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Measuring $^{12}\text{C}(\alpha, \gamma)^{16}\text{O}$ with ERNA: improvements and perspectives

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$^{12}\text{C}(\alpha, \gamma)^{16}\text{O}$ has been, and still is, one of the central topic in nuclear astrophysics.

Reason for this is that stellar models are very sensitive to the ratio $^{12}\text{C}/^{16}\text{O}$ produced by the helium burning stage. Knowing the value of the $^{12}\text{C}(\alpha, \gamma)^{16}\text{O}$ S-factor at the energy of astrophysical interest ($E_0 \sim 300$ keV) to a precision better than 10% would constrain our prediction on the isotopic abundances and the fate of a star at the end of its evolution.

The expected cross section at E_0 ($\sim 10^{-17}$ b) makes the direct measurement unfeasible and the complex ^{16}O energy levels structure require high precision measurement at higher energies to improve extrapolations of the S-factor.

Recent developments have improved the ERNA separator installed at the Tandem laboratory of the University of Campania, Caserta that is now capable of measuring the $^{12}\text{C}(\alpha, \gamma)^{16}\text{O}$ cross section and its gamma emission angular distribution down to 1.0 MeV.

In this contribution the commissioning of ERNA for the $^{12}\text{C}(\alpha, \gamma)^{16}\text{O}$ and perspective on the measurement campaign will be shown.

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