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1	New β -decay spectroscopy of the ¹³⁷ Te nucleus
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3	(Dated: January 25, 2022)
4	Background: Nuclear structure of the neutron-rich isotopes beyond ¹³² Sn is investigated.
5	Purpose: The level scheme of 137 I is obtained after β decay of 137 Te. Transitions in 136 I are detected after
6	β delayed neutron emission of ¹³⁷ Te. The half life of ¹³⁷ Te is measured.
7	Methods: β -delayed γ -ray spectroscopy is employed for neutron-rich ¹³⁷ Sb and ¹³⁷ Te isotopes, produced at
в	the ILL after neutron-induced fission to populate excited states in ¹³⁷ I.
9	Results: The new β decay level scheme of ¹³⁷ I is established. The half lives of ¹³⁷ Sb and ¹³⁷ Te are deter-
D	mined as 0.57(26) s and 2.46(5) s, respectively. The β -delayed neutron emission probability P _n limiting value
1	of 137 Te is deduced to be 2.17(66)%.

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Conclusions: The experimental results are an important input to the theoretical description of nuclei in the region, being well interpreted within LSSM calculations and provide essential information on the first-forbidden transitions beyond N > 82 and Z > 50.

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I. INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION

Close to the double shell closures in the nuclear chart with 26 one of the good examples being the ${}^{132}_{50} \mathrm{Sn}_{82}$ doubly-magic nu-27 cleus, the nuclear shell model stays a major structural frame-28 work to understand such magic nuclei and their neighbours. 62 29 By investigating the nuclear configuration of states around the $_{_{63}}$ 30 132 Sn core, the extension of the magic core may be traced $_{64}$ 31 and the polarization effect of valence particles on the 132 Sn $_{65}$ 32 core may be studied in detail [1]. Valuable information on 33 the nucleon-nucleon effective interaction and single-particle 34 excitation energies may also be obtained. Furthermore, with 35 increasing the neutron excess for these nuclei, a variety of new 36 phenomena are predicted as the existence of neutron skin, van- $_{_{70}}$ 37 ishing of standard magic numbers or opening of new sub-shell 71 38 gaps [2-5]. These phenomena challenge recent competitive ₇₂ 39 studies and boost the quest for new data to more and more $_{73}$ 40 neutron-rich species. In our previous review on ¹³⁶Te which $\frac{1}{74}$ 41 has two valence protons and two valence neutrons outside the $\frac{1}{75}$ 42 doubly-magic $^{13\bar{2}}$ Sn core, deviations of the observed transition $_{_{76}}$ 43 rates from the ones predicted by the shell-model calculation 44 are found [6]. It is of great interest to investigate the Iodine $\frac{1}{78}$ 45 isotopic chain, where in our review in [7] of ¹³⁶Te β decay, 46 the excited levels of 136 I were established and compared to the 47 shell model. In the present work new excited states also are 48 identified in three valence protons systems beyond the magic 49 number Z = 50. One of them, the ¹³⁷I nucleus, which has 50 two valence neutrons outside the closed neutron shell $N = 82^{81}$ 51 is of particular interest since also its low-spin excitations have 52 not been explored in detail, while being very important for the 82 53 nuclear structure in the region. Intermediate-spin states are 83 54 addressed in our review on ^{135–139}I nuclei [8]. 84 55

The excess of valences particles could polarize the ¹³²Sn core and could lead to collective behaviour in ¹³⁷I, a quantity of information on the shell evolution of nuclei is expected at such extreme proton-neutron ratios. However, these I nuclei, similarly to their Te isotones, have not shown a very collective behaviour and a rather similar trend of excitation energies and transition rates of their first excited states [8] with the increase of N. The three valence protons in the Iodines [7] were also regarded as a cluster [9] to explain some features of these nuclei [10]. It is a very interesting exploration field though only the yrast states could be studied in both thermal neutron-induced ²³⁵U-fission [11] and energetic neutron-induced ²³⁸U-fission [8], while many of the non-yrast states could not be populated by this reaction. Based on the knowledge of the only previous β -decay work [12] with relatively scarce data on A = 137as compared to its A = 135 isotope, only 5 excited states up to excitation energy of 1169 keV with 9 γ -ray transitions in ¹³⁷I were associated to the ¹³⁷Te decay scheme [13]. Therefore, new results on ¹³⁷I are highly demanded. More recently, benefiting from the development of experimental technology with radioactive neutron-rich beams [14–16], the majority of neutron-rich nuclei are investigated by spectroscopy of the fission products directly. In this work we report on the β decay of ¹³⁷Te, which is itself produced by the thermal neutron-induced fission reaction on ²³⁵U.

II. EXPERIMENT

The exotic neutron-rich 137 Sb isotopes are produced at the ILL reactor, employing a thermal-neutron beam inducing fission onto a 235 U target. The projectile fission fragments of

interest are selected and identified by the LOHENGRIN [17] 85 separator for two separate data sets tuned on A/Q setting for 86 O = 21 and O = 25 to be able to disentangle more easily 87 background from the radiation associated to the nucleus of in-88 terest. Further, the radioactive species are implanted onto our 89 user detection system for a decay type of measurement. The 90 detection setup consists of the LOENIE [18] β -decay station 91 of plastic detectors in 4π geometry, placed around a supported 92 movable Al-coated Mylar tape, evacuating the radioactivity 93 from the implanted ions. 94

The measurement cycle is adapted to the half life, $T_{1/2}$, 95 of the isotopes of interest. In this work, the time chopper 96 is set to 3 s for injection, 3 s for measurement and 2 s for 97 tape movement. This information is further used to extract the 98 experimental $T_{1/2}$ value (see Sec. III A). Prompt and β -delayed 99 γ rays emitted from the implanted isotopes could be detected 100 by two Clover detectors (with Anti-Compton (AC) shields, 101 used as passive shielding) and a coaxial HPGe detector in a 102 very close geometry. Data is collected by a standard trigger-103 less VME electronics. Further experimental details, including 104 information on the γ -ray detection efficiency are given also 105 in Ref. [19]. As appropriate for the studied energy range, 106 these were also cross-checked with the experimental relative 107 efficiencies of the A = 136 daughter nuclei [7]. 108

For the A = 137 study reported here, it is relevant to state, 109 that isobars and long-lived contaminants as ¹³⁷I, and ¹³⁷Xe (and 110 ¹⁴²Ba in Q = 25 case), produced directly in fission may also¹⁴⁰ 111 reach the experimental station, as the LOHENGRIN separator¹⁴¹ 112 does not distinguish between isobars abundant quantities of 142 113 the longer-lived isobars. Such activities are taken into account143 114 in the analysis as they are already well known and mostly¹⁴⁴ 115 contribute as a long-lived background. 116

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

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A. Half life of ¹³⁷Te

Due to the very short half-life of the implanted $^{137}\mathrm{Sb}_{^{152}}^{^{152}}$ 119 ions and its exoticity with respect to the daughter prod-120 ucts, the delayed spectra are dominated by these ¹³⁷Te, ¹³⁷I 121 daughter/grand-daughters. Also, as explained above such 122 A = 137 contamination is present in the initially-implanted¹⁵⁵ 123 ions as they are produced stronger in the fission. The γ -ray 124 energy after β decay and the corresponding timing informa-156 125 tion, based on the beam chopping are used to construct the¹⁵⁷ 126 "time chopper-energy" matrix. This matrix allows to moni-158 127 tor the activity of γ -rays within the measurement cycle itself.¹⁵⁹ 128 By gating on β -delayed γ -rays in ¹³⁷I, we obtain the decay 160 129 curve of ¹³⁷Te. To demonstrate this and in order to increase 161 130 the statistics, we summed up the time distributions of already 162 131 known γ -rays in this nucleus as 129 keV, 243 keV, 469 keV₁₆₃ 132 and 554 keV and fitted the half life using minimization pro-164 133 cedure. As shown in Fig.1, the contribution of the daughter₁₆₅ 135 137 Te is dominating the time curve. While any 137 Sb contri-166 136 bution is minor (weakly produced and shorter) and may be167 137 neglected, the grand-daughter ¹³⁷I nuclei may contribute to₁₆₈ 138 the background and can be accounted either directly with the169 139



Figure 1. Time distribution of 137 Te β -decay events fitted with the resulting half-life.

Table I. β -decay half-lives measured in this work compared with literature values

nucleus	$T_{1/2}^{exp}\left(s\right)$	$T_{1/2}^{lit}$ (s)
¹³⁷ Sb	0.57(26)	0.566(52) [22], 0.492(25) [22], 0.507(27) [21]
¹³⁷ Te	2.46(5)	2.49(5) [12], 2.1(1) [23], 2.08(40) [24]

known $T_{1/2}$ in the Bateman equations fitting [20], or as a longlived activity background with very similar outcomes. The resulting β -decay $T_{1/2}$ are reported in Table. I together with the values from previous measurements [13]. The uncertainty in the current results comes from the statistical error and the fitting. The result on the ¹³⁷Sb comes from the limit of this observation which is the 61.8 keV line (Fig. 2), corresponding to the deexictation of the excited state in ¹³⁷Te. We have to note however, that it can be still polluted by some unidentified origin as we could not observe any coincidence transitions, e.g. those reported in Ref. [21], possibly due their much lower intensity and the overall low production of ¹³⁷Sb. Thus, the result can be taken as an experimental limit justifying an agreement with previous observations.

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B. ¹³⁷Te β decay to excited states in ¹³⁷I

In the previous $\beta - \gamma$ spectroscopic study of ¹³⁷I, 5 excited levels and 9 γ transitions were established [13], far below the Q_{β} value of 7053(9) keV (see Sec. III D). In the present work, β -delayed γ -ray spectrum of ¹³⁷I is obtained by applying β - β coincidence conditions to all Ge data. The β -gated γ -ray spectrum for different A/Q settings on Q = 21 and Q = 25, as taken in our measurement, is shown in Fig.2. One can clearly see, as marked by their energies, that in both settings the transitions from ¹³⁷I are well identified. The main background comes from the ¹³⁷Xe grand-daughter nuclei, while for Q = 25, also ¹⁴²Ba contributes to the background. In order to subtract the background from long or short-lived nuclei, the analysis are performed under the condition that the selected time window corresponds to the chopper decay part (see Fig. 3). Transitions from the previous measurements, β -decay of ¹³⁷I [12] and ²²⁸ fission [8, 11] are observed in this work. ²²⁹

With the aim to expand and establish a new level scheme²³⁰ 172 of ¹³⁷I from this new β decay data, β - γ , γ - γ (mutual) coinci-²³¹ 173 dences and γ intensity balances are used. The γ - γ coincidence²³² 174 relations are constructed between the Clover detectors and the233 175 coaxial HPGe detector. For all these, we also used a coinci-234 176 dence with the detected β signal to suppress the prompt γ -ray²³⁵ 177 background (similar information is given also in Ref. [19]).²³⁶ 178 In Fig. 4, we show a spectrum gated on the 243.6-keV, transi-237 179 tion corresponding to the the first excited state in ¹³⁷I, where²³⁸ 180 15 cases of mutual coincidences could be found. Four of²³⁹ 181 them are consistent with the previous knowledge: 129.5 keV,240 182 357.2 keV, 469.7 keV and 925.9 keV, while six of them are²⁴¹ 183 used to construct six new excited levels: 609.6 keV. 974.4 keV.²⁴² 184 1155.4 keV, 1833.7 keV, 2047 keV and 2170.2 keV. In Fig.2,243 185 the 974.4 keV γ peak sits on the tail of a background γ in the²⁴⁴ 186 Q = 25 (red) spectrum and is thus weak in the Q = 21 (blue)²⁴⁵ 187 spectrum. As it has a very strong mutual coincidence with²⁴⁶ 188 the 243.6 keV γ -ray, we propose to place this transitions on²⁴⁷ 189 the top of the known 243.6-keV level. Due to weak statistics,²⁴⁸ 190 for the 1833.7 keV, 2047.1 keV and 2170.2 keV transitions we²⁴⁹ 191 present, in addition, their gated spectra, illustrated in Fig.4.250 192 The weakly seen 2047 keV γ -ray in Fig.2, is marked as ten-²⁵¹ 193 tative. The new 227.1-keV transition, found in the 243.6 keV²⁵² 194 gated spectrum, shown in Fig.4, is also in coincidence with the²⁵³ 195 229.1-keV line (in the 227 keV gated spectrum, see Fig. 6),254 196 and all transitions de-exciting the level 373.1 keV such as the255 197 129.5-keV line). As its energy, in addition, fits the energy dif-²⁵⁶ 198 ference between the 600.6-keV and 373.1-keV levels, we place²⁵⁷ 199 it as a new transition in the level scheme (see Fig. 7). The²⁵⁸ 200 229.1-keV line is proposed to be on the top of the 600.6 keV²⁵⁹ 201 state, establishing a new level with energy of 830.2 keV. This²⁶⁰ 202 new level is connected also with 554.2 keV state by the new²⁶¹ 203 276.2 keV transition that can also be traced in the coincidence²⁶² 204 relations depicted in Fig. 4. 205

The 554.2-keV level has previously been observed in the fis-²⁶⁴ 206 sion reaction studies [8, 11], with a single de-excitation by one²⁶⁵ 207 transition to the ground state (g.s.). One can see from Fig.4. 266 208 that the 554.2 keV gated spectrum provides 5 mutual coin-209 cidence lines. The 440.9 keV γ transition is known from the²⁶⁶ 210 previous fission works to connect with the higher-lying $(13/2^+)$ 211 state. The 276.2 keV. 299.0 keV and 897.7-keV lines are ob-212 served for the first time here. The 276.2-keV transition fits the²⁶⁹ 213 energy difference between the new excited level at 830.2 keV 214 and the 554.2 keV, proves the existence of new connections²⁷⁰ 215 with energies of 830.2 keV, 299.1 keV and 897.7 keV, and 271 216 provides an evidence in establishing the new excited levels at272 217 853.2 keV and 1451.9 keV excitation energy. These two levels273 218 can also be cross-checked inspecting their connections to the274 219 other levels. The 600-keV transition is marked as tentative as275 220 it is difficult to be distinguished from the de-excitation of the276 221 600.6 keV level to g.s.. The 1170.1-keV level is known pre-277 222 viously because of its mutual coincidence with the 925.9-keV₂₇₈ 223 and 243.6-keV transitions. Three other transitions de-excite279 224 this level as observed in this work, and they are weaker than the280 225 925.9 keV line. The 569.5 keV gated spectrum, illustrated in₂₈₁ 226 Fig.6, shows these coincidence transitions and suggests that the282 227

569.5 keV line can be placed on the top of the 600.6 keV level and its energy fits well the energy difference between these 1170.1 keV and 600.6 keV states. Therefore, it is assigned to the de-excitation of level 1170.1 keV to level 600.6 keV.

Another previously-known transition which we observe here has the energy of 620.5 keV and is assigned to de-excite the 620.5-keV level directly to the g.s., without any connections to the other levels. As we could not identify any coincidence relations with known transitions, we use the time chopper information to obtain its time behaviour. The principle of this method is to use the time-energy matrix, by projecting the energy spectrum for every 1 s within time chopper decay part and thus trace the transition timing within the correct $T_{1/2}$ of the nucleus of interest. Fig.5-(a) shows how the known 243.6-keV transition behaves as an example, while the 1435.9 keV-transition is assigned as a new transitions regarding this criteria. Fig.5-(c,d) show how transitions from the daughters ¹³⁷Xe and ¹³⁷Cs behave. Due to their long $T_{1/2}$ the statistics within the decay part remains basically the same for these time projections. This criteria is used to cross-check all the new transitions observed in singles or in gated spectra and helps to reject wrongly suspected candidates.

To assign new transitions to the level scheme of ¹³⁷I we used the following criteria: a) the same timing; b) mutual coincidence relations with known or new transitions; c) the same relative intensity in Q = 21 and Q = 25 settings; d) not identified to the background or the contaminants. According to these criteria, 17 excited levels could be established in this work with a total of 32 γ -ray transitions following the β decay of ¹³⁷Te to ¹³⁷I. Among these, we observe for the first time 8 new and one tentative levels with 18 new and two tentative transitions. Table. II summarizes the information about the excited levels and γ transitions associated with this β decay to the ¹³⁷I nucleus. The γ -rays intensities are normalized to the strongest 243.6-keV transition, and obtained using the background subtracted full-energy peak areas from β -gated γ -ray spectrum selecting the time chopper decay part. The β intensity of each level is extracted from the feeding and decaying γ transitions of this particular state. Its log ft value is calculated using the $Q(\beta^{-}) = 7053(9)$ keV from the atomic mass evaluation (AME2020 [25]) and Ref. [26].

C. ¹³⁷Te β feeding to the ¹³⁷I ground state

In order to obtain the ¹³⁷I β feeding, its further decay to ¹³⁷Xe and its P_n channel to ¹³⁶Xe are considered. As there is no long-lived (e.g. ms) isomeric state in ¹³⁷I, these are the two branches representing the total g.s. feeding of ¹³⁷I. For the β decay to ¹³⁷Xe, g.s. to g.s. transitions as well as excited states are taken into account.

We observed 34 excited states and 43 γ transitions in ¹³⁷Xe by the g.s. β decay of ¹³⁷I, representing about 80% of the known transitions in ¹³⁷Xe [13]. The I_{β} for the g.s. of ¹³⁷Xe is obtained in the same way: considering the β feeding from the ¹³⁷Xe g.s. to ¹³⁷Cs. For the β -n channel of ¹³⁷I we did not observe known transitions in ¹³⁶Xe. Note that the latest P_n value is 7.76(14)% [27], compared to the evaluated one



Figure 2. The β -gated γ -ray singles spectrum obtained following the β -decay of ¹³⁷Te for both Q settings. Peaks belonging to ¹³⁷I are marked by their energies. The main background comes from ¹³⁷Xe grand-daughter nuclei and a ¹⁴²Ba contaminant for Q = 25.

of 7.14(23)% [13]. Combining the above information, except₃₀₇ 283 correcting for unobserved branches in the daughter and unob-308 284 served P_n -related γ -ray in Xe, we estimated in addition the real 309 285 production of ¹³⁷Xe in the γ -spectrum of the ¹³⁷Te decay in₃₁₀ 286 the following way. The counted γ -rays belonging to Xe in the₃₁₁ 287 3-6 s decay part, corrected for nonobservance are compared₃₁₂ 288 to those in the 0-1 s of the Te decay, where only 3% follows313 289 decay (due to its $T_{1/2}$). Analysing these portions showed that 290 the γ -rays from Xe in this time range correspond to 20% of 291 those in the entire decay and thus one may infer that 80% of³¹⁴ 292 the Xe actually comes from the Te decay and 20% is from 293 direct production. Therefore, correcting for the above factors, 315 294 the total error for the I_{β} g.s. feeding rises of up to 22% as $_{\rm ^{316}}$ 295 reported in Table II. This reflects also the experimental log ft_{317} 296 uncertainties of particular levels as a systematic error, while₃₁₈ 297 the statistical errors contribute to below or around the percent₃₁₉ 298 level in this measurement. It may be noted also that as sev-320 299 eral transitions in A = 137 are in the energy range relevant₃₂₁ 300 for conversion, this is also investigated. While some of these₃₂₂ 301 transitions, as the 243.6 keV the multipolarity comes from pre-323 302 vious measurements [11, 28], for the others, the possible $M1_{324}$ 303 and E2 assumptions can be made. However, while most of₃₂₅ 304 these transitions are weak in intensity and their proportion is₃₂₆ 305 found to be minor, for two relevant γ -rays of 129.5 keV and 306

139.7 keV, the conversion factors assuming the four different combinations changes the relative I_{β} of the level. For example, for the 243.6 keV level the I_{β} uncertainty increases from 12.8(2.8) to 12.8(3.7). This is relevant also for the 373.1, 713.5 and 853.2 keV levels and as the change is internally in the ¹³⁷I level scheme, it does not affect the g.s. feeding and thus its uncertainty.

D. Level scheme and spin-parity assignments

Due to the $7/2^-$ spin/parity of the parent nucleus, only the low-spin states are expected to be observed in its β decay, taking into account the predominant forbidden nature of these transitions. The g.s. spin/parity of ¹³⁷I as its daughter as $7/2^+$ is established earlier and completely consistent with our work here (see Sec. IV for details). For the 620.5 keV state, the spin/parity of 11/2⁺ was set because of the deduced *E*2 transition multipolarity of the 620.5 keV γ -ray in the spontaneous fission data [11]. In that study the angular correlations of this line were regarded with respect to the 333.9 keV line connecting the suggested 13/2⁺ level at 955.0 with the proposed 11/2⁺, assumed as an *M*1 + *E*2 type.



Figure 3. The β -gated γ -ray singles spectrum obtained following the β -decay of ¹³⁷Te, after background subtraction for Q = 21. The leftover from the background is from ¹³⁷Xe.



Figure 4. Coincidence γ -ray spectra gated on different transitions. All marked peaks are in mutual coincidence.

Table II: Excited levels and γ transitions in the β decay of ¹³⁷Te to ¹³⁷I. The initial level and its related information are given in the first four columns. The γ ray and its absolute intensity are provided in the fifth and sixth columns. The last two columns reveal the final level and its spin/parity. The superscript *n* stands for a new transition, while *u* marks also an assumption for uniqueness [26].

E_i (keV)	\mathbf{J}_i^{π}	$I_{\beta}(\%)$	$\log ft$	$E_{\gamma}(keV)$	$\mathbf{I}_{\gamma}(\%)$	$\mathbf{E}_{f}(\mathbf{keV})$	\mathbf{J}_{f}^{π}
0.0	7/2+	47(10)	5.7(1)				
243.6(8)	5/2+	12.8(37)	6.2(1)	243.6(8)	100.0(6)	0	7/2+
373.1(7)	$(3/2^+, 5/2^+)$	2.8(14)	6.9(2)	129.5(7)	12.2(2)	243.6	5/2+
				373.0(9)	15.2(3)	0	7/2+
554.2(10)	9/2+	7.0(15)	6.4(1)	554.2(10)	33.4(5)	0	7/2+
600.6(6)	$(3/2^+, 5/2^+)$	2.4(6)	6.9(1)	$227.1(7)^n$	1.2(1)	373.1	$(3/2^+, 5/2^+)$
				357.2(10)	6.1(2)	243.6	5/2+
				600.9(10)	4.1(2)	0	7/2+
620.5(10)	9/2+,11/2+	2.5(6)	6.8(1)	620.5(10)	8.9(3)	0	7/2+
713.5(7)	$(7/2^{+})$	14.8(33)	6.0(1)	340.9(11)	13.3(2)	373.1	$(3/2^+, 5/2^+)$
				469.7(9)	26.1(4)	243.6	5/2+
				713.2(12)	13.7(3)	0	7/2+
830.2(6) ⁿ	$(5/2^+, 9/2^+)$	1.5(3)	7.0(1)	$229.1(7)^n$	1.2(1)	600.6	$(3/2^+, 5/2^+)$
				$276.2(5)^n$	0.3(1)	554.2	9/2+
				830.6(11) ⁿ	3.7(2)	0	7/2+
$853.2(7)^n$	$(5/2^+, 9/2^+)$	1.5(3)	7.0(1)	139.7(6) ⁿ	0.9(1)	713.5	$(7/2^{+})$
				$299.0(11)^n$	2.2(1)	554.2	9/2+
				$609.6(10)^n$	2.0(1)	243.6	5/2+
955.0(12)	11/2+,13/2+	0.3(1)	7.6-9.6 ^u	400.8(7)	1.1(1)	554.2	9/2+
1170.1(6)	$(7/2^{+})$	2.9(7)	6.6(1)	$569.5(9)^n$	1.6(1)	600.6	$(3/2^+, 5/2^+)$
				797.6(10) ⁿ	2.1(1)	373.1	$(3/2^+, 5/2^+)$
				925.9(12)	5.5(2)	243.6	5/2+
				$1170.0(7)^n$	0.8(1)	0	7/2+
1218.0(11) ⁿ	$(3/2^+, 9/2^+)$	0.3(1)	7.6(1)	$974.4(8)^n$	1.1(1)	243.6	5/2+
1399.0(11) ⁿ	$(3/2^+, 11/2^+)$	0.2(1)	7.7-9.6 ^u	1155.4(8) ⁿ	0.7(1)	243.6	5/2+
1435.9(9) ⁿ	$(5/2^+, 9/2^+)$	0.8(2)	7.1(1)	1435.9(9) ⁿ	2.8(2)	0	7/2+
1451.9(7) ⁿ	$(7/2^{+})$	2.5(6)	6.6(1)	600^{t}		853.2 ⁿ	$(5/2^+, 9/2^+)$
				$897.7(9)^n$	5.0(2)	554.2 ⁿ	9/2+
				1078.6(8) ⁿ	1.1(1)	373.1	$(3/2^+, 5/2^+)$
				$1452.0(11)^n$	2.7(2)	0	7/2+
$2077.3(14)^n$	$(3/2^+, 11/2^+)$	0.1(1)	7.7-9.5 ^u	1833.7(11) ⁿ	0.3(1)	243.6	5/2+
$2290.6(14)^t$				2047^{t}		243.6	5/2+
2413.8(12) ⁿ	$(3/2^+, 9/2^+)$	0.2(1)	7.3(1)	2170.2(9) ⁿ	0.7(1)	243.6	5/2+

The 620.5 keV state, observed in this work represents a single₃₄₆ 327 transition to the ground state. However, we could not de-347 328 tect any coincident transitions to represent feeders from above.348 329 Thus, its intensity should be mostly coming in direct β feed-349 330 ing. Such scenario would not be entirely consistent with an₃₅₀ 331 earlier proposed spin/parity of $11/2^+$ and log ft value of $6.8(1)_{351}$ 332 evaluated in this work, therefore according to our data $\Delta J < 2_{352}$ 333 possibility shall not be excluded. For example, if the pre-353 334 sumed $11/2^+$ level would be a $9/2^+$ candidate, the 620.5-keV₃₅₄ 335 transition may have some mixing and this would not conflict 336 several deviations from the theoretical angular correlation co-355 337 efficients from the previous observation in Ref. [11]. Such³⁵⁶ 338 scenario would include the margin in the β intensity, observed³⁵⁷ 339 in this experiment and respectively may be also suggested for³⁵⁸ 340 the 620.5-keV level. 341 360

The 554.2-keV [13] state was set to $9/2^+$ based on the suggested₃₆₁ mixed M1 + E2 multipolarity of the 554.2-keV transition, ob-₃₆₂ served in Ref. [11], with respect to the 400.8-keV transition.₃₆₃ Both were placed in the level scheme in coincidence, that we₃₆₄ indeed also observe in Fig. 4). Similarly, if the 400.8-keV transition would originate from a $11/2^+$ instead of the $13/2^+$, suggested for the 955.0 keV level, some possible mixing due some deviations in angular distribution, polarization data or alternation of spins may need to be assumed. In this experimental data, due to visible I_{β} intensity and relatively well fitting log ft values, the previously assigned $11/2^+$ and $13/2^+$ states are now given possible alternative assignments in the level scheme, shown in Fig. 7 and Table II.

As we detect the 554.2-keV transition as the second strongest, relative to that of the first excited state (also previously identified with spin/parity of $5/2^+$ [12]), this gives quite some certitude for the spin of the originating state. It does well fit the spin/parity of $7/2^+$ for the g.s. and is in a very good agreement with our shell-model (SM) expectations (see Sec. IV) that places the first $9/2^+$ state at 554.2 keV excitation energy. Furthermore, looking at the I_β and log *ft* values for the 554.2-keV level, some $5/2^+$ possibility cannot be completely excluded. This tendency actually comes from the fact

that if the 554.2-keV transition is mostly an M1 type, mixed 365 with some E2 multipolarity, the required $\Delta J = 1$ branch would 366 connect similarly strong a $5/2^+$ to the $7/2^+$ ground state. Note 367 that the SM calculations (see Sec. IV) predict, that the second 368 $5/2^+$ state may be expected much below the first $9/2^+$ state and 369 such a state would be populated directly and relatively strongly 370 from the $7/2^{-}$ g.s. β decay. 371

The next candidate for the second $(7/2^+)$ state is the previ-372 ously observed 713.5 keV state, de-exciting by three γ transi-373 tions, that we also observe, with the strongest one connecting 374 to the 243.6 keV state with a spin/parity $5/2^+$ Ref. [11, 12]. 375 Its experimental I_{β} and log *ft* also suggest (7/2⁺) assignment. 376 However, such identification would be somewhat in variance 377 with the SM prediction that expects the second $7/2^+$ level at 378 571 keV excitation energy, while the third $7/2^+$ state is calcu-379 lated at 774 keV (see Sec. IV). Although they all are predicted 380 with the same configuration, there is no clear reason why they 381 would be compressed, except the possibility of unaccounted 382 mixing in the configuration of these states. The third candi-383 date for such spin/parity, according to our data, is at excitation 384 energy of 1170.1 keV. This is very well probable and matches 385 the findings of Ref. [12] to our data, where we observed three⁴²³ 386 more transitions de-exiting this level (see Fig. 7). The level⁴²⁴ 387 must have been among the strongest ones observed in that first425 388 β -decay study and their proposed spins as $5/2^+$ and $7/2^+$ would⁴²⁶ 389 be the favoured ones from the $7/2^{-}$ g.s. of the mother nucleus,⁴²⁷ 390 thus very consistent. 391

The two levels at 830.2 keV and 853.2 keV have similar I_{β}^{429} 392 and log ft values though lower than expected for spin/parity of⁴³⁰ 393 $7/2^+$. Besides, their interconnecting transitions to the lower-⁴³¹ 394 lying 5/2⁺ and 9/2⁺ states, make this 7/2⁺ possibility less ade-432 395 quate. Therefore, we propose both $(5/2^+, 9/2^+)$ as spin/parities⁴³³ 396 assignments. This would agree with the SM results for $9/2^{+434}$ 397 and be underestimated for a $5/2^+$, while the third $7/2^+$ and $3/2^{+_{435}}$ 398 states, expected in the vicinity at 774 keV and 900 keV, require436 399 different experimental branching. 400

The next level which experimentally has strong $I_{\mathcal{B}}$ feeding⁴³⁶ 401 and can be the $(7/2^+)$ state is located at 1170.1 keV, previously⁴³⁹ 402 observed and matching the forth 7/2⁺ predicted at 1085 keV.⁴⁴⁰ 403 The state at 1451.9 keV which has similar characteristics may⁴⁴¹ 404 have the same origin, thus also proposed as a (7/2⁺) state.⁴⁴² 405 Although the (5/2⁺) possibility cannot be completely excluded⁴⁴³ 406 this would require more data to search for feeding branches⁴⁴⁴ 407 that we could not observe. Interestingly, the five states we⁴⁴⁵ 408 suggest with spin/parity 5/2⁺ or 7/2⁺ ($E_x < 1.2$ MeV), being⁴⁴⁶ 409 the strongest fed, are communicated though left unassigned in 447 410 Ref. [12]. 411

In the data presented here, it can be seen that four similar⁴⁵⁶ 412 new excited states at 830.2, 853.2, 1435.9 and 1451.9 keV are 413 established. According to their possible de-excitation transi-414 tion multipolarities, the spin/parities are consistent with the452 415 earlier proposed (9/2⁺) spin/parity, while due to the relatively 416 low log ft value a $(5/2^+)$ possibility may be added or even₄₅₃ 417 $(7/2^+)$ for the later one. 418

Some spin-parity assignments suggested previously [11],455 419 were based on the possible proton-neutron SM configuration₄₅₆ 420 (see Sec. IV). A possible β decay of ¹³⁷Te to ¹³⁷I is expected to₄₅₇ 421 be primarily originated from the conversion of a neutron from 458 422



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Figure 5. Energy spectrum corresponding to the decay of the nucleus chopped at each second. Blue, red and green (color online) are for the first 1^{st} , 2^{nd} and 3^{rd} second, respectively.

the $f_{7/2}$ orbital into a proton in the $g_{7/2}$ (or $d_{5/2}$) orbital by a first-forbidden transition, thus in agreement with spin-parity of 137 Te g.s. of 7/2⁻. The feeding to the g.s. of the daughter 137 I with log ft = 5.7(1) and maximal I_B value of 47(10) indicates that it proceeds by a first-forbidden non-unique transition with $\Delta J = 0$ and $\Delta \pi = -1$ [29]. This suggests spin-parity of 7/2⁺ in agreement with the suggested from systematics spin/parity [12, 13]. Three more levels with suggested spin/parity of $(7/2^+)$ could be identified in the level scheme with log ft values between 6.0 and 6.6.

Other levels candidates e.g. with a $\log ft$ 6.9(1) and a smaller I_B of 2.4-2.8, possibly correspond to $\Delta J = 1, 2$ for these, spin/parity of $(3/2^+, 5/2^+)$ would be more appropriate. For about six levels with $\log ft$ ranging from 6.2 to 7.1, we propose the spin/parity of $(5/2^+)$ to be the most suitable candidate. In addition, based on the I_{β} branching, possible spins and multipolarities it may be assumed that some levels are candidates for $\Delta J = 2$ which suggests some uniqueness when appropriate as marked in Table II.

The proposed level scheme from this work is illustrated in Fig.7. Nine new levels (with one tentative among them) with 18 new transitions (with 2 tentative) are added to the revised previous knowledge. The tentative γ rays with 600 and 2047 keV energy which are hardly distinguishable in β -delayed γ -ray spectrum of ¹³⁷I are placed as they appear in gated spectrum and, moreover, fit the energy differences between already established levels.

E. P_n branch

Since the S_n of ¹³⁷Te is 2950(3) keV, within the Q_β – window of Q_β =7053(9) keV [25, 30], β-delayed neutron emission is possible for the decay of the 137 Te nucleus. To obtain the β -delayed neutron emission probability, P_n , of ¹³⁷Te, we consider the known β decay of ¹³⁶Te [7]. The known γ -rays in ¹³⁶I are regarded with the same criteria as for transitions in



Figure 6. Coincidence γ -ray spectra gated on the 247 keV and 569 keV transitions. All marked peaks are in mutual coincidence.

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⁴⁵⁹ ¹³⁷I. Only one state at 87.3(7) keV with single transition to the⁴⁹⁹ g.s. is observed in this work. The resulting P_n amounts to⁵⁰⁰ ⁴⁶¹ 2.17(66)%, compared to the latest literature value of 2.6(3)%⁵⁰¹ and the evaluated database value of 2.91(16)% in Ref. [31] may⁵⁰²

be regarded as lower limit for the knowledge of this quantity. 503

465 IV. SHELL-MODEL CALCULATIONS AND DISCUSSION 506

The experimental results are compared to theoretical calcu-508 466 lations from large-scale shell-model calculations (SM) calcu-509 467 lations. The r4h - r5i model space with the ¹³²Sn nucleus⁵¹⁰ 468 as a core is used. The model-space, thus, consists of the en-511 469 tire major shell $1f_{7/2}, 0h_{9/2}, 1f_{5/2}, 2p_{3/2}, 2p_{1/2}, 0i_{13/2}$ orbitals⁵¹² 470 for neutrons and $0g_{7/2}$, $1d_{5/2}$, $1d_{3/2}$, $2s_{1/2}$, $0h_{11/2}$ orbitals for⁵¹³ 471 protons. Single-particle energies for neutrons and protons are⁵¹⁴ 472 taken from experimentally known data on ¹³³Sn and ¹³³Sb nu-515 473 clei [32]. The $0i_{13/2}$ neutron and $2s_{1/2}$ proton orbital energies⁵¹⁶ 474 are inferred from Ref. [33] and Ref. [34], respectively. The⁵¹⁷ 475 N3LOP effective interaction [35] is used in this work. It was al-518 476 ready demonstrated in several articles to successfully describe519 477 the spectroscopic properties and collectivity of nuclei in the520 478 region beyond 132 Sn, quoting as examples the Refs. [7, 8, 35–521 479 37]. The diagonalization of the considered system is achieved 522 480 using the NATHAN shell-model code [38]. In this work, up⁵²³ 481 to several excited states for the spin/parity/energy range of in-524 482 terest are calculated and compared to the proposed spin/parity₅₂₅ 483 assignments from the experiment in Fig. 8, the important 526 484 main configurations for the positive (+) parity states are listed ₅₂₇ 485 in Table III. 486

487 For the states of interest, illustrated in Fig. 8, also the main 529
488 SM configurations are noted. The probable correspondence, 530
489 whenever possible, may also be seen (with the color code). 531

It is interesting to remark immediately that for these states, 532 490 the configuration is dominated by the proton configurations533 491 and, especially, the presence of the $d_{5/2}$ proton in the very 534 492 close vicinity of the $g_{7/2}$ proton, inferred from the main oc-535 493 cupation of these orbitals. Almost no neutron excitations are 536 494 found to take place in the detailed analysis of the wave func-537 495 tions for the examined states, even for the highest in excitation 538 496 energy. Note that reviewing higher-lying states would not be₅₃₉ 497 relevant to the observed experimental data. The details of the540 498

main configurations for ¹³⁷I may be traced for the computed states in Tab. III. This is certainly very different from the observed sequences in the ¹³⁶I neighbour, where various neutron excitations could be seen [7], including some moderate $vi_{13/2}$ occupation (see e.g. Fig. 13). Such behaviour may be attributed to the proximity of the N = 82 closed shell in the former case, to the fast step with the extra neutrons from an odd-odd to an odd-even system and finally to its structure.

As it can be seen from the current Table, the purity of the two main configurations in the low-energy states of ¹³⁷I is not small and, therefore, the other contributions appear with relatively minor weight in the wave functions. We present these results in accordance with the excited states that are candidates for the experimentally-populated spin/parity. In the Table, we give up to 10 excited states for the $3/2^+$ candidates for populated states at intermediate energy, and up to 6 excited states, as relevant for the spin/parities $5/2^+$, $7/2^+$, $9/2^+$, $11/2^+$ and $13/2^+$ (see Fig. 8). One may remark, that the neutron excitation to the $vp_{3/2}$ orbital is applicable only in a very few cases. The proton excitations containing the $\pi d_{5/2}$ orbital shows clearly a competition with the $\pi g_{7/2}$ orbital for excited states, and is also the second important contribution (with about 20%) in the $7/2^+$ g.s. of ¹³⁷I.

Another important point is the very small contribution of the $vh_{9/2}$ orbital in the wave function of the $7/2^-$ g.s. of the mother ¹³⁷Te nucleus. The presence of this $vh_{9/2}$ component and its decay to a state with $\pi h_{11/2}$ component in the daughter is the main responsible transition for a GT strength at the beginning of this major shell. In the neighbouring ¹³⁶I case, several 1⁺ states originated from such main configuration are populated, with one very strong branch, as predicted by the SM at about 2 MeV excitation energy [7]. Similar range is recently suggested also for ¹³⁸I in Ref. [39]. Here, for A = 137, the $vh_{9/2}$ component is really minor with a theoretically calculated proportion of only 2.5%. Note, that while present in A = 136with about 10%, it is completely blocked e.g. for 135 I. It is worth to highlight, that for A = 140 of the same isotopic chain (¹⁴⁰I), this probability is again enhanced with respect to A = 137, based on the more mixed g.s. configuration on one side and due to the lowered excitation energy of the GT states themselves, on the other, as it can be seen from the results in Ref. [40].



Figure 7. The proposed level scheme of ¹³⁷I obtained from β decay of ¹³⁷Te. The new levels and transitions are in red (color online), tentative transitions are with dotted line. The Q(β^-) of ¹³⁷Te is taken from Ref. [25]. For the levels marked with (*), some assumption for uniqueness may be possible (see text, Table II).

While reporting on the first excites states in the ¹³⁷Te mother₅₄₉ 541 nucleus, in Ref. [28], some $\nu h_{9/2}(f_{7/2}^2)$ contributions are 550 542 accounted e.g. for the yrast $9/2^-$ states, including the g.s.⁵⁵¹ together with the three valence $v f_{7/2}^3$ configuration. These,⁵⁵² 543 544 as well as core vibrations coupled to them, were suggested⁵⁵³ 545 to originate the $3/2^{-}$ and $5/2^{-}$ states, however they were not⁵⁵⁴ 546 observed in the same study, while the position of these states⁵⁵⁵ 547 is relevant in the situation of ¹³⁷Te nucleus. These states could⁵⁵⁶ 548 557

be seen only in the more recent β -decay of ${}^{137}\text{Sb} \rightarrow {}^{137}\text{Te}$ [21], where the first negative parity states, expected with such configurations are found at relatively high in energy and thus not among those populated in the experimental β -decay results. It could, therefore, be concluded that at A = 137 no allowed branch $\nu h_{9/2} \rightarrow \pi h_{11/2}$ could be experimentally observed. As such contribution to the expected configurations is minor also in the examined ${}^{137}\text{Te} \rightarrow {}^{137}\text{I}$ study here, and none of the excited states seem to present such a strong transition branching, we



Figure 8. Experimental levels in ¹³⁷I compared to the theoretical shell-model (SM) calculations. The color code (online) indicates the main theoretical configurations and some of the possible experimental correspondences.

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give similar conclusions for this odd- $A \beta$ decay.

¹³³Sb and ¹³³Sn nuclei [1].

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A. The $7/2^{-}$ g.s. of 137 Te

The g.s. spin/parity of the β -decaying ¹³⁷Te nucleus can⁵⁸⁴ rather firmly be set to 7/2⁻ based on the experimental log ft^{585} values in the A = 137 I daughter and very strong branch to its ⁵⁸⁶ 7/2⁺ g.s. The direct g.s. to g.s. feeding is also relatively strong ⁵⁸⁷ in this nucleus with about 47%. It behaves completely analo-⁵⁸⁸ gous to the A = 135 nucleus with similar experimental strength [12], from where similar spin/parities can be concluded.

The g.s. of ¹³⁷Te was suggested with quite some certitude⁵⁸⁹ 567 in Ref. [11] based on the observation of a large part of its vrast⁵⁹⁰ 568 scheme (up to spin/parity of (33/2⁺)), multipolarity of several⁵⁹¹ 569 transitions connecting with the g.s. and SM calculations based 592 570 on the Kuo-Herling (KH5082) [41] interaction, reasonably 593 571 describing ¹³⁷I as the one proton coupling to the ¹³⁶Te nucleus.⁵⁹⁴ 572 The perfect match of this assignment for the ¹³⁷I (Z = 53, N = 595573 84) isotope to systematics of heavier-Z Cs, La isotone nuclei 596 574 is found in a follow-up fission work [42], where the entire597 575 excitation scheme could be built in a complete analogy to 598 576 the ¹³⁹Cs (Z = 55, Z = 84) isotone and in agreement with 599 577 the data on other N=85 isotones [43]. These excitations are 600 578 found also to be well described by the two-body CD-Bonn SM601 579 interaction using experimental single-particle energies from 602 580

Both mother and daughter A = 137 g.s. spin/parity assignments are in a good agreement also with our SM calculations using the N3LOP effective interaction. They predict the 7/2⁻ state to be the ¹³⁷Te g.s.. It is already reported, that this prediction for lowest state with largest probability (>50%) as a single neutron state is in a full consistency with the Napoli SM interaction [21].

It is worth to note that similar predictions were given also in earlier works [28], where the 7/2⁻ assignment is compared to systematics of the heavier isotones (up to Z = 64) and concluded that it is best choice for this Z = 52 nucleus. Also, it is quoted in Ref. [28] that this would suite the non-observation (in their data) of candidates for the 3/2⁻ and 5/2⁻ states for this nucleus. These candidates could only be tentatively suggested from β -decay to ¹³⁷Te to be at excitation energy of 61.8 keV for the (5/2⁻) state and at least 1136.6 keV for some possible (3/2⁻) state [21], despite the fact that this is somewhat in variance with the SM theory with both N3LOP and Napoli interactions, predicting the two states as first excited states at around the g.s. for N3LOP and around 200 keV for the Napoli SM interactions.

Table III. Main wave-function compositions for the positive (+) parity states of interest as predicted by the SM calculations for 137 I.

\mathbf{J}_i^{π}	Configuration-I	%	Configuration-II	%	
3/2+	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	15	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^2)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	11	
$3/2^+_2$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	13	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	11	
$3/2^+_3$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	26	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{2'}d_{3/2})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	11	
$3/2_4^+$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	17	$\pi(d_{5/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	12	
$3/2^+_5$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	42	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	7	
$3/2_{6}^{+}$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	34	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{2'}d_{5/2})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	12	
$3/2^+_7$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	39	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^2)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	13	
$3/2_8^+$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	17	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	17	
$3/2_{9}^{+}$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	31	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{2'}d_{5/2})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	9	
$3/2^{+}_{10}$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	27	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	12	
5/2+	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	41	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2} p_{3/2})$	8	
$5/2^+_2$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	33	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	9	
$5/2^+_3$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	26	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^2)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	12	
$5/2^+_4$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	32	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^2)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	17	
$5/2^+_5$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	23	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	16	
$5/2_{6}^{+}$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	30	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	22	
7/2+	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	31	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^2)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	19	
$7/2^+_2$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	18	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^{2'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	17	
$7/2^+_3$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	23	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	22	
$7/2_4^+$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	29	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	22	
$7/2^+_5$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	40	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	11	
$7/2_{6}^{+}$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	35	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{2'}d_{5/2})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	16	
9/2+	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	17	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	12	
$9/2^+_2$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{2'}d_{5/2})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	26	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2} p_{3/2})$	13	
$9/2^{+}_{3}$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	44	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^2)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	10	
$9/2_4^+$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	46	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^{2'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	10	
$9/2^+_5$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	33	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^{2'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	11	
$9/2_{6}^{+}$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	28	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^{2'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	12	
11/2+	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	23	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^2)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	15	
$11/2^+_2$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	20	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^2)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	15	
$11/2^{+}_{3}$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3'})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2'})$	31	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	16	
$11/2_{4}^{+}$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	51	$\pi(g_{7/2}d_{5/2}^2)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	10	
11/2+	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2})$	30	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	22	
$11/2_{6}^{+}$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^{3})\nu(f_{7/2}^{2})$	24	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	23	
$\frac{3}{13/2_1^+}$	$\frac{\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)}{\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)}$	20	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	13	
$13/2^{+}_{2}$	$\pi(g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}) \nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	31	$\pi(g_{7/2}^3)\nu(f_{7/2}^2)$	14	
2	- 112 51-7 51127		······································		

B. Origin of new new positive-parity states in 137 I

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The appearance of the possible $(3/2^+)$ states is uniquely⁶⁶² identified in this work (see Fig.7). These states appear in⁶⁶³ the neighbouring ¹³⁵I where the g.s. spin/parity is the same⁶⁶⁴ as in the other odd–*A* I isotopes, including *A* = 137. These⁶⁶⁵ states cover several possibilities in *A* = 135 with log *ft* around⁶⁶⁶ 7.4-7.5 and together with the 11/2⁺ possibilities up to 8.1⁶⁶⁷ [12]. The candidates in *A* = 137, again similarly probable,⁶⁶⁸ cover except possible $\Delta J = 2$ (of the g.s.) also $\Delta J = 1$ and together with the spin/parity of $11/2^+$, cover log ft values from 6.8 to 7.7. For three of the observed states with $\Delta J = 2$ as most probable scenario, also uniqueness of the first-forbidden transitions may be assumed, reflecting the upper log ft value as given in Table II.

It is the position of the $3/2^+$ states that is well matching the predicted excitation energy by the SM calculations. It can be seen in Fig. 8, where the direct correspondence and the predicted configuration as part of the $v f_{7/2}^2 \pi g_{7/2}^3$ multiplet may be traced. The competing $\pi d_{5/2}$ configuration is relevant only for states above 1.1 MeV and some of the higher-lying in energy experimental candidates that, nevertheless, may correspond to a theoretical state with such origin (see color code, online). However, some of the other propositions for these states as $5/2^+$, $9/2^+$ (or $11/2^+$) also predicted nearby would finally not be excluded.

Of the 11/2⁺ states, only those with the lowest $v f_{7/2}^2 \pi g_{7/2}^3$ configuration (see Table III) may be seen. Indeed, the lowest of these states being among the experimental possibilities ($E_x = 620 \text{ keV}$) has a remarkable theoretical ($E_x = 588 \text{ keV}$) correspondence. The experimental possibilities for the second and third 11/2⁺ states listed together with the first 13/2⁺ or fifth 3/2⁺ possibilities, respectively, have also perfect SM counterparts.

Concerning the $5/2^+$ states, we could classify with certitude the first excited states of them, which is based as expected, on the predominant $\pi d_{5/2}$ configuration (see Table III with more than 40% probability). As it stays only at $E_x = 235$ keV, the orbital positioning may be inferred, and compared with other recent data with similar conclusions [4, 7, 21]. Moreover, this state is reported also in the heavier 139 I at $E_x = 208$ keV and compared to the same SM prediction ($E_x = 175$ keV) with rather good agreement [5, 8]. It can be, therefore, concluded that no drastic change it the $\pi d_{5/2}$ orbital is present in these I isotopes, which is different than its behaviour of the Sb isotopes [4, 21]. Interestingly, in the A = 135 Iodine neighbour, the second $5/2^+$ state is also observed in the vicinity of the first (e.g. at about 270 keV excitation energy difference) [12]. This is the predicted by the SM appearance in 137 I (see Fig. 8). We have observed another candidate within the excitation energy, e.g. the 373.1 keV state, however it may also be assigned differently. The clear difference is based on the experimentally observed I_{β} and respective log ft values that for the 5/2⁺ state in our work amount to 12.8 and 6.2, respectively. It is in a very good agreement with the data on both $5/2^+$ states in 135 I, with respective values of 24.2/16.4 and 6.3/6.4. In ¹³⁷I, two $5/2^+$ states with $d_{5/2}$ proton are predicted among the first six in about 1 MeV energy spacing, thus larger than in the lighter neighbour. Indeed, two candidates can be traced among the excited states around 850 keV and 1.4 MeV (see Fig. 7).

Similar is the situation with the $9/2^+$ states, two of which are based on the same proton excitation as the $5/2^+$ states, while the rest belong to the $v f_{7/2}^2 \pi g_{7/2}^3$ multiplet. It has to be underlined, however, that their wave-functions are much more mixed than those of the $5/2^+$ states with relative contributions of the order of 17%. Experimentally, only the first $9/2^+$ is firmly assigned, while the other six candidates ($\Delta J = 1$ of the

g.s.) are in competition (with the possible $5/2^+$ assignment for₇₀₉ 669 three of the states, or due to β branching also to pairs of states 670 with other possible $(3/2^+$ and $11/2^+)$ assignment, even if the 671 most probable transition multipolarities are considered. Based' 672 on the enhanced branch to the first $7/2^+$ state and the predicted⁷¹¹ 673 second SM state e.g. one may suggest for the 830-keV state⁷¹² 674 more a probable $9/2^+$ than $5/2^+$ attribution, while for the higher 675 lying ones such scenario may be relatively uncertain. 676

The most strongly fed $7/2^+$ states from the direct feeding⁷¹⁵ 677 of the $7/2^{-}$ g.s. state are naturally in a good agreement with 678 the J = 7/2 assignments. Any other different spin/parity⁷¹⁷ 679 would not present these strong branches well visible in the⁷¹⁸ 680 level scheme (Fig. 7) and this certainly excludes the $J = 5/2^{719}$ 681 for the g.s. as e.g. the feeding to the 243.6 keV and 713.5720 682 keV states is clearly different. The log ft values of the newly⁷²¹ 683 identified $(7/2^+)$ states are also of the order of 6 and the first⁷²² 684 excited after the g.s. seems very likely at 713.5 keV excitation723 685 energy, based on these experimentally established I_{β} feeding,⁷²⁴ 686 although slightly underestimated in energy by the theory (Fig.⁷²⁵ 687 8). Interestingly, in the earlier β decay work, mostly the as-726 688 signed as $7/2^+$ states are observed and where the next such₇₂₇ 689 candidate, previously set but unassigned at 1169.0 keV [12],728 690 is confirmed here at 1170.0 keV. In this work, we propose one₇₂₉ 691 more candidate for 7/2⁺ at 1.4 MeV excitation energy (Fig. 8).730 692 These states are purely based on the proton $g_{7/2}^3$ configuration₇₃₁ 693 with the exception of the slightly competing $\pi g_{7/2}^2 d_{5/2}$ contri-⁷³² 694 bution for the $7/2^+_2$ state and their theoretical correspondence⁷³³ 695 is relatively good as it can be seen in the Figure. 696

As stated earlier, the non-observation of states containing 697 GT strength, confirms that this channel is still blocked for ¹³⁷I 698 nucleus and that the decay of the ¹³⁷Te is completely dom-⁷³⁴ 699 inated by the first-forbidden transitions from the dominating 700 $v f_{7/2}^3 \pi g_{7/2}^2$ g.s. This is in full agreement with the SM calcula-735 701 tions that also do not expect such branching at low energy and₇₃₆ 702 the first possible transition between the $7/2^{-}$ (¹³⁷Te) $\rightarrow 5/2^{-}_{737}$ 703 (^{137}I) is expected at $E_x(5/2^-)=3.8$ MeV with B(GT) of about₇₃₈ 704 0.007, which is not found experimentally. It would be further₇₃₉ 705 interesting to investigate whether this strength can again be740 706 unblocked e.g. due the expectations of more mixing and an₇₄₁ 707 evolving collectivity also in the heavier neighbours. 708

V. SUMMARY

In this work, we performed new β -decay spectroscopy of the ¹³⁷Te nucleus to the daughter ¹³⁷I. We observed several new transitions corresponding to first-forbidden branches to excited states in ¹³⁷I. Due to the relatively weak P_n ratio and insufficient statistics, the transitions after β -delayed neutron emission were strongly hindered and only few indications of states in ¹³⁷I could be seen. Therefore, such investigation would require more experimental data.

From the investigations performed in this work, it is interesting to highlight the non-observation of GT strength for this A = 137 isotope, while a possible even-odd effect with decrease of the GT strength at the expense of favoured firstforbidden decay seems to be present. Furthermore, the strong effect of both $\pi g_{7/2}$ and $\pi d_{5/2}$ proton orbitals seems to completely dominate the structure of the ¹³⁷I isotope observed in our data up to 2.4 MeV excitation energy.

The nucleus has an interesting relation to studies of electron and anti-neutrino reactor spectral behaviour in connection to the role of the first-forbidden transitions, especially as forbidden decays cannot be neglected and need to be accounted properly. Being an essential ingredient in the understanding not only for nuclear astrophysics but also reactor anti-neutrino spectra, these type of studies certainly merit deeper investigation.

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