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169

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CHEMICAL IDENTIFICATION OF THE ELEMENT 112 IN THE REACTION $^{48}\text{Ca}+^{242}\text{Pu}$

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The isotopes of the new elements 112-116 and 118 at most undergo α -decays (one or several) that finally end up in spontaneous fission (SF) [1]. Their identification is based on their radioactive decay properties and the reaction mechanism. At the same time, chemical identification of isotopes in the observed decay chains could give us the identity of the atomic numbers of nuclei in the decay chain and provide independent evidence for the discovery of a new element (elements). The first such an experiment was successfully carried out for element 115 [2].

The present experiment is designed to confirm the decay properties of the $4s\ ^{283}112$ reported in [1] and to investigation of chemical properties of element 112. The reaction of ^{48}Ca with ^{242}Pu was investigated at the U-400 cyclotron of Flerov Laboratory. In this reaction the isotope $^{287}114$ is formed in the 3n evaporation channel which decays with $T_{1/2} \approx 0.5$ s to $^{283}112$. Products recoiling from the target are thermalized in a He/Ar gas volume, where $^{287}114$ decayed to $^{283}112$ which is then transported to the Cryo On-Line Detector (COLD) [3]. This detection device represents a rectangular chromatography channel formed by 32 detector pairs, each pair kept at a different temperature between $+35^\circ\text{C}$ (#1) and -180°C (#32), respectively. One side of the detector pairs is covered by a thin Au layer. The experiment aims at the determination of the deposition temperature of element 112 on the gold layers. The established temperature range enables to distinguish between a Hg-like behaviour (first detectors) and a Rn-like behaviour (last detectors).

During 3 weeks beam time two decay chains were observed. In the first chain a ≈ 9.50 MeV α -decay was followed 592 ms later by a SF coincidence of TKE ≈ 230 MeV, in the second chain a ≈ 9.50 MeV α -decay was followed 536 ms later by a SF coincidence of TKE ≈ 230 MeV. Their decay patterns are unambiguously consistent with decay properties reported earlier [1]. The observed deposition behaviour points to properties of element 112 being more like Hg rather than similar to Rn.

This experiment independently confirmed the synthesis of new super heavy elements with atomic number 114 and 116 also.

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