

Gruppi Italiani di Astrofisica Nucleare Teorica e Sperimentale XII

Catania, July 4, 2025

Carbon-Oxygen Shell Interactions in Massive Stars: Nucleosynthesis and Implications

Lorenzo Roberti, INFN – Laboratori Nazionali del Sud, Catania, Italy

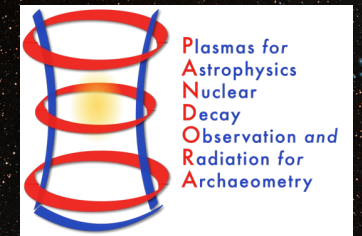
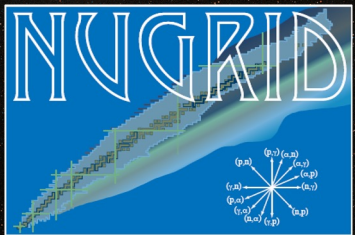
Main collaborations:

Pandora + AsFiN

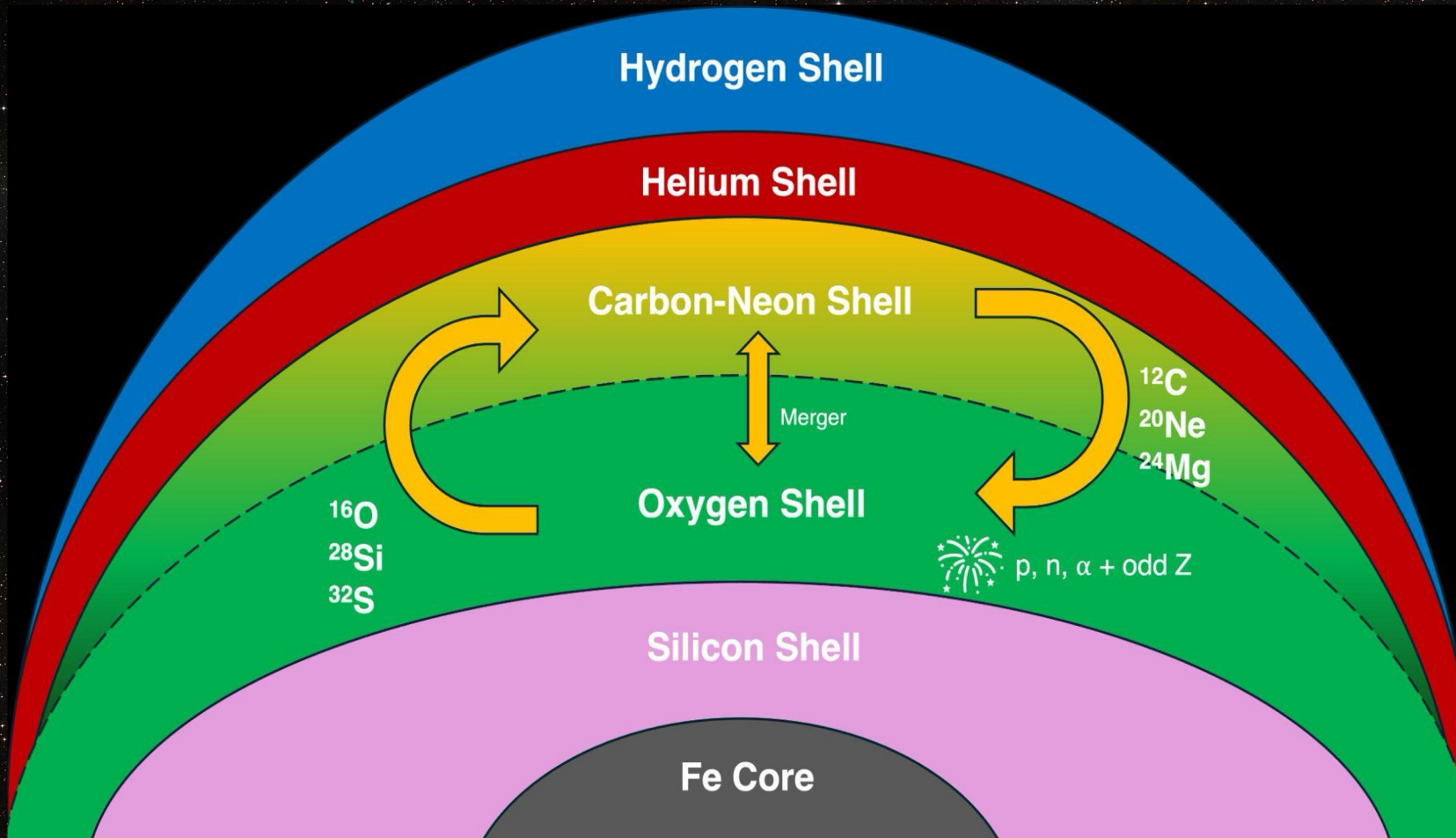
Budapest group: M. Pignatari, M. Lugaro

Rome + Berkeley group: M. Limongi, A. Chieffi, A. Falla, L. Boccioli

NuGriD collaboration

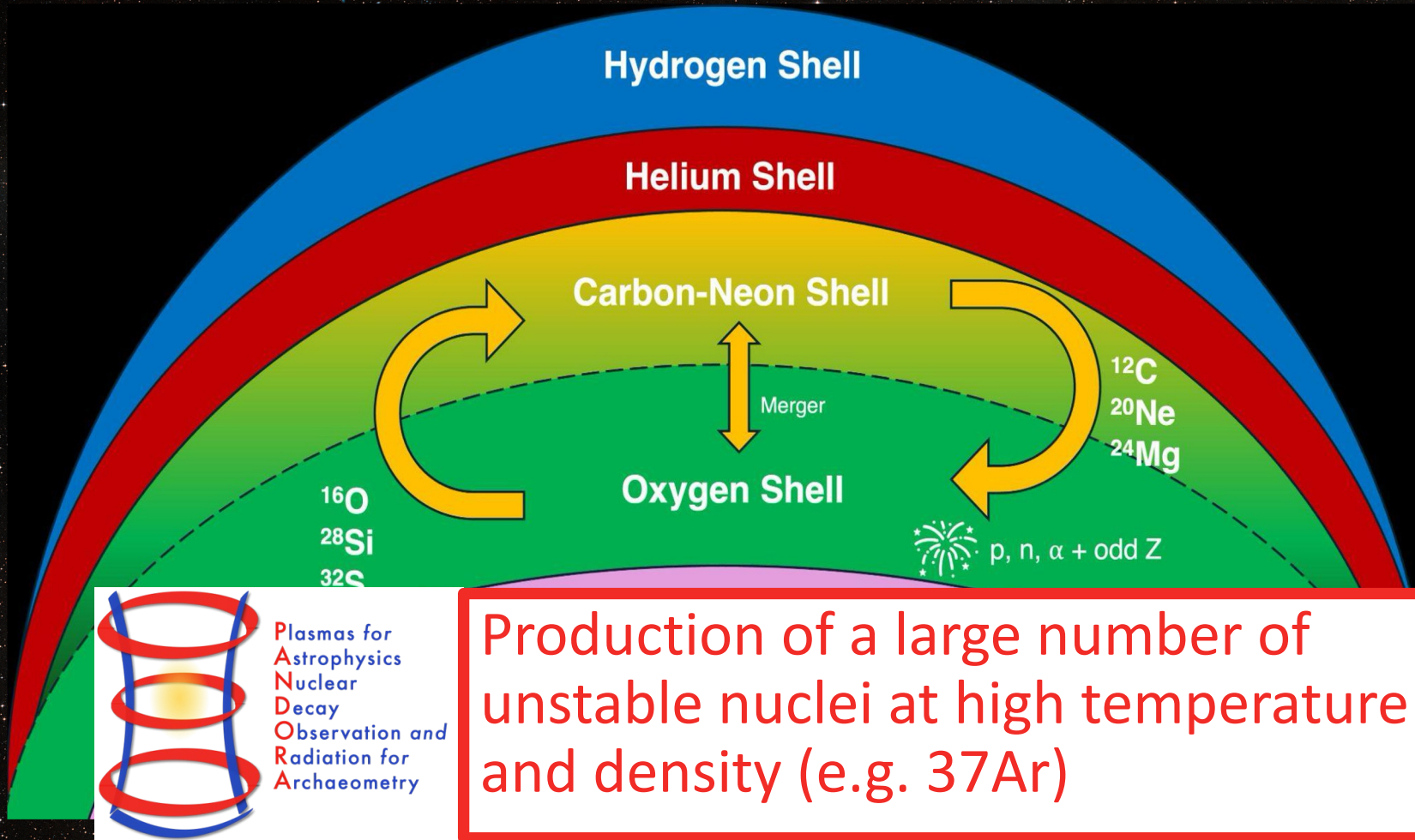


Carbon-oxygen shell mergers in massive stars



- Ingestion of some C (and Ne) in the O burning shell during late stages of the evolution;
- Convective-reactive event → Formation of an extended mixed convective zone;
- Peculiar nucleosynthesis and impact on the explodability;
- Found often in 1D stellar models with $M_{\text{ini}} \leq 25 M_{\odot}$;
- Confirmed by 3D simulations (e.g., Rizzuti+24).

Carbon-oxygen shell mergers in massive stars



Production of a large number of unstable nuclei at high temperature and density (e.g. ^{37}Ar)

- Ingestion of some C (and Ne) in the O burning shell during late stages of the evolution;
- Convective-reactive event \rightarrow Formation of an extended mixed convective zone;
- Peculiar nucleosynthesis and impact on the explodability;
- Found often in 1D stellar models with $M_{\text{ini}} \leq 25 M_{\odot}$;
- Confirmed by 3D simulations (e.g., Rizzuti+24).

Carbon-oxygen shell mergers in massive stars







Open Access

Issue	A&A Volume 698, June 2025
Article Number	A216
Number of page(s)	9
Section	Stellar structure and evolution
DOI	https://doi.org/10.1051/0004-6361/202554461
Published online	17 June 2025

[Link to the paper](#)

A&A, 698, A216 (2025)

The occurrence and impact of carbon-oxygen shell mergers in massive stars

 L. Roberti^{1,2,3,4,5*},  M. Pignatari^{2,3,6,5}, H. E. Brinkman^{7,5},  S. K. Jeena⁸, A. Sieverding⁹,  A. Falla^{10,4},
 M. Limongi^{4,11,12}, A. Chieffi^{13,14,12} and  M. Lugaro^{2,3,15,14}



Received: 10 March 2025 | Accepted: 24 April 2025



Nucleosynthesis in a C-O shell merger

- Enhanced O-burning products and production of odd-Z elements (P, Cl, K, Sc);
- Efficient photodisintegration of heavy elements: production of the weak s-process and γ -process nuclei.

Nucleosynthesis in a C-O shell merger

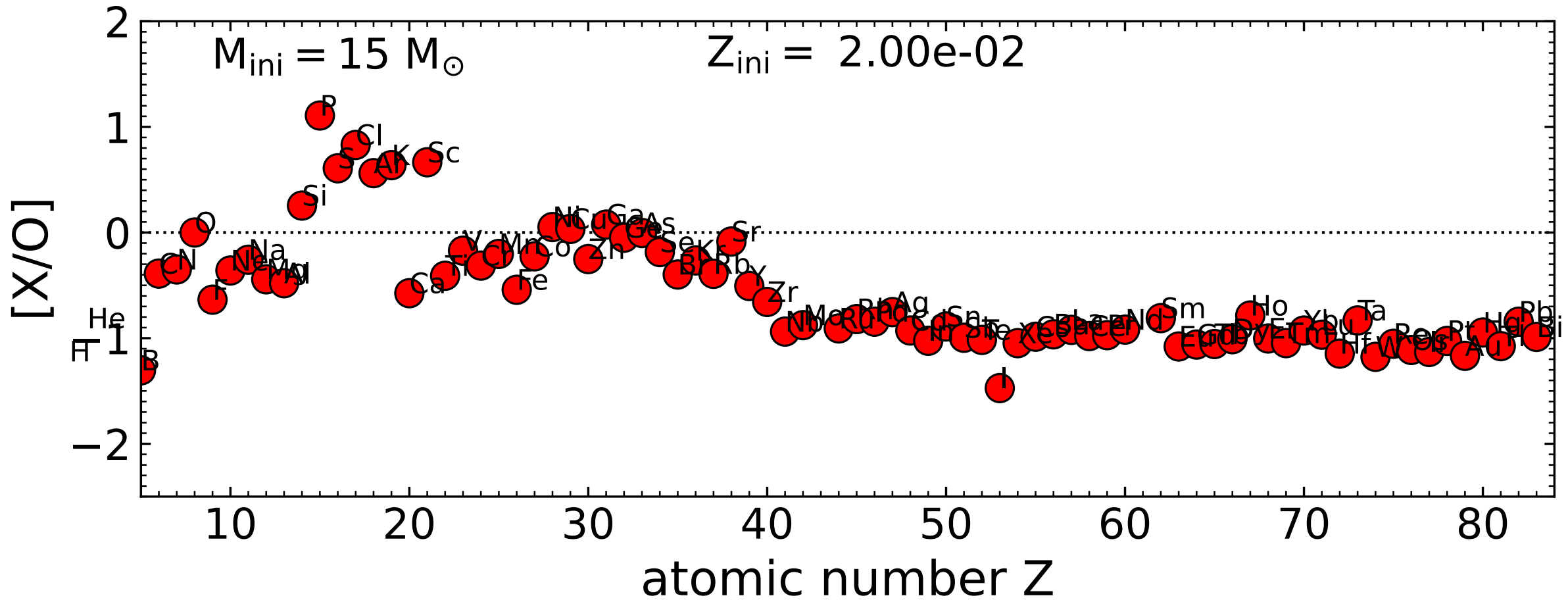
- Enhanced O-burning products and production of odd-Z elements (P, Cl, K, Sc);
- Efficient photodisintegration of heavy elements: production of the weak s-process and γ -process nuclei.

Nucleosynthesis in a C-O shell merger

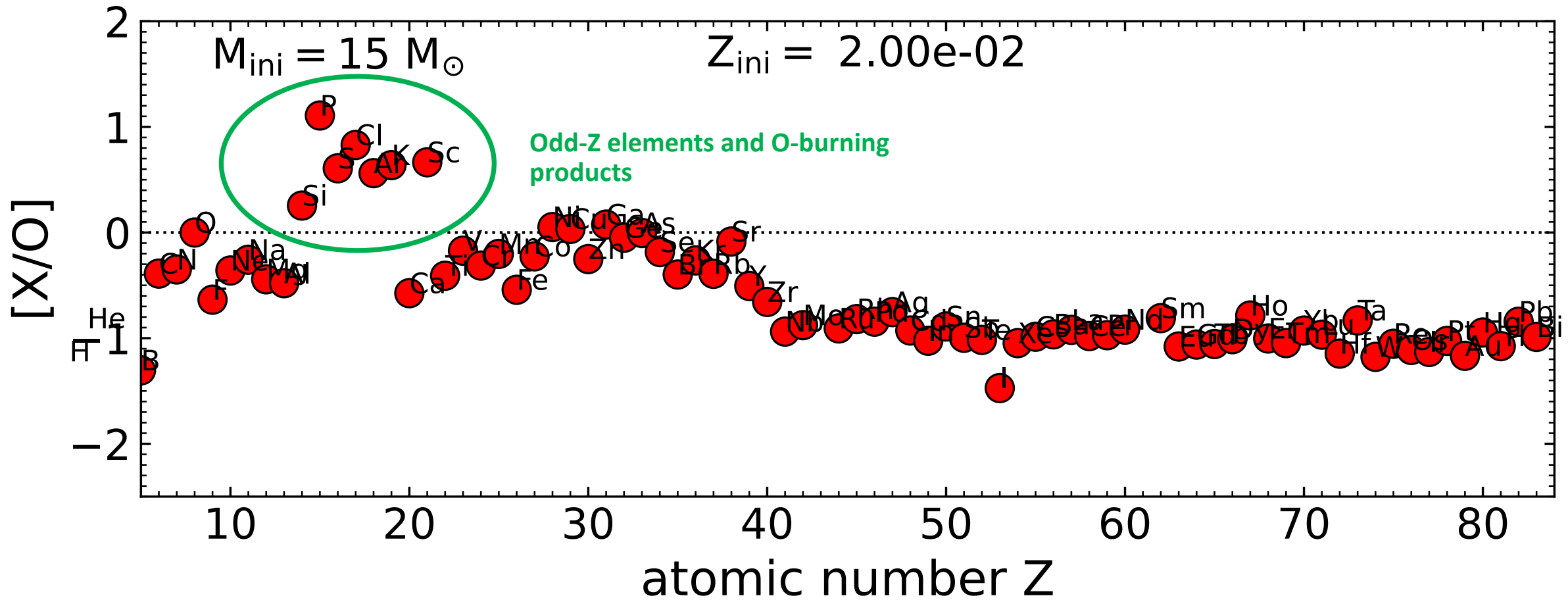
- E
- E
- O



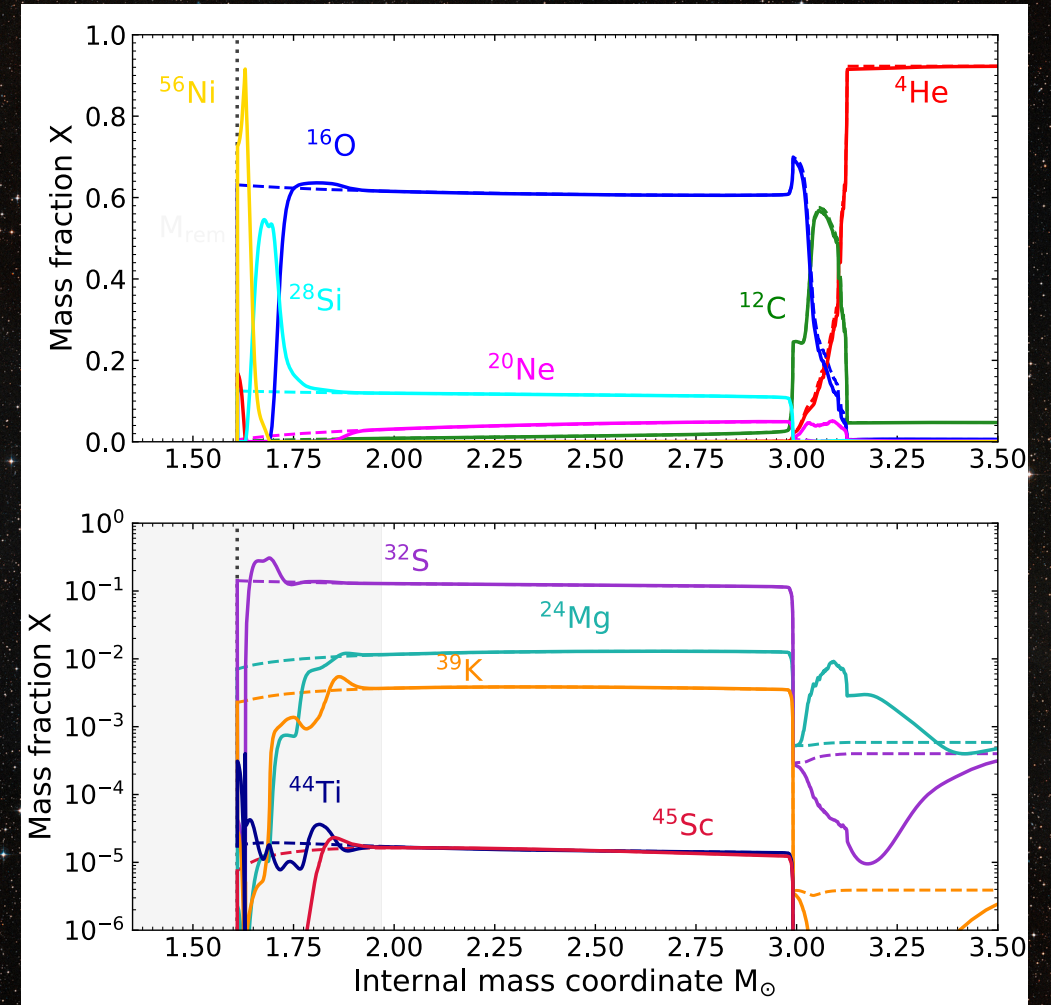
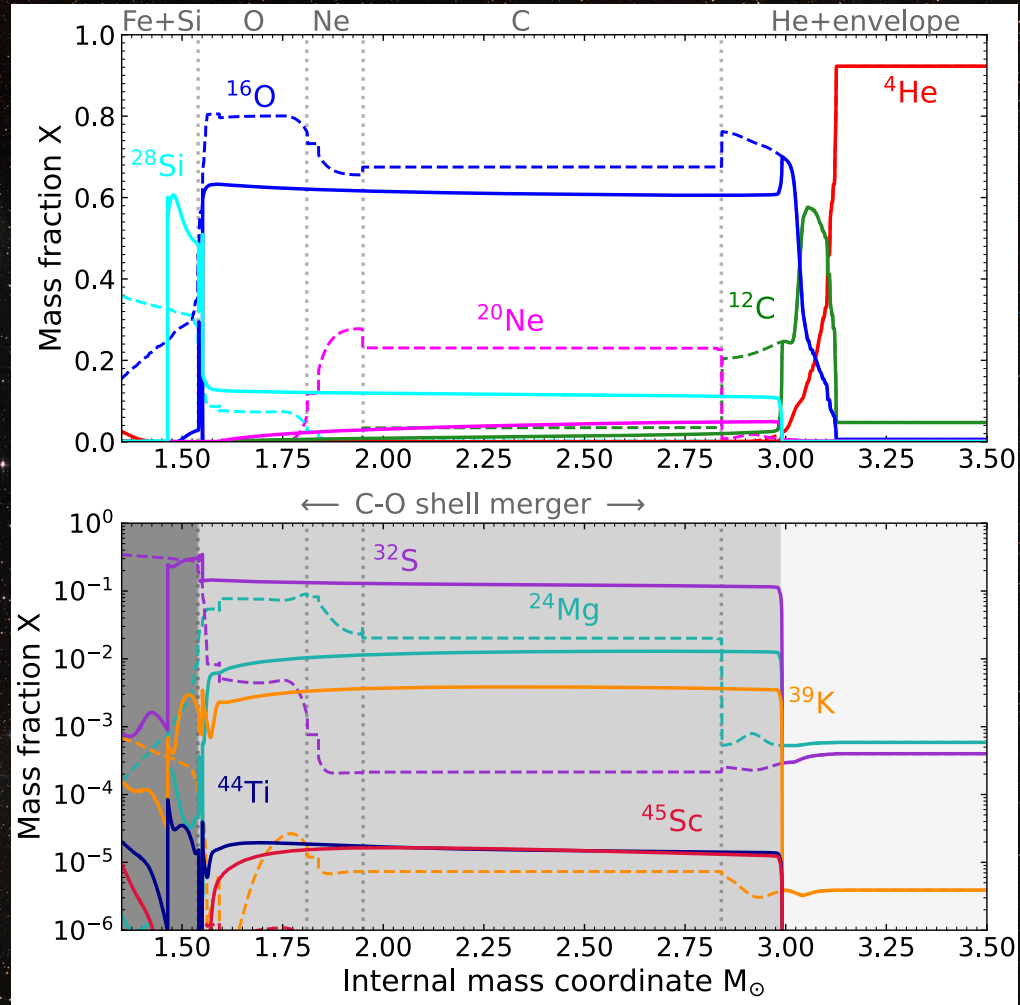
Nucleosynthesis: odd-Z element production



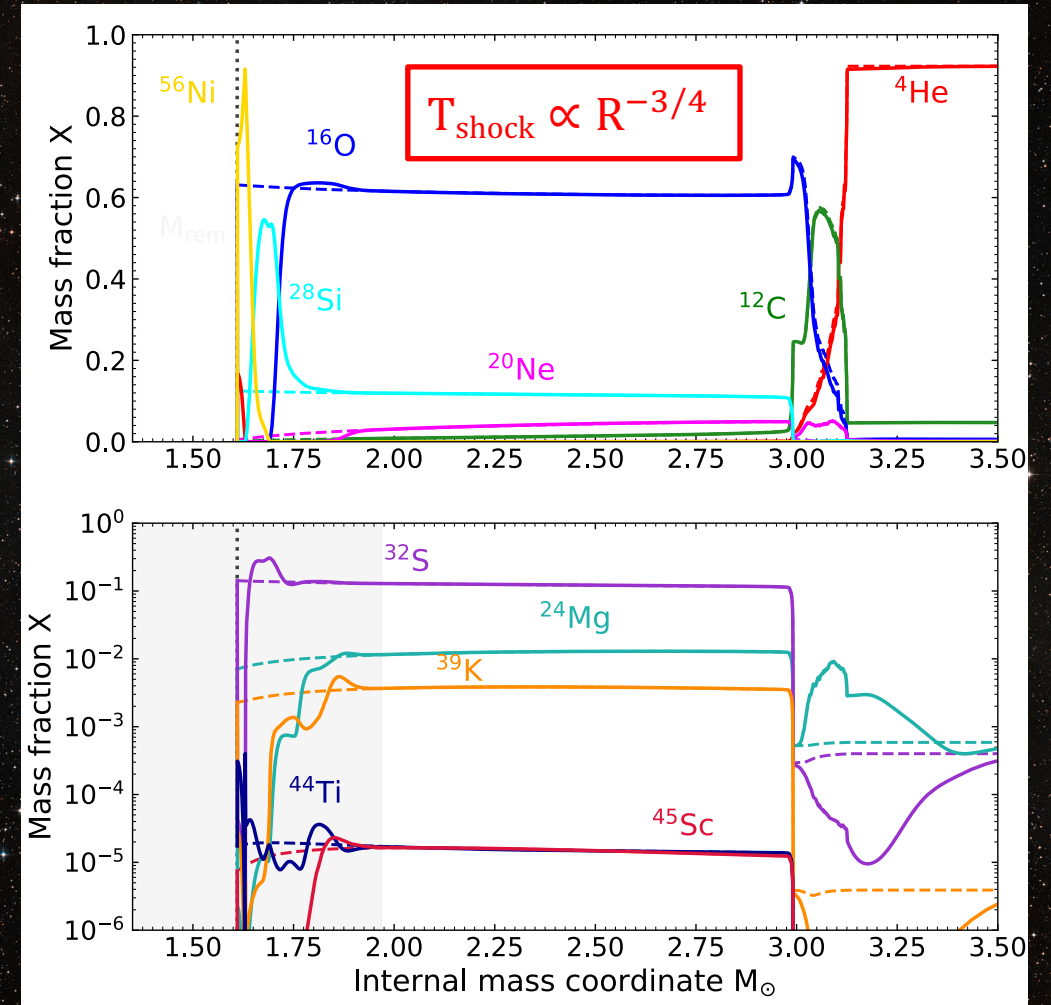
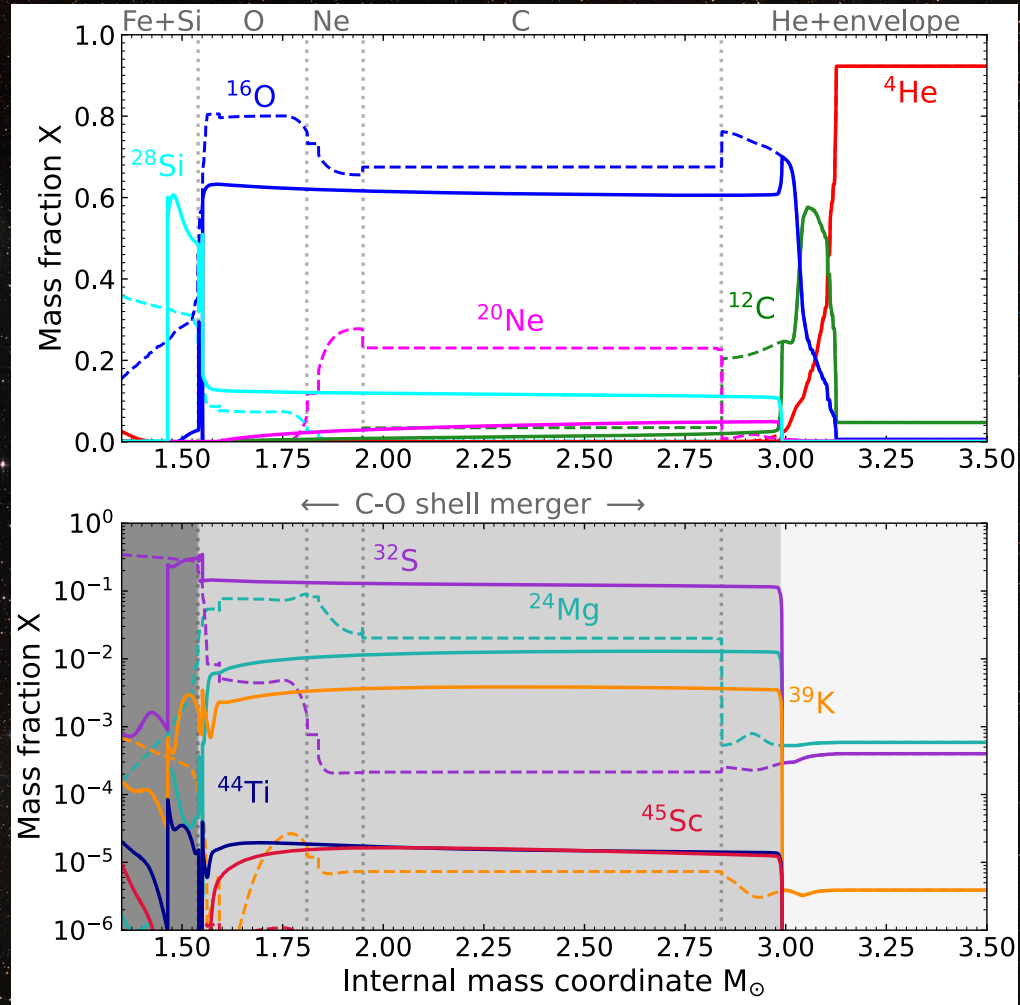
Nucleosynthesis: odd-Z element production



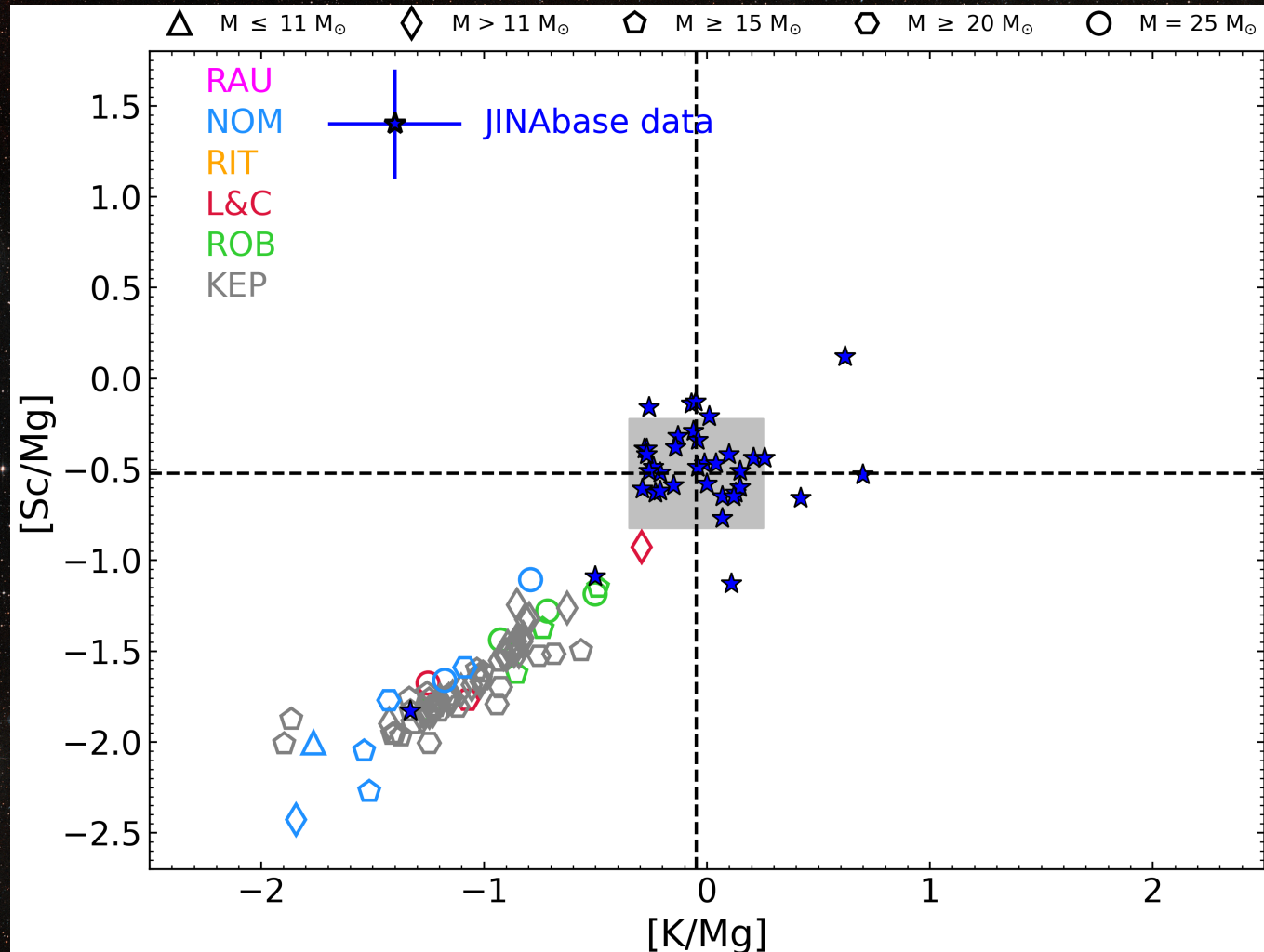
Nucleosynthesis: odd-Z element production



Nucleosynthesis: odd-Z element production

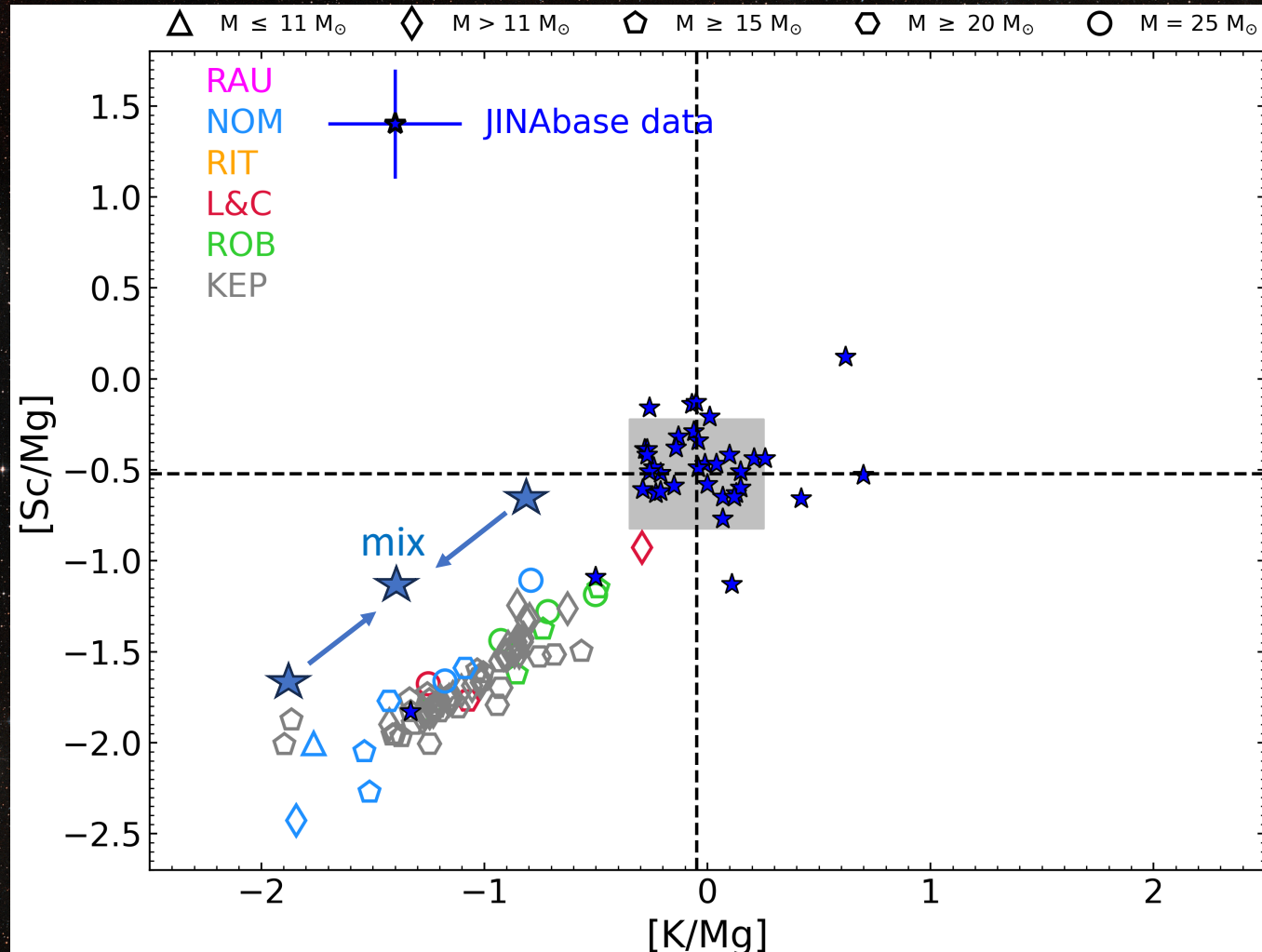


Stellar Archaeology: odd-Z elements



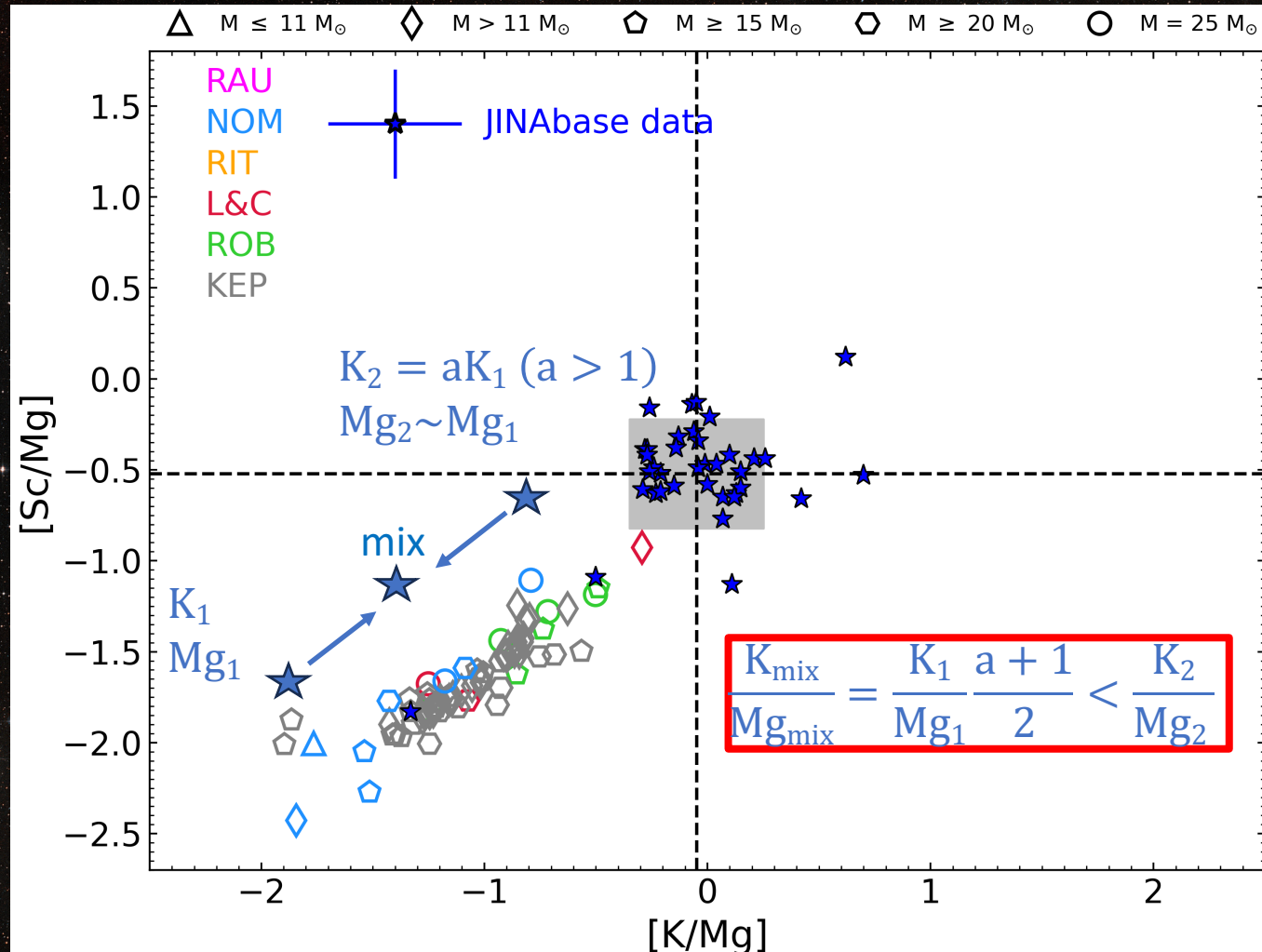
- Comparisons between Pop III models and observations with $[Fe/H] < -3 \rightarrow$ one or few enrichment episodes;

Stellar Archaeology: odd-Z elements



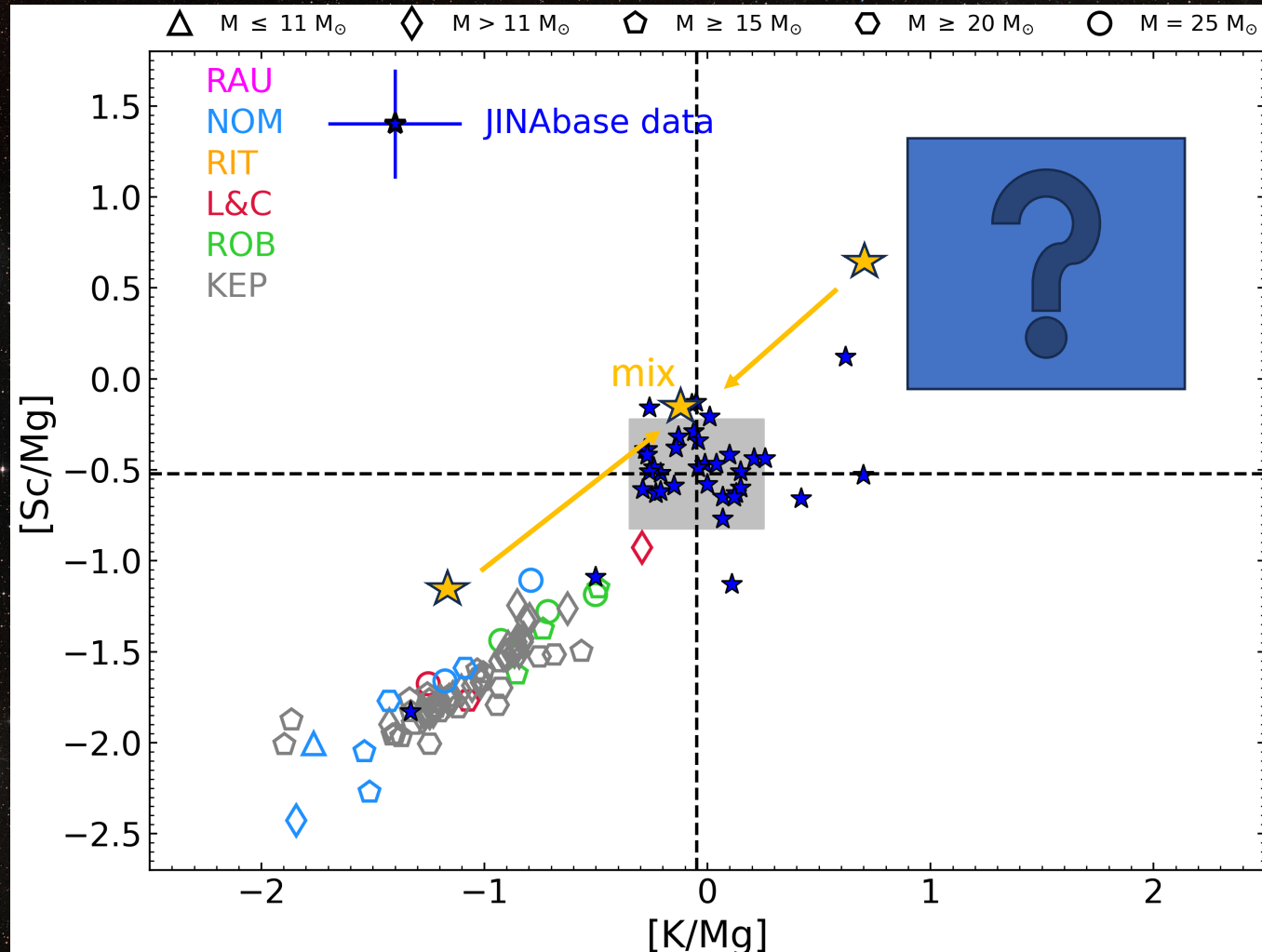
- Comparisons between Pop III models and observations with $[Fe/H] < -3 \rightarrow$ one or few enrichment episodes;
- Mixing between more stars does not allow the ratios to move to the observations!

Stellar Archaeology: odd-Z elements



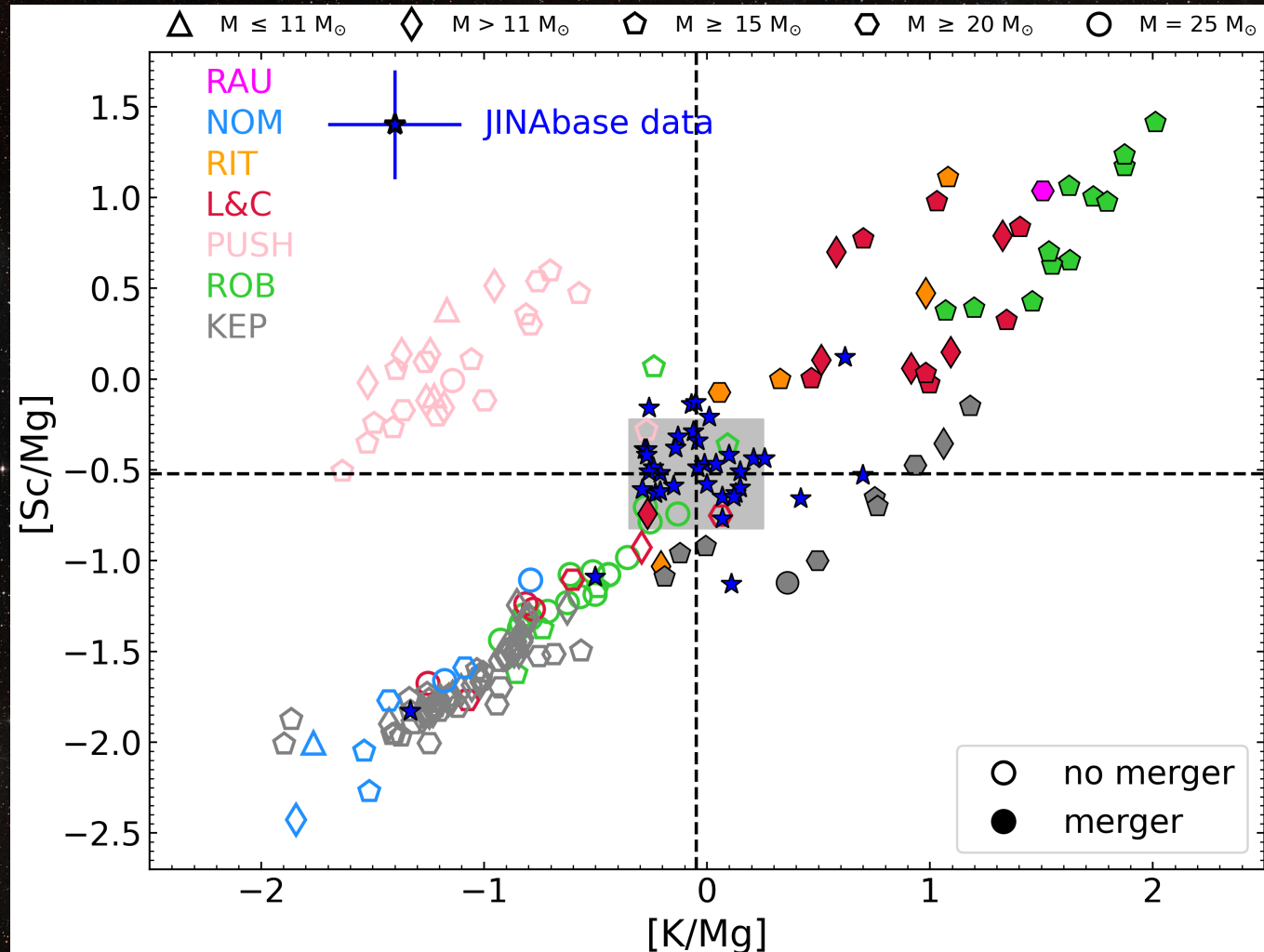
- Comparisons between Pop III models and observations with $[Fe/H] < -3 \rightarrow$ one or few enrichment episodes;
- Mixing between more stars does not allow the ratios to move to the observations!

Stellar Archaeology: odd-Z elements



- Comparisons between Pop III models and observations with $[Fe/H] < -3 \rightarrow$ one or few enrichment episodes;
- Mixing between more stars does not allow the ratios to move to the observations!
- An extra (super-solar) component is required;

Stellar Archaeology: odd-Z elements



- Comparisons between Pop III models and observations with $[Fe/H] < -3 \rightarrow$ one or few enrichment episodes;
- Mixing between more stars does not allow the ratios to move to the observations!
- An extra (super-solar) component is required;
- Models with C-O shell mergers naturally populate the required quadrant!

Summary and conclusions

- Carbon-oxygen (C-O) shell mergers in massive stars have a crucial impact on the explosion and on the ejecta composition of CCSNe;
- Indications from 3D modeling seem to confirm their existence;
- Production site for odd-Z elements: possible enrichment already in the early universe!
- Large density jump at the Si/O interface because of the extended mixed convective region: easier explosion? In progress, stay tuned!
- Questions: frequency? Trend with mass/metallicity/rotation? Nuclear physics?

THANK YOU!