MEASUREMENT OF THE $^{197}$Au(n,g) STELLAR CROSS SECTION AT kT=30 keV BY ACTIVATION

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Neutron capture processes (s-process and r-process) are responsible for the nucleosynthesis of the main part of the heavy elements above iron. The Stellar Cross Section or Maxwellian Averaged Cross Section (MACS) of the involved isotopes is a key parameter for modeling the stellar nucleosynthesis processes. The MACS can be calculated analytically from the neutron-capture cross-section measured as a function of the energy. Moreover, as shown by Beer & Käppeler [1], MACS at kT≈25 keV can be measured almost directly using activation technique (whenever possible), since a quasi-maxwellian neutron spectrum (MNS) can be generated by means of $^7$Li(p,n) near the reaction threshold.

Most neutron cross sections are measured relative to standards. For activation measurements, the MACS of $^{197}$Au(n,γ) at kT=30 keV is used as reference [2]. The value traditionally adopted for the MACS of Au(n,γ) was obtained by Ratynski & Käppeler, in a very accurate activation measurement using a spherical segment gold sample [3]. They reported a value equal to 582±9 mb. Recently, new measurements of the $^{197}$Au(n,γ) with TOF technique at n-TOF facility at CERN [4] reported similar values (611±22 mb).

In this work, we have measured the MACS of $^{197}$Au(n,γ) at kT=30 keV by activation at 3 MV Tandem Pelletron accelerator at CNA (Seville). A gold flat sample was used. We report a value equal to 619±30 mb. We will discuss the analysis and results; in particular we will examine the planar correction proposed in this work.