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Fingerprints of Heavy Element Synthesis in the Universe

ENRICO RAMIREZ-RUIZ, University of California - Santa Cruz

The source of about half of the heaviest elements in the Universe has been a mystery for a long time. Although the general picture of element formation is well understood, many questions about the nuclear physics processes and particularly the astrophysical details remain to be answered. Here I focus on recent advances in our understanding of the origin of the heaviest and rarest elements in the Universe.