Identification of high-\(K\) rotation in \(^{130}\)Ba: Testing the consistency of electromagnetic observables


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The band built on the \(K^\pi = 8^-\), \(T_{1/2} = 9.4\) ms isomer of \(^{130}\)Ba has been identified, filling the gap in the systematics of the dipole bands built on the \(8^-\) isomers in the \(N = 74\) isotones from \(^{128}\)Xe to \(^{130}\)Ba. The use of the GALILEO array in conjunction with its ancillaries EUCLIDES and Neutron Wall, helped to firmly place the newly identified transitions on top of the long-lived isomer. The extracted \(g_K\) and \(g_R\) gyromagnetic factors are in agreement with the \(7/2^-\)[404] @ \(9/2^-\)[514] two-neutron Nilsson configuration. Particle-rotor model calculations give an understanding of the limited degree of \(K\) mixing. The experimental information on the \(K^\pi = 8^-\) isomer of \(^{130}\)Ba is now the most complete among the \(K\) isomers of the \(N = 74\) isotones.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Isomers provide detailed probes of nuclear structure [1]. For example, on account of their extended half-lives, there are possibilities to measure accurately their electromagnetic moments [2]. For \(K\) isomers in deformed nuclei, there is the added feature that their associated rotational bands have moments of inertia and \(\gamma\)-ray branching ratios that further constrain the interpretation of the gyromagnetic ratios and quasiparticle configurations involved.

In the study of \(K\) isomers, the sequence of \(N = 74\) isotones is remarkable in that all the even-even nuclides from \(^{128}\)Xe to \(^{140}\)Dy have \(K^\pi = 8^-\) isomers, with excitation energies ranging from 2.2–2.8 MeV, and with half-lives from 73 ns to 9.4 ms [3]. Of these, only the \(^{130}\)Ba isomer has a measured electric quadrupole moment [4], and only the \(^{128}\)Xe and \(^{130}\)Ba isomers have measured magnetic dipole moments [5]. Furthermore, among the \(N = 74\), \(K^\pi = 8^-\) isomers, only \(^{130}\)Ba and \(^{140}\)Dy have no identified rotational-band structure, with \(^{140}\)Dy being at the limit of experimental accessibility. There is therefore a special imperative to measure the rotational-band structure associated with the \(K^\pi = 8^-\) isomer of \(^{130}\)Ba, and in such a way uniquely to open up the comparison of the full set of observables. In particular, from the measured angular correlations we can extract the mixing ratios, \(\delta\), for the transitions, and hence deduce the \(B(E2;\Delta I = 1)/B(E2;\Delta I = 2)\) ratios and compare them with the calculated values. We can obtain precise values for the \(g_K\) and \(g_R\) factors, and test for \(K\) mixing in the band built on the isomer. In addition, the \(g_K\) value probes the quasiparticle configuration of the isomer. This is what we report in the present work.

The \(K^\pi = 8^-\) isomer of \(^{130}\)Ba was first reported in 1966 by Brinckmann et al. [6] using the \(^{122}\)Sn(\(^{12}\)C, 4\(n\)) reaction. The decay of the isomer has been studied using conversion electron and \(\gamma\) spectroscopy most recently by Perkowski et al. [7], while the magnetic dipole and static electric quadrupole moments have been measured by Moore et al. using collinear laser spectroscopy [8]. The most recent study of the high-spin states of \(^{130}\)Ba has been reported by Kaur et al. [9]. However, there have been no previous reports of the rotational structure based on the \(8^-\) isomer.
The $K^\pi = 8^-$ isomers of the other $N = 74$ nuclei have been studied by Orce et al. [10] for $^{128}$Xe, Paul et al. [11] and Perkovski et al. [12] for $^{132}$Ce, Petrache et al. [13] and Perkovski et al. [14] for $^{134}$Nd, Regan et al. [15] for $^{136}$Sm, Bruce et al. [16] and Cullen et al. [17] for $^{138}$Gd, and Królas et al. [18] and Cullen et al. [19] for $^{140}$Dy. The systematics and theoretical interpretation of the $8^-$ isomers in the $N = 74$ isotones was recently presented in Refs. [16,20,21].

II. EXPERIMENTAL DETAILS AND RESULTS

The $^{130}$Ba nucleus was populated via the $^{122}$Sn($^{13}$C, 5$n$) reaction at a beam energy of 65 MeV. The $^{13}$C beam of 5 pnA was provided by the XTU Tandem accelerator of the Laboratori Nazionali di Legnaro. The target consisted of a stack of two self-supporting $^{122}$Sn foils with a thickness of 0.5 mg/cm$^2$ each. The $\gamma$ rays were detected by the GALILEO spectrometer, which consisted of 25 Compton-suppressed Ge detectors placed on four rings at 90° (ten detectors), 119° (five detectors), 129° (five detectors), and 152° (five detectors). To distinguish different reaction channels, charged particles and neutrons were detected by the EUCLIDES silicon apparatus [22] and the Neutron Wall array [23,24], respectively.

Data were recorded by the GALILEO data acquisition system, which was designed for the GALILEO-EUCLIDES-Neutron Wall Experiment [25]. The accumulated data were unfolded and sorted into files in ROOT format, while Doppler shifts were corrected using a recoil velocity $\beta = v/c = 0.0095$ determined from the present experiment. A total of $1.2 \times 10^9$ triple- or higher-fold events have been collected. The coincidence events were sorted into a three-dimensional histogram (cube) and the analysis was carried out with the RADWARE software package [26,27]. A series of two-dimensional histograms (matrices) were also built in coincidence with different sets of detected particles (e.g., $p, a, n, 2n, pn, an$, etc.), which helped to assign new transitions to different reaction channels or long-lived isomers, and to eliminate and identify contaminants. The $^{130}$Ba nucleus was one of the most intensely populated via the $5n$ reaction channel, with about 40% of the fusion-evaporation cross section calculated with the PACE4 code [28].

A two-point angular-correlation ratio, $R_{\infty}$ [29], using the detectors placed at 90° and 152°, was employed to deduce the transition multipolarities. The mixing ratios ($\delta$) of the M1/E2 transitions were deduced from the transition intensities measured at the four angles available in the GALILEO array (see above), and employing a method developed by Matta [30,31] for the analysis of angular-distribution measurements. For many transitions there are two solutions for $\delta$ in the $\chi^2$ plot, with the absolute values larger than 1, and smaller than 1. For all transitions analyzed in the present work, the $\delta$ values smaller than 1 have been adopted since they have smaller $\chi^2$ values. Still, we cannot completely exclude the larger values only by angular correlation or distribution measurements. However, it is unlikely for there to be predominantly E2 ($\Delta I = 1$) transitions in dipole bands, which normally have predominantly M1 transitions.

FIG. 1. Partial level scheme of $^{130}$Ba. Newly observed structures are marked in red. The energies of the transitions are given in keV, and the widths of the arrows are relative intensities.

A partial level scheme derived from this work is shown in Fig. 1. The details of the newly observed transitions are presented in Table I.

A new structure was established and assigned to populate the previously known 8$^-$ K isomer ($T_{1/2} = 9.4\ ms$) [6]. A typical double-gated spectrum for the new structure is shown in Fig. 2(a). The transitions depopulating the isomer were not observed in our measurement since most of the residues in the isomeric state with such a long lifetime were out of the focus of the GALILEO array when they were emitted. A few weak transitions were found, linking the new structure and the previously known band N2 [see Fig. 2(b)]. However, the statistics are not enough to safely exclude other possible placements of these weak transitions.

To verify the assignment of the new structure, the coincidences between the $\gamma$ rays and charged particles and neutrons were examined. Three matrices were built, in which the $\gamma$ rays are in coincidence with $\alpha$, with one proton, and without detected charged particles, respectively. The $\gamma$ rays belonging to the new structure are not present in the matrix in coincidence with charged particles (see Fig. 3), indicating that the
TABLE I. Energies, spin and parity assignments, intensities ($T_{\gamma}$), $R_\alpha$ ratios, and mixing ratios ($\delta$) of the transitions in the structure above $K^\pi = 8^-$ isomer in $^{130}$Ba.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$E_\gamma$ (keV)</th>
<th>$I^\pi \rightarrow I'^\pi$</th>
<th>$T_{\gamma}$</th>
<th>$R_\alpha$ ratio</th>
<th>$\delta$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$K^\pi = 8^-$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>391.8</td>
<td>$9^- \rightarrow 8^-$</td>
<td>$\geq 159$</td>
<td>0.27(3)</td>
<td>-0.81(48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>450.5</td>
<td>$10^- \rightarrow 9^-$</td>
<td>100(6)</td>
<td>0.31(3)</td>
<td>-0.60(15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>842.6</td>
<td>$10^- \rightarrow 8^-$</td>
<td>38(10)</td>
<td>1.16(16)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>464.5</td>
<td>$11^- \rightarrow 10^-$</td>
<td>83(5)</td>
<td>0.41(2)</td>
<td>-0.37(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>915.5</td>
<td>$11^- \rightarrow 9^-$</td>
<td>60(3)</td>
<td>1.54(17)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>517.7</td>
<td>$12^- \rightarrow 11^-$</td>
<td>69(9)</td>
<td>0.42(3)</td>
<td>-0.39(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>982.5</td>
<td>$12^- \rightarrow 10^-$</td>
<td>59(5)</td>
<td>1.53(10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>471.7</td>
<td>$13^- \rightarrow 12^-$</td>
<td>36(10)</td>
<td>0.41(5)</td>
<td>-0.37(13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>989.8</td>
<td>$13^- \rightarrow 11^-$</td>
<td>71(5)</td>
<td>1.48(8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>681.1</td>
<td>$14^- \rightarrow 13^-$</td>
<td>15(2)</td>
<td>0.86(21)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1153.2</td>
<td>$14^- \rightarrow 12^-$</td>
<td>20(4)</td>
<td>1.19(18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>637.6</td>
<td>$16^- \rightarrow 14^-$</td>
<td>25(4)</td>
<td>1.55(22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>812.9</td>
<td>$18^- \rightarrow 16^-$</td>
<td>20(4)</td>
<td>1.93(29)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1023.1</td>
<td>(20^-) $\rightarrow 18^-$</td>
<td>15(2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Linking transitions

1298.0  (12^-) $\rightarrow 10^-$  7(2)
264     $14^- \rightarrow 12^-$  24(4) 1.52(27)
1109.2  (14^-) $\rightarrow 12^-$ 24(4) 1.52(27)

new structure belongs to Ba nuclei produced by evaporation of only neutrons.

To further check the assignment of the observed structure to the $8^-$ isomer of $^{130}$Ba, we extracted the intensities of all $^{118,133}$Ba isotopes populated via xn reaction channels on the enriched ($\sim$98%) $^{122}$Sn target and the other Sn contaminants (mainly $^{118}$Sn and $^{120}$Sn, which have natural abundances of 24% and 32%, respectively). Since most transitions of the isotopes other than $^{130,131}$Ba are too weak in the total projection spectra, the single-gated spectra were used instead. Spectra obtained by gating on the strongest transition in the isotopes ($2^+ \rightarrow 0^+$ for even-even nuclei) were used, and the areas of the strongest peaks in the spectra were extracted ($4^+ \rightarrow 2^+$ for even-even nuclei). We obtained the following relative intensities: 100(5) for $^{130}$Ba, 74(2) for $^{131}$Ba, 3.9(1) for the $8^-$ isomer of $^{130}$Ba, 3.1(1) for $^{132}$Ba, 2.0(1) for $^{128}$Ba, 1.13(3) for $^{129}$Ba, 0.42(1) for $^{126}$Ba, and 0.29(2) for $^{127}$Ba. The $^{132}$Ba and $^{129}$Ba were populated via the 3n and 6n channels in the reaction on $^{122}$Sn with 2% and 0.2% relative cross sections (calculated with PACE4), respectively, while the lighter isotopes were produced in the reactions on the $^{118,120}$Sn contaminants.

To establish the Ba isotope to which the newly observed structure should be assigned, we built two matrices, one with and one without coincidence with neutrons. The reaction channels associated with the evaporation of a larger number of neutrons are expected to be enhanced in the matrix in coincidence with neutrons. Indeed, as one can see in Fig. 4, the ratios of the peak areas in spectra without and with coincidence with neutrons, are clearly larger for the $^{131}$Ba transitions than for the known and new transitions of $^{130}$Ba, in agreement with the smaller number of neutrons evaporated in the production of $^{131}$Ba ($4n$) than in the production of $^{130}$Ba ($5n$). For the transitions belonging to the new structure, the ratios are in the same range of those corresponding to the known transitions of $^{130}$Ba. Considering that no coincidences were found between this structure and the ground-state band of $^{130}$Ba, the placement of the new structure above the $8^-$ isomer of $^{130}$Ba is the only reasonable explanation.

Apart from $^{130,131}$Ba, the new structure is too strongly populated to be associated with any other barium isotope, and it can be safely assigned to $^{130}$Ba, rather than $^{131}$Ba, based on the coincidence intensities with charged particles and neutrons (Fig. 4) as already discussed.
The energies, initial and final spins and parities, the $E2/M1$ mixing ratios ($\delta$), the ($e^ke^g/e_0^2$) values, and the $B(E2; \Delta I = 1)/B(E2; \Delta I = 2)$ branching ratios for the newly observed transitions are presented in Table II. The mixing ratios $\delta$ included in the table are obtained from the branching ratios which usually have smaller error bars than those obtained from the angular distributions and correlations, which are needed to get the sign of the mixing ratio. However, the $\delta$ values obtained from the two methods agree rather well.

### III. DISCUSSION

In the present work the focus is on the high-$K$ part of the level scheme, or, more specifically, the states that decay through the 9.4 ms isomer. First, the $K$ value of the isomer is considered. The usual assumption is that the $K$ value is equal to the spin of the band head, here $K = 8$, but this can be tested using the $E2$ components of the $\Delta I = 1$ in-band transitions, themselves obtained from the angular-correlation analysis. In Fig. 5 the experimental $B(E2; \Delta I = 1)/B(E2; \Delta I = 2)$ values are compared to the calculated ones, which, in the rotational model, are equal to the ratios of the squares of the Clebsch-Gordan coefficients, based on the expression [32]:

$$B(E2; I \rightarrow I') = \frac{5}{16\pi} e^2 Q_0^2(IK20|I'K)^2,$$  \hspace{1cm} (1)

where $e$ is the electronic charge, and $Q_0$ is the intrinsic quadrupole moment. With $K = 8$, very good agreement is obtained, which is a strong argument in favor of a good $K$ value for the isomer. For comparison, the ratios for $K = 7$ are seen (Fig. 5) to differ significantly from the experimental data.

Next the $g$ factors are considered. The values of $(g_K - g_R)/Q_0$ for the states above the $K^\pi = 8^-$ isomer are obtained from the $\gamma$-ray branching ratios and standard formulas [33]:

$$\frac{g_K - g_R}{Q_0} = \frac{0.933E_1}{\delta\sqrt{(I^2 - 1)}},$$ \hspace{1cm} (3)

where $\delta$ is the mixing ratio, $E$ is the transition energy in MeV, $T$ is the $\gamma$-ray transition intensity, and $Q_0$ is in units of $eb$. The subscripts 1, 2 refer to $\Delta I = 1, 2$ transitions, respectively. The sign of $\delta$ is obtained from the angular correlations. As it can be seen in Table II, the smallest uncertainty for the values of $(g_K - g_R)/Q_0$ is found for the decay of the $I = 11$ band member, and therefore the $(g_K - g_R)/Q_0$ value $-0.093(4)$ for this spin is used in the following. It is consistent with the other values, taking into account their uncertainties. The magnetic dipole moment of $\mu = -0.043(28)\mu_N$ and the spectroscopic quadrupole moment of $Q_s = +2.77(30)eb$ of the $K^\pi = 8^-$ isomer have been measured by Moore et al. [8]. However, Stone [4] renormalized the original quadrupole moment to obtain $Q_s = +2.40(6)eb$, which corresponds to an intrinsic...
quadrupole moment of $Q_0 = +3.42(9)$ eb, assuming $K = 8$. Adopting this value, and $\mu = -0.043(28)$ $\mu_N$, the measured moments enable $g_K$ and $g_R$ to be extracted separately, which is an unusual circumstance, and is unique among the isomers of the $N \approx 74$ isotones. We obtain $g_K = -0.040(5)$ and $g_R = 0.278(15)$.

Consider first the rotational $g$ factor, $g_R = 0.278(15)$. This is smaller than the simple rotational approximation $g_R = Z/A = 0.43$, while restriction to valence nucleons leads to the same value, $g_R = N_p/(N_p + N_n) = 0.43$ for $^{130}$Ba. However, Stone et al. [34] have shown that, at least for the $A \approx 180$ region, neutron-dominated multiquasiparticle configurations have smaller $g_R$ values compared to proton-dominated configurations, albeit with considerable uncertainties. Since a two-neutron configuration is expected for the $^{130}$Ba isomer (see below), the present $g_R$ value appears to be reasonable. It is notable, however, that the obtained experimental uncertainty is relatively small, and further data of this quality would enable useful testing of model predictions.

Consider next the intrinsic $g$ factor, $g_K = -0.040(5)$. Studies of the other $K^\pi = 8^-$ isomers in the $N = 74$ isotones, from $^{128}$Xe to $^{140}$Dy, lead consistently to the assignment of the two-neutron, $7/2^-[404] \otimes 9/2^-[514]$ Nilsson configuration. With this configuration, the opposed intrinsic spins of the two neutrons lead to the expectation that $g_K = 0$. However, the $g_K = -0.040(5)$ value for the $^{130}$Ba isomer is significantly different from zero. Although the difference is less than typical experimental uncertainties, the small uncertainty in the present case means that the nonzero value requires an explanation. Accordingly, the data are examined for the two component neutrons in the neighboring isotopes.

The nuclide $^{129}$Ba has a $7/2^-[404]$ band with known $\mu$ and $Q_s$, and $^{131}$Ba has a $9/2^-[514]$ band also with known $\mu$ and $Q_s$, [4,5]. There is therefore the same level of completeness for these one-quasiparticle bands as there is for the two-quasiparticle, $K^\pi = 8^-$ band of $^{130}$Ba. However, no uncertainties have been reported for the $\gamma$-ray branching ratios of the $9/2^-$ band of $^{131}$Ba [35]. Therefore, the values have been obtained from the present data set, yielding $g_{\Omega} = -0.245(8)$ for the $9/2^-[514]$ band of $^{131}$Ba.

Byrne et al. [36] measured the branching ratios in the $7/2^+[404]$ band of $^{129}$Ba. From these and the quadrupole and dipole moments, we obtain $g_{\Omega} = 0.232(7)$. Then, assuming additivity such that $Kg_K = \Omega_1g_{\Omega_1} + \Omega_2g_{\Omega_2}$, the $K^\pi = 8^-$ band would be expected to have $g_K = -0.036(6)$. This is in excellent accord with our value of $g_K = -0.040(5)$ from the $^{130}$Ba data. We note that rotation alignment and other possible $K$-mixing effects in $^{130}$Ba are included implicitly by making comparison with the $^{129}$Ba and $^{131}$Ba experimental values (together with additivity). Nevertheless, the in-band branching ratios show the dominance of $K = 8$, and the semiempirical good-$K$ interpretation is well satisfied.

It is also useful to compare the data with particle-rotor model (PRM) calculations [37,38] and constrained covariant density functional theory [39] to determine the deformation parameters. For the $K^\pi = 8^-$ band head in $^{130}$Ba, the deformations obtained are $\beta_2 = 0.23$ and $\gamma = 12^\circ$ using PC-PK1 interaction [40], which compare with $\beta_2 = 0.18$ and $\gamma = 6^\circ$ from earlier total-Routhian-surface calculations [20].

The good angular momentum of the PRM enables a $K$ decomposition, which shows that the band head is $90\%$ $K = 8$, and the model well reproduces the experimental in-band $B(E2)$ ratios, as shown in Fig. 5. In addition, the band-head quadrupole moment is calculated to be $Q_0 = 3.60$ eb, which is close to the experimental value (assuming $K = 8$) of $3.42(9)$ eb.

The rotational characteristics of the band built on the $8^-$ isomer have also been investigated. As one can see in Fig. 6, the bands of $^{130}$Ba and $^{132}$Ce are very similar. The small alignment of $\sim 2$ of the $K^\pi = 8^-$ band of $^{130}$Ba (see Fig. 7) is consistent with only a small degree of $K$ mixing. The moment of inertia $J^{(1)}$ is compared to the configuration constrained TRS calculations [41] of the potential energy surface corresponding to the $7/2^+[404] \otimes 9/2^-[514]$ Nilsson configuration in Fig. 8, showing a very good agreement and strongly supporting the assigned configuration.

In summary, we identified the band built on the long-lived $K^\pi = 8^-$ isomer of $^{130}$Ba, completing thus the systematics of

![Figure 6](image6.png)

**Fig. 6.** Energies relative to a rigid rotor for the bands built on the $K^\pi = 8^-$ isomers of the $N = 74$ isotones.

![Figure 7](image7.png)

**Fig. 7.** Experimental quasiparticle alignments for the ground-state band (GSB) and the $K^\pi = 8^-$ band of $^{130}$Ba. A reference with $J_0 = 14\hbar^2\text{MeV}^{-1}$ and $J_2 = 38\hbar^2\text{MeV}^{-3}$ has been subtracted. The adopted $K$ values for the GSB and the $K^\pi = 8^-$ band are 0 and 8, respectively.
FIG. 8. Moment of inertia $J^1(1)$ from TRS calculations for the neutron $g_{7/2}[404]2^+ \otimes h_{11/2}[514]9/2^-$ Nilsson configuration in comparison with the experimental $J^1(1)$ of the band built on the $K = 8^-$ isomer of $^{130}$Ba. The two signature partners with $\alpha = 0, 1$ of the experimental dipole band are drawn with red and black colors. One can see the very good agreement between the experimental and calculated $J^1(1)$ values over the entire observed frequency range.

the bands built on the $8^-$ isomers in the $N = 74$ nuclei from $^{128}$Xe to $^{138}$Gd. We extracted precise values of the $g_K$ and $g_R$ factors of the assigned $7/2^+[404] \otimes 9/2^- [514]$ Nilsson configuration, and investigated the consistency of the electromagnetic observables of the structure built on the isomer. PRM calculations give useful information about the $K$ purity, consistent with the observed properties. Comparing also with neighboring nuclei, we found a remarkable consistency in the description of the two-neutron configuration assigned to the $^{130}$Ba isomer, only possible by using the powerful tools of $\gamma$-ray spectroscopy.

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