

Nuclei in the Cosmos School 2025

# BEAMS, TARGETS & DETECTORS Part II

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#### Layout of the lectures

# Lecture I

# I. Brief Introduction

# **II. Beams for Nuclear astrophysics**

- 1. Requirements
- 2. How to accelerate an ion
  - Accelerator types & purpose of each type
- 3. Radioactive beams
  - production methods
  - examples

**III. Targets for nuclear astrophysics** 

- 1. Requirements
- 2. Solid targets
  - Production
  - Characterization
- 3. Gas targets

# <u>Lecture II</u>

# **IV. Detectors for nuclear astrophysics**

- 1. Some general characteristics of detectors
- 2. Requirements
- 3. Detection systems for charged particles

  i) Silicons detectors
  ii) Magnetic spectrometers
  iii) Gas detectors
  iv) Active Gas targets

  3. Detection systems for charged particles

  Functioning principle
  What is measured
  Examples
- 4. Detection systems for gamma-rays
- 5. Recoils Separators for heavy recoils detection

# Gas targets

Gas targets are important in nuclear astrophysics, especially for reactions involving gaseous elements (like He, Ne) and when using inverse kinematics.

Windowed Gas Cells: Chambers filled with gas, separated from the vacuum using thin entrance and exit windows made of thin foils (e.g., Havar, Mylar, Kapton, or titanium), usually a few micrometers thick.

Typical pressures of a few mbar to several hundred mbar.

- 🙂 Simple design.
- Easy to control gas pressure and target thickness.
- Window degradation under heavy beam irradiation.
- Energy loss and straggling in window foils
- Background reactions from the windows

**Windowless Gas Targets:** Use differential pumping systems to isolate a high-pressure gas region from the vacuum beamline

- gas is injected as a narrow jet into the beamline.
- Extended gas cells longer regions with gas  $% \left( {{{\mathbf{F}}_{{\mathbf{F}}}} \right)$
- © No energy loss from window foils.
- Require complex differential pumping.
- Beam energy loss and spread in gas must be carefully characterized.
- Target thickness may vary along the beam path.

**Recirculating Gas Systems:** used especially for expensive isotopically enriched gases like <sup>15</sup>N,<sup>22</sup>Ne,<sup>3</sup>He, etc. The Gas is continuously recirculated through the target and purification system. Used with windowless or closed gas cells.

- Saves rare/expensive gas.
- Maintains constant pressure
- Adds complexity (seals, valves, purifiers).

## **Targets for measurements in inverse kinematics when using radioactive beams**

#### H targets for $(p,\gamma)$ & $(p,\alpha)$ studies or D for (d,p), (d,n) transfer reactions

Solid CH<sub>2</sub> or CD<sub>2</sub> target: - easy to handle - dx ~ 50 - 1000  $\mu$ g/cm<sup>2</sup>

**But:** non uniformity, carbon and deuterium contaminations

<u>Cryogenic solid targets</u>: - no carbon contamination - more at/cm<sup>2</sup> for similar energy loss But: not easy to handle,

#### <sup>4</sup>He targets for $(\alpha, \gamma)$ studies & <sup>3</sup>He targets for (<sup>3</sup>He,d) transfer reactions:

#### Window-confined gas target:

- high concentration (depending on pressure)

**But:** Background induced by reactions on entrance and exit windows

#### Solid implanted target:

- easy to handle

**But:** - low concentration  $(10^{15} - 10^{17} \text{ at/cm}^2)$  & Sputtering (He loss under irradiation)

#### <u>Cryogenic solid or liquid targets</u> - more at/cm<sup>2</sup> for similar energy loss than in gas **But:** sophisticated cryogenics system (liquid helium supply, temperature control...), background from the windows

#### Windowless ultra jet gas target:

- -high concentration  $10^{19}$  at/cm<sup>2</sup> (e.g JENSA)
- no contamination, no degradation

But: need of differential-pumping system with high pumping speed



# Jet Experiments in Nuclear Structure and Astrophysics (JENSA) gas jet target

Recirculating gas system









First direct measurement of cross-section using JENSA target, ORRUBA Si detectors & low energy & reaccelerated radioactive beam @ NSCL: <sup>34</sup>Ar(α,p)<sup>37</sup>K for X-ray burst studies

Beam intensity  $\sim$  (2-8) $\times$ 10<sup>3</sup> pps

# Detectors for Nuclear Astrophysics



#### Energy resolution FWHM



#### R = FWHM (Full With Half Maximum)/E= $2.35\sigma$ /E= $\Delta$ E/E

→ Two peaks are considered as resolved when d > FWHM→ Example: For a γ-ray with E=1 MeV NaI detector : R= 8-9% HpGe detector: R=0.1%

Response Function : Pulse height and shape observed from the detector when it is bombarded by a given radiation at a given energy

➤ Time Response: Time between the arrival of the radiation and the formation of an output signal
 GOOD timing: signal quickly formed in a sharp pulse almost vertical rising flank ⇒ a precise moment in time can be marked by the signal → important for Time-Of-Flight measurements



#### W. R Leo, Techniques for nuclear & particle physics

#### **Some general characteristics of detectors**



#### **Detection requirements for Nuclear Astrophysics**

In case of direct measurements with stable beams:

low cross sections  $\rightarrow$  low yields  $\rightarrow$  poor signal-to-noise ratio

⇒ Requirements: Improving the signal-to-noise ratio

⇒ High  $\gamma$ -ray, charged particle & neutron detection efficiency ⇒ Reducing background (noise) → perform coincidence measurements (LENA, STELLA,...), recoil mass separator (ERNA, DRAGON..., and/or go underground (LUNA)

In case of indirect measurements (e.g. transfer reactions) with stable beams:

 $\Rightarrow$  **Requirements:** Energy resolution to disentangle the various populated states of interest

 $\Rightarrow$  magnetic spectrometers

In case of direct or indirect measurements with radioactive beams: low beam intensities ( $\leq 10^6$  pps)

 $\Rightarrow$  **Requirements:** Increasing statistics while maintaining good energy resolution

 $\Rightarrow$  large solid angle & efficient particle &  $\gamma$ -ray detection setups

→ for charged particles: - Large area, highly segmented silicon strip detector arrays: MUST2, ORRUBA, SHARC

- Solenoidal Spectrometers with ancilliaries (silicons) : **HELIOS** (ANL), ISS (Isolde)

- Active targets : MUSIC, ACTAR-TPC, ANASEN, AT-TPC

 $\rightarrow$  for  $\gamma$ -rays: Need  $4\pi$  coverage: **GRETINA/GRETA, AGATA** 

→ for heavy recoils : recoil mass separators (DRAGON, SECAR,...)

## **Charged particles detection:**

- Significant number of charge carriers are generated as a result of ionizing radiation. (3.6 eV/pair)
   => good energy resolution (< 1%)</li>
- Widely used in nuclear physics for :
  - Particle identification
  - $\rightarrow \Delta E$ -E technique, E-ToF, Pulse Shape Analysis PSA
  - Energy measurement
  - Position measurement (e.g strip detectors)
- The energy loss of a charged particle through matter is given by the well-known Bethe-Bloch equation (for the stopping power):

$$\left\langle -\frac{dE}{dx}\right\rangle = Kz^2 \frac{Z}{A} \frac{1}{\beta^2} \left[ \frac{1}{2} \ln \frac{2m_e c^2 \beta^2 \gamma^2 W_{\text{max}}}{I^2} - \beta^2 - \frac{\delta(\beta\gamma)}{2} \right]$$
  
Fon non relativistic cases: 
$$\left\langle -\frac{dE}{dx} \right\rangle \sim \frac{mz^2}{E}$$



The most important ingredients are: Z atomic number of absorber A atomic mass of absorber z charge number of incident particle m atomic mass of incident particle E ~ kinetic energy

# **Silicon detectors**

# **Charged particles detection:**

#### **ΔE-E particle identification technique**

• Two detection layers are required; particles must pass through the first layer and be stopped in the second



By plotting the energy loss ( $\Delta E$ ) measured in the first detection layer against the residual energy (E) measured in the second layer



→ Identification in charge & mass of the detected particles



#### **E-ToF (Time of Flight) id technique**

- Can be performed with a single detection layer
- For particles that stop within the detector, the measured energy  $E = mv^2/2 =>$  E-ToF correlation is sensitive to the particle's mass.
- Achieving precise ToF measurement requires a long flight path



First layer: **DSSD** (double sided strip detector) (300  $\mu$ m, 128 strips in X & Y) Second layer : **SiLi** (4.5 mm)



→ Study of  ${}^{60}$ Fe(n, $\gamma$ )  ${}^{61}$ Fe reaction via d( ${}^{60}$ Fe,p) ${}^{61}$ Fe transfer reaction Giron et al, PRC2017

## **Silicon detectors:**

- Particles with different Z & A induce different signal shapes in the detector => particle identification is obtained by correlating the deposited energy with one of the pulse shape parameter- such as the signal rise time, decay time or the amplitude of the current signal Imax)
- Will be used in the next generation silicon detector array GRIT (Granularity, Resolution, Identification, Transparency) for particle identification





- 2 rings of trapezoidal telescopess in the forward (1.5 mm thick DSSSD, 128 strips in X & Y) and backward direction (500 um thick, 32 strips in X & Y)
- 1 ring of square telescopes at 90 degrees

**Highly Segmented Silicon detectors** 

- Useful for reaction studies with radioactive beams (low beam intensities)  $\geq$
- Measurement of energy & ANGLE of the emitted particles in one experimental setting

Eg: transfer reaction  ${}^{37}Ca + p \rightarrow d + {}^{36}Ca$ ; the detected particle is the deuteron



**DSSD** (300 µm, 128 strips in X & Y)



gs

20

 $\begin{array}{c} 40 & 60 \\ \theta_{cm} \ [deg] \end{array}$ 

al PRC2022

60

#### Silicon detectors in Solenoidal spectrometers:

# HELIOS @ANL



#### **Charged particles detection:** Magnetic spectrometers for indirect studies (e.g. transfer reactions)

• From the transfer reaction  $\mathbf{a}(=\mathbf{x}+\mathbf{b})+\mathbf{A} \longrightarrow \mathbf{C}^*(\mathbf{x}+\mathbf{A})+\mathbf{b}$ , we can have access to important spectroscopic parameters (Ex,  $\Gamma_{c,\gamma}$ , ...) to calculate the reaction of interest  $\mathbf{x}+\mathbf{A} \longrightarrow \mathbf{C}^* \underbrace{\overset{\mathbf{C}+\gamma}{\overset{\mathbf{C}+\gamma}{\mathbf{B}+\mathbf{c}}}_{\mathbf{B}+\mathbf{c}} \underbrace{(\mathbf{c}=\mathbf{p},\mathbf{n},\alpha,...)}_{\mathbf{B}+\mathbf{c}}$  (See Richard's lecture)



#### What do we measure by detecting b?

 $E_b, \theta_b \rightarrow \text{Excitation Level energies of } C^*: E_x \text{ (kinematics)}$ 

 $\text{Yield}_{b}(\theta) \rightarrow \text{Differential cross-sections of each state: } d\sigma/d\Omega$ 

- Particle **b** can be detected in **silicon detectors or** in a focal plane of a **magnetic spectrometer**.
- BUT: Better energy resolution (< 0.1%) with magnetic spectrometers</p>



#### **Charged particles detection:**

- Basic principle: gas ionization from radiation interaction;
  - electric signal originated by ion-electron pairs collected through an electric field
- **Working regimes**: Ionisation chambers, Proportional counters, Geiger-Müller
- Ionization chambers: the simplest gas detector



# E = Cst

#### **General constituents**

- Container filled with gas
- Two isolated electrodes with opposite charge
- High Voltage

**Choice of gas:** Propane (C3H8) or **Ar** (more dense) to increase ionzation probability **Detection efficiency:** ~ 100% for charged particles

Signal outputs : small, need amplification

# Proportional Counters:



- → In a high-field region near the wire, electrons gain enough energy to cause secondary ionizations ⇒ Avalanche Formation
- $\Rightarrow$  signal output: High Pulse height  $\propto$  energy of the original ionization
- $\rightarrow$  The applied V is high enough to create amplification via avalanches, but not so high as to cause continuous discharge (which would enter the Geiger-Müller region). Anode wire (+ ve)



Avalanches

## gas detectors (the oldest detectors)

W. R Leo, Techniques for nuclear & particle physics

#### **Gas detectors :**

# **Position sensitive proportional gas counter** *a* **<b>Split-Pole (Orsay)**

#### Position measurement

- The charge avalanche near the anode wires induces a signal on a single cathode strip.
- Cathode strips are connected to a delay line
- ∆T between signal arrivals at both ends of the delay line is
   measured using a TAC (Time-to-Amplitude Converter)

   → Position of the particle on the focal plane ⇒ magnetic rigidity Bp

#### Energy loss measurement

- > The central anode wire works as a conventional proportional counter.
- $\blacktriangleright$  Provides a measure of energy loss  $\Delta E$





#### **Charged particles detection:**

**Active Gas targets** 

- $\succ$  The gas acts as both the target material and the detection medium.
- > The key to their operation lies in tracking charged particles as they move through the gas via the ionization of the latter.
- Can reconstruct the entire reaction kinematics inside the gas volume (Time Projection Chamber (TPC)).
- Great for low-yield or exotic beam reactions
- Adjustable pressure for tuning thickness
- > Often used for inverse kinematics with radioactive beams. Examples: MUSIC, ACTAR TPC@GANIL, AT-TPC at NSCL/FRIB.



#### **Functioning principle:** It is all about ionization & drift

When a charged particle (from the beam or a reaction product) moves through the gas, it ionizes gas atoms along its path

- $\rightarrow$  The particle creates free electrons and positive ions along its trajectory.
- → An applied electric field causes the free electrons to drift toward a readout plane (e.g., a pad array or wires) over microseconds.
- →The drifting electrons are amplified (using e.g., Gas Electron Multipliers [GEMs], Micromegas, or multi-wire proportional chambers) and then recorded, providing a 3D reconstruction of the particle track (TPC).

#### **Challenges:** Complex data analysis and reconstruction (TPC) & limited rate capabilities (10<sup>3</sup>-10<sup>4</sup> pps).

### **Active targets example:**

# Multi-Sampling Ionization Chamber (MUSIC) @ ANL

- > For charged particle-induced reactions studies with radioactive ion beams & stable beams at low to intermediate energies.
- ➤ A large ionization chamber filled with a low-Z gas like helium or hydrogen.
- Unlike TPCs (which track full 3D particle paths), MUSIC detector is better at measuring energy loss (dE/dx) across multiple regions (sampling layers) as the beam or recoil moves through the gas.



#### Parallel Plate Avalanche Counter (PPAC)

- $\rightarrow$  Beam trackers (timing, filled  $C_4H_{10}$ ) Si detector
- $\rightarrow$  Calibration of the beam energy loss
- $\rightarrow$  Coincidence recoil light particle



- Reaction vertex position and particle identification
- ➢ Used extensively at ATLAS and CARIBU facilities.
- Often used for (α, n), (α,p), (α, γ) key astrophysics reactions & elastic scattering studies.
- ▶ Efficient for low-intensity beams (~ $10^3$  pps) → ideal for rare isotopes.

#### **MUSIC:**

- $\rightarrow$  Have impact on <sup>26</sup>Al nucleosynthesis in massive stars
- Direct measurement of <sup>23</sup>Na+α reactions in MUSIC @ two <sup>23</sup>Na beam incident energies: 51.5 & 57.4 MeV, Pressure= 403, 395 Torr
- Detection of the heavy recoils
- Two methods to identify & quantify  ${}^{23}Na+\alpha$  reactions: with Traces & PID







 $\rightarrow$  Better separation of the three reactions is obtained by averaging the  $\Delta E$  values over the 4 strips after the interaction in strip 4

M.L. Avila et al., NIM A 85, 63 (2017)

#### **Active target example:**

➢ Key feature: High granularity & 3D tracking capability
 → 128×128 pads collection plane



# Measures :

- Particle tracks in 3D → position, direction ⇒ emission angle
- Energy loss  $(dE/dx) \rightarrow$  useful for particle identification
- Interaction vertex → can determine where the reaction occurred



pads plane	<b>TPC principle</b>	time sampling
(signal collection)		of signal
2D digitization	$z \Leftrightarrow t$	3D digitization

 $\Delta \mathbf{E}(\mathbf{x},\mathbf{y},z) \iff \Delta \mathbf{E}[\mathbf{x}_{\mathbf{i}},\mathbf{y}_{\mathbf{j}}](\mathbf{z}) \iff \Delta \mathbf{E}[\mathbf{x}_{\mathbf{i}},\mathbf{y}_{\mathbf{j}}](t) \iff \Delta \mathbf{E}[\mathbf{x}_{\mathbf{i}},\mathbf{y}_{\mathbf{j}},t_{\mathbf{k}}]$ 

- Excitation function measurement
- Angular distribution of reaction products

#### **γ-rays detection**



#### Used $\gamma$ -rays detection setups:

#### **Direct measurements with stable beams**

E<sub>CM</sub> [keV]

2187-

987

259

7297

E<sub>x</sub> [keV]

9484

8284

7556

7276

 $J^{\pi}$ 

3/2+

3/2+

 $1/2^{+}$ 

7/2+

<sup>14</sup>N(p,γ)<sup>15</sup>O experiment @ LUNA 400 KV: CNO solar neutrino/globular cluster age

- $\blacktriangleright$  Low energy protons: 70-230 keV  $\rightarrow 4\pi$  BGO detector+gas target:
  - $\rightarrow$  Measurement of total cross section; high  $E_{\gamma}$  efficiency  $\epsilon \approx 70 \%$  (for  $E_{\gamma}=7 \text{ MeV}$ )
- $\blacktriangleright$  High energy protons: 114 -367 keV  $\rightarrow$  HPGe detectors+ solid target
  - $\rightarrow$  Measurement of all  $\gamma$ -transitions & branching ratios, high resolution



**The new generation of γ-rays detection arrays** 

- Developped for reaction measurements at the radioactive beam facilities (FRIB, SPIRAL, SPES, FAIR,...)
- > The new generation:  $4\pi$  array of segmented large-volume HPGe crystals







- Large Doppler broadening
- High background (natural & beam induced)
- High counting rates
- High γ-ray multiplicities



 $E_{T} = E_{1} + E_{2} + E_{3}$ 

- $\rightarrow$  Track each gamma interaction through the crystal
- → Reconstruct the full energy by identifying and summing all the scattered interaction points ⇒ significantly improving the photopeak efficiency
- $\rightarrow$  Reduce background and improve photopeak-to-total ratio
- → Provide **3D localization** for **precise Doppler correction**

# **Experiment with GRETINA** @ FRIB:



#### **Recoil separators**

- > γ-ray detection can be combined with **recoil separators** to detect in coincidence the ejected recoils
- Well suited to measure radiative  $(p,\gamma) \& (\alpha,\gamma)$  capture reactions in inverse kinematics (see Longland lecture)
- Recoil maximum angle:

$$\theta_{\text{max}} = \arctan \left[ \frac{E_{\gamma}/c}{\sqrt{(2m_b E_b)}} \right] \implies \text{forward peaked}$$



Most of the beam does not interact

 $\rightarrow$  recoil separator system needed to:

- Transport the recoil ions to a detection system (~100 % efficiency)
- Reject the incident beam

#### **Requirements:**

• high beam suppression factors (10<sup>10</sup>-10<sup>15</sup>)

Few examples of recoil separators:

- ERNA
- FMA (Fragment mass analyser) @ Argonne Nat. Lab.
- DRAGON @ TRIUMF

emission ( $\theta \sim 1^{\circ}$ )

• SECAR (FRIB)

#### **DRAGON recoil spectrometer**

#### BGO detectors



#### ISAC 1: RIBs / stable (OLIS)

- 0° spectrometer
- Time of flight: 21 m
- Beam rejection:  $10^{12} 10^{15}$
- Angular acceptance: cone ±20 mrad

Target: windowless gas target

- Focal plane: MCP, DSSSD...
- BGO array:  $\varepsilon = 40-80\%$

#### J.M. D'Auria et al., NPA 701, 625 (2002)



#### **DRAGON:**

ockenhuber et al PRC 2007

- <sup>44</sup>Ti produced in massive stars has been observed in supernovae remnant (Cas A)
- Direct measurement of resonance strength using thick target yield formalism ( $\Gamma_{tot} <$  beam energy loss in the target) (See Richard's lecture)

$$\omega \gamma = \frac{2}{\lambda^2} \frac{m_t}{m_p + m_t} \left(\frac{dE}{dx}\right) Y$$

with dE/dx the stopping power of the projectile in the target



#### Selection of <sup>44</sup>Ti recoil events with the DRAGON



Strong resonance measurement @  $Ex \sim 9.2 \text{ MeV}$ 

#### **SECAR recoil Separator for Capture Reactions** *@* **FRIB**

> Dedicated for  $\alpha$  and p capture reactions up to A=65 with proton rich nuclei (Classical Novae, X-ray bursts)



# > Ions sources

- "The Physics and Technology of Ion Sources" Ian G. Brown
- > Neutrons beams

# Detection systems for neutrons

- "Radiation Detection and Measurement" Glenn F. Knoll
- "Techniques for Nuclear and Particle Physics Experiments" William R. Leo
- Elements of Slow-Neutron Scattering: Basics, Techniques, and Applications ". Carpenter, J. M. & C. K. Loong.
- "Experimental Neutron Scattering "B. T. M. Willis and C. J. Carlile

# > Storage Rings

- "RIB physics with storage rings" lecture of Yuri Litvinov https://ejc2015.sciencesconf.org/conference/ejc2015/pages/Skript\_Litvinov.pdf
- "Low-energy nuclear reactions with stored ions: a new era of astrophysical experiments at heavy ion storage rings", J. Glorius, C. Bruno EPJA59,81 (2023)

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION