

High Precision X-ray Spectroscopy: from Kaonic Atoms to Societal Applications

**Simone Manti INFN-LNF , Frascati (Italy)
on behalf of the SIDDHARTA-2 Collaboration**

M. Smoluchowski Institute of Physics, Jagiellonian University, Krakow

Content

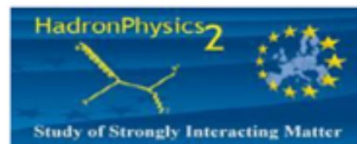
- **High Precision X-ray Spectroscopy of Kaonic Atoms with SIDDHARTA**
- **Studying QCD, QED and BSM with Kaonic Atoms**
- **Beyond Kaonic Atoms: Impact of Crystal Spectrometers**

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SIDDHARTA-2

Silicon Drift Detector for Hadronic Atom Research by Timing Applications



LNF-INFN, Frascati, Italy

SMI-ÖAW, Vienna, Austria

Politecnico di Milano, Italy

IFIN –HH, Bucharest, Romania

TUM, Munich, Germany

RIKEN, Japan

Univ. Tokyo, Japan

Victoria Univ., Canada

Univ. Zagreb, Croatia

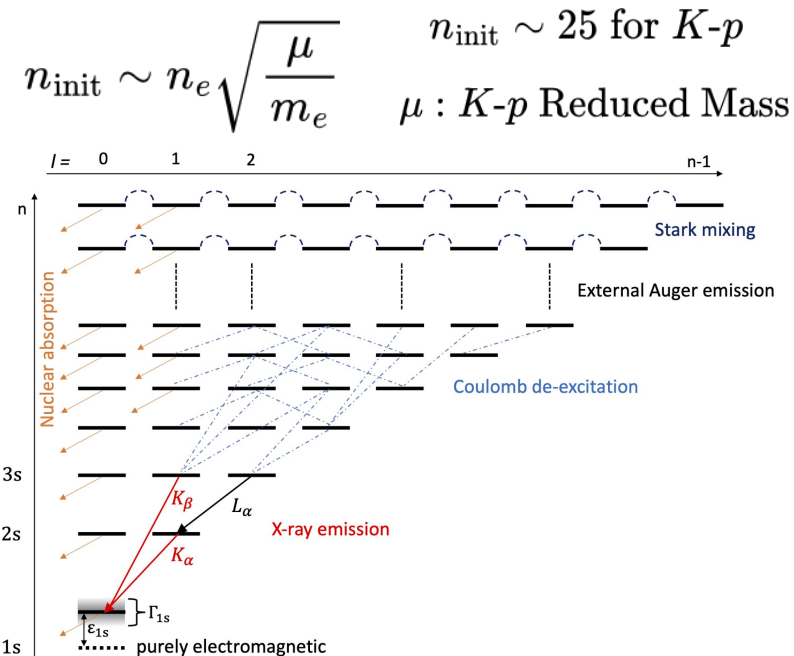
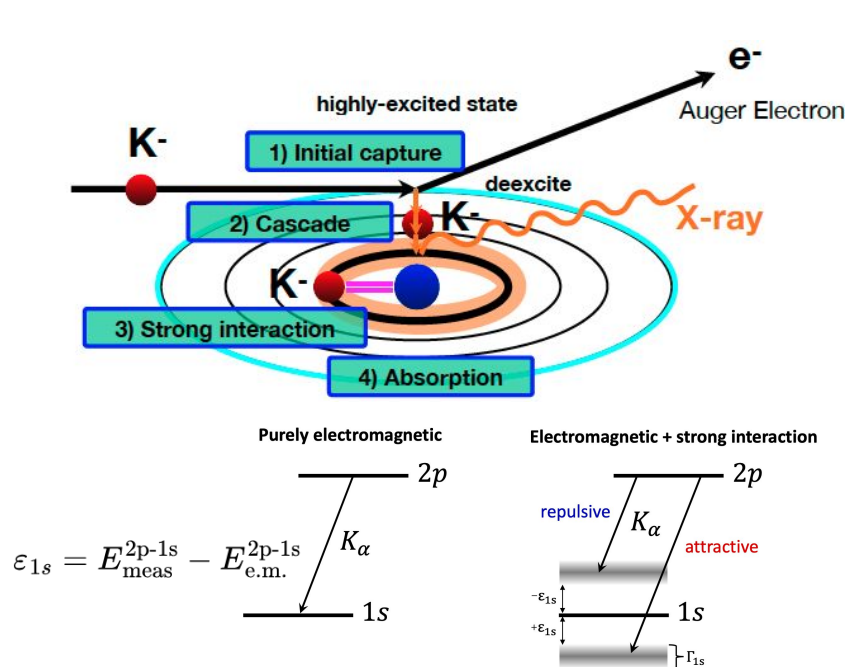
Helmholtz Inst. Mainz, Germany

Univ. Jagiellonian Krakow, Poland

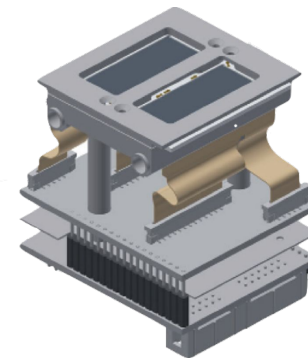
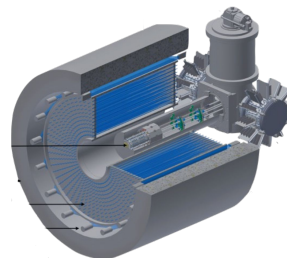
ELPH, Tohoku University



Kaonic Atoms X-ray Spectroscopy



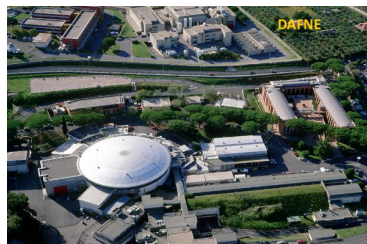
A long journey...



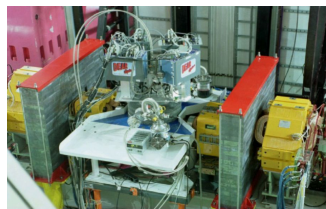
The modern era of light kaonic atom experiments

Catalina Curceanu, Carlo Guaraldo, Mihail Iliescu, Michael Cargnelli, Ryugo Hayano, Johann Marton, Johann Zmeskal, Tomoichi Ishiwatari, Masa Iwasaki, Shinji Okada, Diana Laura Sirghi, and Hideyuki Tatsuno

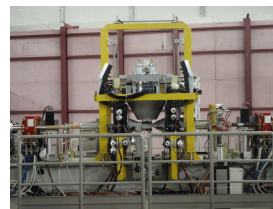
Rev. Mod. Phys. 91, 025006 - Published 20 June 2019



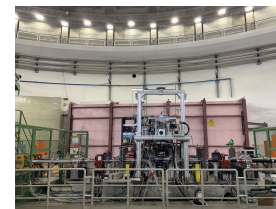
DEAR 2002



SIDDHARTA 2009



SIDDHARTA-2 2022



Fundamental physics New Physics

The modern era of light kaonic atom experiments
Rev.Mod.Phys. 91 (2019) 2, 025006

Part. and Nuclear physics QCD @ low-energy limit Chiral symmetry, Lattice

Kaonic Atoms to Investigate Global Symmetry
Breaking Symmetry 12 (2020) 4, 547

Kaonic Atoms Kaon-Nuclei Interactions (Scattering and Nuclear Interactions)

Astrophysics EOS Neutron Stars

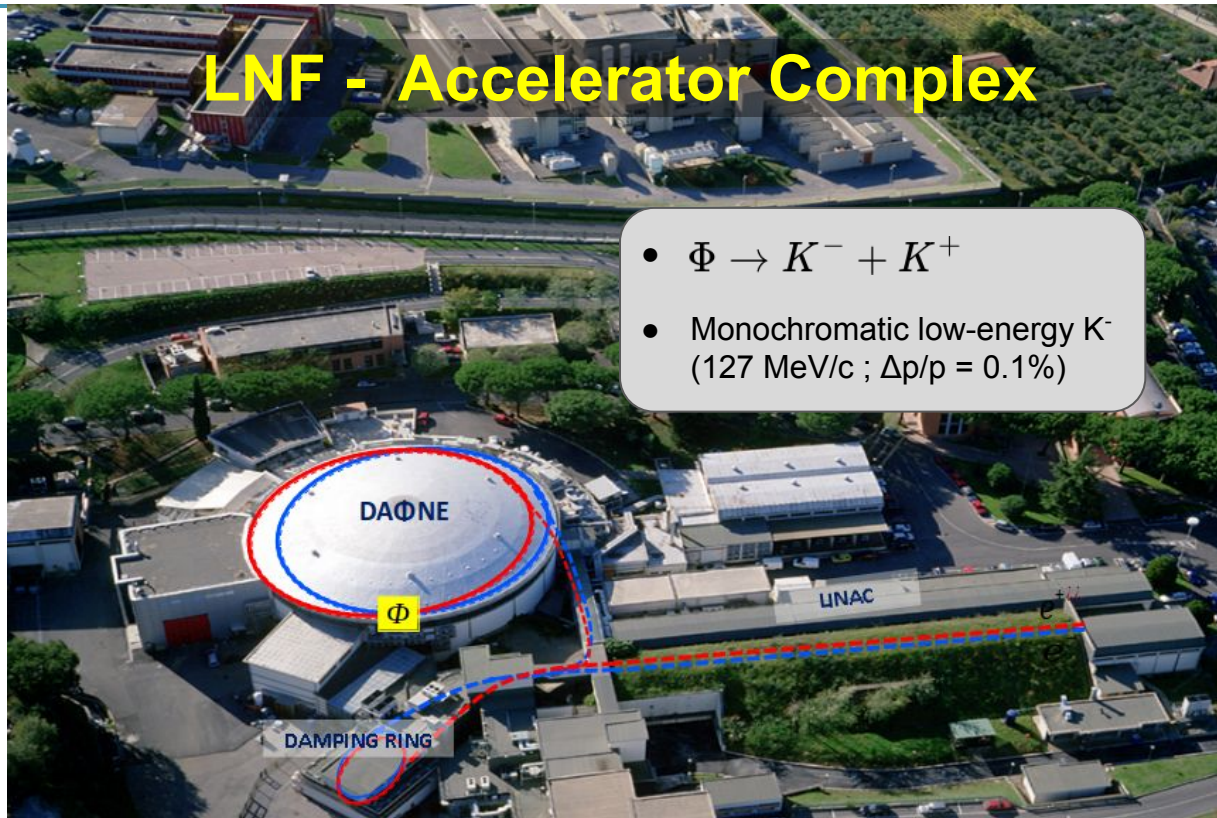
The equation of state of dense matter: Stiff, soft, or both?
Astron.Nachr. 340 (2019) 1-3, 189

Dark Matter studies

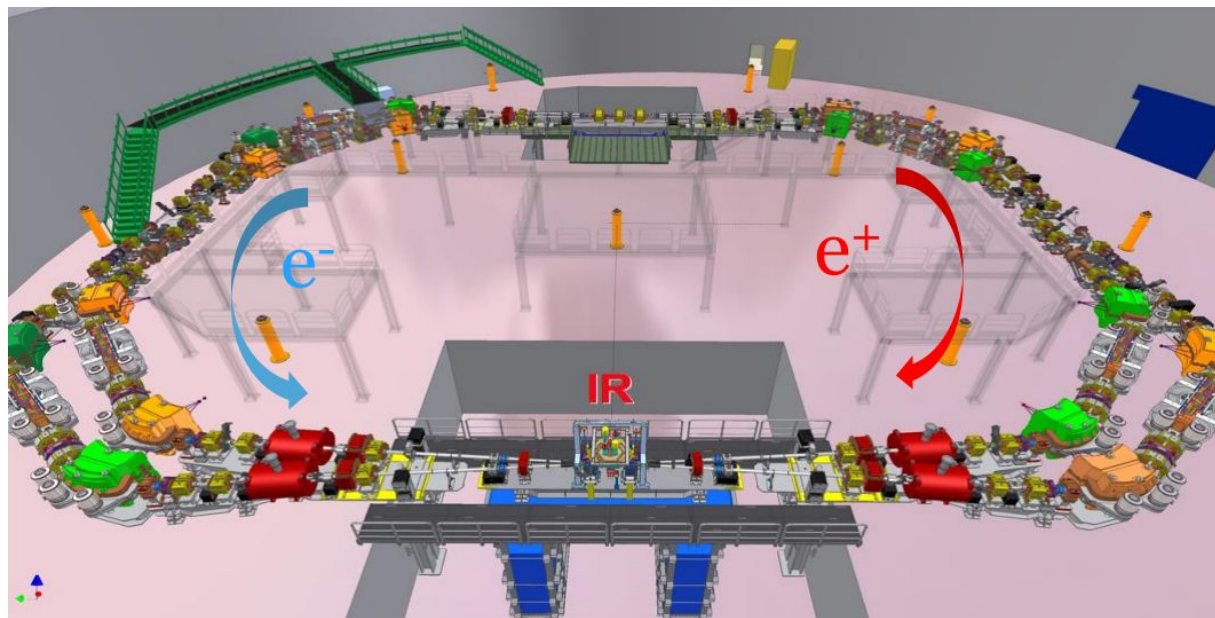
On self-gravitating strange dark matter halos around galaxies
Phys.Rev.D 102 (2020) 8, 083015

LNF - Accelerator Complex

- $\Phi \rightarrow K^- + K^+$
- Monochromatic low-energy K^-
(127 MeV/c ; $\Delta p/p = 0.1\%$)

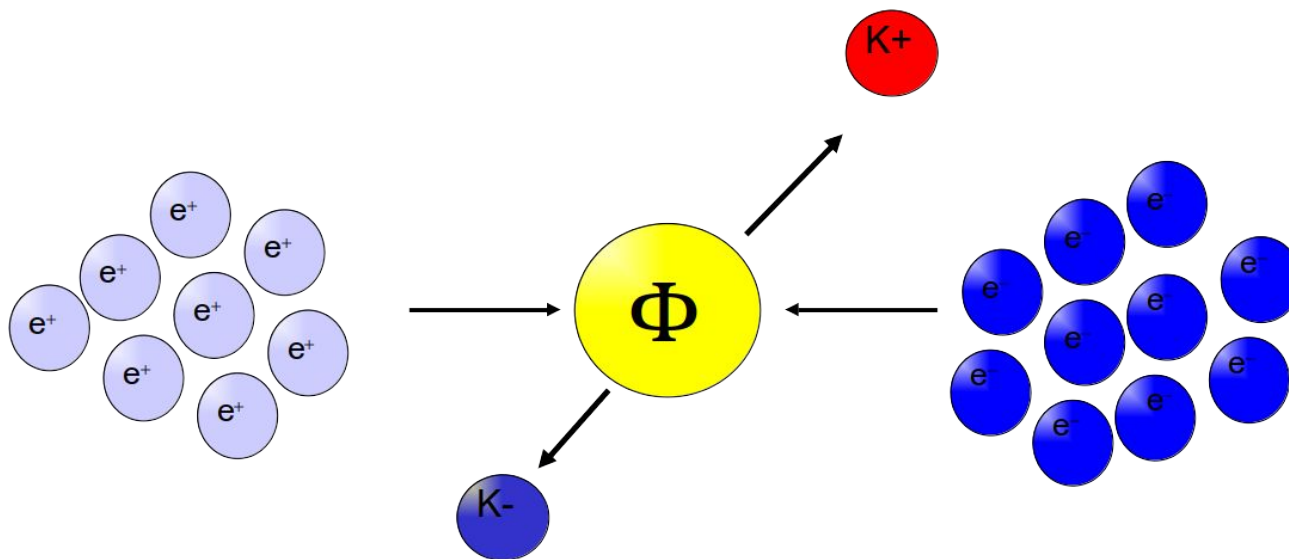


Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati (INFN-LNF)



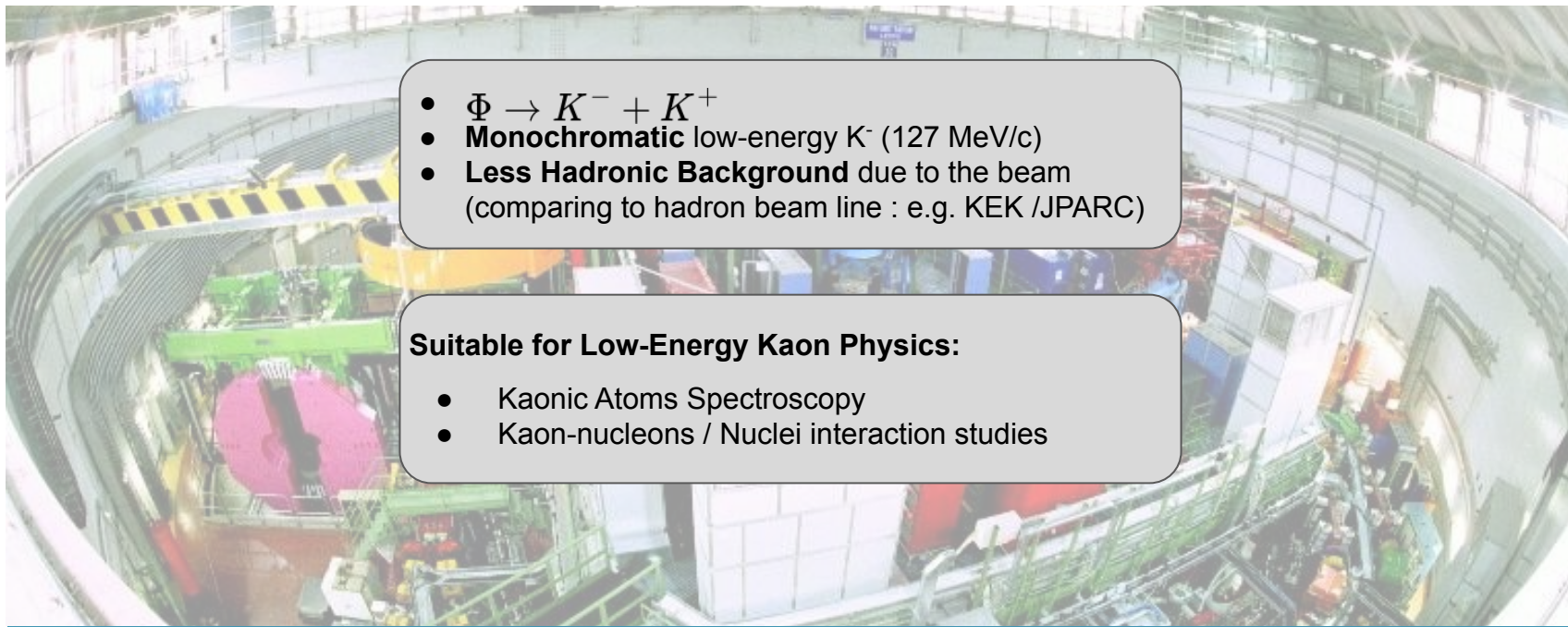


The DAΦNE Principle

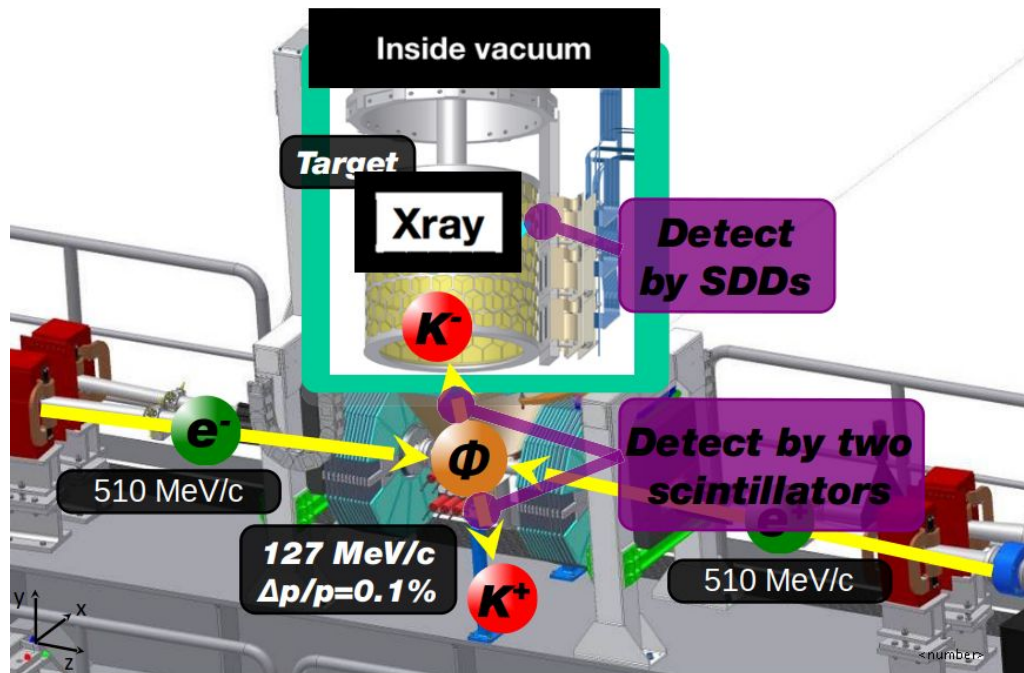


Flux of produced Kaons: about 1000/second

The DAΦNE Principle



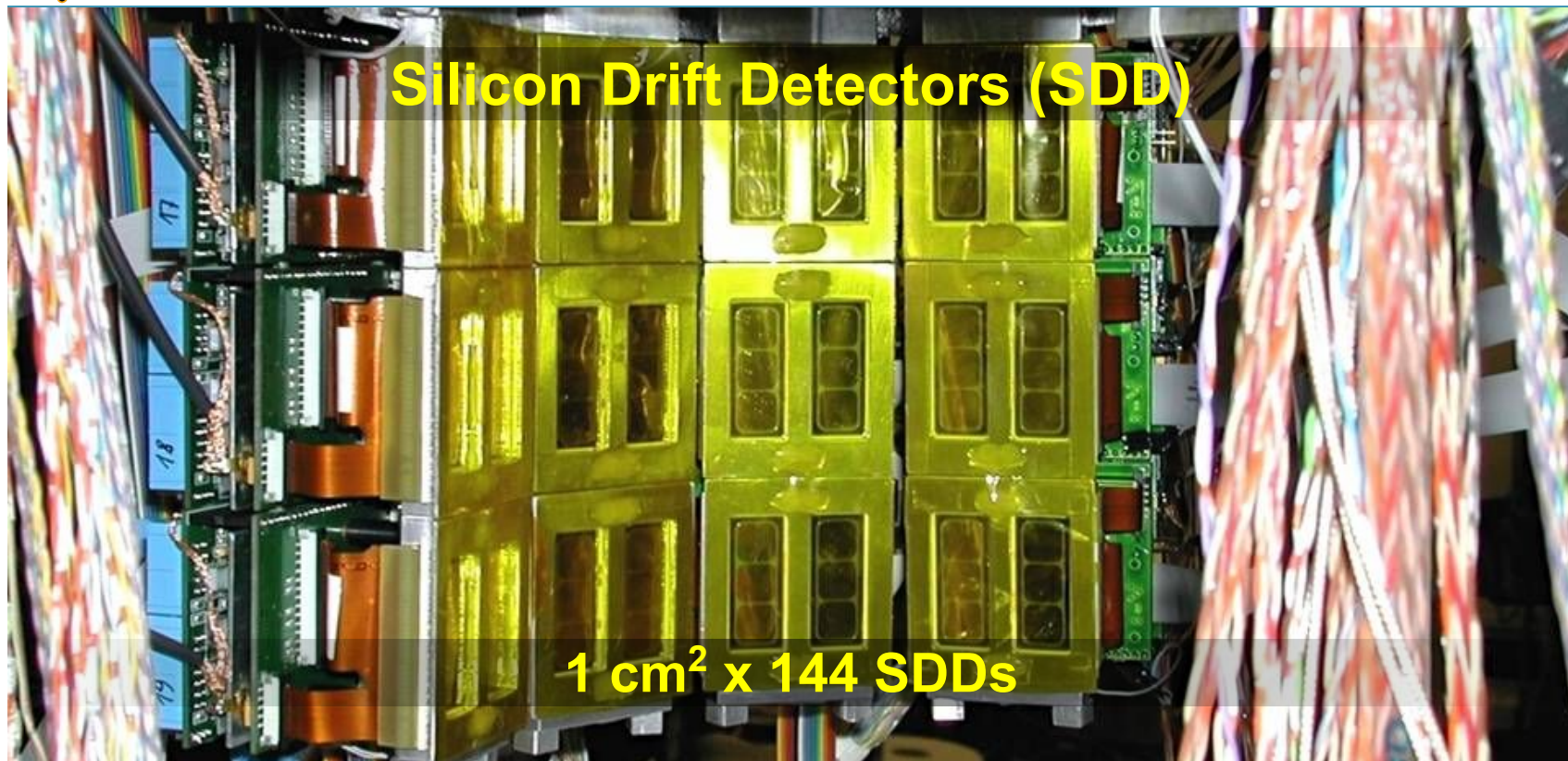
SIDDHARTA Setup Overview



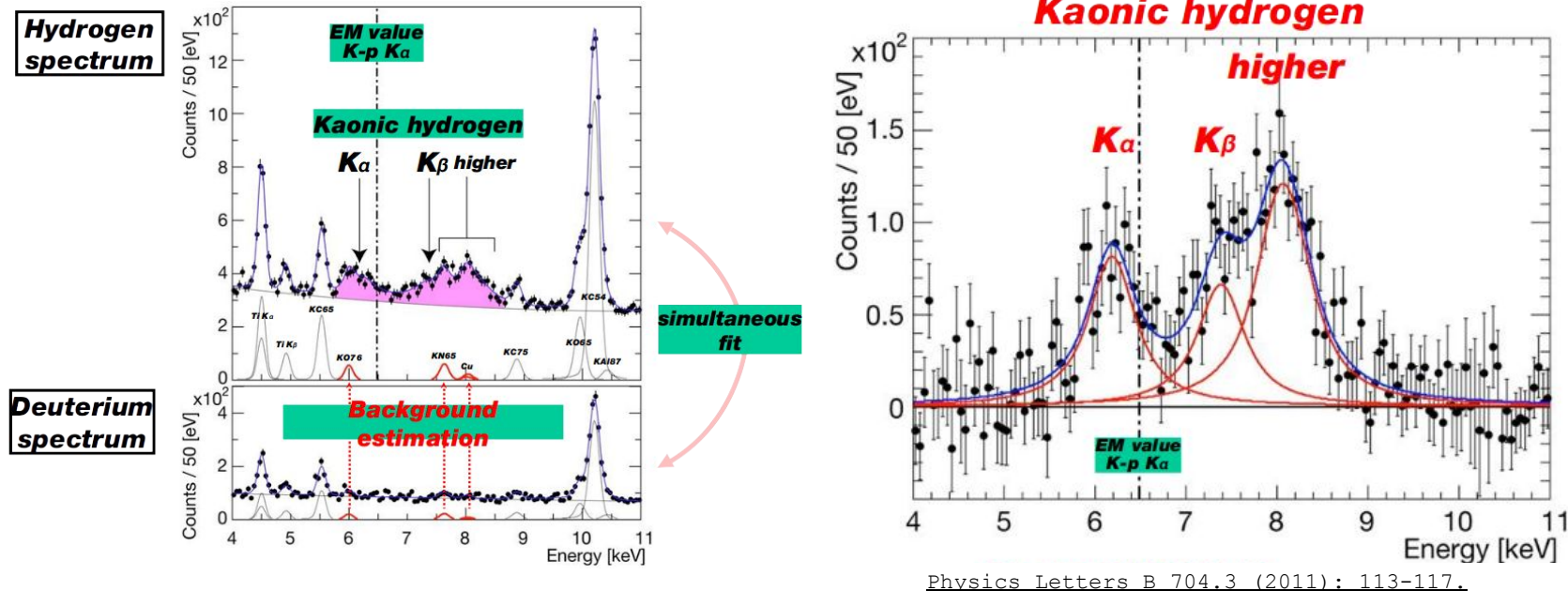
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The Kaonic Hydrogen Measurement of SIDDHARTA



The SIDDHARTA-2 Scientific Goal: Kaonic Deuterium

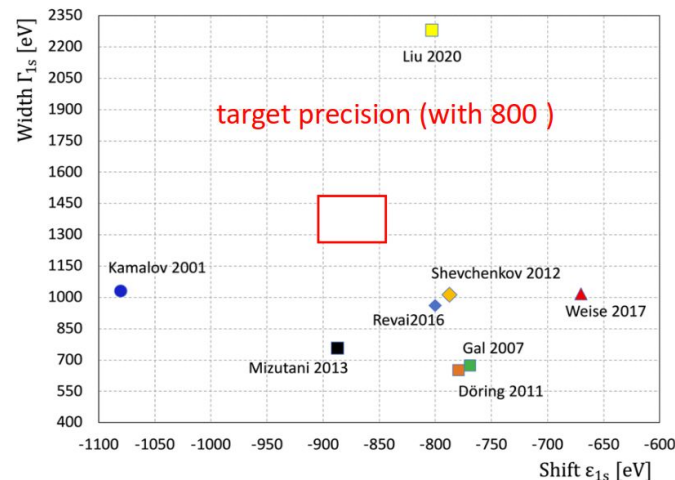
Main Scientific Goal:

- First measurement of **Kaonic Deuterium** X-ray transition to the **1s-level**
- Determine its **Shift** and **Width** induced by the presence of the **Strong Interaction**
- Providing unique data to investigate the **QCD in the Non-Perturbative regime with Strangeness**.

AntiKaon-Deuteron Scattering Length:

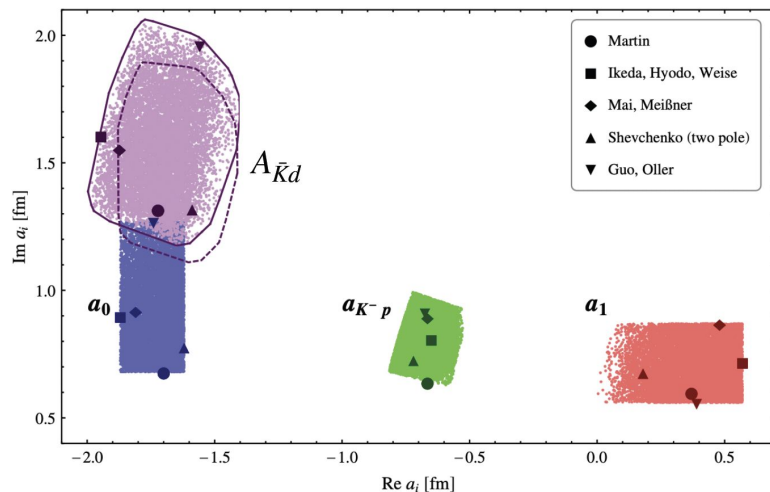
$$\epsilon_{1s} + \frac{i}{2}\Gamma_{1s} = 2\alpha^3\mu^2 a_{K-d} / (1 + 2\alpha\mu(\ln\alpha - 1)a_{K-d})$$

Shevchenko, N. V. Few Body Syst. 63, 22



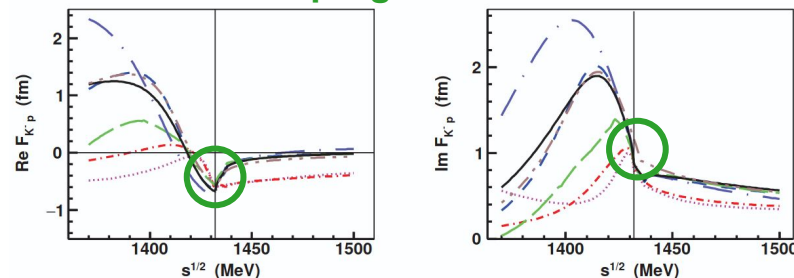
The SIDDHARTA-2 Scientific Goal: Kaonic Deuterium

Combined analysis of the **Kaonic Deuterium** and **Kaonic Hydrogen** measurements

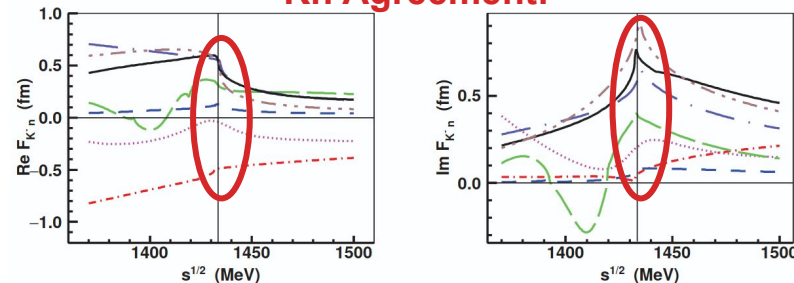


Maxim Mai, Vadim Baru, Evgeny Epelbaum, and Akaki Rusetsky Phys. Rev. D 91, 054016

Kp Agreement!

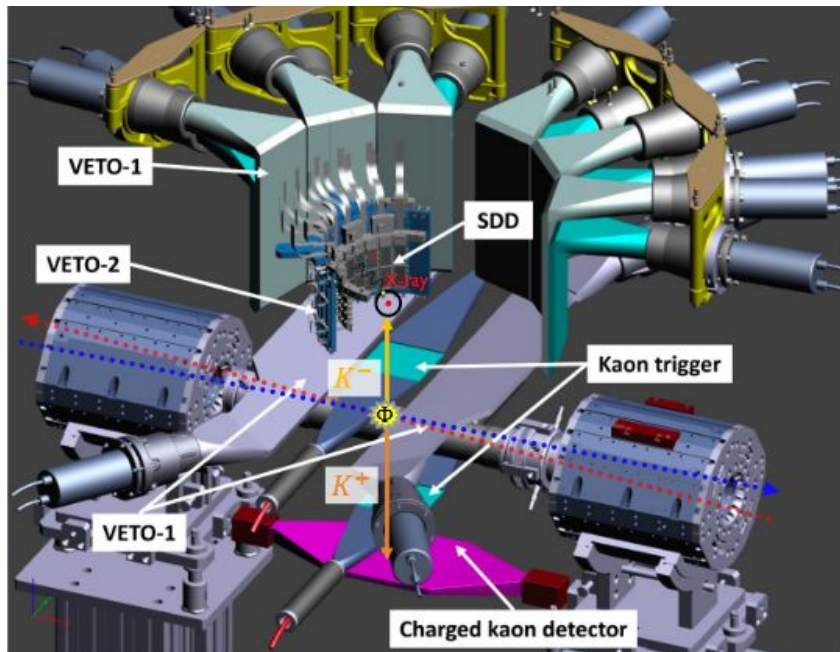


Kn Agreement!



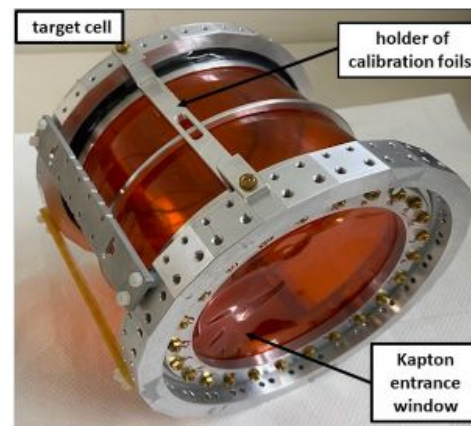
Aleš Cieplý, et al. AIP Conf. Proc. 2020; 2249 (1): 030014

The SIDDHARTA-2 Experimental Setup

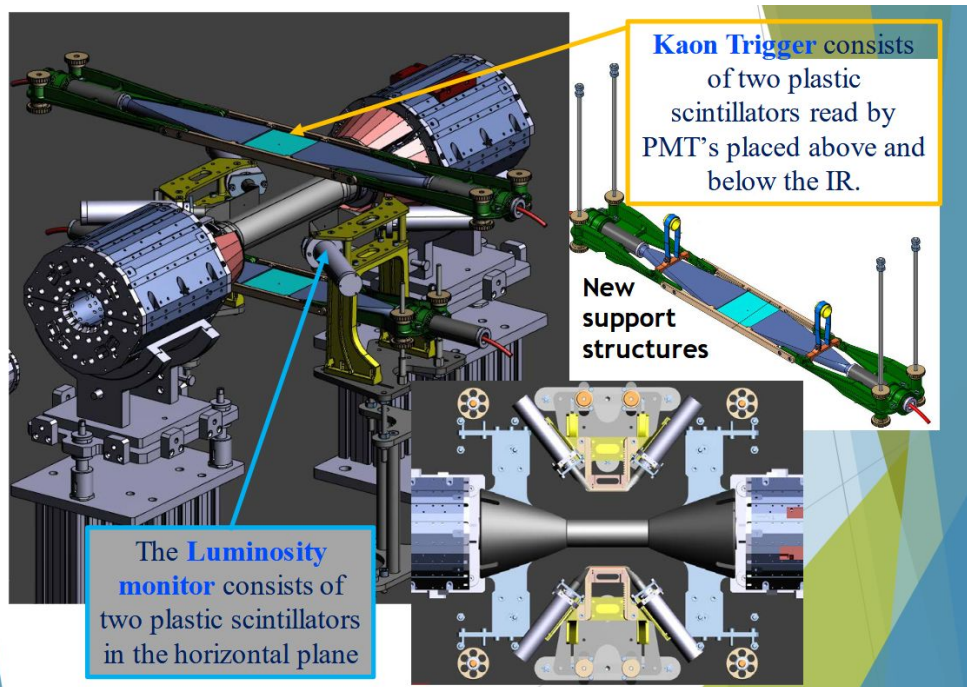


Kaon Trigger: two plastic scintillators read by photomultipliers placed above and below the interaction region.

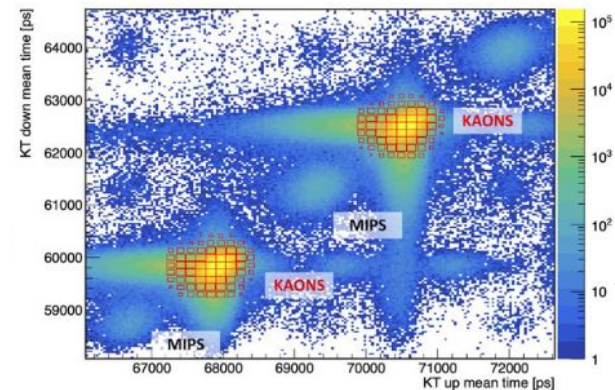
Cryogenic gaseous target cell surrounded by **384 SDDs**



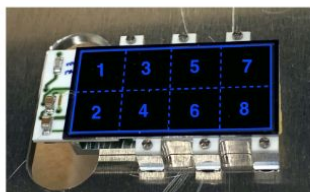
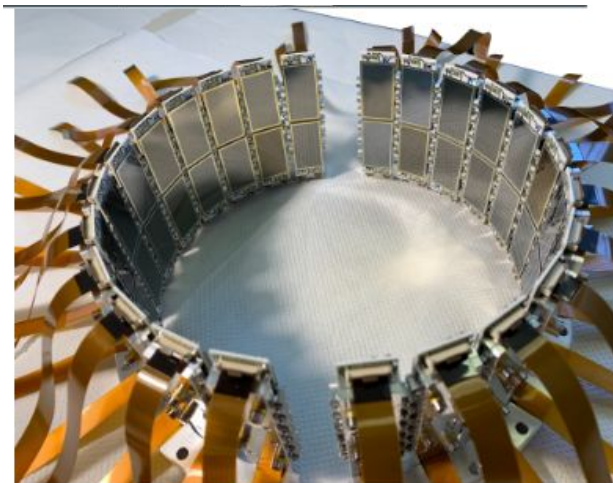
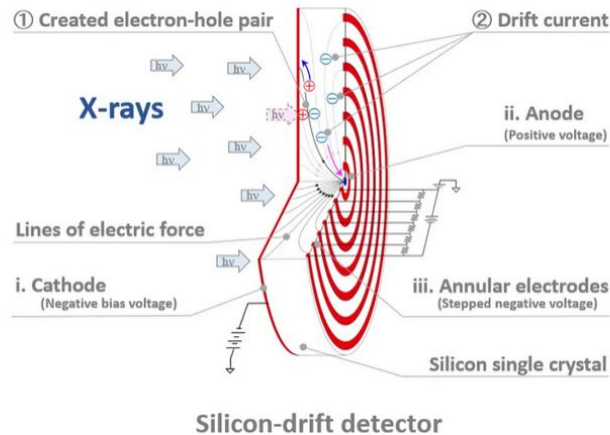
The SIDDHARTA-2 Experimental Setup: Luminometer



Dr. Magdalena Skurzok



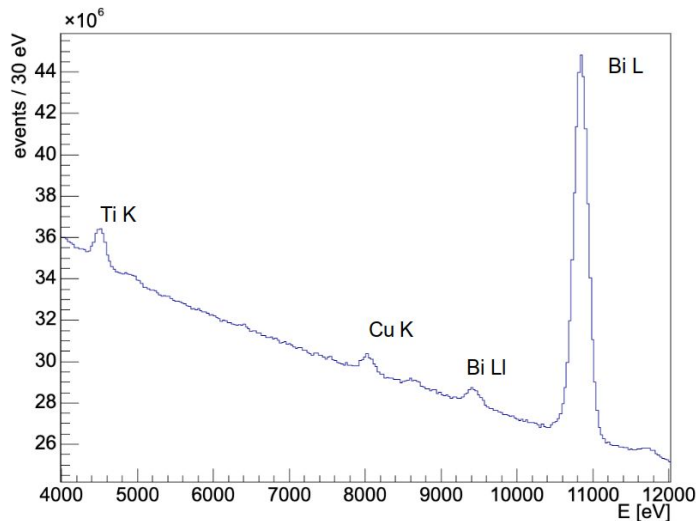
Silicon Drift Detectors (2020-2021)



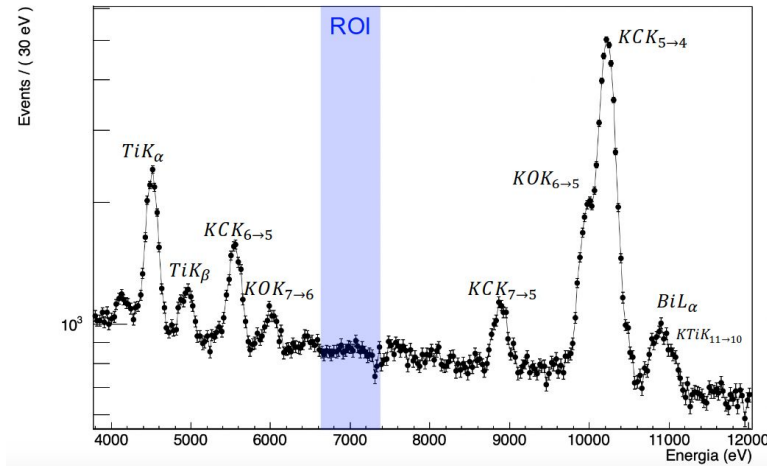
- **8 SDD units** (0.64 cm^2)
- **Total Active Area** of 5.12 cm^2
- **Thickness** of $450 \text{ }\mu\text{m}$ ensures a **High Efficiency** at 5-12 keV

Kaonic Deuterium X-ray Energy Spectrum

Raw Spectrum



Bkg Selected Spectrum



Background reduced by a factor 3×10^4

Extended Maximum-Likelihood Fit of the X-ray Spectrum

- We perform an **Extended Maximum-Likelihood fit** to the binned spectrum, including **Systematic Uncertainties as Nuisance Parameters**
- The full model is implemented in **ROOT / RooFit**:

$$f(E; \theta) = \underbrace{\sum_{n=0}^{18} y_n G_n(E; \mu, \sigma)}_{\text{Contaminant X-ray Lines}} + \underbrace{y_{2p \rightarrow 1s} V_{2p \rightarrow 1s}(E; \mu, \sigma, \Gamma) + \sum_{n=3}^7 y_{n \rightarrow 1s} V_{n \rightarrow 1s}(E; \mu, \sigma, \Gamma)}_{\text{Kaonic Deuterium Lines } K\alpha, K\beta, \dots} + \underbrace{y_{em} e^{\lambda_{em} E} + y_{had} e^{\lambda_{had} E} + C}_{\text{Background E.M and hadronic}}$$

Eur. Phys. J. A (2023) 59 3, 56

- The **Total Negative Log-Likelihood** is: $-2 \ln \mathcal{L}_{\text{tot}} = -2 \ln \mathcal{L}_{\text{ext}} - 2 \ln \mathcal{L}_{\text{nuisance}}$

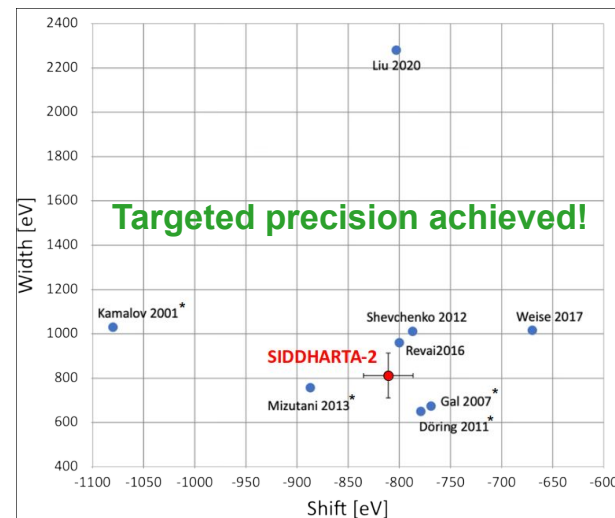
$$-2 \ln \mathcal{L}_{\text{nuisance}} = \underbrace{\frac{(\delta\mu_{cal})^2}{\sigma_{cal}^2} + \frac{(\delta\mu_{stab})^2}{\sigma_{stab}^2}}_{\text{Calibration + Stability}} + \underbrace{\frac{(FF - FF_0)^2}{\sigma_{FF}^2} + \frac{(noise - noise_0)^2}{\sigma_{noise}^2}}_{\text{Energy Resolution}} + \underbrace{\frac{(\lambda_{em} - \lambda_{em}^0)^2}{\sigma_{\lambda_{em}}^2} + \frac{(\lambda_{had} - \lambda_{had}^0)^2}{\sigma_{\lambda_{had}}^2}}_{\text{E.M. and Hadronic Background}}$$

Phys.Scripta 97 (2022) 114002

Measur.Sci.Tech. 32 (2021) 9, 095501

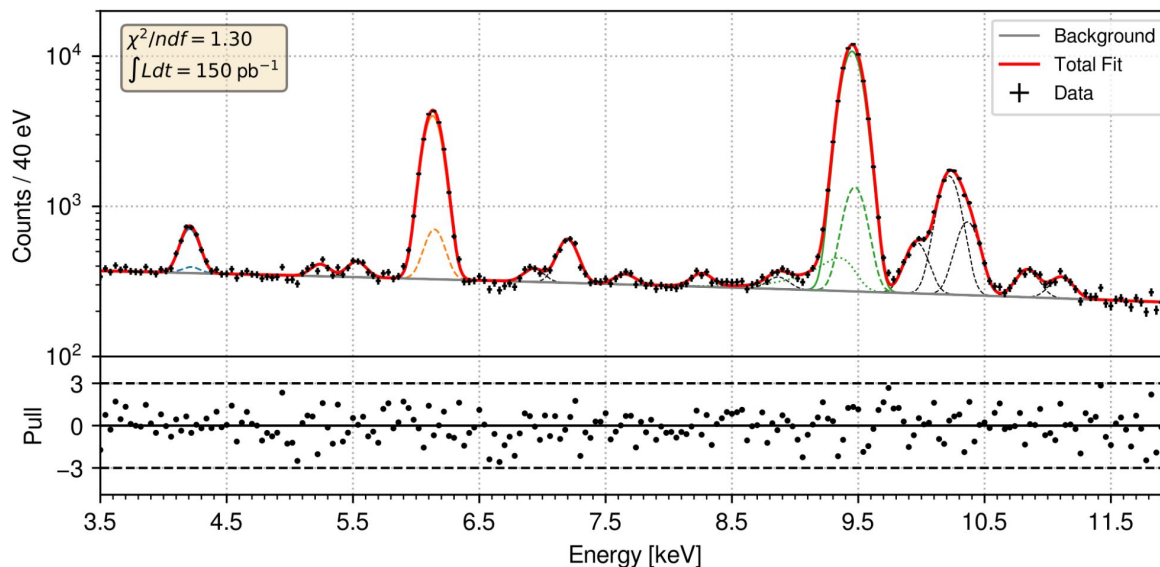
Measur.Sci.Tech. 33 (2022) 9, 095502

$$\Gamma_{1s} = 812 \pm 97 \text{ (stat.)} + 33 \text{ (syst.)}$$



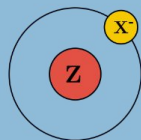
High Precision X-ray Spectroscopy in KNe

The **Kaonic Neon (KNe)** spectrum exhibits several transitions with **Intense Yields** resulting from the **Radiative De-Excitation** in the X-ray range of the kaonic atom during its **Cascade Process**.



MultiConfigurational Dirac-Fock Calculations with MCDFGME code

Ab Initio Input



- **Ab Initio Approach:** based only on **Physical Laws** and **Fundamental Constants**.
- Supports **Normal, Exotic, or Mixed Atomic Systems**.
- Supported **Exotic Particles**:
 - K^- : Kaons
 - μ^- : Muons
 - π^- : Pions
 - Σ^- : Sigmas
 - \bar{p} : Antiprotons
 - X^- : Test Particles

MCDF Framework

Basis Wavefunctions:

- Dirac Equation (spin- $1/2$ particles)

$$[c\boldsymbol{\alpha} \cdot \mathbf{p} + \beta mc^2 + V(\mathbf{r})] \psi_i(\mathbf{r}) = \varepsilon_i \psi_i(\mathbf{r})$$

- Klein-Gordon Equation (spin-0 particles)

$$[-\hbar^2 c^2 \nabla^2 + m^2 c^4] \phi(\mathbf{r}) = [E - V(\mathbf{r})]^2 \phi(\mathbf{r})$$

Multi-Configuration Dirac-Fock:

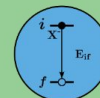
$$\Psi = \sum_{v=1}^{NCF} W_v \phi^v(1, 2, \dots, N; J, J_z)$$

$$E_{\text{tot}} = \sum_{\nu\mu} W_\nu W_\mu \langle \phi^\nu | H | \phi^\mu \rangle / \sum_{\nu} W_\nu^2$$

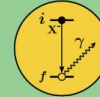
Total Energies Contributions:

- QED (All-Orders)
- Breit Interaction
- Recoil Effect
- Nuclear Finite Size
- Screening Effect

Output Quantities



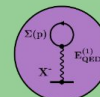
Energy Levels & Transitions



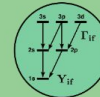
Radiative Transition Probabilities



Auger Decay Rates



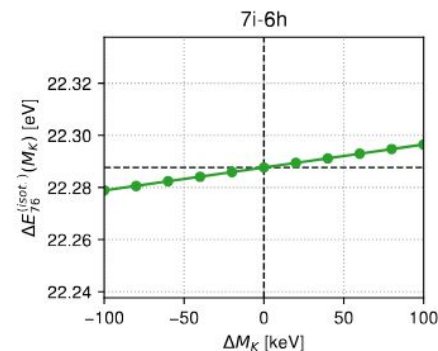
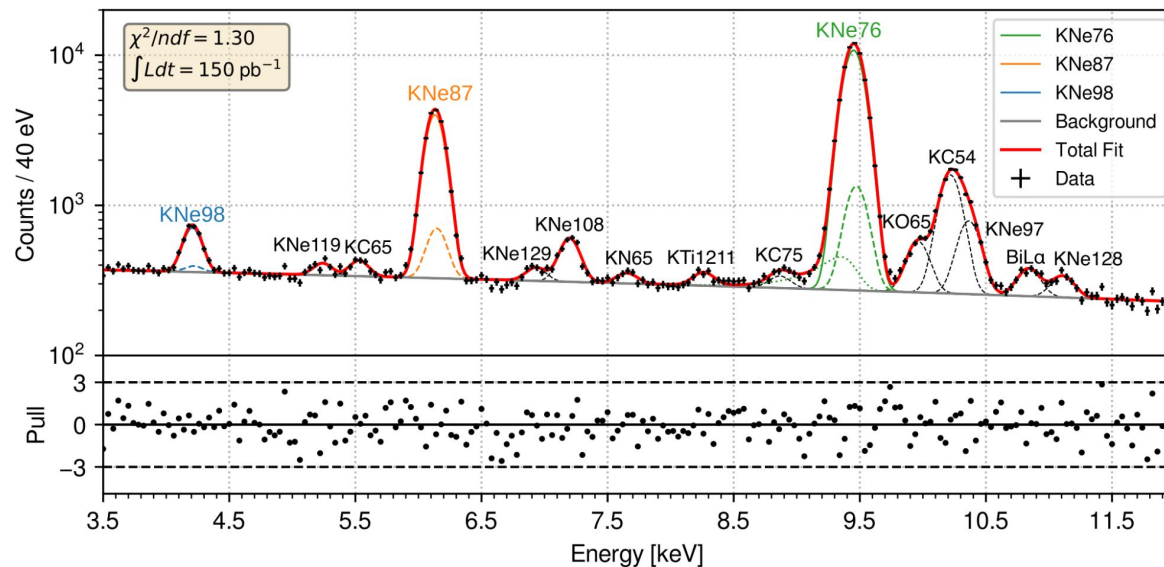
QED Self-Energy & Vacuum Polarization



Parameters for Atomic Cascade

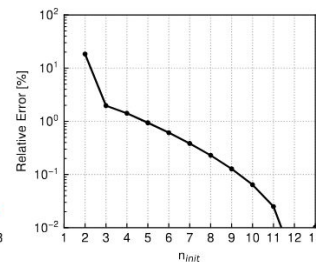
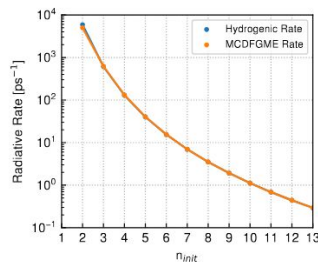
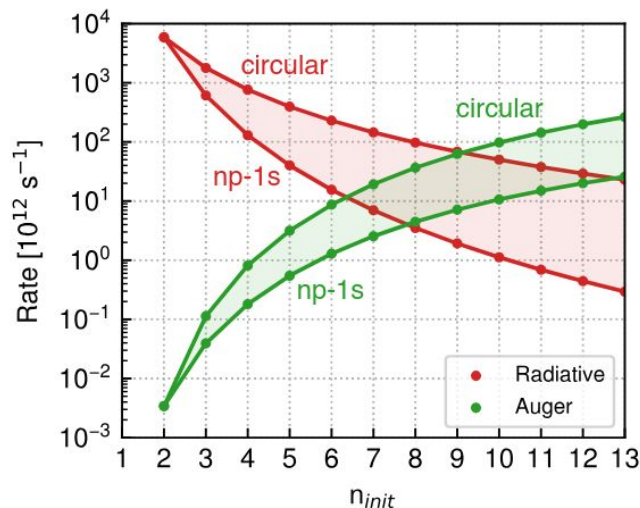
High Precision X-ray Spectroscopy in KNe

Dirac-Fock Calculations are employed to determine the transition energies of the spectral peaks. **Nuclear Shifts and Widths** for $n > 4$ are negligible (Recoil, FNS, QCD)



Calculations to Reveal the Cascade Mechanism in KNe

- **Qualitative trends in kaonic X-ray Yields** can be explained by the interplay between **Radiative** and **Auger** decay rates
→ X-ray emission dominates for $n < 10$
- **Quantitative predictions** require accurate **Cascade Calculations**

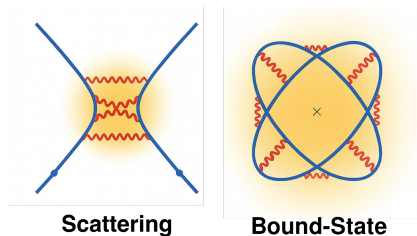


Burbidge, G.R.,
de Borde, A.H.,
1953. Phys. Rev.
89, 189–193.

$$\Gamma_{n,l \rightarrow n',l \pm 1}^R = \frac{4\mu Z^4}{3} \alpha^3 \left| R_{n',l \pm 1}^{n,l} \right|^2 (\Delta E_{if})^3$$

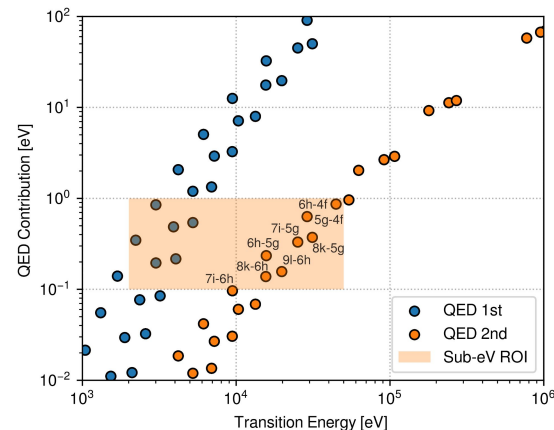
$$\Gamma_{n,l \rightarrow n',l \pm 1}^A = \frac{32}{3} \left(\frac{Z_e}{Z} \right)^2 \frac{\pi}{\mu^2} \frac{l}{2l+1} \left| R_{n',l \pm 1}^{n,l} \right|^2 \frac{y^2}{1+y^2} \frac{\exp[y(4 \tan^{-1} y - \pi)]}{\sinh(\pi y)}$$

Kaonic Atoms for Bound-State QED Studies



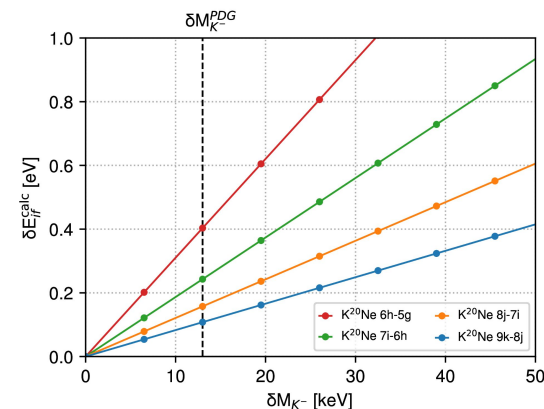
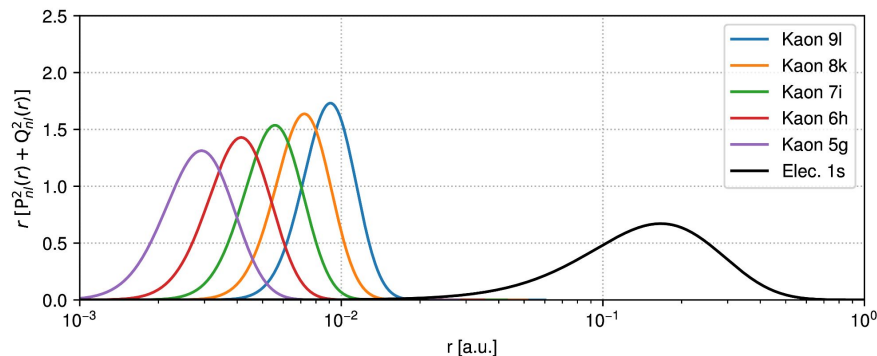
Transition	$E_{if}^{(exp.)}$	$\delta E_{if}^{(stat.)}$	$\delta E_{if}^{(sys.)}$	$E_{if}^{(calc.)}$	$E_{if}^{(QED)}$	$E_{if}^{(QED1)}$	$E_{if}^{(QED2)}$
9l-8k	4206.97	3.43	2.00	4201.45	2.09	2.07	0.02
8k-7i	6130.57	0.65	1.50	6130.31	5.09	5.05	0.04
7i-6h	9450.23	0.37	1.50	9450.28	12.66	12.56	0.10
6h-5g ^a	15673.30	0.52	9.00	15685.39	32.75	32.51	0.24

- **QED Contributions** exceed experimental uncertainties (**$\sim 8\sigma$ for the 7-6**)
- Many transitions lie in the **sub-eV ROI**, enabling **Precision BSQED Tests**.
- **Submitted to PRL!** (arXiv:2508.08161)



Benchmarks: Electronic Screening & Kaon-Mass Uncertainty

- Evaluation of **Electronic Screening** effects and **Uncertainty on the Kaon Mass (~13 keV)** on the observed lines in comparison to the size of QED contributions
- **Both Effects are Small (< 0.5 eV)** relative to the QED contributions and, moreover, electronic screening is negligible for the considered transitions.



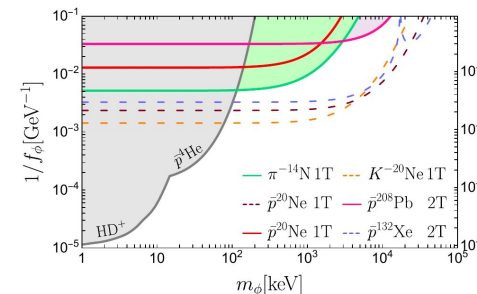
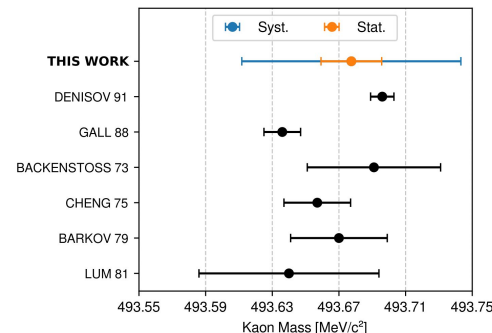
Kaon WFs are well inside the 1s electron orbit -> Neon Fully Ionized!

Fundamental Physics: Kaon Mass determination & BSM Physics

- Transitions with **Sub-eV Statistical Precision** already provide a **Statistical Uncertainty of ~18 keV** on the Kaon Mass.

Transition	M_{K^-} [MeV]	$\delta M_{K^-}^{\text{stat.}}$ [keV]	$\delta M_{K^-}^{\text{syst.}}$ [keV]
7i-6h	493.674	19	78
8k-7i	493.699	59	121
7i-6h + 8k-7i	493.677	18	66

- A KNe Dedicated Optimized Run can reach < 10 keV** via:
 - ×2 improvement by **Doubling Statistics** ($150 \text{ pb}^{-1} \rightarrow 300 \text{ pb}^{-1}$)
 - ×2 improvement by **Optimized Gas Target Design** (lower statistical and systematic $\rightarrow 0$)
- Exclusion Limits** can be set on hypothetical particles with **Yukawa-type couplings** using these transitions.



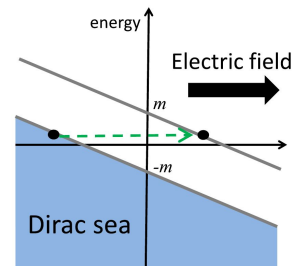
constrain uds-scalar [arXiv:2502.03537]

Kaonic Atoms as Probes of Strong Fields QED: Schwinger Limit for KF

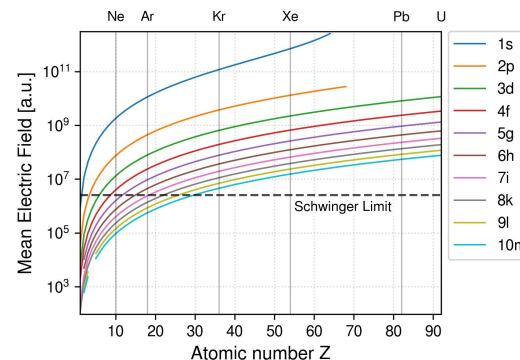
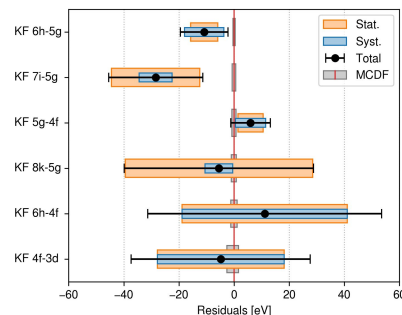
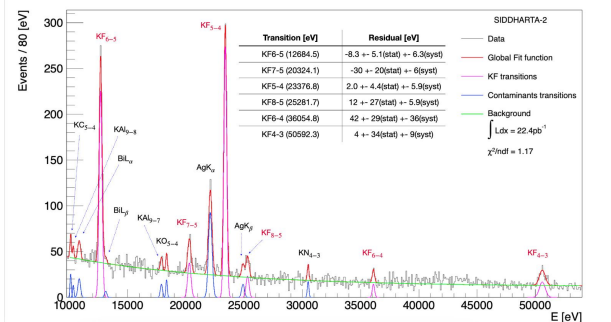
- The **Schwinger Limit** for spontaneous $e^+ - e^-$ Pair Creation is:

$$E_c = \frac{m_e^2 c^3}{q_e \hbar} \approx 1.32 \times 10^{18} \text{ V/m} \quad \langle E \rangle_{nl} = \int d^3 r |\psi_{nl}(\mathbf{r})|^2 E(\mathbf{r})$$

Above $E_c \sim$ Dielectric Breakdown



- BSQED contribution enhanced by the **Nonlinear Electric-Field dependence** of Vacuum Polarization diagrams
- In **KF 4f \rightarrow 3d (50.6 keV)** the **Average Orbital Electric Field** approaches the **Schwinger limit (a First in Exotic Atoms!)**.



Beyond SIDDHARTA-2: EXKALIBUR

EXtensive **K**aonic **A**toms research: from **L**ithium and **B**eryllium to **U**Ranium a unique opportunity for measurements of kaonic atoms along the periodic table

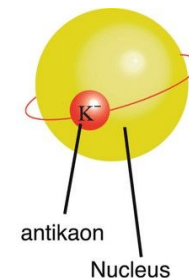
The measurement for the first EXKALIBUR module were selected based on two criteria:

Feasibility with minimal modifications/addings of the already existent SIDDHARTA-2 setup and within a reduced timescale

Impact i.e. the maximal scientific outcome:

- Precision measurements along the periodic table at DAΦNE for:
- Selected light kaonic atoms (LHKA) – Li, Be, B
- Selected intermediate and heavy kaonic atoms (IMKA) – Al, C, O, S, Pb

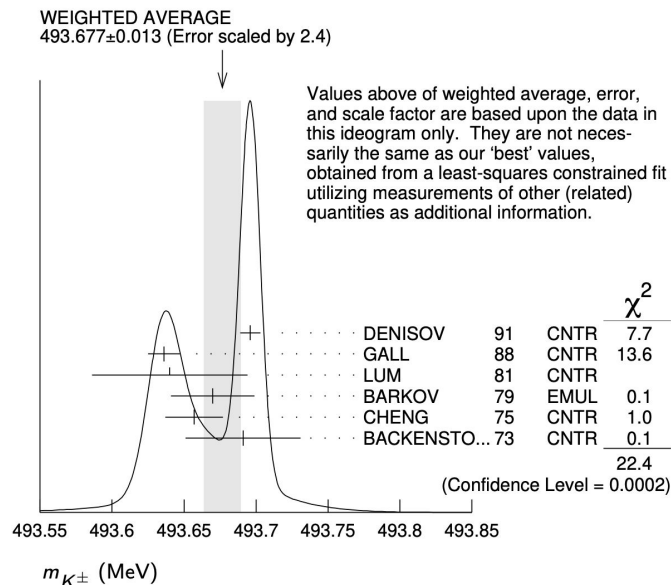
Dedicated runs with different types of detectors: CZT detectors, SDDs



EXtensive
Kaonic
Atoms research:
from
Lithium and
Beryllium to
URanium

EXKALIBUR: Kaonic Neon for the Charged Kaon Mass

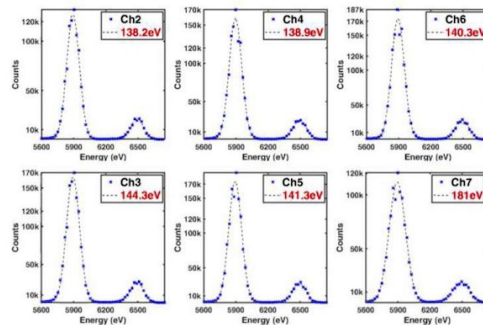
EXtensive **Kaonic A**toms research: from **L**ithium and **B**eryllium to **U**Ranium a unique opportunity for measurements of kaonic atoms along the periodic table



- The first measurement we plan doing is the kaonic neon high-n levels transition with precisions below 1 eV, to extract the charged kaon mass (5-7 keV precision).
- By using a gaseous target, we can resolve the ambiguity in the charged kaon mass determination, providing a new precise value through the measurement of kaonic neon high-n transitions. Moreover, the measurement also provides a precision test of QED in atomic systems with strangeness

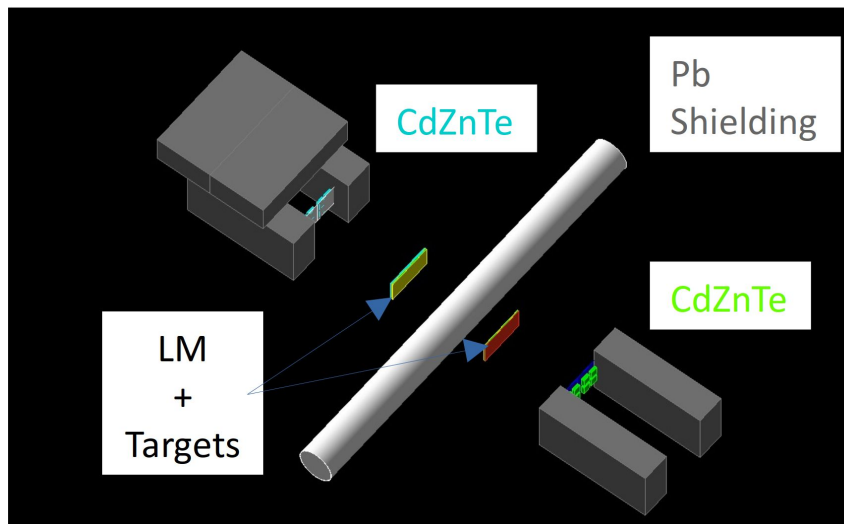
EXKALIBUR: Light Mass (low-Z) Kaonic Atoms (LHKA)

- After the kaonic neon, measurement of light mass (Li, Be, B) kaonic atoms high and low-n transitions, to study in detail the strong interaction between kaon and few nucleons (many body).
- Now precise measurements for these kaonic atoms of the shifts, widths and yields will result in a significative improvement on the knowledge of the interactions of kaons in matter, with a great impact on the low energy QCD and astrophysics (equation of state for neutron stars).



Replacing the gaseous target with a multi-element (Li-Be-B) solid target and new 1 mm thick SDDs for higher detection efficiency up to 50 keV

EXKALIBUR: Intermediate-mass Kaonic Atoms measurements with CdZnTe setups



- **Kaonic Oxygen:** key role in the description of the nuclear-matter density distribution which enters in the formula for the density-dependent optical potentials
- **Kaonic Aluminium:** 3→2 QCD – never measured
- **Kaonic Sulphur:** 4→3 the inconsistent measurements

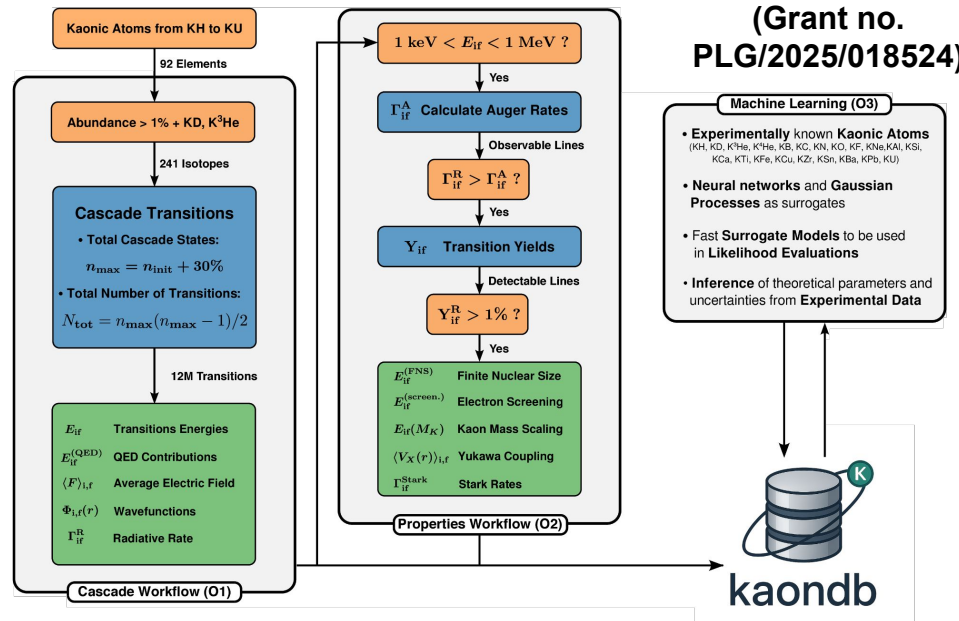
Building a (Strange) Periodic Table of Kaonic Atoms



Dr. Magdalena Skurzok

Awarded 500,000 Core-Hours on the **Helios Supercomputer (PLGrid)** to build a **Kaonic Atoms Database (KaonDB)**

- **Cascade Workflow O1:**
KH-KU, ~12M transitions
- **Properties Workflow O2:**
Observable and Detectable
- **Machine Learning O3:**
Inference from Experiments
- Deliver an **Online-Accessible Database (FAIR principles)**



Content

- **High Precision X-ray Spectroscopy of Kaonic Atoms with SIDDHARTA**
- **Studying QCD, QED and BSM Physics with Kaonic Atoms**
- **Beyond Kaonic Atoms: Impact of Crystal Spectrometers**

Why Crystal Spectrometers?

State-of-the-art detectors (SDD, HPGe, CZT):

- **Excellent Efficiency**, timing, large solid angle
- **Energy Resolution** ~ 100 eV (SDD, CZT, HPGe)

But... **to reach sub-eV resolution**, fundamental for precision QED, strong interaction, and BSM physics

TES < eV but:

- Extremely **Costly**
- Complex cryogenic operation (**T~mK**)
- **Limited availability** & scalability
- **Impact** mainly in fundamental research

Crystal spectrometers:

- $\text{FWHM} / E < 0,1 \%$
- ~ 500 ns time resolution
- Working T ~ 300 K

TES microcalorimeters

- $\text{FWHM} / E < 0,1 \%$
- $\sim \mu\text{s}$ time resolution
- Working T $\sim 0,05$ K

SDDs

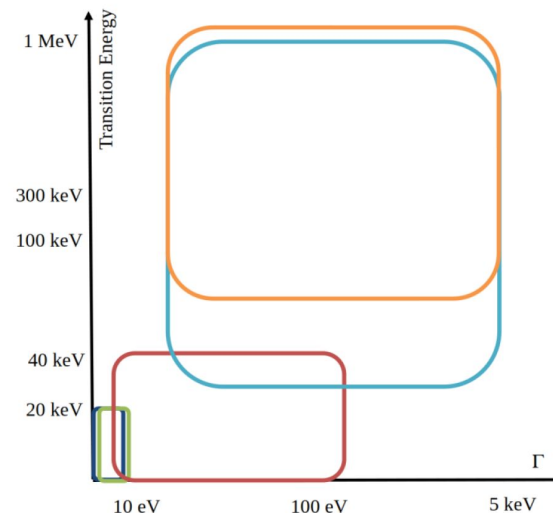
- $\text{FWHM} / E < 2 \%$
- ~ 100 ns time resolution
- Working T ~ 160 K

CZT

- $\text{FWHM} / E \sim \%$
- ~ 10 ns time resolution
- Working T ~ 300 K

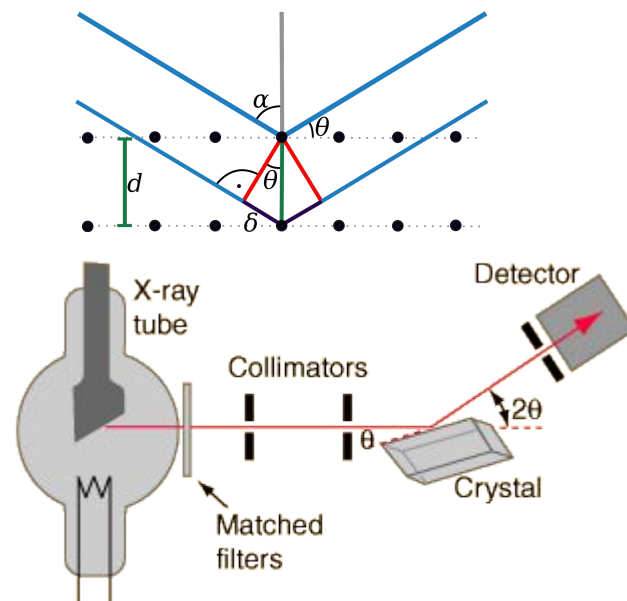
HPGe

- $\text{FWHM} / E \sim \%$
- $\sim \mu\text{s}$ time resolution
- Working T ~ 100 K



Crystal Spectrometers for High Precision Spectroscopy

- **Principle:** Bragg diffraction separates X-ray energies → dispersive technique
- **Resolution:** ΔE down to sub-eV ($\Delta E/E \approx 10^{-4} - 10^{-5}$), far beyond solid-state detectors
- **Advantages:**
 - Precise energy calibration
 - Natural background suppression (geometry)
 - Suitable for extended sources with mosaic crystals (e.g., HAPG)
- **Limitations:**
 - Small solid angle coverage
 - Efficiency $\approx 10^{-5} - 10^{-8}$
 - Resolution vs. efficiency trade-off (mosaicity, thickness, source size)
 - Configurations: Von Hamos, Johann, Semi-VH ... optimized for different needs

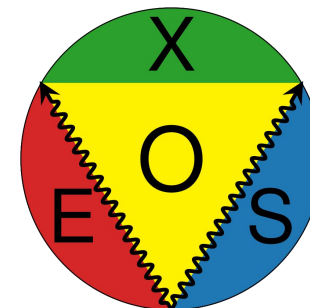


VOXES: High-Resolution Bragg Spectroscopy for Extended Sources

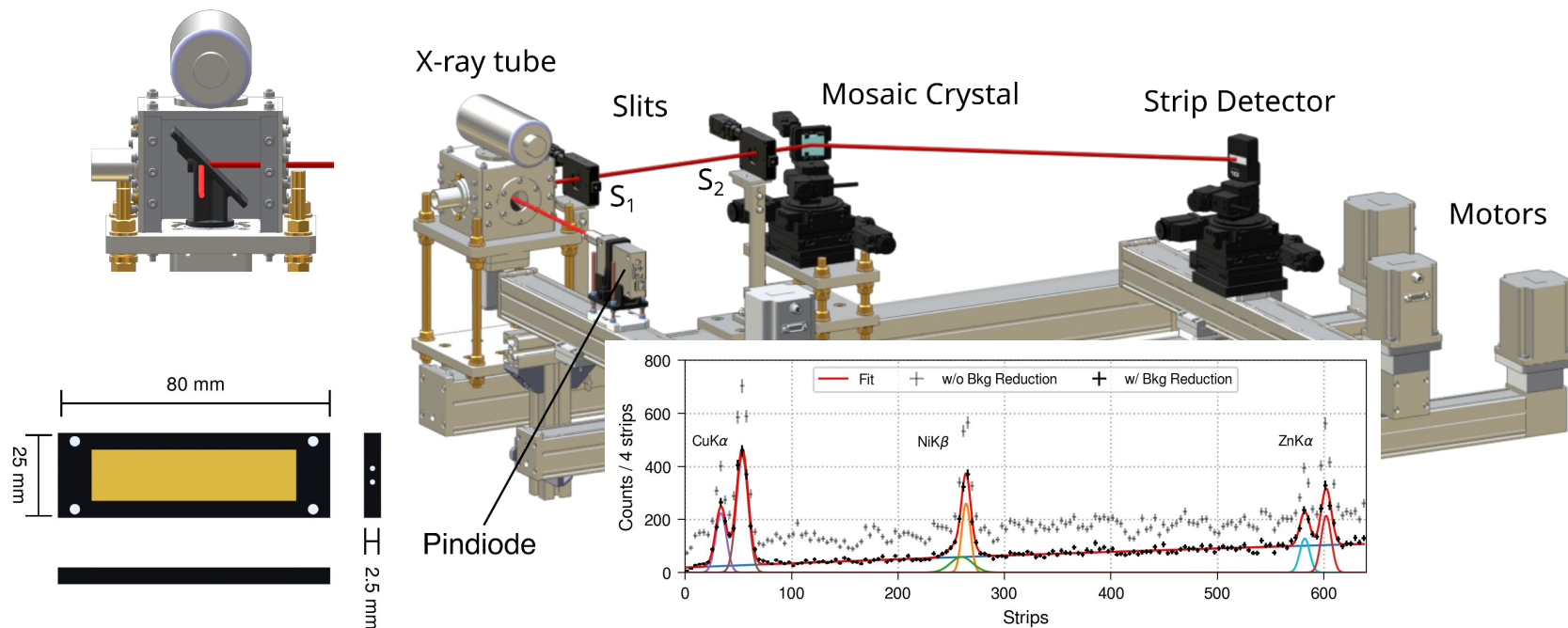
- A **Von Hamos spectrometer** based on Highly Annealed Pyrolytic Graphite (HAPG) **mosaic crystals**
- Designed at INFN-LNF (Frascati) for **extended and diffused X-ray sources**

Features:

- Uses **Mosaic Crystals** → higher efficiency while maintaining good resolution
- **Flexible geometry** (Von Hamos, Semi-VH) for compact setups
- Works with **sources up to mm/cm** dimensions
- **Resolution** < 10 eV; precision < 1 eV
- **Applications:** fundamental physics, material science, agrifood, cultural heritage

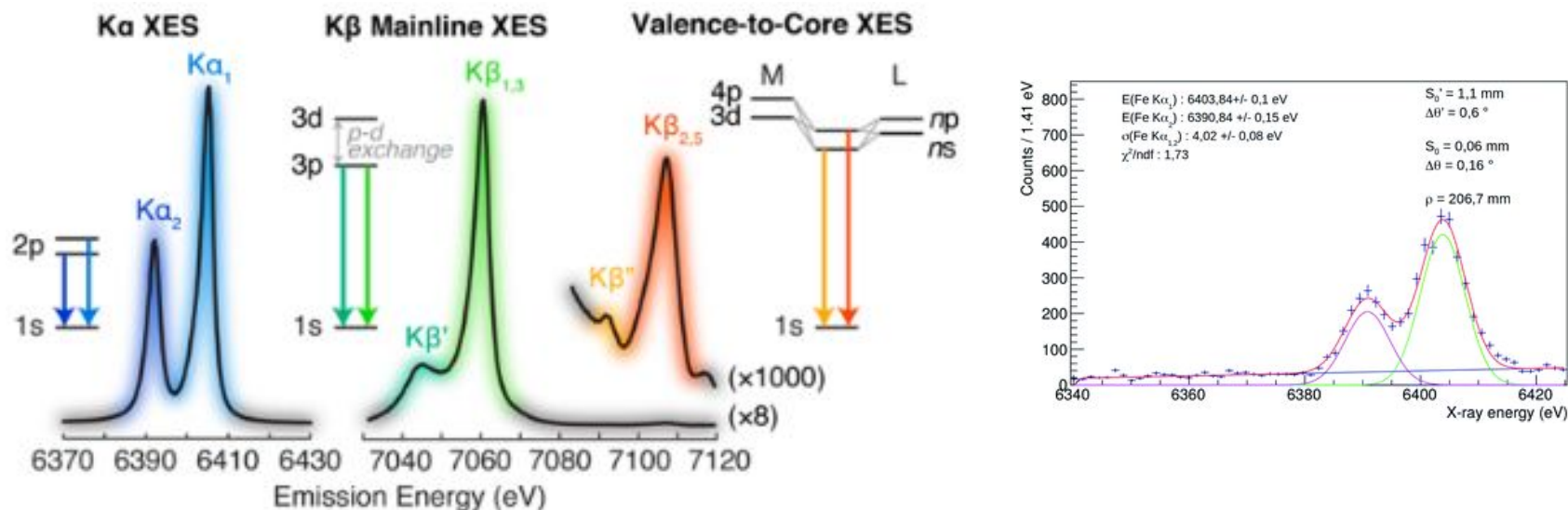


VOXES: High-Resolution Bragg Spectroscopy for Extended Sources



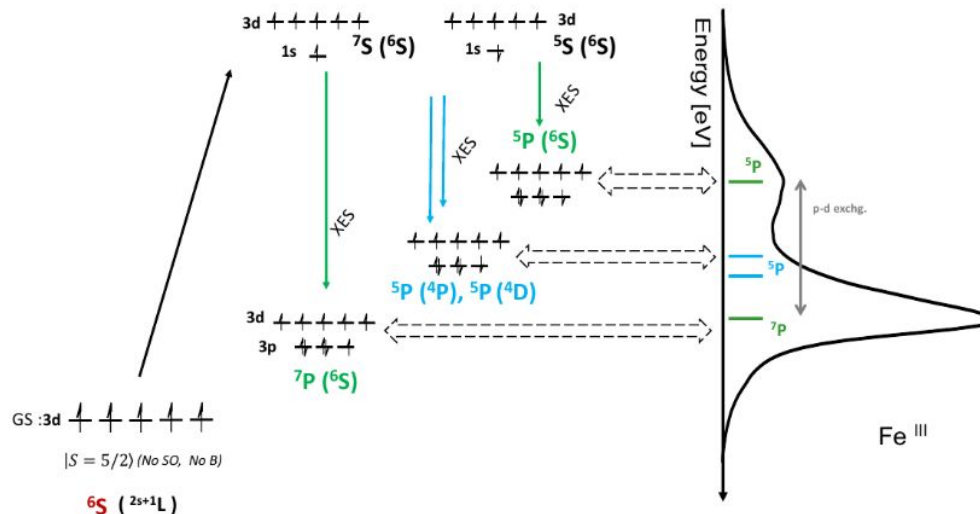
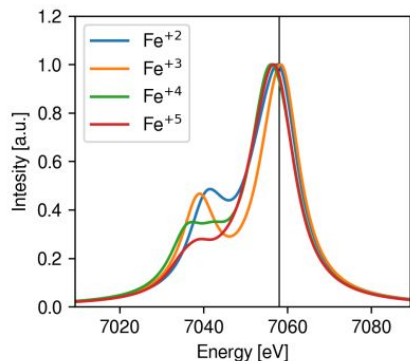
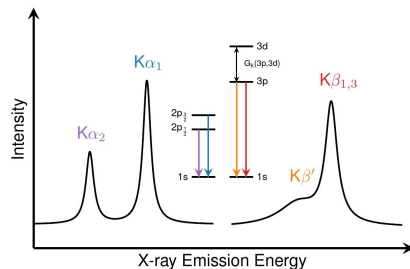
[Manti, Simone, et al. *Condensed Matter* 9.1 \(2024\): 19.](#)

Different Information from Different Emission Lines



Nicole Lee, Taras Petrenko, Uwe Bergmann, Frank Neese, and Serena DeBeer, Journal of the American Chemical Society 2010 132 (28), 9715-9727 DOI: 10.1021/ja101281e

K β Emission Line is sensible to the Metal's (Spin~Oxidation) State



Nicole Lee, Taras Petrenko, Uwe Bergmann, Frank Neese, and Serena DeBeer, Journal of the American Chemical Society 2010 132 (28), 9715-9727 DOI: 10.1021/ja101281e

Effects of the Metal's State on the $K\beta$ Lineshape in Solid/Liquids

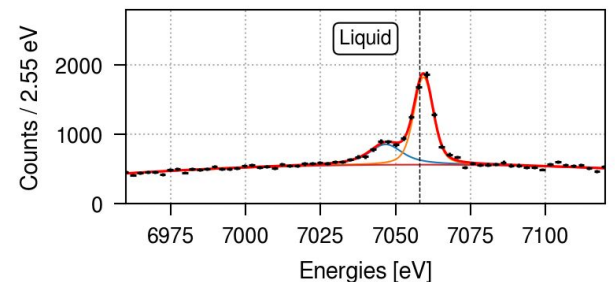
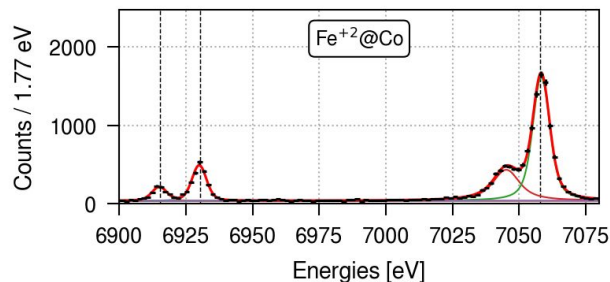
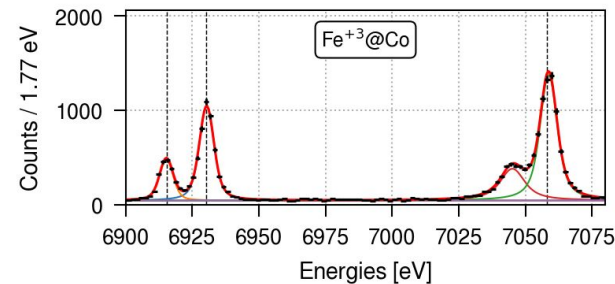
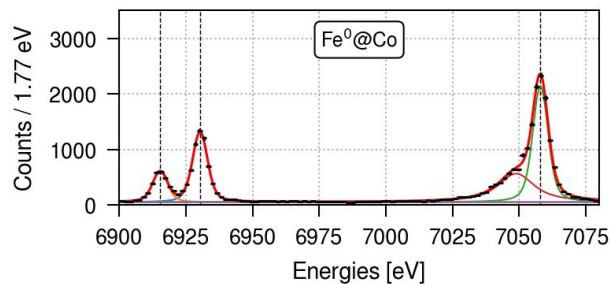
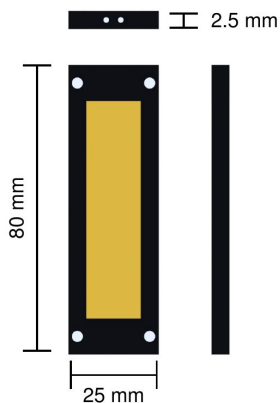


Gabriel Moskal
Jagiellonian University



Effects of the Metal's State on the $K\beta$ Lineshape in Solid/Liquids

MITI QO



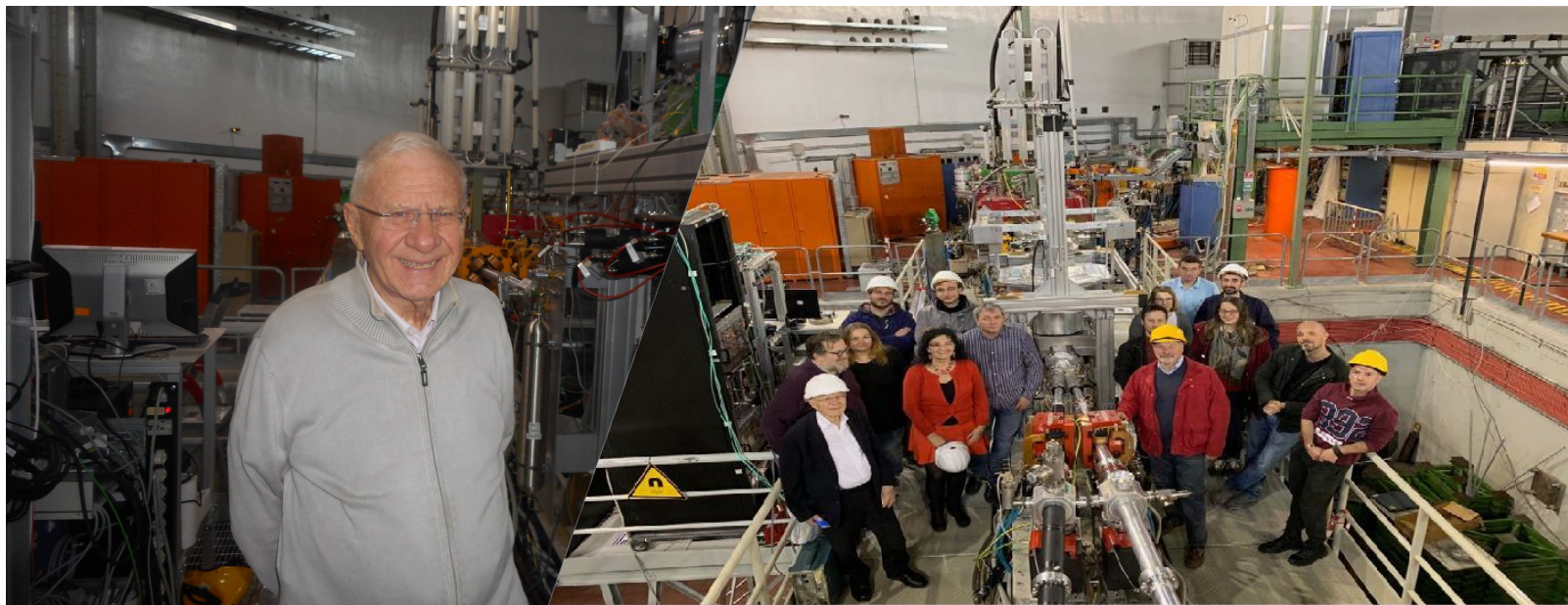
Conclusion

- **High Precision X-ray Spectroscopy of Kaonic Atoms with SIDDHARTA**
- **Studying QCD, QED and BSM Physics with Kaonic Atoms**
- **Beyond Kaonic Atoms: Impact of Crystal Spectrometers**

Part of the SIDDHARTA-2 collaboration



I dedicated this talk to my dear colleagues and friends
Prof Carlo Guaraldo and Dr. Johann Zmeskal who passed away in 2024
You'll be very much missed!



Conclusion

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Thank you for the Attention!