



Relic neutrinos detection and mass measurement in the PTOLEMY project.

Seminario all'Universita' di Milano Bicocca May 28th 2025 M Messina, LNGS-INFN



Why we believe in the Big Bang?

- 1. Expansion of Universe
- 2. Light element abundances
- 3. Cosmic Microwave Background



Why believe Big Bang?

- 1. Expansion of Universe
- 2. Light element abundances
- 3. Cosmic Microwave Background
- 4. Cosmic Neutrino Background





Cosmic Neutrino Background

JAMES PEEBLES NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSICS 2019



Dicke, Peebles^{*}, Roll, Wilkinson (**1965**)

Cosmology's Century (2020)

Number density: $n_v = 112/cm^3$ **Temperature**: T_v~ 1.95K Time of decoupling: $t_v \sim 1$ second ~50% of the Total Energy Density of the Universe @ 1 sec neutron/proton ratio @start of nucleosynthesis ⁴He

²H (³He) ⁷Li

Grand Unified Neutrino Spectrum



Where to look for $C\nu B$?

- or —

Is it possible to detect 0.010 eV neutrinos?

Induced beta decay

PHYSICAL REVIEW

VOLUME 128, NUMBER 3

NOVEMBER 1, 1962

 $m_{\nu}=0$

Universal Neutrino Degeneracy

STEVEN WEINBERG* Imperial College of Science and Technology, London, England (Received March 22, 1962)

Modern cosmological theories imply that the universe is filled with a shallow degenerate Fermi sea of neutrinos. In the steady state and oscillating models (and perhaps also the "big bang" theories) it can be shown rigorously that the proportion of filled neutrino levels (plus the proportion of filled antineutrino levels) is precisely one up to a finite Fermi energy E_F . The proof takes into account both absorption and the repressive effects of already filled levels on neutrino emission. Experiment shows that $E_F \leq 200 \text{ eV}$ for antineutrinos and $E_F \leq 1000 \text{ eV}$ for neutrinos. The degenerate neutrinos could be observed (if $E_F > 10 \text{ eV}$) by looking for apparent violations of energy conservation in β^- decay. In the steady state and evolutionary cosmologies E_F is much too low to ever be observed, but in the oscillating cosmologies $E_F \simeq 5R_c$ MeV, where R_c is the minimum radius of the universe in units of its present radius; thus experiment already shows that the universe will contract by a factor over 10^3 , if at all. Astronomical evidence plus Einstein's field equation (without cosmological constant) require in an oscillating cosmology that $E_F < 2 \times 10^{-3}$ eV (so $R_c < 10^{-9}$) and suggest that higher energy neutrinos may represent the bulk of the energy of the universe. A model universe incorporating this idea is constructed.

 $n_i = \frac{1}{e^{(\epsilon_i - \mu)/k_B T} + 1}$ $\frac{\mu}{\frac{1}{k_- T}} < 0.1$

Cocco, Mangano, Messina calculated in 2007 the interation cross section and the rate with $m_v \neq 0$ case

JCAP 0706:015,2007

CROSS SECTIONS

Tritium has the largest product of capture cross section and lifetime

$${}^{3}H \rightarrow {}^{3}He^{+} + e^{-} + \bar{\nu}_{e}$$
$$\bar{\nu}_{e} + {}^{3}H \rightarrow {}^{3}He^{+} + e^{-}$$



Selection of target



Expected rate: 100 gram-year exposure

JCAP 0706:015,2007

$\overline{m_{\nu}} \; (eV)$	FD (events yr^{-1})	NFW (events yr^{-1})	MW (events yrs^{-1})	
0.6	^{7.5} x0.5	⁹⁰ x0.5	150 x0.5	Dira
$0.3 \\ 0.15$	7.5 7.5	23 10	33 12	Dirg

$m_{\nu} \ (\mathrm{eV})$	FD (events yr^{-1})	NFW (events yr^{-1})	MW (events yrs^{-1})
0.6	7.5	90	150
0.3	7.5 ·	23	33
0.15	7.5	10	12

Majorana

JCAP 076:015, 2007 JCAP 1408 (2014) 038







Detection concept: Neutrino Capture on β unstable nuclei

 Basic concept for relic neutrino detection rooted in a paper by Steven Weinberg in 1962 [Phys. Rev. 128:3, 1457]; applied for the first time, in case of massive neutrinos, to lay out a proposal for their direct experimental detection in 2007 by A.G.Cocco, G.Mangano and M.Messina. [JCAP 06(2007)015 DOI: 10.1088/1475-7516/2007/06/015]



from neutrino oscillations

PTOLEMY target resolution: ~ 50 meV

Before carrying on we can't miss to mention the KATRIN experiment

The principle of the Mac-E filter^{*}

Two superconducting solenoids produce a magnetic field B. The beta electrons, which are starting from the tritium source in the left solenoid, are guided magnetically on a cyclotron motion around the magnetic field lines into the spectrometer (2p solid angle).



The principle of the Mac-E filter (I)

On their way to the center of the spectrometer the magnetic field B drops by many orders of magnitude. Therefore, the magnetic gradient force

$$F_{grad} = (\overrightarrow{m} \cdot \overrightarrow{\nabla}) \cdot \overrightarrow{B}$$

transforms most of the cyclotron energy into longitudinal motion. Thus, because of the slowly varying magnetic field B the momentum transforms adiabatically, therefore the magnetic moment μ that in a non-relativistic approximation is:

$$\mu = \frac{E_{\perp}}{B}$$

does not change! Condition of adiabaticity



Features and LIMITS of the KATRIN detector

- Pros:
- Simple Filter concept
- Cons:
- Too large volume
- Poor energy resolution
- To increase sensitivity, one musts increase volume
- Collecting electron from any direction

New Filter concept



New filter concept: transverse drift



Kinetic energy degradation

$$\frac{dT_{\perp}}{dt} = \frac{\mu}{B^2} \boldsymbol{E} \cdot (\boldsymbol{\nabla} B \times \boldsymbol{B})$$

Prog.Part.Nucl.Phys. 106 (2019) 120-131

Once the kinetic energy is reduced high performance calorimetric measurements can be done



Measurement summary



- Extreme energy resolution
- New filter to cope with high rate
- Atomic Tritium on graphene support

KATRIN arXiv:2406.13516v1 [nucl-ex] 19 Jun 2024

PTOLEMY detector schema

PonTecorvo / PrinceTon Observatory for Light Early-universe Massive-neutrino Yield



Full demonstrator simulation (Princeton)



Transmission Simulation Setup

- 1 mm radius circular area split into 50 rings (5 shown)
- 50 rings = 10,200 particles
- Uniform distribution of pitch θ within a 10 degree window
- 8 fixed phi Φ emission angles
- All electrons with initial KE = 18.6 keV

```
• E.g.

\theta = 30\pm 5, \Phi = 0 (N=10,200)

\theta = 30\pm 5, \Phi = 45 (N=10,200)

...

\theta = 30\pm 5, \Phi = 315 (N=10,200)

\theta = 30\pm 5, \Phi = 0..315 \rightarrow N=81,600

\theta = 40\pm 5, \Phi = 0..315 \rightarrow N=81,600

...
```







1mm radius (5 rings)

Methodology

- 2D plane monitors placed every 1 cm in z
 - 11x6 cm in (x,y) centered at (0,0)
- Record individual particle hit information (incl. multiple hits per particle due to cyclotron motion)

At each Z coordinate:

- **Transmission efficiency:** Extract # of unique particle hits per plane, express as percentage of N
- Average KE: Take average over all hits (incl. duplicates)
- **Pitch angle:** Calculate instantaneous pitch angle from momentum components for hits within 5mm of x=0, then take average pitch over these hits





Showing θ = 20±5, 30±5, 40±5 averaged over Φ bin

Average over $\phi = [0, 2\pi], N = 81600$



PTOLEMY: Energy

• Energy measurement from ΔV and calorimeter:

$$E_e = e \left(V_{cal} - V_{source} \right) + E_{RF} + E_{cal}$$

- Calorimeter energy resolution must be O(50meV)
 - 1. Transition Edge Sensors
 - 2. State-of-the-art 50 meV@100eV with photons
- Voltage stability (alias overall energy scale) better than 10-20mV
- NOTE: internal voltages are actively adjusted for each interesting electron

Sensitivity as a function of tritium mass



Remarks:

the sensitivity is weakly
 dependent upon the energy
 resolution (500 meV is already a good starting point)

 1 µg is potentially comparable or even better than the projection of the best technology on the market

- 100 µg (0.5 m²) can potentially probe the neutrino mass down to the IO scenario

In preparation a theory paper on solid state effects on the electron spectrum, and consequent theory systematics on $m_{v_{.}}$ extraction (A. Casale, A. Esposito G. Menichetti, V. Tozzini)

Systematics



1) Theory aspects:

further understanding of e ground level is needed

https://arxiv.org/pdf/2504.13259

2) Overall energy scale know at < 10 meV

3) RF correction known at better than 10 %



9

Overview of the R&Ds in the PTOLEMY project

- 1. RF measurement from single electron emission (LNGS/Nikhef)
- 2. Graphene loading capability (Roma1)
- 3. Graphene transmission measurement and electrostatic analyser (Roma3)
- 4. TES design optimization at National Institute of Metrology (INRiM)
- 5. Demonstrator SC magnet design and construction (LNGS/Princeton)
- 6. HV system development setting the overall energy scale (LNGS)

PTOLEMY Demonstrator at LNGS We aim at

Proof the capability of the new filter concept to transport the electrons from Target/source to the electron calorimeter and simultaneously select electrons in the ROI (10-100 eV around the T endpoint)

The baseline option of the demonstrator setup is (Phase-0):

- 1) Run the filter with full functionalities
- 2) Electron provided by calibration sources
- 3) Energy measurement realized by means of a standard Silicon Drift Detector

In a second step (Phase-1, 2027-) we aim at exploiting the features of Transition Edge Sensor (TES) calorimeters with the targeted energy resolution and start to use T loaded graphene

Assembly of the DEMONSTRATOR



PTOLEMY: tritium target

• Use atomic ³T

- No ro-vibrational modes in final state like for ³He-³T final state.
- Limit to energy resolution not determined by target itself
- dE/dx of electrons imposes extremely thin targets
- We investigate ³T loosely bound to graphene
 - Theoretical maximum is about 0.2 mg tritium per m²







Hydrogen and Deuterium loading on graphene and nano-porous graphene at Roma3

atomic H as a tool to '*pinch*' the sp2 bonds towards an sp3 configuration while maintaining the planar nature of graphene



sp3 H-C bond

how to estimate the H (or D):C upload → directly from a quantification of the sp3 bond spectroscopic signal from the XPS C 1s core level:

$$H/C = I_{sp3} / (I_{sp3} + I_{sp2}) = \Theta$$





method: atomic H at ~0.2 eV kinetic energy by hot-capillary in vacuum



FIG. 1. Schematic drawing of the atomic hydrogen source.

 H_2 flow into a capillary with hot-spot (~2000 C) in UHV → more than 95% molecules cracked in **atomic H** concentrated onto the sample

Bischler and Bertel, J. Vac. Sci. Technol. A 11, 458 (1993)


Betti et all, Nano Lett. **22**, 2971 (2022)

T-loading setup in Roma1

we need a lab. capable to deal with T gas system tested with H²

T-chamber R side view



Quadrupole Mass Spectrome SRS RGA 100

T-chamber L side view



Scroll Pump: Leybold SCROLLVAC SC 15 D

Single electron RF emission detection

- Aim:Detect single electron RF emission signal @ 27 GHz at low intensity (~ 1 fW)in a relatively short time (hopefully below 100 μs)
- Purpose(s): First measurement of this kind in the PTOLEMY Collaboration First step toward the demonstrator Key steps to build the GANTTChart for funding agencies
- Setup: Permanent magnet (1 Tesla field) hosting an "electron trap"

RF detection setup at LNGS: electron trap



Electron cyclotron RF radiation studies



Candidate electron events

RF emission frequency vs time of single electron in the permanent magnet



Electron signature: trigger rate (data)



Recent Project 8 Tritium RF Measurement



RF measurement background levels extremely low.

No events observed above endpoint, Setting upper limit on background rate

< 3x10⁻¹⁰ /eV/s (90% CL)

→ Background Rate < 1 event per eV in 100 years!

https://arxiv.org/abs/2203.07349

RF readout electronics





RTO64 used for DAQ

Dedicated downconverter developed @ NIKHEF

DAQ with FPGA trigger under development @ NIKHEF

A special Magnet

Being rebuilt in a larger size and will be installed at the LNGS Key elements to realize the transverse drift and the Demonstrator of the PTOLEMY project



Construction ASG/Suprasys consortium of a SC dipole with special attention to the fringe field







Eβ

Electron Transport: RF pickup & Filter

PTOLEMY filter: years of development

10⁵

Particle trajectories can be calculated/predicted analytically

motion



A design for an M.G.Betti et al, I

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(2019) 120-131

gnetic filte

r for precision energy

endpoint

Demonstrator parts under constructions: magnet, order issued

Magnet: Key subsystem

ASG (Genova)/Suprasys(Bilbao) Õ 00 è 0.0 0 3513.8

Magnet commissioning by summer





Demonstrator parts under constructions: vacuum chamber



100x100 µm

 ~ 100 mK cold bath (refrigerator)

SiN_X 500 nm Thermal bath

20x20 μm

50x50 μm

C. Pepe, E. Monticone, M. Rajteri

Mauro Rajteri, Eugenio Monticone and others, <u>https://doi.org/10.1007/s10909-019-02271-x</u> "TES Microcalorimeter for PTOLEMY", J. Low Temp. Phys. 199 (2020) 138-142.

Calorimetry at INRiM



Based on the expertise of the INRiM electron detection with TES! Key elements: high quality TES and new e-source based on nanotubes



Now: 0.11 eV @ 0.8 eV and 106 mK and 10x10 μm² TiAuTi 90nm [Ti(45nm) Au(45nm)]^(τ ~137 ns)

Design Goal (PTOLEMY): $\Delta E_{FWHM} = 0.05 \text{ eV} @ 10 \text{ eV}$ translates to $\Delta E \propto E^{\alpha} (\alpha \leq 1/3)$ $\Delta E_{FWHM} = 0.022 \text{ eV} @ 0.8 \text{ eV}$



Phys.Rev.Applied 22 (2024) 4, L041007

First measurement of electrons at 100 V with a resolution ~1-1.5 eV

Alternative energy measurement Electrostatic electron analyser



Commercial Electron analyser

from Scientaomicron



Energy resolution	
	< 40 meV FWHM at 6 kV
	< 100 meV FWHM at 10 kV
Transmission mode energy range	5 eV – 10 000 eV
Angular modes	± 22°, ± 30°
Angular mode energy range	100 eV – 10 000 eV
Deflection mode energy range	-
Deflection mode Spin scan	-
Operating pressure	< 10 ⁻⁵ mbar
Mounting flange	DN200CF (10" O.D.)
	For full specifications and more information about product options, please do not hesitate to contact your local sales representative.
	Find the contact details here: Contact Us

HV High precision stability (LNGS)











Damas Caratan

Single ₅board (1 kV)

 $\sigma = 0.3 \text{ mV}$

To Conclude

A message to young researchers that are considering to join this project

The PTOLEMY project is very challenging, and we have a long way in front of us.

However, there are so many import and interesting results that we can gain, while pushing further the knowledge, that makes the path more as interesting as the final goal.

We aim at showing the demonstrator functioning at LNGS by next year

Contact: marcello.messina@lngs.infn.it; web: https://ptolemy.lngs.infn.it/

BACKUP

1. Neutrino wind – coherent scatter

- Velocity of solar system w.r.t CMB frame $\beta \approx 10^{-3}$
- Coherent Acceleration $\sigma_{
 u N} \propto G_F^2$
 - ✓ De Broglie $\lambda \approx 2 3$ mm

✓ $a_{NR-D/M} = O\left(10^{-27} \frac{cm}{s^2}\right)$ for non-relativistic neutrinos

 $a \approx 10^{-13} cm/s^2$ achieved so far



... and worry about solar ν and WIMP backgrounds

2. Cosmic neutrinos

• Interact with high energy ν :

$$E_{\nu_i} \approx 4 \cdot 10^{21} \left(\frac{eV}{m_{\nu_i}} \right) eV$$

- Signature:
 - 1. Dip of high energy ν flux
 - 2. Exces of high energy γ , proton flux



PTOLEMY Demonstrator at LNGS: filter electrodes prototype



First Version of the PTOLEMY magnet



SIMONS FOUNDATION

Ways to solve?

Strategy 1: find other target material



from Mendeleyev et al

Strategy 2: alternative ³H storage





from A. Esposito







World-record TES calorimeter 50 meV resolution for CNB neutrinos



C. Pepe, E. Monticone, M. Rajter

Funding:

- CSN2 (2018-2021): 205 kE
- CSN5 (2022-): 50 kE
- Call of the "Agenzia per la coesione territoriale", participation as partner of a bigger LNGS project on metal 3D printing. 400 kE out of 2ME for the PTOLEMY project (First in the ranking but not yet delivered). This 300 kE will be dvoted to the of the SC demonstrator magnet. 100 kE for research contract.
- PRIN2022: Proposal for a budget of 250 kE mainly to run demonstraor. Waiting for the answer.
- Dutch Research Council (NL) (2021-): 1.3 million Euro Research Grant of "One Second after the Big Bang" The topic of the grant is "RF antenna design and large scale readout chain implementation." LNGS is a partner in this grant. One PhD position is awarded and one PostDoc, 60% based at LNGS with 100 kE budget, are foreseen.
- Princeton Univ., Simons and Templeton Foundations (2016-): 1 M\$ from J Templeton Foundation and 1.3 M\$ from J Simons Foundation out of which 0.75 M\$ will go in TES development and demonstrator running.

With this financial plan, even though with have some uncertainty, we are sure to be able to accomplish Pahse-0: running the new filter and measure the end to end electron transfer function from target to the measuring point where electron energy will be measured by means of an SDD. Then endpoint measurement of T loaded on graphene will follow.

Bobsledding (pushing electron up potential)



Transverse "Selector" (one channel) Dynamically Adjusted (side channels) to Total Energy "Selector"

Data set at 10000 V Intrinsic diode resolution



σ(intrisic) = sqrt(10) x 0.3 ~ 1mV (<< 50 mV !!!)
The intrinsic resolution is way better than the present measurement method!!!</pre>

Conduction Cooled Superconducting Coils

- LNGS magnet specifications within ~20% of an Open MRI system made by ASG/Suprasys (about 10 commercial systems delivered per year)
- Order issued, concept design frozen and the construction phase has started



Packed with multi-layer thermal insulation



SC coils magnet

Sample preparation: graphene growth and transfer on TEM grid



Mono-/tri- layer graphene on nickel TEM grid:

- G2000HAN Ted Pella Inc.
- 2000 mesh per inch \rightarrow 12.5 μ m pitch
- 💠 Hole width 6.5 μm
- Nominal geometrical transmission 41%



The LASEC experimental layout (Roma3)



- Al K α source:
- ✤ hv = 1486.7 eV
- Resolution 0.35 eV
- Analyser wf = 4.3 eV
- Tot resolution = 0.46 eV

Custom-made monochromatic electron gun:

- Continuous electron beam
- Tuneable energy 30 900 eV
- Resolution = 45 meV

Transmission through mono- and tri- layer graphene

 $\frac{I_{NOG}}{I_0} \longrightarrow \text{grid without graphene}$ (i.e. geometrical transmission)

Nominal geometrical transmission

41%

 Uncertainty 1.7% (not shown ~same size of the dots)



 $\frac{I_{xLG}}{I_0 \cdot 0.39}$ \rightarrow grid with graphene (net of the 39% grid transparency)



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QUANTUM SPREAD

Distributing tritium on flat graphene has one drawback



Slide by Angelo Esposito at NuMass 2022

PTOLEMY Concept simulation


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V.s/m^2 0.2

Energy 101/101 403.762 ns 36260.9 eV 0.670033 eV

(The

Electromagnetic Filters



Electromagnetic Filters



Preliminary RF signal FFT analysis (CST)



time (samples)

freq

QUANTUM SPREAD

Distributing tritium on flat graphene has one drawback



Slide by Angelo Esposito at NuMass 2022

QUANTUM SPREAD

Distributing tritium on flat graphene has one drawback •

spatially localized tritium



tritium's momentum

spread in final electron energy

[Cheipesh, Cheianov, Boyarsky - PRD 2021, 2101.10069]

• A simple semi-classical estimate:

energy and momentum conservation returns fluctuating momenta $\Delta E_e \simeq \left| \frac{\mathbf{p}_e \cdot \mathbf{\Delta} \mathbf{p}_T}{E_{He}} \right| \sim \frac{p_e}{m_{He} \mathbf{\Delta} x_T} \sim \frac{0.6 - 0.8 \text{ eV}}{1}$ $\mathbf{p}_T = \mathbf{\Delta} \mathbf{p}_T$ $\mathbf{p}_{He} = \mathbf{p}_{He} + \Delta \mathbf{p}_{He}$ $\mathbf{p}_e = \mathbf{\overline{p}}_e + \Delta \mathbf{p}_e$ an order of magnitude spread of initial tritium wave larger than the wanted function ($\Delta x_T \sim 0.1$ Å) energy accuracy

QUANTUM SPREAD

PTOLEMY Collaboration, A. Apponi et all, DOI: <u>10.1103/PhysRevD.106.053002</u>

• The resulting rate is



Collaboration with Savannah River National Laboratory for Tritium Loading CNT, NPG, CVD-G, and De-localized Atomic T Geometries ~2Å flat potential – not chemically active

