The LUNA experiment : studying stars by going underground

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Laboratory Underground Nuclear Astrophysics

Outline:

-Nuclear Fusion reactions in stars: why measuring their cross section?

-Why going underground to perform these experiments?

-The Luna Experiment: most important results

- On-going measurements and future perspective: the LUNA-MV project

## Nuclear Astrophysics



# Why studying nuclear fusion reaction cross sections?





-Stars are powered by nuclear reactions

-Among the key parameters (chemical composition, opacity, etc.) to model stars, reactions cross sections play an important role

- They determine the origin of elements in the cosmos, stellar evolution and dynamic

- Many reactions ask for high precision data.

#### Element abundances in the solar system



#### The periodic table of the elements

1 H																	2 He
a Li	4 Be											B	6 C	7 N	8 0	9 F	10 Ne
11 Na	12 Mg											13 Al	14 Si	15 P	16 S	17 Cl	18 Ar
19 K	20 Ca	21 Sc	22 Ti	23 V	24 Cr	25 Mn	25 Fe	27 Co	28 Ni	29 Cu	30 Zn	31 Ga	32 Ge	33 As	<sup>34</sup> Se	35 Br	36 Kr
37 Rb	38 Sr	39 <b>Y</b>	40 <b>Zr</b>	41 Nb	42 <b>Mo</b>	43 Tc	44 Ru	45 Rh	46 Pd	47 Ag	48 Cd	49 <b>In</b>	50 Sn	51 Sb	62 Te	53 	54 Xe
55 Cs	56 Ba	71 Lu	72 Hf	73 <b>Ta</b>	74 W	75 Re	76 Os	77 Ir	78 Pt	79 Au	80 Hg	81 <b>TI</b>	82 Pb	83 Bi	84 Po	85 At	se Rn
87 Fr	aa Ra	103 Lr	104 Rf	105 Db	105 Sg	107 Bh	108 Hs	109 Mt	110 Ds	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118

Lathanides	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
	La	Ce	Pr	Nd	Pm	Sm	Eu	Gd	Tb	Dy	Ho	Er	Tm	Yb
Actinides	89	90	91	92	SI	94	95	<sup>B®</sup>	97	SE	99	100	101	102
	Ac	Th	Pa	U	Np	Pu	Am	Cm	Bk	Cf	Es	Fm	Md	No

#### Neutrino production in stars



#### Neutrino flux experiments



Solar neutrino puzzle: solved! Neutrino flux from the Sun can be used to study:

- Solar interior composition
- Neutrino properties

<u>ONLY</u> if the cross sections of the involved reactions are known with enough accuracy

## Big Bang nucleosynthesis

Production of the lightest elements (D, <sup>3</sup>He, <sup>4</sup>He, <sup>7</sup>Li, <sup>6</sup>Li) in the first minutes after the Big Bang

The general concordance between predicted and observed abundances (spanning more than 9 orders of magnitude) gives a direct probe of the Universal baryon density

CMB anysotropy measurements (WMAP satellite) gives an independent measurement of the Universal baryon density

The concordance of the two measurements has to be understood in terms of uncertainties in the BBN predictions

#### **BBN** reaction network



Apart from <sup>4</sup>He, uncertainties are dominated by systematic errors in the nuclear cross sections

## LUNA program: astrophysical motivation

- Solar neutrinos:  ${}^{3}\text{He}({}^{3}\text{He},2p){}^{4}\text{He}, {}^{3}\text{He}({}^{4}\text{He},\gamma){}^{7}\text{Be}, {}^{14}\text{N}(p,\gamma){}^{15}\text{O}$
- Age of globular cluster:  ${}^{14}N(p,\gamma){}^{15}O$
- Light nuclei nucleosynthesis ( $^{17}/^{18}O$  abundances,  $^{19}F$  production,  $^{26}Mg$  excess,...):  $^{15}N(p,\gamma)^{16}O$ ,  $^{17}N(p,\gamma)^{18}O$ ,  $^{25}Mg(p,\gamma)^{26}AI$
- Big Bang Nucleosynthesis:  ${}^{2}H(\alpha,\gamma){}^{6}Li$ ,  ${}^{3}He({}^{4}He,\gamma){}^{7}Be$ ,  ${}^{2}H(p,\gamma){}^{3}He$

#### Next:

Light nuclei nucleosynthesis:  ${}^{17}O(p,\alpha){}^{14}N$ ,  ${}^{22}Ne(p,\gamma){}^{23}Na$ ,  ${}^{23}Na(p,\gamma){}^{24}Mg$ ,  ${}^{18}O(p,\gamma){}^{19}F$ ,  ${}^{18}O(p,\alpha){}^{15}N$ He burning and stellar evolution:  ${}^{12}C(\alpha,\gamma){}^{16}O$ s process nucleosynthesis:  ${}^{13}C(\alpha,n){}^{16}O$ ,  ${}^{22}Ne(\alpha,n){}^{25}Mg$ 

#### Hydrogen burning $4p \rightarrow {}^{4}He + 2e^{+} + 2v_{e} + 26.73 \text{ MeV}$



#### Nuclear reactions in stars



Sun: T=  $1.5 \ 10^7 \ K$ kT =  $1 \ keV \ll E_c (0.5-2 \ MeV)$ 

Reaction	Eo				
<sup>3</sup> He( <sup>3</sup> He,2p) <sup>4</sup> He	21 keV				
d(p,γ) <sup>3</sup> He	6 keV				
<sup>14</sup> N(p,γ) <sup>15</sup> O	27 keV				
<sup>3</sup> He( <sup>4</sup> He,γ) <sup>7</sup> Be	22 keV				





Danger in extrapolations!

#### Sun

Luminosity =  $2 \cdot 10^{39}$  MeV/s

Q-value (H burning) = 26.73 MeV

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Reaction rate = 10^{38} s<sup>-1</sup>
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#### Laboratory

 $R_{lab}$ =  $N_p N_t \sigma \epsilon$ 

 $N_p$  = number of projectile ions  $\approx 10^{14}$  pps (100  $\mu$ A q=1<sup>+</sup>)

 $N_{t}$  = number of target atoms  $\approx 10^{19}$  at/cm<sup>2</sup>

 $\sigma$  = cross section = 10<sup>-15</sup> barn

ε= efficiency ≈ 100% for charged particles 1% for gamma rays

 $R_{lab} \approx 0.3-30$  counts/year

R<sub>lab</sub> > B<sub>beam induced</sub> + B<sub>env</sub> + B<sub>cosmic</sub> B<sub>beam induced</sub> : reactions with impurities in the target reactions on beam collimators/apertures B<sub>env</sub> : natural radioactivity mainly from U and Th chains

B<sub>cosmic</sub> : mainly muons







## $E_{\gamma}$ <br/> 3MeV $\rightarrow$ passive shielding for<br/> environmental background radiation

underground passive shielding is more effective since  $\mu$  flux, that create secondary  $\gamma$ 's in the shield, is suppressed





Laboratory for Underground Nuclear Astrophysics

> LNGS (1400 m rock shielding = 4000 m w.e.)

**(2012->...)** 

LUNA 1 (1992-2001) 50 kV

> LUNA 2 (2000→...) 400 kV

Radiation LNGS/surface

Muons Neutrons 10<sup>-6</sup> 10<sup>-3</sup>

#### Laboratory for Underground Nuclear Astrophysics



400 kV Accelerator : $E_{beam} \approx 50 - 400 \text{ keV}$ I  $_{max} \approx 500 \ \mu A$  protons I  $_{max} \approx 250 \ \mu A$  alphasEnergy spread  $\approx 70 \ eV$ Long term stability  $\approx 5 \ eV/h$ 



Fundamental reaction of the p-p cycle

•Measured down to the lower edge of the solar Gamow peak •No resonances  $\rightarrow$  no nuclear explanation for the solar neutrino puzzle

#### $^{14}N(p,\gamma)^{15}O$ cross section influences



#### <sup>14</sup>N( $p,\gamma$ )<sup>15</sup>O: the bottleneck of the CNO cycle



#### High resolution measurement



Solid target + HPGe detector

- single γ transitions
- Energy range 119-367 keV
- summing had to be considered

CNO neutrino flux decreases of a factor  $\approx$  2 Globular Cluster age increases of 0.7 – 1 Gyr: new upper limit on the Age of the Universe T<14 Gy



- high efficiency
- total cross section
- Energy range 70-230 keV

S<sub>0</sub>(LUNA) = 1.61 ± 0.08 keV b

#### $^{3}$ He( $^{4}$ He, $\gamma$ ) $^{7}$ Be

#### John Bahcall e M. H. Pinsonneault, astroph/0402114v1, 2004:

The rate of the reaction  ${}^{3}\text{He}({}^{4}\text{He},\gamma){}^{7}\text{Be}$  is the largest nuclear physics contributor to the uncertainties in the solar model predictions of the neutrino fluxes in the p-p chain. In the past 15 years, no one has remeasured this rate; it should be the highest priority for nuclear astrophysicists."

$$\Phi(^{8}B) \sim (1+\delta S_{11})^{-2.73} (1+\delta S_{33})^{-0.43} (1+\delta S_{34})^{0.85} (1+\delta S_{17})^{1.0}$$

$$(1+\delta S_{e7})^{-1.0} (1+\delta S_{1,14})^{-0.02}$$
where fractional uncertainty  $\delta S_{11} \equiv \Delta S_{11}/S_{11}(0)$ 



<sup>3</sup>He(
$$\alpha,\gamma$$
)<sup>7</sup>Be(e,v) <sup>7</sup>Li\*( $\gamma$ )<sup>7</sup>Li  
E $\gamma$  = 478 keV  
E $\gamma$  = 1586 keV + E<sub>cm</sub> (DC  $\rightarrow$  0);  
E $\gamma$  = 1157 keV + E<sub>cm</sub> (DC  $\rightarrow$  429)  
E $\gamma$  = 429 keV



#### LUNA measurements



Two techniques and reduced (4%) systematic uncertainties

S<sub>34</sub> (LUNA) =0.567±0.018±0.004 keV b

in Solar fusion cross sections II: arXiv:1004.2318v3 based on LUNA and successive measurements: S<sub>34</sub>= 0.56 ± 0.02 (exp) ± 0.02 (model) keV b

Uncertainty due to  $S_{34}$  on neutrinos flux:  $\Phi(^{8}B)$  7.5%  $\rightarrow$  4.3%  $\Phi(^{7}Be)$  8%  $\rightarrow$  4.5%

#### **BBN** reaction network



#### The <sup>6</sup>Li case

Constant amount in stars of different metallicity ( $\rightarrow$ age) 2-3 orders of magnitude higher than predicted with the BBN network (NACRE) (Asplund 2006, now debated since convective motions on the stellar surface can give an asymmetry in the absorption line mimicking the presence of <sup>6</sup>Li)



The primordial abundance is determined by: <sup>2</sup>H( $\alpha,\gamma$ )<sup>6</sup>Li producing almost all the <sup>6</sup>Li <sup>6</sup>Li(p, $\alpha$ )<sup>3</sup>He destroying <sup>6</sup>Li  $\rightarrow$  well known

#### Available data



[F. Hammache et al., Phys. Rev. C 82, 065803 (2010)] Direct measurements: Robertson et al. E > 1 MeV Mohr et al. around the 0.7 MeV resonance

Indirect measurements: •Hammache et al. upper limits with high energy Coulomb break-up

At LUNA direct measurements at the energies of astrophysical interest

## The beam-induced background

- neutron background generated by  $d(\alpha,\alpha)d$  Rutherford scattering followed by  $d(d,n)^{3}He$  reactions



#### Experimental set-up

Reduced gas volume: pipe to minimize the path of scattered <sup>2</sup>H and hence diminish the  $d(d,n)^{3}$ He reaction yield HPGe detector in close geometry: larger detection efficiency and improved signal-to-noise ratio







#### <sup>2</sup>H( $\alpha,\gamma$ )<sup>6</sup>Li analysis

Two measurement campaigns: a) 400 keV and 280 keV b) 360 keV and 240 keV at 400 keV the expected S/N ratio is about 1/12

Signal: E<sub>v</sub> = Q + E<sub>CM</sub> -  $\Delta$ E<sub>rec</sub> ±  $\Delta$ E<sub>Doppler</sub> 400 A counting excess is clearly visible both at 400 and Back 360 keV!

Possible systematics still to be evaluated



170+p is very important for hydrogen burning in different stellar environments:

- Red giants

- Massive stars

- AGB
- Novae
  - production of light nuclei

     (<sup>17</sup>O/<sup>18</sup>O abundances....);
  - observation of <sup>18</sup>F γ-ray signal (annihilation 511 keV).

Main Sequence or Red Giant star Accretion Disk



(Cygni 1992)

Classical novae T=0.1-0.4 GK =>  $E_{Gamow}$  = 100 - 260 keV Resonant Contribution:  ${}^{17}O(p,\gamma){}^{18}F$  resonance at  $E_p$  = 183 keV and non resonant contribution

State of the art before the LUNA measurement (1):



**Rolfs et al**., 1973, prompt  $\gamma$ S<sub>DC</sub> measured at 4 energies in the range E<sub>cm</sub> = 290-430 keV S<sub>DC</sub>  $\approx$  9 keV b for E<sub>cm</sub>= 100-500 keV

Fox et al., 2005, prompt  $\gamma$ discovered 193 keV resonance  $\omega\gamma = (1.2\pm0.2) 10^{-6} \text{ eV}$ calculation of DC  $S_{DC} = 3.74 \pm 0.676E - 0.249E^2$ determination of high energy resonance influence on S total

Chafa et al., 2007, activation  $\omega\gamma = (2.2\pm0.4) \ 10^{-6} \ eV$ measured  $S_{DC} = (8.3\pm4.0) \ keV \ b$   $S_{DC} = 6.2 + 1.61E - 0.169E^2$ larger than Fox by more than 50%

Status of the art before the LUNA measurement (2):



Newton et al., 2010, prompt  $\gamma$ S<sub>DC</sub> measured at 6 energies in the range E<sub>cm</sub> = 260-470 keV Calculated S<sub>DC</sub>(E) = 4.6 keV b (±23%)

Hager et al.(DRAGON), 2012, recoil separator E<sub>cm</sub> = 250-500 keV S<sub>DC</sub> higher than Newton and Fox. No flat dependence. Re-evaluate resonant contributions

183 keV resonance and direct capture component for E=200-370 keV measured with prompt gammas and activation  $\rightarrow$ Gamow window for Novae region explored with the highest precision to-date



183 keV resonance:  $\omega\gamma$ =1.67±0.12 µeV (weighted average of prompt and activation) Several new transitions identified and branching ratios determined



 $^{17}O(p,\gamma)^{18}F$  results



The best fit includes the contribution from the E=557 and E=667 broad resonances from literature and a constant direct capture component

Improvement of a factor of 4 in the reaction rate uncertainty!

D. Scott et al., Phys Rev Lett 109 (2012) 202501

#### LUNA 400 kV program

	reaction	Q-value (MeV)
completed	<sup>17</sup> <b>Ο(p</b> ,γ <b>)</b> <sup>18</sup> <b>F</b>	5.6
just started	<sup>17</sup> <b>Ο(p</b> ,α) <sup>14</sup> Ν	1.2
$\rightarrow$	<sup>18</sup> <b>Ο(p</b> ,γ) <sup>19</sup> <b>F</b>	8.0
$\rightarrow$	<sup>18</sup> Ο(p,α) <sup>15</sup> Ν	4.0
$\longrightarrow$	<sup>23</sup> Na(p,γ) <sup>24</sup> Mg	11.7
just started	<sup>22</sup> Ne(p,γ) <sup>23</sup> Na	8.8
completed	<b>D(</b> α,γ <b>)</b> <sup>6</sup> Li	1.47

Still three reactions to be measured  $\rightarrow$  to be completed by 2015

#### LUNA MV Project

April 2007: a Letter of Intent (LoI) was presented to the LNGS Scientific Committee (SC) containing key reactions of the He burning and neutron sources for the s-process:  ${}^{12}C(\alpha,\gamma){}^{16}O$  ${}^{13}C(\alpha,n){}^{16}O$  ${}^{22}Ne(\alpha,n){}^{25}Mg$ ( $\alpha,\gamma$ ) reactions on  ${}^{14,15}N$  and  ${}^{18}O$ 

These reactions are relevant at higher temperatures (larger energies) than reactions belonging to the hydrogenburning studied so far at LUNA

Higher energy machine  $\rightarrow$  3.5 MV single ended positive ion accelerator

#### $^{12}C(\alpha,\gamma)^{16}O$ - Holy Grail of Nuclear Astrophysics

Stellar Helium burning in Red Giant Stars

the He burning is ignited on the <sup>4</sup>He and <sup>14</sup>N ashes of the preceding hydrogen burning phase (pp and CNO)

Carbon we are made of !

For the second sec



12 14

#### <sup>12</sup>C/<sup>16</sup>O ratio at the end of Helium burning

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example: Stellar model for a 20 M<sub>solar</sub> Star
S factor(CF85) = 2 × S factor(CF88)
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#### Element abundances in the solar system



#### s-process nucleosynthesis during AGB



#### <sup>13</sup> $C(\alpha,n)^{16}O$ experimental status of the art



Big uncertainties in the R-matrix extrapolations. Presence of subthreshold resonances

#### <sup>22</sup>Ne( $\alpha$ ,n)<sup>16</sup>O experimental status of the art



Unmeasured resonance at E=635 keV $\rightarrow$  big uncertainties in the reaction rate.

## Location at the "B node" of a 3.5 MV single-ended positive ion accelerator



 In a very low background
 environment such as LNGS, it is mandatory not to increase the
 neutron flux above its average value



 $^{13}C(\alpha, n)^{16}O$ 

1E+04

a beam intensity: 200 μA Target: <sup>13</sup>C, 2 10<sup>17</sup>at/cm<sup>2</sup> (99% <sup>13</sup>C enriched) Beam energy(lab) ≤ 0.8 MeV

 $^{22}Ne(\alpha,n)^{25}Mg$ 

a beam intensity: 200 µA Target: <sup>22</sup>Ne, 1 10<sup>18</sup>at/cm<sup>2</sup> Beam energy(lab) ≤ 1.0 MeV

from  ${}^{12}C(\alpha,\gamma){}^{16}O$  $^{13}C(\alpha, n)^{16}O$ 

a beam intensity: 200 μA Target: <sup>13</sup>C, 1 10<sup>18</sup>at/cm<sup>2</sup> (<sup>13</sup>C/<sup>12</sup>C = 10<sup>-5</sup>) Beam energy(lab) ≤ 3.5 MeV

- Maximum neutron 1E+03 energy (lab): 3.02 MeV rate [1/s] 1E+02 Maximum neutron 1E+01 energy (lab): 5.6 MeV production 1E+00 Maximum neutron energy (lab): 0.45 MeV 1E-01 1E-02  $-{}^{13}C(\alpha,n)^{16}O$  from  ${}^{12}C(\alpha,\gamma)^{16}O$ leutron  $- ^{22}Ne(\alpha, n)^{25}Mg$ 1E-03  $- {}^{13}C(\alpha, n)^{16}O$ 1E-04 1E-05 1E-06 0,25 0,5 0,75 1,25 1,5 1.75 2 2.25 2.5 2,75 з 3,25 3,5 Beam energy (lab) [MeV]
- Maximum neutron production rate : 2000 n/s
  - Maximum neutron energy (lab) : 5.6 MeV

Geant4 simulations for neutron fluxes just outside the experimental hall and on the internal rock walls



Just-outside the wall the nflux is less than 1% of the LNGS natural flux!



#### "Progetto Premiale LUNA -MV"

Special Project financed from the Italian Research Ministry with 2.805 Millions of Euros in 2012

Schedule: 2012-2013 Hall preparation- Tender for the accelerator-Shielding 2014 Beam lines R&D- Infrastructures 2015 Accelerator installation - Beam lines construction-Detectors installation 2016 Calibration of the apparatus and first tests of beam on target

New collaborations are highly welcome!

## Workshop at LNGS: Starting-up the LUNA-MV collaboration

#### 6-8<sup>th</sup> February, 2013 luna-mv.lngs.infn.it

The LUNA-MV project aims at measuring the astrophysical key reactions

- <sup>3</sup>He(<sup>4</sup>He,γ)<sup>7</sup>Be
- $^{12}C(\alpha,\gamma)^{16}O$
- $^{13}C(\alpha,n)^{16}O$
- <sup>22</sup>Ne( $\alpha$ ,n)<sup>25</sup>Mg

using a MV machine placed in the Gran Sasso underground laboratory.

**Goal of the workshop** is to define the scientific priorities as well as the structure and the task sharing of the new collaboration. A possible timeline of the project will also be discussed. LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

- A. Guglielmetti (chair)
- A. Formicola (scientific secretary)
- M. Junker
- P. Prati
- F. Chiarizia (secretary)

#### INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

C. Broggini - INFN Padova, Italy

- M. Busso Perugia University, Italy
- H. Costantini Aix-Marseille Universite-CPPM, France
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- A. Lefebvre CSNSM CNRS/IN2P3, France

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#### $^{2}H(\alpha,\gamma)^{6}Li$ analysis

Two measurement campaigns: a) 400 keV and 280 keV b) 360 keV and 240 keV

at 400 keV the expected S/N ratio is about 1/12.



#### $^{2}H(\alpha,\gamma)^{6}Li$ analysis

Signal:  $E_{\gamma} = Q + E_{CM} - \Delta E_{rec} \pm \Delta E_{Doppler}$ 400 (360) keV and 280 (240) keV ROIs not overlapping Background almost independent on beam energy

