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National Nuclear Physics Summer School 2011

Hosted by the Triangle Universities Nuclear Laboratory _______ at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

June 20 - July 1, 2011

Introduction to Nuclear Astrophysics

Christian Iliadis

The 2011 National Nuclear Physics Summer School is being organized by Triangle Universities Nuclear Laboratory (TUNL). The school will be held on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The school is intended for advanced graduate students and beginning postdoctoral researchers in either experimental or theoretical nuclear physics. The primary aim is to provide future researchers with a broad perspective on current research in the field. Lecture courses will cover the major themes in nuclear physics research.

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Nuclear Reactions
- 3. Thermonuclear Reactions
- 4. Nuclear Burning Stages in Stars

1. Introduction

Hans Bethe (1906-2005)



Life on Earth depends on nuclear processes deep inside the Sun

Fusion of H to He:

Bethe & Critchfield (1938) [pp chains] Bethe 1939; von Weizsäcker 1938 [CNO cycle]

Nobel prize to Hans Bethe (1967)

Accurate nuclear physics information is crucial for understanding of stars

How do other stars produce energy? How do they evolve?

SOlar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO)

Solar system abundances





Willy Fowler (1911-95)

- Suess & Urey, Rev. Mod. Phys. 28, 53 (1956)
- Lodders, Astrophys. J. 591, 1220 (2003)

Foundation of modern theory of nuclear astrophysics:

- Burbidge, Burbidge, Fowler and Hoyle (1957)
- Cameron (1957)

Nobel prize to Willy Fowler (1983)

Direct evidence for stellar nucleosynthesis

(i) Solar neutrinos

- first direct test of how Sun generates energy was performed by detecting solar neutrinos [from ⁸B decay] at the Homestake gold mine, SD
- disagreement of predicted and measured neutrino flux: "solar neutrino problem" [giving later rise to discovery of neutrino oscillations]
- Nobel prize to Ray Davis (2002)



Ray Davis (1914-06)

(ii) γ-ray astronomy

- radioactive ('live") ²⁶Al has bee observed in the Galaxy [see image on right]
- T_{1/2}(²⁶AI)=720,000 years; time scale of Galactic chemical evolution: 10⁹ years
- from photon intensity: 1-2 solar masses of ²⁶Al in Galaxy
- conclusion: nucleosynthesis is ongoing

COMPTEL map of 1.8 MeV photon intensity



Pablo Picasso (1881-1973)



Guernica - 1937

"Computers are useless. They can only give you answers. What is needed are questions!"



Les Demoiselles d'Avignon - 1907

15 Key Questions in Nuclear Astrophysics

- (i) Why do predictions of helioseismology disagree with those of the standard solar model?
- (ii) What is the solution to the lithium problem in Big Bang nucleosynthesis?
- (iii) What do the observed light-nuclide and s-process abundances tell us about convection and dredge-up in massive stars and AGB stars?
- (iv) What are the production sites of the γ-ray emitting radioisotopes ²⁶Al, ⁴⁴Ti and ⁶⁰Fe?
 - (v) What is the origin of about 30 rare and neutron deficient nuclides beyond the iron peak (p-nuclides)?
- (vi) What causes core-collapse supernovae to explode?
 - (vii) What is the extend of neutrino-induced nucleosynthesis (ν -process)?
 - (viii) What is the extend of the nucleosynthesis in proton-rich outflows in the early ejecta of core-collapse supernovae (νp -process)?
 - (ix) What are the sites of the r-process?
- (x) What causes the discrepancy between models and observations regarding the mass ejected during classical nova outbursts?
 - (xi) Which are the physical mechanisms driving convective mixing in novae?
- (xii) What are the progenitors of type Ia supernovae?
- (xiii) What is the nucleosynthesis endpoint in type I X-ray bursts? Is there any matter ejected from those systems?
 - (xiv) What is the impact of stellar mergers on Galactic chemical abundances?
 - (xv) What are the production and acceleration sites of Galactic cosmic rays?

From: J. Jose & C. Iliadis, "The Unfinished Quest for the Origin of the Elements", review article submitted to *Reports on Progress in Physics* (2011)

Globular cluster M 10



Supernova 1987A in LMC (a small galaxy nearby)

Brightest exploding star seen in 400 years

Explosion of massive (blue supergiant) star

Supernova shock wave reaches gas previously ejected by central star

Debris from explosion

NASA (R. Kirshner and B. Sugerman)

core collapse supernovae release an energy of $(1-2)x10^{51}$ erg [1 erg=6.2x10⁵ MeV]



Cat's Eye nebula (NGC 6543)



C. Iliadis, Nuclear Physics of Stars, Wiley-VCH (2007)

Hertzsprung-Russell diagram, a key to stellar evolution

Heavy lines: major nuclear burning stages in stellar core

Evolution of star mainly determined by its mass:

Larger mass:

- \rightarrow larger T and P in core
- \rightarrow faster nuclear energy generation
- \rightarrow larger luminosity
- \rightarrow faster fuel consumption
- \rightarrow shorter lifetime

Dumbbell nebula (M27)



2. Nuclear Reactions

Definition of cross section:

(number of interactions per time)

(number of incident particles per area per time)(number of target nuclei within the beam)

Unit: 1 barn=10⁻²⁸ m²

Task#1: consider ${}^{1}H + {}^{1}H \rightarrow {}^{2}H + e^{+} + v$ (first step of pp chain) at E_{lab}=1 MeV

- σ_{theo} =8x10⁻⁴⁸ cm² [E_{cm}=0.5 MeV]
- 1 ampere (A) proton beam; dense hydrogen gas target (10²⁰ protons/cm²)

How long, on average, do you have to wait for 1 reaction to occur?



Why does the cross section fall drastically at low energies?Where is the peak in the cross section coming from?

A simple example in 1 dimension



$$\hat{T} = \frac{K}{k} \frac{|B|^2}{|G|^2} \approx e^{-(2/\hbar)} \sqrt{2m(V_1 - E)} (R_1 - R_0)$$

(after lengthy algebra, and for the limit of low E)

"Tunnel effect"



Tunnel effect is the reason for the strong drop in cross section at low energies!

Back to the simple potential, now in 3 dimensions





Continuity condition...

Wave intensity in interior region: (after very tedious algebra)







[change of potential depth V₀: changes wavelength in interior region]

"Resonance phenomenon"

A resonance results from favorable wave function matching conditions at the boundaries!

Resonance phenomenon: radial wave function for varying potential depth V_0



Macroscopic analogy: Tacoma Narrows Bridge (1940)



Transmission through the Coulomb barrier



Formal reaction theory: Breit-Wigner formula



Used for:

- for fitting data to deduce resonance properties
 - for "narrow-resonance" thermonuclear reaction rates
 - for extrapolating cross sections when no measurements exist
 - for experimental yields when resonance cannot be resolved

What are "partial widths"?

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probability per unit time for formation or decay of a resonance (in energy units)

For protons/neutrons:

$$\Gamma_{\lambda c} = 2 \frac{\hbar^2}{mR^2} P_c C^2 S \theta_{pc}^2$$

A partial width can be factored into 3 probabilities:

- C²S: probability that nucleons will arrange themselves in a "residual nucleus + single particle" configuration ["spectroscopic factor"]
- θ²: probability that single nucleon will appear on nuclear boundary ["dimensionless reduced single particle width"; Iliadis, NPA 618, 166 (1997)]
- P_c: probability that single nucleon will penetrate Coulomb and centripetal barriers ["penetration factor"; strongly energy-dependent! see later]



- resonance energy obtained from known excitation energy
- proton partial width: estimated using C²S from proton transfer
- $\Box \gamma$ -ray partial width estimated from measured lifetime (0.30 eV)

Breit-Wigner formula predicts accurately cross section extrapolated over 10⁶ resonance widths!

Task #2:

The $E_r^{cm} = 518 \text{ keV} (J^{\pi} = 1^{-})$ s-wave resonance (Fig. 3.11) in the ${}^{13}\text{C}(p,\gamma){}^{14}\text{N}$ reaction (Q = 7550 keV) has an "observed" proton and γ -ray partial width of $\Gamma_p^o = 37 \text{ keV}$ and $\Gamma_{\gamma}^o = 9.4 \text{ eV}$, respectively, at the resonance energy. Both values are given here in the center-of-mass system. They are derived from the results reported in King et al. 1994. The latter value corresponds to the γ -ray partial width of the *E*1 transition to the ${}^{14}\text{N}$ ground state ($J^{\pi} = 1^+$). By using the energy dependences of the partial widths, find for this particular resonance the center-of-mass energy at which $\Gamma_p^o \approx \Gamma_{\gamma}^o$. Approximate the s-wave penetration factor by the Gamow factor and disregard the small energy dependence of the dimensionless single-particle reduced width.

Hints/suggestions:

use the following expressions to scale the proton and g-ray partial widths:

$$\Gamma_{p}^{0}(E) = \Gamma_{p}^{0}(E_{r}) \frac{P_{\ell=0}(E)}{P_{\ell=0}(E_{r})} \qquad \Gamma_{\gamma,E1}^{0}(E) = \Gamma_{\gamma,E1}^{0}(E_{r}) \left(\frac{E+Q}{E_{r}+Q}\right)^{2L+1}$$

3. Thermonuclear Reactions

For a reaction 0 + 1 \rightarrow 2 + 3 we find from the definition of σ (see earlier) a "reaction rate":

$$r_{01} = N_0 N_1 \int_0^\infty v P(v) \sigma(v) \, dv \equiv N_0 N_1 \langle \sigma v \rangle_{01}$$

For a stellar plasma: kinetic energy for reaction derives from thermal motion:

"Thermonuclear reaction"

For a Maxwell-Boltzmann distribution:

$$----- \langle \sigma v \rangle_{01} = \left(\frac{8}{\pi m_{01}}\right)^{1/2} \frac{1}{(kT)^{3/2}} \int_0^\infty E \underline{\sigma(E)} \, e^{-E/kT} \, dE ---$$

The interplay of many different nuclear reactions in a stellar plasma



$$\frac{d(N_{25}_{Al})}{dt} = N_{H}N_{24}_{Mg}\langle \sigma v \rangle_{24}_{Mg(p,\gamma)} + N_{4}_{He}N_{22}_{Mg}\langle \sigma v \rangle_{22}_{Mg(\alpha,p)} \\ + N_{25}_{Si}\lambda_{25}_{Si(\beta^{+}\nu)} + N_{26}_{Si}\lambda_{26}_{Si(\gamma,p)} + \dots \\ - N_{H}N_{25}_{Al}\langle \sigma v \rangle_{25}_{Al(p,\gamma)} - N_{4}_{He}N_{25}_{Al}\langle \sigma v \rangle_{25}_{Al(\alpha,p)} \\ - N_{25}_{Al}\lambda_{25}_{Al(\beta^{+}\nu)} - N_{25}_{Al}\lambda_{25}_{Al(\gamma,p)} - \dots \end{cases} \right\}$$
 destruction

System of coupled differential equations: "nuclear reaction network"

Solved numerically [Arnett, "Supernovae and Nucleosynthesis", Princeton University Press, 1996]

Special case #1: reaction rates for smoothly varying S-factors ("non-resonant")

$$\sigma(E) \equiv \frac{1}{E} e^{-2\pi\eta} S(E)$$

$$N_A \langle \sigma v \rangle = \left(\frac{8}{\pi m_{01}}\right)^{1/2} \frac{N_A}{(kT)^{3/2}} \int_0^{\infty} E \sigma(E) e^{-E/kT} dE$$

$$= \left(\frac{8}{\pi m_{01}}\right)^{1/2} \frac{N_A}{(kT)^{3/2}} S_0 \int_0^{\infty} e^{-2\pi\eta} e^{-E/kT} dE$$
"Gamow peak"
Represents the energy range over which most nuclear reactions occur in a plasma!
Location and 1/e width of Gamow peak:
$$E_0 = \left[\left(\frac{\pi}{\hbar}\right)^2 \left(Z_0 Z_1 e^2\right)^2 \left(\frac{m_{01}}{2}\right) (kT)^2\right]^{1/3}$$

$$= 0.1220 \left(Z_0^2 Z_1^2 \frac{M_0 M_1}{M_0 + M_1} T_9^2\right)^{1/3} (MeV)$$

$$\Delta = \frac{4}{\sqrt{3}} \sqrt{E_0 kT} = 0.2368 \left(Z_0^2 Z_1^2 \frac{M_0 M_1}{M_0 + M_1} T_9^2\right)^{1/6} (MeV)$$

 $(1 \times 10^{\circ} \times 1)$

Energy (MeV)



Important aspects:

(i) Gamow peak shifts to higher energy for increasing charges Z_p and Z_t

(ii) at same time, area under Gamow peak decreases drastically

Conclusion: for a mixture of different nuclei in a plasma, those reactions with the smallest Coulomb barrier produce most of the energy and are consumed most rapidly (→ stellar burning stages)



Task #3: what causes the low-energy rise in the ¹⁶O+p S-factor for the transition into the first excited state?

Steps/Hints:

(i) We can read the following S-factor values off the graph: E_{cm} =0.03 MeV, S=0.008814 MeV b E_{cm} =0.1 MeV, S=0.006843 MeV b E_{cm} =0.4 MeV, S=0.004469 MeV b

- (ii) Convert S-factors to cross section
- (iii) Divide the cross section by the penetration factor; in order to do this, you need to determine the orbital angular momentum [before the interaction: p + ¹⁶O; after interaction: ¹⁷F in first excited state + E1 radiation]; use the numerical values for P from the file "Task3Help.pdf"

$$P_{\ell} = R \left(\frac{k}{F_{\ell}^2 + G_{\ell}^2} \right)_{r=R}$$

$$\rho = 0.218735 \cdot r \sqrt{\frac{M_p M_t}{M_p + M_t}} E$$
$$\eta = 0.157489 \cdot Z_p Z_t \sqrt{\frac{M_p M_t}{M_p + M_t}} \frac{1}{E}$$

where M_i , E and r are in units of u, MeV and fm, respectively.

(iv) What do you observe for the energy dependence of this "modified S-factor"?

Special case #2: reaction rates for (very) "narrow resonances" (Γ_i constant over total Γ)

Breit-Wigner formula (energy-independent partial widths)

$$N_A \langle \sigma v \rangle = \left(\frac{8}{\pi m_{01}}\right)^{1/2} \frac{N_A}{(kT)^{3/2}} \int_0^\infty E \,\sigma(E) \, e^{-E/kT} \, dE$$

$$= N_A \frac{\sqrt{2\pi\hbar^2}}{(m_{01}kT)^{3/2}} e^{-E_r/kT} \omega \frac{\Gamma_a \Gamma_b}{\Gamma} 2\pi$$

resonance energy needs to be known rather precisely [takes into account only rate contribution at E_r]

"resonance strength" ωγ: proportional to area under narrow resonance curve

[For influence of uncertainties in E_r and $\omega\gamma$ on rate: see Thompson & Iliadis, NPA 647, 259 (1999)]

Task #4: although the Gamow peak concept is strictly defined only for non-resonant reactions, it is used all the time in nuclear astrophysics even in the case of resonances, where it is assumed that those resonances contribute the most to the total rate that are located inside the Gamow peak.

- (i) Explain the reasoning behind this line of thought.
- (ii) Also explain why these arguments do not always apply, especially not at higher temperatures.

Special case #3: reaction rates for "broad resonances"

Breit-Wigner formula (energy-**dependent** partial widths)

$$N_A \langle \sigma v \rangle = \left(\frac{8}{\pi m_{01}}\right)^{1/2} \frac{N_A}{(kT)^{3/2}} \int_0^\infty E \,\sigma(E) \, e^{-E/kT} \, dE$$

rate can be found from numerical integration

There are two contributions to the rate: (i) from "narrow resonance" at E_r (ii) from tail of broad resonance



Example for resonance: $E_r = 214 \text{ keV}$ in ²⁴Mg(p, γ)²⁵Al

M 13



Total thermonuclear reaction rate



Need to consider:

- non-resonant processes
- narrow resonances
- broad resonances
- subthreshold resonances
- interferences
- continuum

every nuclear reaction represents a special case

Monte Carlo method: a step forward



Lognormal probability density function:
Monte Carlo reaction rates for 62 reactions from ¹⁴C to ⁴⁰Ca target nuclei



Schematic (not real) example:

²²Ne(α,γ)²⁶Mg at T=500 MK

> $E_r = 300 \pm 15 \text{ keV}$ $\omega \gamma = 4.1 \pm 0.2 \text{ eV}$

10,000 samples

Foundation of our new library of thermonuclear reactions rates; will be used for simulations of massive stars, classical novae, AGB stars etc.

New evaluation of 62 nuclear reaction involving targets in the A=14-40 mass region:
Iliadis, Longland, Champagne, Coc & Fitzgerald, Nucl. Phys. A 841, 31 (2010)



4. Nuclear Burning Stages

- reactions with smallest Coulomb barrier proceed first, stabilizing star
- when nuclear fuel is consumed, star contracts gravitationally, T increases
- next available nuclear fuel (ashes of previous stage) burns, stabilizing star



[Woosley, Heger & Weaver, Rev. Mod. Phys. 74, 1015 (2002)]

Hydrostatic Hydrogen Burning:

Sun (T=15.6 MK), stellar core (T=8-55 MK), shell of AGB stars (T=45-100 MK)



Hydrostatic Hydrogen Burning:

Sun (T=15.6 MK), stellar core (T=8-55 MK), shell of AGB stars (T=45-100 MK)





14C



- ¹²C and ¹⁶O nuclei act as catalysts
- branchings: (p,α) stronger than (p,γ)
- ¹⁴N(p,γ)¹⁵O slowest reaction in CNO1 has been measured by LUNA/LENA
- solar: ¹³C/¹²C=0.01; CNO1: ¹³C/¹²C=0.25 ("steady state")
- T>20 MK: CNO1 faster than pp1
- CNO cycles in AGB stars: main source of ¹³C and ¹⁴N in Universe

| | CNO1 | CNO2 | CNO3 | <u>CNO4</u> |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ¹² C(p,γ) ¹³ N ¹³ N(β ⁺ ν) ¹³ C | ¹⁴ N(p,γ) ¹⁵ O ¹⁵ O(β ⁺ ν) ¹⁵ N | ¹⁵ N(p,γ) ¹⁶ O ¹⁶ O(p,γ) ¹⁷ F | ¹⁶ O(p,γ) ¹⁷ F ¹⁷ F(β ⁺ ν) ¹⁷ O |
| | $^{13}C(p,\gamma)^{14}N$ | ¹⁵ N(p,γ) ¹⁶ O | $^{17}F(\beta^+\nu)^{17}O$ | ¹⁷ O(p,γ) ¹⁸ F |
| - | ¹⁴ N(p,γ) ¹⁵ O ¹⁵ O(β ⁺ ν) ¹⁵ N | $^{10}O(p,\gamma)^{17}F$ $^{17}F(\beta^+\nu)^{17}O$ | ¹⁷ O(p,γ) ¹⁸ F ¹⁸ F(β ⁺ ν) ¹⁸ O | $^{18}F(\beta^+\nu)^{18}O(p,\gamma)^{19}F$ |
| | ¹⁵ N(p,α) ¹² C | ¹⁷ O(p,α) ¹⁴ N | ¹⁸ O(p,α) ¹⁵ N | ¹⁹ F(p,α) ¹⁶ O |

The 4 reaction branchings in the CNO cycles:



Explosive Hydrogen Burning:

Classical novae (T=100-400 MK)

²⁰Ne

¹⁹F

¹⁸O





- all reactions [incl. $^{14}N(p,\gamma)^{15}O]$ become faster than β -decays of $^{14}O,~^{15}O$
- energy generation depends on β-decays ("β-limited CNO cycle")
- most abundant nuclides: ¹⁴O, ¹⁵O
- time for one HCNO1 cycle: 278 s (operates far from equilibrium)



Nova Cygni 1992/HST

Classical Novae are very special from the nuclear physics point of view:

- a restricted number of important nuclear reactions
- reaction can be measured directly in the Gamow peak
- the only stellar explosions mainly based on experiment

see reviews by:

- Jose, Hernanz & Iliadis, Nucl. Phys. A 777, 550 (2006)
- Starrfield, Iliadis, & Hix, Classical Novae, 2nd ed., Cambridge U. Press (2008)

Nucleosynthesis "sensitivity" study

[to quantify importance of nuclear reactions/motivate new experiments]:

• Iliadis, Champagne, Jose, Starrfield & Tupper, Astrophys. J. Suppl. 142, 105 (2002) [classical novae; 7,000 network calculations]





Helium Burning: Massive stars (T=100-400 MK)





From Saha statistical equation and reciprocity theorem we find:

$$\lambda_{A \to B \to (C \text{ or } B')} = \frac{\lambda_{A \to B}}{\lambda_{B \to A}} (\lambda_{B \to C} + \lambda_{B \to B'})$$
$$= N_a \left(\frac{h^2}{2\pi}\right)^{3/2} \frac{1}{(m_{Aa}kT)^{3/2}} \frac{(2j_B + 1)}{(2j_A + 1)(2j_a + 1)}$$
$$\times \frac{G_B^{\text{norm}}}{G_A^{\text{norm}} G_a^{\text{norm}}} e^{Q_{A \to B}/kT} (\lambda_{B \to C} + \lambda_{B \to B'})$$

independent of reaction rate for $A \rightarrow B!$

Task #5: calculate the temperature dependence of the triple-α decay constant near 100 MK; how does your result explain qualitatively, for example, the helium flash at the onset of hydrostatic helium burning?

Hints: use the expression for the decay constant λ given below; the decay constant is related to the reaction rate via

$$\lambda_1(0) = \frac{1}{\tau_1(0)} = N_1 \langle \sigma v \rangle_{01} = \rho \frac{X_1}{M_1} N_A \langle \sigma v \rangle_{01}$$

where ρ is density, X is mass fraction, M is atomic mass

For the triple- α rate use the following expression:

$$\lambda_{3\alpha} = 0.23673 \frac{(\rho X_{\alpha})^2}{T_9^3} e^{-11.6048E'/T_9} \omega \gamma_{^8Be(\alpha,\gamma)} \quad (s^{-1})$$
$$= 8.7590 \cdot 10^{-10} \frac{(\rho X_{\alpha})^2}{T_9^3} e^{-4.4040/T_9} \quad (s^{-1}) \quad (5.102)$$

where we used E' = 287.6 keV - (-91.84 keV) = 379.4 keV and $\omega \gamma_{^8\text{Be}(\alpha,\gamma)} = \Gamma_{\text{rad}} = 3.7 \cdot 10^{-3} \text{ eV}$. Note that this expression is valid only for temperatures of $0.1 \leq T_9 \leq 2$. For lower and higher temperatures, additional contributions to the reaction rates have to be taken into account (Angulo et al. 1999).

Explosive Hydrogen-Helium Burning:

Type I X-ray bursts (T>500 MK)





- ¹⁵O(α,γ)¹⁹Ne
 ¹⁹Ne(p,γ)²⁰Na
- II. ¹⁴O(α,p)¹⁷F
 ¹⁷F(p,γ)¹⁸Ne
 ¹⁸Ne(α,p)²¹Na
- III. ¹⁴O(α,p)¹⁷F ¹⁷F(γ,p)¹⁶O ¹⁶O(α,γ)²⁰Ne

Experiments with radioactive ion beams

[neutron star: $1.3M_{sol}$, r=8 km, T_{peak} =1.4 GK, t=100 s]



Network sensitivity study: Parikh et al., ApJS 178, 110 (2008); PRC 79, 045802 (2009)

What is the role of the ${}^{15}O(\alpha,\gamma){}^{19}Ne$ breakout reaction?

Fisker, Goerres, Wiescher & Davids, Astrophys. J. 650, 332 (2006) [hydro code AGILE]







But: no significant effect on peak luminosity, recurrence time or nucleosynthesis in more recent hydro model studies! [Davids, Cyburt, Jose & Mythili, arxiv 1104.2877 (2011); hydro code SHIVA]

theoretical predictions are more reliable if reproduced by two independent stellar model codes





²⁴Mg







Experimental binding energies per nucleon

largest B/A for ⁶²Ni, ⁵⁸Fe, ⁵⁶Fe

As ²⁸Si disappears in the core at the end of Si burning, T increases, until all non-equilibrated reactions come into equilibrium [last reaction: 3α reaction]

One large equilibrium cluster stretches from p, n, α to Fe peak: "Nuclear Statistical Equilibrium" (NSE)

Abundance of each nuclide can be calculated from repeated application of Saha equation:

$$N_{Y} = N_{p}^{\pi} N_{n}^{\nu} \frac{1}{\theta^{A-1}} \left(\frac{M_{Y}}{M_{p}^{\pi} M_{n}^{\nu}}\right)^{3/2} \frac{g_{Y}}{2^{A}} G_{Y}^{\text{norm}} e^{B(Y)/kT}$$

In NSE, abundance of any nuclide is determined by: temperature, density, neutron excess

Represents number of excess neutrons per nucleon (can only change as result of weak interactions!)



Dominant species:

. . .

η needs to be monitored very carefully! [stellar weak interaction rates need to be known]

Assume first that $\eta=0$ and Si burning has mainly produced ⁵⁶Ni (N=Z=28) in the Fe peak besides ⁴He, p, n...

At ρ =const and T rising: increasing fraction of composition resides in light particles (p, n, α)



[Hartmann, Woosley & El Eid, ApJ 297, 837 (1985)]

Onion shell structure of massive star [25 solar mass star of solar composition]



From: J. Jose & C. Iliadis, "The Unfinished Quest for the Origin of the Elements", review article submitted to *Reports on Progress in Physics* (2011)

No other nuclear energy source is available to core...

grows in mass; when it exceeds 1.4 times solar mass, electron degeneracy pressure is unable to counteract gravity...

two important effects: (i) electron-capture on Fe peak nuclei removes electrons, thus decreasing pressure (ii) NSE composition shifts to lighter nuclei (less stable!) removing energy, thus decreasing pressure

core collapses in free fall...

when ρ =10¹⁴ g/cm³ nuclei and nucleons feel short-range nuclear force (repulsive at very short r)

part of core rebounds, producing an outward moving shock wave...

within a fraction of a second, the core with a size of several thousand kilometers collapses to a proto-neutron star of several tens of kilometer radius.

shock moves outward into infalling matter and loses energy by: (i) photodisintegrating Fe peak nuclei into free nucleons, and (ii) emission of neutrinos

about 1 second after core collapse the shock reaches outer edge of core, has lost all its energy, and stalls!

how exactly the shock is revived and disrupts star in a supernova is a mystery

during core collapse, a gravitational binding energy of several 10⁵³ erg, representing a staggering 10% of the iron core's rest mass, is released in form of neutrino radiation; therefore, the stalled shock is thought to be revived by neutrinos and antineutrinos that emerge from the hot and dense proto-neutron star

only a fraction (1%) of the total gravitational binding energy, deposited by neutrinos as thermal energy of nucleons, leptons and photons in this region, would be required to initiate a powerful shock propagating through the stellar mantle and giving rise to an explosion

problem is highly complex, involving energy-dependent neutrino transport in three dimensions, a convectively unstable region near a compact hot and dense object, possible diffusive instabilities, magneto-rotational effects, and so on

Nucleosynthesis in the earliest ejecta: the α -, r-, and ν p-processes



 R_v : "neutrino sphere" R_g : "gain radius"

proton-rich wind

neutron-rich wind

"Complete" Explosive Si Burning (T>5 GK, ρ >10⁸ g/cm³)

outgoing shock wave heats inner ²⁸Si layer of star to high T and ρ : matter approaches NSE, expands, cools (when shock moves outward), and reactions begin to fall out of equilibrium

nucleosynthesis depends critically on density (ρ), expansion time Scale (τ), and n, p, α abundances



if ρ large and/or τ large: NSE is terminated by lack of light particles ("particle-poor freeze-out"): ejected abundances are close to those derived from NSE [mainly ⁵⁶Ni since $\eta \approx 0.003$]

if ρ small and/or τ small: NSE is terminated by excess of α -particles (" α -rich freeze-out"): ejected abundances change somewhat from NSE [although still mainly ⁵⁶Ni for $\eta \approx 0.003$; also ⁴⁴Ti]





Nuclear astrophysics experiments: direct measurements

two nuclei with kinetic energies before reaction:



excited product nucleus after reaction:



What we need:

- accelerated ion beams
- targets
- detectors



Target chamber design

Location where: • reactions occur

• incident particle charge is measured





Target material deposited on a "backing"

targets should: (ideally) • have a well-known stoichiometry

not degrade under ion bombardment
have no contaminants

backings: Ta, Ni, Cu

contaminants: ¹¹B, ¹⁹F, ¹³C



evaporation onto backing







etching of backings using acids



Detectors: semiconductors & scintillators

$$\begin{array}{l} \mathsf{p} + {}^{17}\mathsf{O} \rightarrow {}^{18}\mathsf{F} + & \gamma \\ \mathsf{p} + {}^{17}\mathsf{O} \rightarrow {}^{14}\mathsf{N} + & \alpha \end{array}$$

radiation [reaction products] deposits energy in matter

germanium [semiconductor for γ-rays]



Nal(TI) [scintillator for γ-rays]









Detector Simulations and Calibrations using Geant4 and MCNP



Computer Tomography (CT) at UNC Hospitals





Computed Tomography (CT) Images





Carson, Iliadis et al., Nucl. Instr. Meth. A618, 190 (2010)

Measured germanium detector γ -ray pulse-height spectrum



Background radiation: sources





| Half lives: | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| ³ H: ¹⁴ C: ⁴⁰ K: ⁶⁰ Co: ⁹⁰ Sr: ¹³⁷ Cs: ²²² Rn: ²³⁸ U: ²³² Th: | 12.3 y 5730 y 1.3·10 ⁹ y 5.2 y 28.8 y 30.2 y 3.8 d 4.5·10 ⁹ y | | | |
| ²³² Th: | 1.4·10¹⁰ y | | | |

Coincidence-Anticoincidence Detection Apparatus





Rowland, Iliadis et al., Nucl. Instr. Meth. A 480, 610 (2002)
Longland, Iliadis et al., Nucl. Instr. Meth. A 566, 452 (2006)

Another background reduction technique: experiments underground



Iliadis, Nuclear Physics of Stars, Wiley (2007)

Nuclear astrophysics overviews/reviews:

C. Iliadis, Introduction to Nuclear Astrophysics, CP1213, ed. Spitaleri, Rolfs & Pizzone (AIP, 2010) [22 pages] very general introduction – advanced undergrad level

J. Jose & C. Iliadis, Nuclear astrophysics: the unfinished quest for the origin of the elements, Rep. Prog. Phys., in print About 50 pages – advanced grad student level

PHYSICS TEXTBOOK

Christian Iliadis

WILEY-VCH

Nuclear Physics of Stars


Extra slides

The power of electronics: coincidence gating





The pioneering Laboratory for Underground Nuclear Astrophysics (LUNA)





Broggini et al., Annu. Rev. Nucl. Part. Sci. 60, 53 (2010)

"Incomplete" Explosive Si Burning (T>4-5 GK)

outgoing shock wave still moving in ²⁸Si layer, but T and ρ are smaller: ²⁸Si is dissociated, two quasi-equilibrium clusters form, and Fe peak nuclei are produced

process very similar to hydrostatic Si burning, except that: (i) fast expansion causes freeze-out before NSE can be established (ii) significant amount of ²⁸Si remains

main nucleosynthesis products: ²⁸Si, Fe peak species, intermediate-mass elements

Explosive O Burning (T=3-4 GK)

next layer reached by shock is composed of ¹⁶O

process similar to incomplete silicon burning [fuel (¹⁶O) is dissociated, giving rise to two QSE clusters in the mass regions of silicon and the Fe peak]; however, temperature is lower and thus less matter is converted to the Fe peak and much more material remains locked in silicon

most abundant nuclides after freeze-out: ²⁸Si, ³²S, ³⁶Ar and ⁴⁰Ca (" α -elements")



Explosive C and Ne Burning (T=2-3 GK)

finally, shock encounters a zone mainly composed of ¹⁶O, ²⁰Ne, ¹²C

 ^{20}Ne [and to a lesser extend ^{12}C] burns explosively, but T and τ are too small for establishing QSE and the forward and reverse nuclear reactions operate far from equilibrium



abundance of a given species depends on initial composition and reaction rates.

after freeze-out most abundant species: ¹⁶O, ²⁰Ne, ²⁴Mg, ²⁸Si; also main site of ²⁶Al production



Most supernovae (approximately 85%) result from core collapse of massive stars (>11 M_{sol})

Main production Site of ²⁶AI: Explosive Ne/C burning



| Nuclide | Origin | Nuclide | Origin | Nuclide | Origin |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|--------------|
| ¹ H | BB | ¹⁷ O | CN | ³⁰ Si | С |
| ² H | BB | ¹⁸ O | He | ³¹ P | С |
| ³ He | BB | ¹⁹ F | [AGB, ν,] | ³² S | xO |
| ⁴ He | BB | ²⁰ Ne | С | ³³ S | xO, xNe |
| ⁶ Li | CR | ²¹ Ne | С | ³⁴ S | xO |
| ⁷ Li | [BB, AGB, CN] | ²² Ne | He, AGB | ³⁶ S | [He(s), xC,] |
| ⁹ Be | CR | ²³ Na | С | ³⁵ Cl | xO |
| ^{10}B | CR | ²⁴ Mg | С | ³⁷ Cl | [xO, He(s),] |
| ^{11}B | [CR, ν] | ²⁵ Mg | C, AGB | ³⁶ Ar | xO |
| ¹² C | AGB, He | ²⁶ Mg | C, AGB | ³⁸ Ar | xO |
| ¹³ C | AGB, CN | ²⁶ Al | xC, xNe | 40 Ar | [He(s), C,] |
| 14 N | AGB | ²⁷ AI | С | ³⁹ K | xO |
| ¹⁵ N | CN | ²⁸ Si | xO | 40 K | He(s) |
| ¹⁶ O | He | ²⁹ Si | С | 40 Ca | xO |

Tab. 5.2 Origin of the light nuclides. The labels denote: Big Bang (BB); cosmic ray spallation (CR); asymptotic giant branch stars (AGB); ν -process (ν); classical novae (CN); helium, carbon, neon, oxygen burning in massive stars (He, C, Ne, O), where an "x" in front of the symbol of a burning stage indicates explosive rather than hydrostatic burning; the weak s-process component is denoted by He(s). Information from Woosley, Heger and Weaver 2002, Clayton 2003, José, Lattanzio and Limongi 2006 (priv. comm.). Uncertain or conflicting assignments are given in square parenthesis.

Supernova 1994D in galaxy NGC 4526

Remnant of Tycho's supernova (SN 1572)



Credit: NASA/CXC

SN1994D m_v=11.9

Credit: NASA/ESA

- smaller fraction (approximately 15%) of supernovae are type la supernovae
- believed to occur in binary stars: CO white dwarf + other star
- high mass accretion onto white dwarf surface (to avoid classical nova!)
- white mass grows to near Chandrasekhar limit (1.4M_{sol})
- carbon ignites under degenerate conditions (thermonuclear runaway)
- nuclear energy release disrupts white dwarf, no remnant left behind
- 10¹⁰ times solar luminosity
- nucleosynthesis in hottest zone: produces mainly ⁵⁶Ni via NSE at low neutron excess
- outer regions attain smaller temperatures: explosive Si and O burning
- standard candles

