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Author(s): Eronen, Tommi; Kankainen, Anu; Äystö, Juha

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Ion Traps in Nuclear Physics — Recent Results and Achievements

Tommi Eronen, Anu Kankainen and Juha Äystö

University of Jyväskylä, P.O. Box 35 (YFL), FI-40014 University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Abstract

Ion traps offer a way to determine nuclear binding energies through atomic mass measurements with a high accuracy and they are routinely used to provide isotopically or even isomerically pure beams of short-living ions for post-trap decay spectroscopy experiments. In this review, different ion-trapping techniques and progresses in recent nuclear physics experiments employing low-energy ion traps are discussed. The main focus in this review is on the benefit of recent high accuracy mass measurements to solve some key problems in physics related to nuclear structure, nuclear astrophysics as well as neutrinos. Also, several cases of decay spectroscopy experiments utilizing trap-purified ion samples are summarized.

Keywords: ion traps, atomic masses, trap-assisted spectroscopy

1. Introduction

Progress of ion manipulation technologies in ion traps has opened exciting opportunities for solving fundamental questions in atomic and nuclear physics. Calculation of electron binding energies in atoms using the well-known theory of QED (Quantum Electrodynamics) can be performed with accuracies of the order of a few eV for almost any atom. To be sensitive in this level in atomic mass itself, a relative mass uncertainty of the order of 10^{-10} or better is required. Experimentally this precision is already reached for stable isotope masses [1–3].

The calculation of the nuclear binding, however, has to rely on less accurately quantifiable strong interaction derived from the theory of QCD (Quantum Chromodynamics). The mass M of a neutral atom can be expressed as

$$M = N \times m_n + Z \times m_p + Z \times m_e - (B_{\text{atom}} + B_{\text{nucleus}}) / c^2, \quad (1)$$

where N and Z are the neutron and proton number and m_p , m_n and m_e are free proton, neutron and electron masses, respectively. B_{atom} and B_{nucleus} are the total electron and nuclear binding energies, respectively. At best, the total mass (or binding energy, see Chapter 3.1) of an atom can presently be calculated to an accuracy

of the order of a few 100 keV which corresponds to a relative mass uncertainty $\Delta m/m$ of the order of 10^{-6} only, which is several orders of magnitude less precise than for atomic binding energies. Therefore in nuclear physics, in general, the required experimental accuracies are currently less stringent than in atomic physics. This is particularly true when comparing experimental data with theoretical model predictions for absolute masses and the effects of global correlations on masses.

However, the first- and second-order differentials of masses can serve as sensitive indicators of local behavior of collective or single particle structures with changing proton and/or neutron numbers. In fact, the measurement accuracy required for those observables is of the order of 10 keV or better, and is comparable to that routinely available in spectroscopy of nuclear excited states. This opens up interesting perspectives for studying the binding energy systematics for the excited states as well. The observables, for example, include nucleon or nucleon pair binding energies, Q -values for radioactive decays, isomer masses, pairing gaps and shell gaps. Some examples of differentials and their typically required accuracies are given in Table 1 together with related key physics topics.

In this review, we wish to introduce the newest developments in ion trapping techniques for nuclear physics. The emphasis in the review is in the use of Penning-

Table 1: Required accuracies for different nuclear physics motivations.

Physics motivation	Accuracy
Nuclear structure	
Global correlations	a few 100 keV
Local correlations	≤ 10 keV
Evolution of shell structure, pairing and collectivity	≤ 10 keV
Drip-line phenomena, halos, isomers	≈ 1 keV
Nuclear astrophysics	≥ 1 keV
Charge symmetry in nuclei	≤ 1 keV
Fundamental symmetries	
Tests of the Standard Model	≤ 100 eV
β decay and electroweak interaction	≤ 100 eV
CVC theory and the unitarity of the CKM matrix	≤ 100 eV
Double β decay	10 – 1000 eV
Neutrino mass and mass hierarchy problem	$\ll 100$ eV

trap technique for high-precision mass measurements as well as in their use as high-resolution mass separators to produce high-purity isotopic or isomeric sources for decay spectroscopy of exotic nuclei. It will be shown that these techniques have opened up unique possibilities for high-precision measurements of rare isotopes of practically all chemical elements down to half-lives of few ms and production rates on the order of few ions per hour.

Then, we move on to present an update of recent progresses of direct mass measurements of neutron-rich nuclei covering a wide range of the chart of nuclei between mass numbers $A = 10$ and $A = 250$. The mass data will mainly be discussed in the framework of mass differentials, such as nucleon and nucleon-pair binding energies, pairing gaps and shell gaps. A comparison with some selected theoretical models will be discussed. In addition, a special class of high-precision measurements of isobaric mass doublets and isotopic mass multiplets will be presented. Finally, a novel technique of trap-assisted decay spectroscopy is introduced with applications on beta, gamma, conversion electron and β delayed neutron studies.

2. Ion trap techniques

Every major radioactive ion beam facility in the world utilizes ion traps. Their role is not just in mass measurement and separation but also as ion beam preparatory devices like ion bunchers, which convert continuous ion beam into a sequence of ion packages (bunches) [4].

The traps can be categorized to electrostatic traps, electric radiofrequency (RF) traps and Penning traps that employ a combination of homogenous magnetic

field and electrostatic potential [5]. This section gives an overview of different trap types and their uses in nuclear physics studies.

2.1. Radiofrequency cooler-bunchers

It is quite common that radioactive ion beams after their production and extraction from the source have rather poor ion optical properties and commonly are continuous in nature. Both of these properties are rather unsuitable for ion traps that require ions almost at rest.

To meet the ever-increasing requirements of ion traps, gas-filled radiofrequency cooler-bunchers (RFQCBs) have been developed for this task. The ions from the source are first decelerated to ~ 100 eV and then injected to an RF-multipole (most commonly a quadrupole) structure that keeps the ions confined between the rods. The space between the rods is filled with dilute gas (usually helium at pressure of about 0.1 mbar) to allow for the reduction of the width of the ions' kinetic energy distribution (ion cooling). The ions collide with gas atoms and consequently lose energy and are centered to the RF electric field axis. Finally, using additional fine (on the order of 0.1 V/cm) DC-gradients, the cooled ions are collected to a potential well, from where they are swiftly released by switching the trap potentials. This is illustrated in Fig. 1.

These devices allow ions to be released downstream to trap experiments as short, well cooled, bunches. These devices have existed for a while now (see for example Refs. [7–9]) and are still in active use. The new devices built after the first-generation experiments have been concentrating on improving throughput of ions like CARIBU buncher [10] at Argonne National laboratory or preparations for DESIR at SPIRAL2 [11].

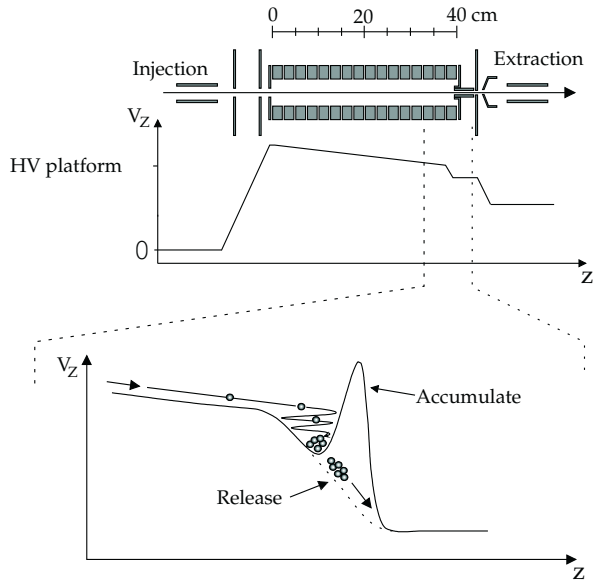


Figure 1: Schematic principle of an RFQCB (used at JYFLTRAP). The ions having $30 \dots 60q$ keV of energy are electrostatically slowed down by setting the RFQ at a high voltage (HV) platform and injected into the gas-filled RF structure with about ~ 100 eV of energy. Ion-atom collisions cool the ions. Finally the ions are collected into an axial potential well, from where they are released as a short bunch downstream. This figure is from Ref. [6].

RFQ cooler-bunchers are used in two rather distinctive modes of operation. One is preparation of ion bunches that, upon extraction, have extremely small energy spread (below 1 eV) but have rather long bunch size (typically few μ s). Low energy spread is ideal for *e.g.* collinear laser spectroscopy [12, 13] and also is suitable even with long temporal length for Penning traps. The other RFQ operating mode is to provide temporally short (typically 10-100 ns) bunches but this comes with the expense of increased energy spread. This type of bunches are needed for multi-reflection time-of-flight separators [14–16].

2.2. Paul traps

Paul trap is a very simple type of ion trap, which utilizes radiofrequency (RF) electric fields to form a confining potential [17]. These type of traps are ideal for studying properties that require ions to be nearly "free floating". Such conditions are needed, *e.g.* for studying kinematics of radioactive decay. These type of studies require rather elaborate trap geometry designs to allow access for various types of detectors. A pioneering LPCTRAP serves as a good example, see Refs. [18, 19]. Schematic of the experiment is shown in Fig. 2.

The LPCTRAP at GANIL [18] and BPT at Argonne

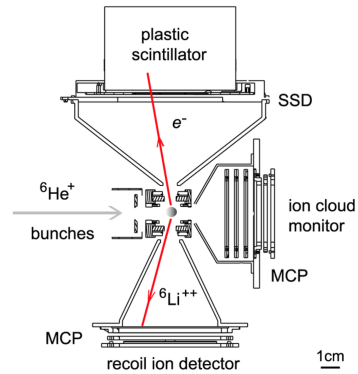


Figure 2: Schematic overview of the LPCTRAP. The ions under study are captured to a small volume of the trap, where the RF field keeps the ions confined. When a β decay occurs, the emitted electron or positron is detected with a position sensitive silicon strip detector (SSD) combined with a plastic scintillator. The recoiling ion is detected with a micro channel plate (MCP) detector. From the position of the β particle and the time-of-flight of the recoil the neutrino energy spectrum can be reconstructed. This figure is from Ref. [19].

National Laboratory [20] are Paul traps that have been developed to determine β - ν angular correlations in β decays and to study β -delayed neutron emission [21]. The decays will occur in a very small volume (~ 1 mm³) and since the decay occurs nearly at rest and in free space, the kinematics can be reconstructed rather accurately. In a β decay, the neutrino will go undetected but the momenta it carried away can be reconstructed from the detection of the emitted electron and the recoil daughter ion. Similarly, in case of a neutron emission, there is no need to detect the neutron but the energy carried away by the neutron can be reconstructed from the kinetic energy of the recoiling ion.

2.3. Penning traps

The best mass measurement accuracy and also the best mass resolving power is provided by Penning traps [22]. A Penning trap consists of a strong homogenous magnetic field and a weak quadrupolar electrostatic potential. Such a configuration confines a charged particle in all three spatial directions. In the absence of any electric field, ion undergoes cyclotron motion in a homogenous magnetic field with a so-called free-space cyclotron frequency

$$\nu_c = \frac{1}{2\pi} \frac{q}{m} B, \quad (2)$$

where q and m are the charge and mass of the particle and B the magnetic field. This relation gives a direct link between charge-over-mass and *frequency*. However, a homogenous magnetic field only offers ion confinement

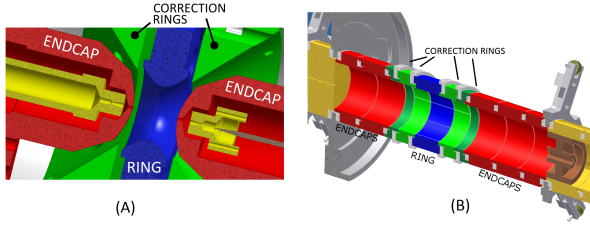


Figure 3: Hyperbolic (A) and cylindrical (B) Penning traps (Tritium-³He trap from Heidelberg, Germany [23] and JYFLTRAP [24], respectively). With both configurations a quadrupolar electric potential can be formed. In both cases additional compensation (correction) electrodes are needed to correct for the truncation of electrodes and unideal geometry. Some components have been stripped for clarity.

in two spatial directions. To achieve full confinement, a quadrupolar electrostatic potential is added in order to restrict ion movement along the magnetic field axis. Commonly hyperbolic or cylindrical electrodes are used as illustrated in Fig. 3.

With an added quadrupolar electrostatic potential, the ion will exhibit *axial motion* with frequency

$$\nu_z = \frac{1}{2\pi} \sqrt{\frac{qV_0}{md^2}} \quad (3)$$

and two *radial motions* with frequencies

$$\nu_{\pm} = \frac{1}{4\pi} \left(\nu_c \pm \sqrt{\nu_c^2 - 2\nu_z^2} \right). \quad (4)$$

The axial motion with frequency ν_z along the magnetic field lines depends (in addition to ion q/m) on the applied trapping potential V_0 and the geometry described with the characteristic trap dimension d . The two radial motions are called cyclotron motion with frequency ν_+ , which is commonly called trap-modified cyclotron frequency, and magnetron motion with frequency ν_- [25]. To get the free-space cyclotron frequency (Eq. (2)) out of these, one can utilize the invariance theorem [26]

$$\nu_c^2 = \nu_-^2 + \nu_z^2 + \nu_+^2 \quad (5)$$

or the radial sideband frequency

$$\nu_c = \nu_+ + \nu_-, \quad (6)$$

which is commonly used in nuclear physics measurements. The former, Eq. (5), is accurate even with small misalignments and inhomogeneity present and is commonly used in the most highest precision mass spectrometry reaching accuracies better than 10^{-11} [1]. The latter, Eq. (6), requiring only the sum of the two radial frequencies to be determined, is commonly used in mass measurements for short-lived nuclei. Recently, mass-over-charge doublets have been measured at 10^{-10} level [27] and non-doublets at 10^{-8} level [28].

To measure an absolute atomic mass through Eq. (2), a well known calibration mass is needed since there is no way to otherwise determine B accurately enough. To this end, a Penning trap provides *frequency ratios* and, with proper treatment of the data, *atomic mass ratios*. Ideally, clusters of ¹²C ions would be used [29], giving a calibration point every 12 mass units. There are also other suitable reference ions, whose masses have been determined very accurately, such as often used ¹³³Cs or ⁸⁵Rb.

If the ion of interest and reference ion masses are several mass units away, the frequency ratio is prone to so-called mass-dependent frequency shifts [30, 31]. These are due to imperfections in the electrostatic potential and homogenous magnetic field and depend on the motional amplitudes of the trapped ion.

2.3.1. Mass doublet technique

Especially in decay Q -value measurements where both parent and daughter have same mass number A , the aforementioned systematic shifts cancel out in the frequency ratio when both ions have equal starting conditions prior to ion motion excitations. Typically these shifts become small compared to statistical uncertainty [32]. To obtain a Q -value from a frequency ratio, a simple equation (for singly charged ions, omitting electron binding energies) can be used:

$$Q = (r - 1)(M_d - m_e)c^2, \quad (7)$$

where r is the daughter/parent ions' frequency ratio $r = \nu_c^d / \nu_c^p$, M_d the atomic mass of the daughter and m_e the mass of an electron. Typically with Q -values of some MeV, the term $r - 1 < 10^{-3}$. This factor also reflects the cancellation of systematic shifts in the Q -value and the uncertainty contribution from the daughter mass. It is easy to generalize Eq. (7) for other charge states and to take electron binding energies into account.

This doublet technique has been extensively used in measurements of Q -values of superallowed β emitters (see Ref. [33] and references therein), Q -value measurements of double beta decay and double electron capture decays [34].

2.3.2. The time-of-flight ion-cyclotron resonance technique

To date, most of the atomic mass determinations for short-living ions with Penning traps are done with the so-called time-of-flight ion-cyclotron resonance technique (TOF-ICR) [35, 36]. Here, a radiofrequency (RF) electric field in quadrupolar configuration around the cyclotron frequency of Eq. (2) is applied for a certain

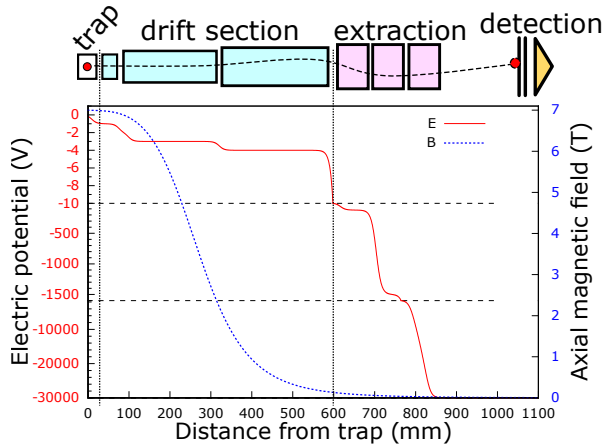


Figure 4: Extraction side of JYFLTRAP showing schematic extraction electrodes, electrostatic potential for extraction mode and the axial magnetic field. When the ions are extracted from the trap, they first pass the so-called drift section that has only few eV lower potential than the trap itself. Since the magnetic field has a rather big gradient there, the ions' radial energy gets converted to axial energy. After this slow drift section the ions are accelerated to 30 qkeV of energy and finally detected with a microchannel plate detector (MCP).

duration (usually dictated by the half-life of the ion-of-interest or for practical reasons capped to few seconds). With a given amplitude, such a field will periodically convert motion from cyclotron to magnetron and vice versa. The conversion is strongest at the sideband frequency of Eq. (6). Typically the amplitude is chosen so that only one full conversion happens at this frequency. Before this RF excitation, ions are prepared to have some amplitude in magnetron motion, e.g., by applying a dipolar RF electric field or using a Lorenz steerer [37].

After excitation, the ions are released from the trap towards a detector that is outside of the strong magnetic field of the trap (see Fig. 4). The radial energy gets converted to axial in the field gradient, and thus, the ions that have more radial energy (larger cyclotron motion orbit) will reach the detector earlier.

Repeating the measurement for different excitation frequencies, a TOF resonance curve is obtained as shown in Fig. 5. At resonance, the ions possess maximal radial energy, and thus, they are the first to reach the detector. At other frequencies, the conversion is only partial, defined by the excitation amplitude profile. The resonances shown in Fig. 5 is obtained with conventional excitation pulse, *i.e.* the excitation is switched on for a certain duration T_{RF} and off again while keeping the amplitude during the excitation constant.

The width of the resonance is inversely proportional to the excitation time, evident also from Fig. 5. With

longer excitation time the resonance becomes narrower and the frequency of the center can be obtained with better precision. In the resonances shown one can also see the motion damping gets worse with longer excitation times. That is, ions collide with rest gas molecules, and consequently, the resonance becomes less pronounced. With measurements of short-living nuclei, also the half-life imposes a limit to the excitation time.

Precision boosting methods

An advanced version of the conventional excitation is the **Ramsey's method of time-separated oscillatory fields**. Instead of applying a constant amplitude for the whole duration of the excitation, the application of the RF is split to two or more excitation pulses interleaved with waiting periods [38]. Usage of two pulses with a waiting period in between boosts the frequency determination precision by a factor of three when same total duration is used for the excitation pattern. The waiting period need to be much longer than the two excitation pulses (e.g. a pattern of 100-700-100 ms on-off-on) in order to get the full benefit of this technique. Ramsey's method has become the norm - nearly all mass measurements utilizing TOF-ICR technique have been performed using Ramsey's method of time-separated oscillatory fields in the recent past [39].

Other precision boosting methods have also been developed. One candidate is **octupolar excitation**. This method has been studied extensively (see e.g. Refs. [40, 41]) and also used in some mass measurements like in Q -value measurement of double-electron capture in ^{164}Er at SHIPTRAP [42]. The experiment would have been impossible with the quadrupole excitation even when Ramsey-type excitation would have been used due to the very low mass difference of the two states.

Octupolar excitation utilizes an 8-pole RF field instead of the quadrupole. The gain factor in mass resolving power between quadrupolar and octupolar excitations is about a factor of ten - much larger than the naively expected factor of two due to doubling of the poles and hence the frequency. It was found out that the lineshape depends strongly on the initial phases and amplitudes of the ion motion and the octupolar field. For this reason, the octupolar excitation has not been used so extensively in experiments as it takes rather long to prepare the experiment for each particular case.

It is worth noting the full width at half maximum of the TOF-resonance is always constant independent of the mass-over-charge of the ion. A way to increase the frequency, and thus to improve the precision of the cyclotron frequency measurement, is to strip more electrons out from the ions. In principle, the precision in-

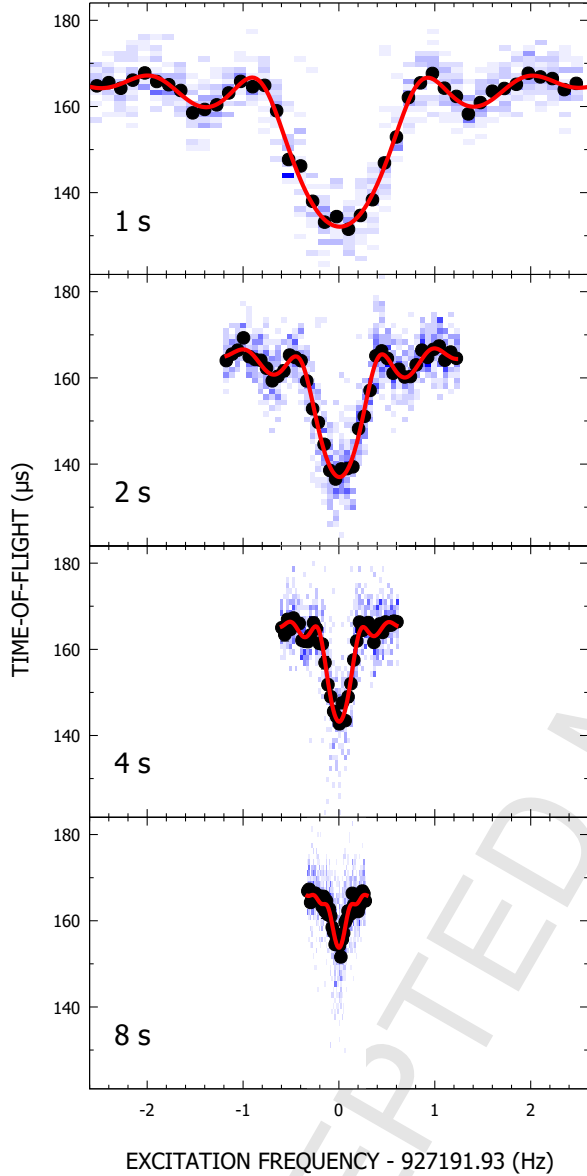


Figure 5: Time-of-flight resonance curves for different excitation (T_{RF}) times as shown in the panels. Black points are the experimental TOF values and red curves are fit to the data. The blue pixels show the scatter of data; darker the pixel, more ions was observed. Each resonance were measured with $^{116}\text{Sn}^{1+}$ ions at JYFLTRAP. One can see that the width of the resonance gets narrower when longer excitation times are used. Additionally, motional damping is evident from the decrease of TOF for ions in resonance. See text for more explanation.

329 creases proportionally to the charge of the ion but in
 330 practice charge exchange reactions and difficulties in
 331 preparing the ions becomes more and more difficult
 332 with increased charge state. **Charge breeding** is cur-
 333 rently pursued at TITAN trap [43]. Other limiting fac-
 334 tors aside, at some point with high enough charge state
 335 the precision of the binding energy of the stripped elec-
 336 trons become the limiting factor in mass determination.
 337 Or, put other way around, Penning traps can be used to
 338 determine the binding energy.

339 2.4. Phase-imaging cyclotron resonance technique

340 The most promising and already demonstrated Pen-
 341 ning trap mass measurement technique at the moment
 342 is the so-called *phase-imaging cyclotron resonance* (PI-
 343 ICR) technique developed at SHIPTRAP [44, 45]. In-
 344 stead of relying on the energy conversion like in the
 345 TOF-ICR method, the new method is based on determi-
 346 nation of ion motional phases with a spatially resolving
 347 micro channel (MCP) plate detector. This technique is
 348 thoroughly explained in Ref. [45].

349 In practice, the method is used to determine either
 350 the magnetron ν_- and modified cyclotron ν_+ frequency
 351 separately, or alternatively the cyclotron frequency ν_c
 352 (see section 5 of Ref. [45]) by determining the final
 353 phase of the motion in question. Axial motion is not
 354 measured but cooled to minimal amplitude to minimize
 355 frequency shifts and ion scatter due to collisions with
 356 rest gas molecules.

357 Only the magnetron motion phase can be directly pro-
 358 jected to the MCP detector since the magnetron period
 359 is much longer than the time-of-flight of the ions to the
 360 MCP resulting in a well defined spot in the detector. In
 361 the case of high-frequency cyclotron motion, direct de-
 362 termination of the cyclotron phase is not possible. In-
 363 stead of a well defined spot a ring is observed. To get the
 364 phase of the fast cyclotron motion a short quadrupole
 365 excitation pulse is applied to convert cyclotron motion
 366 to slow magnetron motion and consequently its phase
 367 can be determined. In addition, to obtain a distortion-
 368 free phase image, the ion path from the trap to the MCP
 369 detector needs to be electric field free.

370 Compared with the TOF-ICR technique using Ram-
 371 sey excitation scheme, this technique is an astonishing
 372 factor of 25 faster and provides a 40-fold gain in res-
 373 olving power. Very recently mass difference of ^{163}Ho
 374 and ^{163}Dy was measured at SHIPTRAP with the new
 375 method providing a mass ratio at 10^{-10} precision level
 376 surpassing any TOF-ICR measurements [27].

377 This technique is now being implemented in other
 378 Penning trap experiments. It is clear that such precision
 379 requires the ions in the trap to be prepared extremely

well in order to avoid amplitude-dependent frequency shifts. Although this method boosts the precision or reduces the frequency measurement time, preparation time for the measurement will be considerably longer than for TOF-ICR. Also, in order to utilize the method, the cyclotron frequency needs to be known to some precision so that the measured phase can be correctly assigned to the period preceded by *known* number of full periods. In case of short-lived ions of unknown mass, it is necessary to first obtain a rough frequency with the ordinary TOF-ICR technique. For example $A/q = 100$ ions in 7 T field have about 1 MHz cyclotron frequency. In order to know the number of full periods the ions have circulated after phase accumulation time of 1 second, the mass needs to be known better than 10^{-6} precision ($100 \text{ keV}/c^2$).

2.5. Gas-filled Penning trap for beam purification

Perhaps the most used beam purification technique for short-lived rare ions is the sideband cooling technique developed nearly three decades ago at ISOLTRAP [46]. By filling a Penning trap with low-pressure gas (10^{-5} mbar), the amplitudes of the fast modified cyclotron and axial motions gets damped. The amplitude of the magnetron motion, on the other hand, slowly increases.

The recipe for mass-selective cleaning in a buffer-gas filled Penning trap is rather simple (example duration given in parenthesis, case dependent):

1. cooling (50 ms)
2. magnetron excitation (5 ms or simultaneously with quadrupole excitation)
3. mass-selective quadrupolar excitation (100 ms)
4. cooling (30 ms)
5. extract through narrow aperture ($10 \mu\text{s}$).

The first step simply reduces the axial amplitude of the ions due to ion collisions with buffer gas atoms. The second step increases the magnetron motion diameter of all ions. The magnetron orbit diameter needs to become larger than the diameter of the extraction hole aperture in order for this cleaning technique to work.

The third step is where the mass selectivity comes into play. The excitation frequency is set to be the ion cyclotron frequency (Eq. (2)) and thus the magnetron motion for the ions of interest with some frequency bandwidth gets converted to cyclotron motion. The subsequent cooling period cools the cyclotron motion and thus ions of interest have now both their magnetron and cyclotron motion mostly removed. Once the bunch is extracted through an electrode having a narrow aperture

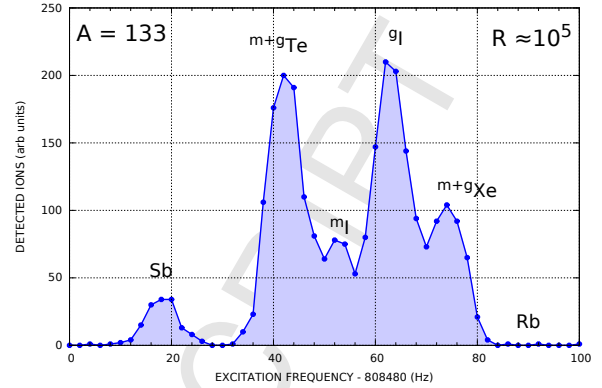


Figure 6: An example frequency scan utilizing sideband cooling method of Ref. [46] using JYFLTRAP’s gas filled purification trap [24]. The ions were produced in proton induced fission of uranium. The scan shows the various isotopes and isomers produced. A mass resolving power $M/\Delta M$ of about 10^5 is obtained. Both ^{133}Te and ^{133}Xe have low-lying isomeric states, which can’t be fully separated with this method.

(see Fig. 3 (B), electrode on far left) only the ions of interest can pass and the contaminants hit the electrode.

The obtained resolving power depends on various factors like gas pressure, excitation times, amplitudes and durations. The resolving power is often tuned to “as low as necessary required” to gain in transmission and to properly cool the ions. The purity of the used gas (typically helium) and the background pressure plays an important role. The background gas molecules like water vapor can cause charge exchange to happen, *i.e.* the ion of interest getting neutralized (and subsequently lost) and the contaminant molecule ionized. An example of a rather high resolving power frequency scan of the quadrupolar electric field is shown in Fig. 6.

2.6. High-resolution Penning trap cleaning techniques

In absence or in addition to the cleaning method described in the previous section, a Penning trap without buffer gas can be utilized for cleaning purposes. Without any cooling method, it is necessary to be very careful to not excite the ion of interest with a too short excitation pulse duration, especially when its mass is being measured, in order to avoid frequency shifts.

Most often the cleaning is accomplished by exciting the contaminant ions’ cyclotron motion with dipolar excitation near or at its ν_+ frequency. This frequency offers the most mass resolving power as it is directly proportional to $\nu_c = \frac{1}{2\pi} \frac{q}{m} B$ with a small offset due to the almost-constant magnetron frequency ν_- . One example of dipolar cleaning is described in Ref. [47], where states of ^{70}Cu were separated using this

method at ISOLTRAP. It has been used in many Penning trap experiments, especially in the ones lacking high-resolution pre-separation. It is quite easy to remove known contaminants but with unknown ones it is rather tedious to apply cleaning to every possible contaminant (especially to identify every contaminant) as explained well in Ref. [48], where a cleaning method based on stored waveform inverse Fourier transform (SWIFT) is explained. In short, SWIFT excitation scheme is applied that ions beyond a narrow “no excitation gap” are removed with rather large bandwidth.

For extremely high resolution cleaning, the dipolar excitation can be used by scaling the excitation time up. Alternatively, if cooling is available (not necessarily in the trap where the cleaning is applied), also the ion-of-interest can be, to some extent, excited. This shortens the required excitation time considerably, especially if Ramsey-type excitation is used described in Ref. [49]. This so-called Ramsey cleaning method that is frequently used at JYFLTRAP and can provide separation at the ~ 0.5 Hz level. For singly charged ions with mass of 100 u in 7 T field this corresponds to $M/\Delta M \approx 2 \times 10^6$ (≈ 50 keV/ c^2). A glimpse of the available resolving power can be seen in Fig. 7.

The Ramsey cleaning method has enabled contaminant-free mass measurements and decay spectroscopy of various nuclei. It is possible to determine mass when a contaminant is present but in Penning trap mass spectrometry the measured frequencies are prone to shifts, which might result in a reduction of the measurement accuracy [52]. Especially Q_{EC} -values of several superallowed beta emitters could be determined in absence of low-lying isomeric contaminants [33] and masses near ^{132}Sn for nuclear structure studies [53].

Recently, other types of cleaning methods have emerged. One promising is the so-called SIMCO method (simultaneous magnetron and resonant conversion), where simultaneous dipolar magnetron and quadrupolar cyclotron excitation is applied [54]. Also octupolar excitation has been studied for cleaning purposes [55].

2.7. Multi-reflection time-of-flight separators

The long-awaited multi-reflection time-of-flight (MR-TOF) separators [56] have finally entered to the field of nuclear physics [14–16]. These devices can provide similar or even better [57] mass resolving power in much shorter time than a buffer gas filled purification Penning trap.

The principle of an MR-TOF separator is rather simple. A well-focused bunch of ions is injected inside the

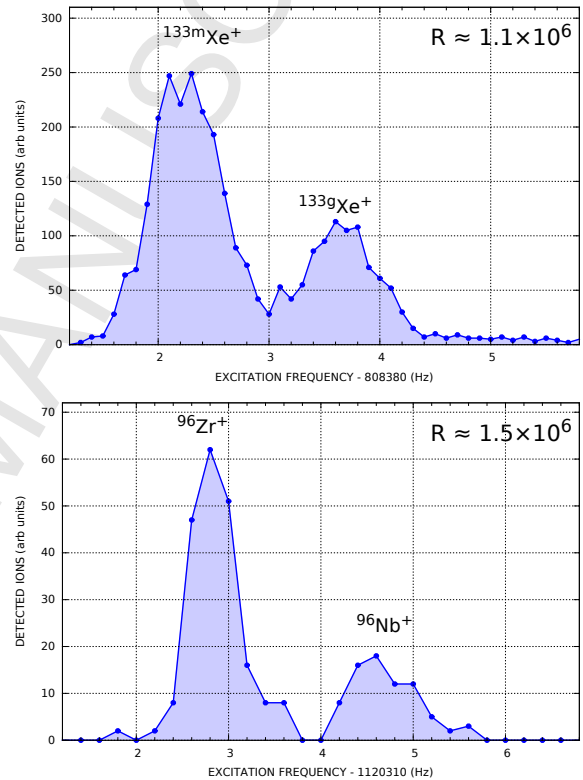


Figure 7: (Top) Separation of the isomeric states of ^{133}Xe having mass difference 233 keV [50]. (Bottom) Separation of ^{96}Nb and ^{96}Zr having mass difference 163.96(13) keV [51].

device and let freely drift between two electrostatic mirrors. The geometry and potential of the mirror electrodes are chosen such that ions retain isochronicity: Ions can have tens of eV of energy spread and this is what the mirrors have to compensate for to keep the “lap time” constant. With each turn there is dispersion in mass. It has been shown that MR-TOFs can obtain and even surpass the mass resolving power of a gas-filled purification trap and reach resolving power beyond 10^5 in as little as 10 ms. This has enabled purification of ion beams with much worse ion-of-interest to contamination ratios and shorter half-lives [58].

Since the interest is to go further out from the valley of stability towards more exotic ions, the relative amount of accompanying contaminating ions is dramatically increasing. Buffer gas filled purification traps and other preseparators can do only that much and this is where MR-TOFs come in need. At the moment MR-TOFs are being built in many facilities, see Table 2.

2.8. Summary of ion-trap facilities in the world

Currently, there are seven operating Penning-trap facilities dedicated to high-precision mass measurements in the world (see Table 2, REXTRAP has not been used for mass measurements). With respect to the number of measured ground or isomeric states in nuclei, ISOLTRAP [59] at the ISOLDE facility at CERN has been the most productive Penning trap in the world. JYFLTRAP [24] holds the second place, thanks to the universal ion-guide technique employed at the IGISOL facility in the JYFL Accelerator Laboratory in Jyväskylä. The CPT Penning trap [60] has performed a massive number of mass measurements of neutron-rich fission fragments at the CARIBU facility in the Argonne National Laboratory. SHIPTRAP [61] at GSI has specialized in measuring masses of superheavy elements (see e.g. [62–64]). TITAN [65] at TRIUMF utilizes highly-charged ions in their experiments, and has measured many light, neutron-rich isotopes. LEBIT [66] employs exotic ions produced via fast beam fragmentation and in-flight separation at the National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory (NSCL). TRIGA-TRAP [67] in Mainz is also operating, and has been mainly dedicated to very high-precision Q -value measurements.

3. Overview of recent mass measurements employing ion traps

Over the years, Penning-trap measurements have yielded more than thousand mass or Q -values that have

improved our knowledge of e.g. evolution of shell closures, onset of deformation, and nucleosynthesis in stars (see Fig. 8). Most of the mass values have been compiled in the Atomic Mass Evaluation 2012 (AME12) [68]. After AME12, around 100 mass values from experiments with ion traps have been published. Twelve nuclei ($^{52,53}\text{K}$ [58], $^{53,54}\text{Ca}$ [69], ^{82}Zn [70], ^{100}Rb [71], $^{129,131}\text{Cd}$ [72], ^{141}I [73], ^{198}At [74], $^{232,233}\text{Fr}$ [75]) have been measured for the first time. The new measurements have revealed large deviations from the adopted or extrapolated mass values in the AME12 (see Fig. 9). For example, $^{52,53}\text{K}$ and $^{53,54}\text{Ca}$ are 400-1000 keV lower than the AME12 values. On the other hand, in the ^{132}Sn region, $^{129,130,131}\text{Cd}$ [72] all yield 100-360 keV higher values than in the AME12. The CPT results for $^{130,131}\text{In}$ [73] also differ by more than 100 keV from the AME12. However, the results are for an unknown mixture of isomeric and ground states which can explain the deviations to AME12 and JYFLTRAP [53, 76]. Discrepancies at ^{140}Te [73, 76] and ^{146}Cs [73] are intriguing and call for new measurements.

The recent Penning-trap measurements have focused on a couple of regions on the chart of nuclides. Firstly, several measurements of nuclei in the vicinity of doubly magic ^{132}Sn have been performed [53, 72, 73, 76, 80]. These nuclei are also important not only for studying the evolution of the $Z = 50$ and $N = 82$ shell-gap energies but also for modeling the astrophysical r process [81]. Secondly, the evolution of $N = 28$ and $N = 32$ shell closures in neutron-rich K and Ca nuclei have been studied at ISOLTRAP [82, 83] and TITAN [82, 83]. A third region of recent interest is located around the $Z = 82$ shell closure, which has been explored via measurements of Tl, Pb, Fr, Ra isotopes at ISOLTRAP [74, 75, 84]. In addition, new measurements of neutron-rich Sr and Rb nuclei have probed the nuclear structure changes in the midshell region [71, 85], and extended these studies towards more neutron-rich regions than in previous works [86, 87]. Islands of inversion at $N = 40$ and $N = 20$ have been explored via measurements of neutron-rich Mn and Fe [88] and Mg [89] isotopes. In the neutron-deficient side, several measurements have focused on the isobaric multiplet mass equation at $A=9$ [90], $A=20$ and $A=21$ [91] and $A=31$ [92]. Studies of mirror nuclei ^{21}Na [93], ^{23}Mg [94], ^{25}Al [95], ^{29}Na [93], ^{45}V [96], and ^{49}Mn [96] have improved the precisions of the Q_{EC} values considerably (see Table 6). Also many stable nuclei have been studied, such as Zr and Mo isotopes at LEBIT [97] and JYFLTRAP [98, 99], or ^{184}Os at TRIGA-TRAP [100], which revealed a 2.9σ deviation to the AME12. The recently published mass-excess values, which have not been included in the AME12, have

Table 2: Table of all ion traps that are currently in use, being commissioned or under planning at the radioactive beam facilities around the world.

Location	Facility	Setup name	Type	Status
North America				
USA	Argonne NL	CPT	PT (+ MR-TOF)	Operational
USA	NSCL/MSU	LEBIT	PT	Operational
Canada	TRIUMF	TITAN	PT (+ MR-TOF)	Operational
USA	Texas A&M	TAMUTRAP	PT	Commissioning
Europe				
Switzerland	ISOLDE	ISOLTRAP	PT+MR-TOF	Operational
Finland	JYFL	JYFLTRAP	PT (+ MR-TOF)	Operational
Germany	GS1	SHIPTRAP	PT	Operational
Germany	Univ. Mainz	TRIGATRAP	PT	Operational
Switzerland	ISOLDE	REXTRAP	PT	Operational
Germany	GS1	HITRAP	PT	Commissioning
Germany	GS1/FAIR	FRS Ion Catcher	MR-TOF	Operational
Germany/France	Univ. Munich/ALTO	MLL-TRAP	PT	Commissioning
Germany	GS1/FAIR	MATS	PT	Planning
France	GANIL	DESIR-TRAP	PT	Planning
France	GANIL	PIPERADE	PT	Planning
France	GANIL	PILGRIM	MR-TOF	Planning
Russia	PNPI	PITRAP	PT	Planning
Asia				
Japan	RIKEN	SLOWRI	MR-TOF	Operational
China	IMP Lanzhou	Lanzhou-trap	PT	Planning
China	CIAE, BRIF	BRIF-TRAP	PT	Planning
China	CIAE, CARIF	CARIF-TRAP	PT	Planning
India	VECC	VECC-TRAP	PT	Planning
Japan	RIKEN	RIKEN-TRAP	PT	Planning
South Korea	RISP	RISP-TRAP	PT	Planning

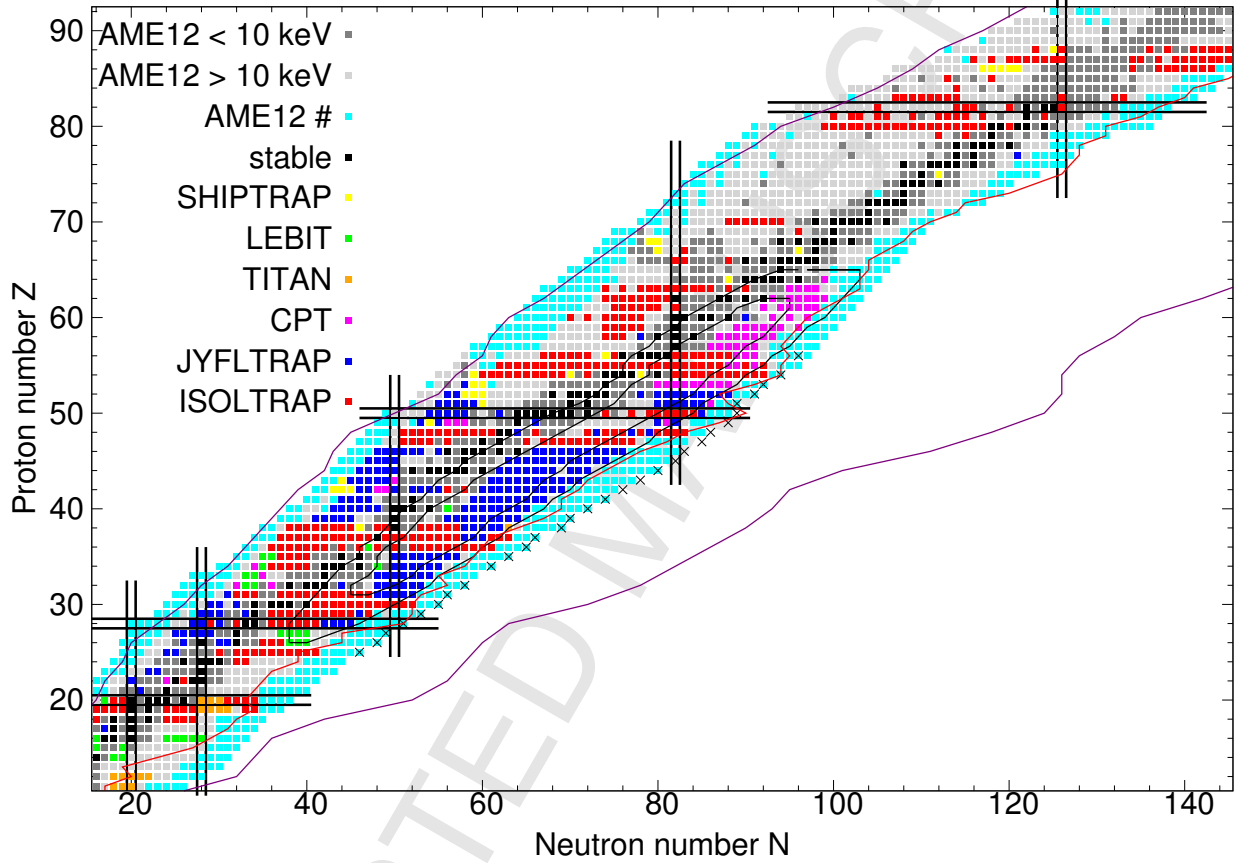


Figure 8: (Color online) Penning-trap measurements performed at ISOLTRAP, JYFLTRAP, SHIPTRAP, LEBIT, CPT and TITAN. Since many nuclei have been measured at several facilities, all data points are not visible in the figure. The nuclei whose mass-excess values in AME2012 [68] are known with a precision better than 10 keV (dark grey), worse than 10 keV (light grey) or have extrapolated mass values (cyan) are also shown. The average two-proton and two-neutron driplines from the energy-density functional calculations are plotted in purple [77]. The crosses highlight the most neutron-rich isotopes whose half-lives have been measured recently at RIKEN [78, 79]. A 100-ms contour for half-lives of neutron-rich isotopes (red line) and contours for calculated 1- μ b and 1-mb $^{238}\text{U}(p\ 25\ \text{MeV}, f)$ fission cross sections are also shown (black lines).

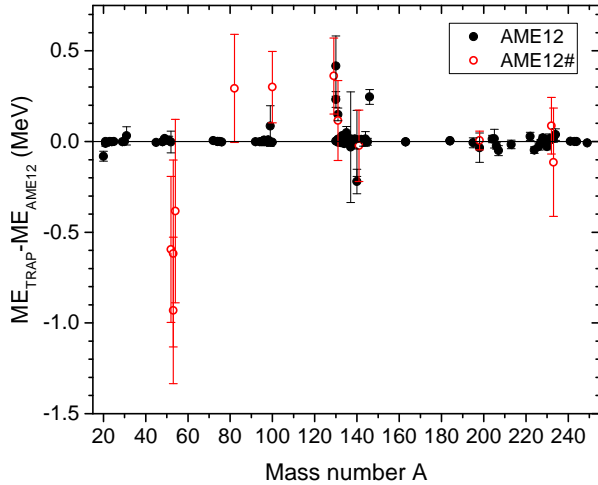


Figure 9: Comparison of recent ion-trap mass measurements to the AME12 [68]. The general agreement with the AME12 is rather good. However, several isotopes deviate significantly. The largest deviations are observed for nuclei around ^{52}Ca and ^{132}Sn .

610 been summarized in Tables 3, 4, and 5.

611 3.1. Comparison with theoretical mass models

612 The Penning-trap measurements provide a data pool
 613 for comparisons with different theoretical mass mod-
 614 els. We have now compared five different mass mod-
 615 els (FRDM2012 [108], Duflo-Zuker [109], WS4 [110],
 616 HFB-24 [111], and UNEDF0 [112]) to experimental
 617 mass-excess values in three different regions in the chart
 618 of nuclides. The regions, $Z = 15 - 25$, $Z = 45 - 55$
 619 and $Z = 80 - 90$, were selected due to their locations
 620 close to magic neutron and proton shells at ^{48}Ca , ^{132}Sn ,
 621 and ^{208}Pb , and since recently mass measurements have
 622 been performed in these regions (see Table 3). Most
 623 of the theoretical models selected are relatively new
 624 [108, 110–112], the only exception is the Duflo-Zuker
 625 formula. Three of the models, FRDM2012, Duflo-
 626 Zuker, and WS4 are macroscopic-microscopic models
 627 where the macroscopic part is based on the liquid drop
 628 model. The HFB-24 and UNEDF0 models are based
 629 on Hartree-Fock-Bogoliubov mass model with Skyrme
 630 forces. Of these, UNEDF0 is purely energy density
 631 functional without any additional procedures done to
 632 match the experimental data. Below, the different mod-
 633 els are shortly described.

634 FRDM2012 is a macroscopic-microscopic mass
 635 model. It is based on finite-range droplet macro-
 636 scopic and the folded-Yukawa single-particle micro-
 637 scopic nuclear-structure models. FRDM2012 employs
 638 the same model as its precursor, FRDM1995 [113], but
 639 with considerably improved treatment of deformation

640 and fewer approximations have been made thanks to
 641 more computing power available. The root-mean square
 642 (rms) error of the FRDM2012 model is 0.5595 MeV for
 643 the entire region of nuclei included in the adjustment,
 644 and only 0.3549 MeV for the nuclei with $N \geq 65$ (0.669
 645 MeV and 0.448 MeV for the FRDM1995 model, respec-
 646 tively).

647 Duflo-Zuker is also a macroscopic-microscopic for-
 648 mula. Its six macroscopic monopole terms lead asymp-
 649 totically to a liquid drop form, three microscopic terms
 650 take into account configuration mixing (multipole) cor-
 651 rections to the monopole shell effects, and one term is
 652 for deformed nuclei. Duflo-Zuker, originally fitted to
 653 AME1995 values, performed outstandingly well compar-
 654 ed to other mass models when AME2003 mass eval-
 655 uation was published [114] with a root-mean square er-
 656 ror of about 0.5 MeV.

657 WS4 (Weizsäcker-Skyrme 4) model [110] is a
 658 macroscopic-microscopic mass formula, where the
 659 macroscopic part is treated using the liquid drop
 660 model, and axially deformed Woods-Saxon potential is
 661 adopted to obtain the shell corrections using the Strut-
 662 nsky method. The latest WS model, WS4, has taken
 663 into account the surface diffuseness effect of nuclei near
 664 the drip lines for the first time. This resulted in a bet-
 665 ter prediction of neutron-rich masses, and the root-mean
 666 square to AME12 only 0.298 MeV.

667 The HFB-24 model [111] is based on the Hartree-
 668 Fock-Bogoliubov (HFB) mass model supplemented by
 669 the Skyrme forces with a microscopic pairing force,
 670 phenomenological Wigner terms and correction terms
 671 for the spurious collective energy. The model param-
 672 eters have been fitted to the AME12 [68] experimental
 673 mass values, and the Skyrme force has been simultane-
 674 ously fitted to the zero-temperature equation of state of
 675 infinite homogeneous neutron matter as determined by
 676 many-body calculations with realistic two- and three-
 677 nucleon forces. The HFB-24 model works rather well
 678 with about 0.55 MeV root-mean square deviation to the
 679 AME2012 [68] evaluation.

680 UNEDF0 [112] is a pure energy-density functional
 681 model relying on the nuclear energy density of Skyrme
 682 type in the framework of the Hartree-Fock-Bogoliubov
 683 theory. The energy-density functional was calibrated by
 684 fitting to a set of 72 nuclei at closed $Z=20, 28, 50$, and
 685 82 proton shells, from the mid-shell region with $N \approx$
 686 100 and from the heavy region $Z \geq 100$. Only spherical
 687 or axially deformed nuclei are considered in UNEDF0.
 688 The root-mean square error, 1.45 MeV, is much better
 689 than for example for the SLy4 model [115, 116] with
 690 an rms error of 4.80 MeV. It has been suggested that
 691 the Sly4 model has an overemphasis on doubly-magic

Table 3: Summary of most recent Penning-trap measurements (not included in the AME12). The reference ions are singly-charged unless stated otherwise.

Nuclide	Ref.	ME _{trap} (keV)	ME _{AME12} (keV)	Trap	Ref.
²¹ Na	²¹ Ne	-2184.63(10)	-2184.64(28)	LEBIT	[93]
²⁰ Mg	²³ Na	17477.7(18)	17559(27)	TITAN	[91]
²¹ Mg	²³ Na	10903.85(74)	10914(16)	TITAN	[91]
²³ Mg	²³ Na	-5473.50(16)	-5473.3(7)	TITAN	[94]
²⁴ Al	²³ Na	-48.86(23)	-47.6(11)	TITAN	[101]
²⁵ Al	²⁵ Mg	-8915.962(63)	-8916.2(5)	JYFLTRAP	[95]
²⁹ P	¹² C ₃	-16953.15(47)	-16952.5(6)	LEBIT	[93]
³⁰ P	³⁰ Si	-20200.854(64)	-20200.6(3)	JYFLTRAP	[95]
³¹ Cl	³¹ P	-7034.7(34)	-7070(50)	JYFLTRAP	[92]
⁵² K	³⁹ K, ⁵² Cr	-17138(33)	-16540(400)#	ISOLTRAP/MR-TOF	[58]
⁵³ K	³⁹ K, ⁵² Cr	-12298(112)	-11680(500)#	ISOLTRAP/MR-TOF	[58]
⁴⁸ Ca	¹⁴ N ¹⁸ O ¹⁶ O	-44224.45(27)	-44224.76(12)	TITAN	[102]
⁵¹ Ca	³⁹ K	-36332.07(58)	-36339(22)	ISOLTRAP	[69]
⁵² Ca	³⁹ K	-34266.02(71)	-342660(60)	ISOLTRAP	[69]
⁵³ Ca	³⁹ K, ⁵³ Cr	-29388(43)	-28460(400)#	ISOLTRAP/MR-TOF	[69]
⁵⁴ Ca	³⁹ K, ⁵⁴ Cr	-25161(49)	-24780(500)#	ISOLTRAP/MR-TOF	[69]
⁴⁸ Ti	¹⁴ N ¹⁸ O ¹⁶ O	-48492.71(21)	-48491.7(4)	TITAN	[102]
⁴⁵ V	⁴⁵ Ti	-31885.3(9)	-31881(8)	JYFLTRAP	[96]
⁴⁹ Mn	⁴⁹ Cr	-37620.3(24)	-37637(10)	JYFLTRAP	[96]
⁸² Zn	⁸⁵ Rb	-42314(3)	-42610(300)#	ISOLTRAP	[70]
⁷⁴ Ga	⁸⁵ Rb ⁹⁺	-68049.7(50)	-68050(3)	TITAN	[103]
⁷² Br	⁸⁵ Rb	-59062.2(10)	-59067(7)	LEBIT	[104]
⁷⁴ Rb	⁸⁵ Rb ⁹⁺	-51916.5(60)	-51916(3)	TITAN	[103]
⁷⁵ Rb	⁸⁵ Rb ⁹⁺	-57218.7(17)	-57218.7(12)	TITAN	[103]
⁷⁶ Rb	⁸⁵ Rb ⁹⁺	-60481.0(16)	-60479.1(9)	TITAN	[103]
⁹⁸ Rb	⁸⁵ Rb	-54309.4(40)	-54318(3)	ISOLTRAP	[71]
⁹⁹ Rb	⁸⁵ Rb	-51120.3(45)	-51205(110)	ISOLTRAP	[71]
¹⁰⁰ Rb	⁸⁵ Rb	-46247(20)	-46550(200)#	ISOLTRAP	[71]
⁹⁶ Zr	⁹⁶ Mo	-85437.5(4)	-85445(2)	JYFLTRAP	[51]
⁹⁶ Nb	⁹⁶ Mo	-85601.5(4)	-85607(3)	JYFLTRAP	[51]
⁹² Mo	⁸⁷ Rb, ¹² C ₈	-86808.53(17)	-86807.8 0,781	LEBIT	[97]
⁹⁴ Mo	⁸⁷ Rb, ¹² C ₈	-88413.96(25)	-88412.8(4)	LEBIT	[97]
⁹⁵ Mo	⁸⁷ Rb, ¹² C ₈	-87711.51(26)	-87710.6(4)	LEBIT	[97]
⁹⁶ Mo	⁸⁷ Rb, ¹² C ₈	-88794.53(30)	-88793.6(4)	LEBIT	[97]
⁹⁷ Mo	⁸⁷ Rb, ¹² C ₈	-87544.44(25)	-87543.6(5)	LEBIT	[97]
⁹⁸ Mo	⁸⁷ Rb, ¹² C ₈	-88115.95(38)	-88114.8(5)	LEBIT	[97]
¹⁰⁰ Mo	⁸⁷ Rb, ¹² C ₈	-86193.04(30)	-86189.5(10)	LEBIT	[97]

Table 4: Table 3 continued.

Nuclide	Ref.	ME_{trap} (keV)	ME_{AME12} (keV)	Trap	Ref.
¹²⁹ Cd	¹³³ Cs	-63148(74)	-63510(200)#	ISOLTRAP	[72]
¹³⁰ Cd	¹³³ Cs	-61118(22)	-61530(160)	ISOLTRAP	[72]
¹³¹ Cd	¹³¹ Cs, ¹³³ Cs	-55215(100)	-55330(200)#	ISOLTRAP/MR-TOF	[72]
¹³⁰ In	¹³³ Cs	-69652(20)	-69880(40)	CPT	[73]
¹³¹ In	¹³³ Cs	-67876(35)	-68025.6(27)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁰ Sn	¹³³ Cs	-80130.8(36)	-80132.9(21)	CPT	[73]
¹³¹ Sn	¹³³ Cs	-77259.6(43)	-77272(6)	CPT	[73]
¹³² Sn	¹³³ Cs	-76549.0(28)	-76543.9(29)	CPT	[73]
¹³³ Sn	¹³³ Cs	-70869.1(36)	-70874.2(24)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁴ Sn	¹³³ Cs	-66444(16)	-66432(3)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁵ Sn	¹³³ Cs	-60584(34)	-60632(3)	CPT	[73]
¹³¹ Sb	¹³³ Cs	-81986(10)	-81981.9(21)	CPT	[73]
¹³² Sb	¹³³ Cs	-79633.8(61)	-79635.6(27)	CPT	[73]
¹³³ Sb	¹³³ Cs	-78921.3(76)	-78923(3)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁴ Sb	¹³³ Cs	-74012(10)	-74020.5(17)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁵ Sb	¹³³ Cs	-69693.9(65)	-69689.6(29)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁶ Sb	¹³³ Cs	-64491(15)	-64510(6)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁷ Sb	¹³³ Cs	-60061(52)	-60030(300)	CPT	[73]
¹³³ Te	¹³³ Cs	-82899.8(65)	-82932(4)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁵ Te	¹³³ Cs	-77729.6(21)	-77727.9(27)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁶ Te	¹³³ Cs	-74423.3(37)	-74425.8(24)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁷ Te	¹³³ Cs	-69301.7(37)	-69304.2(25)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁸ Te	¹³³ Cs	-65695.3(76)	-65696(4)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁹ Te	¹³³ Cs	-60191(17)	-60205(4)	CPT	[73]
¹⁴⁰ Te	¹³³ Cs	-56577(62)	-56357(28)	CPT	[73]
¹³³ I	¹³³ Cs	-85858.2(64)	-85887(5)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁴ I	¹³³ Cs	-84040.8(64)	-84059(6)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁵ I	¹³³ Cs	-83778.9(20)	-83789(5)	CPT	[73]
¹³⁹ I	¹³³ Cs	-68470.7(40)	-68459(29)	CPT	[73]
¹⁴⁰ I	¹³³ Cs	-63606(13)	-63600(180)	CPT	[73]
¹⁴¹ I	¹³³ Cs	-59927(16)	-59900(200)#	CPT	[73]
¹⁴² Cs	¹³³ Cs	-70506.9(93)	-70518(7)	CPT	[73]
¹⁴³ Cs	¹³³ Cs	-67676.3(79)	-67674(22)	CPT	[73]
¹⁴⁴ Cs	¹³³ Cs	-63256(31)	-63271(25)	CPT	[73]
¹⁴⁵ Cs	¹³³ Cs	-60057(16)	-60056(11)	CPT	[73]
¹⁴⁶ Cs	¹³³ Cs	-55323.2(86)	-55570(40)	CPT	[73]

Table 5: Table 3 continued.

Nuclide	Ref.	ME _{trap} (keV)	ME _{AME12} (keV)	Trap	Ref.
¹⁶³ Dy	¹² C ₁₅	-66381.7(8)	-66379.9(19)	TRIGA-TRAP	[105]
¹⁶³ Ho	¹² C ₁₅	-66379.3(9)	-66377.3(19)	TRIGA-TRAP	[105]
¹⁸⁴ W	¹² C ₁₅	-45705.40(94)	-45707.6(9)	TRIGA-TRAP	[100]
¹⁸⁴ Os	¹² C ₁₅	-44251.47(113)	-44256.6(13)	TRIGA-TRAP	[100]
¹⁹⁵ Tl ^g	¹³³ Cs	-28162(25)	-28155(11)	ISOLTRAP	[84]
¹⁹⁵ Tl ^{g,m}	¹³³ Cs	-28152(24)		ISOLTRAP	
¹⁹⁸ Tl ^g	¹³³ Cs	-27528.7(75)	-27490(80)	ISOLTRAP	[84]
¹⁹⁸ At ^g	¹³³ Cs	-6715(6)	-6721(51)#	ISOLTRAP	[74]
²⁰⁴ Rn	¹³³ Cs, ²⁰⁸ Pb	-7969(15)	-7983(15)	SHIPTRAP	[106]
²⁰⁵ Rn	¹³³ Cs, ²⁰⁸ Pb	-7698(9)	-7710(50)	SHIPTRAP	[106]
²⁰⁶ Rn	¹³³ Cs, ²⁰⁸ Pb	-9139(10)	-9115(15)	SHIPTRAP	[106]
²⁰⁷ Rn	¹³³ Cs	-8685(26)	-8635(8)	SHIPTRAP	[106]
²²² Fr	¹³³ Cs	16378(7)	16350(21)	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²²⁴ Fr	¹³³ Cs	21748(12)	21795(13)	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²²⁶ Fr	¹³³ Cs	27513(15)	27541(12)	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²²⁷ Fr	¹³³ Cs	29682(7)	29686(13)	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²²⁸ Fr	¹³³ Cs	33389(8)	33369(13)	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²²⁹ Fr	¹³³ Cs, ²³⁸ U	35666(6)	35674(14)	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²³⁰ Fr	¹³³ Cs	39483(8)	39511(16)	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²³¹ Fr	¹³³ Cs	42080(8)	42064(25)	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²³² Fr	¹³³ Cs	46073(14)	45990(160)#	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²³³ Fr	¹³³ Cs	48920(20)	49030(300)#	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²¹³ Ra ²⁺	¹³³ Cs	342(11)	358(21)	SHIPTRAP	[106]
²³³ Ra	¹³³ Cs	44339(12)	44322(16)	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²³⁴ Ra	¹³³ Cs	46931(8)	46890(30)	ISOLTRAP	[75]
²⁴⁴ Pu	¹² C ₂₂	59806.2(18)	59807(5)	TRIGA-TRAP	[107]
²⁴¹ Am	¹² C ₂₂	52936.9(18)	52936.2(18)	TRIGA-TRAP	[107]
²⁴³ Am	¹² C ₂₂	57176.2(14)	57176.3(23)	TRIGA-TRAP	[107]
²⁴⁹ Cf	¹² C ₂₂	69718.1(13)	69726.0(22)	TRIGA-TRAP	[107]

692 nuclei during the optimization process which might ex-
 693 plain the larger differences.

694 The mass-excess differences to the FRDM2012 have
 695 been plotted for the first region of interest, from P ($Z = 15$) to Mn ($Z = 25$), in Fig. 10. Between $N = 20$ and
 696 $N = 28$, the agreement between the experimental val-
 697 ues and theoretical models seems to be rather good with
 698 the exception of UNEDF0 for some chains. An inter-
 699 esting feature is observed at $N = 32$ where FRDM2012
 700 predicts higher mass-excess values, i.e. smaller binding
 701 energies, than experimental results. HFB-24 and WS4
 702 follow the experimental trend in a better way. However,
 703 when we enter the region where no experimental data
 704 exist so far, WS4 model predicts much smaller binding
 705 energies than FRDM2012 and the other models. As a
 706 result, deviations on the order of several MeV are ob-
 707 served between the models outside the experimentally
 708 known region.
 709

710 For the second region of interest, from Rh ($Z = 45$)
 711 to Cs ($Z = 55$), the largest deviations to the experimen-
 712 tal values are observed at $N = 50$ and $N = 82$ (see
 713 Fig. 11). The trend in the neutron-rich region, where no
 714 experimental data are available, is the same as for the
 715 lower mass region: WS4 predicts much smaller binding
 716 energies than FRDM2012, whereas Duflo-Zuker and
 717 HFB-24 tend to give higher binding energies than the
 718 FRDM2012. The overall deviations are large asking for
 719 more refined mass models and systematic studies in or-
 720 der to obtain a better understanding for example on the
 721 astrophysical rapid neutron capture process.

722 In the third region of interest, from Hg ($Z=80$) to
 723 Th ($Z=90$), the UNEDF0 model seems to have difficul-
 724 ties in producing the binding energies at the closed neu-
 725 tron shell $N = 126$ (see Fig. 12). The uncertainties in
 726 the Skyrme energy-density functional model have been
 727 studied e.g. in Refs. [117, 118]. The discrepancy at
 728 ^{208}Pb cannot be removed by fit parameters as they are al-
 729 ready quite rigidly constrained by other data. This sug-
 730 gests that something is missing in the description of the
 731 ^{208}Pb mass ($N = 126$). This is most probably related to
 732 a poor description of the ground-state collective correla-
 733 tions in doubly-magic systems [117]. Otherwise, the
 734 trends in the experimentally unknown region are rela-
 735 tively similar as in the lower mass regions, except that
 736 the Duflo-Zuker model predicts now smaller binding en-
 737 ergies than the FRDM2012 model, and thus, has a simi-
 738 lar trend to WS4.

739 To summarize, most of the mass models are in a rea-
 740 sonable agreement where experimental data exist but
 741 the deviations between the models become very large
 742 outside the known region. None of the discussed mod-
 743 els performs outstandingly well in all three regions dis-

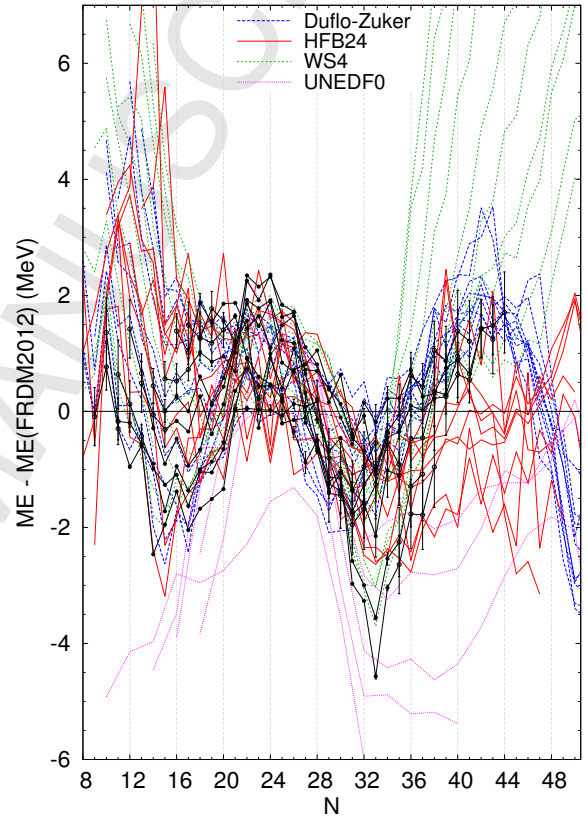


Figure 10: Comparison of experimental mass-excess values to different theoretical models for isotopic chains from P ($Z=15$) to Mn ($Z=25$) as a function of neutron number N . FRDM2012 has been used as a baseline. Black solid points are experimental values and hollow points are AME2012 extrapolated values.

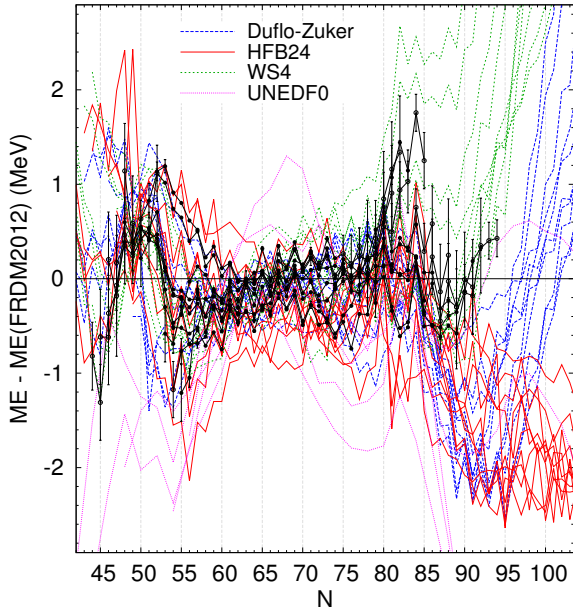


Figure 11: Comparison of experimental mass-excess values to different theoretical models for isotopic chains from Rh ($Z=45$) to Cs ($Z=55$) as a function of neutron number N . FRDM2012 has been used as a baseline. Black solid points are experimental values and hollow points are AME2012 extrapolated values.

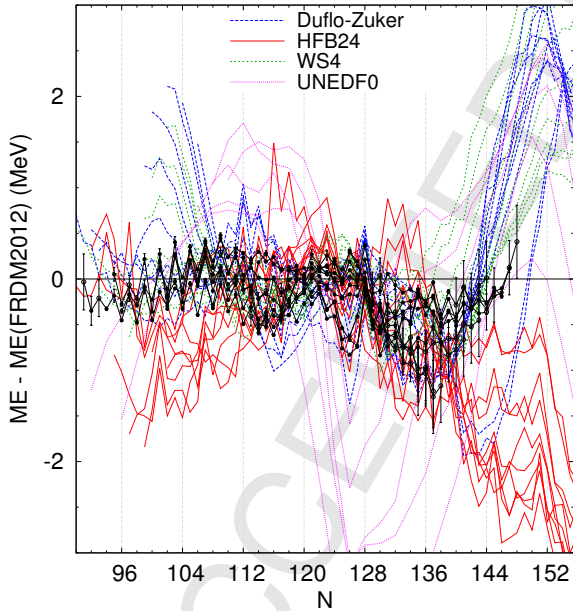


Figure 12: Comparison of experimental mass-excess values to different theoretical models for isotopic chains from Rh ($Z=80$) to Th ($Z=90$) as a function of neutron number N . FRDM2012 has been used as a baseline. Black solid points are experimental values and hollow points are AME2012 extrapolated values.

744 cussed above. It should also be noted that the mass
745 differentials are usually better predicted by the models
746 than the absolute mass values (see e.g. Section 3.2.5 for
747 two-neutron shell gap energies). Thus, scatter e.g. in
748 neutron-separation energies required for the astrophysical
749 r-process modeling may not deviate as much as the
750 mass values shown in Figs. 10, 11 and 12.

751 3.2. Two-nucleon binding energies and shell gaps

752 A novel mass measurement technique offered by ion
753 traps provides an accurate microscope to study the fine
754 structure of the nuclear mass surface away from the val-
755 ley of stability. This is best viewed through the sys-
756 tematic evaluation of various mass differentials as a
757 function of proton and neutron number. Such differ-
758 entials, as already mentioned in the introductory sec-
759 tion of this review are, for example, to the first order
760 the one- and two-nucleon separation energies and decay
761 Q -values and to the second order the shell gap energies
762 and odd-even staggering of masses related to pairing ef-
763 fects. With the ion-trap spectrometry these quantities
764 are now typically available with accuracies of the or-
765 der of 10 keV or better. This accuracy is comparable
766 to that of excited states spectroscopy far from stability
767 in the outskirts of the known nuclear landscape. Most
768 of the new ion trap mass data since the last five years
769 have been obtained for neutron-rich nuclei. Also, there
770 is a high relevance of this data for nuclear astrophysics,
771 where it is needed in modeling the synthesis of heavy
772 elements via the rapid neutron capture processes occur-
773 ring in high-temperature and density scenarios (see e.g.
774 reviews [119, 120]). Therefore, in the following sec-
775 tions we will focus on the systematic behavior of two-
776 neutron separation energies in the light of the newest
777 data published since the last atomic mass evaluation in
778 2012. The two-neutron separation energy S_{2n} is ob-
779 tained by using the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned} S_{2n} &= B(A, Z) - B(A - 2, Z) \\ &= (M(A - 2, Z) + 2M_n - M(A, Z))c^2, \quad (8) \end{aligned}$$

780 where $B(A, Z)$ and $M(A, Z)$ stand for the binding en-
781 ergy and mass, respectively. This gives the energy re-
782 quired to remove the last two neutrons from the nucleus
783 to continuum. The overall trend for S_{2n} as a function
784 of the increasing neutron number is its nearly mono-
785 tonic decrease due to the filling of less bound, higher
786 and higher-lying orbitals. As shown in Fig. 13, the
787 above mentioned behavior is clearly seen in the S_{2n}
788 energies as a function of neutron number for neutron-
789 rich isotopes from krypton to tin. For demonstrating the

790 progress in mass measurements in this region, we show
 791 for comparison the knowledge on two-neutron separation
 792 energies as in the 2003 atomic mass evaluation [50].
 793 Very recently important new data has been obtained at
 794 the ISOLTRAP, TITAN and JYFLTRAP facilities for
 795 neutron-rich Kr, Rb, Cd and Sn isotopes. In addition,
 796 since the atomic mass evaluation in 2003 over one hun-
 797 dred new masses were measured with the JYFLTRAP
 798 setup ranging from nickel to xenon, as reported in our
 799 previous review article in 2012 [98].

800 In addition to a smooth behavior of S_{2n} shown in Fig.
 801 13, there are kinks near $N = 60$ in the isotopic chains
 802 from yttrium to molybdenum outside of which a smooth
 803 behavior is again observed. This behavior is known to
 804 be due to a distinct shape change between $N = 58$ and
 805 60 at which strong prolate ground state deformation sets
 806 in. The rapid onset is due to a shape transition and co-
 807 existence of shapes around $Z = 40$ and $N = 60$, see Ref.
 808 [121] and references therein. While the ground states
 809 of these nuclei below $N \approx 60$ appear to be only weakly
 810 deformed or nearly spherical, the heavier isotopes dis-
 811 play mainly axially symmetric deformed shapes. The
 812 shape changes and coexistence picture are well known
 813 also from spectroscopic studies. This interpretation has
 814 also been confirmed by a series of collinear laser spec-
 815 troscopy experiments in the form of a sudden increase
 816 of the mean-square charge radii around $N = 60$.

817 A recent theoretical study by Takahara et al. [122]
 818 implied that the spin-orbit potential plays a decisive role
 819 in the predominance of prolate deformation of ground
 820 states. For neutron-rich nuclei above $N = 60$, neutrons
 821 start to occupy deformed orbits deriving from the $g_{7/2}$
 822 having considerable overlap with the spin-orbit partner
 823 proton levels deriving from the $g_{9/2}$ single-particle level.
 824 Interaction between the relevant neutron and proton or-
 825 bits drives the nucleus to large deformations for nuclides
 826 with $Z = 37 - 44$ and $N > 60$. This interpretation is
 827 supported by the new data obtained from the mass mea-
 828 surements of neutron-rich Kr isotopes ($Z = 36$). Here,
 829 protons are mainly occupying orbitals below the $g_{9/2}$ or-
 830 bit, and hence this results in a nearly monotonically de-
 831 creasing trend in two-neutron binding energies.

832 Concerning the evolution and persistence of the two-
 833 neutron shell gap at $N = 82$, it is of interest to note
 834 that the new measurement at ISOLTRAP has produced
 835 accurate mass values for $^{129,130,131}\text{Cd}$ isotopes. Derived
 836 from that data one can observe that the S_{2n} values in-
 837 dicate a smaller drop for Cd from $N = 81$ to $N = 83$
 838 as compared with the neighbouring In and Sn isotope
 839 chains. To confirm whether this trend is really happen-
 840 ing it would be important to extend the accurate ion-trap
 841 measurements to the nearby $^{130,132}\text{In}$ and ^{132}Cd isotopes.

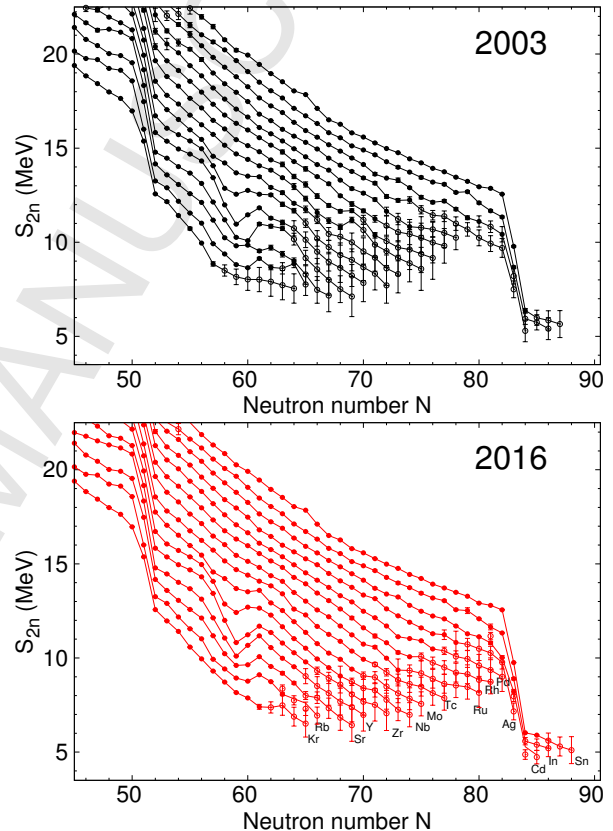


Figure 13: Two-neutron binding energy vs. N from Kr to Sn. Note that the experimental uncertainties, if not shown, are smaller than the data points.

842 In the following chapters, two-neutron separation energies are presented and discussed in three regions of
 843 neutron-rich nuclei; near and above the spherical shell closures at $N = 28, 82, 126$ and the deformed region
 844 with $N = 60$. We compare the experimental data with DFT calculations employing two commonly used functionals
 845 Sly4 [115, 116] and UNEDF0 [112], see chapter 3.1 for their description.
 846
 847
 848
 849

850 3.2.1. Neutron-rich Ca isotopes. A new shell closure?

851 Recent experiments employing the ISOLTRAP and TITAN have produced new accurate mass data up to the
 852 neutron-rich ^{54}Ca isotope with $N = 34$, see Ref. [69, 83]. The data show a distinct drop of about 5 MeV for
 853 S_{2n} between $N = 28$ and $N = 30$ as well as another drop of about 3 MeV from $N = 32$ to 34. A similar trend was
 854 observed for the neutron-rich K isotopes in a later study also with the ISOLTRAP mass spectrometer [58].
 855
 856
 857
 858

859 The drop at $N = 34$ has been interpreted as a prominent new shell closure at $N = 32$. The observation
 860 was explained to be due to the influence of three nucleon forces as calculated with a chiral effective field
 861 theory. New measurements of the charge radii of the same Ca isotopes up to ^{52}Ca by laser spectroscopy have
 862 revealed a somewhat unexpected behavior of the charge radii, see Ref. [123]. Instead of the expected decrease
 863 of the charge radius at the shell closure $N = 32$, a significant gradual increase from ^{48}Ca towards heavier Ca
 864 isotopes was observed. Adequate theoretical explanation for this is lacking, which sets a challenge for future
 865 experiments as well as theories. Figure 14 shows the two-neutron separation energy for neutron-rich Ca
 866 isotopes together with the theoretical values derived from the mass values of Ref. [111, 124]. The general agree-
 867 ment is rather satisfactory, although the theoretical calculations seem rather insensitive to experimental shell
 868 closures at $N = 28$ and $N = 32$.
 869
 870
 871
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 875
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 877

878 3.2.2. Neutron-rich Kr and Zr isotopes. Deformation around $N=60$

879 As shown in the previous discussion and in Fig. 13 the onset of large deformation is observed between
 880 $N=58$ and 60 for Zr isotopes in the form of a kink in the two-neutron binding energy curve but at the same time
 881 this feature seems to completely disappear for krypton isotopes at the corresponding neutron number. Figure
 882 15 shows a comparison between DFT calculations and experimental data for Kr (a) and Zr (b) isotope chains.
 883 The Sly4 functional seems to describe the data better, even overemphasizing behavior at the spherical closed
 884 shells, whereas the UNEDF0 functional gives clearly a
 885
 886
 887
 888
 889
 890

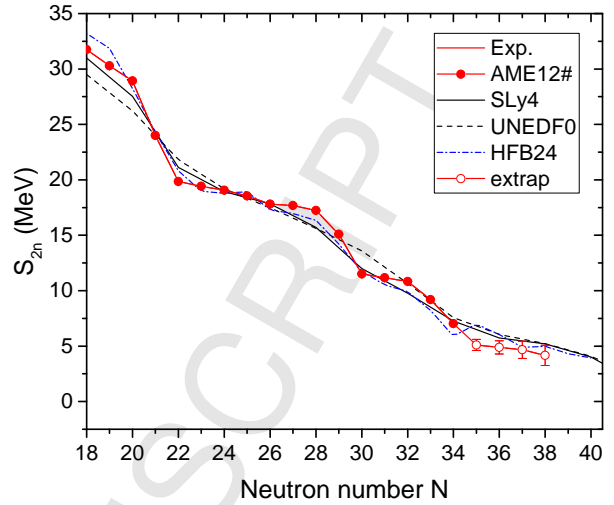


Figure 14: Two-neutron separation energies for neutron-rich calcium isotopes.

891 better overall description including the region of defor-
 892 mation (Zr) around $N = 60$.

893 3.2.3. Neutron-rich radium and francium isotopes

894 Heavy neutron-rich francium ($Z = 87$) and radium
 895 ($Z = 88$) isotopes were studied at ISOLTRAP providing
 896 accurate mass data up to $N=146$, being one of the most
 897 neutron-rich data sets far from the valley of beta stabil-
 898 ity, see Ref. [75]. Both Fr and Ra behave in a similar
 899 way for their two-neutron separation energies. Since the
 900 DFT calculations are only available for the even-even
 901 nuclides we show in Fig. 16 the S_{2n} plots only for the
 902 radium isotopes. It seems that the UNEDF0 functional
 903 gives a very nice agreement with the experimental data
 904 in particular beyond $N = 132$. SLy4 seems to overpre-
 905 dict the values at and below $N = 126$ and underpredict
 906 above.

907 3.2.4. Evolution of the two-neutron shell closure at $N = 50$

908 For more quantitative insight into the question of the
 909 changes in mass values around shell closures, one can
 910 investigate the two-nucleon binding energy differences
 911 for neutrons or protons. For this purpose, we have
 912 plotted two-neutron separation energies in Fig. 17 for
 913 $N = 46, 48, 50, 52$ and 54 isotones as a function of
 914 the proton number. The energy difference between the
 915 $N = 50$ and $N = 52$ isotones corresponds to a two-
 916 neutron shell gap across $N = 50$. When moving down
 917 in Z from the semi-doubly magic ^{90}Zr , there is an obvi-
 918 ous trend for lowering the value having a minimum at
 919 Ge ($Z = 32$). This corresponds also to a minimum in
 920

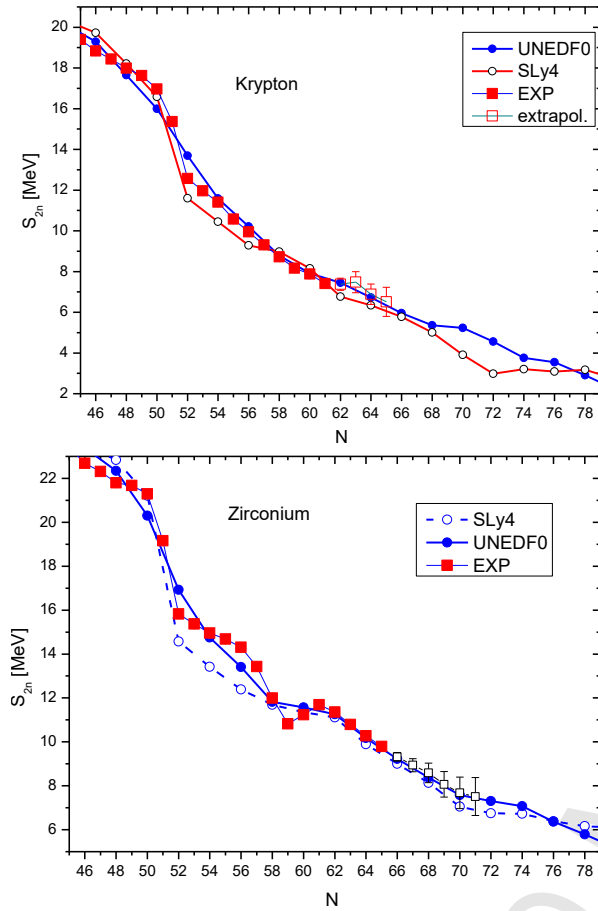


Figure 15: Two-neutron separation energies for neutron-rich krypton and zirconium isotopes.

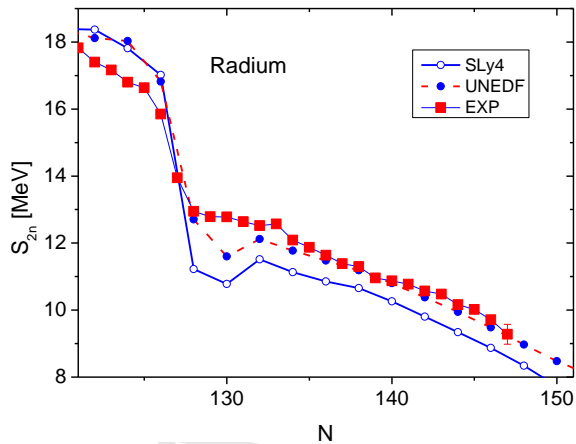


Figure 16: Two-neutron separation energies for neutron-rich radium isotopes.

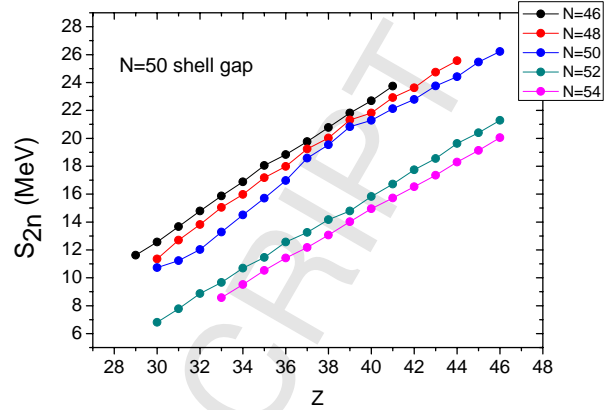


Figure 17: Experimental two-neutron separation energies as a function of proton number for $N = 50$ shell gap. The uncertainties are smaller than the sizes of the data points.

921 the systematics of the first 2^+ energies of known even-
 922 A $N = 50$ isotones suggesting maximum impact from
 923 core polarization effects. The isotone curves also indicate
 924 that the $N = 50$ gap seems to increase towards
 925 the doubly-magic Ni core ($Z = 28$). Since our previous
 926 review a new and important additional data point
 927 obtained from the measurement of the mass of ^{82}Zn
 928 at ISOLTRAP [70] could be included in the plot.

929 3.2.5. Two-neutron shell gaps and theoretical comparison

930
 931 The question of how the known spherical shell closures
 932 persist when moving far away from the valley of
 933 stability is a fundamental and important question for
 934 nuclear structure physics. Therefore, the comparisons
 935 of the data with various theoretical approaches are
 936 needed. Figures 18 and 19 show the comparison of the
 937 experimental values with three different types of
 938 theoretical models. These models are described and
 939 tested against the total mass values in chapter 3.1.
 940 It is obvious that all models follow the general trend
 941 of the shell gaps for all studied neutron shell closures
 942 in a reasonable way. The new finite range droplet
 943 model FRDM2012 seems to reproduce the shell gaps
 944 in the studied region rather well. Also, the other
 945 similar microscopic-macroscopic approach WS-4
 946 follows the FRDM2012 values closely except for the
 947 $N = 50$ but with some shifts in the neutron
 948 number. The more universal HFB model HFB24
 949 seems to reproduce the trends best, in particular
 950 near the $Z = 28, N = 50$ region. However, its
 951 prediction below $Z = 28$ shows somewhat odd large
 952 drop which is difficult to understand.

953 The values obtained with two density functionals
 used in the mean-field calculations, SLy4 and UNEDF0

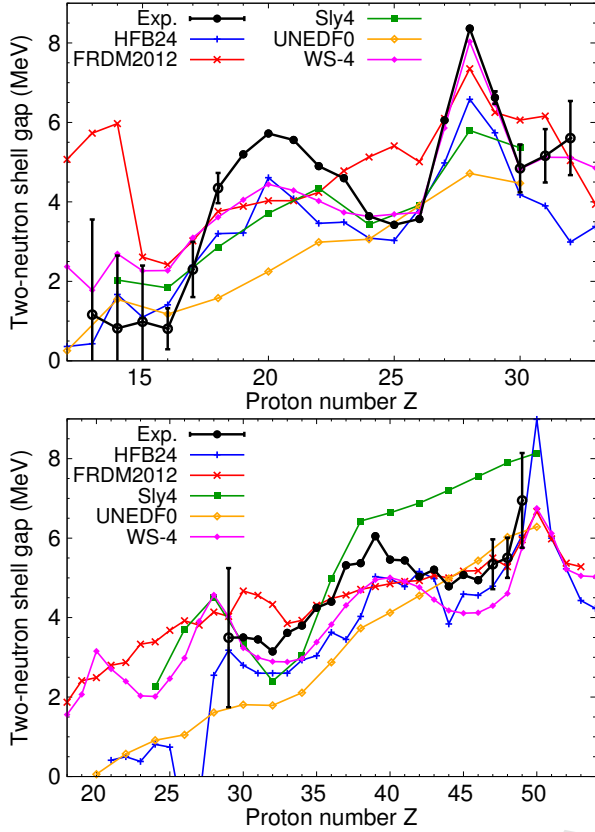


Figure 18: The $N = 28$ (top panel) and $N = 50$ (bottom panel) two-neutron shell gaps as a function of the proton numbers. See text for the explanation of the model calculations.

954 differ strongly from each other. The former one pro-
 955 duces better the doubly-closed shell-gap values, but the
 956 UNEDF0 functional is rather insensitive to those, and
 957 rather exhibits a gradual reduction in its value outwards
 958 from stability. In fact, it even seems to predict a gradual
 959 disappearance of the shell gap towards the limits of nu-
 960 clear binding. This is very interesting in the light of its
 961 fairly good agreement with the two-neutron binding en-
 962 ergies shown in Figs. 14, 15 and 16 in the neutron-rich
 963 wings of the curves.

964 4. Isobaric mass doublets and isospin multiplets

965 As described in section 2.3.1, measurements of mass
 966 differences of mass doublets (those that have the same
 967 A/q) form a special subset of Penning trap mass spec-
 968 trometry. From experimental point of view, the mass
 969 difference can be determined with extremely high preci-
 970 sion: even on the order of 10^{-10} in the frequency ratio,
 971 allowing eV-level precision for Q -value determination

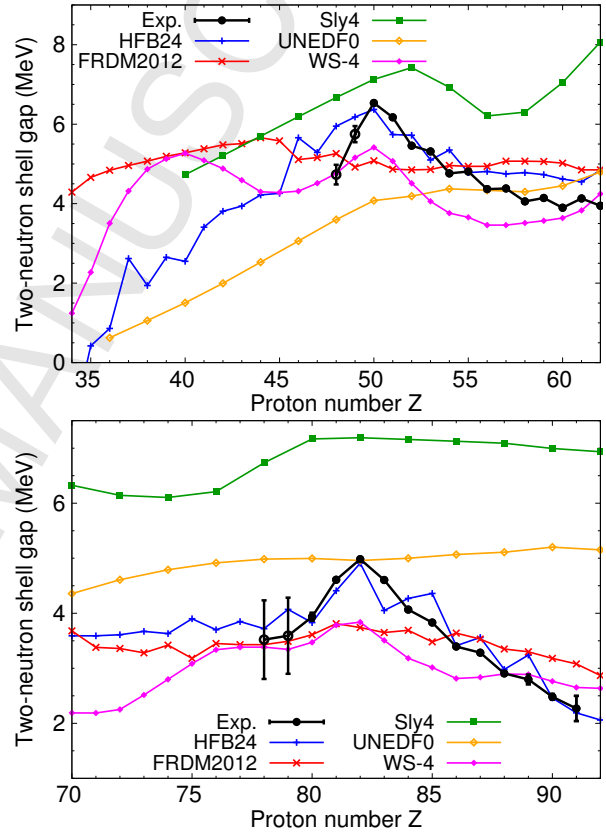


Figure 19: The $N = 82$ (top panel) and $N = 126$ (bottom panel) two-neutron shell gaps as a function of the proton numbers. See text for the explanation of the model calculations.

972 [27] with the PI-ICR technique or 10^{-9} level with TOF-
973 ICR technique.

974 4.1. Superallowed and $T = 1/2$ mirror beta decays

975 The doublet technique has been extensively used for
976 measuring the Q_{EC} values of $T = 1$ superallowed and
977 $T = 1/2$ mirror beta decays. In these cases the par-
978 ent and daughter have always same mass number. Both
979 mirror β decays and superallowed β decays contribute
980 to the testing of the Standard Model of Particle Physics.
981 Namely, the V_{ud} of the Cabibbo-Kobayashi-Maskawa
982 (CKM) quark mixing matrix can be deduced. Here
983 the superallowed beta decays, due to very simple de-
984 cay matrix element, produce the most precise V_{ud} value
985 [125]. In addition to half-life, branching ratio and Q -
986 value needed for superallowed β decays, it is necessary
987 to determine $\beta - \nu$ angular correlations for mirror nuclei
988 [126].

989 4.1.1. Superallowed β decays

990 As of today, Q -values of all the “well known” Su-
991 perallowed β emitters spanning in 14 transitions in to-
992 tal, have been measured to a high precision with Pen-
993 ning traps (see Ref. [125] and references therein).
994 JYFLTRAP has been the most contributing trap here
995 and some cases like ^{38}Ca , have been measured with
996 many trap facilities. The Q -value of the final 14th, ^{14}O
997 was measured in 2015 by LEBIT [127].

998 The most controversial findings of the Q -values was
999 the disagreement of ^{46}V Q -value to the older reaction-
1000 based results [128, 129] by CPT and JYFLTRAP
1001 groups. Measurements of ^{50}Mn and ^{54}Co revealed sim-
1002 ilar disagreements prompting for re-evaluation of the
1003 isospin-symmetry breaking corrections [130].

1004 4.1.2. Mirror decays

1005 Mirror decays might soon yield the next-best V_{ud}
1006 value after superallowed β emitters. Clearly the most
1007 challenging quantity to measure is the $\beta - \nu$ angular cor-
1008 relation coefficient, which are currently being pursued
1009 at many facilities.

1010 The Q -values are now actively being measured, and
1011 several new Q -values have emerged recently, summa-
1012 rized in Table 6. Some mirror nuclei have been already
1013 measured earlier at JYFLTRAP, such as ^{23}Mg [131], ^{31}S
1014 [132], and heavier mirror nuclei ^{53}Co , ^{55}Ni , ^{57}Cu , and
1015 ^{59}Zn [133].

1016 4.2. Isobaric Multiplet Mass Equation

1017 Assuming nuclear force is charge-independent, the
1018 masses of the members of an isobaric multiplet should

Table 6: Q_{EC} -values of mirror nuclei published recently. Both the reported Q_{EC} -value and comparison from AME2012 derived values are given.

Decay	new Q_{EC} (keV)	AME2012	Ref.
^{21}Na	3547.11(9)	3547.14(28)	[93]
^{23}Mg	4056.35(16)	4056.6(7)	[94]
^{25}Al	4276.805(45)	4276.6(5)	[95]
^{29}P	4942.18(37)	4942.6(6)	[93]
^{45}V	7123.82(22)	7128(8)	[96]
^{49}Mn	7712.42(24)	7695(10)	[96]

1019 show a quadratic behaviour:

$$1020 \quad M(A, T, T_Z) = a(A, T) + b(A, T)T_Z + c(A, T)T_Z^2 \quad (9)$$

1021 where T is the isospin, T_Z the isospin projection and
1022 $M(A, T, T_Z)$ is the mass of the isobaric analogue state
1023 (IAS) of the T_Z member in the T isobaric multiplet. The
1024 Eq. (9) is known as the Isobaric Multiplet Mass Equa-
1025 tion (IMME). The quadratic form works quite well for
1026 a majority of isobaric multiplets, see e.g. recent reviews
1027 and compilations of the IMME coefficients [134–136].
1028 However, in a couple of cases, it deviates significantly
1029 from the quadratic form. Penning-trap measurements
1030 have revealed a breakdown of the quadratic IMME for
1031 several multiplets. The TITAN mass measurements of
1032 ^8He [137], ^9Li [90], ^9Be [90] and ^{21}Mg [91] have re-
1033 vealed breakdowns of the quadratic IMME for the $T = 2$
1034 quintet at $A = 8$ [137, 138], as well as for the $T = 3/2$
1035 quartets at $A = 9$ [90] and $A = 21$ [91], respectively. Re-
1036 cent measurement of ^{31}Cl [92] at JYFLTRAP has shown
1037 that the quadratic form cannot describe the $T = 3/2$
1038 quartet at $A = 31$. The $T = 2$ quintet at $A = 32$
1039 has been probed via ^{32}Si and ^{32}S mass measurements at
1040 LEBIT [139], ^{32}Ar at ISOLTRAP [140], and indirectly
1041 via the mass measurement of ^{31}S [132] at JYFLTRAP
1042 combined with the measured proton separation energy
1043 of ^{32}Cl , and it has been shown to be significantly deviate
1044 from the quadratic form. The ISOLTRAP measurement
1045 of ^{35}K for the $T = 3/2$ quartet at $A = 35$ [141] has also
1046 revealed a breakdown of the IMME. The breakdown of
1047 the IMME has been explained, e.g. by isospin mixing
1048 of the states and charge-dependent effects [90, 142].

1049 The precision achieved in Penning-trap measure-
1050 ments today is so high that the the excitation energies
1051 of the isobaric analog states of the other members of
1052 multiplets than $T_Z = \pm T$, in particular of the $T_Z = 1 - T$
1053 member, have become the limiting factors for probing
1054 the validity of the IMME. For example, the TITAN ex-
1055 periment on ^{20}Mg showed a breakdown of the IMME
1056 [91], but it was later revalidated by a new measurement

of the IAS in ^{20}Na via β^+ decay of ^{20}Mg . The break-downs for the $T = 3/2$ quartets at $A = 33$ [143] and $A = 53$ [144], have also been revalidated by measurements of the IAS energies in ^{33}Cl [145] and ^{53}Co [146].

5. Trap-assisted spectroscopy

Although ion traps in nuclear physics are mostly used for direct measurements of nuclear masses they can also contribute to providing isotopically and sometimes even isomerically pure sources for measurements of radioactive decays. Routinely, the mass resolving power $M/\Delta M$ of the order of 10^5 can be reached which allows clean separation of neighboring isobaric nuclides and thus decay spectroscopy of sources free from contaminant activities. Recently separation of a heavy ion isomeric beam with a multiple-reflection time-of-flight mass spectrometer has also been demonstrated as a potential device for trap-assisted spectroscopy [147].

With the Ramsey cleaning technique, as described in chapter 2.6 for JYFLTRAP, decay spectroscopy of a nucleus in its pure isomeric state with energy of the order of > 100 keV has become possible. Ions of isotopically or isomerically purified radionuclides can either be extracted out of or stored in the trap for subsequent in-trap decay measurements. In the former case, ions are extracted out of the trap as a beam which is directed and deposited on a catcher foil or a movable tape for subsequent decay measurements using standard detector arrays for beta-, gamma-, neutron or charged particle detection. In the latter case, the ions can also be kept by the trapping potential inside the trap vacuum where their decays are observed. Such massless sources of short half-lived nuclei provide ideal conditions for high-resolution detection of emitted charged particles down to very low energies

5.1. In-trap spectroscopy

Measurement of particles and photons emitted in the decays of radioactive ions stored in a trap offers many interesting applications for fundamental physics as well as for nuclear structure physics. Such experiments can utilize, for example, Paul traps, Penning traps or electron beam ion traps (EBITs) or coupled combinations of them.

5.1.1. Penning trap spectroscopy

Among the first applications of ion traps for in-trap spectroscopy has been discrete-energy conversion electron spectroscopy. As an example, the scheme of the JYFLTRAP setup used in feasibility studies for short-lived isomers is shown in Fig. 20 (from Ref. [148]).

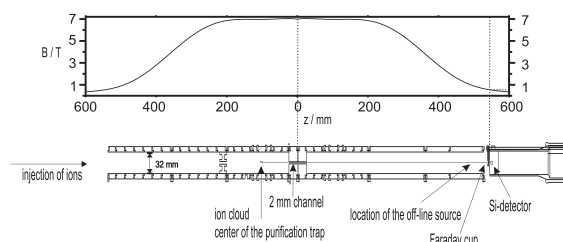


Figure 20: The electrode structure inside the magnetic solenoid of the JYFLTRAP spectrometer. This figure is from Ref. [148].

The studied nuclei in their isomeric states were produced in proton-induced fission of ^{238}U at the IGISOL3 facility followed by their injection into the linear RFQ cooler buncher device. Ions were then extracted in short bunches and injected into a double Penning trap described in chapter 2. Inside the first trapping region the motion of ions was cooled with helium buffer gas and simultaneously applying successive magnetron (ν_-) and cyclotron (ν_c) excitations. As a result of this mass-selective process, only the ions obeying the cyclotron resonance condition were centered in the symmetry axis of the trap. In order to maintain the ions in a cloud of about 1 mm in diameter, successive RF pulses at ν_c were applied for a repeated re-centering [148]. Conversion electrons emitted from the centered ions were transported through a 2 mm diameter channel to the Si-detector while the electrons emitted from the off-centered ions hit the center electrode of the trap. The measurements employed a high-resolution Si-detector having a 10 mm^2 sensitive area and a thickness of $500 \mu\text{m}$ and with a dead-layer thickness of 250 \AA .

A conversion electron spectrum recorded from the decays of short-lived ^{117m}Pd isomer is shown in Fig. 21. The decay of this isomer is featured by electron peaks due to two converted transitions at 34.5 and 168.6 keV. The corresponding K conversion lines at 9 and 143 keV show a resolution of about 2 keV, which consists of the intrinsic resolution of the detector itself and broadening of the lines due to back-scattering effects. The intrinsic line widths of the measured transitions were estimated to be less than eV, due to natural line widths of the transitions as well as thermal effects in the electron emitting ion cloud. The overall detection efficiency for the transitions seen in Fig. 21 were estimated in Ref. [148] to be of the order of 30-40 %.

5.1.2. Paul and Penning trap spectroscopy for beta-neutrino correlation measurements

The early applications of in-trap spectroscopy were devoted to studies of energy and angular correlations

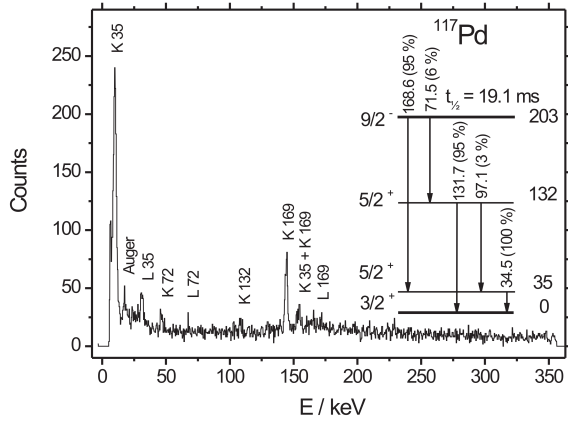


Figure 21: In-trap electron spectrum recorded for ^{117m}Pd . This figure is from Ref. [148].

between beta particles and recoil nuclei with the aim to search for scalar and tensor currents in the weak interaction. Two examples of applying Paul trap in such experiments are described in refs. [149, 150]. The results of both approaches are consistent with a purely V-A interaction, and in the case of couplings, to right-handed neutrinos. The LPC trap is operational at GANIL and has a transparent electrode structure which allows high-efficiency and precise measurements of the $\beta - \nu$ angular correlation parameter in nuclear β decays. The setup is installed at the low energy beam line, LIRAT, of the GANIL/SPIRAL facility. Measurements have been performed for three different nuclei ^6He , ^{19}Ne and ^{35}Ar that were ionized in an ECR ion source prior to their injection to the measurement trap. With the precise value of the angular correlation parameter, the experiment on the ^{35}Ar mirror decay will also contribute to the more accurate extraction of the V_{ud} matrix element of the CKM matrix of the standard model.

At Argonne National Laboratory beta-neutrino correlations are studied in the beta decay of $^8\text{Li}^+$ ions stored in the Beta-Decay Paul Trap (BPT) [151]. This trap is a linear Paul trap constructed with thin planar electrodes that provide an open geometry to allow for large solid-angle detector coverage. Prior to Paul trap the ions produced in $^7\text{Li}(d,p)$ reactions were prepared for injection in the CPT Penning trap. The beta-recoil correlation measurement was based on the detection of β decay of ^8Li and subsequent breakup of the ^8Be daughter to two α -particles.

In the Penning trap side, the WITCH (the Weak Interaction Trap for Charged Particles) trap is dedicated for $\beta - \nu$ angular correlation measurements [152]. There, the

angular correlation coefficient is derived from the shape of the recoil energy spectrum by using retardation potential.

5.1.3. Paul trap spectroscopy for beta-delayed neutrons

The Beta-Decay Paul trap configuration as the one described above has also been applied in a feasibility study for beta-delayed neutron spectroscopy. Neutron energy was determined using the beta-recoil-ion coincidence time of flight, see ref. [21]. Neutron emission leads to high-energy recoils having short TOFs, with the lower-energy recoil imparted by the electron and antineutrino being a small perturbation to the measurement. The setup used in this study is shown in Fig. 22. The neutron precursor ^{137}I was produced in fission from a 1 mCi ^{252}Cf source and thermalized as singly charged ions in a large-volume gas catcher [153]. The $A = 137$ singly-charged fission product ions were separated by the Canadian Penning Trap (CPT) prior to their injection into the open Paul trap structure. Recoil-ion TOF spectrum collected with a 30 ions/s $^{137}\text{I}^+$ beam is shown in Fig. 22. The TOF spectrum of the ^{136}Xe recoil ions from beta-delayed neutron emission, highlighted by the dotted box, is shown in the inset. The energy range covered extended from about 200 keV threshold energy up to 1.5 MeV. The study showed that this technique has a high potential for delayed-neutron energy measurements with high efficiency of the order of 1 %, neutron-energy thresholds of about 100 keV and a good energy resolution.

5.1.4. Electron Beam Ion Trap for gamma- and X-ray spectroscopy.

A novel concept for in-trap decay spectroscopy has been devised at ISAC of TRIUMF where electron-beam ion trap (EBIT) has been used for long-term storage of highly charged ions [154]. The setup has been developed with a special emphasis on precision spectroscopy of low branching ratios and is being developed in the context of measuring electron-capture branching ratios needed for determining the nuclear ground-state properties of the intermediate odd-odd nuclei in double-beta ($\beta\beta$) decay. The EBIT is a central part of the TITAN ion trap system and can be fed with purified samples from the adjacent linear RFQ trap. Storage of radioactive ions in vacuum in an open-access EBIT allows observing their decay in a backing-free environment. Simultaneously, the high magnetic field of EBIT provided an efficient spatial separation between decay photons and decay positrons removing bremsstrahlung background. This unique feature is especially advantageous in cases of electron-capture (EC) decays, where

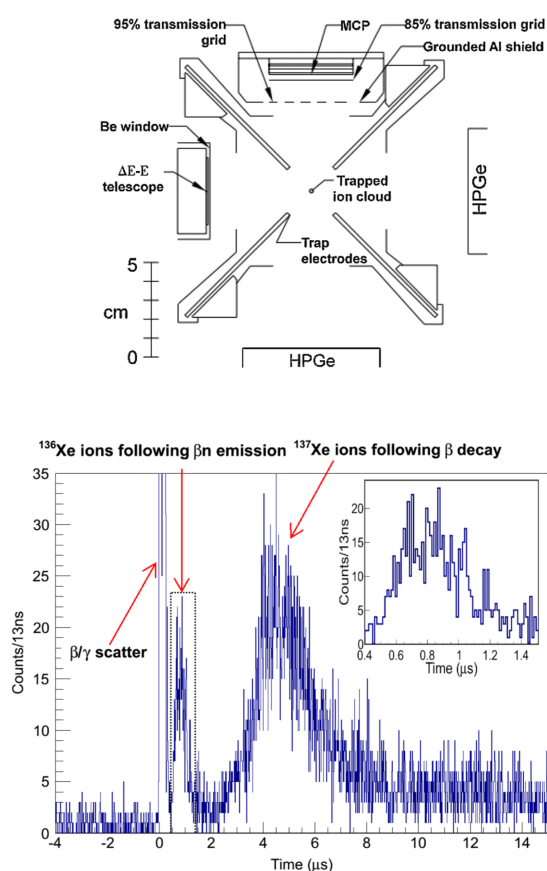


Figure 22: Above: A cut view of the Open Paul trap at ANL, Below: Time of Flight spectrum of ^{137}Xe ions triggered by the beta detector. These figures are from Ref. [21].

1227 the measurements of low-intensity and low-energy X-
 1228 rays are required. The approach has been successfully
 1229 demonstrated by a measurement of the decays of highly
 1230 charged radioactive ions of ^{124}In and ^{124}Cs [155].

1231 5.2. Post-trap decay spectroscopy

1232 Decay spectroscopy for nuclear structure physics at
 1233 ISOL facilities has long been a backbone in studies of
 1234 exotic nuclei far from stability. However, when mov-
 1235 ing further from the valley of stable nuclei, increas-
 1236 ing complexity of decay patterns and low production
 1237 rates of these nuclei have led to even more stringent re-
 1238 quirements for experimental methods. On top of this
 1239 development there have been many innovations on se-
 1240 lective ionization methods applicable to produce ini-
 1241 tially purified beams. However, with the introduction of
 1242 novel universal production methods, such as in-flight or
 1243 IGISOL methods, requirements for fast purification of
 1244 isomers and isotopes for decay spectroscopy have be-
 1245 come necessary. In addition, the ion manipulation by
 1246 ion traps can significantly improve the emittance, re-
 1247 duce the energy spread and modify the time structure
 1248 of the ion beams used for decay spectroscopy.

1249 5.2.1. Conventional decay spectroscopy of trap- 1250 purified isotope sources

1251 Ion trap systems coupled to ISOL or in-flight gas
 1252 catcher based production facilities can offer powerful
 1253 means for spectroscopy applications. In this context
 1254 we introduce two programs, one at ISOLDE and one
 1255 at IGISOL, where the method is already in full use. The
 1256 ISOLTRAP facility at ISOLDE in combination with
 1257 the recently installed decay-spectroscopy setup [156]
 1258 will make it possible to combine high-precision mass
 1259 measurements with nuclear-decay spectroscopy. This
 1260 combination allows the assignment of masses with the
 1261 corresponding decaying states, particularly important
 1262 in cases where isomeric state(s) are involved. A re-
 1263 cent experiment utilizing this approach revealed identity
 1264 (spin/parity/mass) for the ground and isomeric states of
 1265 even neutron-deficient $^{190,194}\text{Tl}$ isotopes [157].

1266 An active decay spectroscopy program using the
 1267 JYFLTRAP setup has addressed mainly the nuclear
 1268 structure studies of neutron-rich nuclei produced in fis-
 1269 sion. Additionally, a few half-life and branching-ratio
 1270 measurement campaigns for the superallowed beta de-
 1271 cays have been carried out, see e.g. [158–160]. In the
 1272 next section, we mainly focus on decays of medium-
 1273 mass neutron-rich nuclei. These nuclides are typically
 1274 produced in fast proton-induced fission of ^{238}U . Short-
 1275 lived fission fragments thermalized in helium gas as

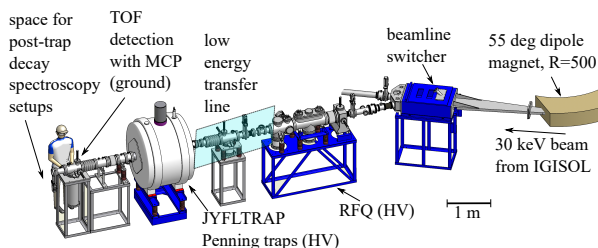


Figure 23: JYFLTRAP setup at IGISOL3. The beam from the IGISOL gas cell is separated with an ordinary dipole magnet (right) before injecting the mass-selected beam to into the RFQ. See text for more explanation.

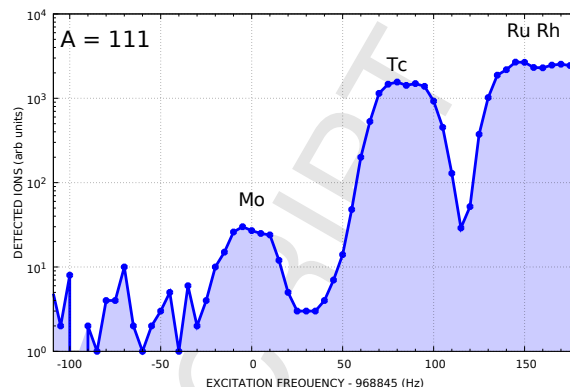


Figure 24: Mass spectrum of $A = 111$ isobars.

ions are reaccelerated and separated by the IGISOL system with a mass resolving power of $M/\Delta M \sim 500$. This resolving power is good enough to separate nuclei of one mass number only from all other nuclear species produced in fission. Thus, separated radioactive beam consist of a complete chain of nuclei within the same isobar produced directly in fission. In the past, these multi-component isobaric beams were successfully used to study many exotic, neutron-rich nuclei of refractory elements unavailable at other ISOL facilities. However, a serious problem with isobaric contaminants made it very difficult to extend these studies weakly produced nuclides further from stability. Therefore, the double Penning trap system JYFLTRAP was developed and constructed to provide high enough mass resolving power for the production of pure isotopic as well as even isomeric beams for nuclear spectroscopy. The layout of the JYFLTRAP at IGISOL3 [24] setup is shown in Fig. 23.

Ions after the mass separation at IGISOL are injected into a buffer-gas filled RFQ trap where they are rapidly (\sim ms) cooled and subsequently stored in a potential well produced by the combination of the electric RF and DC potential. Ions are then extracted in the form of short, typically a few μ s long bunches and transported into the double Penning trap system for purification. The necessary steps for cleaning are described in chapter 2.5. In the simplest approach, mass selective buffer-gas cooling is applied in the first trap, after which the ions are ejected through a narrow channel separating the purification and the precision traps, and out from the trap system to the spectroscopy setup. Another approach, if necessary, would be to use the higher resolution precision trap for additional purification. This technique has been used for example to resolve the ground and isomeric states of ^{100}Nb to study their beta decay schemes to ^{100}Mo [161].

5.2.2. Nuclear structure studies

The focus of the decay spectroscopy program at IGISOL has for some years been in studies of the evolution of coexisting shapes in neutron-rich nuclei around $A=100-120$. This mass region located between the closed doubly magic core nuclei ^{78}Ni and ^{132}Sn is very rich consisting of different structures, including those with prolate, oblate and triaxial shapes. Experimental tracking of the systematics of these structures provides important testing ground for theoretical calculations, which are eventually needed in predicting the properties of even more neutron-rich nuclides involved, for example, in understanding the r-process synthesis of heavy elements. As an example of such a study we describe here the decay spectroscopic study of a neutron-rich isotope ^{111}Mo which employed isotopically purified sources of ^{111}Mo nuclei [162]. The mass spectrum of the $A = 111$ isobars as measured by the purification trap of the JYFLTRAP setup is shown in Fig. 24. As shown in this figure, a monoisotopic beam of ^{111}Mo could be delivered for decay spectroscopy when the filtering frequency of the trap was set to 968845 Hz. A typical rate of about 20 ions/s of ^{111}Mo was observed with the MCP detector positioned after the trap. This rate allowed for a complete X-ray spectroscopy for constructing the low-lying level structure for the daughter nucleus ^{111}Tc . Due to a short half-life of about 200 ms the trap purification cycle of 120 ms was used. The daughter nucleus ^{111}Tc has also a relatively short half-life of about 350 ms. Therefore, its beta-delayed gamma-transitions are also observed as daughter products in the gamma-ray spectrum corresponding to the ^{111}Mo setting of the trap, see Fig. 25.

The level scheme of ^{111}Tc constructed from this experiment revealed excited structures fed in the beta decay up to slightly below 600 keV in excitation energy.

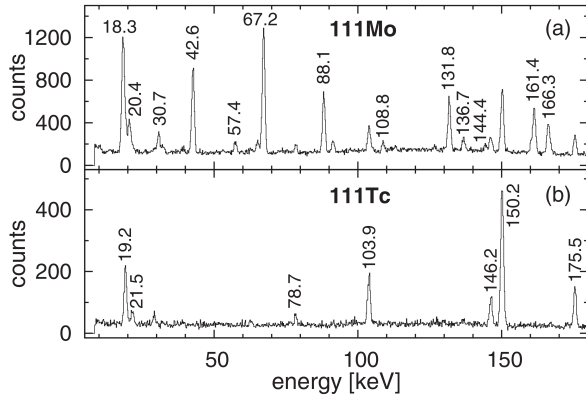


Figure 25: Beta-gated gamma-ray spectra corresponding to the trap cyclotron resonance frequencies for ^{111}Mo and ^{111}Tc .

Earlier unobserved, new excited levels in ^{111}Tc populated in the β -decay of ^{111}Mo provided the first indication for a low-lying oblate deformation in the mass $A \approx 110$ region. This solution coupled to the QPRM calculations offers an explanation for the two lowest-energy states with $I = (1/2, 3/2)^+$ at 30.7 keV and $I = 5/2^+$ at 42.6 keV to present the first clear indication of a triaxial oblate shape in the $A \approx 110$ neutron-rich nuclei. Additionally, a wide range of levels with different spins indicate the existence of at least two β -decaying states in ^{111}Mo which could not be separated with the available resolving power of $M/\Delta M \sim 30,000$. One should note, however, that the beta-decay energy window or the Q_β -value of ^{111}Mo is considerably larger, e.g. 9085(5) keV as determined by the JYFLTRAP mass measurement. Therefore, although important for producing relevant information on the low-lying level structure of ^{111}Tc the described spectroscopy experiment could cover only marginally gross beta-decay properties of ^{111}Mo .

5.2.3. Total Absorption Gamma-ray Spectroscopy

To correct for the deficit related to observing weak branches to high-lying states, another approach based on the total absorption spectroscopy has to be applied in combination with trap-produced isotopes. So far, in addition to nuclear structure studies, this technique in connection with the trap-purified isotope sources has been applied for the measurements of interest for the decay heat of the nuclear reactors and for the determination of the electron antineutrino spectrum from thermal reactors of relevance for the neutrino oscillation experiments [163]. In the former case, β -feeding probabilities for three important contributors to the decay heat in nuclear reactors, namely $^{102,104,105}\text{Tc}$, have been measured, resulting significant improvements and solving a large

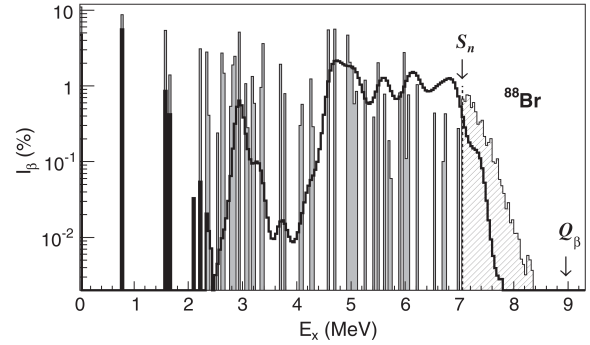


Figure 26: Beta decay strength distribution for ^{88}Br , from Ref. [165].

part of the discrepancy in the decay-heat data of ^{239}Pu in the 300–3000 s cooling interval. In the latter case, the decay of ^{92}Rb , which makes the dominant contribution to the reactor antineutrino spectrum in the 5–8 MeV range, was investigated, see ref. [164]. In these experiments, previously unobserved beta feeding was seen in the 4.5–5.5 MeV region and the ground-state to ground-state feeding was found to be 87.5(25) %, which is 7.7 % smaller than the previously used value. The overall impact of the new result from this experiment on the reactor antineutrino spectra is discussed in more detail in Ref. [164]. In another recent study, total absorption spectroscopy was used to investigate the β -decay feeding to states below and above the neutron separation energy followed by γ -ray emission in $^{87,88}\text{Br}$ and ^{94}Rb . An unexpected large γ -emission intensity was observed in all three cases extending well above the excitation energy region where neutron emission is no longer hindered by the angular momentum barrier, see ref. [165]. This is exemplified by the measured beta intensity distribution for ^{88}Br in Fig. 26, where a significant amount of feeding to neutron unbound states can be seen to lead to gamma-emission.

5.2.4. Delayed neutron spectroscopy at JYFLTRAP

Beta-delayed neutron and multi-neutron emission become very important ingredients in the decay processes far away from the valley of stability. They also have a significant impact on the elemental and isotopic abundance distributions of the r-process nuclear synthesis. Thus, the total neutron emission probabilities, often denoted as P_n , are critical for r-process calculations (see, e.g. Ref. [119]). An example of the importance of the role of delayed neutron emission in the beta decay of highly neutron-rich nuclides is demonstrated in Fig. 27 below. Beta-delayed neutron emission probability in the case of niobium isotopes becomes observable already at

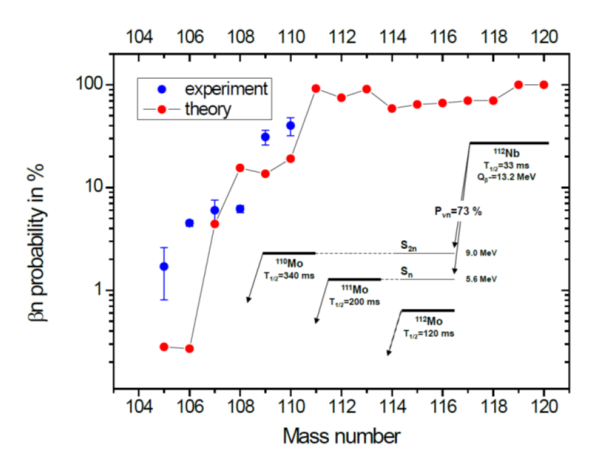


Figure 27: Beta-delayed neutron emission probability for a chain of Nb isotopes. Theoretical values are based on theoretical calculation employing the QRPA calculation and the finite range droplet model, from Ref. [168].

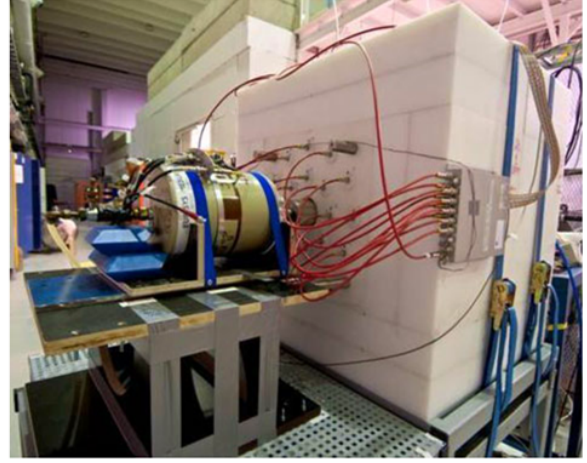


Figure 28: The neutron long counter system behind the JYFLTRAP setup. The setup includes also a HPGe detector for simultaneous gamma-ray spectroscopy.

1419 and beyond $^{106}\text{Nb}_{65}$ and reaches rapidly nearly a 100 %
 1420 probability for more neutron-rich Nb isotopes [166].
 1421 As a consequence, beta-decay schemes become highly
 1422 complex and experimental conditions demanding. One
 1423 of the key requirements will then be set by the availabili-
 1424 ty of isobarically and isotopically pure sources. One
 1425 approach to reach such conditions is provided by the
 1426 Penning-trap purified radioactive sources [167].

1427 On the other hand, the beta-decay feeding to individ-
 1428 ual nuclear states and their de-excitation by gamma-ray
 1429 and (multiple) neutron emission need to be known for
 1430 nuclear structure studies. This necessitates the mea-
 1431 surement of neutron energy, which can be done by us-
 1432 ing either secondary nuclear reactions or a time-of-flight
 1433 method. These measurements are challenging due to
 1434 the high complexity of required detection systems, such
 1435 as large arrays of either ^3He -based counters or scintil-
 1436 lator detection systems, respectively. The total num-
 1437 ber of neutrons can best be measured using a neutron
 1438 long counter technique where neutrons are first thermal-
 1439 ized and then detected, for example, by an array of ^3He
 1440 counters embedded in a thermalisation medium. The P_n
 1441 value can then be extracted from the ratio of the mea-
 1442 sured neutrons to the number of β -particles emitted from
 1443 the source. The experimental uncertainty is highly depen-
 1444 dent on the isotopic purity of the source which can
 1445 be provided by the trap-assisted approach. A detec-
 1446 tion system under development for the use at the future
 1447 FAIR facility was recently commissioned with Penning-
 1448 trap purified delayed neutron activities, see Fig. 28.
 1449 In this setup, neutrons were detected with the BELEN

1450 4π neutron counter, described in ref. [167]. The em-
 1451 ployed detector configuration consisted of 20 ^3He pro-
 1452 portional counter tubes at a pressure of about 20 atm.
 1453 The tubes were embedded in a high density polyethy-
 1454 lene block with overall dimensions 90 cm \times 90 cm \times
 1455 80 cm, which acts as both neutron moderator and neu-
 1456 tron background shielding. The detection efficiency ε_n
 1457 for the setup, as deduced from Monte Carlo (MC) sim-
 1458 ulations, was close to 50% for neutron energies up to
 1459 1 MeV. Well-known neutron-rich neutron emitters ^{88}Br ,
 1460 $^{94,95}\text{Rb}$ and ^{138}I used in the commissioning experi-
 1461 ment were produced in fission, separated by the IGISOL
 1462 facility and prepared as isotopically pure sources with the
 1463 JYFLTRAP setup. Fig. 29 shows the growth and decay
 1464 curves for the beta- and neutron-activities for the trap-
 1465 purified ^{94}Rb activity ($T_{1/2} = 2.7$ s). The neutron time
 1466 spectrum could be fitted very nicely using a single half-
 1467 life component combined with a constant background.

Following this commissioning experiment, some ear-
 1468 lier measured delayed neutron emitters east of the $N=50$
 1469 neutron shell were studied by this setup, see Ref. [169].
 1470 The measured preliminary P_n values for four isotopes
 1471 ($^{85}\text{Ge}_{53}$, $^{85}\text{As}_{52}$, $^{86}\text{As}_{53}$ and $^{91}\text{Br}_{56}$) agreed perfectly
 1472 with the earlier measured data whereas the theoret-
 1473 ical values based on QRPA- and shell-model based ap-
 1474 proaches showed remarkable difference between theory
 1475 and experiment, see Ref. [169] for more detailed infor-
 1476 mation.

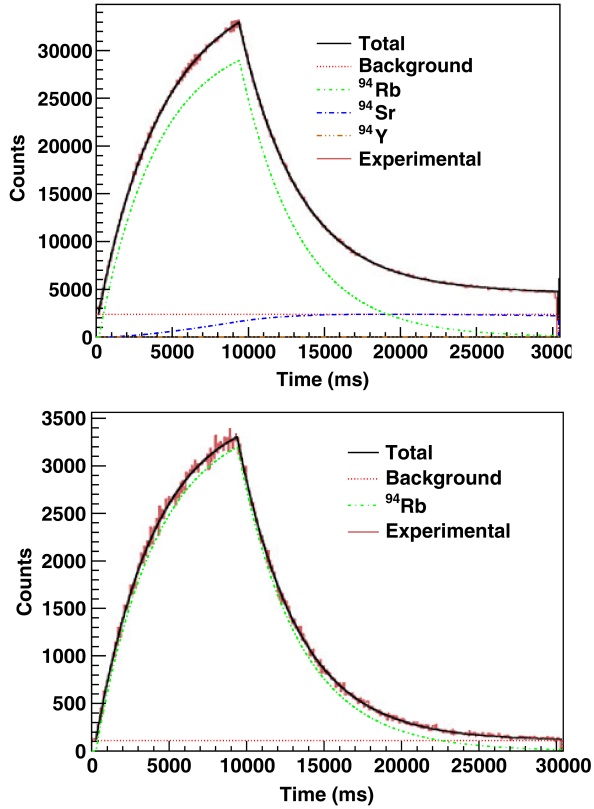


Figure 29: Growth-in and decay curves for trap-purified source of ^{94}Rb as measured with the beta-counter only (top) and beta-gated neutron long counter (bottom). This figure is from Ref. [166].

5.3. Double Beta decay studies of relevance for neutrino physics

Neutrinos are one of the least understood fundamental particles. For half a century physicists thought that neutrinos, like photons, had no mass. But recent data from the neutrino oscillation experiments at SuperKamiokande, SNO, and KamLAND overturned this view and confirmed that the neutrinos are massive particles. However, oscillation experiments can yield only the differences in the squares of the neutrino masses, therefore, no absolute mass scale can be determined. In addition, another question remains concerning the fundamental character of neutrinos, whether they are Dirac or Majorana particles. Neutrinoless double beta decay is a process which can address both issues raised above. This decay process is forbidden according to the Standard Model of Particle Physics since it violates the lepton-number conservation and is only allowed if neutrinos are massive Majorana particles. The detection of this mode of double beta decay could result in the missing information on the neutrino mass scale and possibly also its mass hierarchy. In this context, an interesting application for the accurate mass measurements, available by the Penning trap technique, is to measure the decay energy values of all potentially interesting double beta-decaying nuclei. The accurate decay energy measurements are crucial for any experiment by searching for discrete sum energy peak of two emitted electrons (positrons) related to a neutrinoless double beta decay. Penning-trap experiments have recently provided new accurate Q -values for all currently relevant double-beta decay experiments and measured several additional and potentially interesting cases. These included not only $0\nu\beta^-\beta^-$ or $2\nu\beta^-\beta^-$ decaying isotopes but also $0\nu ECEC$ and $2\nu ECEC$ decaying nuclides. A decisive summary of the current experimental status of these Q -value measurements performed using Penning trap mass spectrometry is given in Refs. [22, 34]. In addition to the accurate Q -values needed for searching the signal from the neutrino experiments, also the relevant nuclear matrix elements for the transitions involved in the decay have to be known. This information, needed for the extracting the effective mass of the Majorana neutrino, will have to be obtained from theory. The half-life for $0\nu\beta\beta$, when mediated by the virtual exchange of light but massive Majorana neutrinos (the simplest interpretation), is given by:

$$\frac{1}{T_{1/2}^{0\nu}} = G_{0\nu} g_A^4 |M^{0\nu}|^2 \langle m_{\beta\beta} \rangle^2 \quad (10)$$

where $G_{0\nu}$ is the energy-dependent phase space factor, $M^{0\nu}$ is the nuclear matrix element (NME) and

1528 $m_{\beta\beta}$ is the effective neutrino mass. The NME has to
 1529 be obtained from theory and has currently significant
 1530 uncertainties. It can be calculated based on differ-
 1531 ent modern methods of nuclear structure, such as Nu-
 1532 clear Shell Model, Quasi-Random Phase Approxima-
 1533 tion, Interaction Boson Model or Projected Hartree-
 1534 Fock-Bogoliubov approach.

1535 The $\beta\beta$ decay process, with neutrinos or without, can
 1536 proceed via two-step virtual transitions through states in
 1537 the intermediate nucleus. The $0\nu\beta\beta$ decay would pro-
 1538 ceed via intermediate states of all spins and parities,
 1539 whereas the $2\nu\beta\beta$ decay is restricted to Gamow-Teller
 1540 (GT) transitions through states in the intermediate nu-
 1541 cleus with $J^\pi = 1^+$. Therefore, experiments testing
 1542 different theories for these matrix elements would be
 1543 important. Three such systems, where linking transi-
 1544 tions via the intermediate nucleus are available, have
 1545 now been studied using the Penning trap setup at the
 1546 IGISOL facility. These are the mass 96, 100 and 116
 1547 multiplets related to possible candidates of ^{96}Zr , ^{100}Mo
 1548 and ^{116}Cd for the search experiments of the neutrino-
 1549 less decay, see refs. [51, 170, 171] respectively. In the
 1550 following we would like to focus on the most recent of
 1551 these, the cases of ^{116}Cd and ^{96}Mo .

1552 **^{116}In case.** Fig. 30 shows a simplified energy scheme
 1553 of relevance for the double- β decay of ^{116}Cd . In this
 1554 figure, the energy scale for ^{116}In is magnified. The
 1555 electron-capture decay branch of the ^{116}In 1^+ ground
 1556 state mediated by the Gamow-Teller decay to the ground
 1557 state of ^{116}Cd was determined using a Penning-trap puri-
 1558 fied ^{116}In isotopic source and a high-resolution X-ray
 1559 detector. Due to a small decay energy 462.81 ± 0.27 keV
 1560 the corresponding branch is very small and therefore its
 1561 determination required ultra-pure source of ^{116}In .

1562 In another experiment, the atomic mass difference
 1563 between ^{116}Cd and ^{116}Sn was determined by a Pen-
 1564 ning trap technique to be $2813.50(13)$ keV [172]. This
 1565 value differed by as much as 4.5 keV from the earlier
 1566 value and was 30 times more precise. The ratio for the
 1567 EC branch of $[2.46 \pm 0.44(\text{stat.}) \pm 0.39(\text{syst.})] \times 10^{-4}$
 1568 was obtained. This value represents the first measure-
 1569 ment of EC on ^{116}In with a statistical significance over
 1570 five standard deviations in agreement with the previous
 1571 data, see Ref. [170]. The final value extracted from
 1572 this experiment for the GT transition strength of ^{116}In
 1573 to ^{116}Cd ground state turned out as $B(\text{GT}) = 0.402 \pm$
 1574 $0.072(\text{stat.}) \pm 0.064(\text{syst.})$. Combining the obtained ma-
 1575 trix element with the corresponding one for ^{116}In β^-
 1576 decay one obtains the $2\nu\beta\beta$ -decay matrix element for
 1577 the virtual transition through the ground state of ^{116}In as
 1578 $0.168 \pm 0.015(\text{stat.}) \pm 0.13(\text{syst.})\text{MeV}^{-1}$. This value ex-
 1579 ceed only slightly the total value of $0.129 \pm 0.005\text{MeV}^{-1}$

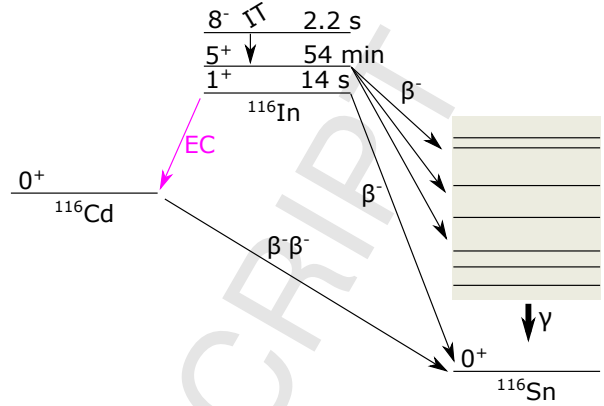


Figure 30: The A=116 system of relevance for the double beta decay of ^{116}Cd .

1581 derived using the directly measured $2\nu\beta\beta$ decay rate of
 1582 ^{116}Cd . This shows that the intermediate ground state
 1583 makes a significant contribution to the ^{116}Cd $2\nu\beta\beta$ de-
 1584 cay.

1585 **The ^{96}Zr case.** The mass differences of the iso-
 1586 baric multiplet ^{96}Zr - ^{96}Nb - ^{96}Mo were recently measured
 1587 with about 100 eV accuracy by the JYFLTRAP mass
 1588 spectrometer employing a technique where the mea-
 1589 surements were performed by switching between the
 1590 ion species in the pairs (^{96}Zr , ^{96}Nb), (^{96}Nb , ^{96}Mo), and
 1591 (^{96}Zr , ^{96}Mo) [51]. This eliminated to a high degree any
 1592 mass-dependent systematic uncertainties. By provid-
 1593 ing the new highly accurate values for the single- and
 1594 double-beta decay energies this measurement sheds new
 1595 light on the corresponding transition strengths, respec-
 1596 tively. If the single beta decay of ^{96}Zr to ^{96}Nb were
 1597 directly observed, a comparison of the measured and
 1598 theoretical single β -decay rate would allow a direct test
 1599 of the nuclear-matrix-element calculations for $\beta\beta$ de-
 1600 cay, as these follow the same theoretical description.
 1601 However, this case involves four-fold forbidden transi-
 1602 tions resulting in additional complications for the calcu-
 1603 lations. However, the $0\nu\beta\beta$ decay would proceed via in-
 1604 termediate states of all spins and parities, and therefore
 1605 the case of ^{96}Nb would be particularly interesting case
 1606 for testing the theory for matrix element calculations.

1607 The $\beta\beta$ decay of ^{96}Zr to ^{96}Mo features a large de-
 1608 cay Q -value of $3356.097(86)$ keV, which makes it an
 1609 ideal candidate for the search experiments for neutrino-
 1610 less double-beta decay. The partial half-life for the
 1611 2ν variant of the $\beta\beta$ decay to the ^{96}Mo ground state is
 1612 known from the experiments by the NEMO-3 Collabora-
 1613 tion with the value of $T_{1/2} = (2.3 \pm 0.2) \times 10^{19}$ y [51].
 1614 On the other hand, a geochemical measurement has re-
 1615 sulted in a total half-life of $T_{1/2} = (0.94 \pm 0.32) \times 10^{19}$ y.

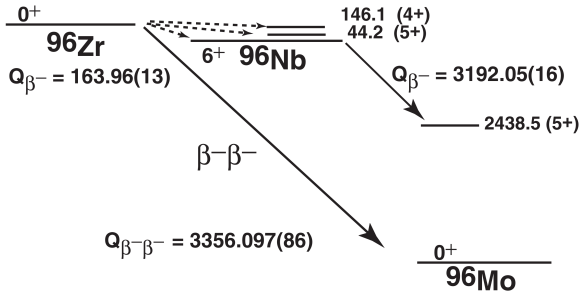


Figure 31: The $A=96$ system of relevance for the double beta decay of ^{96}Zr . This figure is from Ref. [51].

However, ^{96}Zr is also unstable against single β decay and the corresponding half-life can be derived to be $T_{1/2} = (1.6 \pm 0.9) \times 10^{19} \text{y}$. The mass difference, e.g. the Q -value for single beta decay of ^{96}Zr is 163.96(13) keV. The theoretical single β -decay rate has been recalculated using a shell-model approach and assuming a quenched axial-vector coupling constant of $g_A \approx 1$. The resulting half-life, $11 \times 10^{19} \text{y}$ [51], is a factor of two smaller than the value from earlier QRPA calculations, and significantly higher as the experimental value deduced above. However, this indicates that ^{96}Zr single β -decay lifetime is needed and is within reach of an experimental verification.

6. Conclusion and outlook

Ion traps are versatile instruments offering possibilities to explore several interesting physics questions. Precise ground- and isomeric-state ion-trap mass measurements have been important for many aspects of nuclear structure, such as evolution of the shell gaps far from stability, onset of deformation, the role of pairing, three-nucleon forces, and charge symmetry in nuclei. The accuracy of the Penning-trap mass measurements has made it possible to observe subtle changes in nuclear pairing energies and deviations from the quadratic form of the isobaric multiplet mass equation. Precise mass measurements have also provided a fruitful basis to develop theory, for example the role of three-nucleon forces in nuclei.

Modeling of nucleosynthesis in stars requires rather accurate knowledge of nuclear binding energies which play a central role for example in the calculations for the astrophysical r process proceeding along neutron-rich nuclei. Penning-trap measurements have contributed significantly to the mass data needed for nuclear astrophysics modeling. For example, most of the nuclei above ^{56}Ni involved in the rapid proton capture process

occurring in type I X-ray bursts [173] were either experimentally unknown or based on beta-decay endpoint energies prone to accumulated uncertainties and missed decay branches to excited states at higher energies in daughter nuclei before Penning-trap measurements. For the astrophysical r process, to answer the question of its astrophysical site(s), more mass measurements in combination with the development of theoretical mass models are needed. New techniques, such as PI-ICR, and MR-TOR devices currently being developed or commissioned at many facilities, will help in this task.

Precise Q -value measurements performed with Penning traps have played a central role in the studies of superallowed beta decays needed to test the CVC hypothesis and the unitarity of the CKM matrix. Many mirror-beta decay Q_{EC} values have also been measured with unprecedented accuracy using Penning traps, and are being actively studied at different facilities. Penning-trap measurements have contributed to neutrino physics studies by determining the Q values for all currently relevant double-beta decay experiments, and finding several additional, potentially interesting cases. The determination of the neutrino mass and solving the neutrino hierarchy problem are one of the biggest open questions in modern physics, setting challenges for future ion-trap experiments.

Ion traps have been exploited in many kinds of decay studies observing decay from trapped ions for example for beta-neutrino angular correlation experiments or for conversion electron spectroscopy. Penning traps and MR-TOF devices have also shown their strength in the beam purification for contaminant-free spectroscopy studies after the trap. The possibility to provide even isomerically pure beams has yielded new possibilities for studies of isomers, but also applications, such as the production of isomerically pure radioxenon ^{133m}Xe and ^{133g}Xe calibration samples for monitoring the nuclear weapon test ban treaty [174].

Ion traps are pivotal for many experiments driven both by fundamental physics questions and by applications. As a consequence, new ion traps are being planned or constructed for present and future radioactive facilities to continue the quest towards measurements of more exotic, unknown nuclei. Novel ion-trapping techniques are being pursued to reach highest accuracies in future ion-trap measurements. To conclude, ion traps have established a firm position in modern nuclear physics experiments.

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