## **Cosmic rays as an imaging tool**





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#### Muo-what??



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Muography

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Muography** is an imaging technique that produces a projectional image of a target volume by recording elementary particles, called muons, either electronically or chemically with materials that are sensitive to charged particles such as nuclear emulsions. Cosmic rays from outer space generate muons in the Earth's atmosphere as a result of nuclear reactions between primary cosmic rays and atmospheric nuclei. They are highly penetrative and millions of muons pass through our bodies every day.

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Muography utilizes muons by tracking the number of muons that pass through the target volume to determine the density of the inaccessible internal structure. Muography is a technique similar in principle to radiography (imaging with X-rays) but capable of surveying much larger objects. Since muons are less likely to interact, stop and decay in low density matter than high density matter, a larger number of muons will travel through the low density regions of target objects in comparison to higher density regions. The apparatuses record the trajectory of each event to produce a muogram that displays the matrix of the resulting numbers of transmitted muons after they have passed through hectometer to kilometer-sized objects. The internal structure of the object, imaged in terms of density, is displayed by converting muograms to muographs.



# First known application of muography (1955)

Commonwealth Engineer, July 1, 1955

#### Cosmic Rays Measure Overburden of Tunnel

• Fig. 1—Geiger counter "telescope" in operation in the Guthega-Munyang tunnel. From left are Dr. George and his assistants, Mr. Lehane and Mr. O'Neill.



Geiger counter telescope used for mass determination at Guthega project of Snowy Scheme . . . Equipment described

By Dr. E. P. George<sup>®</sup> University of Sydney, N.S.W.

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- Muon flux used to measure ice thickness above a tunnel
- No directional information

# First application of muography to archaeology



Search for hidden chambers in the Chephren's Pyramid L.W. Alvarez et al. Science 167 (1970) 832

#### Alvarez's result: no hidden chamber



Spark chamber "muon telescope"











Data and simulation are corrected for pyramid structure and telescope acceptance



#### Fast-forward by ~50 years



Search for hidden chambers in the Chephren's Pyramid L.W. Alvarez et al. Science 167 (1970) 832



Discovery of a big void in Khufu's Pyramid by observation of cosmic-ray muons Morishima et al., Nature 552 (2017) 386

Alvarez chose the wrong pyramid...

(But would have he been able to spot this void?)

## Outline

- 1. Some physics
- 2. Muography How-to
- 3. A few selected applications

Disclaimer:

 Choice of sub-topics is very personal, not representative at all of the variety of activities in this area

# 1. Some physics

## Discovery of cosmic rays

- Early 1900s: hypothesised that there is a natural background of ionizing radiation that discharges all the electroscopes
- People believed it was mostly due to radioactive rocks
- 1909: Theodor Wulf uses Tour Eiffel to measure this background at different heights; surprisingly, he reported that it increases with the altitude, but measurements were not so precise and he was met with skepticism
- 1911-12: Victor Hess improved the instrument and used a balloon to study the phenomenon between 1000 and 5000 m over sea level

When the device is charged, the sheets move apart. Ionization of the gas leads to a discharge, and the sheets move towards each other.



#### Primary and secondary cosmic rays





Picture from here

From wikipedia

The number of charged particles increases as the cascade progresses, but eventually most of them are absorbed

#### Secondary cosmic rays in the atmosphere



- Primary CRs (mostly protons) entering the atmosphere collide mostly with Oxygen and Nitrogen, producing a shower of particles
- Mostly x-rays, muons, protons, alphas, pions, electrons, neutrons
- They tend to stay within 1° of the direction of the primary CR
- Muon rate: ~100 Hz/m<sup>2</sup> (~1 muon/second through your thumb) 11

#### An old mystery





Figure 4: Early measurements of energy loss in 0.7-1.5 cm of Pb. Dots indicate single particles; circles, shower particles.

#### "Who ordered that?" (I. Rabi)



#### At ground level, the visible flux is dominated by muons

Source: Particle Data Group

All curves are for E>1 GeV; points are experimental measurements for negative muons

#### Angular distribution



From J.-W. Lin et al., *Measurement of angular distribution of cosmic-ray muon fluence rate*, NIM A 619 (2010) 24

 $\Rightarrow$  Large difference in statistics between vertical and horizontal telescopes

$$I_{\theta} = I_0 \cos^n \theta$$

This is an approximation, and  $n\sim2$  works pretty well; but it depends on energy, latitude, altitude, depth, ...



Figure 3.60: Momentum dependence of the exponent, n, of the zenith angular distribution of muons,  $I(\theta, > p) = I(0^{\circ}, \ge p) \cos^{n}(\theta)$  at sea level (Bhattacharyya, 1974b).

#### Atmospheric muon spectrum



At large angle, more low-E muons decay before reaching the ground, and more high-E pions decay before interacting.

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## 2. How-to

#### Absorption method



• Basic idea: just like normal radiography, with  $\mu$  instead of X-rays

## Stopping power



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Picture from PDG



### Scattering method

Incoming muons (from natural cosmic rays)



• Exploits multiple scattering in high-Z materials (e.g., spent nuclear reactor fuel, smuggled fissile material, etc.)



 Deflection distribution follows Rutherford's law in the tails (single hard scattering) and is ~ Gaussian in the bulk (multiple scattering)

•  $X_0$  is the radiation length, and it depends on the atomic number



$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{X_0} &= 4\alpha r_e^2 \frac{N_A}{A} \Big\{ Z^2 \big[ L_{\text{rad}} - f(Z) \big] + Z L_{\text{rad}}' \Big\} \\ f(Z) &= a^2 \Big[ (1 + a^2)^{-1} + 0.20206 \\ &- 0.0369 \, a^2 + 0.0083 \, a^4 - 0.002 \, a^6 \Big] , \\ \text{where } a &= \alpha Z \end{aligned}$$

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(Formulas from the PDG)

#### Absorption vs scattering



- Opacity measurement
- Sensitive to  $\boldsymbol{\rho}$
- Observable: deficit with respect to free sky
- Intrinsically 2D, can get 3D by using multiple points of view
- Slow



- Deflection measurement
- Sensitive to Z and  $\rho$
- Observable: deflection
- (can be combined with absorption)
- Intrinsically 3D
- Fast

#### Absorption vs scattering



- Scattering method is much faster, as it uses more information
- Better definition too





#### What to use for what

Material	Thickness	θ (°)	<b>P</b> <sub>absorption</sub>
Air	100 m	0.094	0.78%
Lead	10 cm	1.01	2.9%
Water	1 m	0.35	4.2%
Ground	100 m		99%







Scattering



#### **Recap of Muography Applications**



### **Detector** geometry

- Typically, a "telescope"
  - Trade-off between angular precision (better if long) and acceptance (better if short)
- **Deep underground applications** (e.g., for mining exploration) need a borehole
  - More acceptance to the sides than to the top



Borehole detector illustration from

D.Nakadachi, H.Tanaka et al





TOMUVOL apparatus

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 Representative example from Project Deep Carbon (application to monitoring of Carbon Capture & Storage sites), slides by Lee Thompson

#### Scintillators

- Solid plastic scintillators, coupled to photomultipliers
- Strengths:
  - Cheap
  - Robust
  - ✓ Quick signal → can use time-of-flight to reject backgrounds
- Weaknesses:
  - Poor space resolution
  - Photomultipliers response may depend on temperature (issue if operating outdoors for months)



Illustration by S.Procureur

#### Nuclear emulsions

(a)

(c)

- Photographic plates
- Well known technique in neutrino experiments
- Strengths:
  - Excellent resolution
  - No need for power supply
- Weaknesses:
  - Fragile
  - No real-time information
  - No background rejection
  - Dedicated analysis infrastructure (scanners)

Popular among the muography teams that are spin-offs of OPERA or other v experiments that used this technique (e.g.: Bern, Salerno, Nagoya)



#### Gaseous detectors

- Huge variety of techniques are in use in muography (drift tubes, RPC, MWPC, MicroMegas, ...), with very different complexity, cost, robustness
- General strengths:
  - Very good space resolution
  - ✓ Quick signal → can use time-of-flight to reject backgrounds
- General weaknesses:
  - Logistics (gas bottles), leakages, security issues
  - Stability

Gain variations of CEA/ScanPyramid MicroMegas detector, with increasingly complex gain corrections:





### More exotic choices

- Silicon detectors
  - Lot of expertise in HEP with Si pixel and microstrip detectors; <100 μm resolution</li>
  - Problem: very expensive (CMS microstrips: ~1000 euros per module)
  - Being considered for space applications (compact payload, and rad-hard)
- Cherenkov detectors
  - ASTRI, an INAF prototype for the CTA, located at Serra La Nave, on Mt. Etna's slopes
  - Cosmic muons used for calibration; "parasitic" usage for muography; but location not optimal (5 km from target) and definitely not portable
  - INAF-PA team is proposing the development of a cheaper and portable version of ASTRI
  - Momentum threshold (20 GeV) limits statistics
  - Bonus: Cherenkov ring radius gives E







O.Catalano, M.Del Santo, T.Mineo, G.Cusumano, M.C.Maccarrone, G.Pareschi, NIM A 807 (2016) 5

#### From raw data to density map



From Anne Barnoud, with TOMUVOL data on Puy de Dôme

#### Not so different from:



CMS Collaboration (M.Komm, AG, et al.), JHEP 04 (2016) 073

# 3. applications

#### Mountains and volcanoes

- Pioneered since the 90's by Nagamine's team in Japan, intense activity since early 00's in Japan, Italy, France
- Both "static" and "time-series" studies are potentially useful for volcanology, the latter also for civil protection
- Intrinsically "academic" activity, trend towards collaborations



Satsuma-Iwojima volcano, Japan, 2013 eruption H.Tanaka, T.Kusagaya, H.Shinohara, Nature Comm.5 (2014) 3381

## Some activities in Italy

- Vesuvius:
  - MU-RAY / MURAVES collaboration (INFN Naples & Florence + INGV)
  - Plastic scintillators + SiPM
- Stromboli:
  - Salerno's HEP&Geo + Naples HEP
  - Nuclear emulsions (OPERA spin-off)
- Etna:
  - INAF + INGV
  - Cherenkov telescope (CTA spin-off)
  - (In the past, also DIAPHANE collaboration from France, with plastic scintillators)







#### Flux normalization, Backgrounds



Image from http://www.scienceinschool.org/2013/issue27/muons, adapted from H.Tanaka et al., Earth Plan. Sci. Lett. 263 (2007) 104

Muons from outside the target (including backward) are a help and a nuisance:

- In-situ flux normalization from the free sky
- Background (true muons uncorrelated with the target) due to large-angle scattering
- Time-of-flight helps



Ambrosino et al. (TOMUVOL+MU-RAY coll.), J.Geophys.Res.Solid Earth 120 (2015), 7290



# The most interesting region is the most difficult



#### Two months of data with TOMUVOL detector on Puy de Dôme, dormant volcano in France

Linear opacity to atmospheric muons

Background contamination mimics lower opacity

From Carloganu & Saracino, Physics Today dec.2012

#### Combination with "standard methods"

#### **Gravimetry:**

#### Seismic tomography:



**Observable: Bouguer anomalies** 

$$\Delta g_{BP} = 2\pi G \rho h$$



Figures from Niklas Linde and from http://landtechsa.com

# Combination with "standard methods"



Most geoprospecting methods are non-linear inversion problems: solutions wildly degenerate, need strong constraints to converge, different assumptions lead to qualitatively different results

Muography: highly directional, breaks degeneracy of the other methods

Formula from Anne Barnoud

N(km)

(2) tomography acquisition kernel,  $\mathcal{M}$ 

1774 1774.2 1774.4 1774.6

1773.6 1773.8

#### Checkerboard test



Seen from gravimetric inversion

Seen from muographic inversion

#### Khufu's (Cheops) Great Pyramid (ScanPyramids mission)

KEK CEA Nagoya (emulsions, (MicroMegas, (scintillators, indoors) indoors) outdoors) tan0y Simulation-corrected image 1 -New void Δy G1 (Alhazen) a 100 (¢) (0) 141.3 ± 28.3 0.6 1.2 0.4 10<sup>2</sup> 02 ton/6 -100  $141.8 \pm 24.7$ 100 Ax -100n tane, 0.2  $0.40 \le \tan \theta_{..} < 0.70$ New void -0.8 -0.6 -0.4 -0.2 0 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 0.1 tan(0) q Triangulation positions -0.1 -20 0 20 from Nagoya University 20 40 Λx 0.0 tanθ. G1 (Alhazen) G2 (Brahic)

#### **Coherent conclusions from 3 detectors**

#### Galleria Borbonica, Naples

Detector: MURAVES (same as used on Vesuvius), arranged vertically and with small spacing to increase acceptance







From G.Saracino et al., Scientific Reports 7 (2017) 1181

#### Homeland security





CMS Drift Tubes spin-off at INFN LNL / Padova (P.Checchia et al)

- Currently done with X rays
- Idea: secondary inspection with muon rays to clear/confirm alarms
- Activities also in USA (LANL spin-off)

From http://cms.cern/content/security-and-environmental-protection

### Another CMS spin-off



- Same RPC as CMS experiment, but smaller (16x16 cm<sup>2</sup>)
  - Also same gas mixture and same front-end electronics
- First prototype, just to gain experience
  - Second one will have x4 or x10 strip density
  - ...hence will require different electronics, or/and smart multiplexing
- Design principle: must be portable
  - Particular care in making gas-tight layers (10<sup>-9</sup> mbar l/s)
  - Total weight including the electronics: ~50 kg
  - Robust: went to the Utah Desert and back

#### Nuclear waste monitoring





#### Muography and the private sector



- Usually in HEP the role of the private sector is to provide equipment, facilities, material to the publicly funded institutes
- In muography, a few companies try to valorize the outcomes of academic research
  - Some of them are actually university spin-offs
  - Still in infancy; fragile/hypothetical market
- Examples:
  - Geophysical applications: IRIS Instruments (France), TECNO IN (Italy), NEC (Japan), Lingacom (Israel)
  - Nuclear waste monitoring: Lynkeos Technology (UK)
  - Mining exploration: CRM GeoTomography Technologies (Canada)
  - Pipeline x-section measurement: Muon Systems (Spain)
  - Homeland security: Decision Systems (USA)

## **Planetary exploration**

- The usual requirements for muography instruments on Earth are even more important for space missions
  - Compact size, low weight
  - Very robust! Must survive landing!
  - Low power consumption
  - Temperature variations
- Test with a "rover" on Mt.Omuro (Japan) in 2012
- Additional challenges from the thin atmosphere:
  - Smaller flux of muons
  - (on the other hand, horizontal muons are less suppressed and their flux is actually larger than vertical)
  - Larger hadronic background (primary cosmics!)





S.Kedar et al., Geosci. Instrum. Method. Data Syst. 2 (2013) 157

#### Small solar system bodies





Image from AMS-1 of the MIR space station using secondary  $\pi$  and  $\mu$ 

From T.H. Prettyman

#### Thanks for your attention!



<u>Acknowledgements</u>: Sophie Wuyckens, Sebastien Procureur, Lorenzo Bonechi, Chris Morris, David Mahon, Anne Barnoud, Lee Thompson, ..... Compare attenuation length of X-rays and muons

For X-rays of O(1-10 keV) it ranges between 10<sup>-6</sup> and 10<sup>-1</sup> meters depending on material (Z) and energy



#### **Detector requirements**

- Angular resolution: from sub-mrad to  $\sim 10 \text{ mrad}$
- Large acceptance
- Large detection area: trade-off between the cost, transportability and required statistics
- Robustness
- Autonomy and access
- Time resolution: depends on the application
- Low cost

#### Topology of background events

*Background* events are **grazing downward going muons** of ~1-10 GeV deflected close to the detector and possibly on the volcano flank.



*Figure 8 : 100 MeV background muon with an elevation of 5 deg. Left: top projection, right: side projection. The red line stands for the muon track.* 

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#### Slide from Valentin Niess

#### Primary cosmic rays

- Stable (>10<sup>6</sup> years) charged particles and nuclei
  - Protons: 87%; alphas: 12%; other nuclei: 1%; electrons: 2%; also photons, neutrinos, antimatter



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### Sources of galactic cosmic rays

- We are not sure
  - Because they are deflected several times by galactic magnetic field, they reach Earth from random directions
- Abundance of heavy elements suggests an origin from supernovae, for most but maybe not all of them
  - Remember: ~ 1 SN every 50 years in the Milky Way
- Cosmic rays are probably accelerated by the shock waves in the interstellar gas due to supernovae
- Energy of typical SN explosion: ~10<sup>51</sup> ergs
  - It would be sufficient that O(%) of this energy is converted in kinetic energy of the cosmic rays; the exact way is unknown
  - Data from Fermi satellite recently proved that SN are sources of CR, with ~  $10^{49} 10^{50}$  ergs of CR kinetic energy

#### Muon tomography

#### Muon radiography



Slide by Lorenzo Bonechi



Figure 2.138: Differential momentum spectra of positive and negative muons combined at a zenith angle of 37.5° in eastern and western directions, at an altitude of 2960 m (Zugspitze, Germany) (Allkofer and Trümper, 1964). The data are not corrected for proton and electron contamination.

37.5° east o 37.5° west

Figure 2.141: Vertical differential momentum spectrum of muons at an altitude of 5260 m (Mt. Chacaltaya, Bolivia) (Allkofer and Kraft, 1965).

Grieder's book contains plenty of figures showing spectra at different locations, altitudes, times



### UCL's mini-gRPCs



Spacers



Aluminum box



Telescope configurations



Resistive coating



Vacuum tests



Inside chamber



Detectors assembled with readout and high voltage electronics system



From Sophie Wuyckens' master thesis

#### A few months of progress

Purity evolution of events



HV - 6.8 kV & th 100

#### Underground cavities: Backprojection method



nis and the next cartoons are courtesy of **L. Bonechi** 

L. Bonechi, R. D'Alessandro, N. Mori, L. Viliani, A projective reconstruction method of underground or hidden structures using atmospheric muon absorption data, JINST



<u>Assumptions</u>: size of the target, and distance from the detector, are not much larger than the detector

STEREOSCOPIC VIEW: different parts of the detector look to the target from different directions

IDENTIFICATION OF THE ANGULAR REGION WHERE AN ANOMALY IN THE MUON DENSITY MAP IS EXPECTED

IDENTIFICATION OF THE ANGULAR REGION WHERE AN ANOMALY IN THE MUON DENSITY MAP IS EXPECTED

INCOMING

**MUON TRACKS** 

BACK-PROJECTION OF TRACKS TO PARALLEL PLANES OR CONCENTRIC SPHERICAL SURFACES

Z<sub>6</sub>

 $Z_5$ 

L-AXI.

Z<sub>8</sub>

Ζ7

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Υ.

Z₃∙

Ζ4

BACK-PROJECTION OF TRACKS TO PARALLEL PLANES OR CONCENTRIC SPHERICAL SURFACES



STUDY OF THE ANGULAR WIDTH OF THE ANOMALOUS REGION AS SEEN FROM THE DETECTOR'S POSITION

Z2<sup>×</sup>

Z

ZΔ

 $Z_5$ 

 $Z_6$ 

68

Z<sub>8</sub>

 $Z_7$ 



THE MINIMUM ANGULAR WIDTH OF THE OBSERVED «ANOMALY» (AS SEEN FROM THE DETECTOR) IS FOUND WHEN PROJECTING TRACKS TO A SURFACE PASSING THROUGH THE ANOMALY ITSELF

Angular width:

$$\lambda(z) = 2 \tan^{-1}\left(\frac{w(z)}{2 z}\right)$$

Z3

w(Z<sub>3</sub>)

**Z**<sub>1</sub>

w(Z<sub>1</sub>)

w(Z<sub>7</sub>)



Simulation study with GEANT4