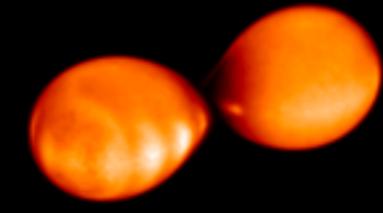


# Neutron star mergers as heavy element production site

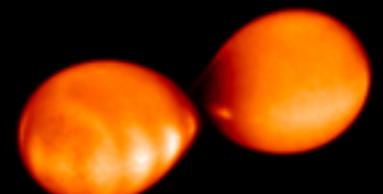
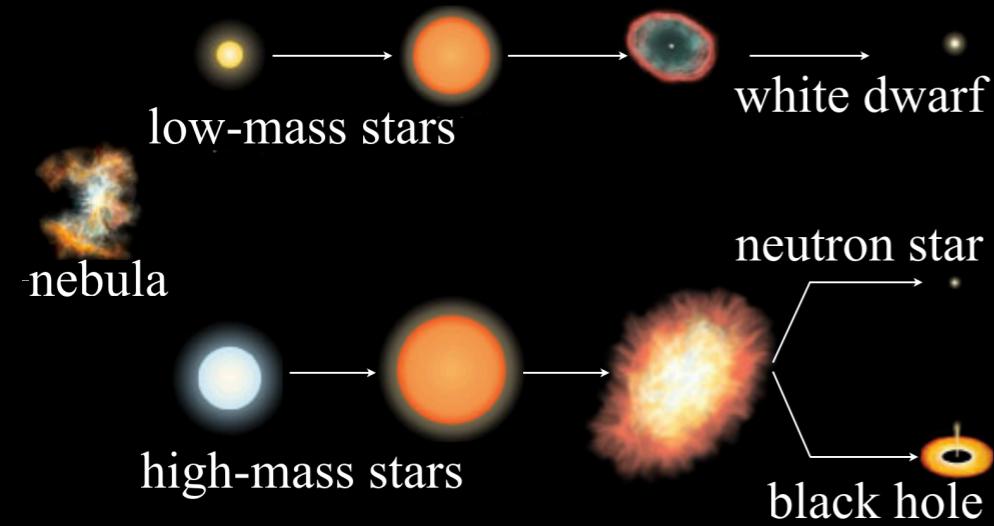
Stephan Rosswog  
Astronomy & Oskar Klein Centre  
Stockholm University





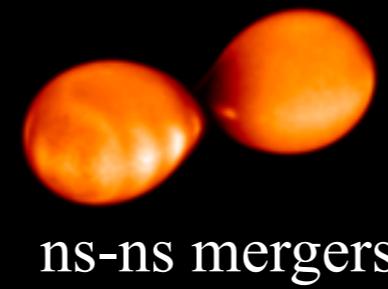
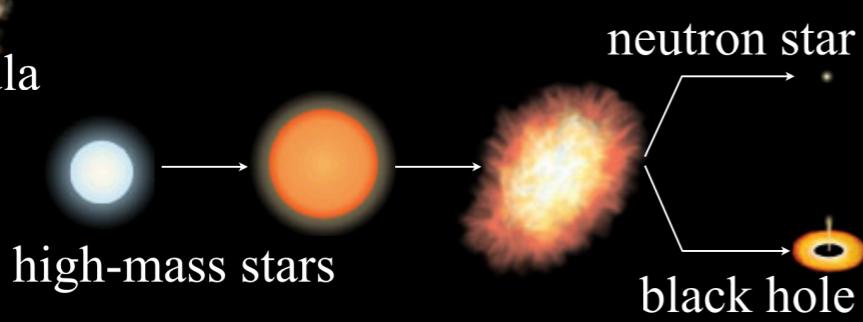
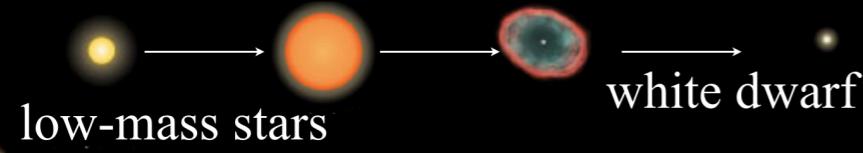
ns-ns mergers

## Binary stellar evolution



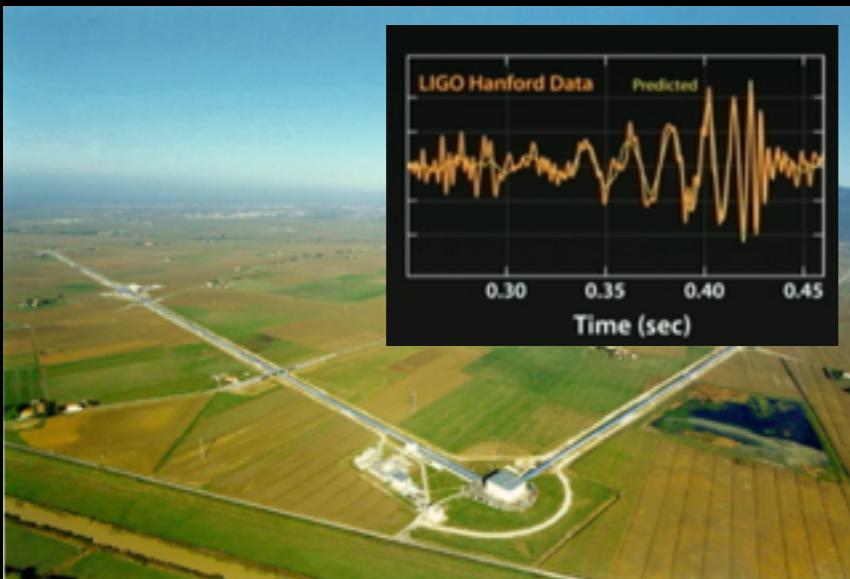
ns-ns mergers

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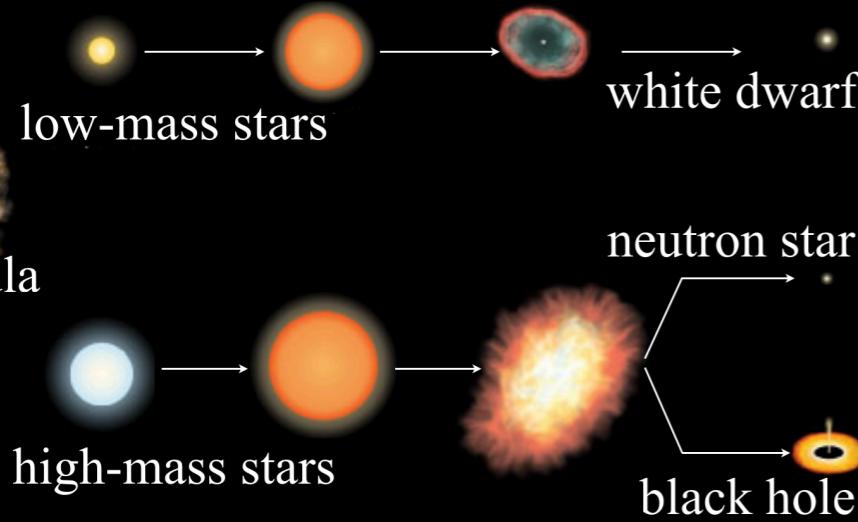


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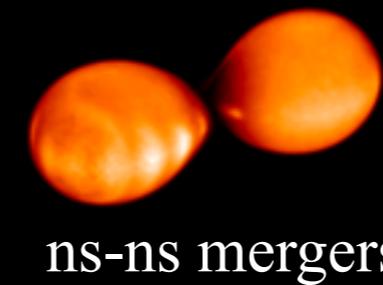
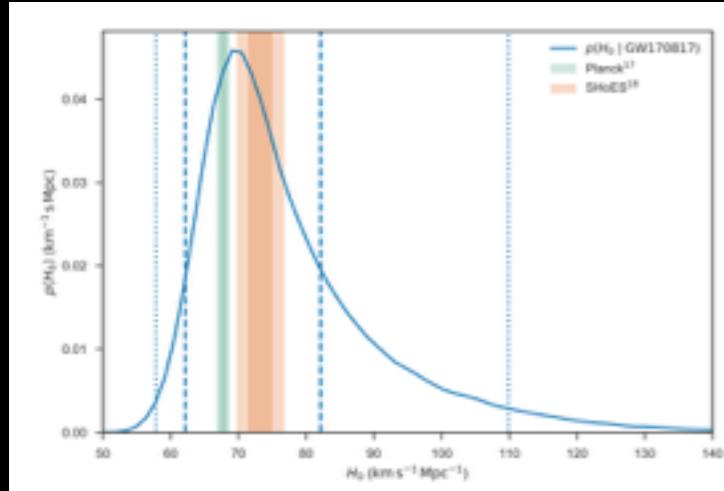
## Gravitational wave detection



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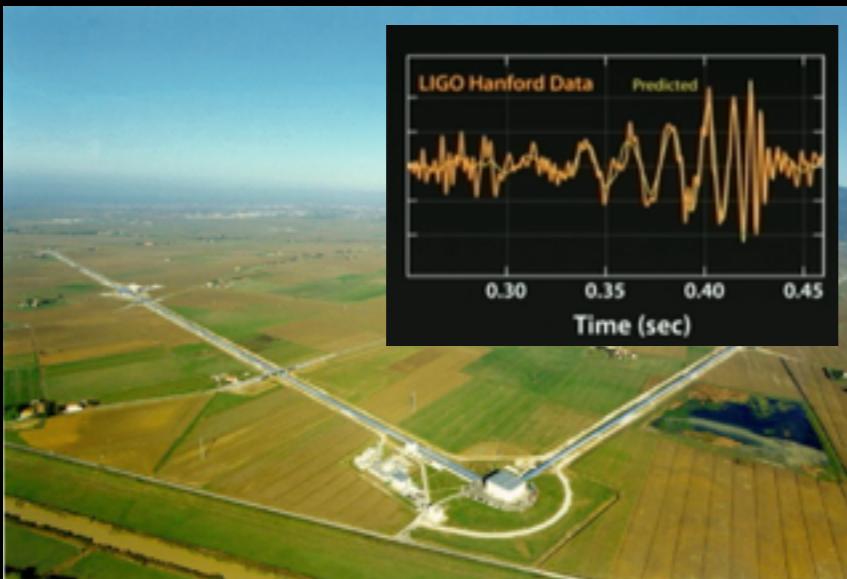


## Cosmology

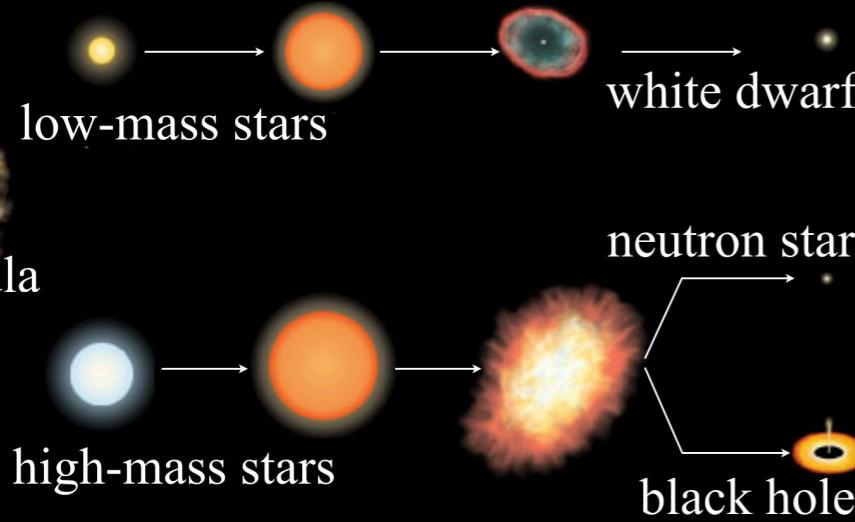


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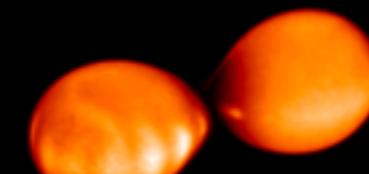
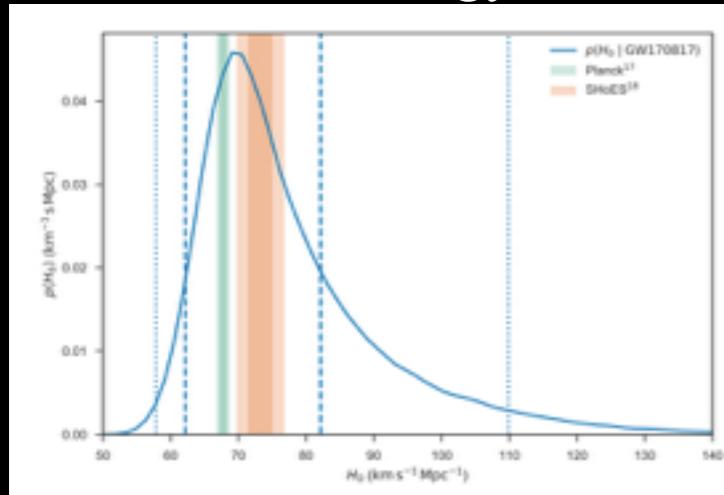
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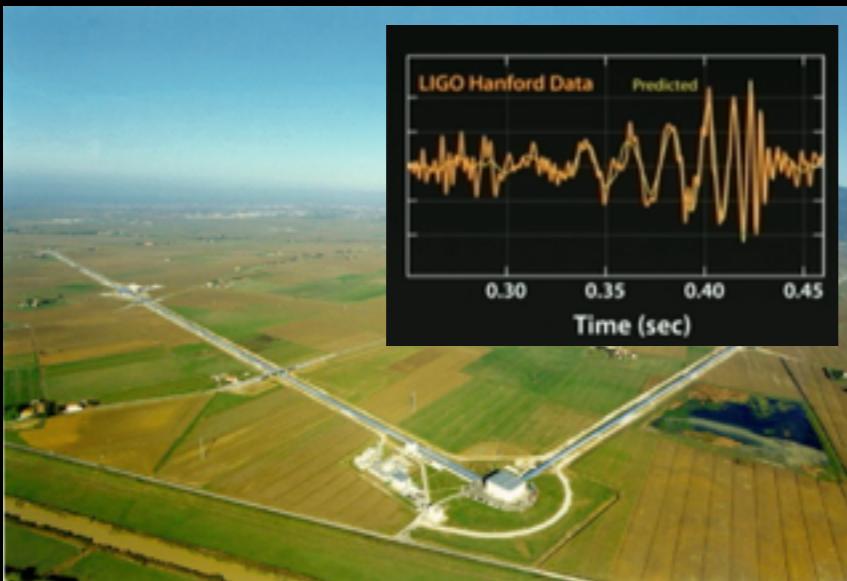


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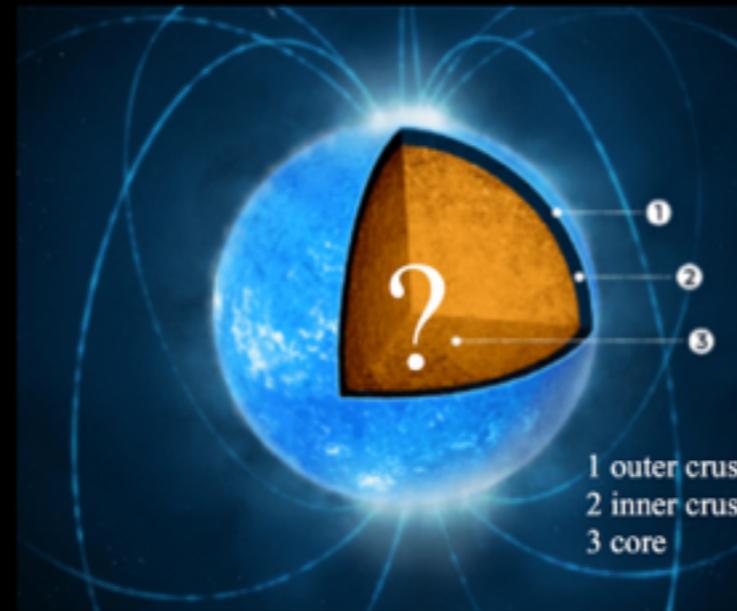


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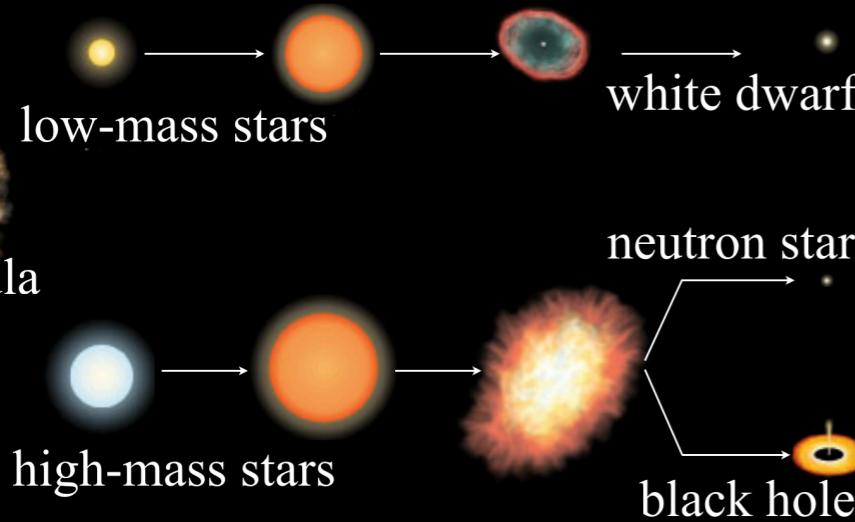
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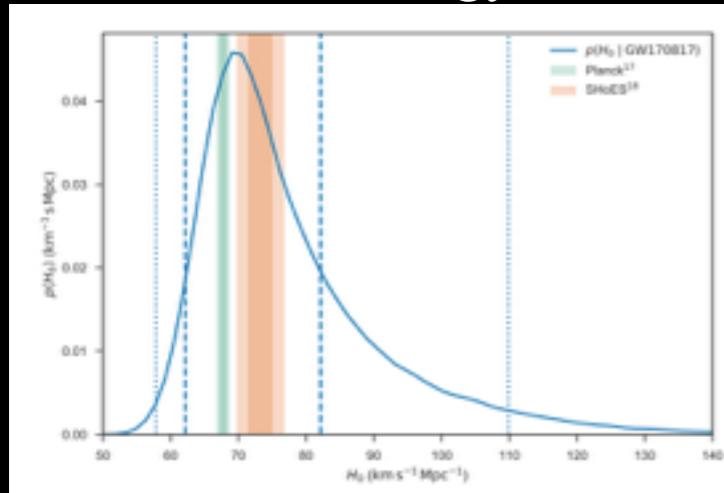
## Nuclear matter properties



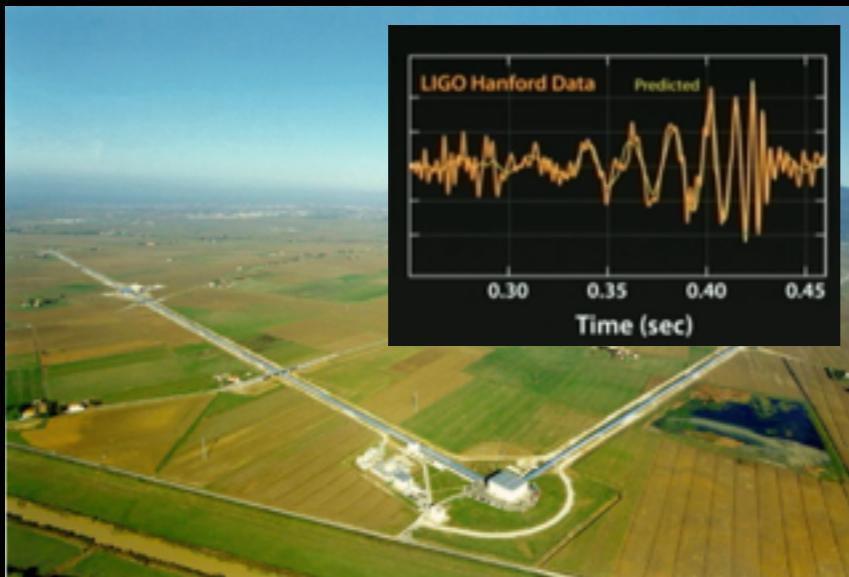
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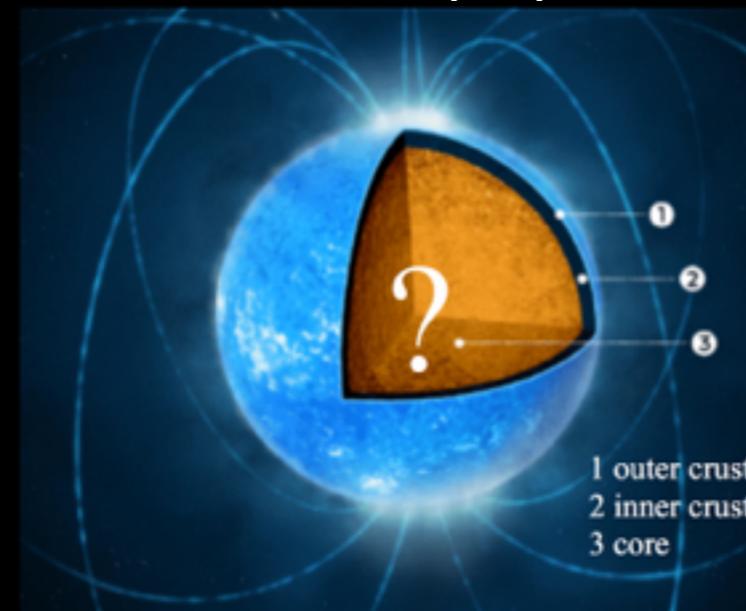
## Cosmology



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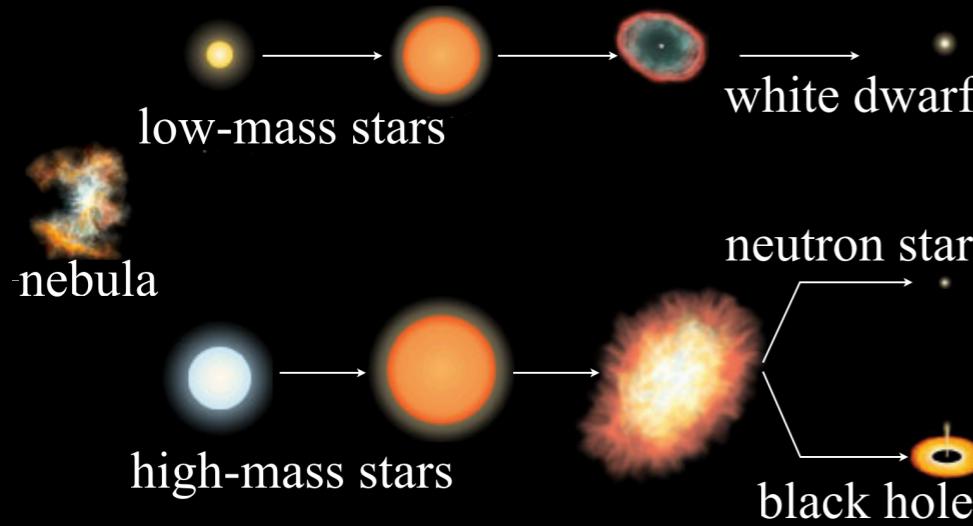
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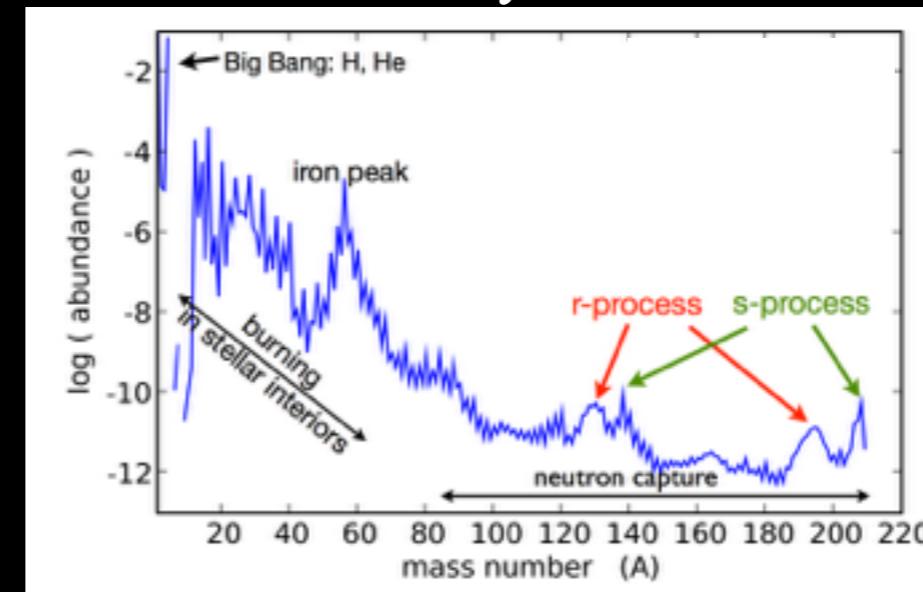
## (short) Gamma-Ray Bursts



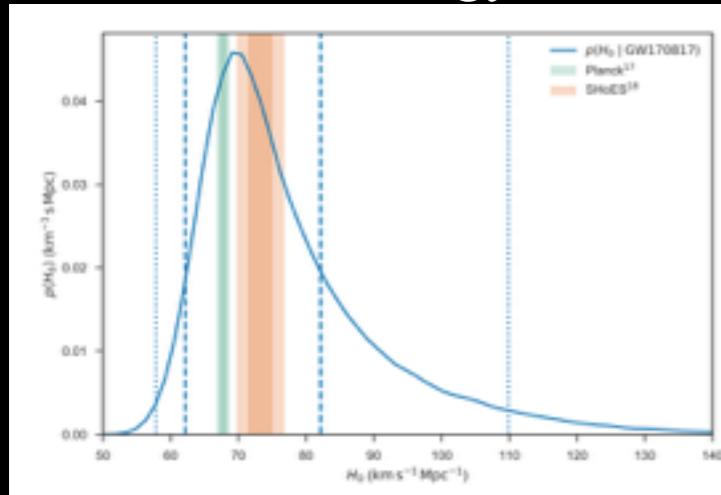
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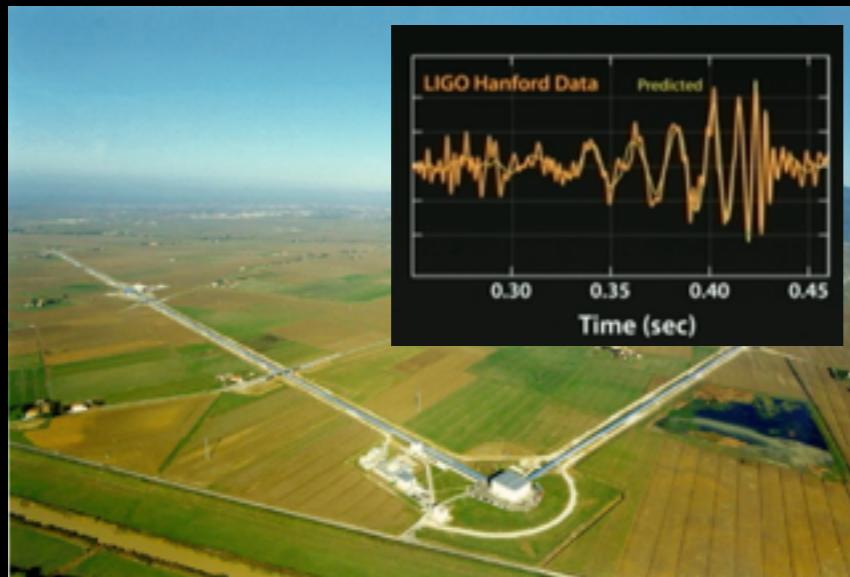
## Nucleosynthesis



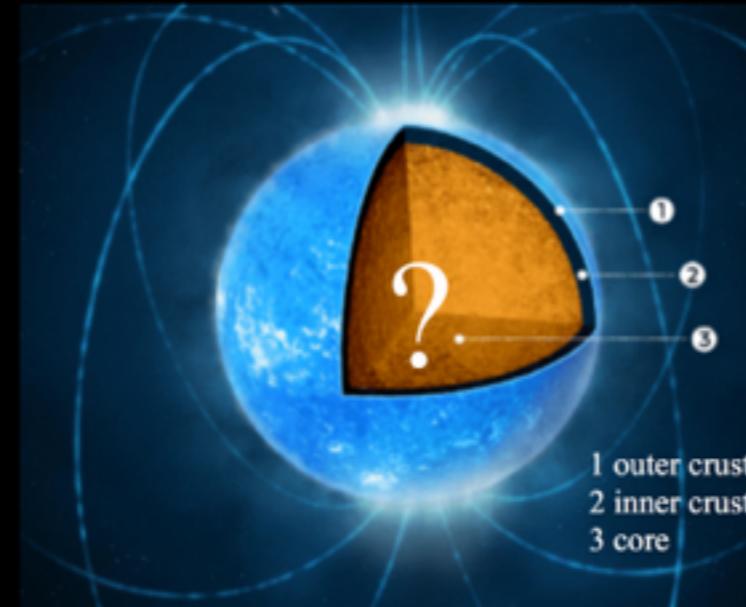
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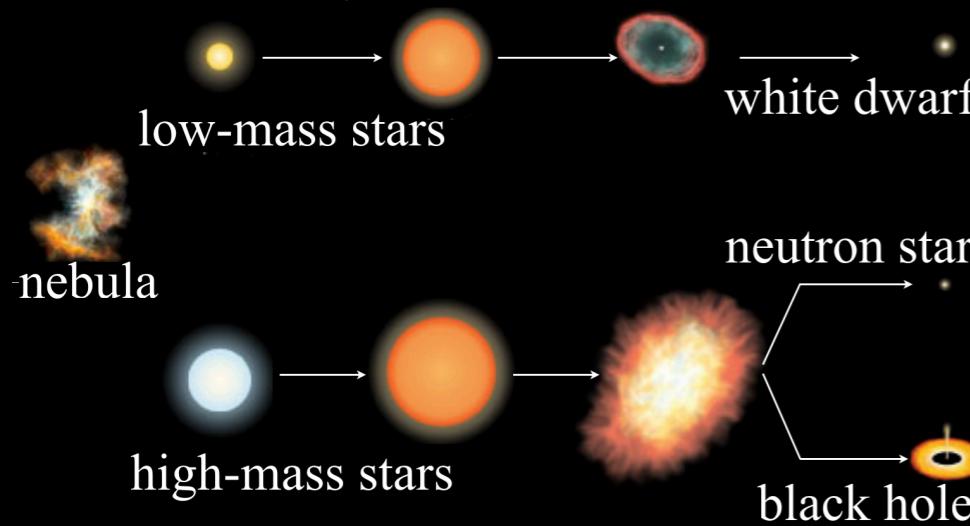
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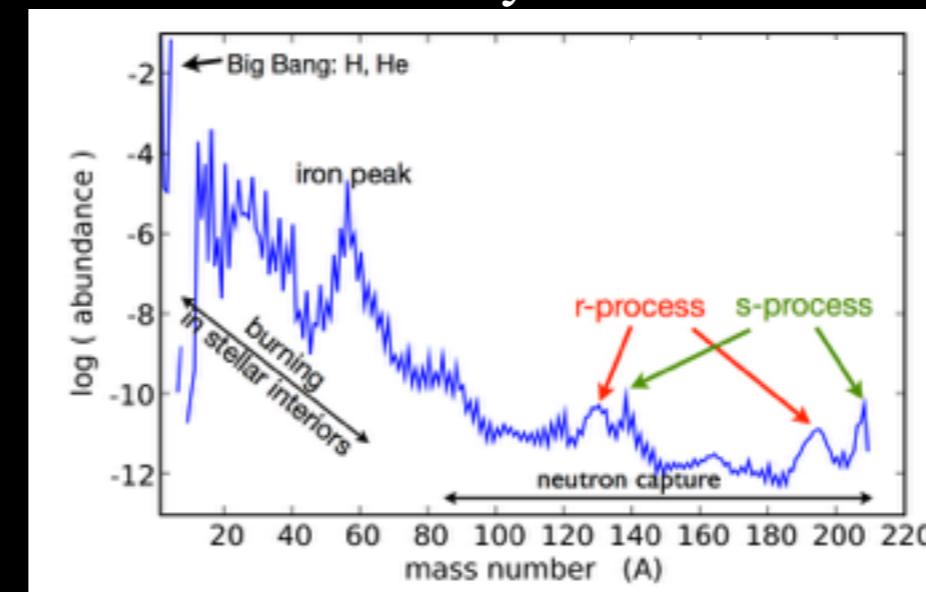
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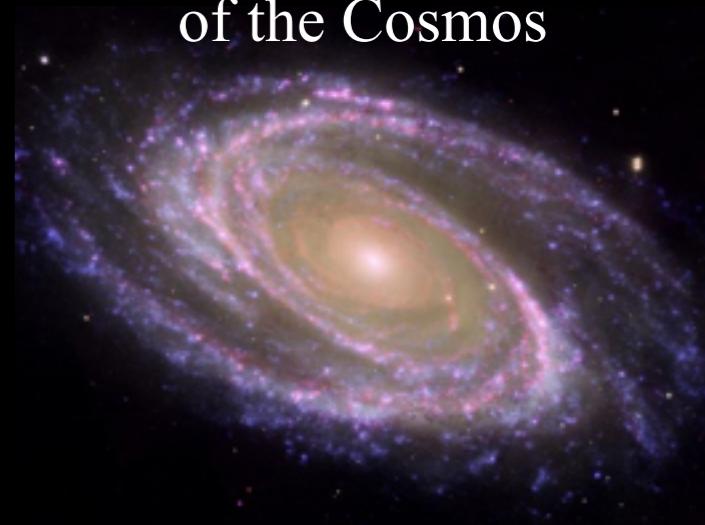
## Binary stellar evolution



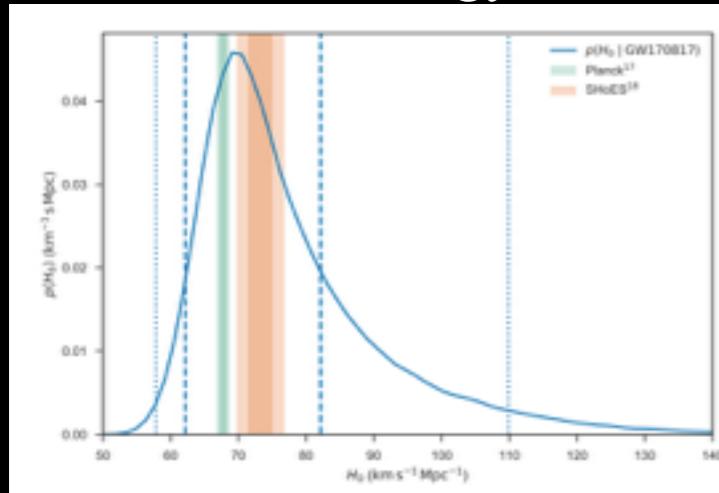
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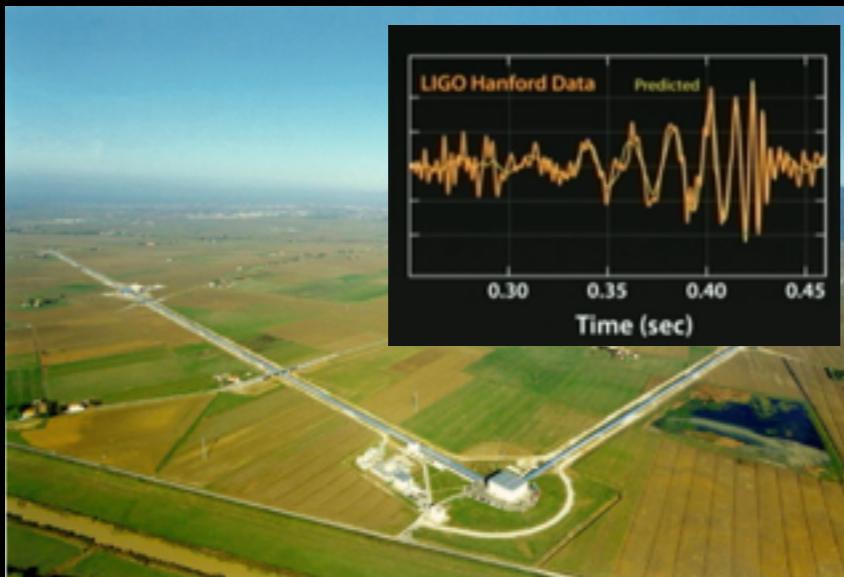
## Elemental evolution of the Cosmos



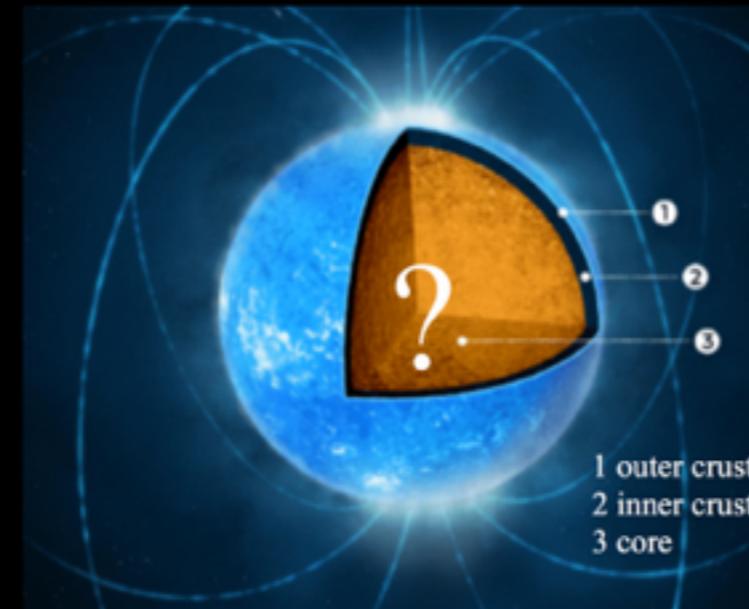
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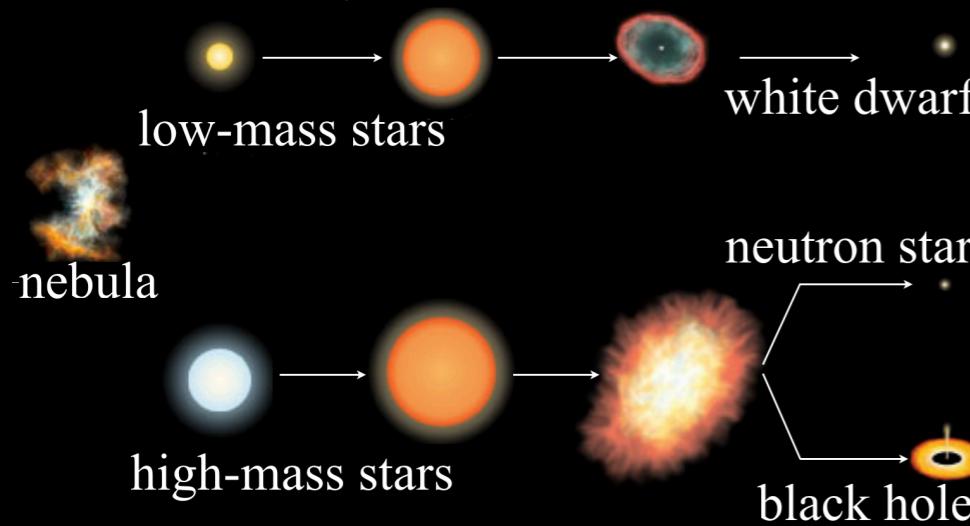
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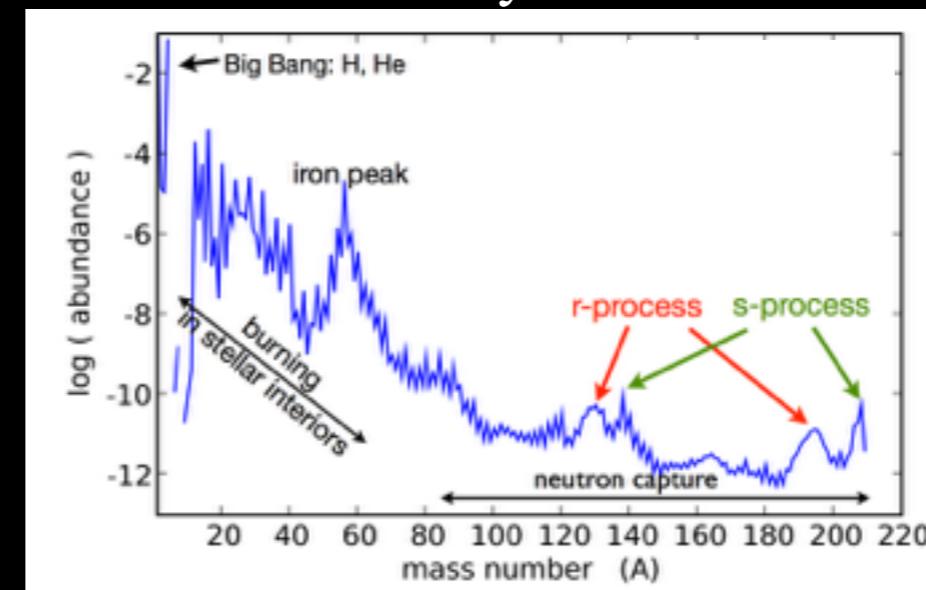
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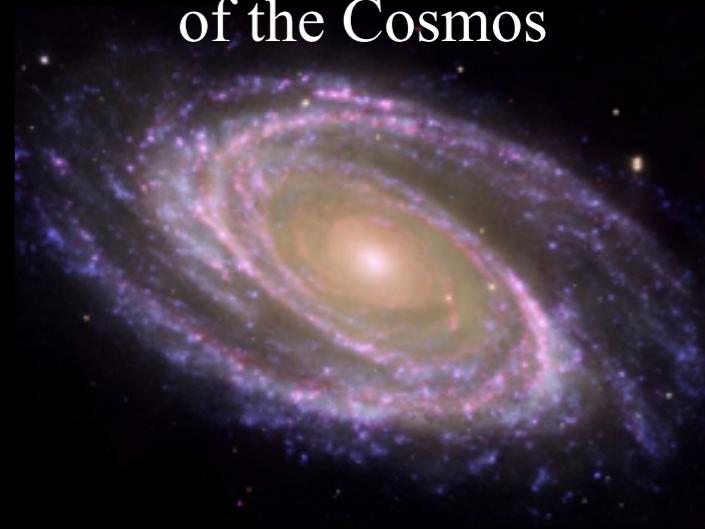
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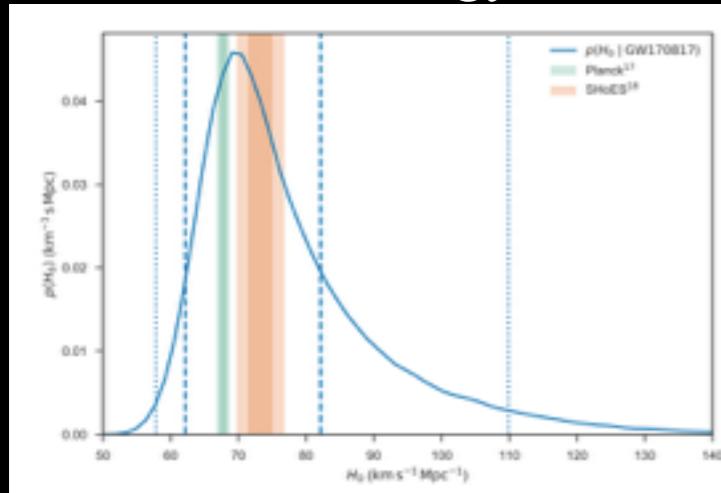
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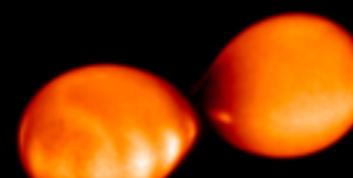
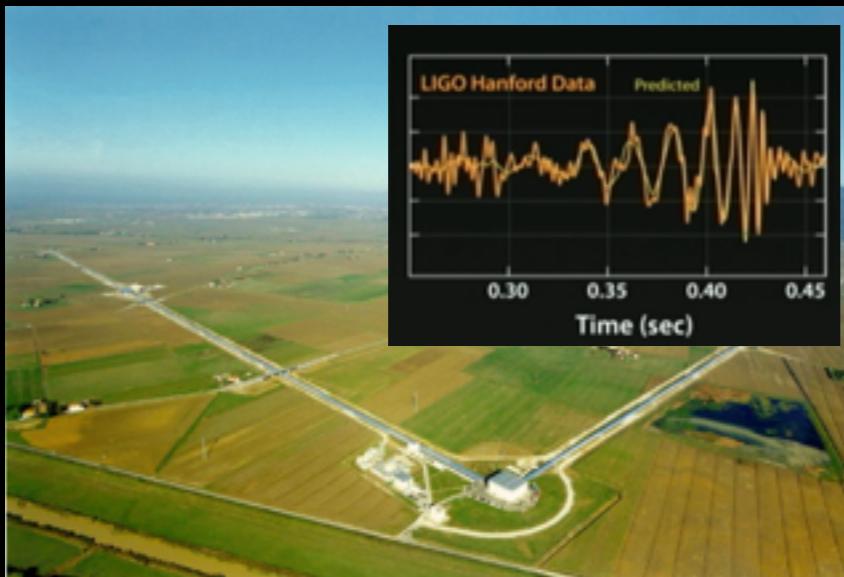
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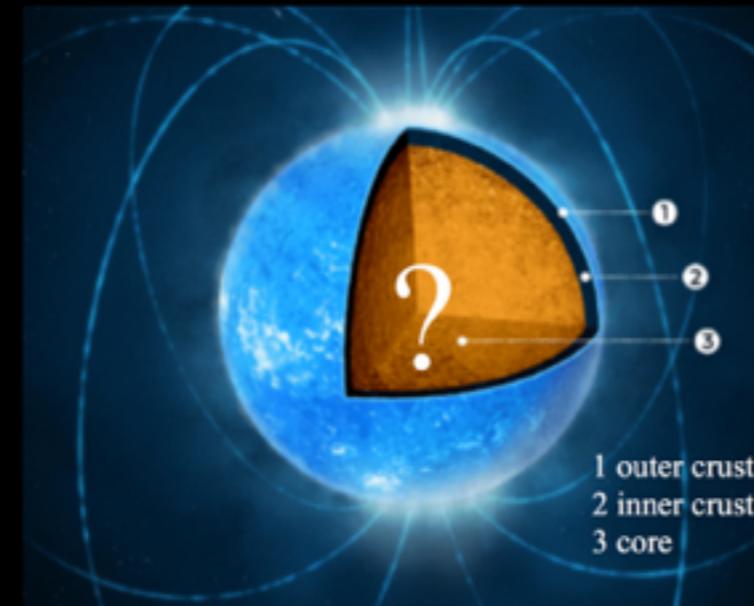


## Gravitational wave detection



ns-ns mergers

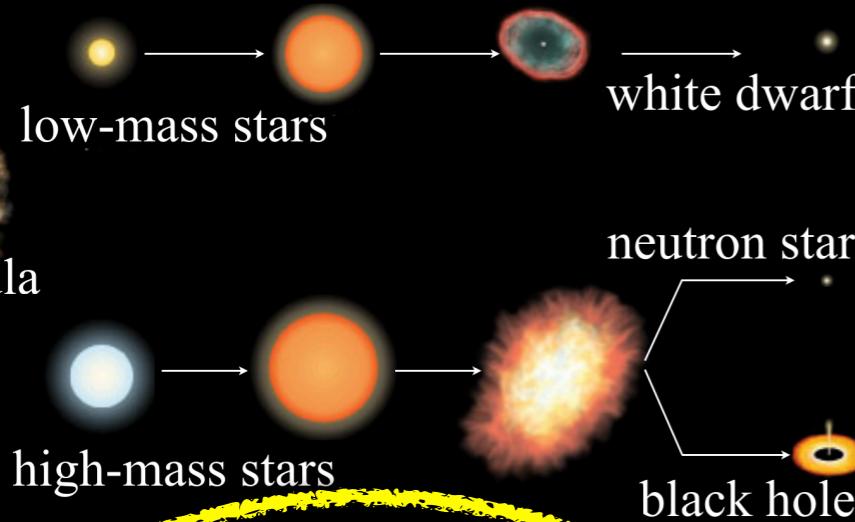
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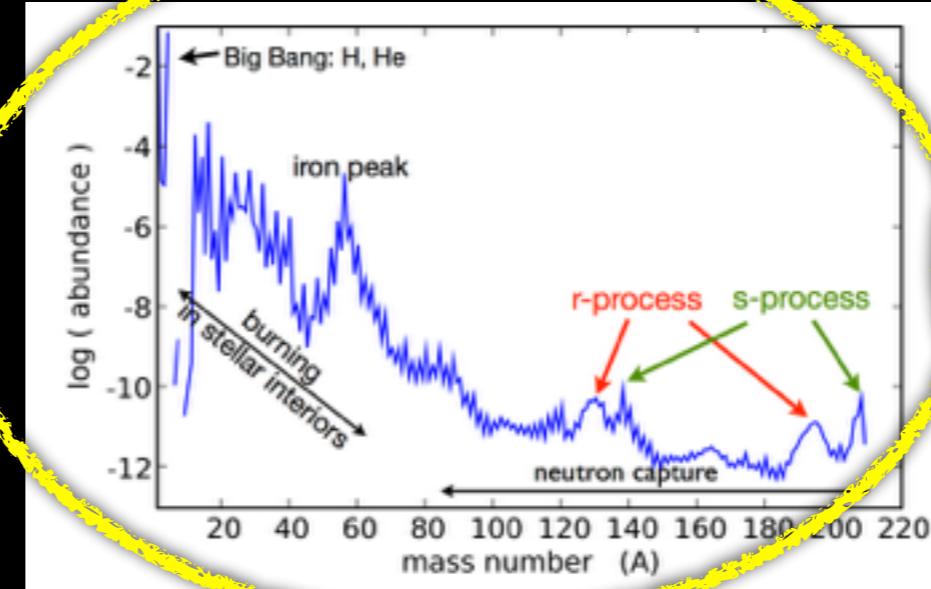
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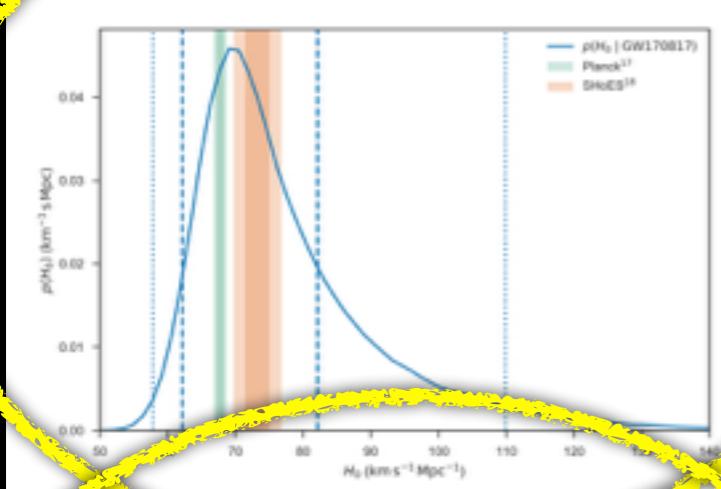
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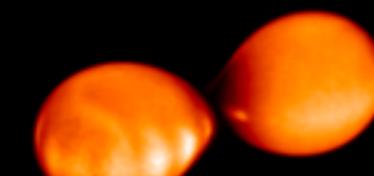
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## Cosmology



**GW170817**

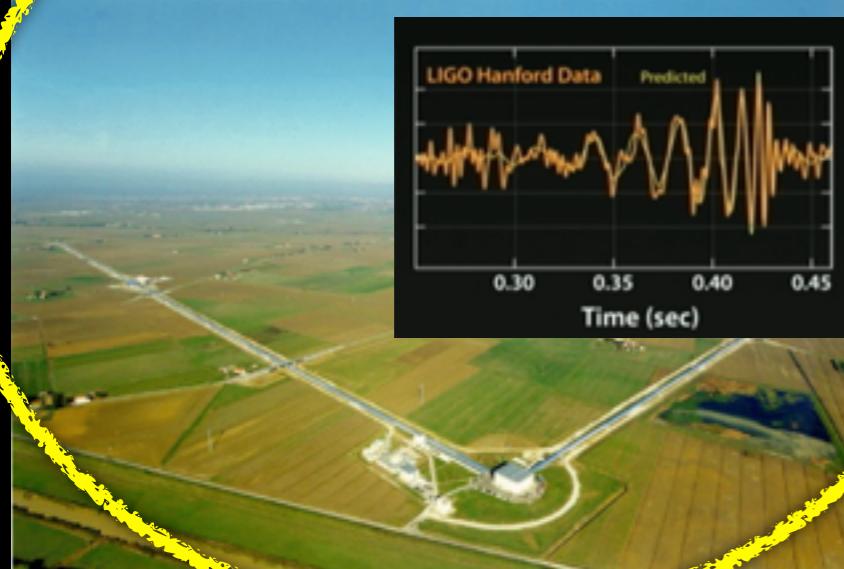


ns-ns mergers

## Radioactive electromag. flashes



## Gravitational wave detection



## Nuclear matter properties



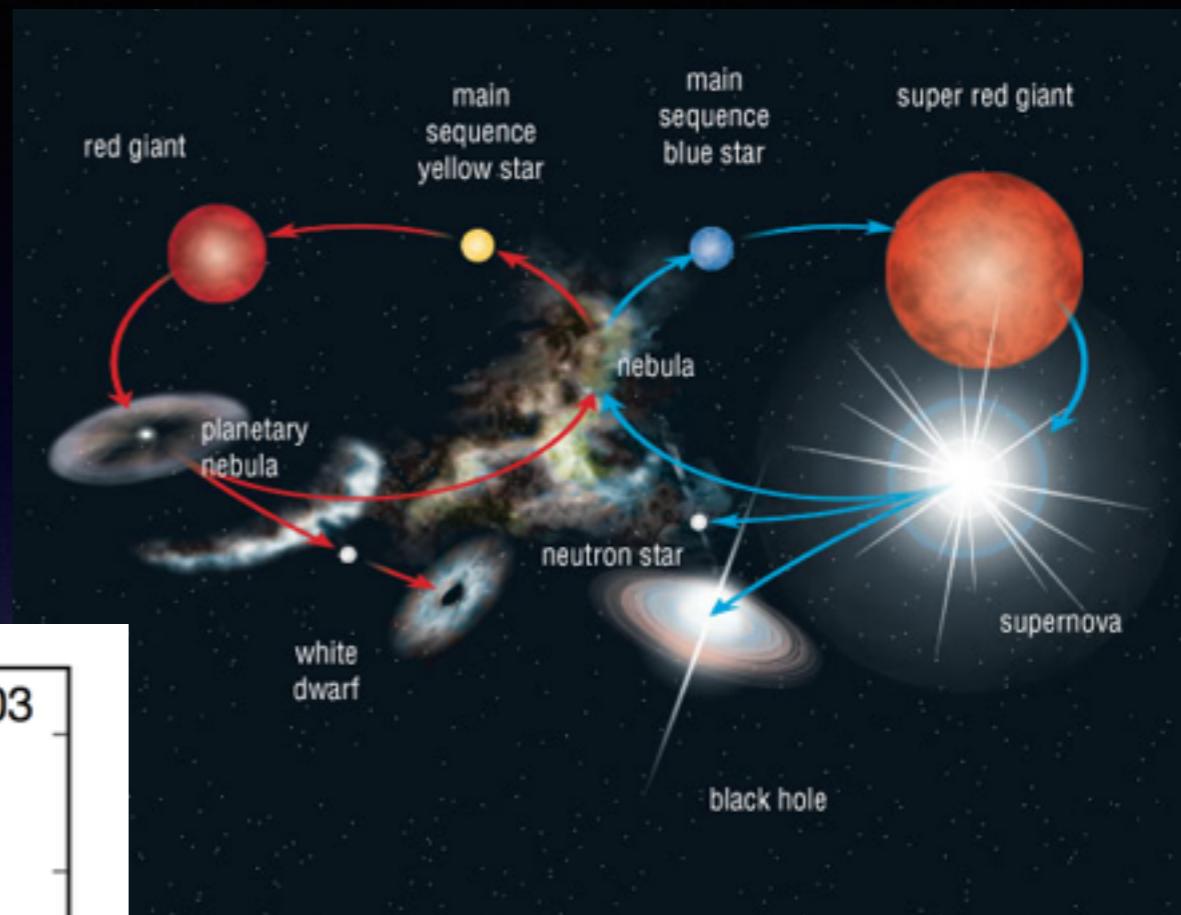
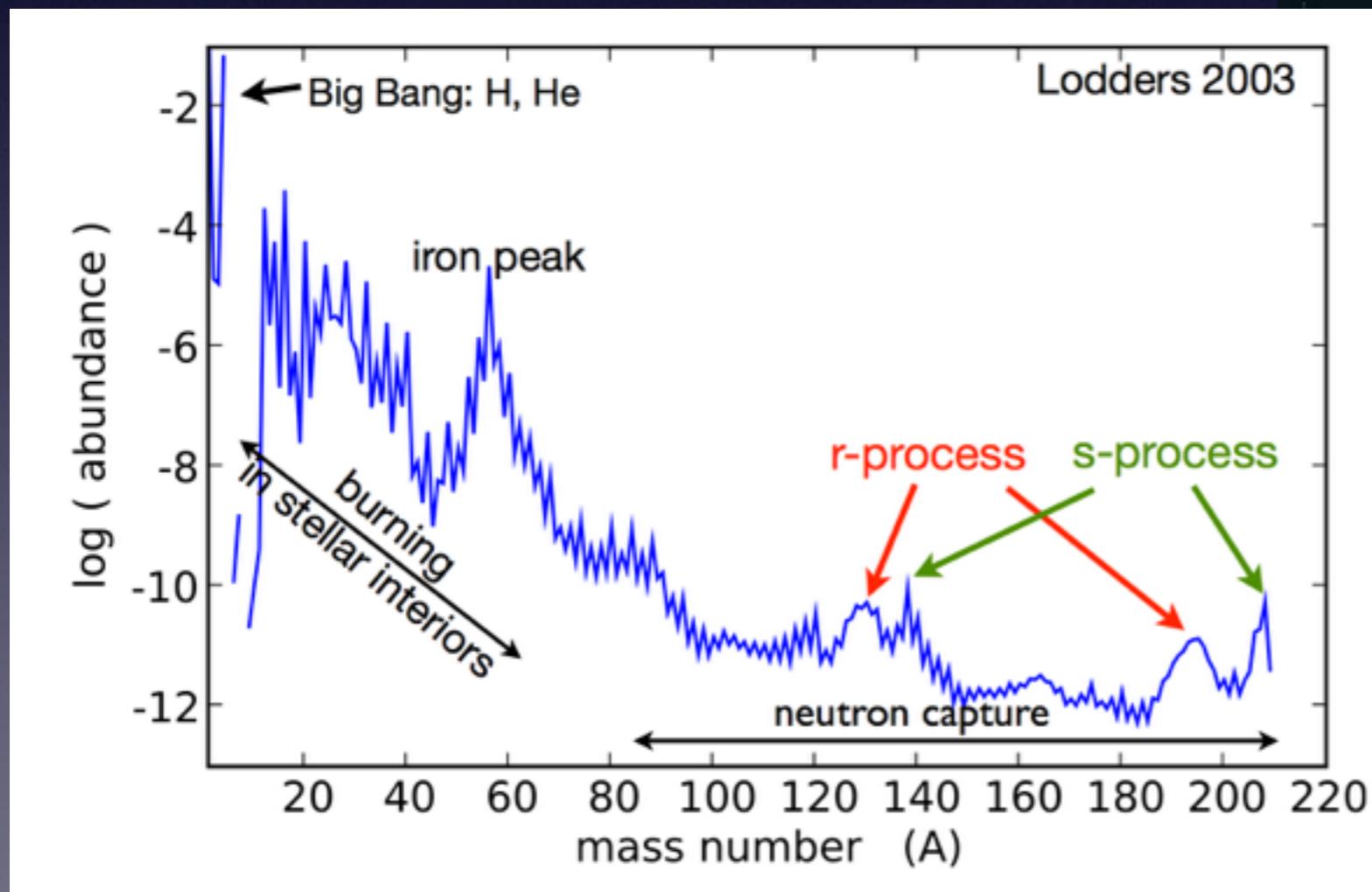
## (short) Gamma-Ray Bursts



# R-process nucleosynthesis

cosmic life cycle

## Solar system abundances



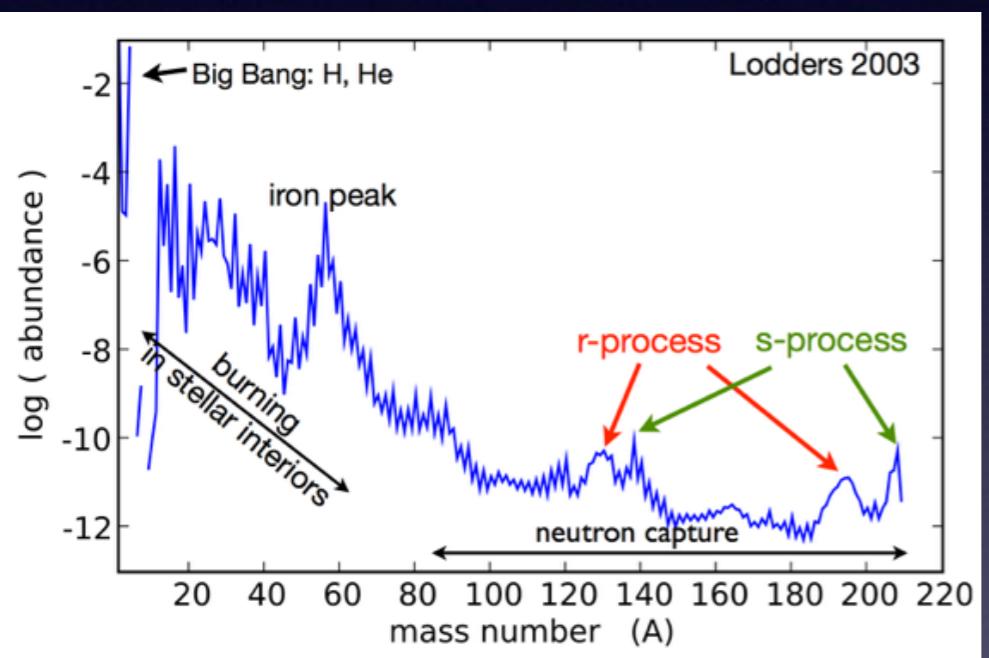
two neutron capture processes:

- slow n-capture (“s-process”)
- rapid n-capture (“r-process”)  
⇒ ~50% of elements heavier than iron

“Big Bang” “stellar burning” “neutron captures”

## Examples of r-process elements

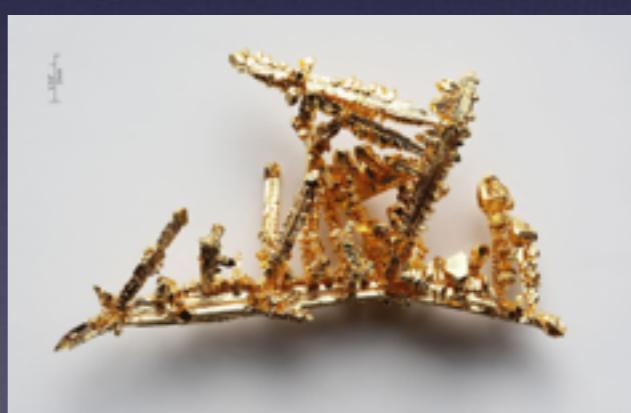
Iridium, Z= 77, A= 192



Platinum, Z= 78, A= 195



Gold, Z= 79, A= 197



Lead, Z= 82, A= 207



# Where does the r-process happen?

- One of the “11 science questions for the new century”  
(National Research Council 2003)
- Supernovae traditionally favored since the 1950ies  
(Burbidge et al. 1957, Cameron 1957)



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Coalescing Neutron Stars: A Solution to the R-Process Problem ?

*S. Rosswog<sup>1</sup>, F.K. Thielemann<sup>1</sup>, M.B. Davies<sup>2</sup>, W. Benz<sup>3</sup>, T. Piran<sup>4</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Departement für Physik und Astronomie, Universität Basel, Switzerland  
<sup>2</sup> Institute of Astronomy, University of Cambridge, UK  
<sup>3</sup> Physikalisches Institut, Universität Bern, Switzerland  
<sup>4</sup> Racah Institute for Physics, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel

11 May 1998

**1.1 Introduction**

Most recent nucleosynthesis parameter studies [3, 4, 11] place questions on the ability of high entropy neutrino wind scenarios in type II supernovae to produce r-process nuclei for

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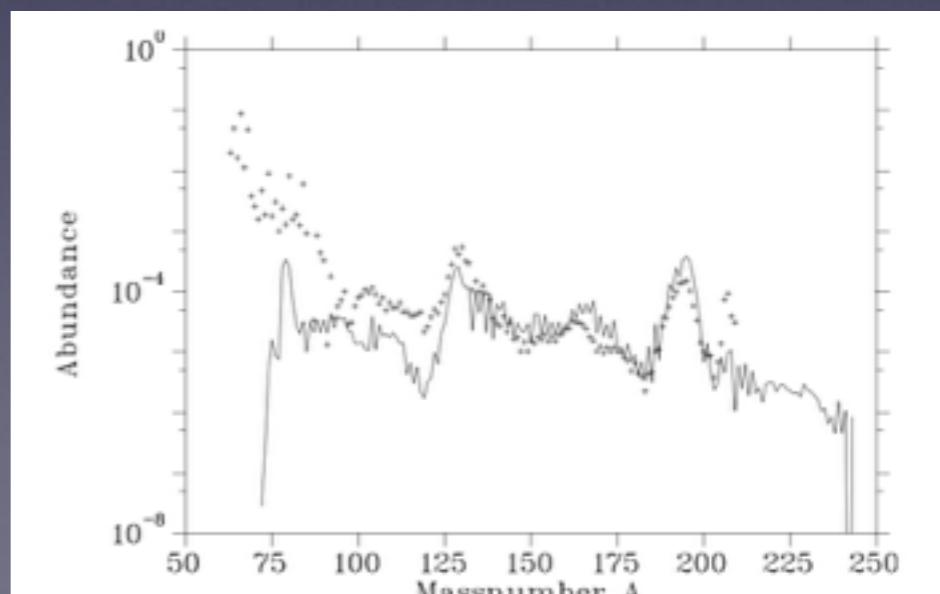
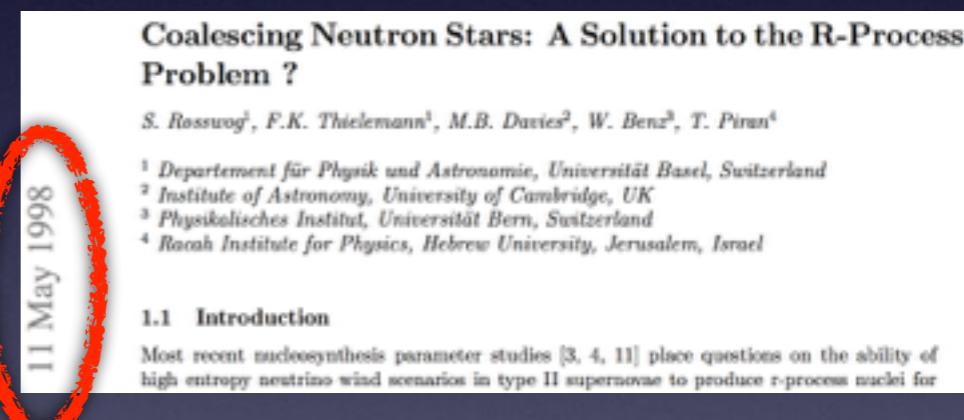
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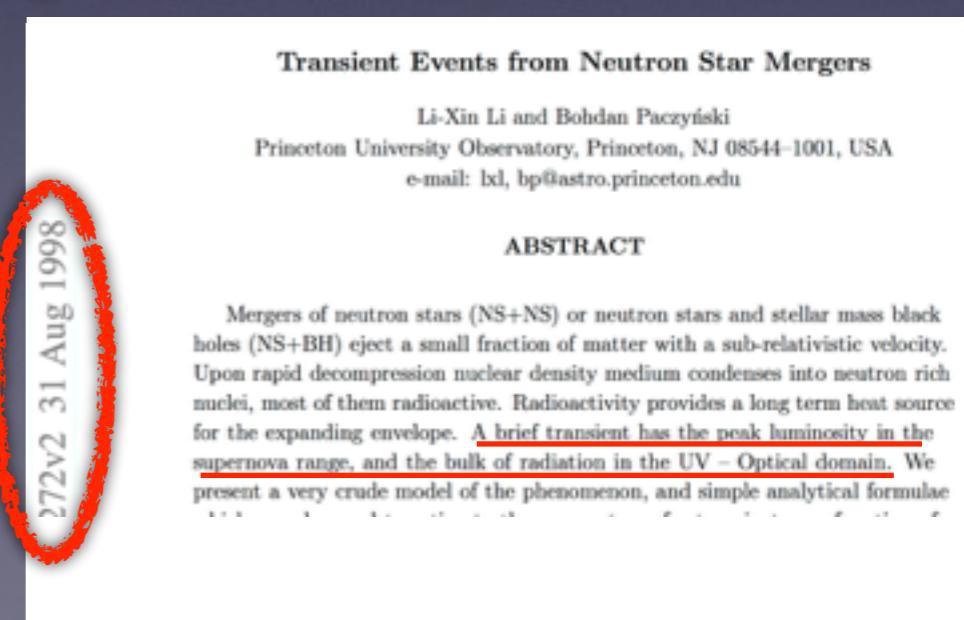
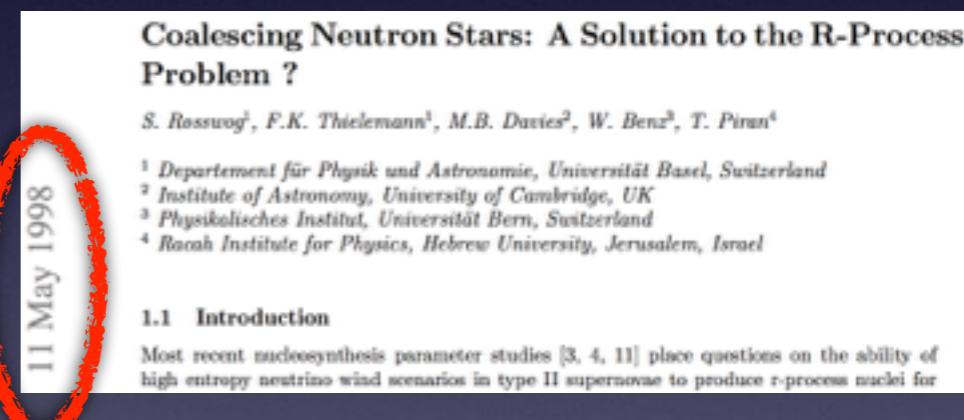
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- “should power EM transient” (Li & Paczynski 1998)

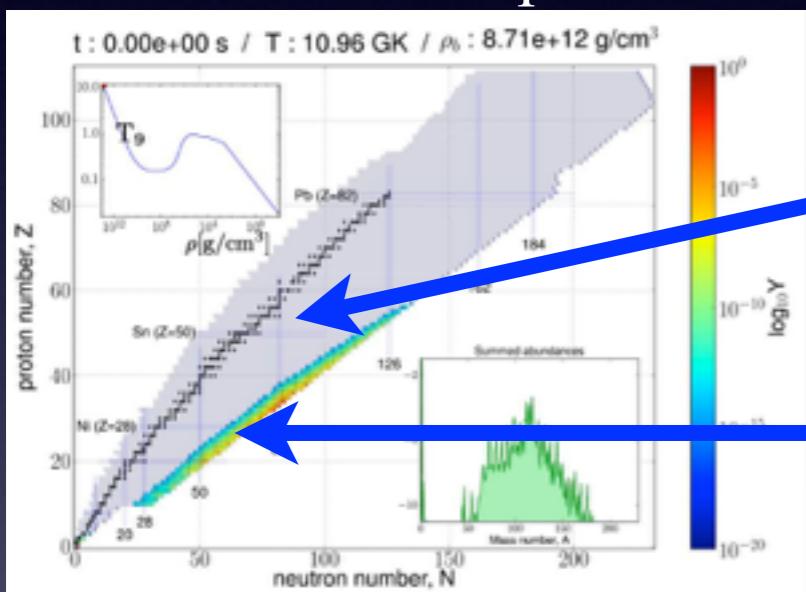


## R-process: electron fraction $Y_e$ plays decisive role!

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high  $Y_e$ :

- closer to valley of  $\beta$ -stability
- nuclear properties from experiments

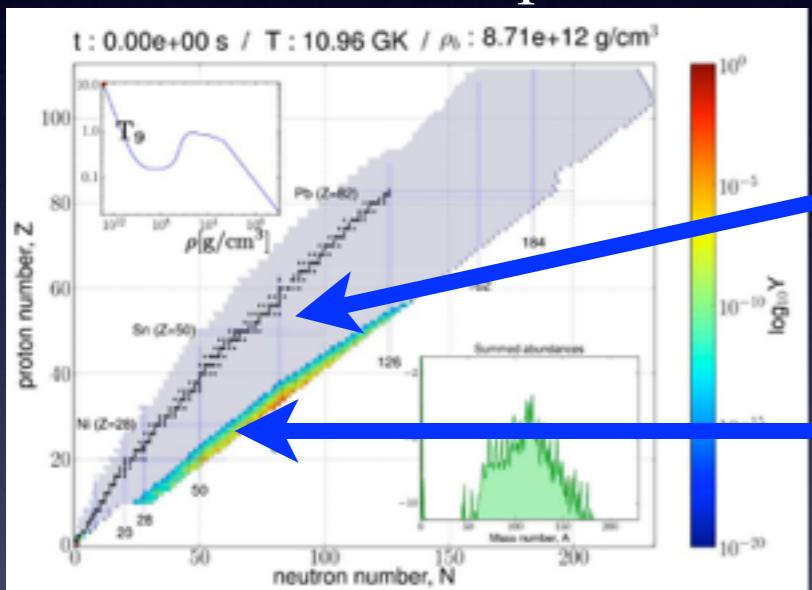
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- astrophysical realization



Supernova:

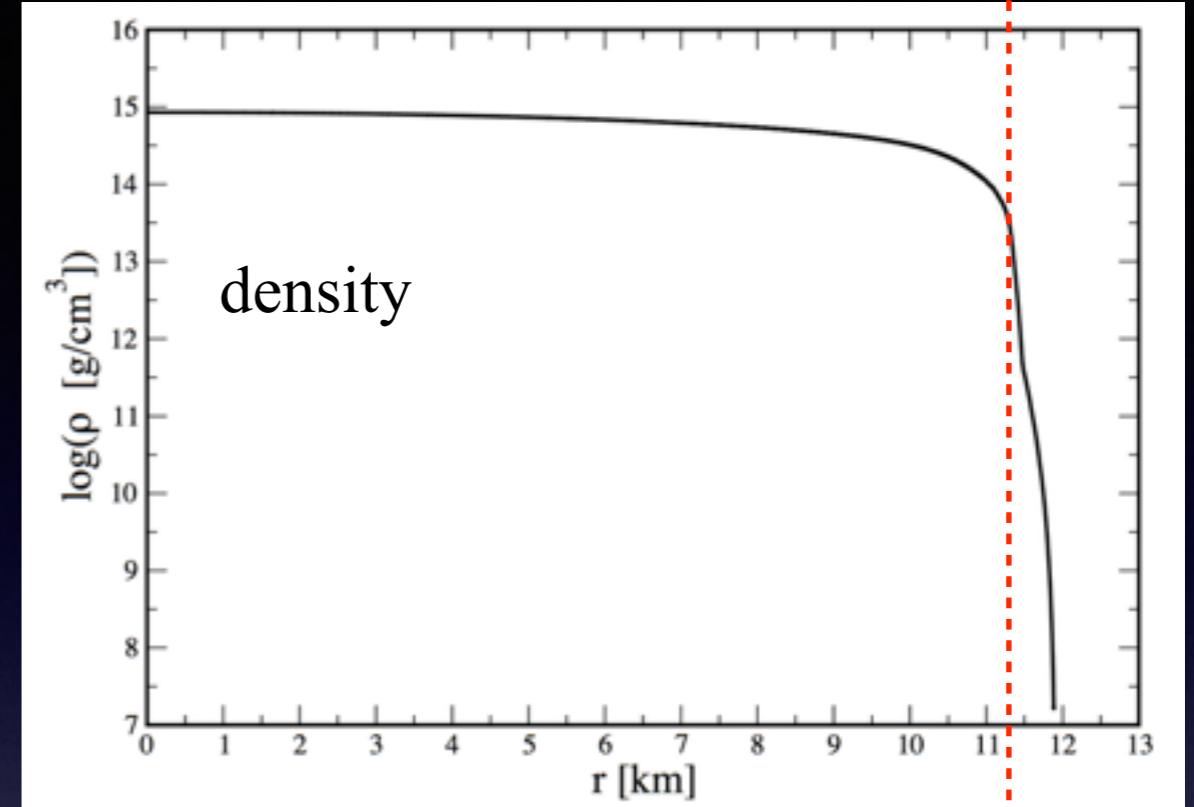
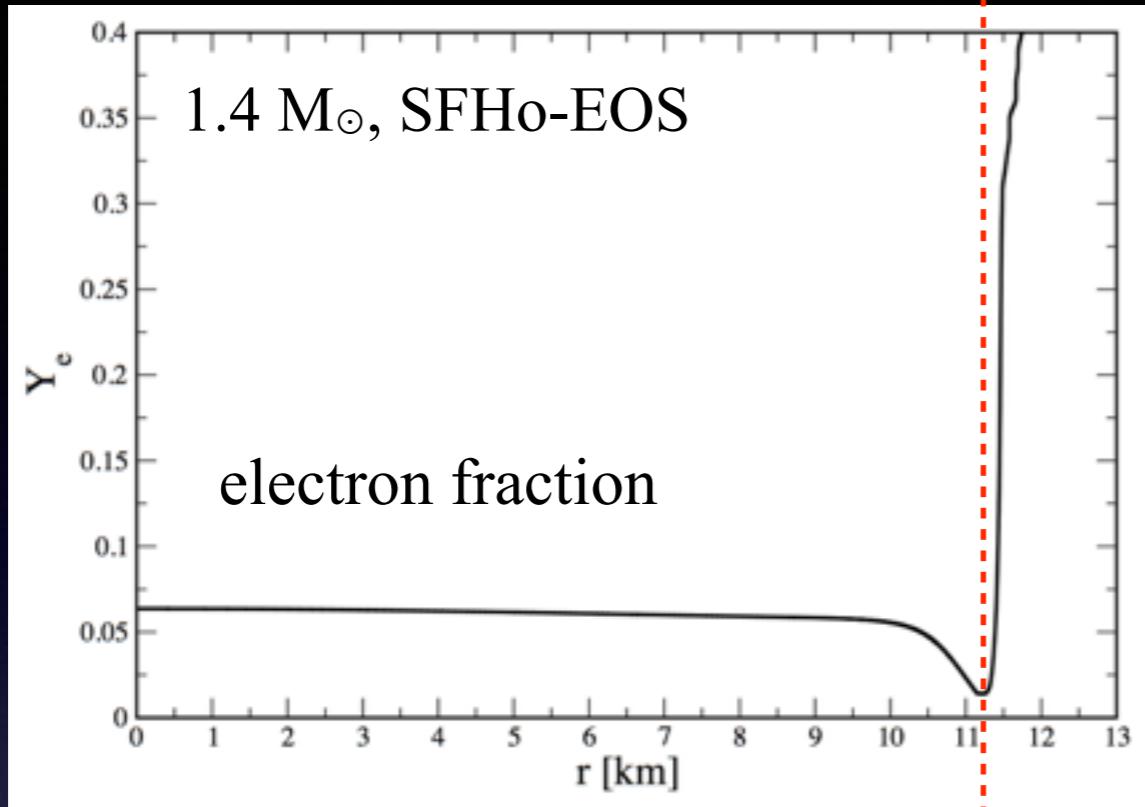
“de-leptonizing”  
from 0.5 down  
to  $Y_e \sim 0.3$



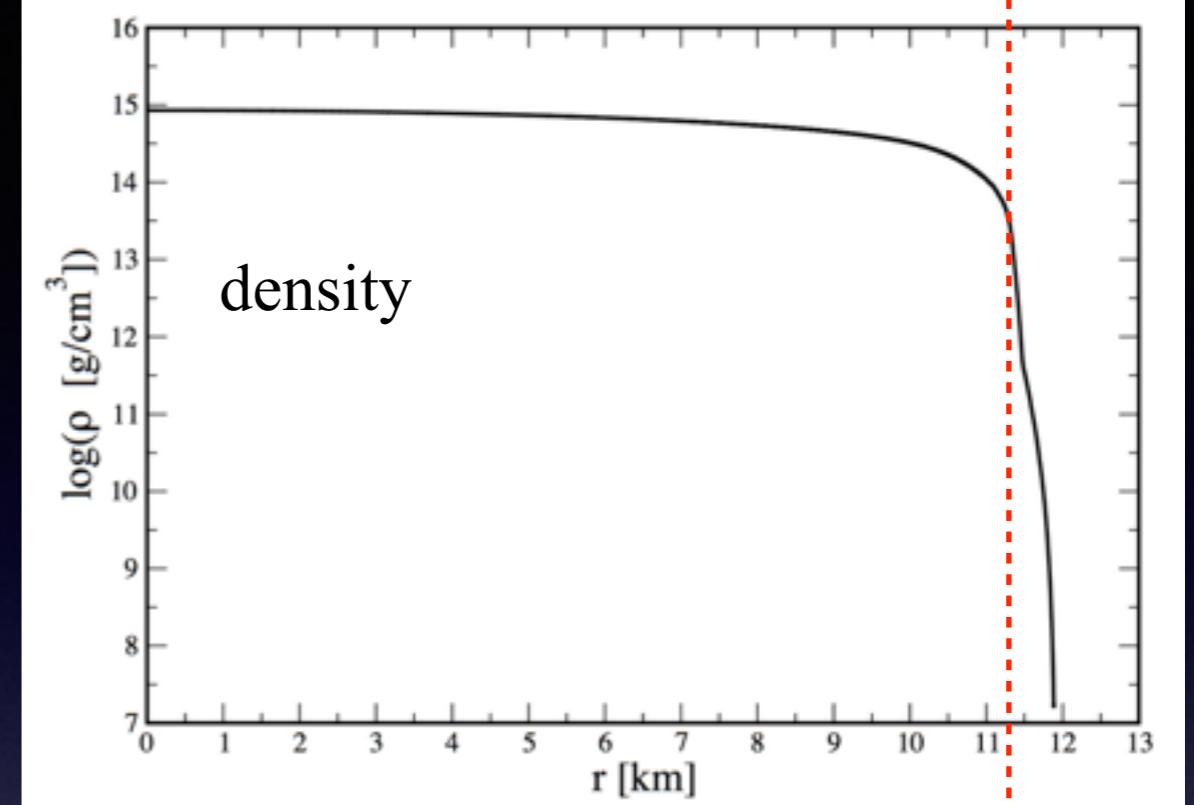
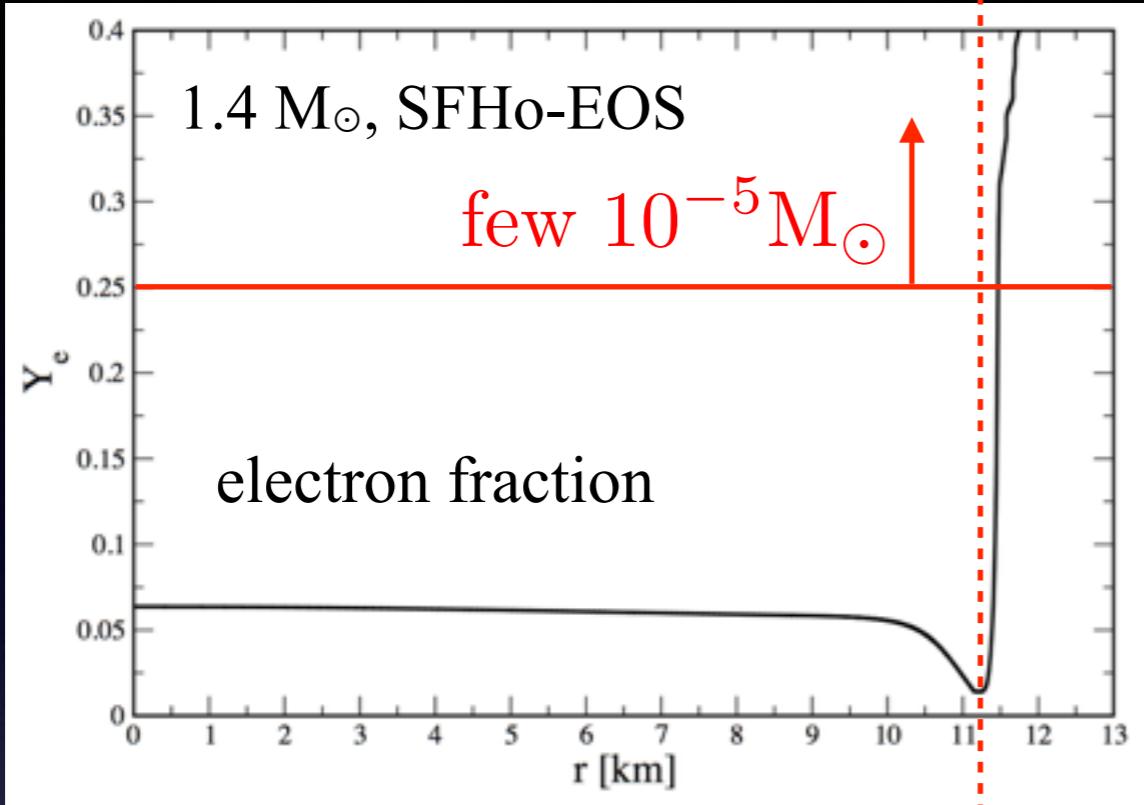
NS mergers:

“re-protonizing”  
starting from  
 $Y_e \sim 0.1$

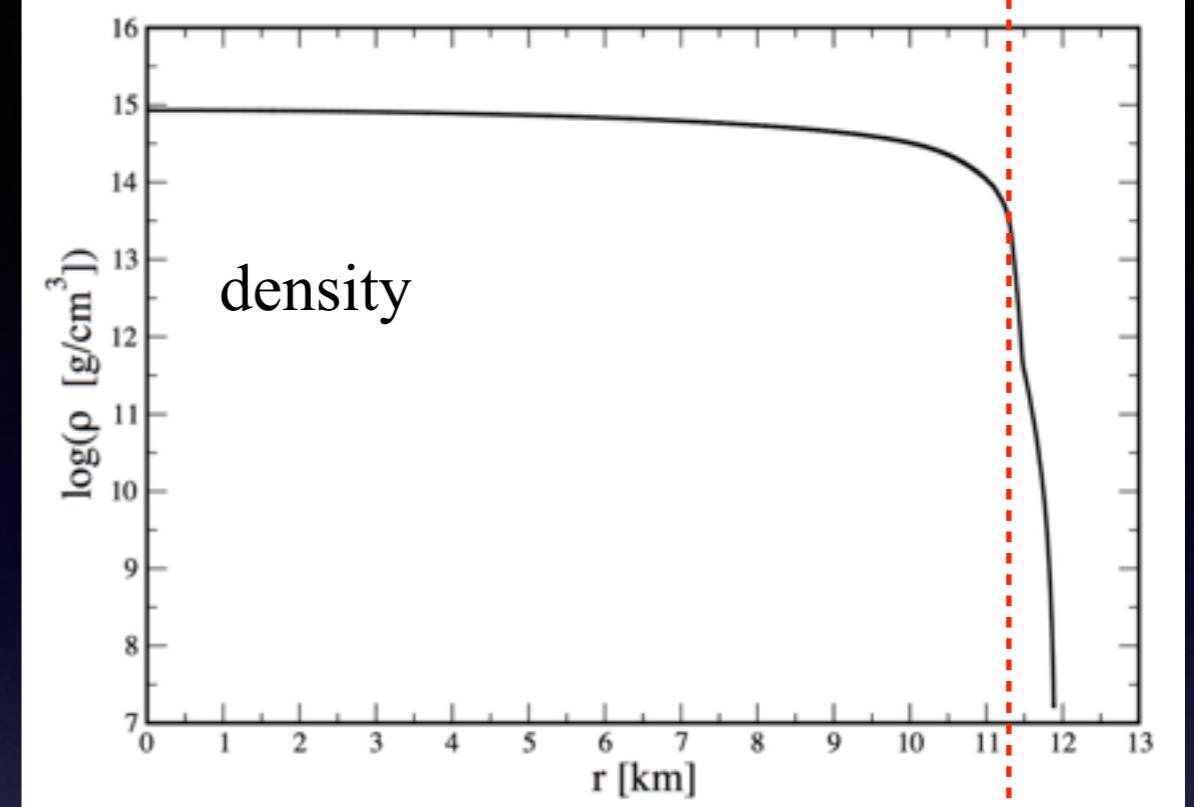
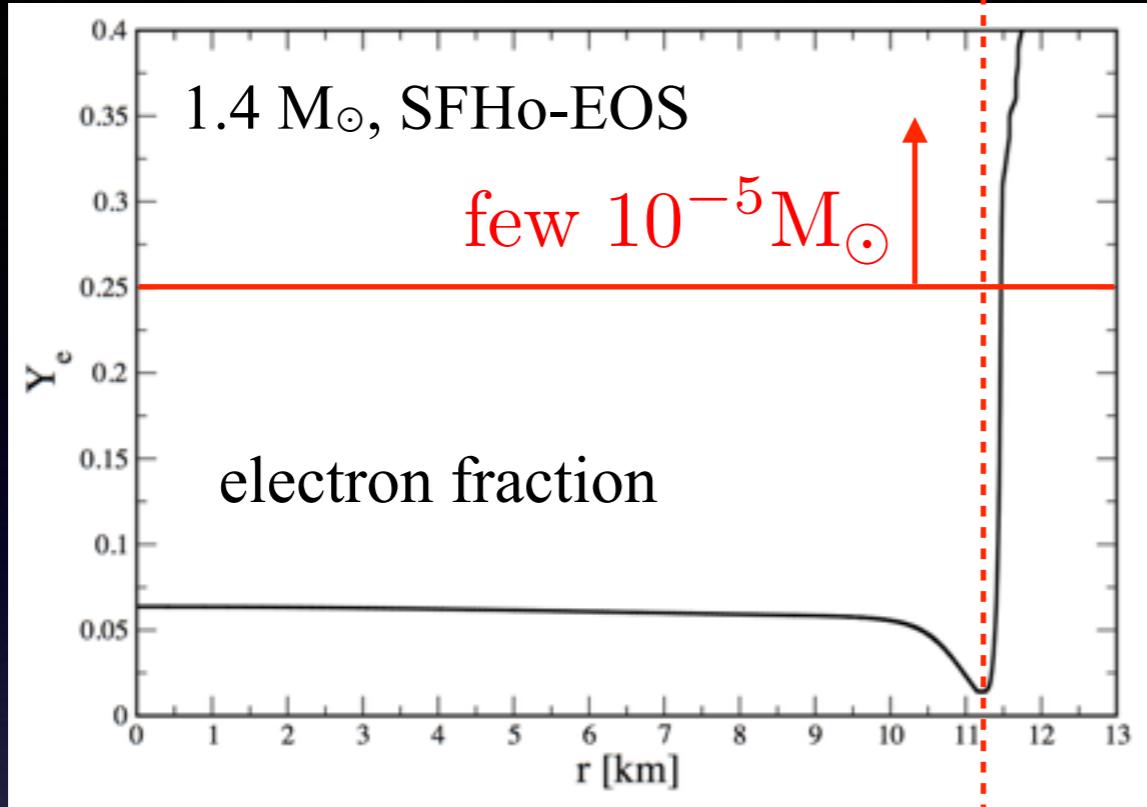
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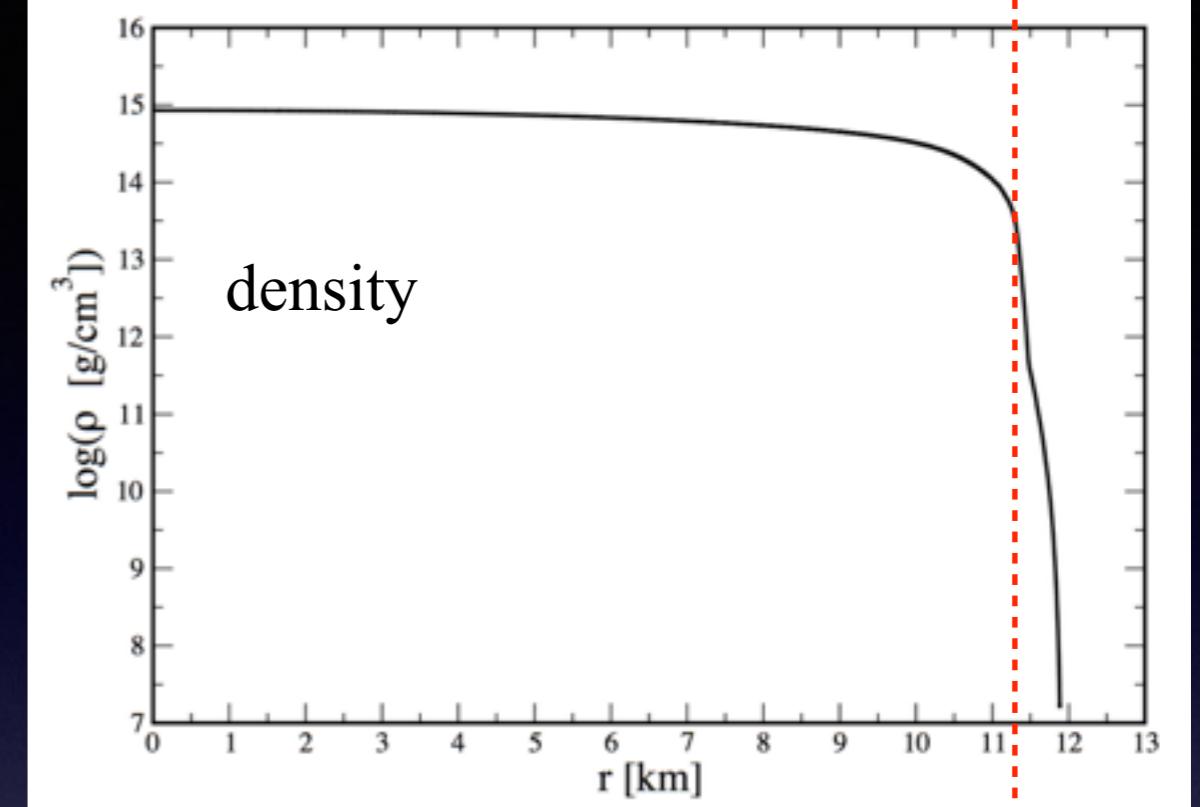
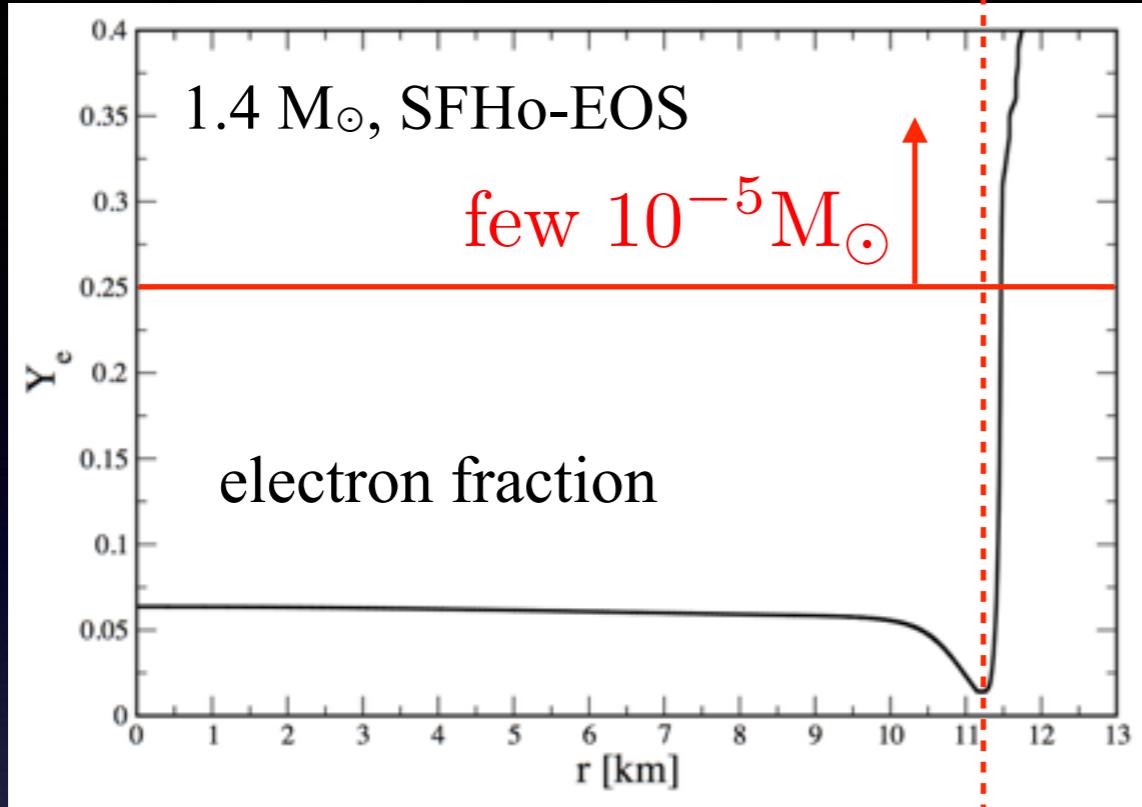
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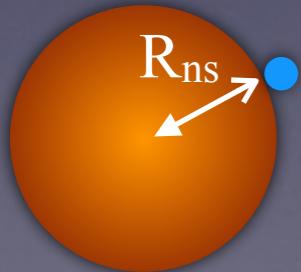
- increasing  $Y_e$  via  $\beta$ -reactions     $e^+ + n \rightarrow p + \bar{\nu}_e$      $\Rightarrow$  ejecta history?



- initial neutron star: cold  $\beta$ -equilibrium, very low  $Y_e$

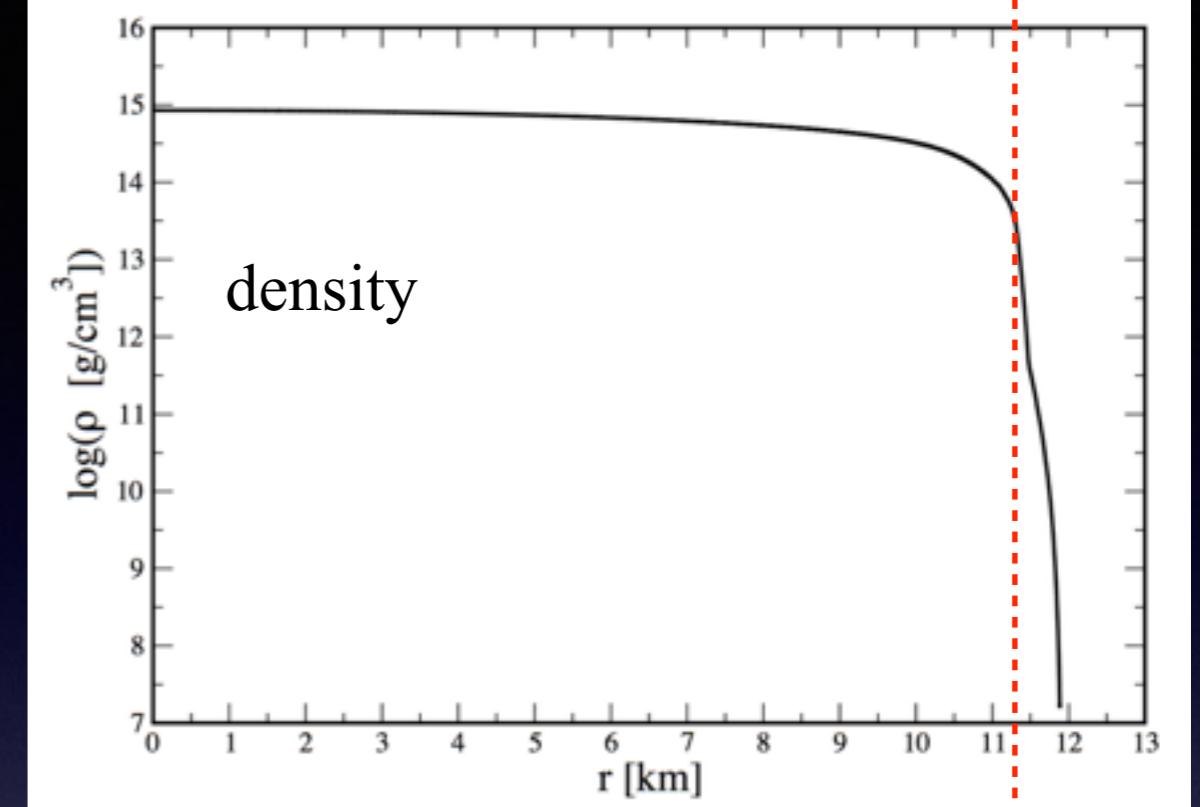
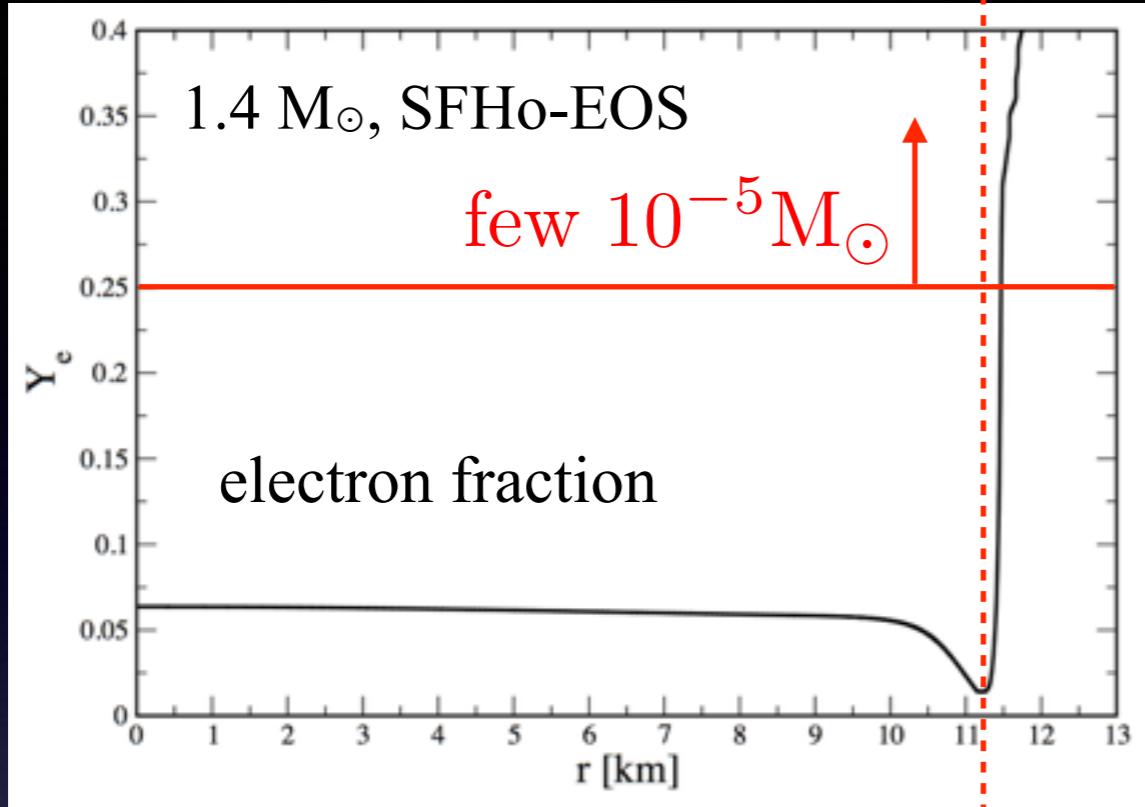


- increasing  $Y_e$  via  $\beta$ -reactions     $e^+ + n \rightarrow p + \bar{\nu}_e$      $\Rightarrow$  ejecta history?
- $\nu_e + n \rightarrow p + e^-$
- BUT: unbinding matter from a neutron star is non-trivial!



$$|E_{\text{grav}}| \approx 150 \text{ MeV} \gg E_{\text{nuc}} \leq 8 \text{ MeV}$$

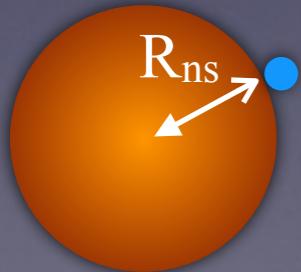
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$\Rightarrow$  need extreme conditions: merger with ns or bh

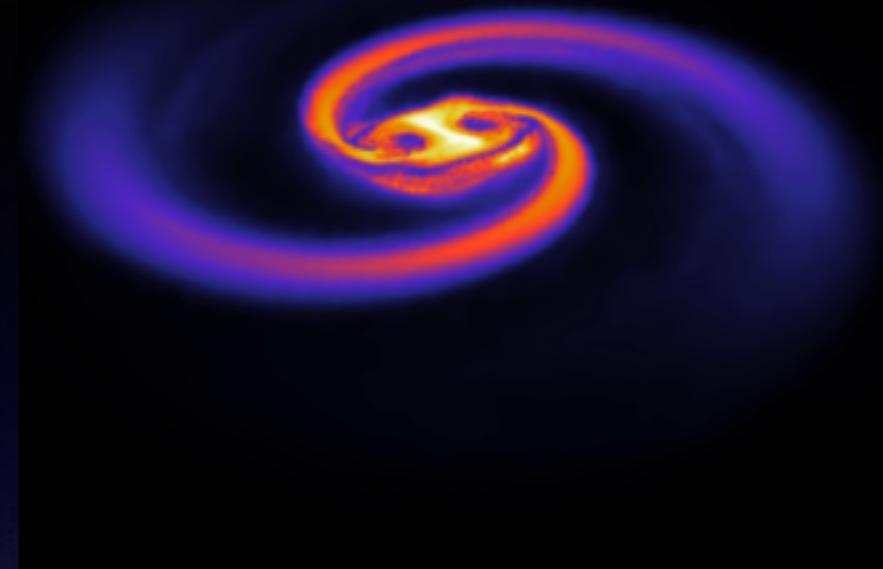
# Ejecta types

## i) “dynamic”

### a) “tidal”:

- equatorial
- “cold”
- low  $Y_e \sim 0.1$
- $\sim 1\% M_\odot$

$\sim 1$  ms

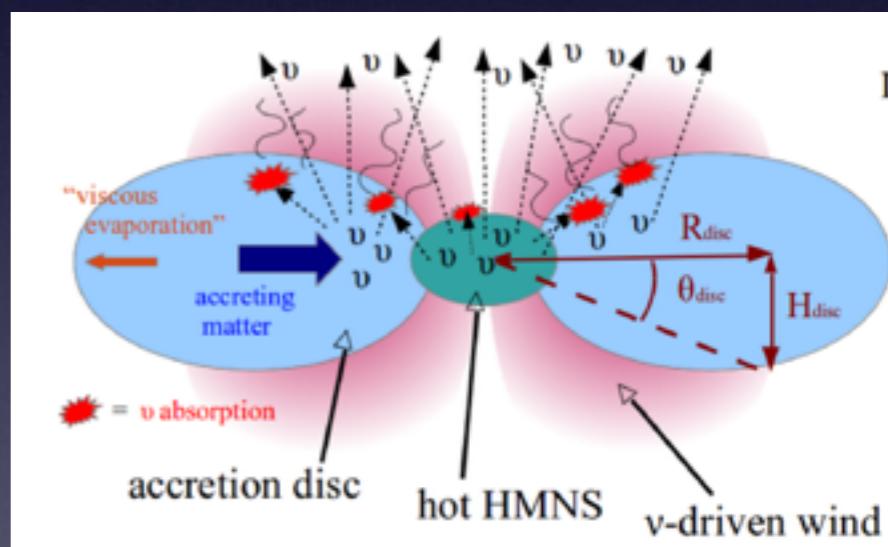


(from S.R. et al. 2017)

## ii) neutrino-driven winds

- polar
- mass:  $\sim 1\% M_\odot$
- broader range of  $Y_e$

$\sim 10 - 100$  ms

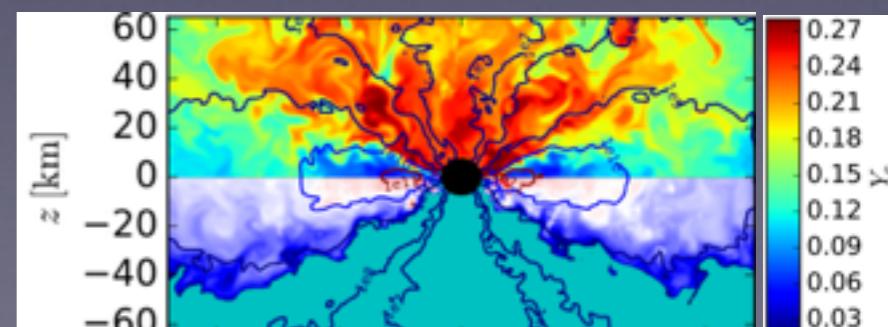


(from Perego et al. 2014)

## iii) “secular”

- viscosity/MRI
- recombination nucleons into  $\alpha$ -particles
- $\sim 30\%$  initial torus mass

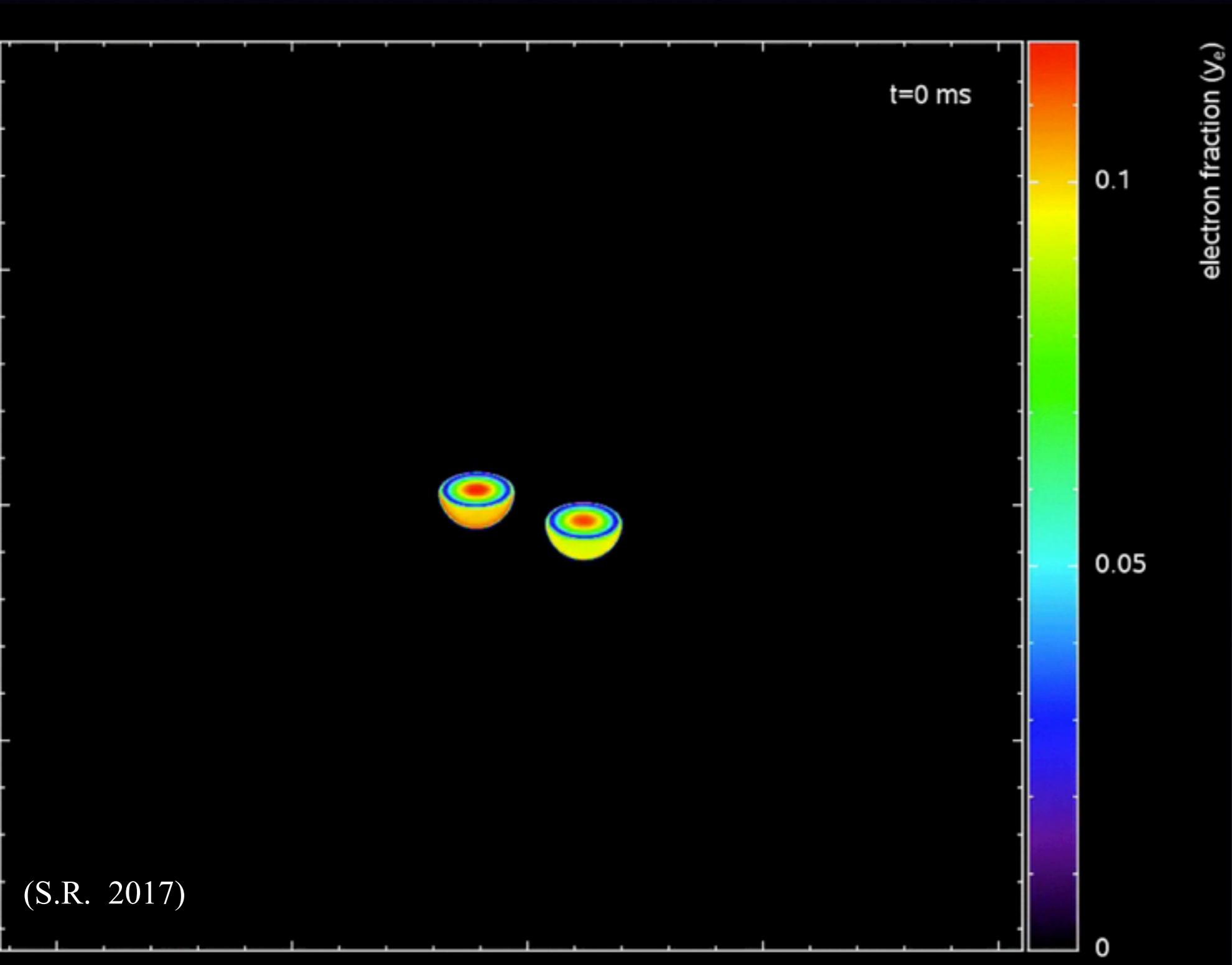
$\sim 1$  s



(from Siegel & Metzger 2017)

## i) Dynamic ejecta, tidal component

1.4 and 1.5  $M_{\odot}$ , no stellar spins

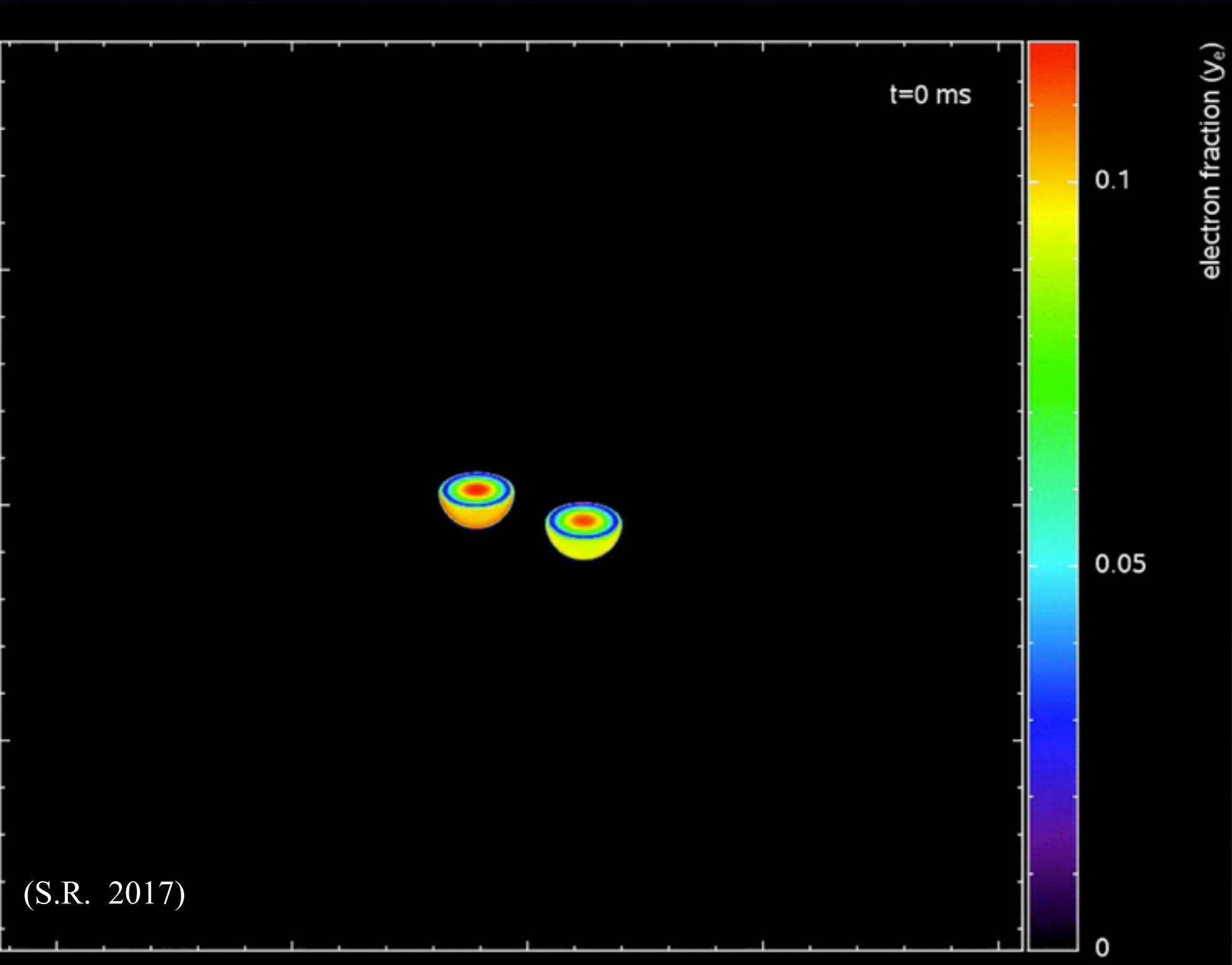


typical numbers:

- mass:  
 $\sim 0.005 \dots 0.02 M_{\odot}$
- velocity:  
 $\sim 0.15c$
- electron fraction:
  - “tidal”:  $\sim 0.05$
  - “interaction”:  $\sim 0.2$

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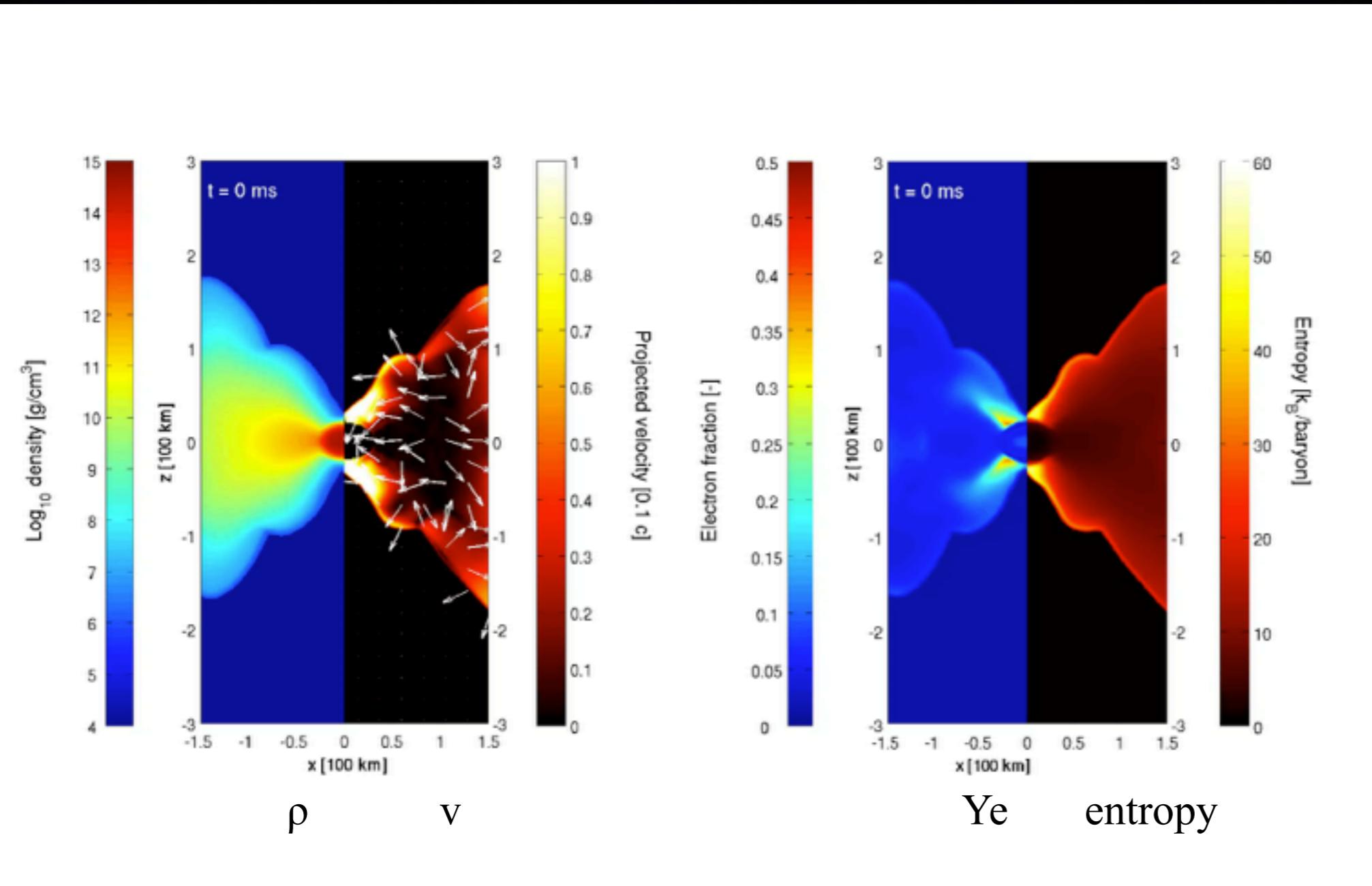
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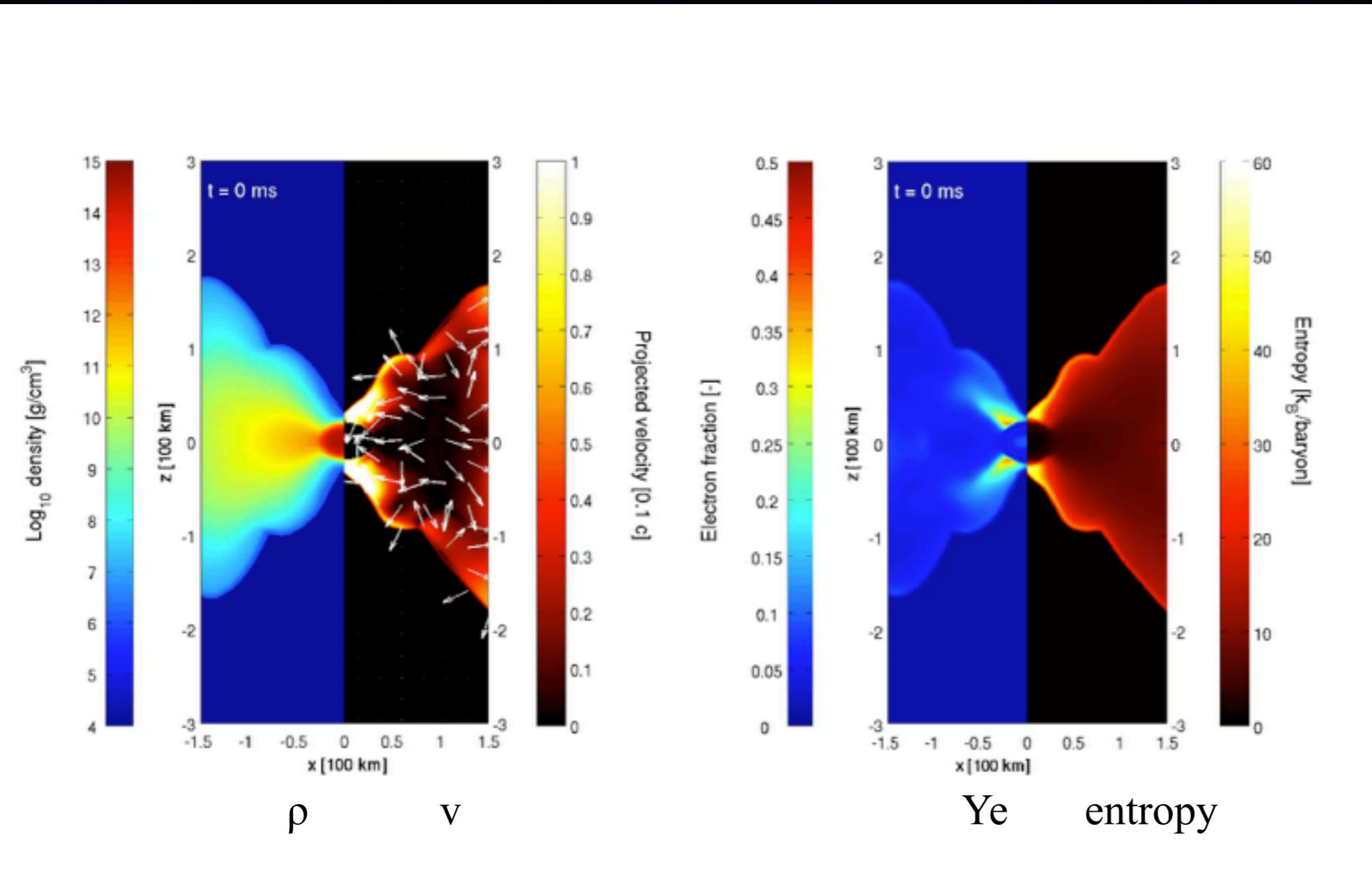


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(Perego, S.R., Cabezon ... 2014)

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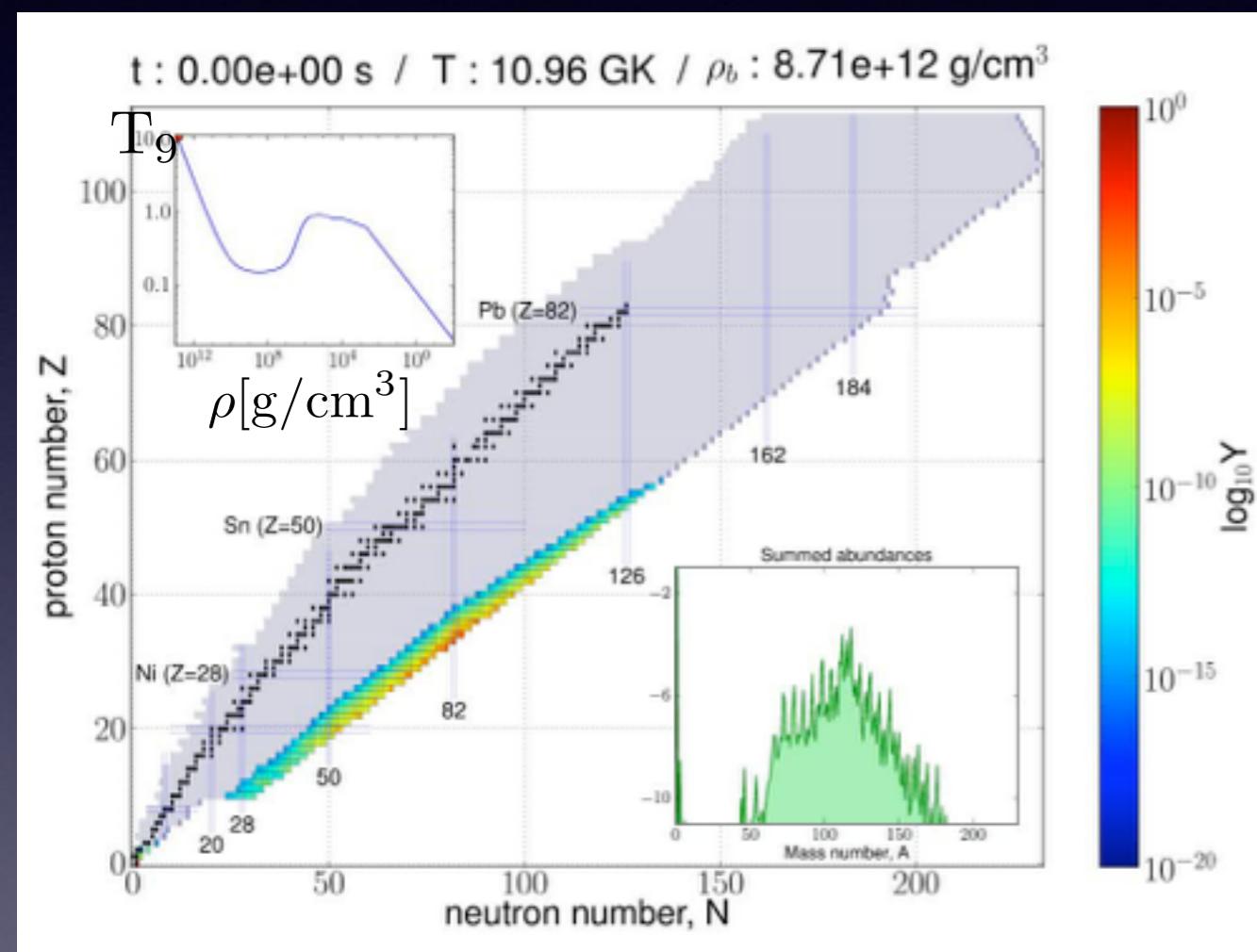
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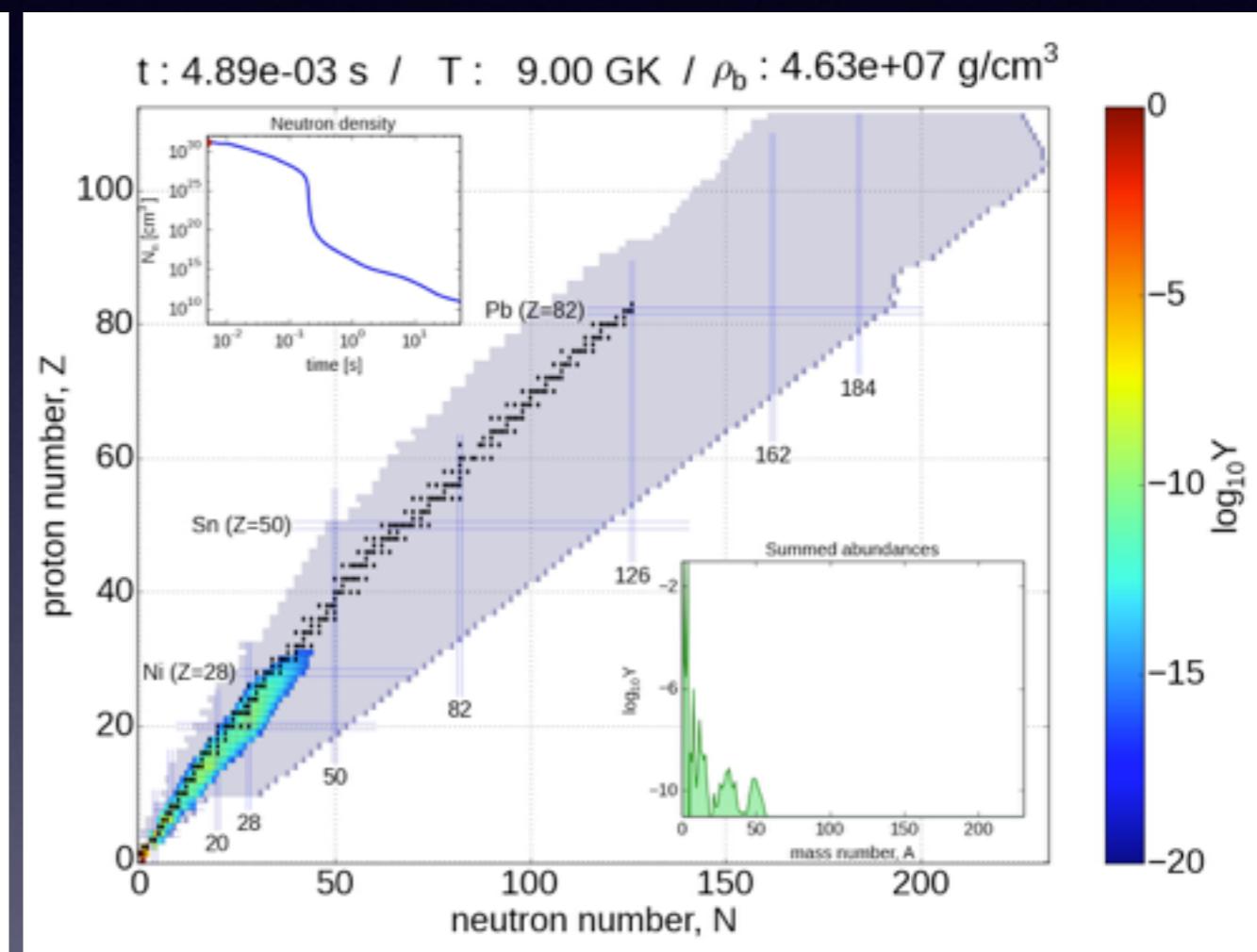
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very low Ye (= 0.05),  
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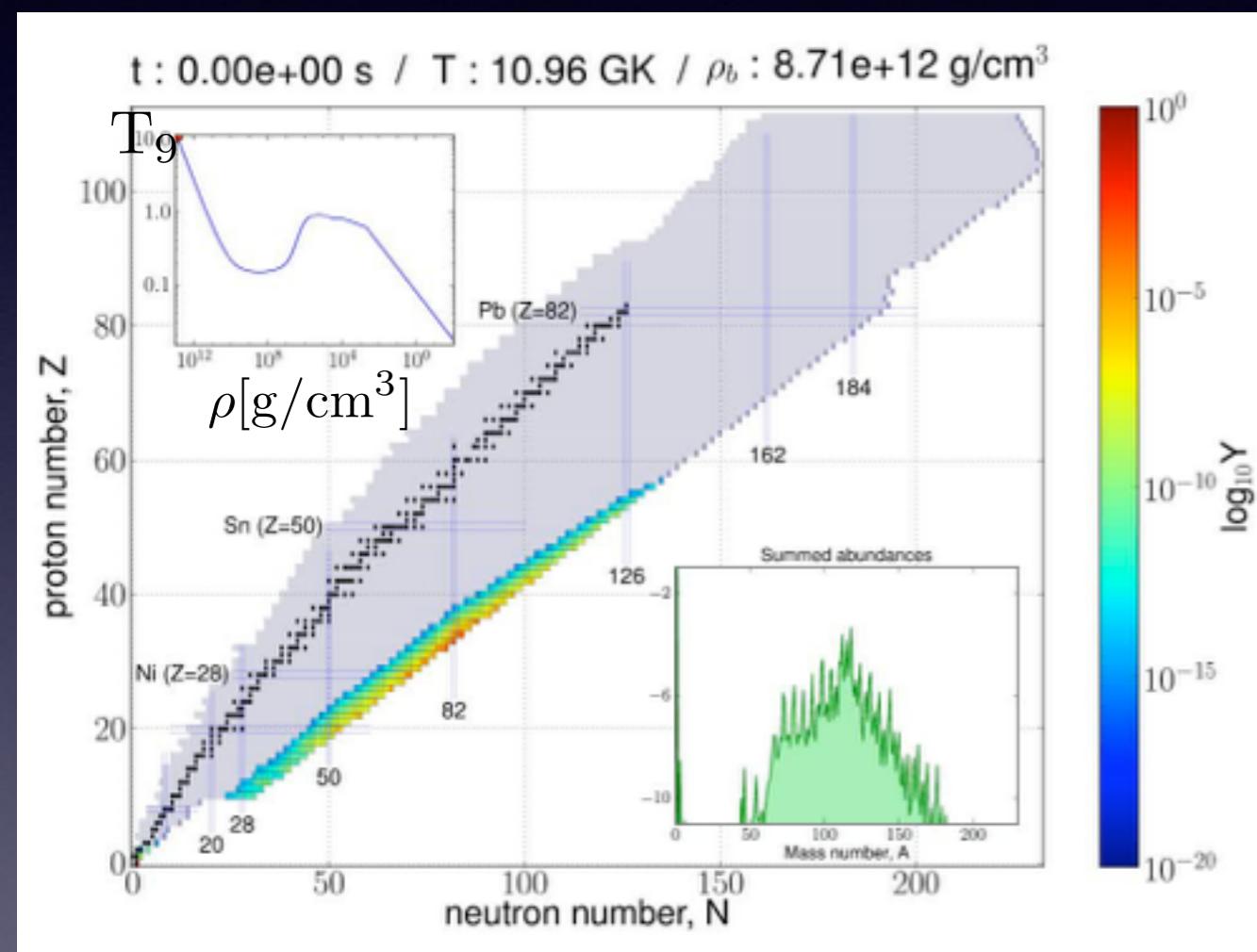


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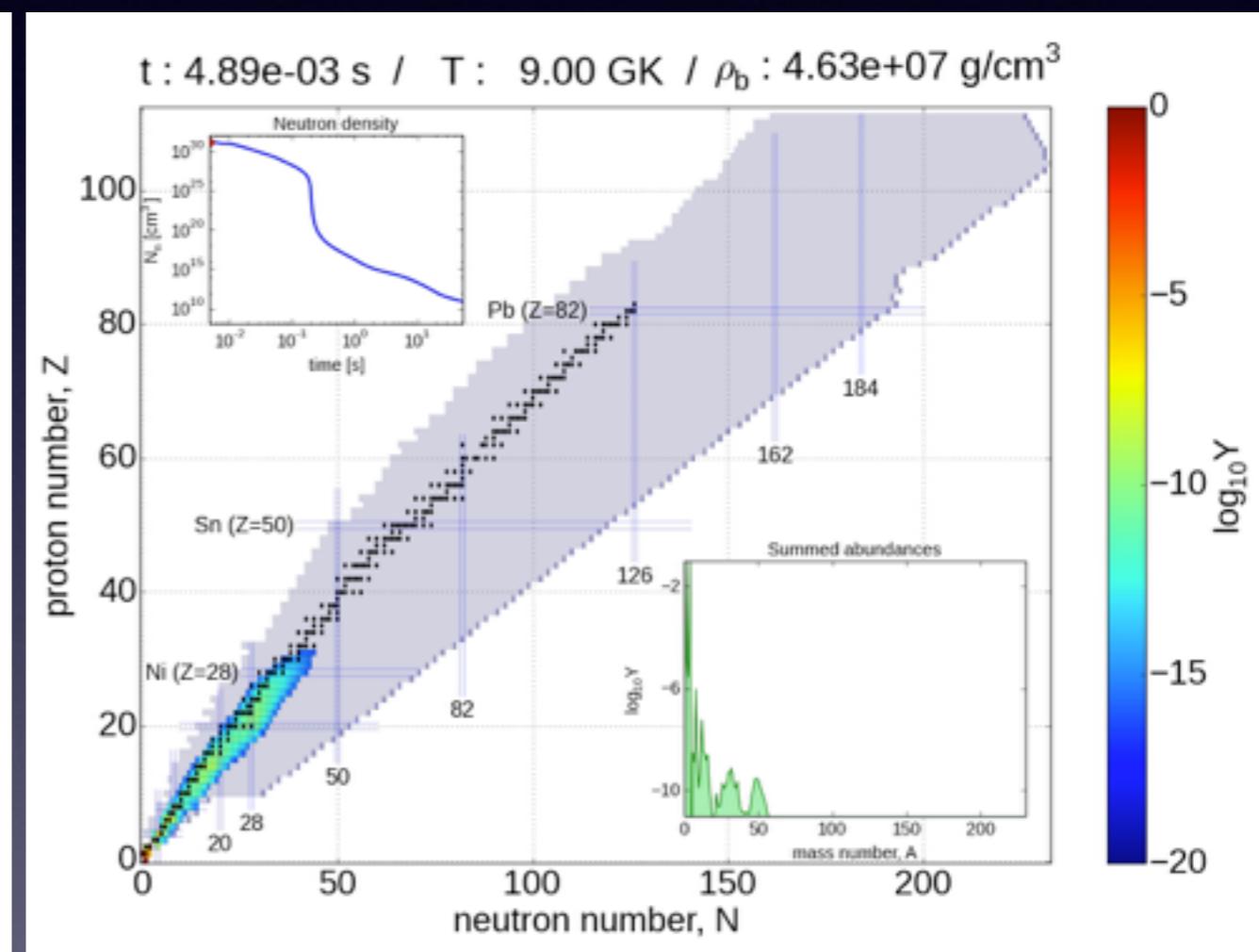
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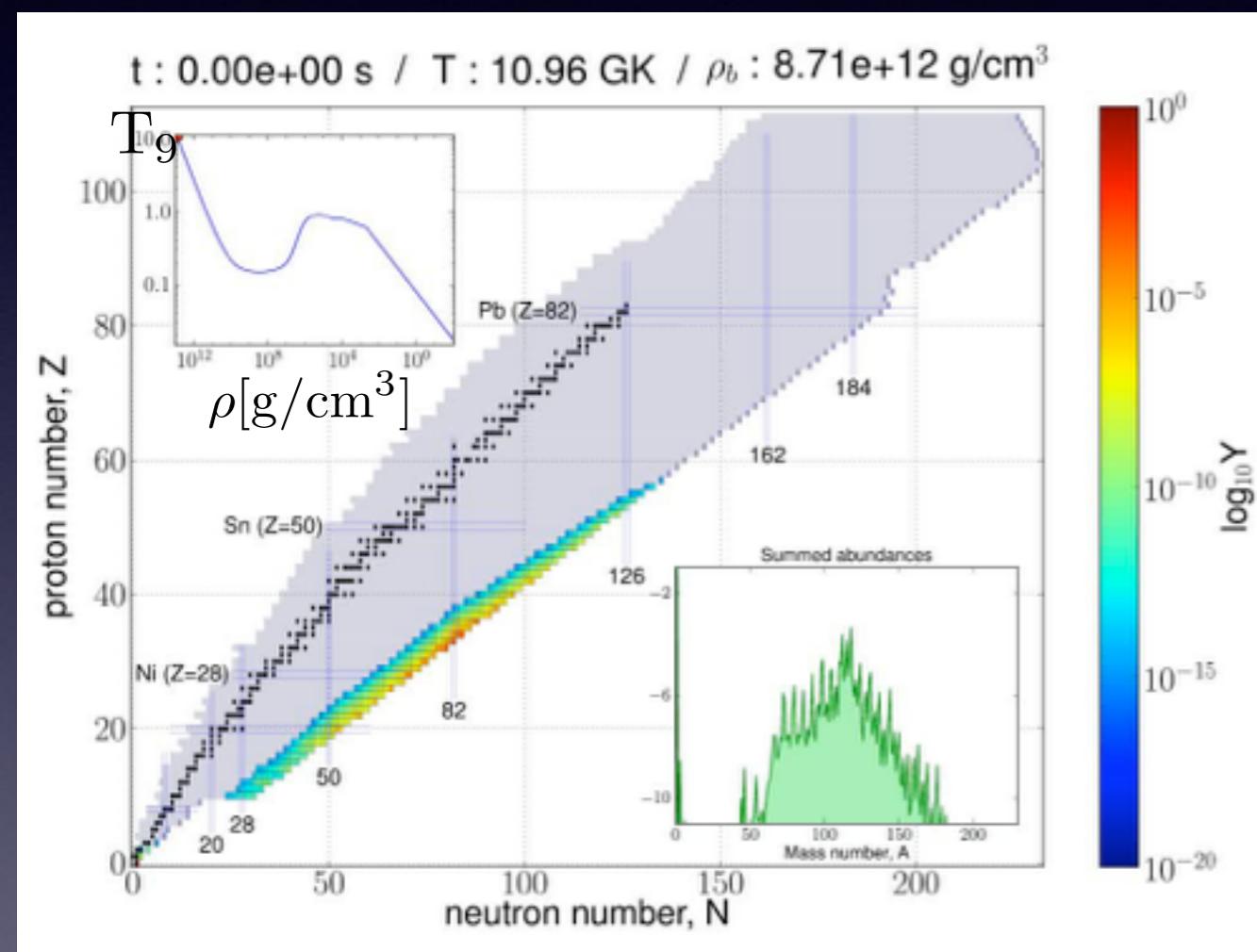


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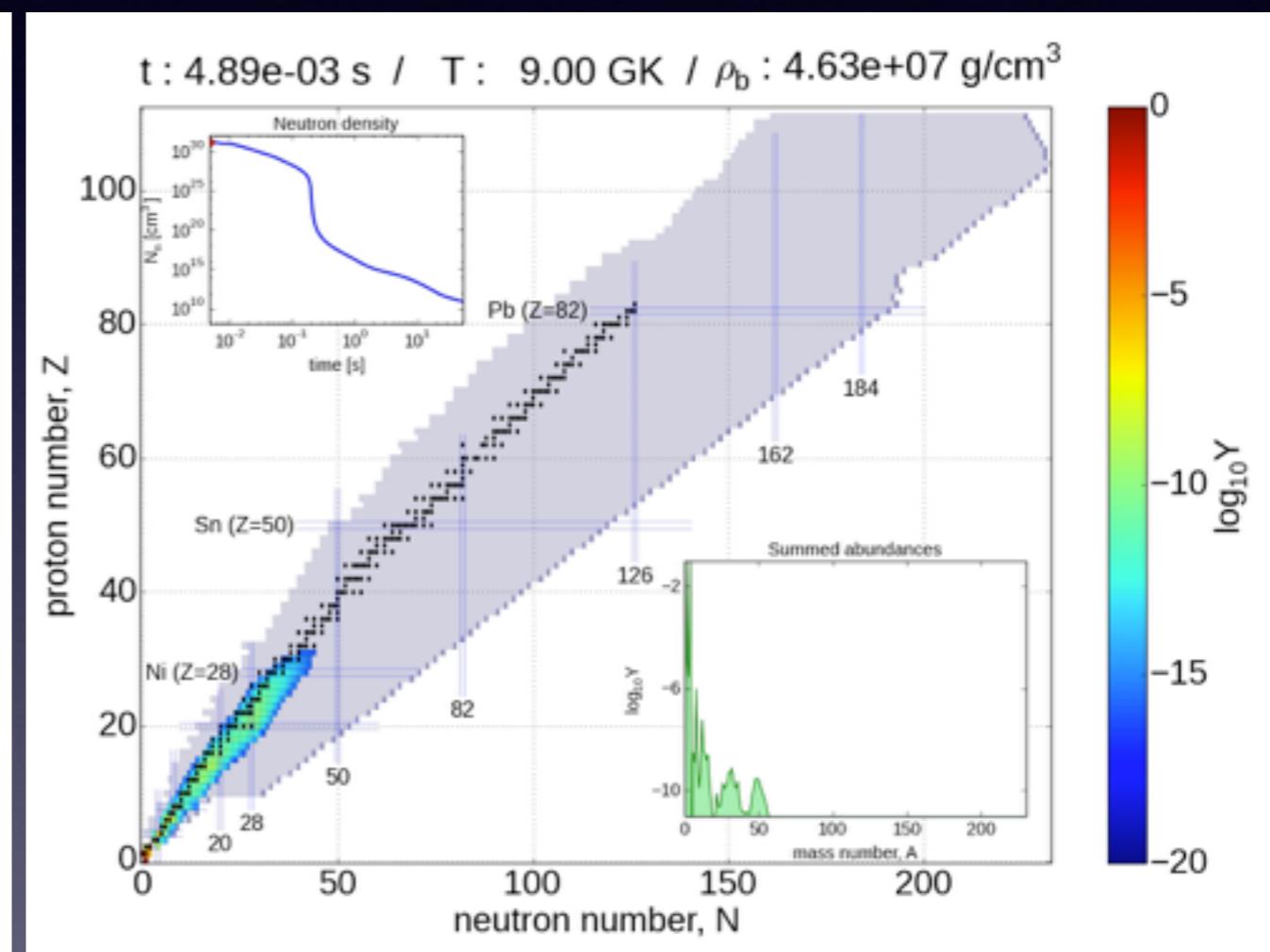
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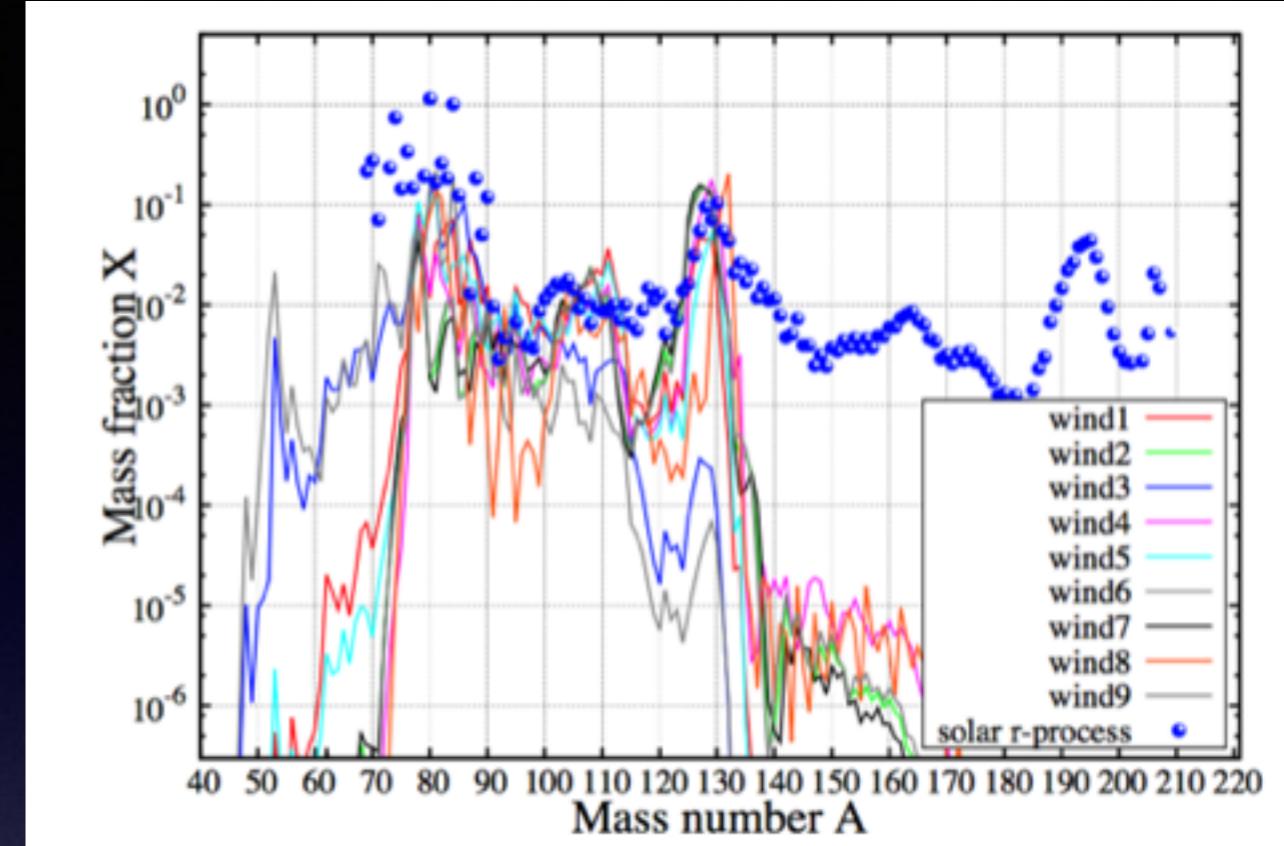
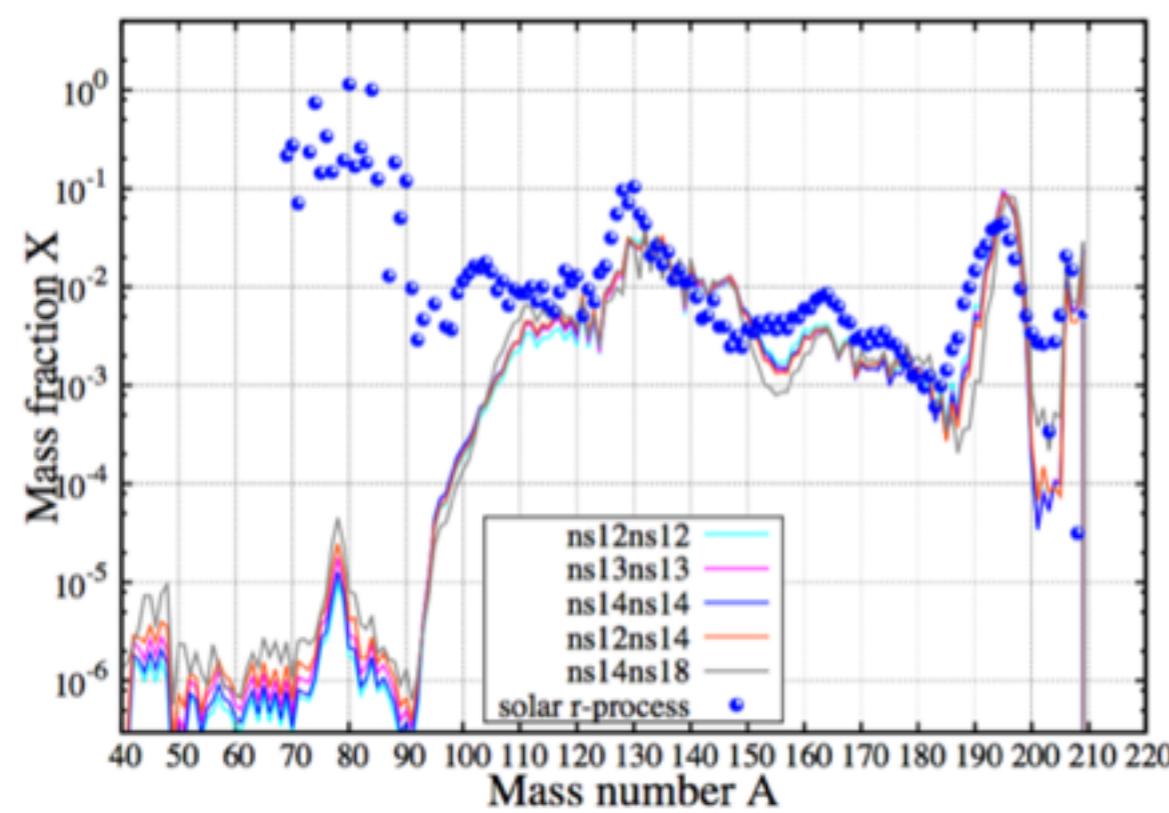


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low-Ye dynamic ejecta

$Y_e^{\text{crit}} \approx 0.25$

moderately high Ye wind ejecta



(from S.R.+ 2014)

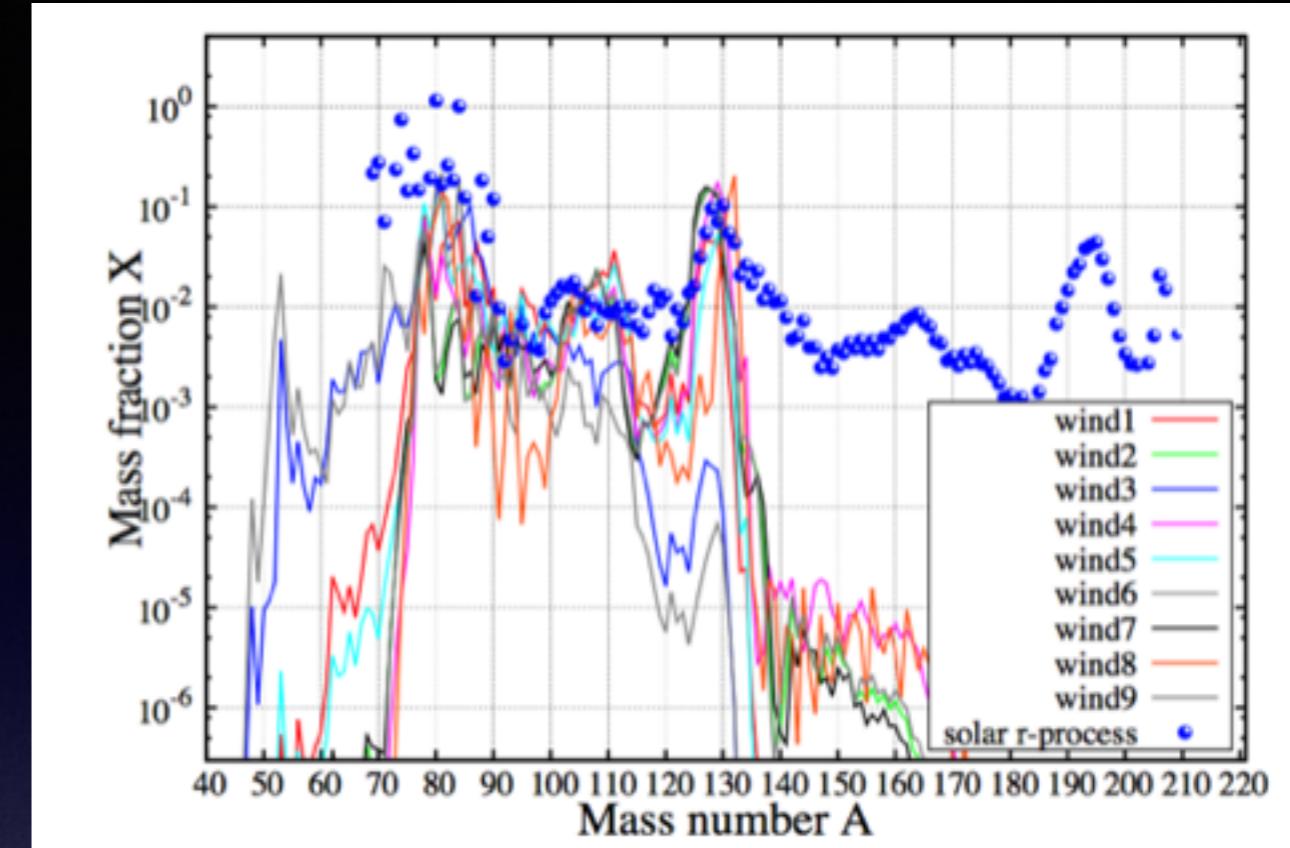
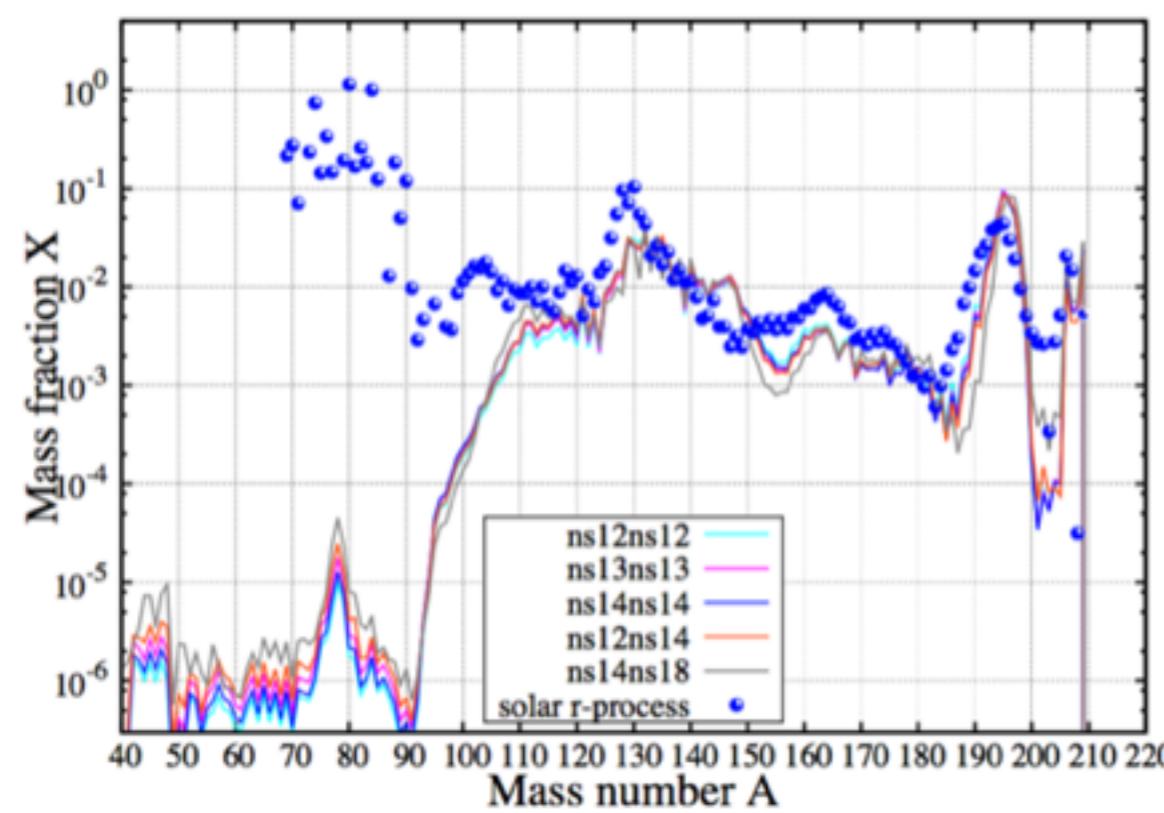
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- (but not with resp. to nuclear physics)
- “strong”,  $A \gtrsim 130$
- this robustness is observed in stellar spectra

- sensitive to detailed trajectory
- “weak”,  $A \lesssim 130$

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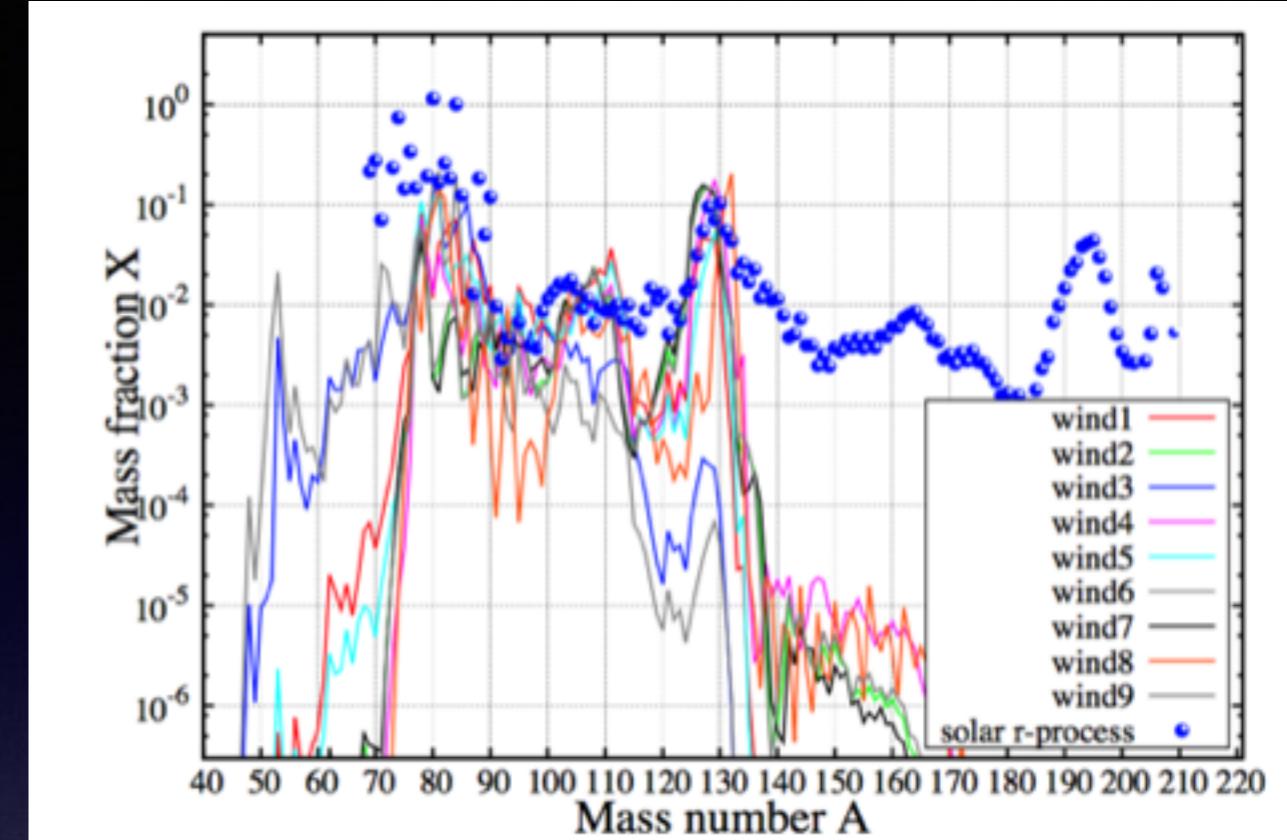
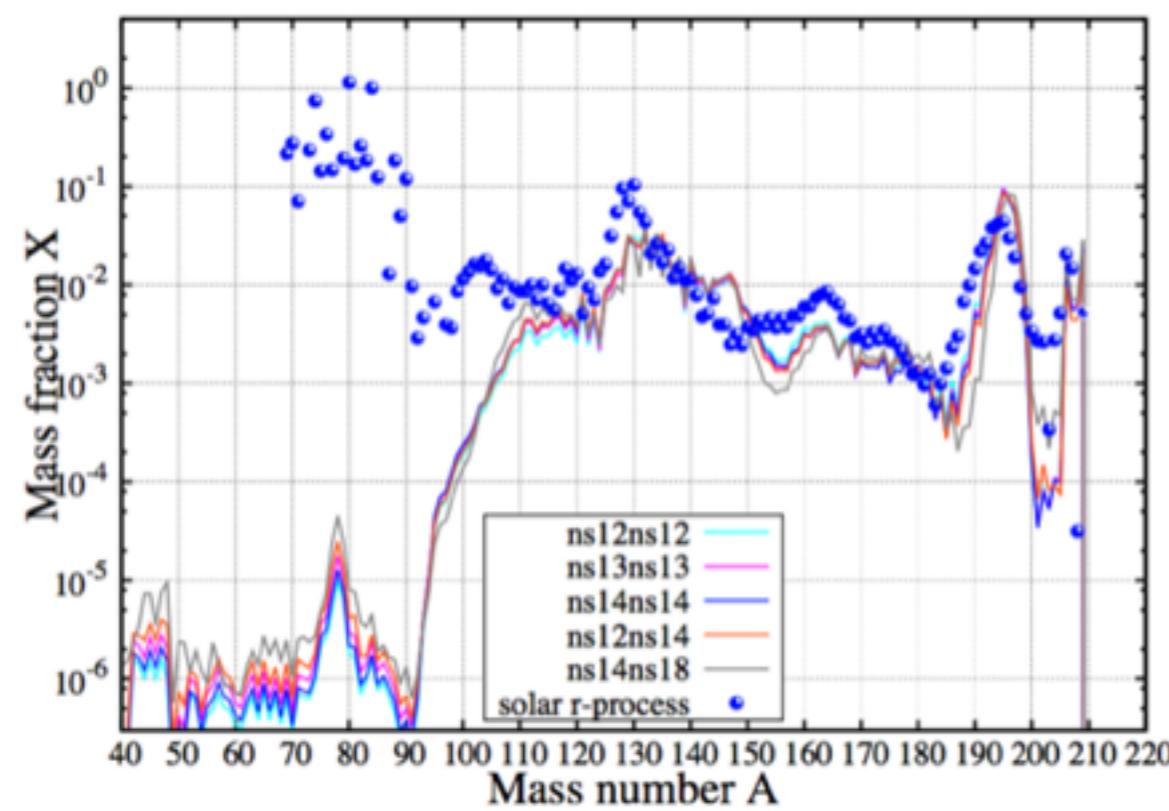
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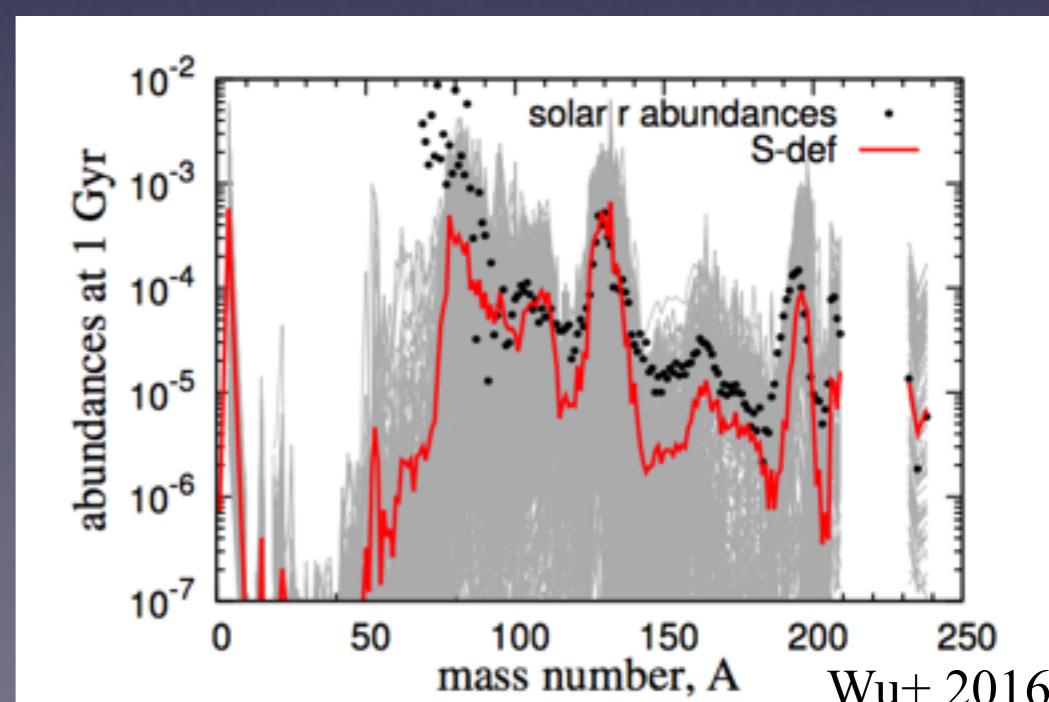


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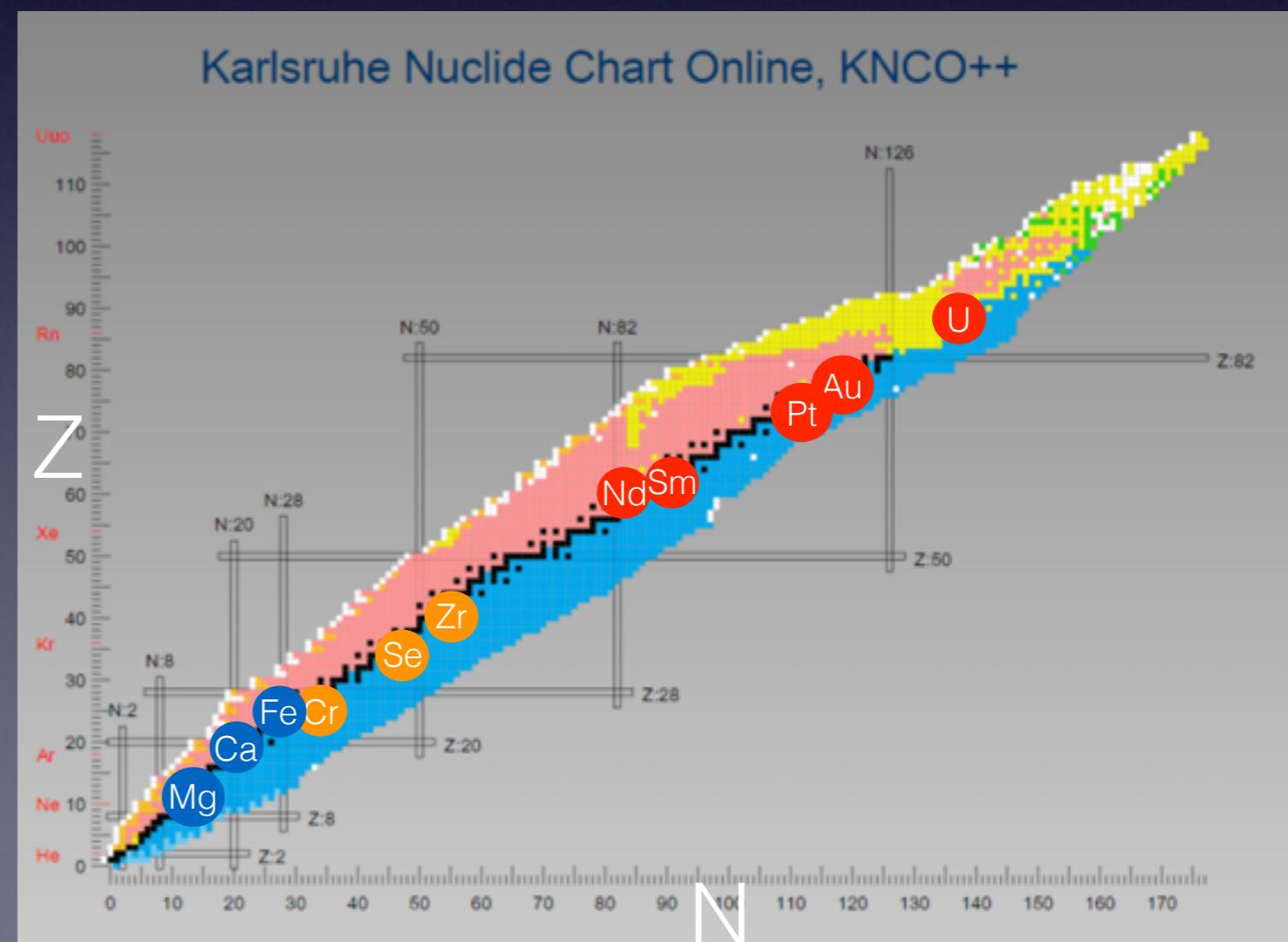
- also found for BH+torus systems  
(e.g. Just+ 15, Wu+ 16, Siegel+17)



Wu+ 2016

# Radioactive decay: macronovae

- similarities to supernovae:
  - expanding, radioactive material
- BUT:
  - less material,  $\sim 0.01 M_{\odot}$
  - higher velocities,  $\sim 0.1 c$
  - very different composition:



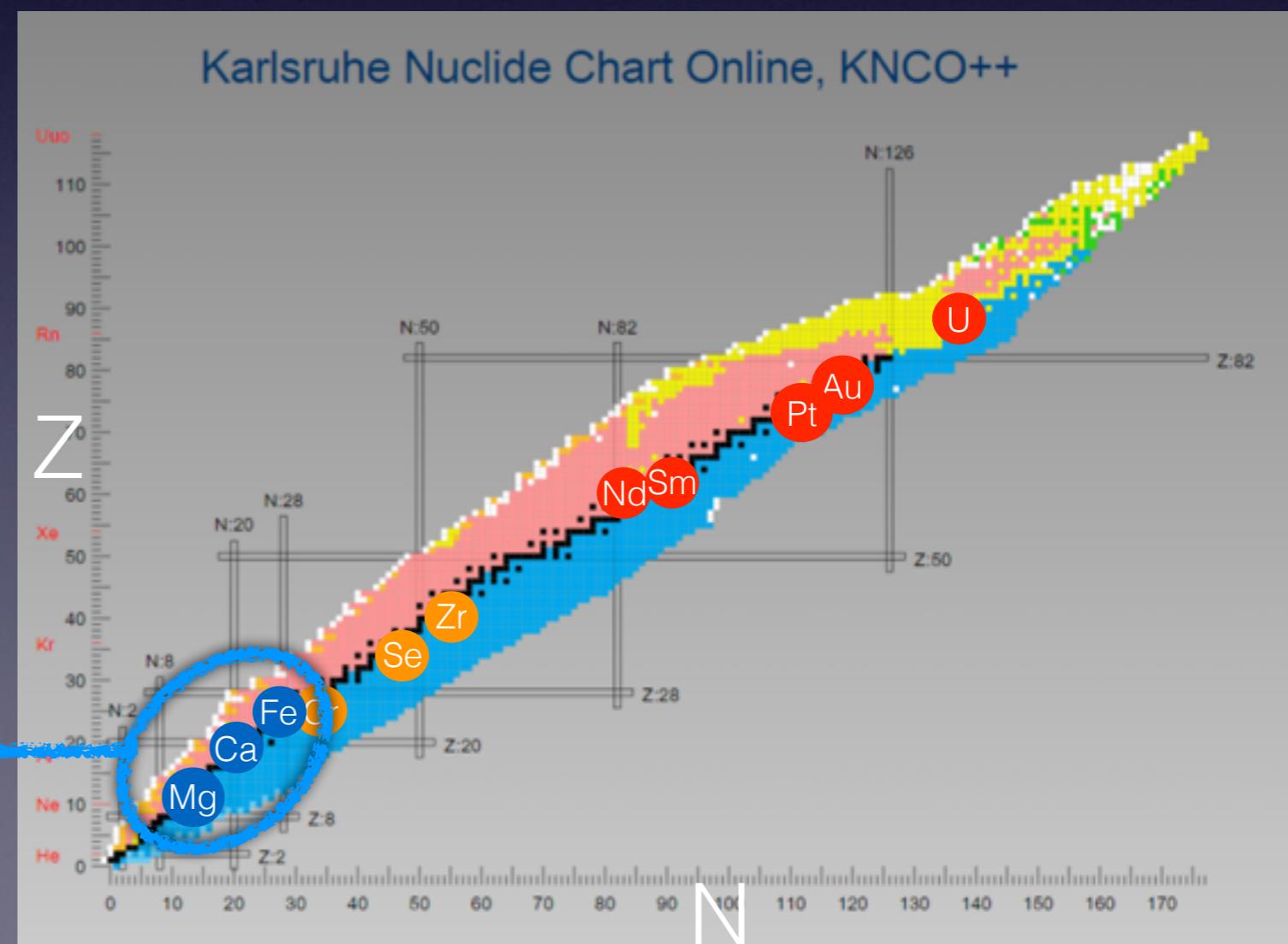
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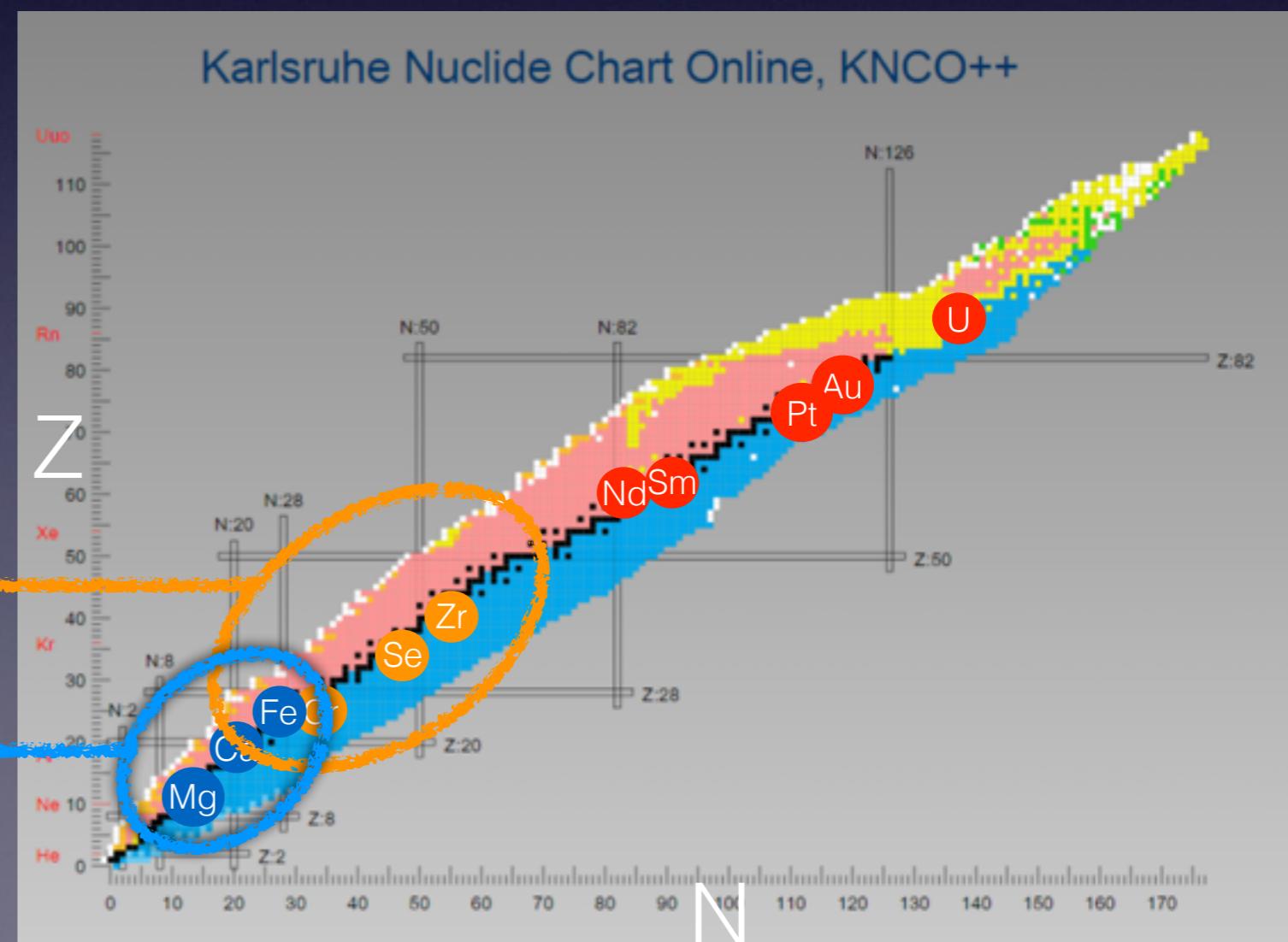
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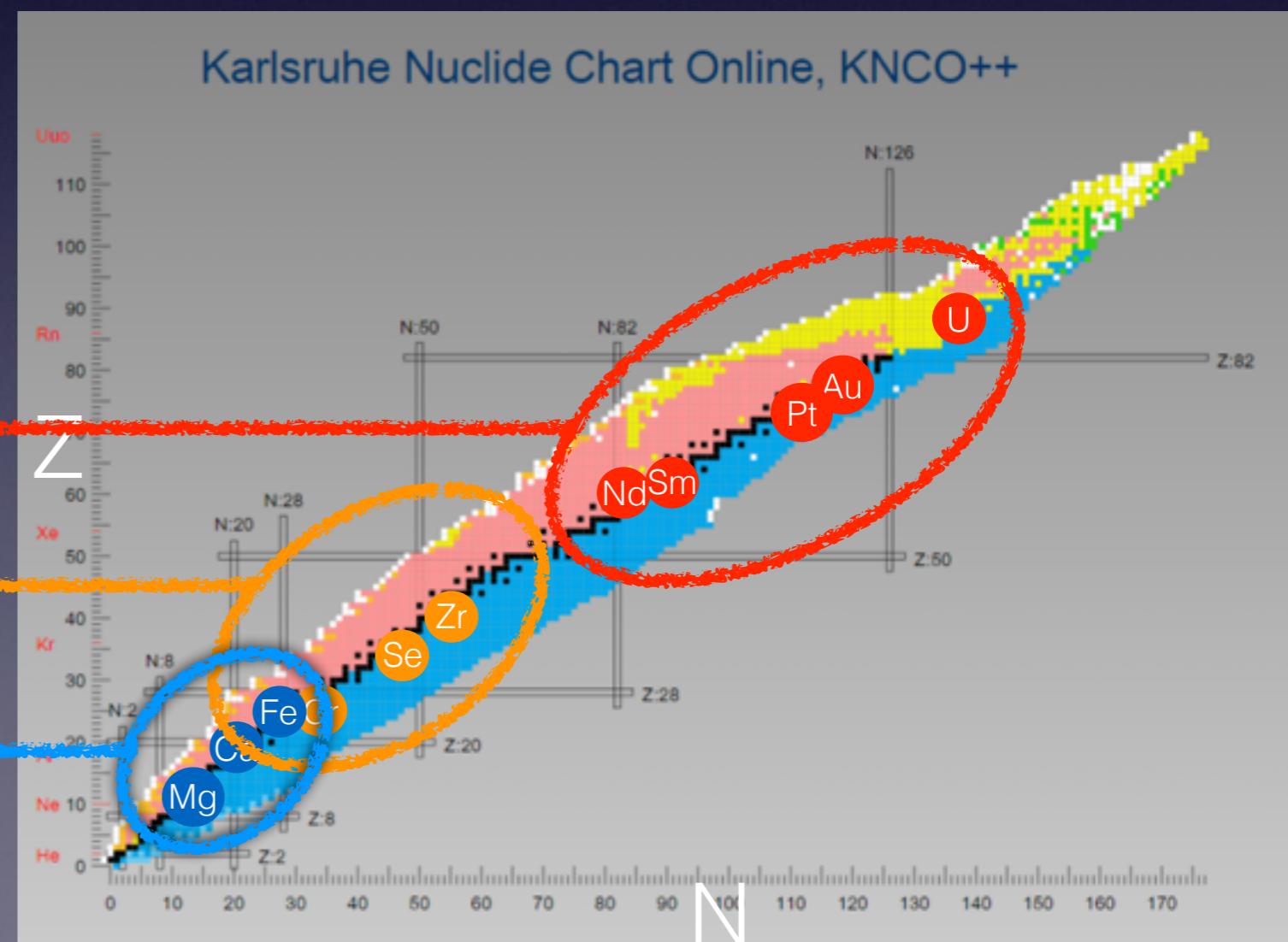


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## Scaling relations

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- peak emission when  $t_{\text{diff}} = t_{\text{expansion}}$  yields  
(Arnett 1980)

- photospheric temperature evolution

$$t_{\text{peak}} = \left[ \frac{3}{4\pi} \frac{M\kappa}{vc} \right]^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

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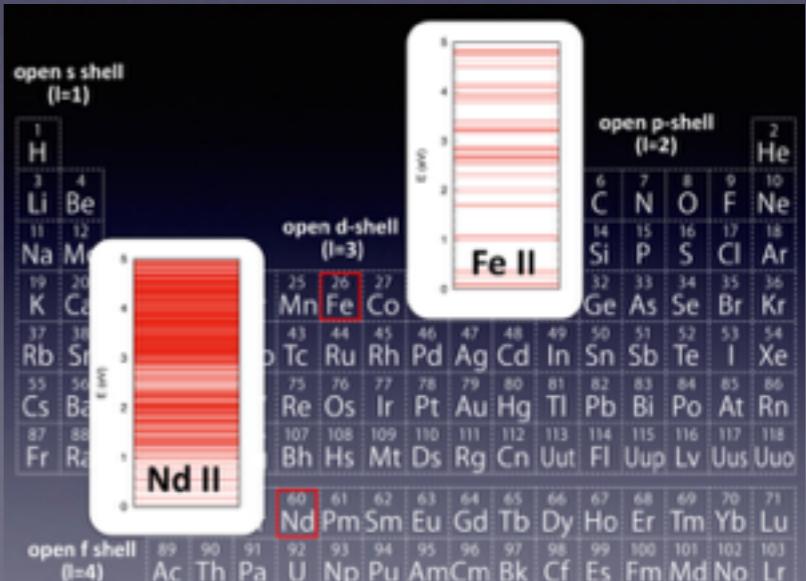
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- photospheric temperature evolution
- opacities  $\kappa$  (e.g. Kasen 2013):
  - determined by density of lines
  - for SN-material:  $\kappa \approx 0.1 \text{ cm}^2/\text{g}$
  - for heavy r-process:  $\kappa \approx 10 \text{ cm}^2/\text{g}$

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courtesy M. Tanaka

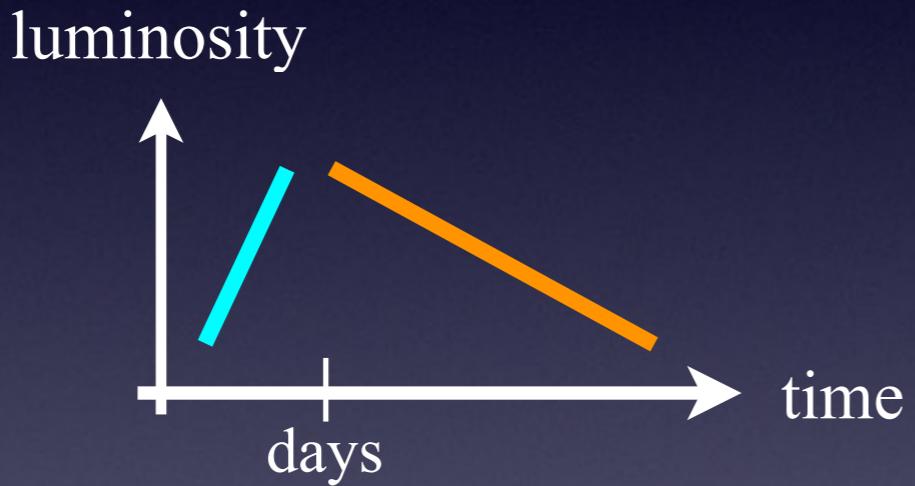
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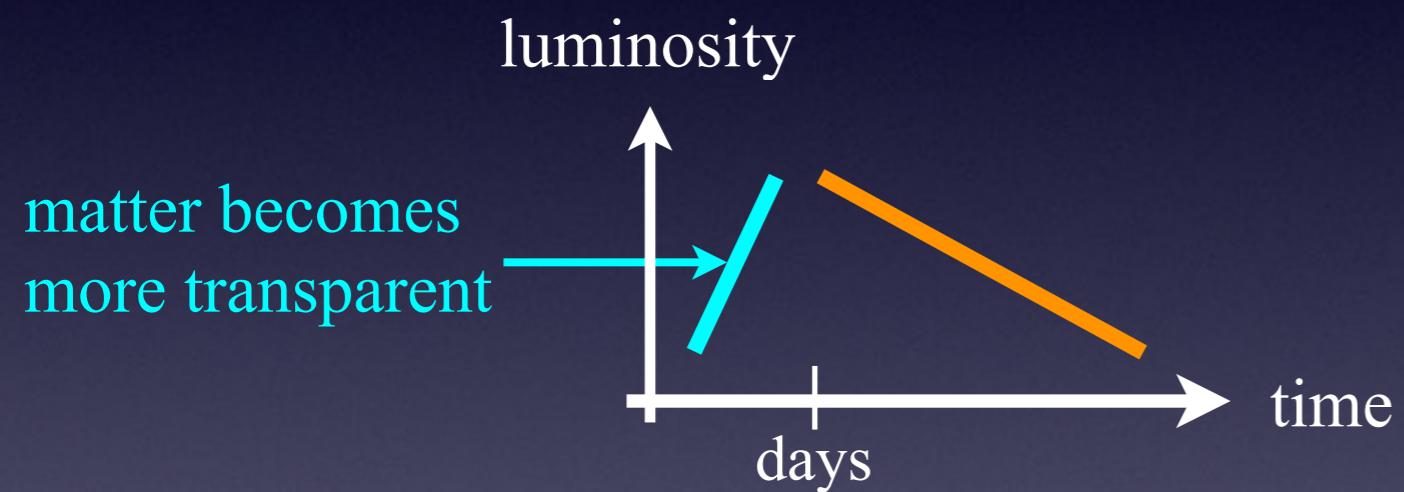
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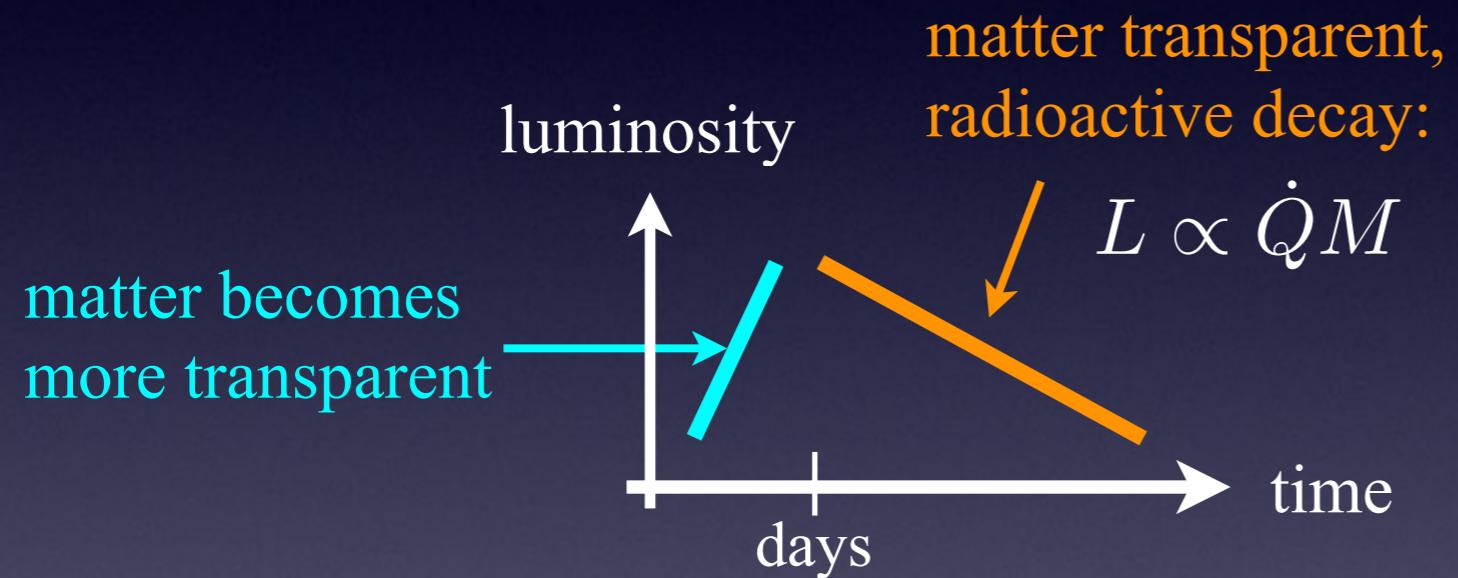
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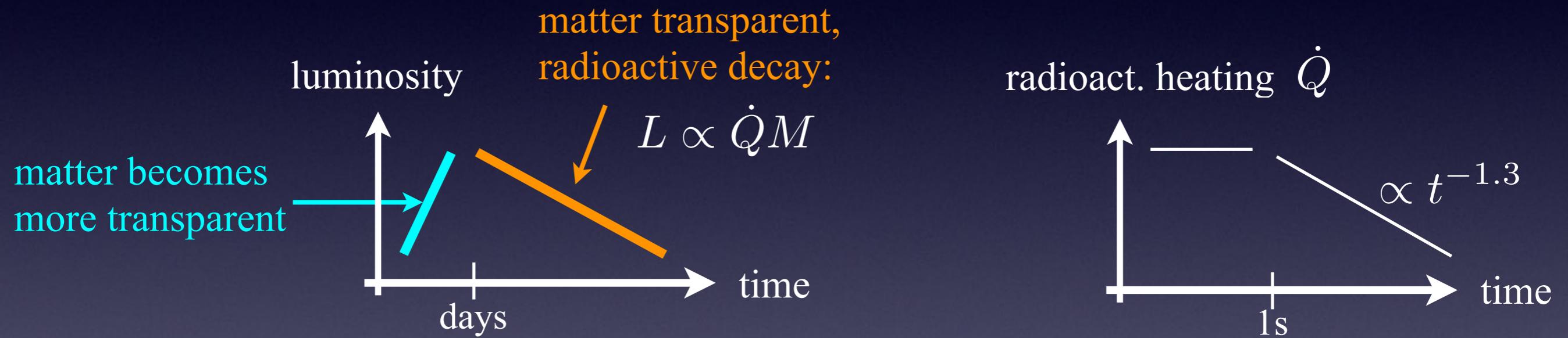
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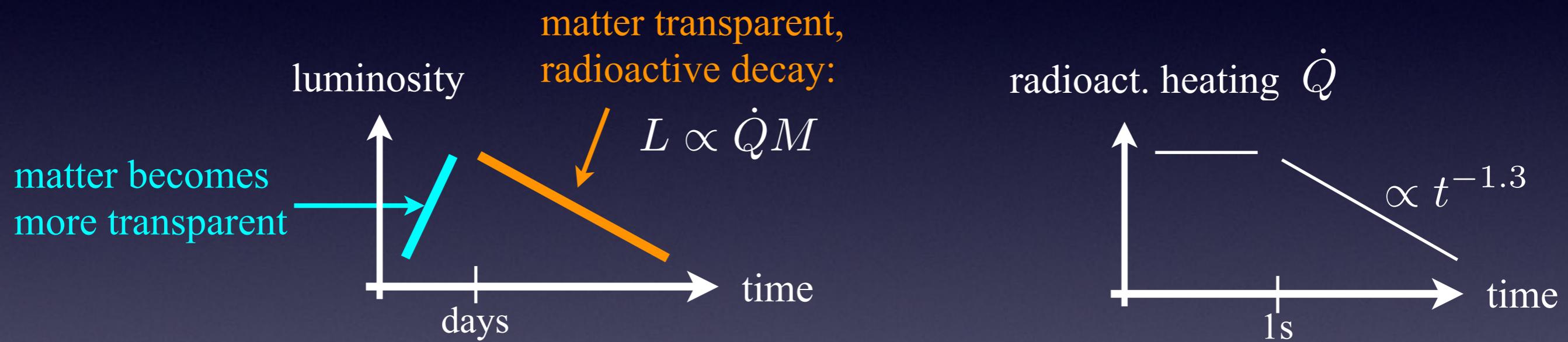
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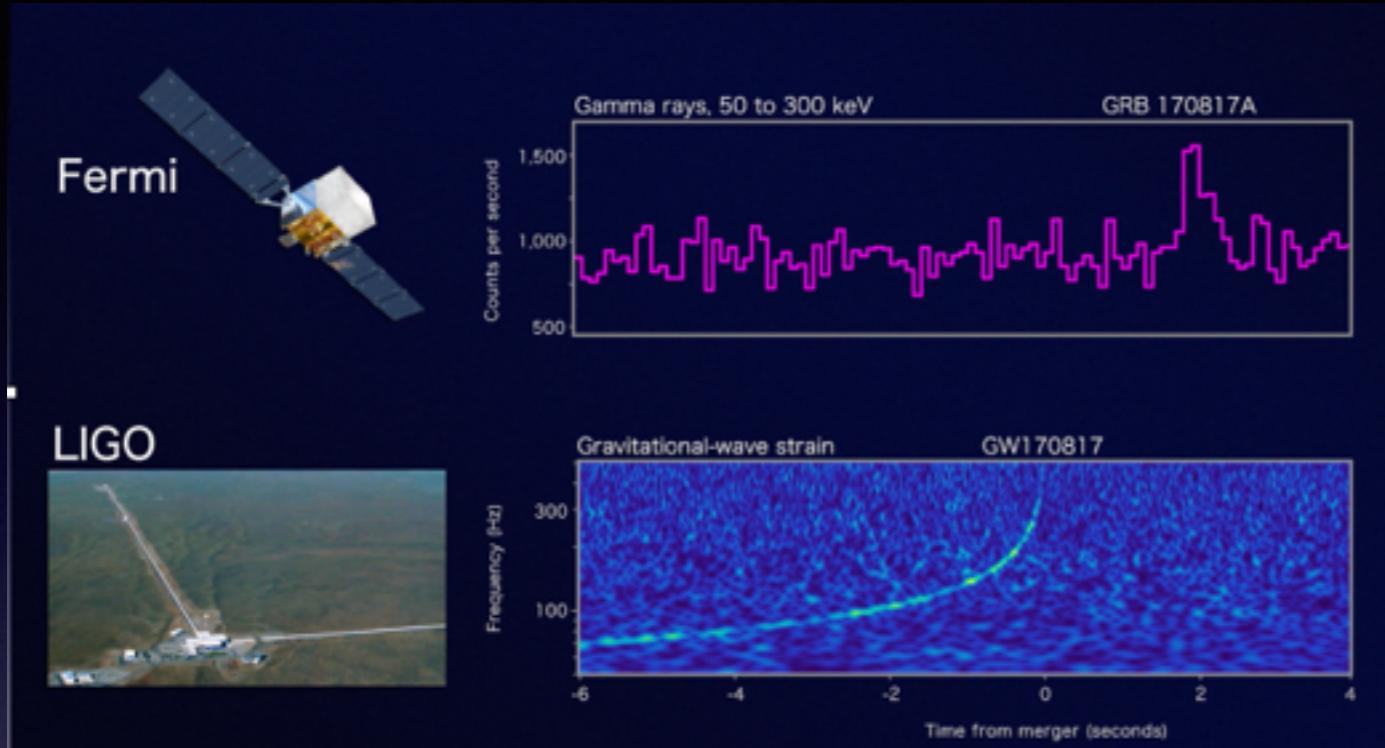


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- key physics ingredients:
  - ejecta mass, velocity,  $Y_e$   $\Rightarrow$  astrophysics
  - opacity  $\kappa$   $\Rightarrow$  atomic physics
  - radioactive heating rate  $\dot{Q}$   $\Rightarrow$  nuclear physics

# GW/EM 170817: Beginning of the Multi-Messenger Era



$\gamma$ -rays (“std. GRB” seen off-axis?)

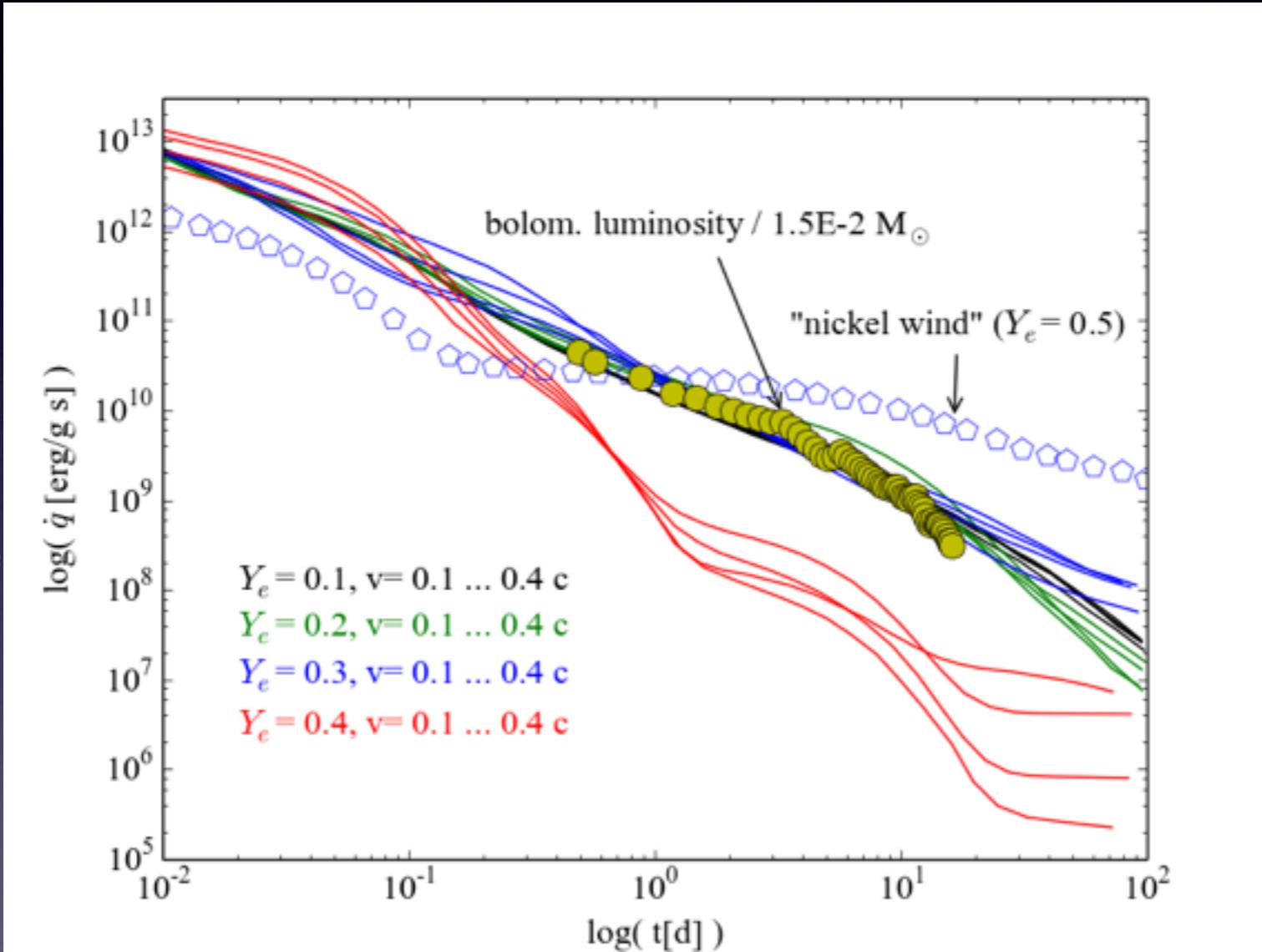
gravitational waves



# Really r-process?

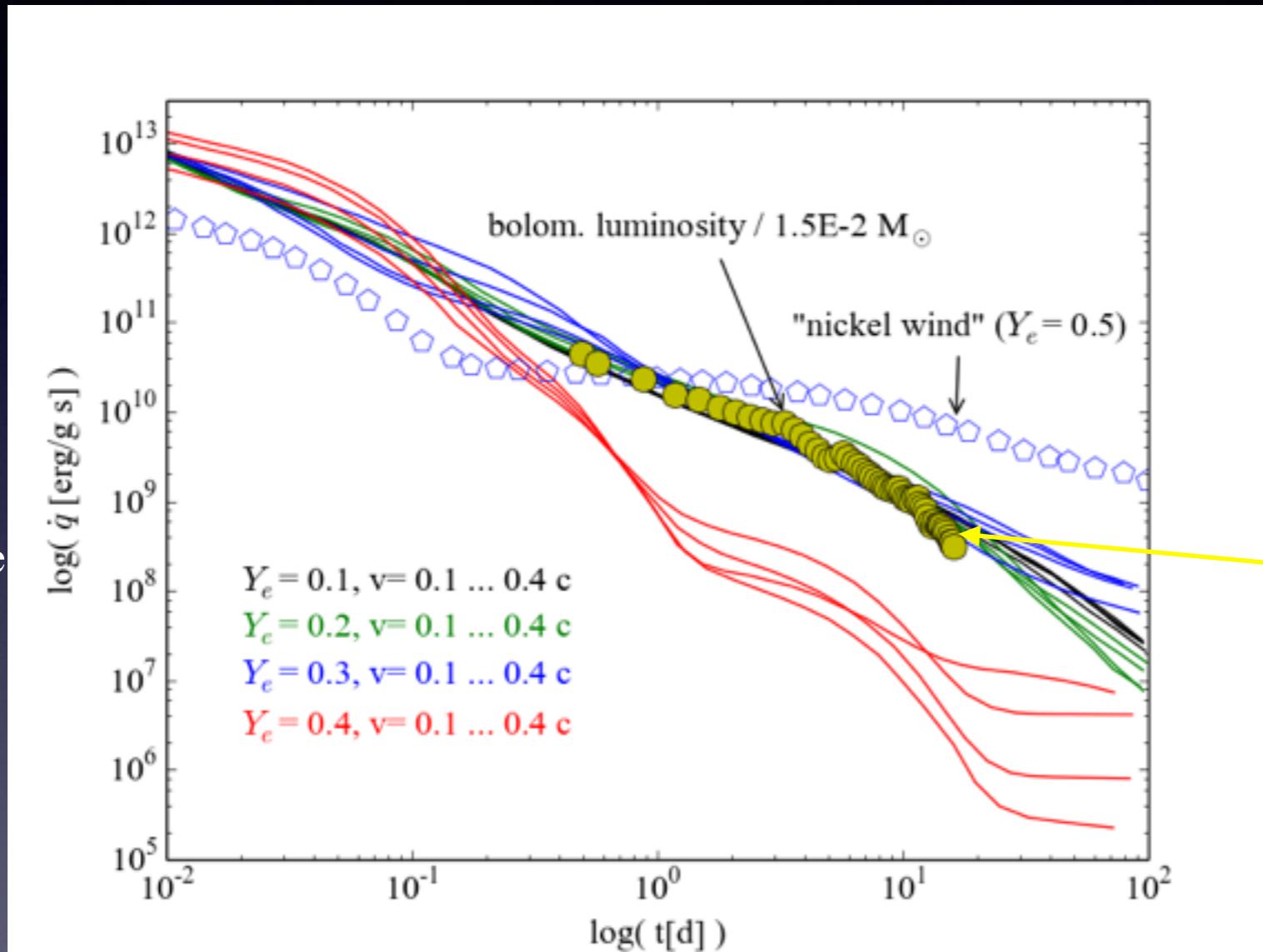
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observed  
luminosity/  
nuclear  
heating rate



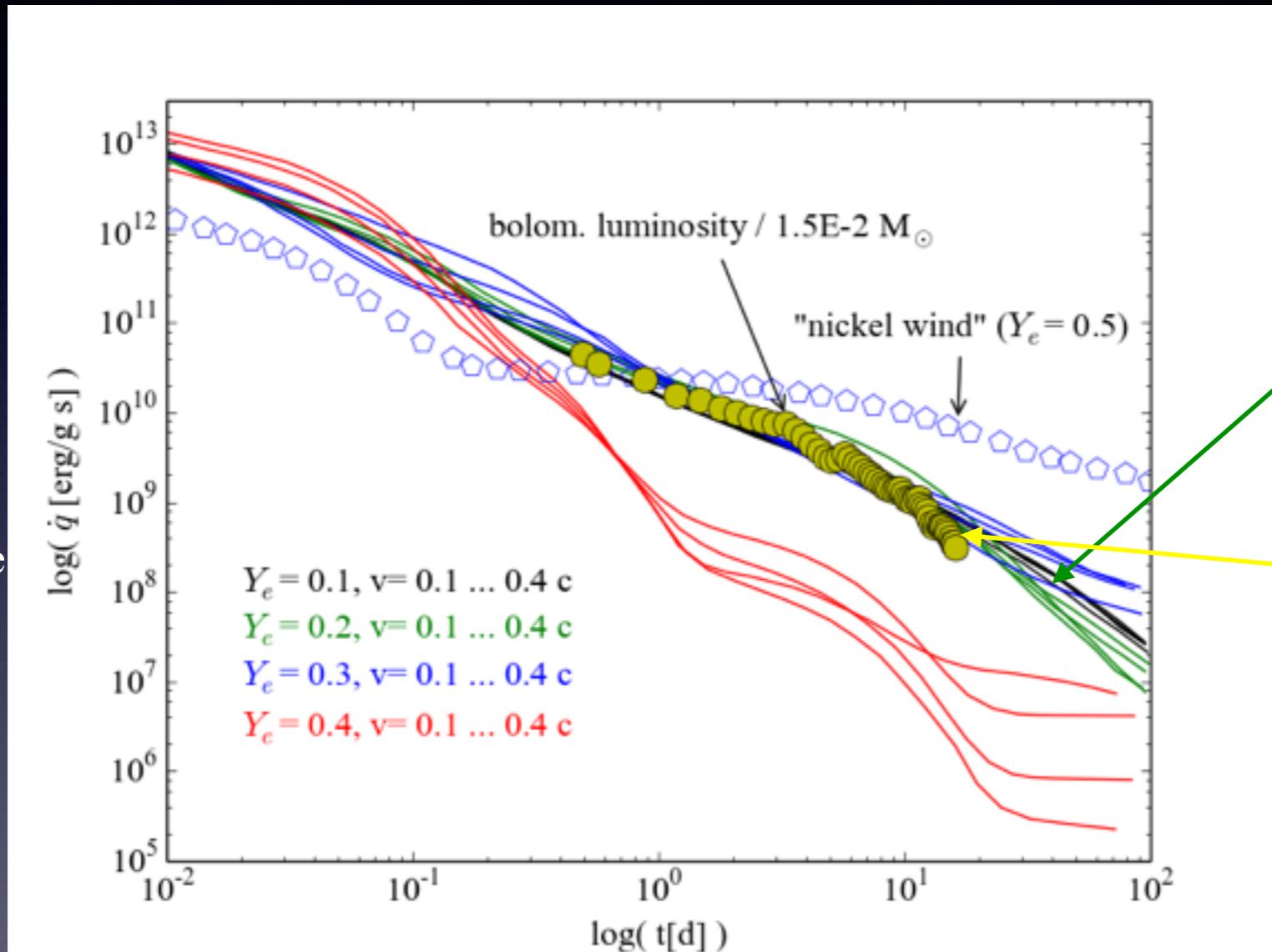
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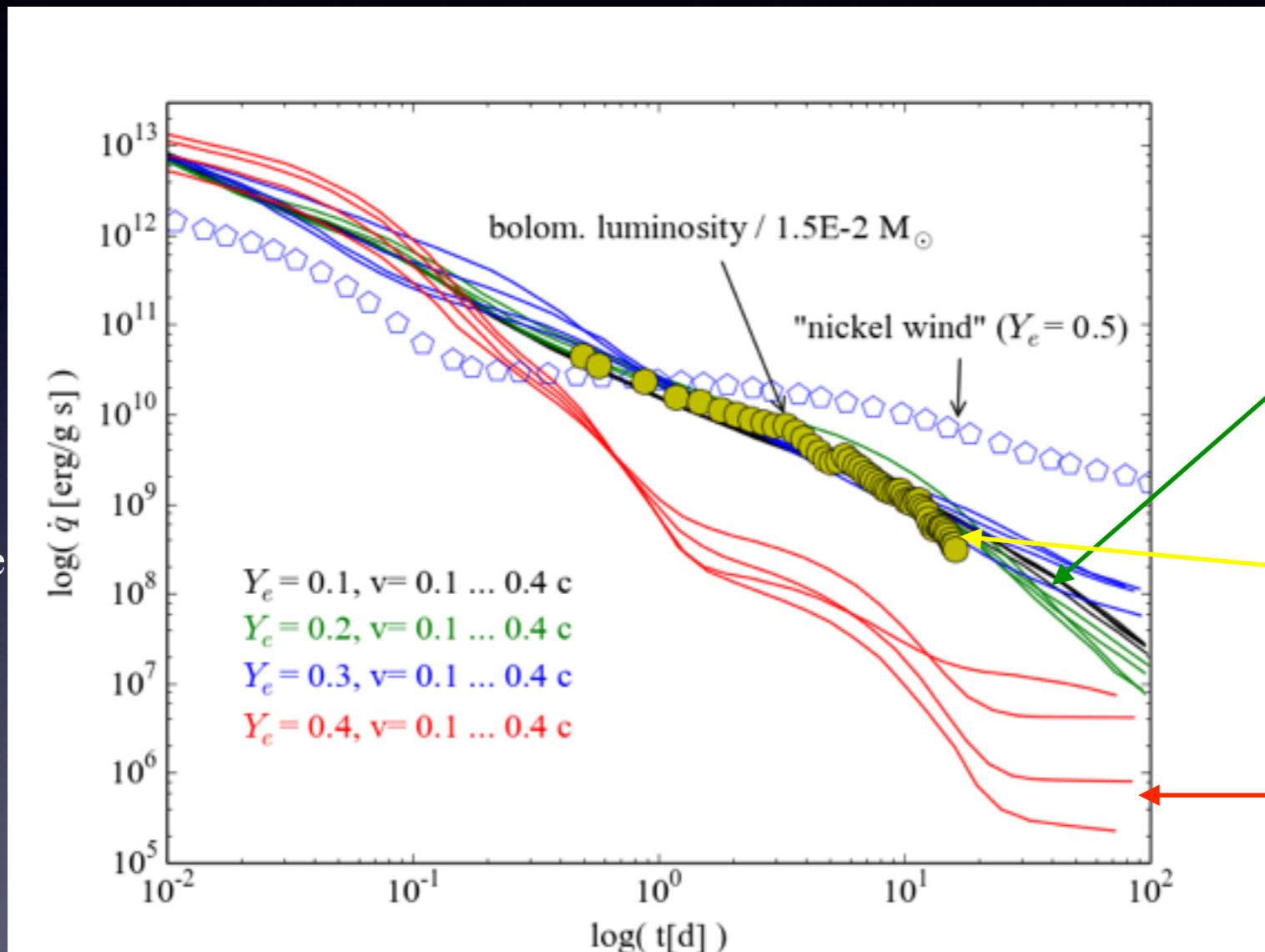
observed  
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low electron fraction ( $Y_e \lesssim 0.3$ )  
 $\Rightarrow$  r-process

(scaled) observed luminosity

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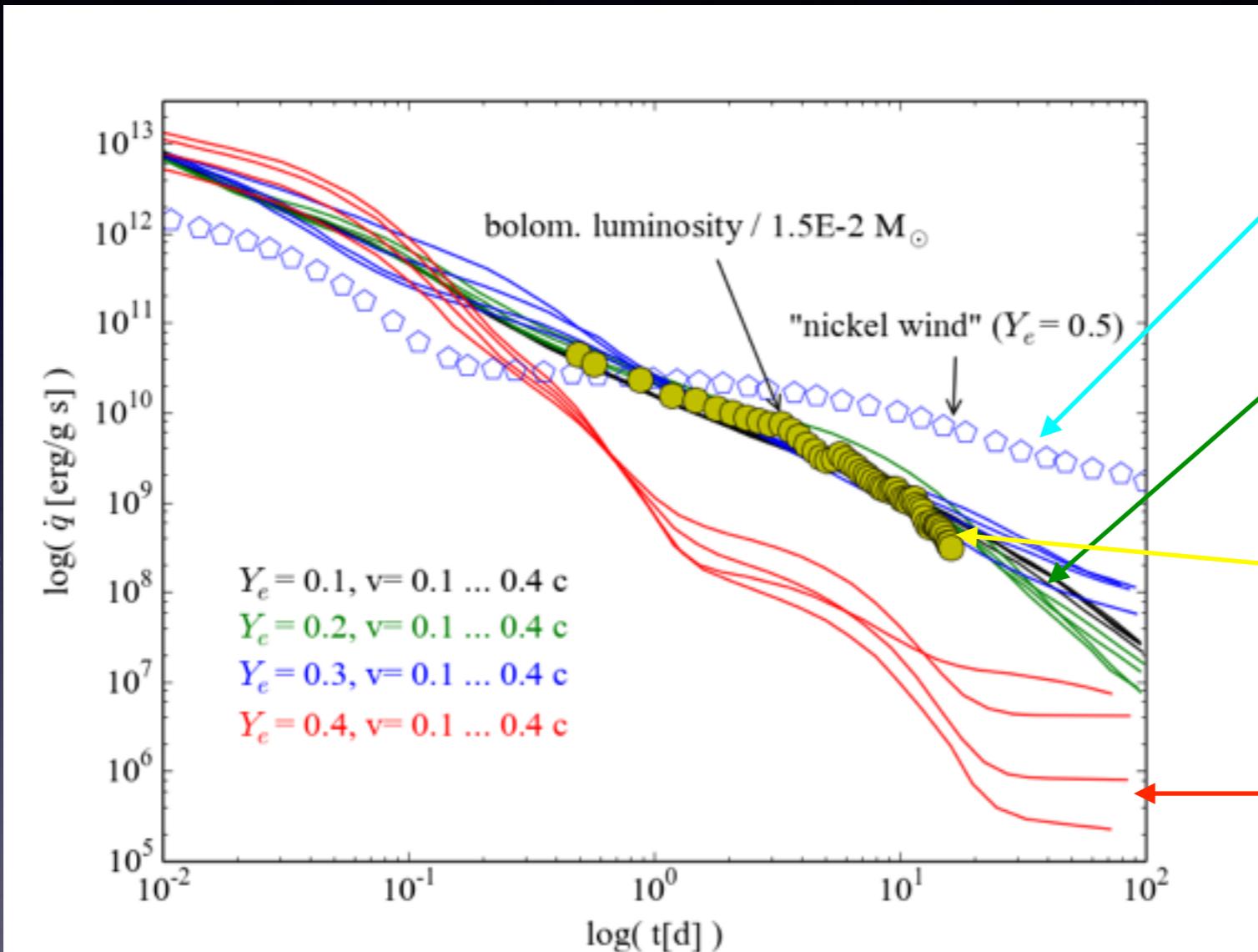
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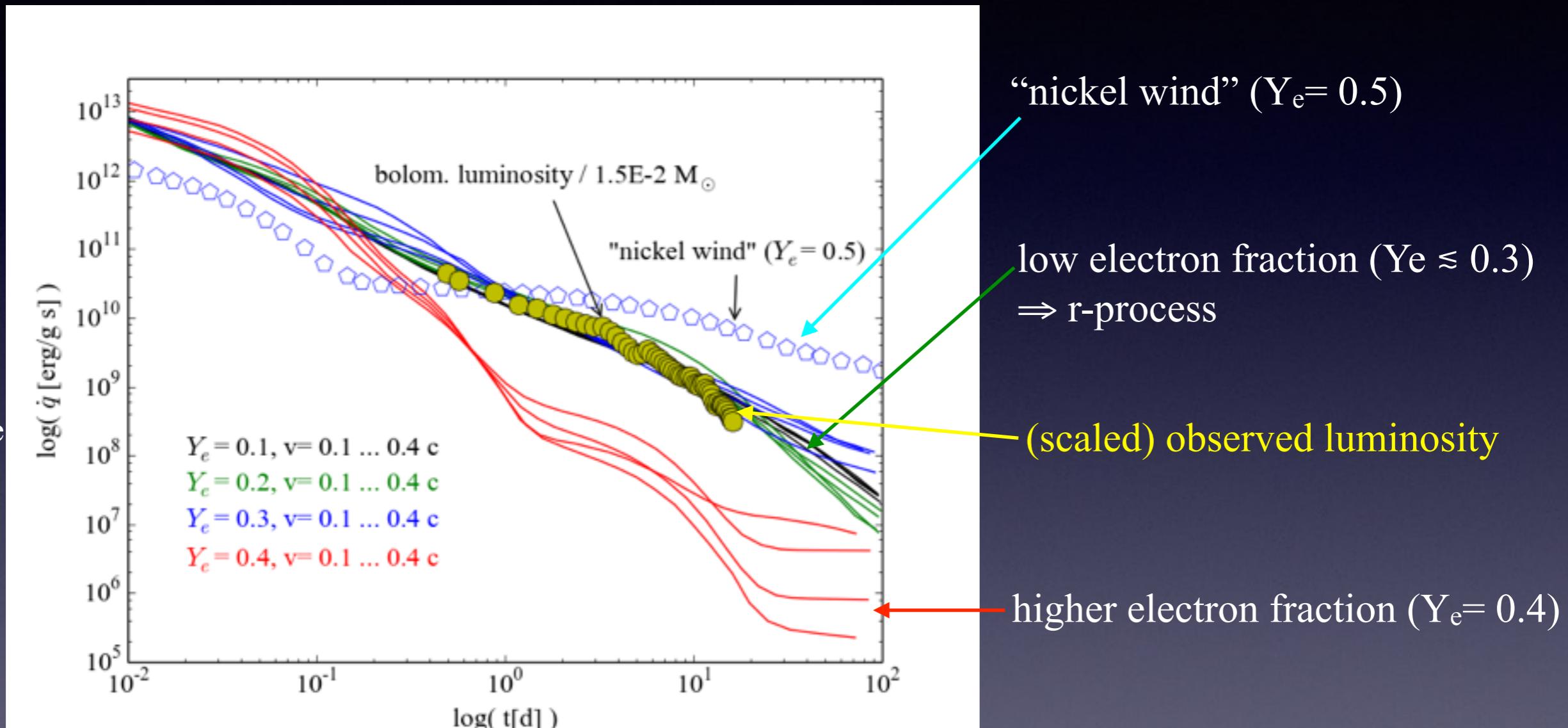
observed  
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“nickel wind” ( $Y_e = 0.5$ )  
low electron fraction ( $Y_e \lesssim 0.3$ )  
 $\Rightarrow$  r-process  
(scaled) observed luminosity  
higher electron fraction ( $Y_e = 0.4$ )

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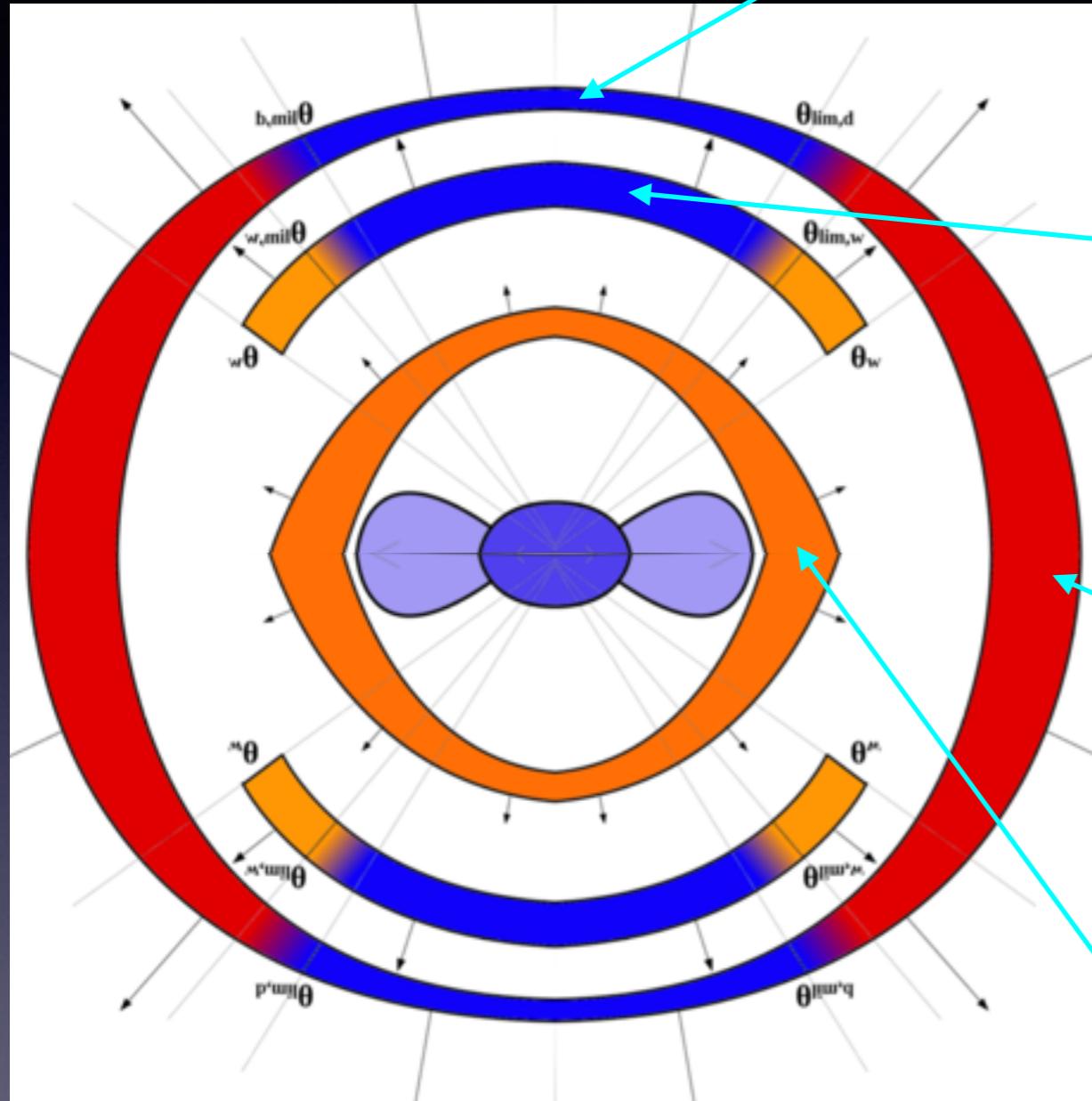
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observed  
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- lessons:

- decay of luminosity **consistent with r-process nucleosynthesis**
- either with (more likely) or without lanthanides
- ejecta mass  $> 0.015 M_\odot$

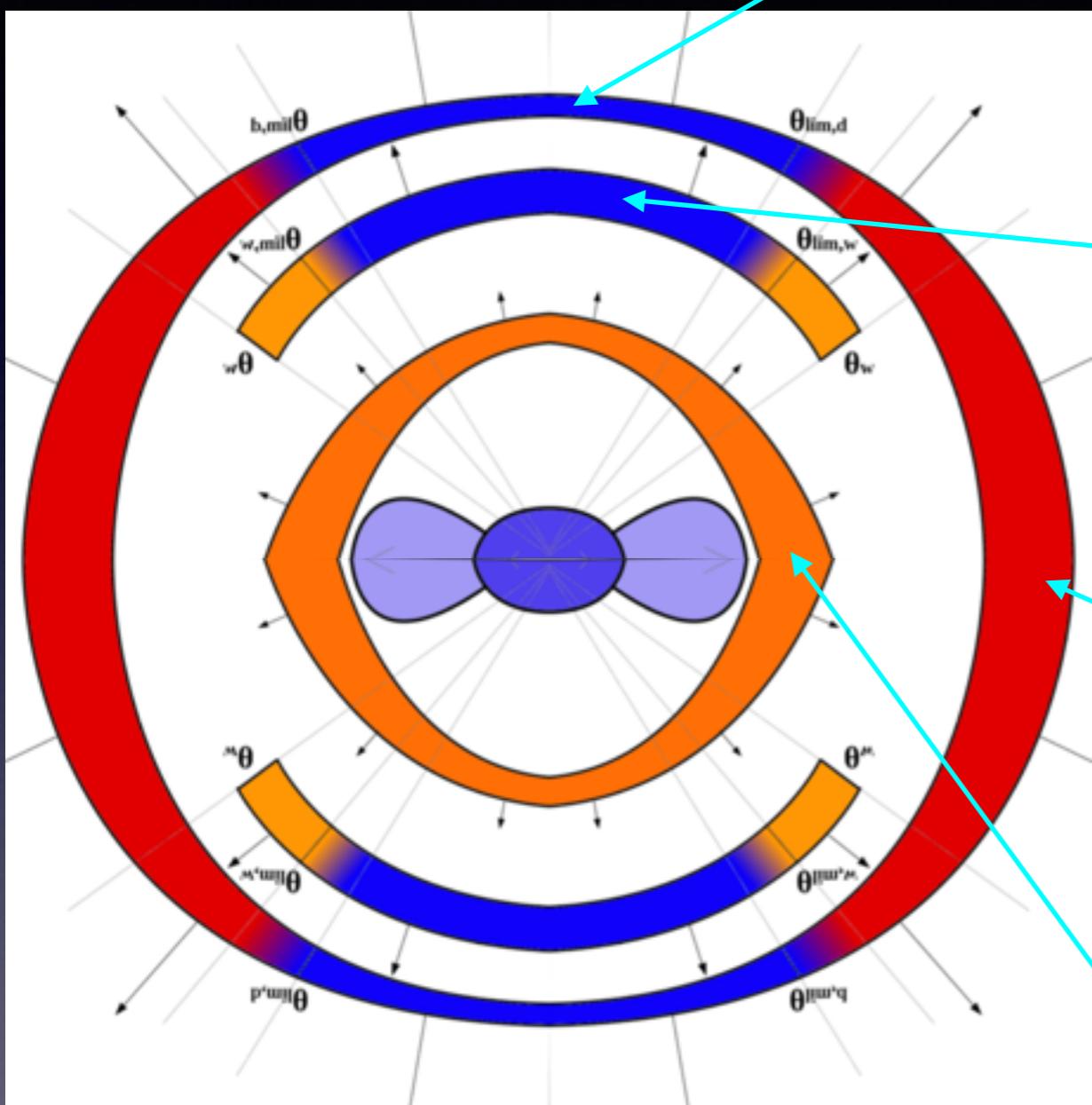


(Figure after Perego+ 2017)

- dynamic ejecta, “interaction component”:
  - early, ~1 ms
  - “polar”
  - higher  $Y_e$
  - ‘blue’
- winds ( $v$ -driven, magnetic, etc):
  - early, ~10s of ms
  - higher  $Y_e$
  - ‘blue’
- dynamic ejecta, “tidal component”:
  - early, ~ 1 ms
  - equatorial
  - low  $Y_e$
  - ‘red’
- “secular”, “tidal component”:
  - late, ~ 1 s
  - ~ isotropic
  - broad range  $Y_e$

e.g. Kilpatrick+ 17  
Kasen+ 17

“blue”:  
 $m \sim 0.025 M_{\odot}$   
 $v \sim 0.25 c$



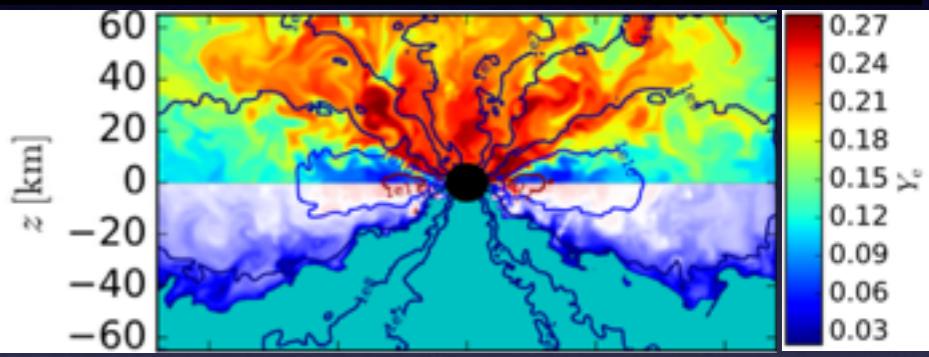
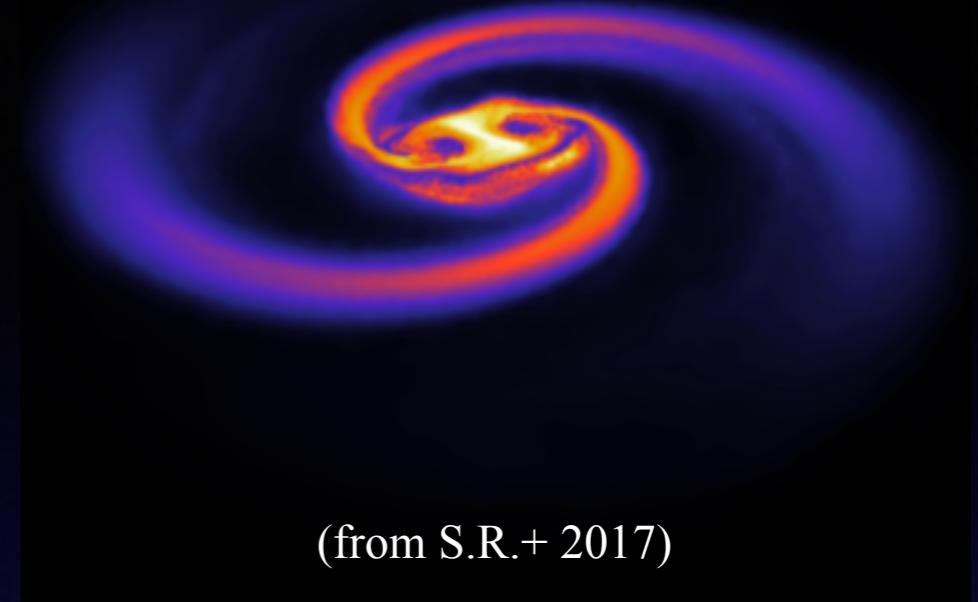
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“red”:  
 $m \sim 0.035 M_{\odot}$   
 $v \sim 0.15 c$

# Implications

- “large mass in red component” ( $\sim 0.04 M_{\odot}$ )
- very difficult for tidal dynamic ejecta
- secular/disk ejecta?



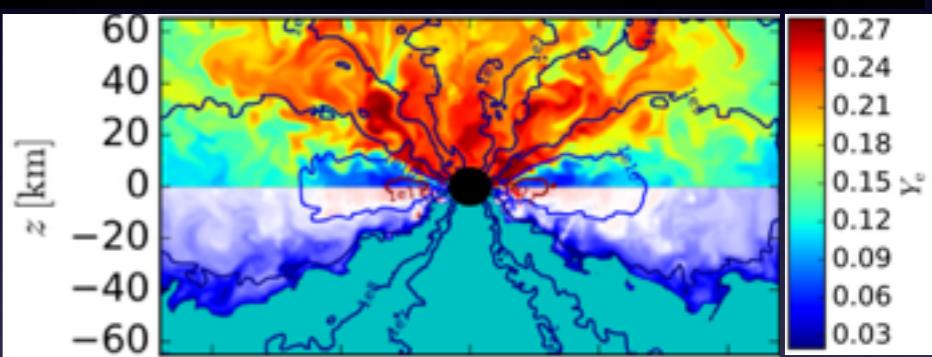
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- “large mass in blue component” ( $\sim 0.02 M_{\odot}$ )
  - original mass with  $Y_e > 0.25$  only  $\sim 5 \times 10^{-5} M_{\odot}$

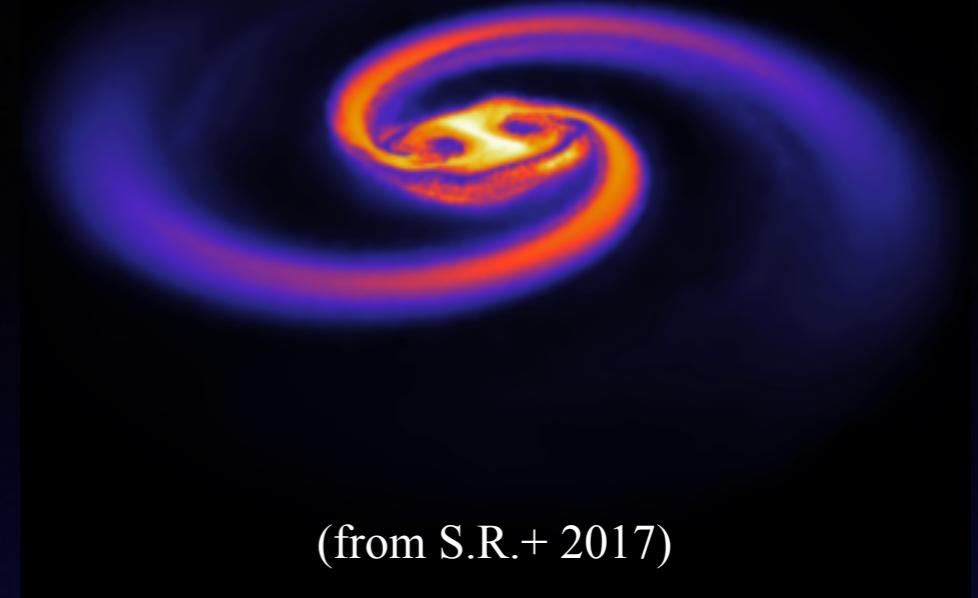
$\Rightarrow$  weak interaction/neutrino physics plays key role!



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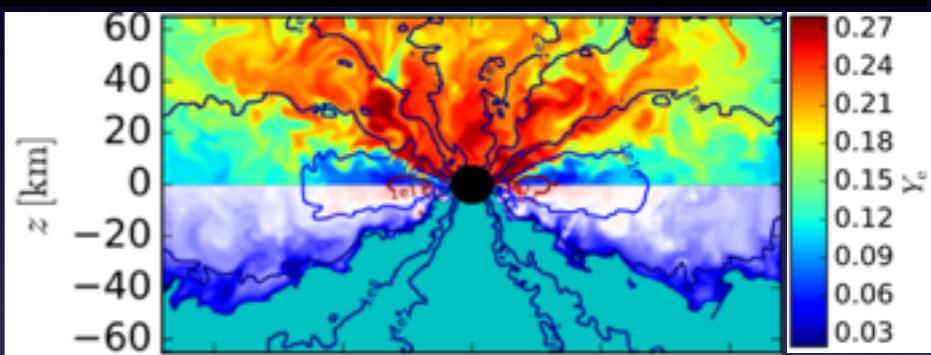
- very difficult for tidal dynamic ejecta
- secular/disk ejecta?



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- expected, accumulated mass:

$$M_{r,\text{expected}} \sim 17\,000 M_{\odot} \left( \frac{\mathcal{R}_{\text{nsns}}}{500 \text{ Gpc}^{-3} \text{yr}^{-1}} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{m}_{\text{ej}}}{0.03 M_{\odot}} \right) \left( \frac{\tau_{\text{Gal}}}{1.3 \times 10^{10} \text{ yr}} \right)$$

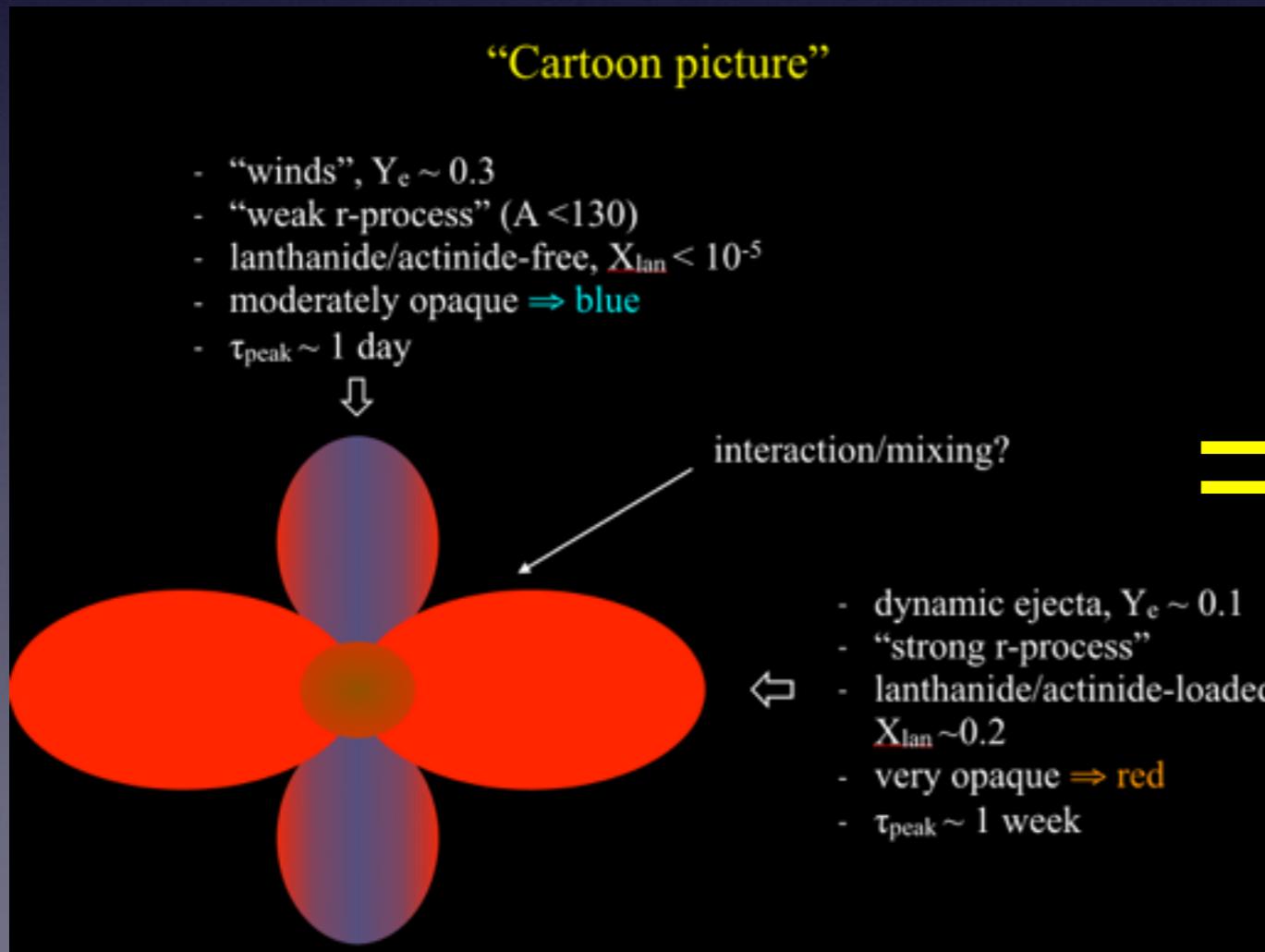
$$\sim M_{r,\text{MilkyWay}}$$

$\Rightarrow$  very likely THE source of r-process elements in the Universe!

- velocities in blue component larger ( $\sim 0.3c$ ) than expected

⇒ interaction with jet?

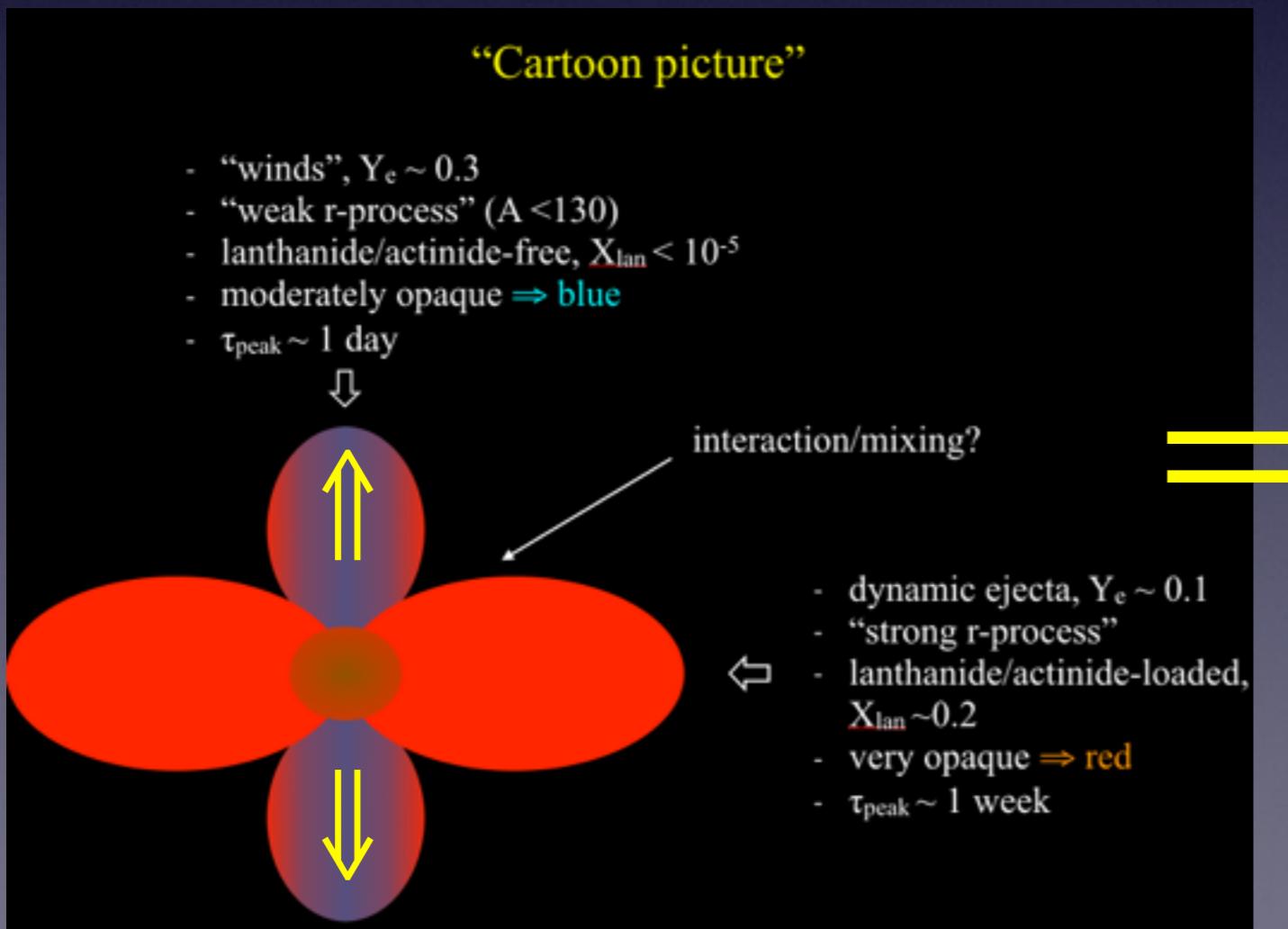
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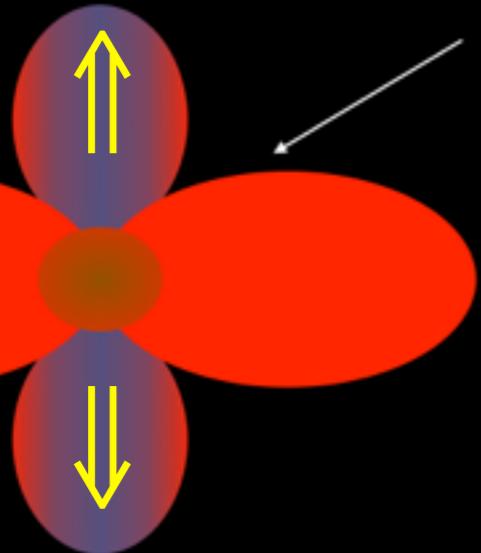
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Lorenzo Nativi

“Cartoon picture”

- “winds”,  $Y_e \sim 0.3$
- “weak r-process” ( $A < 130$ )
- lanthanide/actinide-free,  $X_{lan} < 10^{-5}$
- moderately opaque ⇒ blue
- $\tau_{peak} \sim 1$  day



interaction/mixing?



- dynamic ejecta,  $Y_e \sim 0.1$
- “strong r-process”
- lanthanide/actinide-loaded,  $X_{lan} \sim 0.2$
- very opaque ⇒ red
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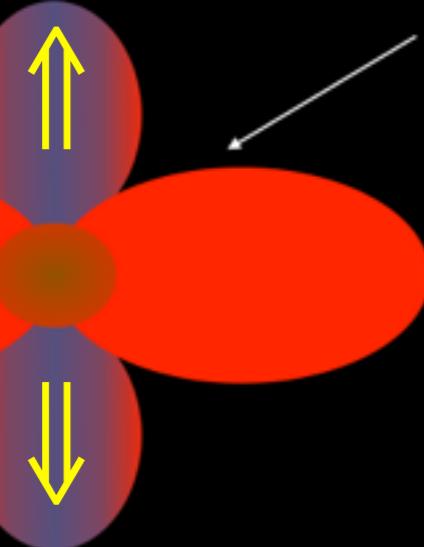
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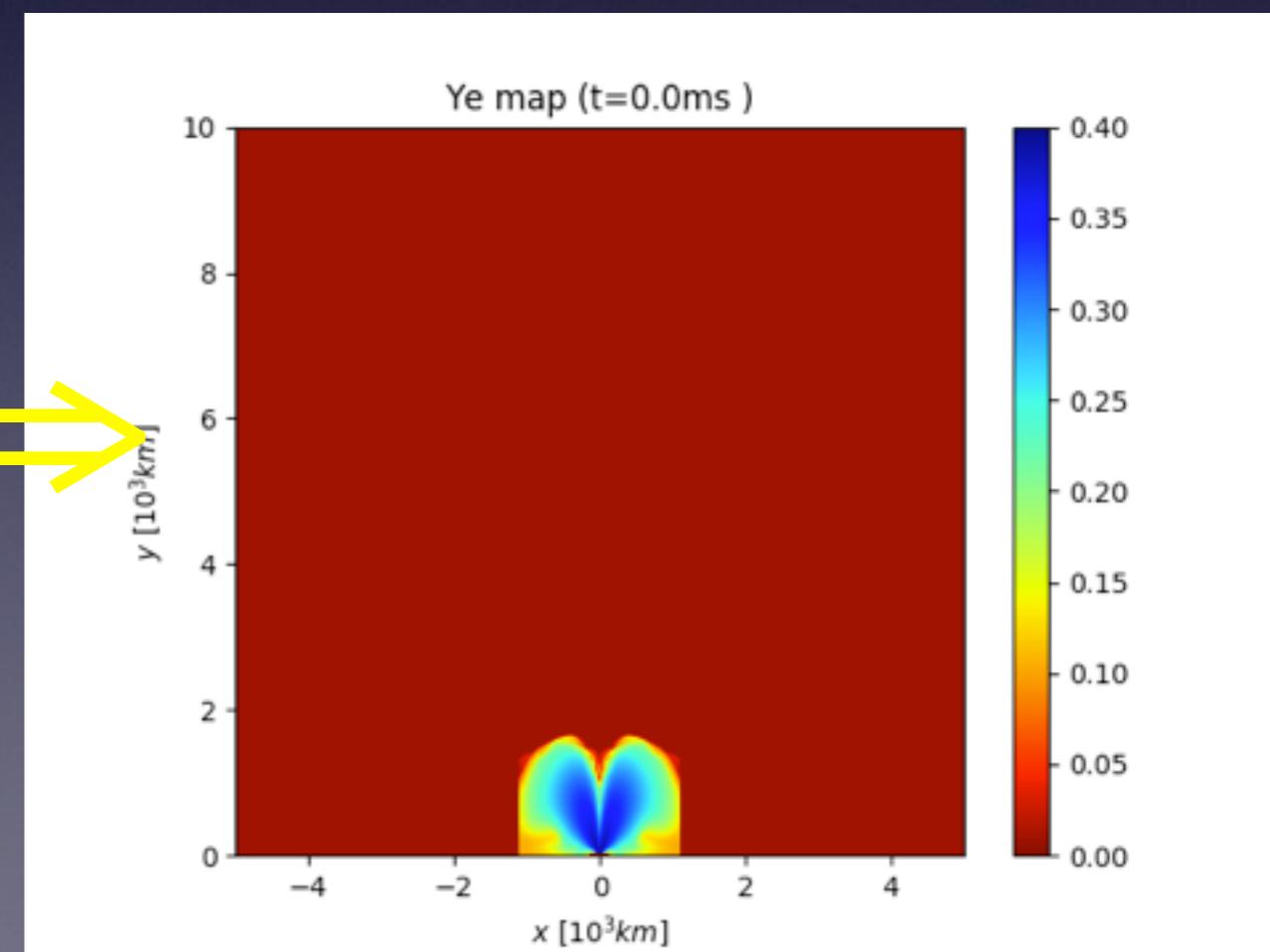
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- “it was a neutron star neutron star merger with total mass  $\approx 2.8 M_\odot$ ”
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- independent measure of the Hubble constant
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## Electromagnetic waves:

- “it happened in lenticular host galaxy at 42.5 Mpc, z= 0.0097”
- neutron star mergers produce short GRBs
- 1.7s delay GW vs. GRB: GWs travel at speed of light to within 1:10<sup>15</sup>
- produced a “macronova”
- ***neutron star mergers do produce r-process!***
  - likely broad range, light and heavy r-process nuclei
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The future is bright...

## Electromagnetic

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LIGO/VIRGO  
Science Run O3,  
exp. early 2019