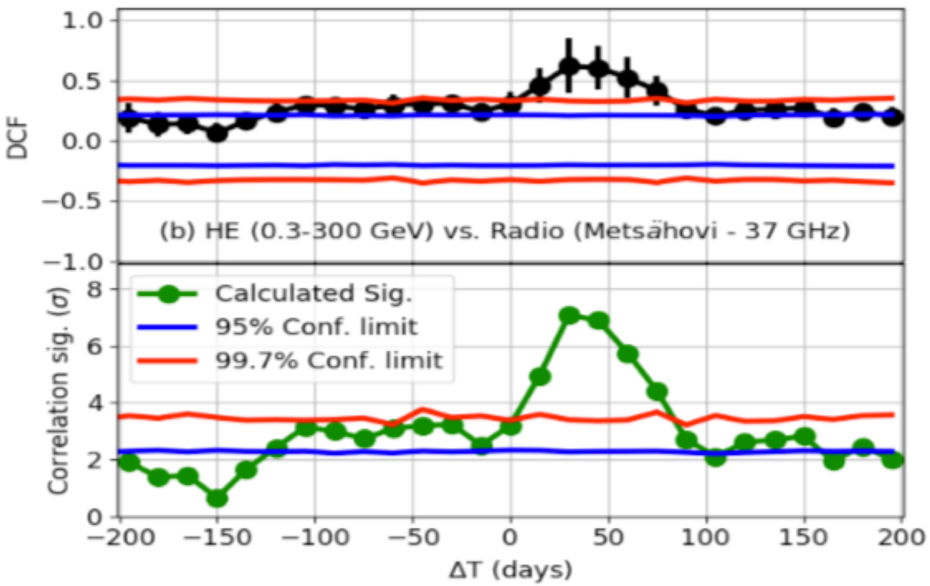
Blue – After flare 2012

GeV-radio correlation in Mrk421 (2007-2016)

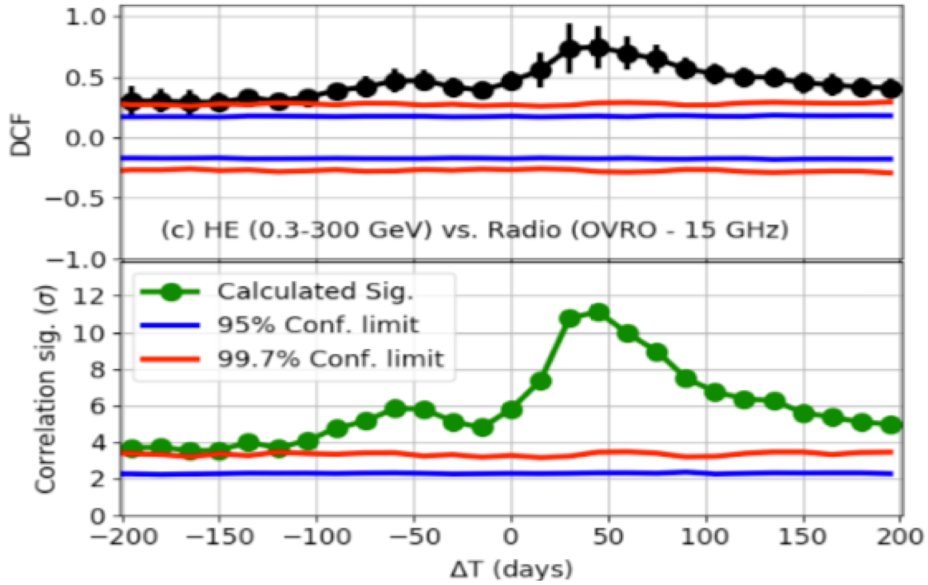
Acciari et al 2020, MNRAS in press (arXiv:2012.01348)

> 0.3 GeV (Fermi-LAT)

37 GHz (Metsahovi)



15 GHz (OVRO)



GeV-radio-optical correlation in Mrk421 (2007-2016)

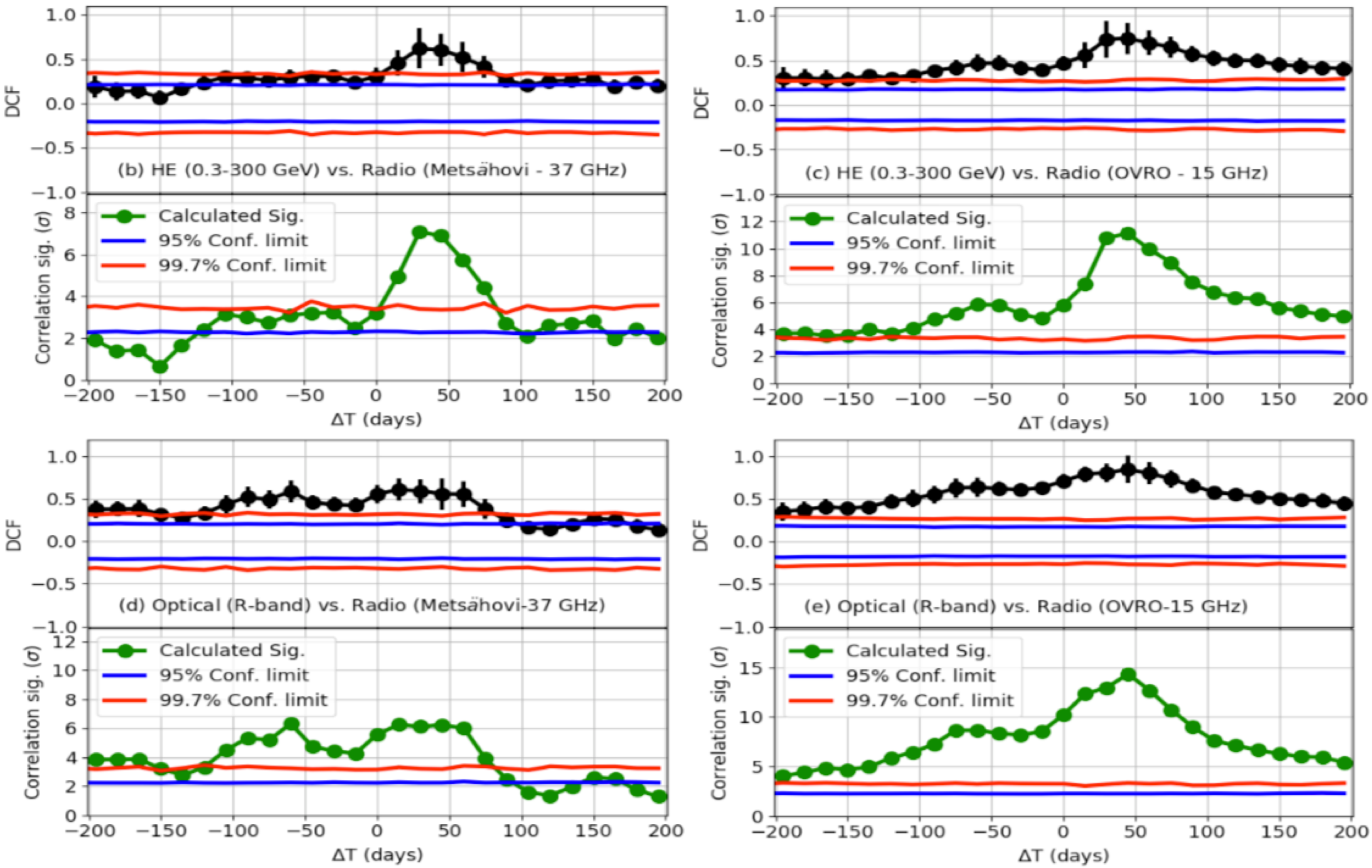
Acciari et al 2020, MNRAS in press (arXiv:2012.01348)

37 GHz (Metsahovi)

15 GHz (OVRO)

> 0.3 GeV (Fermi-LAT)

Optical (R-band)



Radio-GeV correlation in Mrk421 (2007-2016)

Correlated behaviour with a time lag of ~45 days (Radio lags) reported by:

Max-Moerbeck et al 2014, MNRAS 445, 428

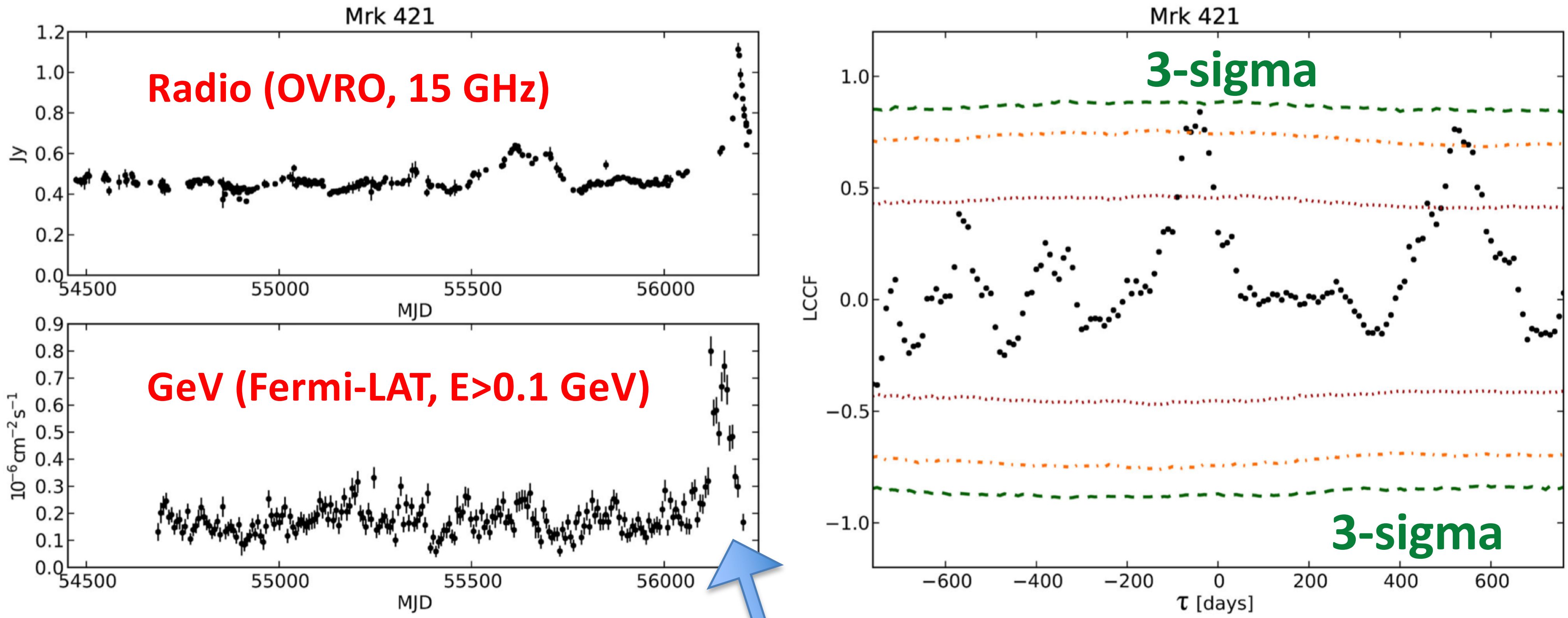


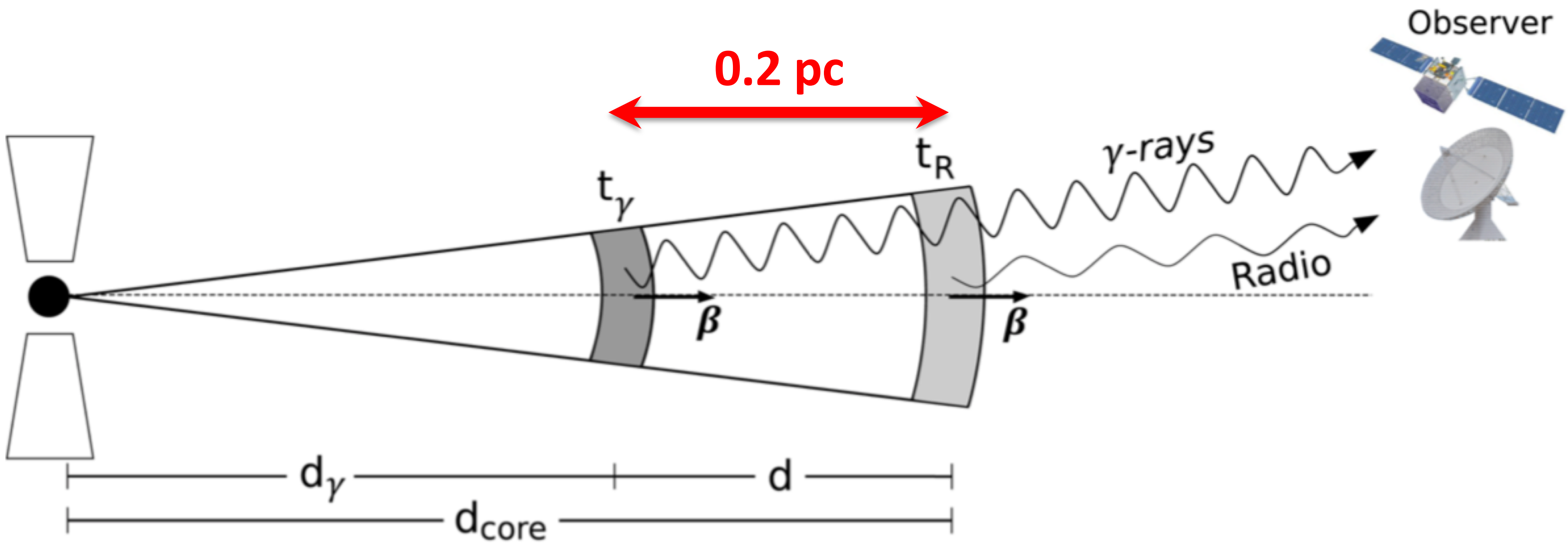
Figure 2. Light curves (left) and cross-correlation (right) for Mrk 421. The most significant peak is at -40 ± 9 d with 98.96 per cent significance. Colours and line styles as in Fig. 1.

40 +/- 9 days

Back then, the correlated behaviour was marginally signifincant (~3 sigma) and strongly dominated by the large flare in 2012

Radio-GeV correlation in Mrk421 (2007-2016)

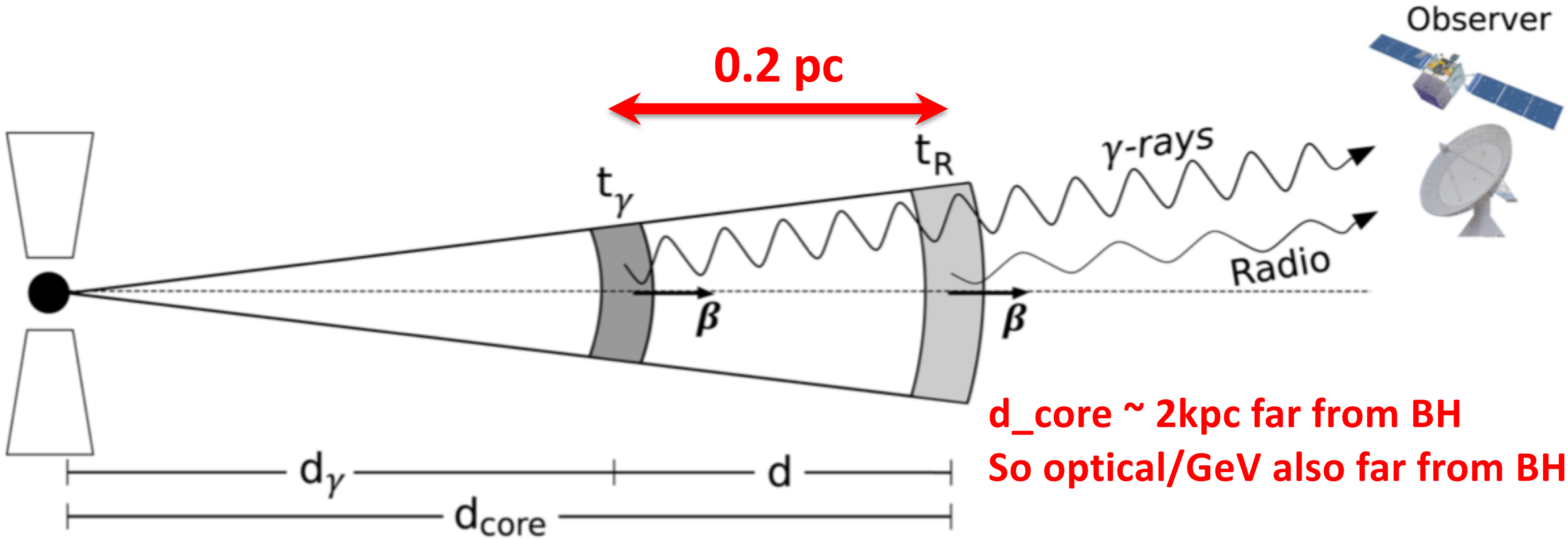
We confirm and further strengthen the correlation and the radio lag of about 45 days reported in **Max-Moerbeck et al 2014,** but this time with data that is NOT dominated by the 2012 flare. **This correlation is an intrinsic characteristic in the multi-year emission of Mrk421, and not a particularity of a rare flaring activity.**



Emission may be produced by plasma (or jet disturbance) moving along the jet of Mrk421, first crossing the surface of unit gamma-ray opacity and then, **about 0.2 pc down the jet**, crossing the surface of unit radio opacity

Radio-GeV correlation in Mrk421 (2007-2016)

We confirm and further strengthen the correlation and the radio lag of about 45 days reported in **Max-Moerbeck et al 2014,** <u>but this time with data that is NOT dominated by the 2012 flare.</u> **This correlation is an intrinsic characteristic in the multi-year emission of Mrk421, and not a particularity of a rare flaring activity.**



d_core ~ 2kpc far from BH
So optical/GeV also far from BH

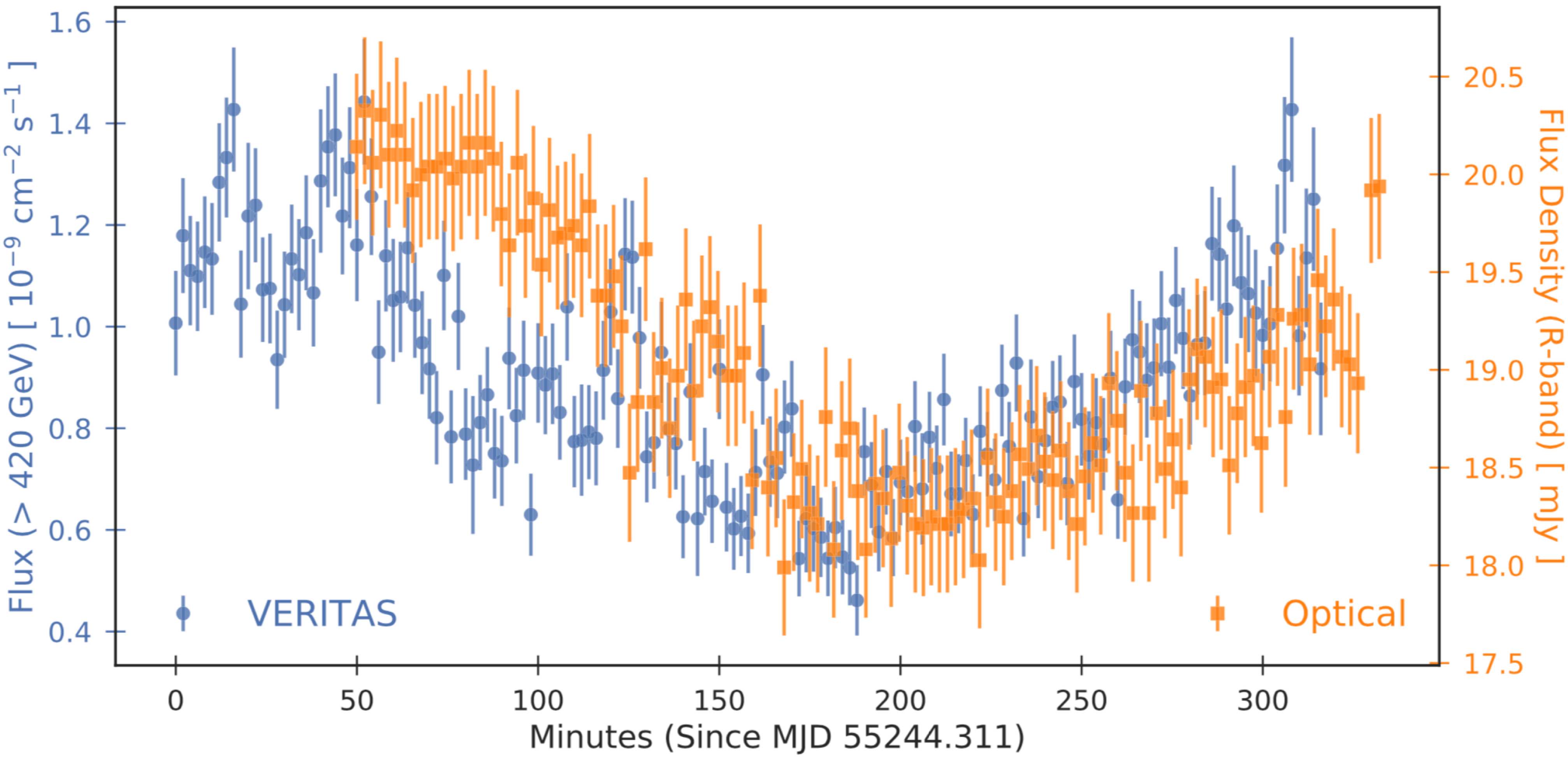
VHE/X-ray may be produced in a small region with very high energy particles close to the central engine, very far away from the radio/optical/GeV emission. This would explain naturally the (typical) lack of correlation between VHE/X-ray and optical/GeV

But there may be possibilities for VHE/X-ray emission close to optical/GeV (and radio)

Intra-night Optical-TeV correlation in Mrk421 during unprecedented flaring activity (February 17th, 2010)

Abeysekara et al. ApJ 2020, 890, 97

Largest TeV flare of Mrk421 to date (27 x Crab Nebula above 1 TeV)



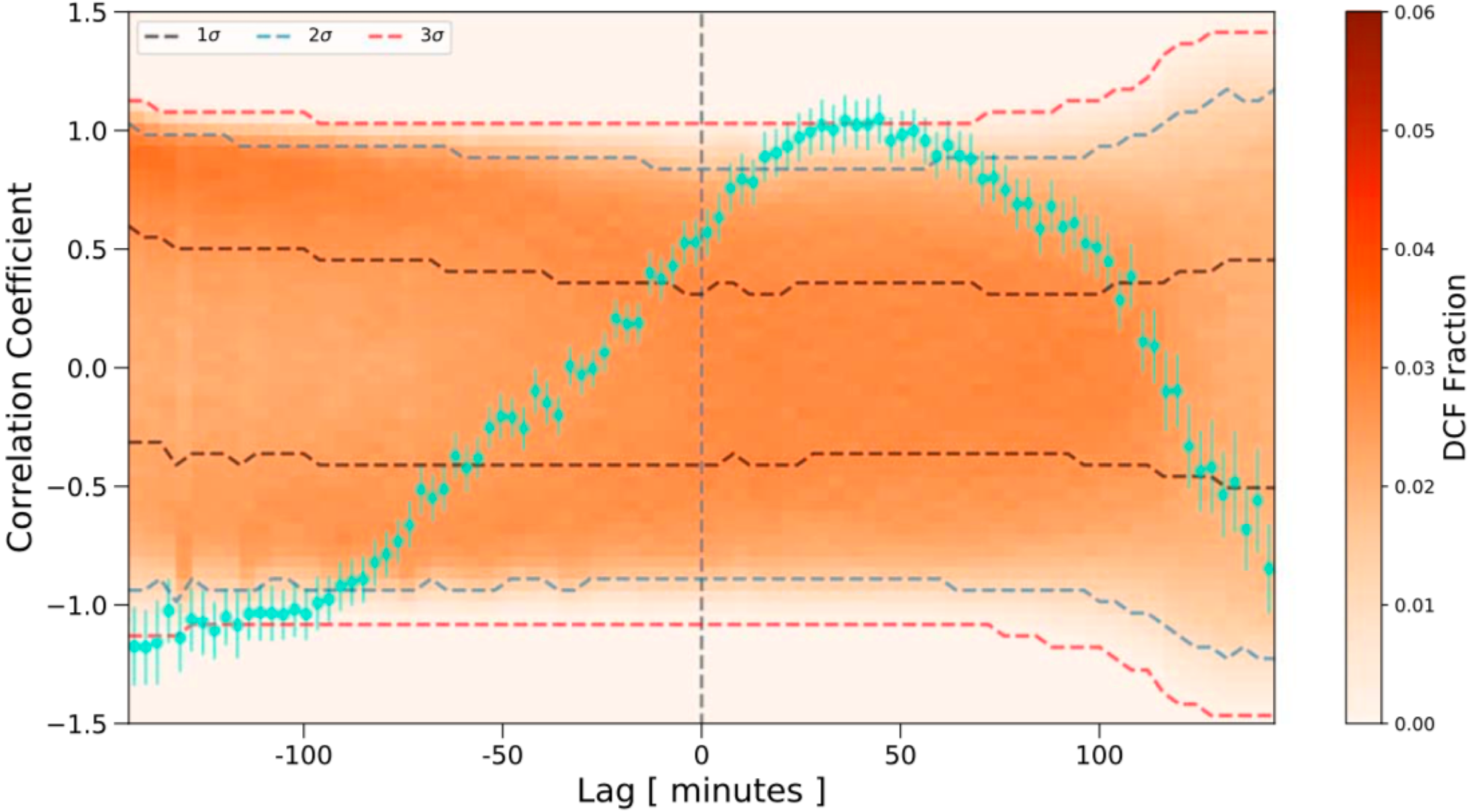
Intra-night Optical-TeV correlation in Mrk421 during unprecedented flaring activity (February 17th, 2010)

Abeysekara et al. ApJ 2020, 890, 97

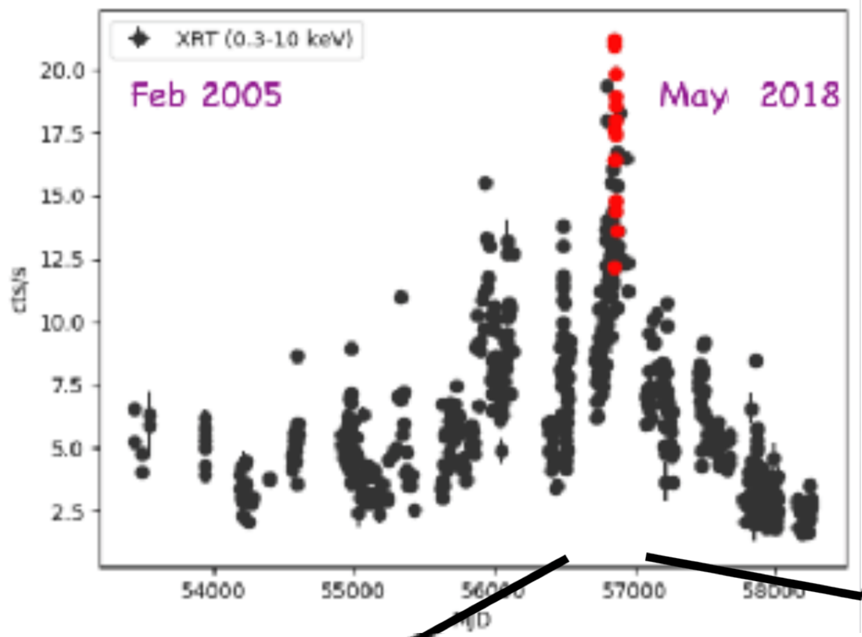
Correlation at 3 sigma, with a time lag of about 40 minutes

→ *TeV and eV emission co-spatial (at least partially) during this flare*

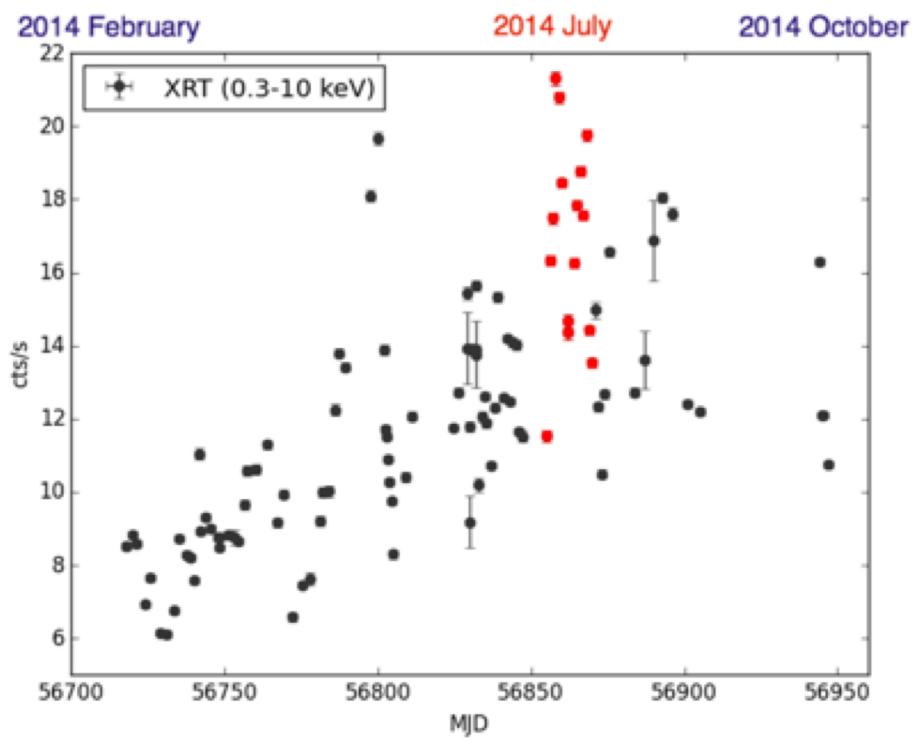
→ *Very atypical event, suggesting distinct processes during this flare*



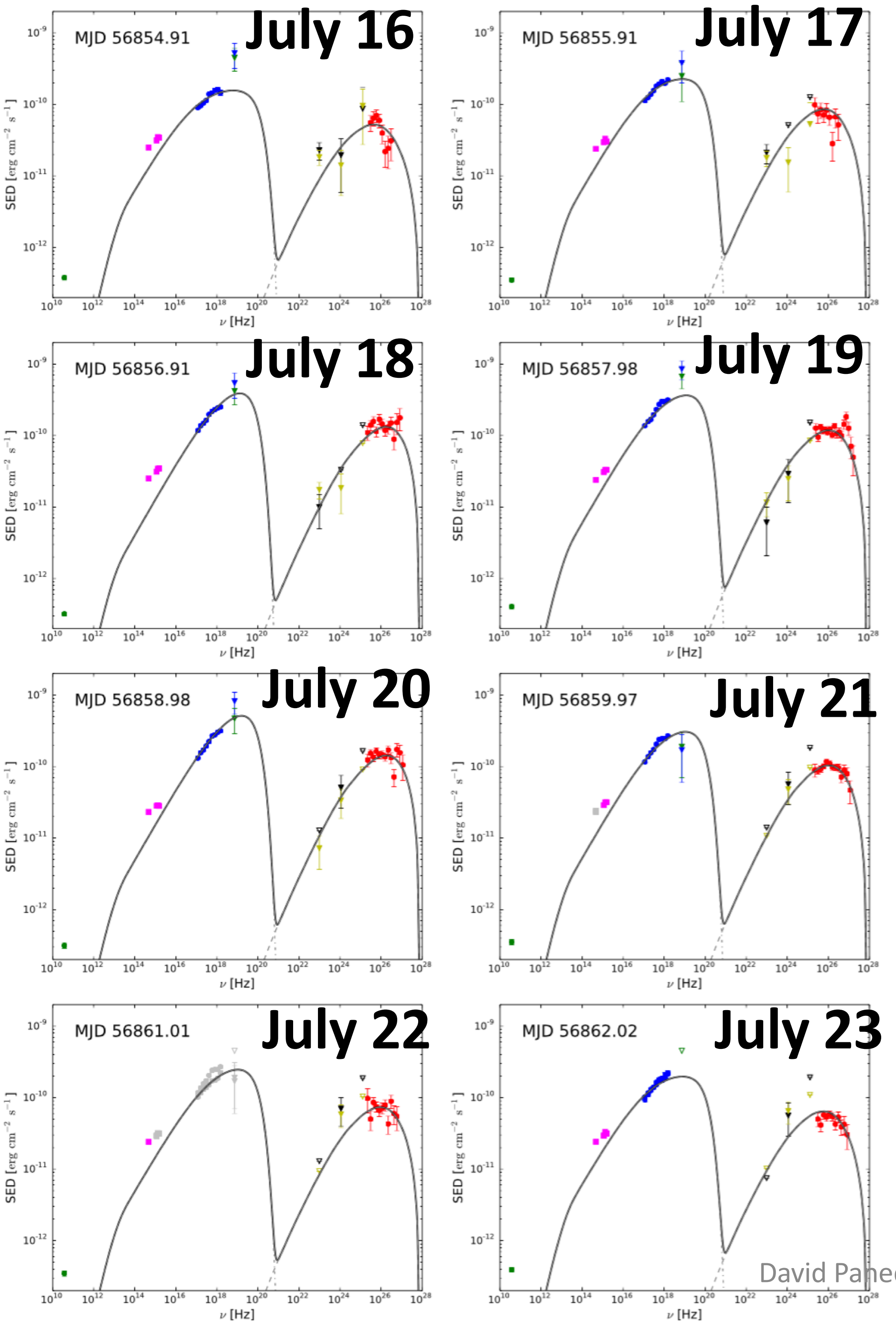
Large flaring activity of Mrk501 in July 2014



Swift-XRT
Historical light curve
in ~**15 years**



Largest X-ray activity occurred in July 2014

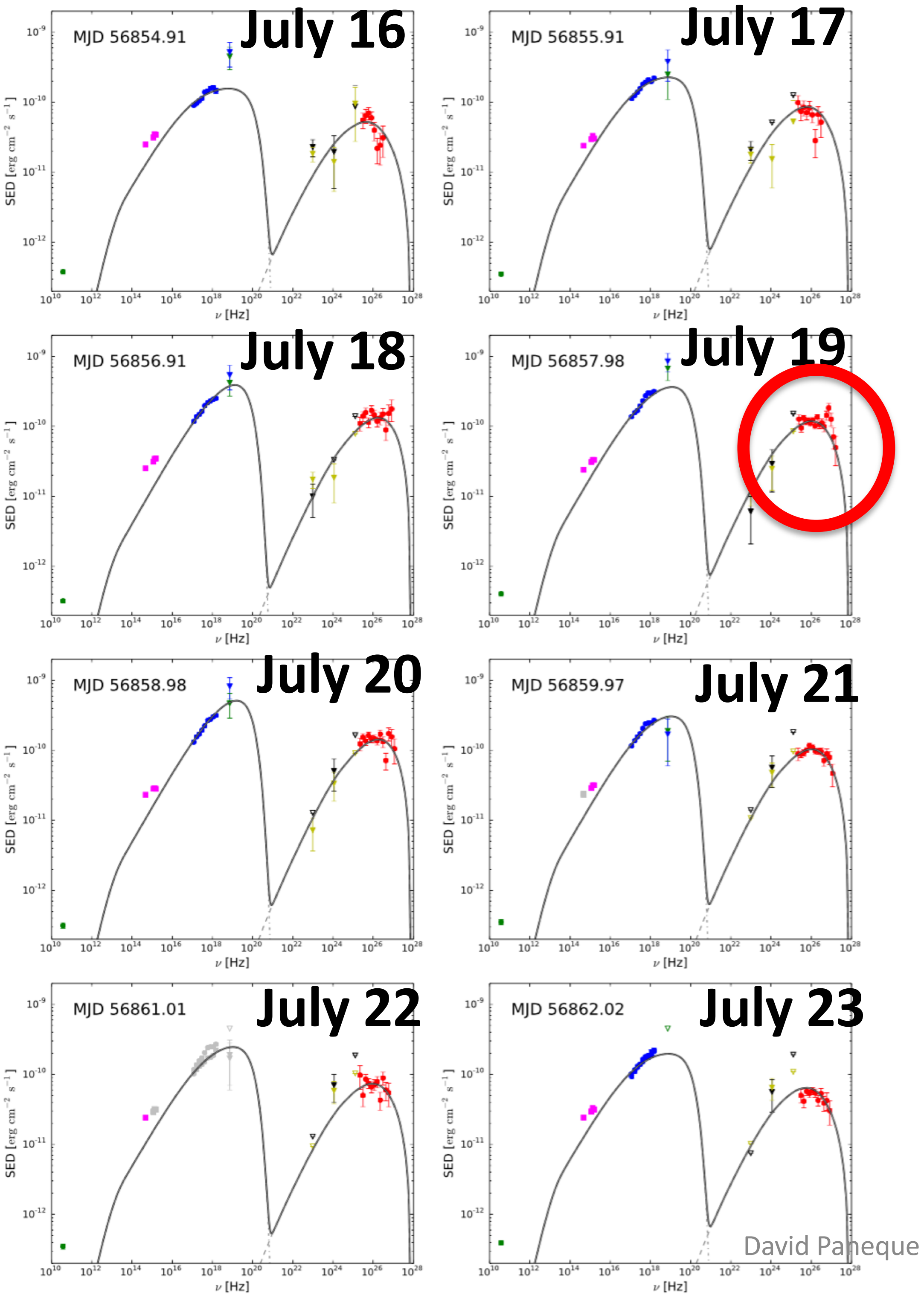


Large flaring activity of Mrk501 in July 2014

Acciari et al A&A 2020, 637, 86

Broadband SEDs can be constructed for single (observations) nights

→ One-zone SSC can describe the most prominent and variable components



Large flaring activity of Mrk501 in July 2014

Narrow feature at ~3 TeV found in the VHE spectrum of MJD 56857.98 (July 19th, 2014), when X-ray flux was highest

This feature is inconsistent at more than 3**σ** with the classical functions for VHE spectra (*power law, log-parabola, and log-parabola with exp. cutoff*)

statistical fluctuation (>3σ) or new component ?

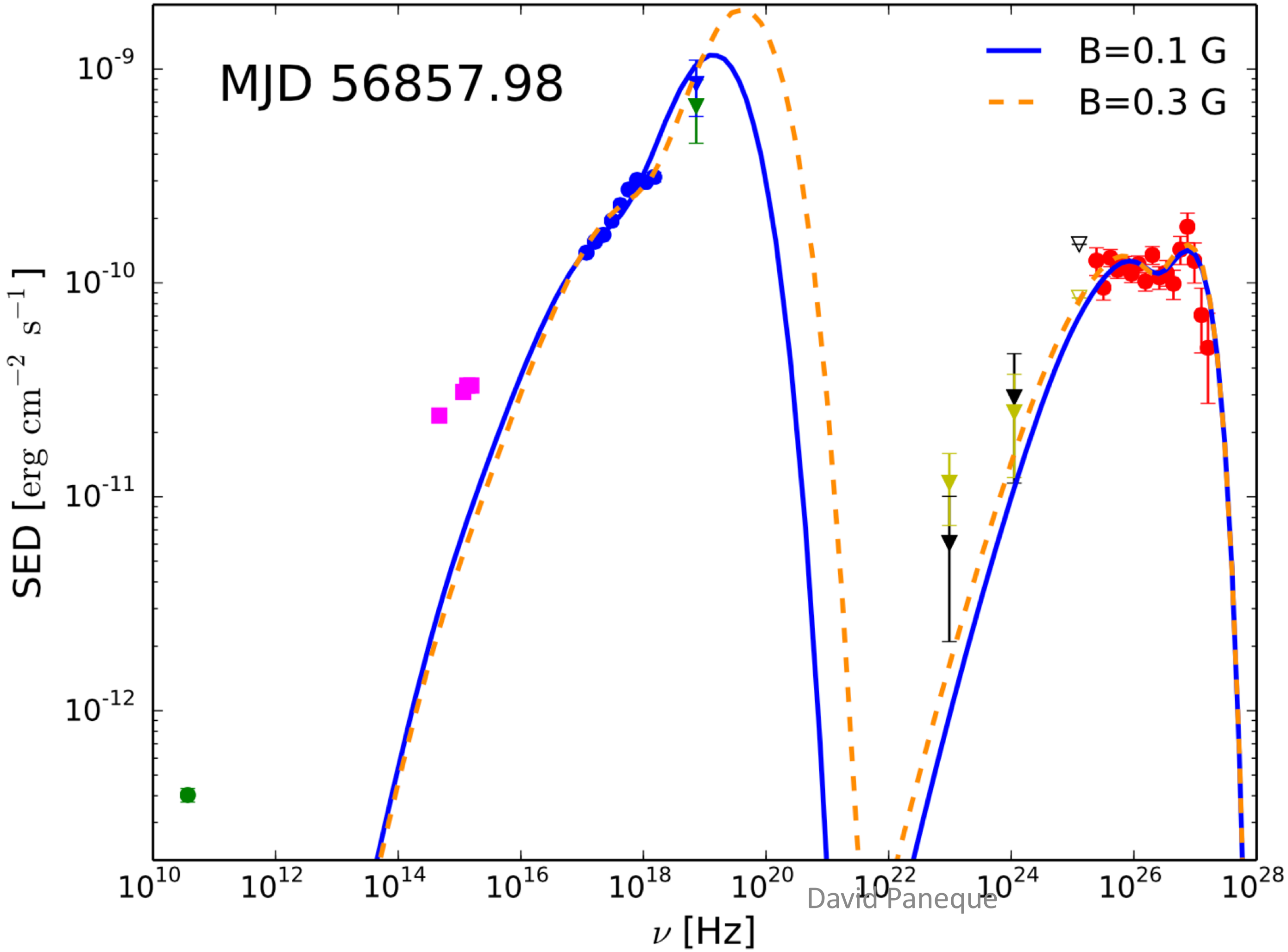
Pile-up in the electron energy distribution due to stochastic acceleration

Acciari et al A&A 2020, 637, 86

$\text{Time}_{\text{Acceleration}}(\gamma_{eq}) \sim \text{Time}_{\text{Cooling}}(\gamma_{eq}) \ll \text{Time}_{\text{Escape}}$

Usual **log-parabolic EED at $\gamma \ll \gamma_{eq}$, Relativistic Maxwellian EED at γ_{eq}**

Mrk501



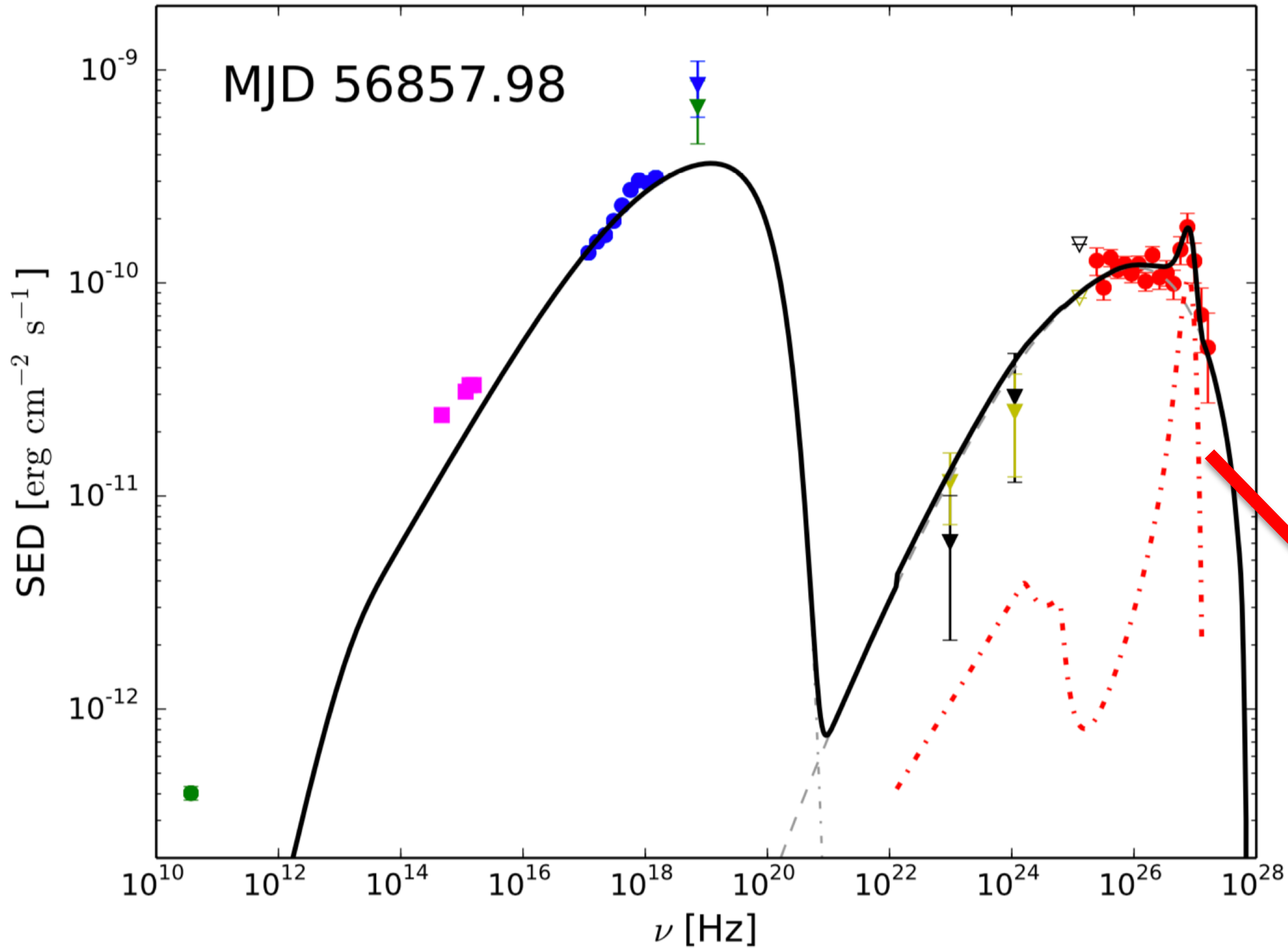
Model performed by Andrea Tramacere

Based on
Stawarz&Petrosian 2008
Tramacere et al 2011
Lefa et al 2011

Additional component produced via an Inverse Compton pair cascade induced by electrons accelerated in a magnetospheric vacuum gap close to the Black Hole

Acciari et al A&A 2020, 637, 86

Mrk501

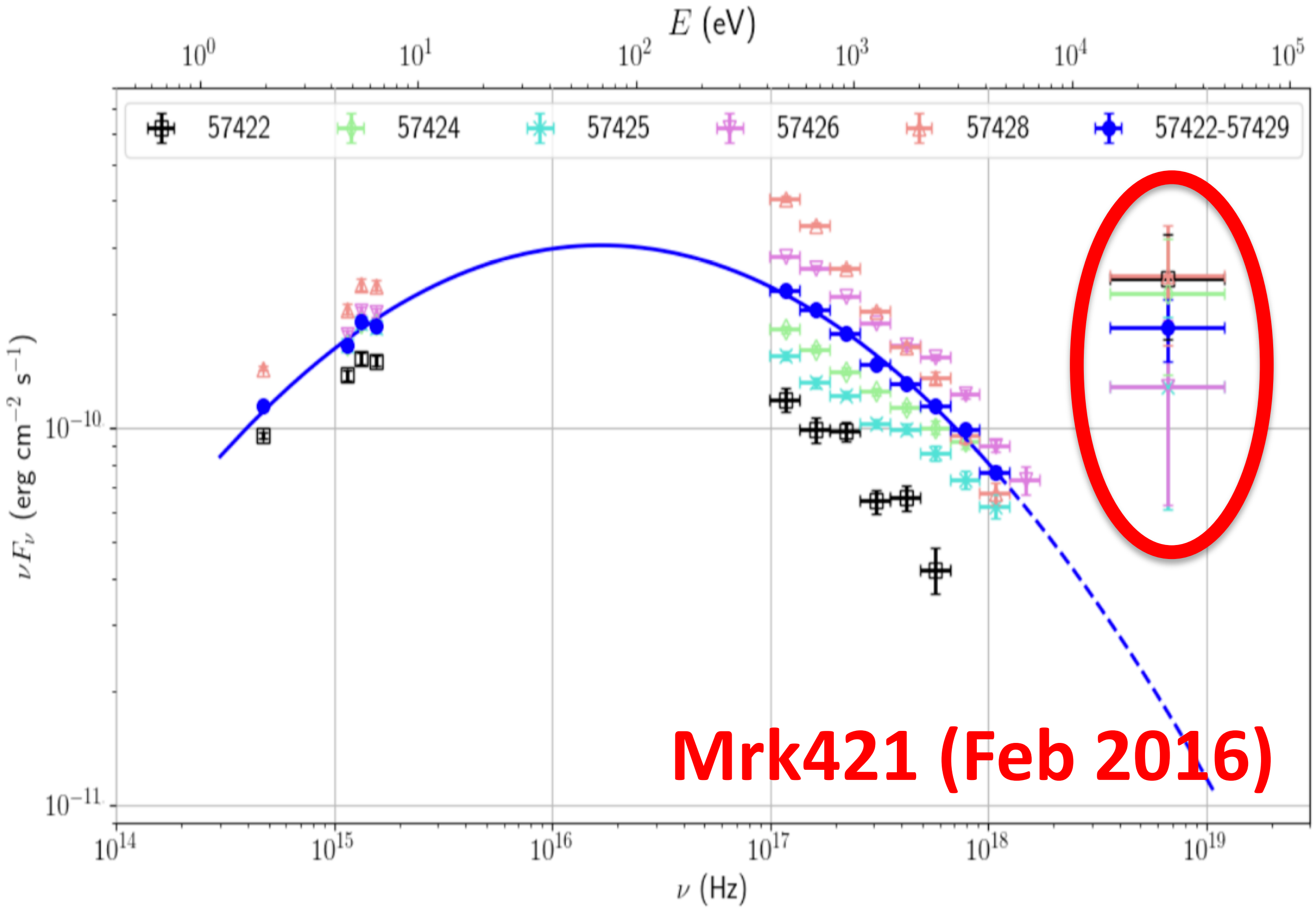


Model by Christoph Wendel
(for details, see arXiv:2012.05215)

Based on
Zdziarski 1988,
Levinson&Rieger 2011,
Ptitsyna&Neronov 2016
and
Wendel et al 2017

Emission from narrow EED accelerated in Magnetospheric vacuum gap

A peculiar observation: Swift BAT excess

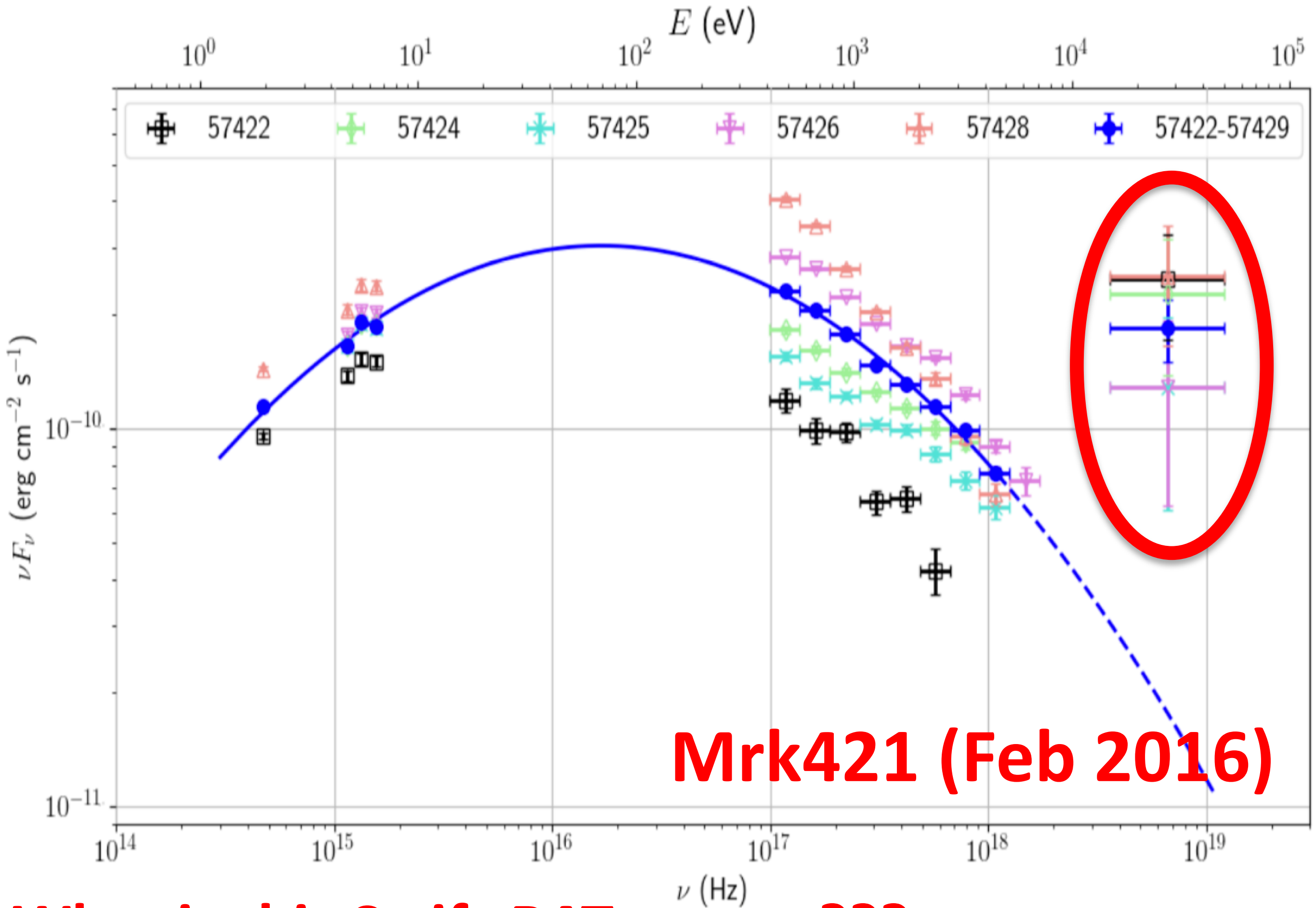


Acciari et al 2020, MNRAS in press (arXiv:2012.01348)

Single spectra (colors) during a 7-day time interval in 2016 Feb. 4—11

And also 7-day average spectra (blue)

A peculiar observation: Swift BAT excess



Acciari et al 2020, MNRAS in press (arXiv:2012.01348)

Single spectra (colors) during a 7-day time interval in 2016 Feb. 4—11

And also 7-day average spectra (blue)

What is this Swift-BAT excess ???

Onset of IC component (*as suggested Kataoka&Stawrz 2016 using NuSTAR hint*) ?

OR

Inverse-Compton produced by high-energy electrons from the spine region up-scattering the synchrotron photons from the layer (*as proposed by Chen 2017*) ?

OR

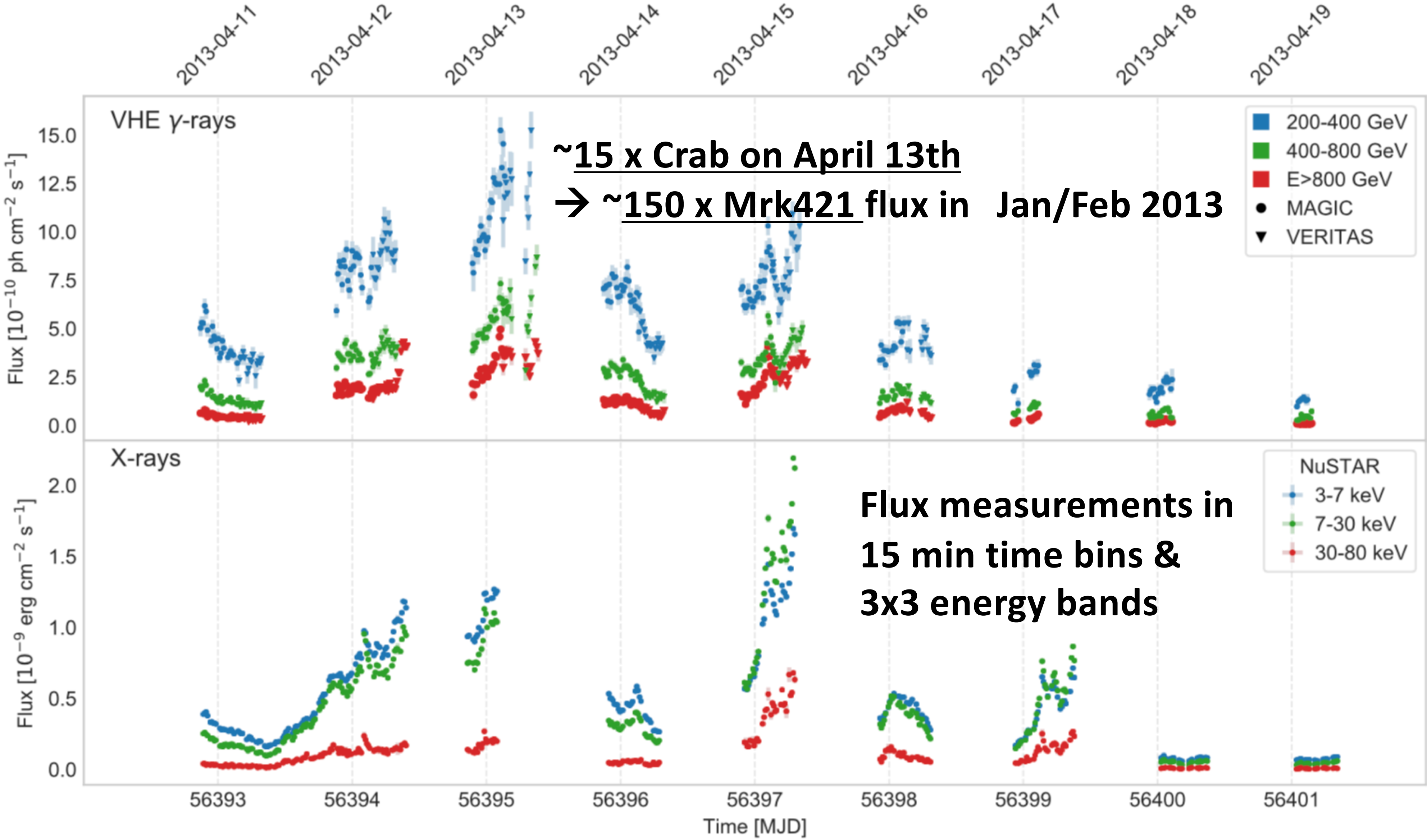
new narrow component, similar to Mrk501 in 2014 (*Acciari et al 2020*) ?

Mrk421 April 2013: Multi-band X-ray and VHE LCs

MAGIC+VERITAS observed for 70 hours and NuSTAR for 71 hours

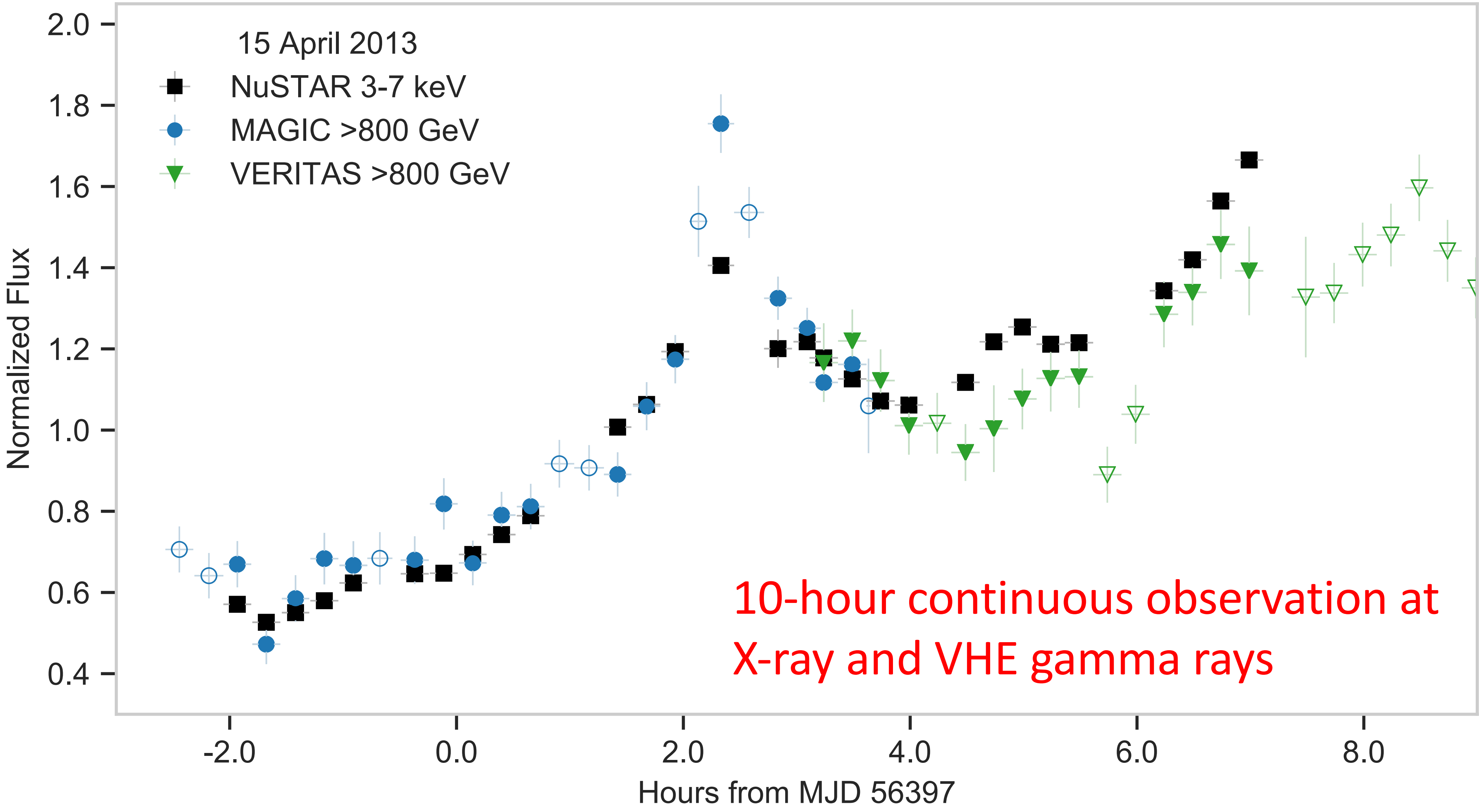
About 45 hours of strictly simultaneous VHE and hard X-ray data

Acciari et al. ApJS 2020, 248, 29



Normalized light curves for single night (April 15th)

Acciari et al. ApJS 2020, 248, 29

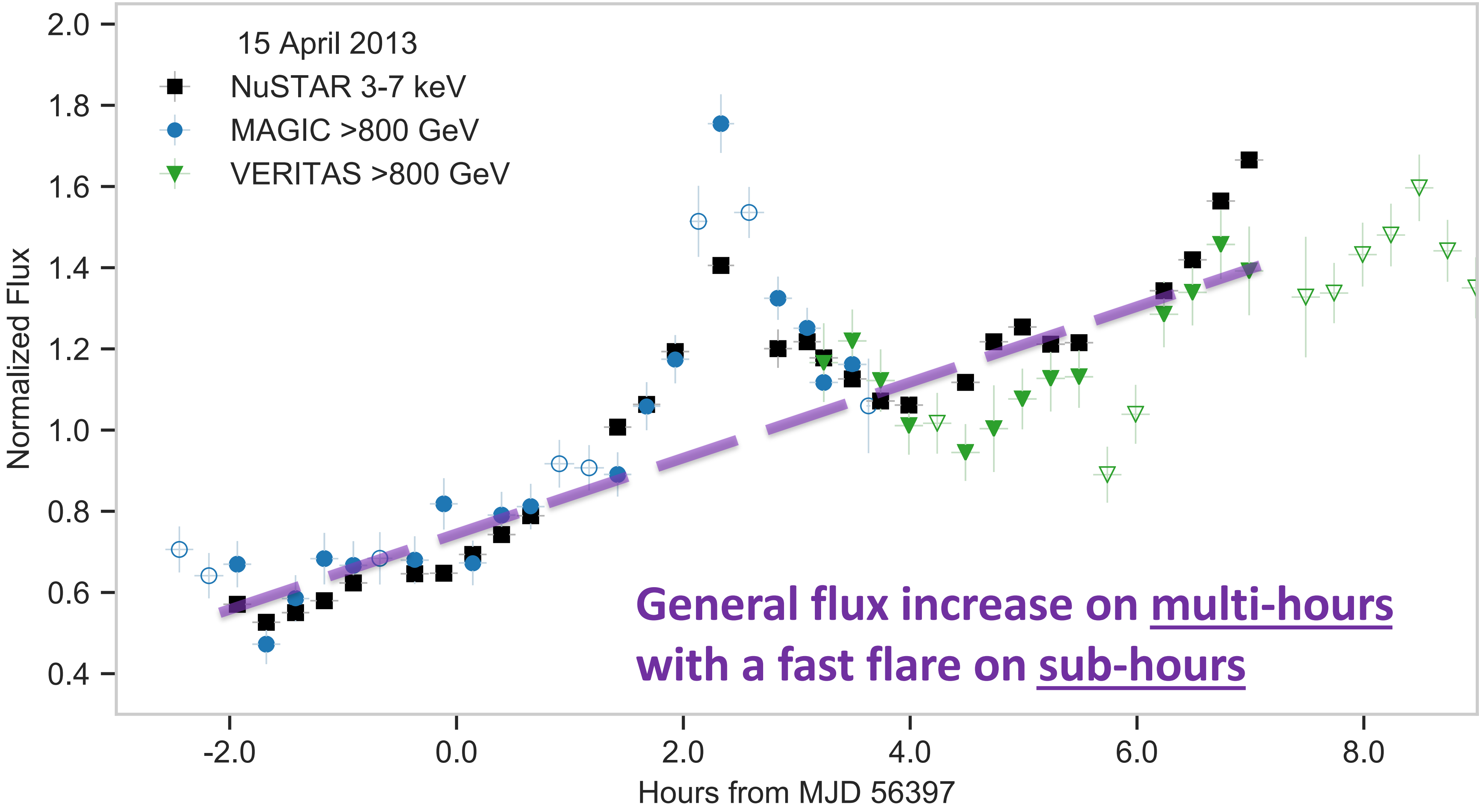


Normalized flux: flux normalized to night mean flux from simultaneous data

Full markers indicate time bins with strictly simultaneous VHE/X-ray data

Normalized light curves for single night (April 15th)

Acciari et al. ApJS 2020, 248, 29



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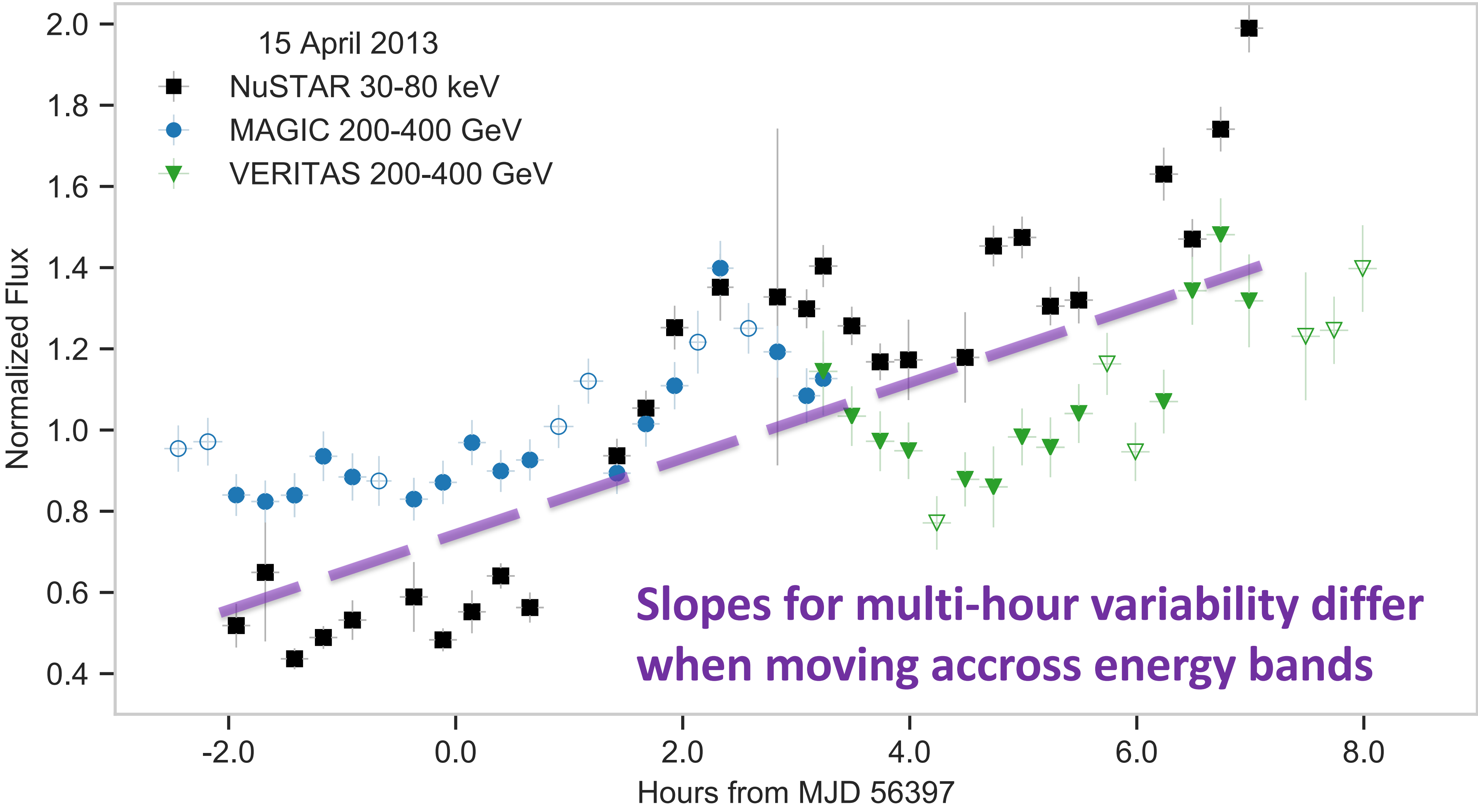
Acciari et al. ApJS 2020, 248, 29



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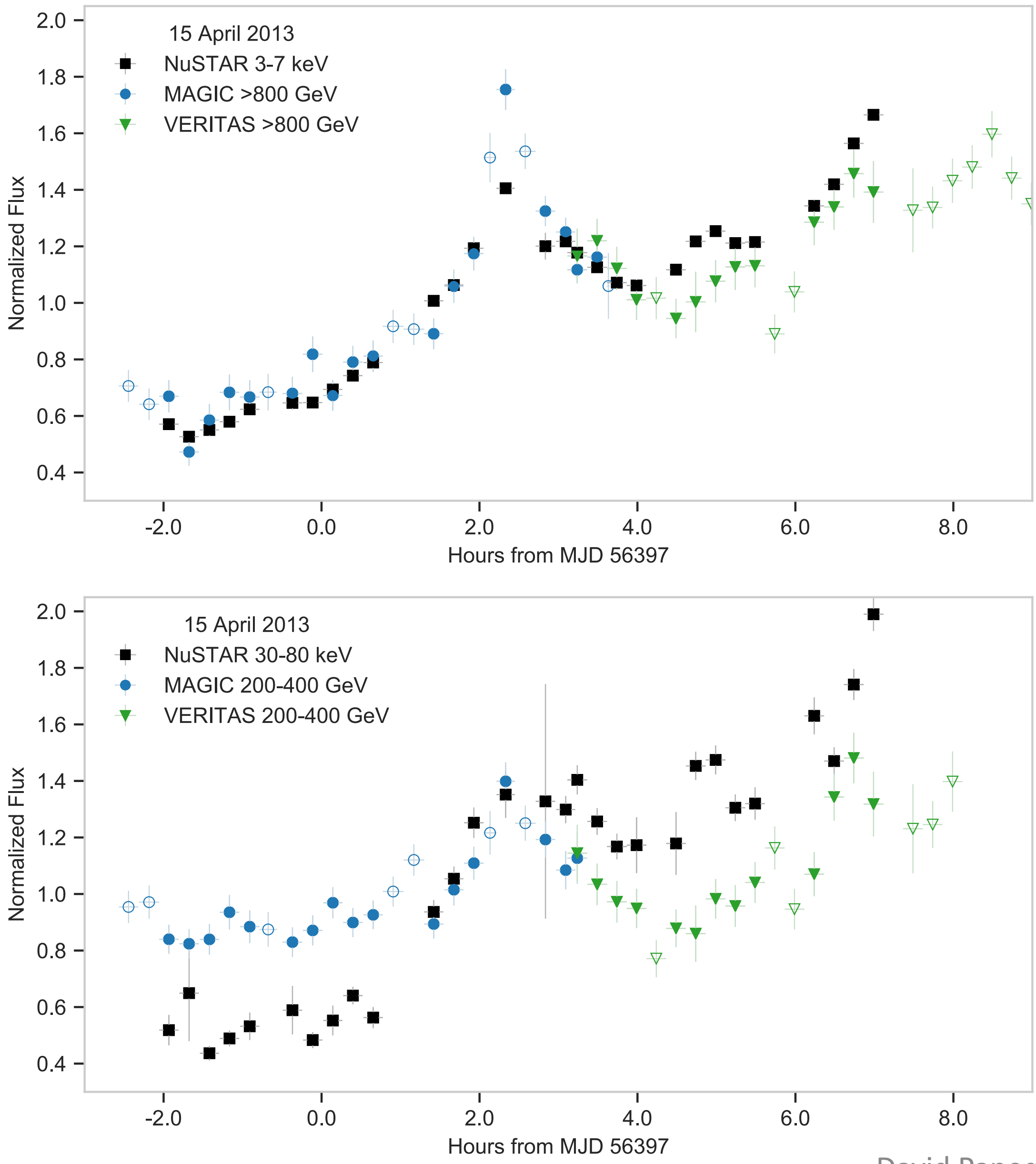
Acciari et al. ApJS 2020, 248, 29



MAGIC + VERITAS >0.8 TeV
NuSTAR 3-7 keV

Large change in the overall shape and structure of LCs when moving across X-ray and VHE bands

MAGIC + VERITAS 0.2-0.4 TeV
NuSTAR 30-80 keV

Function used to parameterize the main trends in the multi-hour X-ray& VHE Light curves

$$\mathrm{Flux}(t) = \mathrm{Slow}(t) + \mathrm{Fast}(t)$$

$$\mathrm{Slow}(t) = \mathrm{Offset}(1 + \mathrm{Slope} * t)$$

$$\mathrm{Fast}(t) = \frac{2}{2^{-\frac{t-t_0}{rise}} + 2^{\frac{t-t_0}{fall}}} \times (\mathrm{Flare\ Amplitude}) \times (\mathrm{Slow}(t_0))$$

Parameters:

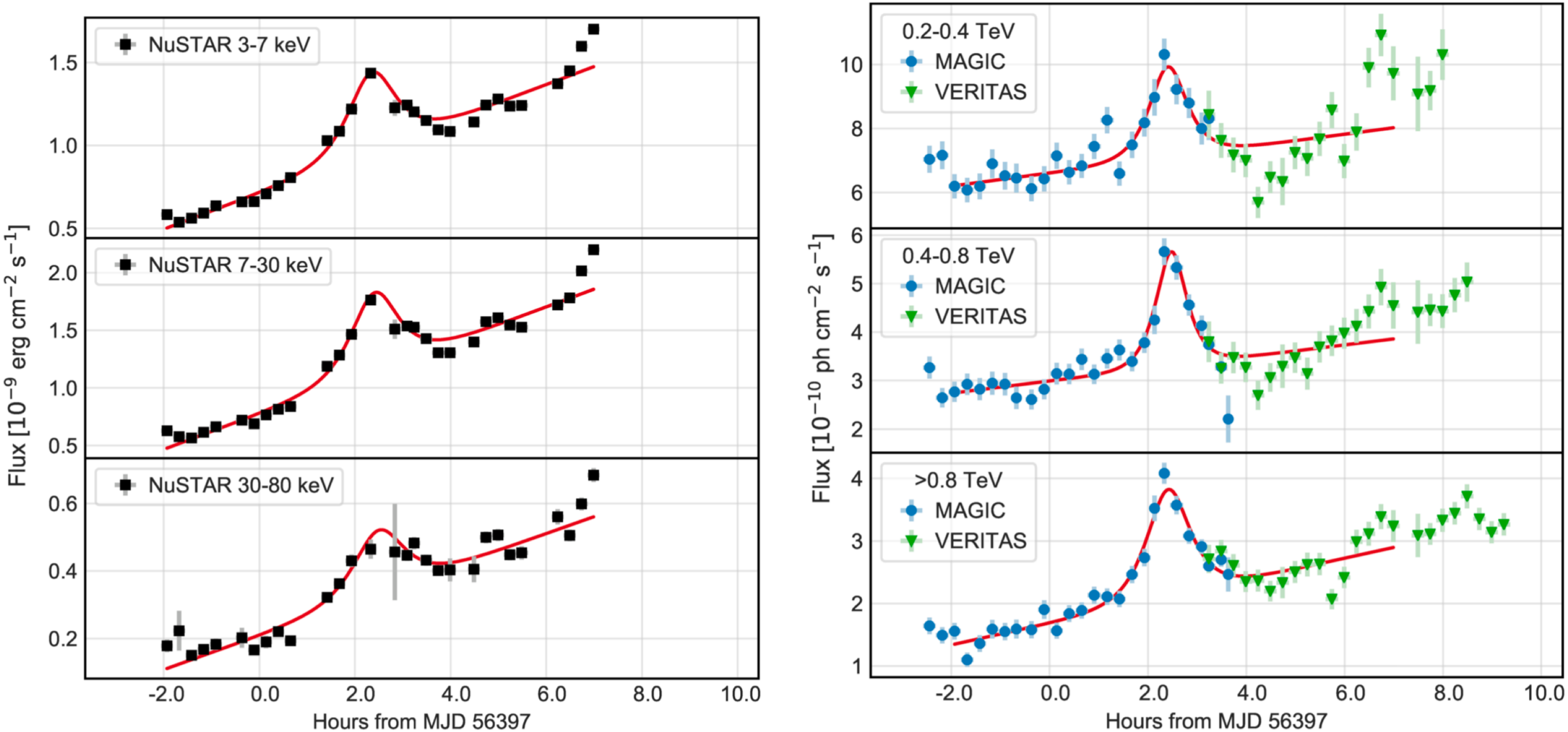
Simplification: rise=fall → timescale

- offset = starting flux
- amplitude = max. strength of the flare relative to slow(t0) flux
- timescale = flux doubling time scale
- slope = (slow component) flux would increase by this factor in 1 day

This parameterization provides normalized slopes and amplitudes, which allows for a direct comparison of the values among different various X-ray and VHE bands

X-ray and VHE Light curves for single night (April 15th)

Acciari et al. ApJS 2020, 248, 29



The red curve shows a fit with a two-component function, applied to the time interval with simultaneous X-ray and VHE observations

→ Close relation between X-ray and gamma-rays → Leptons !!

→ But *complex X-ray vs VHE variability and correlation pattern*

Acciari et al. ApJS 2020, 248, 29

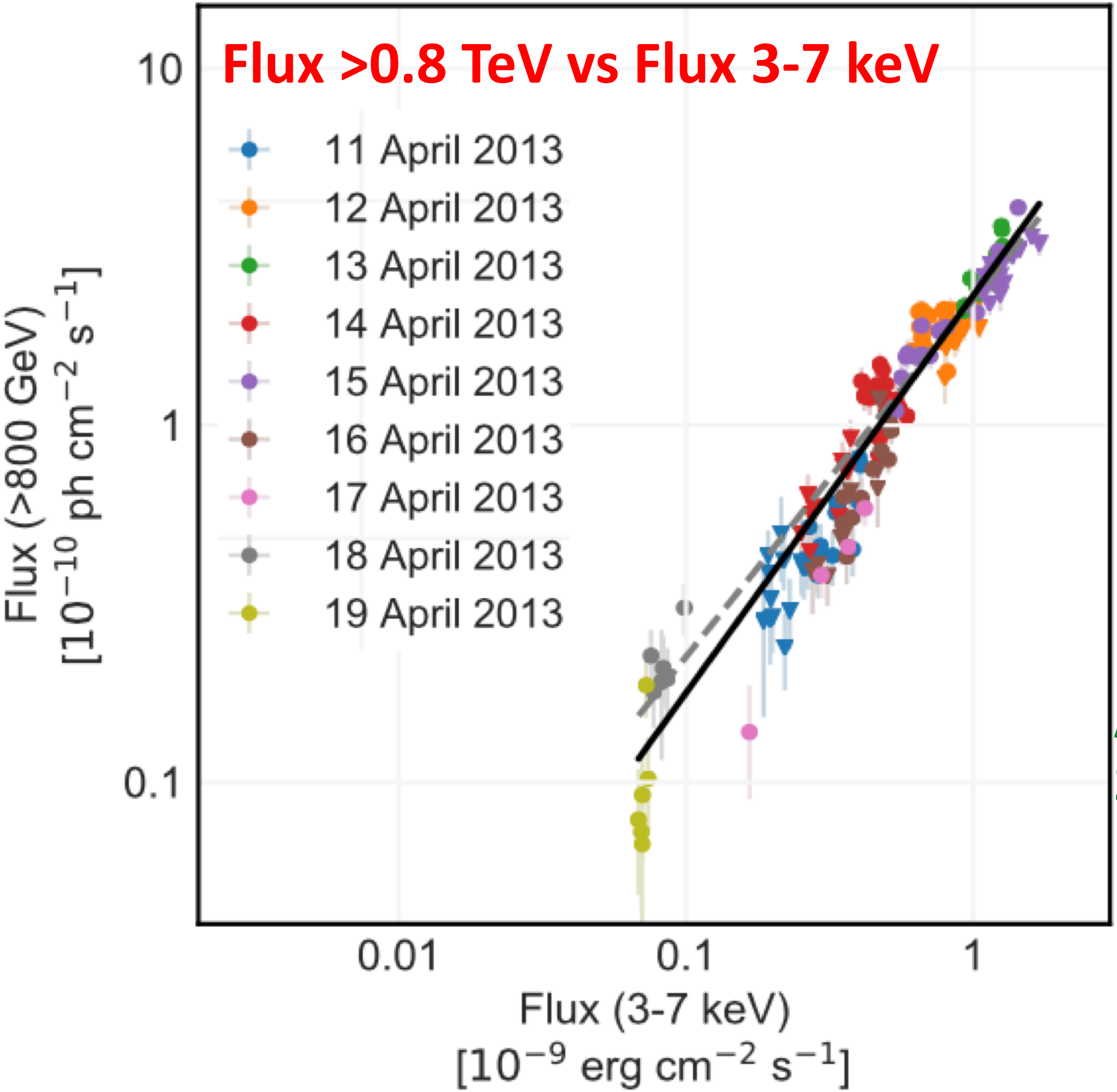
Table 3. Parameters resulting from the fit with Eq. 3 to the X-ray and VHE multi-band light curves from 2013 April 15.

Band	*Offset*[a]	*Slope* $[\mathrm{h}^{-1}]$	Flare Amplitude A	Flare flux-doubling time[b] [h]	Flare t_0 [h]	χ^2/d.o.f
15 April 2013						
3-7 keV	0.71 ± 0.01	0.153 ± 0.006	0.49 ± 0.07	0.30 ± 0.04	2.35 ± 0.06	836/24
7-30 keV	0.78 ± 0.02	0.199 ± 0.009	0.59 ± 0.11	0.30 ± 0.04	2.41 ± 0.06	889/24
30-80 keV	0.21 ± 0.01	0.241 ± 0.018	0.56 ± 0.18	0.32 ± 0.09	2.50 ± 0.10	111/24
0.2-0.4 TeV	6.60 ± 0.17	0.031 ± 0.008	0.40 ± 0.09	0.23 ± 0.07	2.41 ± 0.09	96.9/38
0.4-0.8 TeV	2.99 ± 0.07	0.042 ± 0.008	0.72 ± 0.09	0.19 ± 0.03	2.47 ± 0.04	68.1/42
>0.8 TeV	1.68 ± 0.05	0.103 ± 0.010	0.82 ± 0.08	0.27 ± 0.03	2.41 ± 0.04	90.0/45

[a] For VHE bands in 10^{-10} ph cm^{-2} s^{-1}, for X-ray bands in 10^{-9} erg cm^{-2} s^{-1}.

[b] Parameters t_{rise} and t_{fall} in Eq. 3 are set to be equal, and correspond to the Flare flux-doubling time in the Table.

Large energy-dependence difference between the slow and the fast components



Gamma-ray vs X-ray flux (9-day “full” flare)

Flux measurements in gamma rays and X-rays @ 15min

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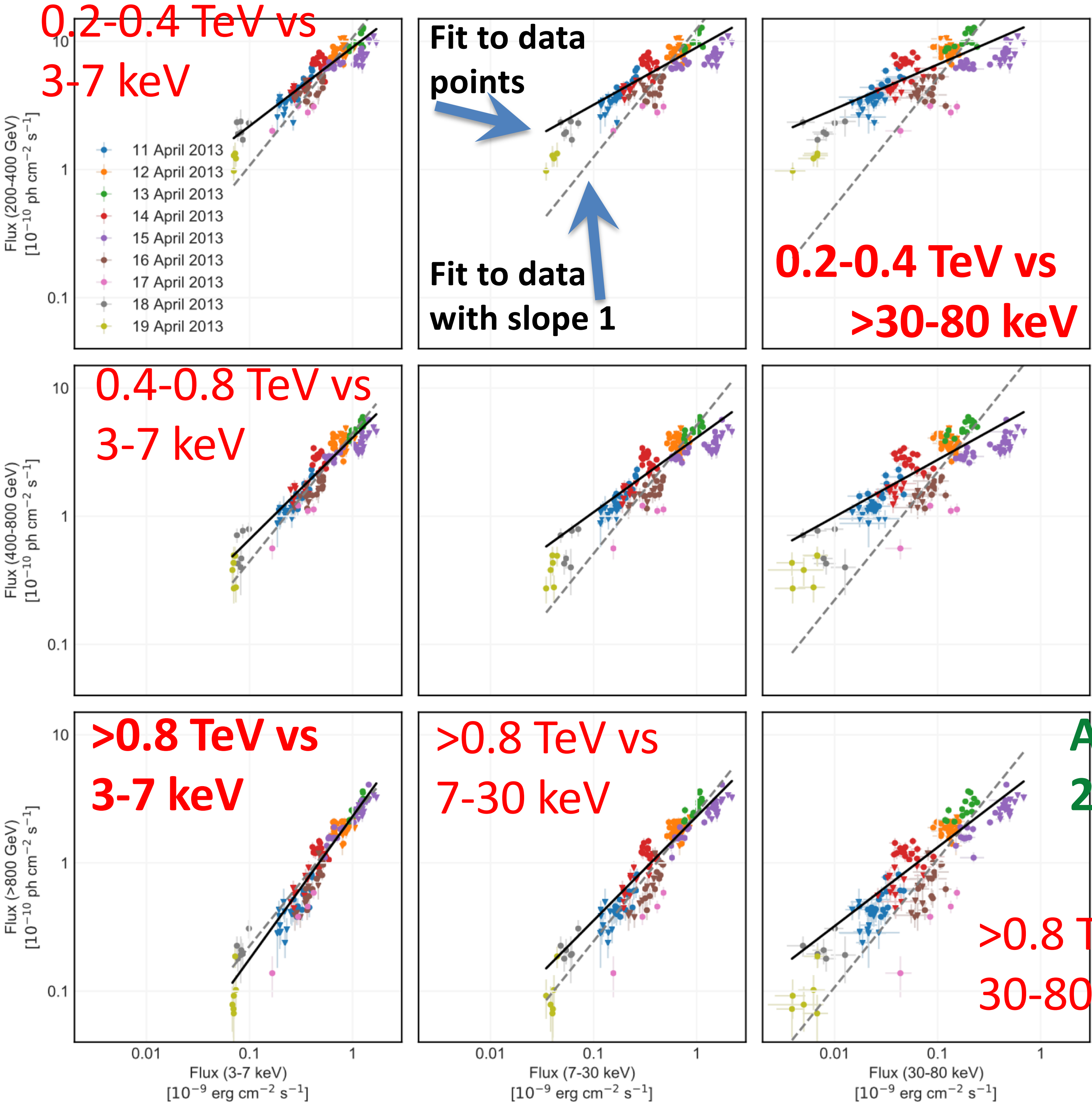

characterization in 3 (X-ray) x 3 (gamma) energy bands

Flux measurements in gamma rays and X-rays @ 15min

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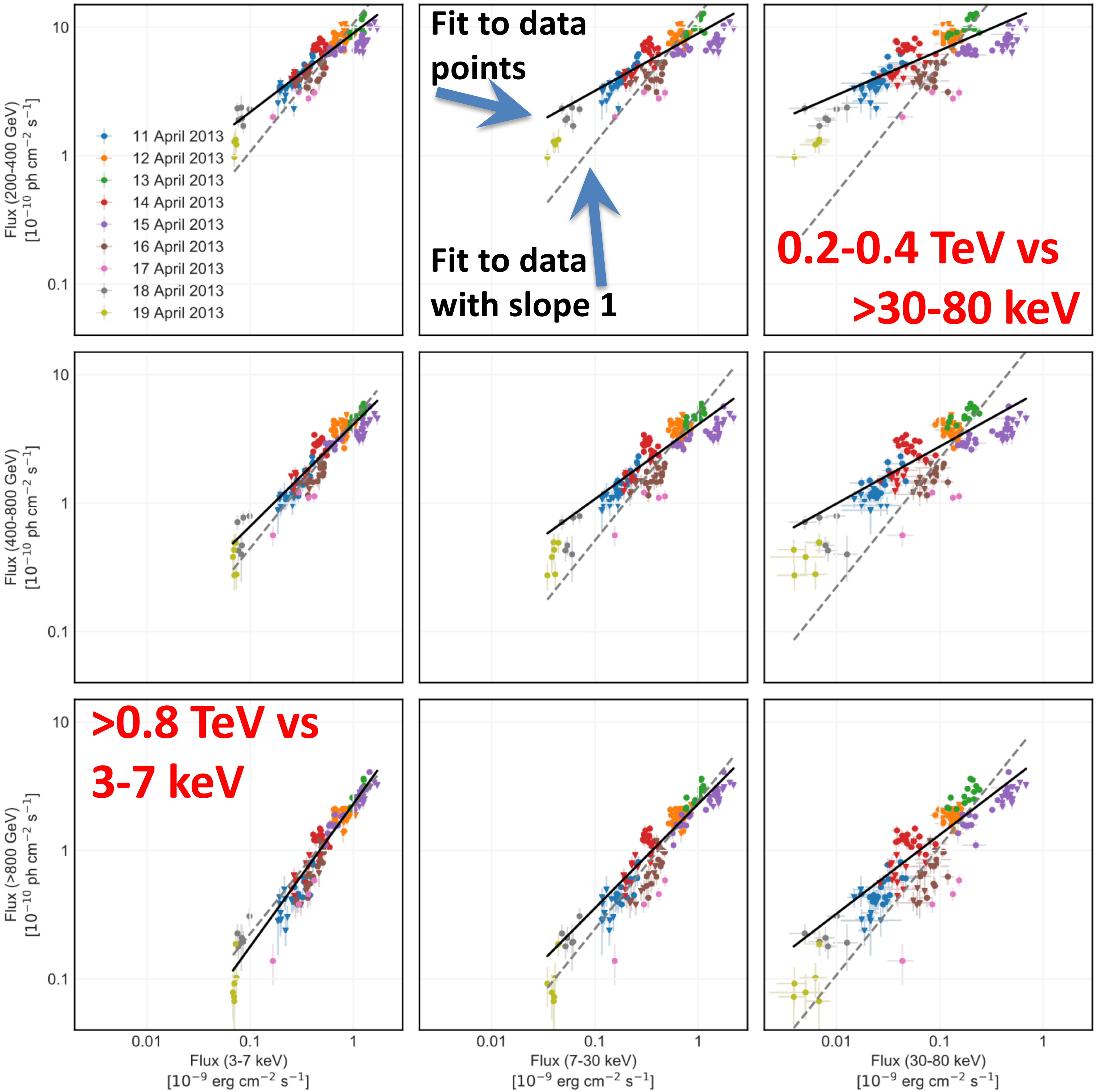

Gamma-ray vs X-ray flux (9-day "full" flare)

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Flux measurements in gamma rays and X-rays @ 15min

Several flavours of X-ray vs VHE correlation when moving across bands

Quantification of the VHE vs X-ray correlations

Positive correlation exists (and very significant) for all the energy bands

Table 5. Correlation coefficients and slopes of the linear fit to the VHE vs X-ray flux (in log scale) derived with the 9-day flaring episode of Mrk421 in April 2013.

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VHE band	Xray band	Pearson coeff.	Nsigma in Pearson	DCF	Slope from linear fit	Chi2/d.o.f
200-400 GeV	3-7 keV	0.920 + 0.011 - 0.013	20.2	0.928 $\pm$ 0.117	0.61 $\pm$ 0.02	1183 / 162
	7-30 keV	0.871 + 0.018 - 0.020	17.0	0.879 $\pm$ 0.111	0.45 $\pm$ 0.03	1891 / 162
	30-80 keV	0.790 + 0.028 - 0.032	13.6	0.805 $\pm$ 0.108	0.35 $\pm$ 0.02	2277 / 162
400-800 GeV	3-7 keV	0.946 + 0.007 - 0.009	23.4	0.955 $\pm$ 0.114	0.79 $\pm$ 0.03	1038 / 170
	7-30 keV	0.909 + 0.012 - 0.014	19.8	0.918 $\pm$ 0.108	0.58 $\pm$ 0.03	1725 / 170
	30-80 keV	0.838 + 0.021 - 0.024	15.8	0.855 $\pm$ 0.105	0.45 $\pm$ 0.03	2160 / 170
>800 GeV	3-7 keV	0.964 + 0.005 - 0.006	26.0	0.971 $\pm$ 0.108	1.11 $\pm$ 0.03	704 / 170
	7-30 keV	0.947 + 0.007 - 0.008	23.5	0.955 $\pm$ 0.105	0.81 $\pm$ 0.03	1245 / 170
	30-80 keV	0.892 + 0.015 - 0.017	18.6	0.908 $\pm$ 0.103	0.61 $\pm$ 0.03	1736 / 170

Many different trends in the VHE vs X-ray correlation when moving across “nearby” energy bands

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Many different trends in the VHE vs X-ray correlation when moving across "nearby" energy bands

The combination > 0.8TeV and 3-7 keV shows the highest degree of correlation, highest slope, and less scattering

Gamma-ray vs X-ray flux-flux plot (April 15th)

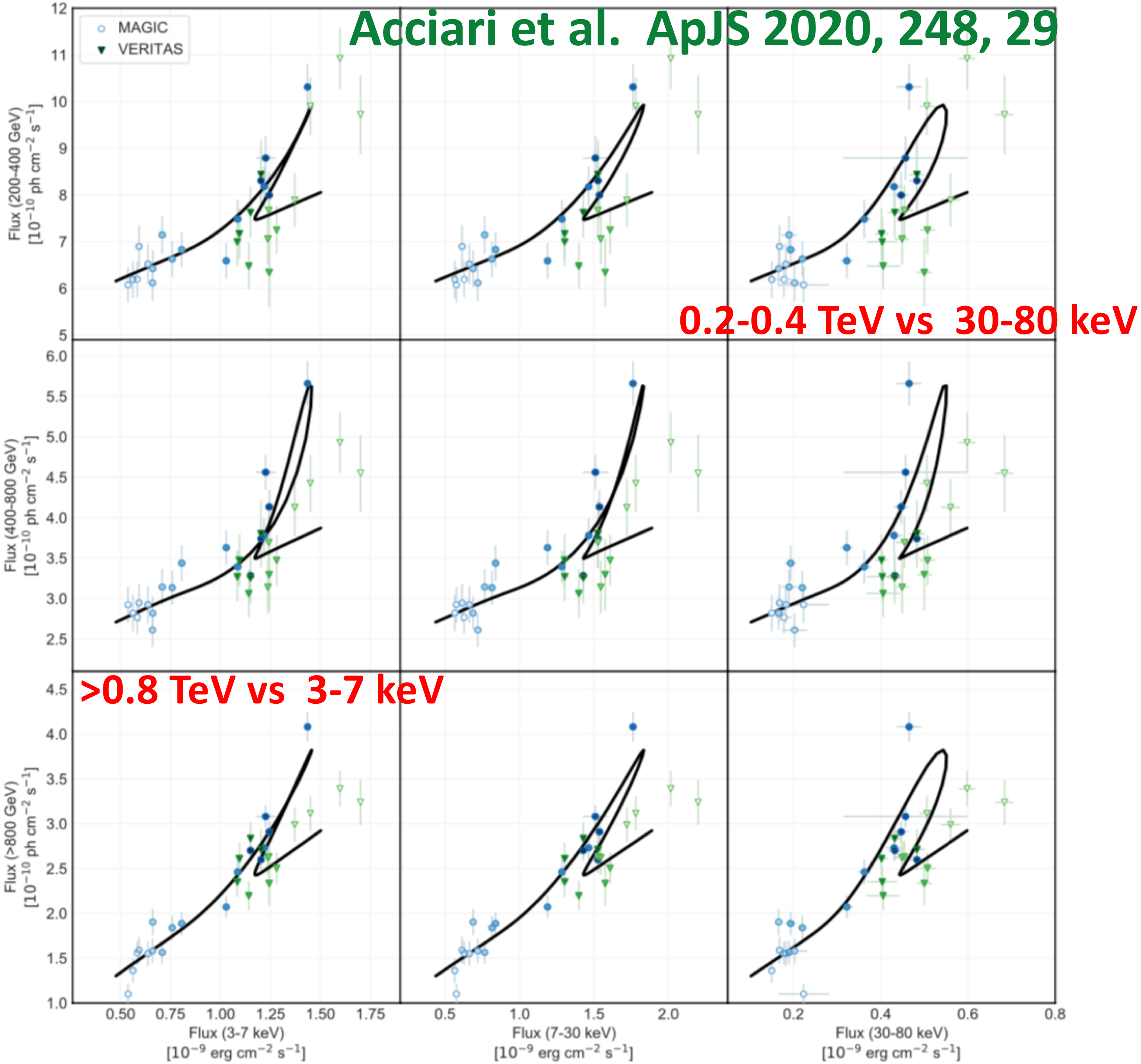

Figure 7. VHE flux vs. X-ray flux in three X-ray and three VHE energy bands for April 15. The black line is the track predicted by Slow+Fast component fit from Eq. 2. The lightness of symbols follows time: for MAGIC data lightness decreases with time, and for VERITAS data it increases in time, so that the central part of the night, where MAGIC and VERITAS observations overlap, is plot using darker symbols.

Curves depict the expectation from the envelopes from the fit function (slow+fast) to the light curve at the 3x3 energy bands

Blazar flares powered by plasmoids in relativistic reconnection

Maria Petropoulou ✉, Dimitrios Giannios, Lorenzo Sironi

Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society, Volume 462, Issue 3, 1 November 2016, Pages 3325–3343, https://doi.org/10.1093/mnras/stw1832

Considered that the large X-ray/VHE activity is produced in a magnetic reconnection layer

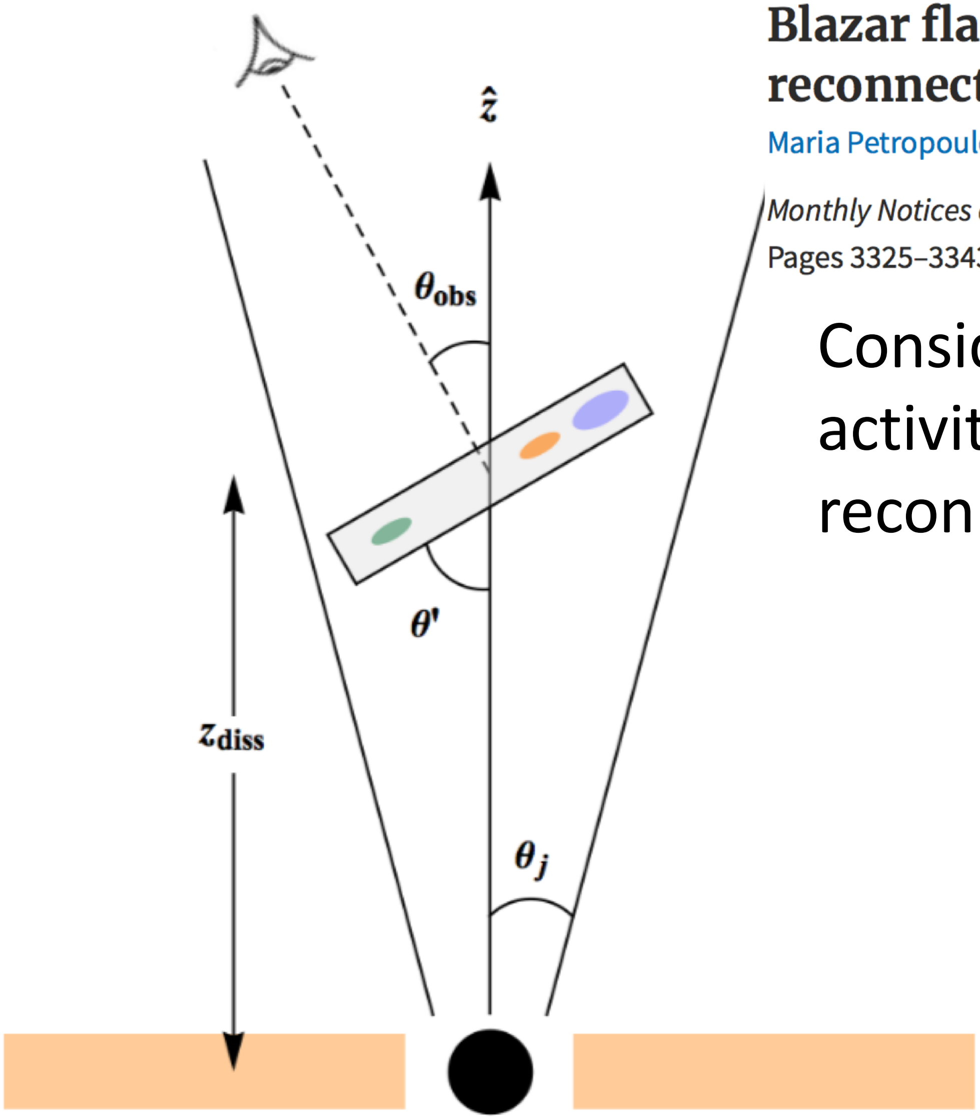

Figure 9. Sketch of a reconnection layer (of half-length L') forming in the jet at a distance z_{diss} (not in scale). The layer forms an angle θ' (as measured in the jet's rest frame) with respect to the jet axis. Plasmoids of different sizes and velocities move towards the sides of the layer while radiating. The jet has an opening angle θ_j and a bulk Lorentz factor Γ_j.

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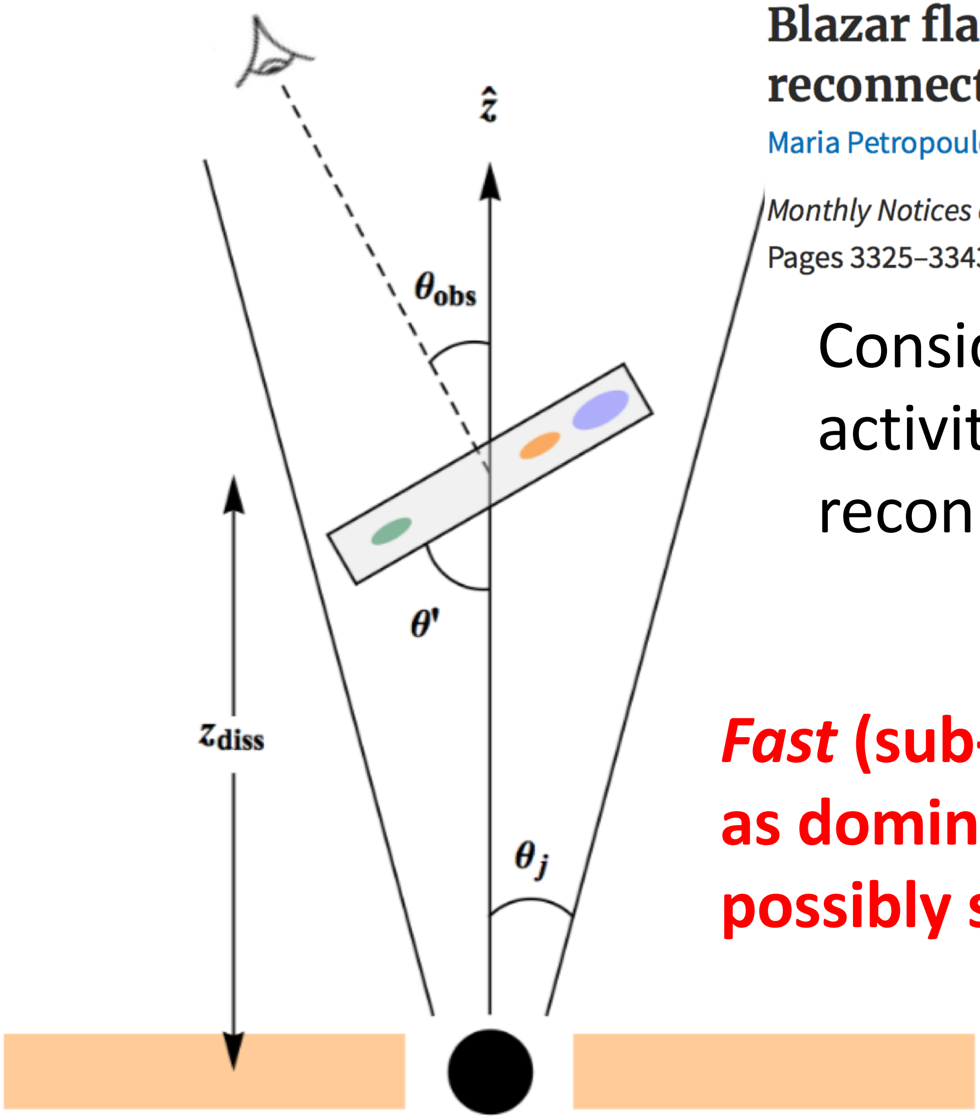

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Considered that the large X-ray/VHE activity is produced in a magnetic reconnection layer

Fast **(sub-hour) flares may be understood as dominated by a single plasmoid, possibly small and highly relativistic**

Slow **(multi-hour) but more luminous component of the light curve, may be understood as dominated by superposition of many plasmoids of different sizes and speeds**

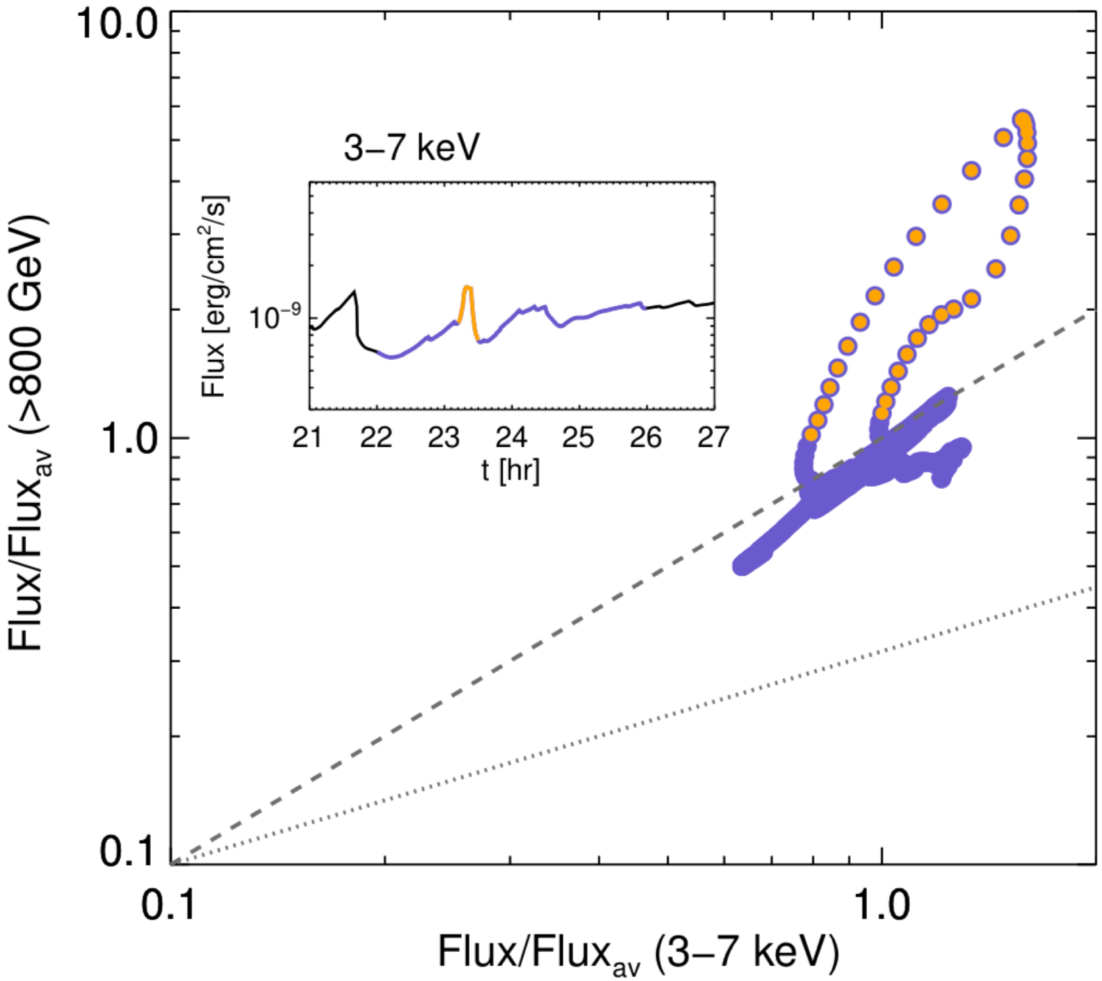

Figure 9. VHE flux (> 800 GeV) versus X-ray flux (3–7 keV) of a plasmoid-powered light curve, computed for a "vanilla" model of a BL Lac source (see model BL10 in Christie et al. 2019). The fluxes are extracted from a 4-hr time window of the total light curve (see purple line in the inset plot) and are normalized to their time-averaged values. The loop-like structure in the flux-flux plot is produced during a fast flare of duration ∼ 0.3 hr (see orange points). Lines with slopes 1 (dashed) and 0.5 (dotted) are overplotted to guide the eye.

Flux-flux plot for a portion of a LC produced by plasmoids (**simulation**)

The loop is produced by a fast flare, dominated by a single plasmoid
Similar shape to that found in the data

Conclusions

AGNs are the most powerful (persistent) cosmic accelerators

Gamma rays are crucial to understand AGNs

→ especially important for blazars (gamma rays dominate SED)

Knowledge of the gamma-ray sky has substantially improved

→ Gamma-ray instrumentation largely improved in last 10-15 years

→ *And major improvements coming online (e.g. CTA, LHAASO …)*

Accurate AGN studies require wide broadband (radio to gamma-rays) AND temporal (years down to minutes) coverage

→ *Variability in the multi-band emission can break degeneracies*

→ *Multi-messengers (e.g. neutrinos) can break degeneracies*

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AGNs are complicated "cosmic animals"

This complexity can be hidden when the observations suffer from limited sensitivity, and limited **energy & time** coverage

→ Extensive MWL campaigns on Mrk421 & Mrk501 benefit from bright sources and high sensitive instruments, and wide energy coverage and dense time coverage

Conclusions

Multi-instrument data from Mrk421&Mrk501 show complexity in the temporal evolution of the broadband (radio to VHE γ-rays) SED.

→ **One-zone SSC model can be used to approximately model the most prominent & variable segments of the SED (X-ray and VHE).**

→ BUT accurate modeling of the broadband SED would require additional components

→ Complex (*and variable !!)* variability patterns

→ **These sources have complicated "cosmic personalities":**

Mrk421: HBL trying to become IBL (in 2013)

Mrk501: HBL became EHBL (in 2012)

→ during non-flaring activity

Mrk501: hints of a narrow spectral feature at 3 TeV

Mrk421: hints of extra (narrow) component at 20 keV

→ ***Are these recurrent episodes ? Occur on other blazars ?***

- Next generation of gamma-ray instruments, e.g., CTA, will allow to perform these studies on many other AGNs (*x10 dimmer at VHE*)