

# The Jahn-Teller Effect in Solid State Chemistry of Transition Metal Compounds

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The general features of the local and cooperative Jahn-Teller effect of  $d^n$  cations with  $E_g$  ground states in octahedral coordination and simple model structures are discussed. Examples of different cooperative Jahn-Teller ordering patterns and of phase transitions from static to partially dynamic and finally fully dynamic Jahn-Teller determined structures are given. While in general a tetragonally elongated coordination of the Jahn-Teller ions is favored, the compressed configuration may be stabilized under certain conditions also. It is demonstrated by some examples that the extent of the Jahn-Teller distortion depends on the symmetry and connection pattern of the polyhedra in the host lattice structure. Finally it is shown that the crossover between high- and low-spin configurations of  $d^7$  cations is strongly influenced by the additional Jahn-Teller stabilization of the low-spin  ${}^2E_g$  state.

## 1. Introduction

The Jahn-Teller theorem states that orbitally degenerate ground states are not possible in nonlinear systems (1). There will always be a normal coordinate in the point group of the complex or molecule, which provides a mechanism for reducing the symmetry, i.e., for distorting the molecule. In this way the degeneracy of the ground state is lifted and a new nondegenerate ground level is generated, which has a lower energy than the original one. Paramagnetic transition metal complexes and compounds provide ideal systems for studying the energetic and stereochemical consequences of the Jahn-Teller effect, because many  $d^n$  configurations lead to threefold and twofold orbital ground-state degeneracies in cubic coordination (Table I). Especially large level splittings are expected, if the ground state is  $\sigma$  antibonding. This is demonstrated by Fig. 1, where the spectroscopic and structural results of  $\text{FeF}_2$  and  $\text{CuF}_2$ —both with rutile-type structures—are compared. The extent

TABLE I  
GROUND STATES OF  $d^n$  CATIONS IN CUBIC COORDINATION<sup>a</sup>

<u>octahedral</u>		
$E(g)$	$d^4, d^9, \underline{d^7}$	$\text{Cr}^{2+}, \text{Mn}^{3+}, \text{Cu}^{2+}, \text{Ag}^{2+},$ $\text{Co}^{2+}, \text{Ni}^{3+}$
$T_1$	$d^2, d^7, \underline{d^4}$	$\text{V}^{3+}, \text{Co}^{2+}$
( $\Pi$ ) $T_2$	$d^1, d^6, \underline{d^5}$	$\text{Ti}^{3+}, \text{V}^{4+}, \text{Cr}^{5+}, \text{Fe}^{2+}$
<u>tetrahedral</u>		
$E(\Gamma)$	$d^1, d^6,$	
$T_1$	$d^3, d^8,$	$\text{Ni}^{2+}$
( $\Delta + \Pi$ ) $T_2$	$d^4, d^9,$	$\text{Cu}^{2+}$

<sup>a</sup> Low-spin configurations are underlined.

of the tetragonal compression of the  $\text{FeF}_6$  octahedra and the splitting of the  $\pi$ -antibonding  $T_{2g}$  ground state is less distinct than the tetragonal elongation of the  $\text{CuF}_6$

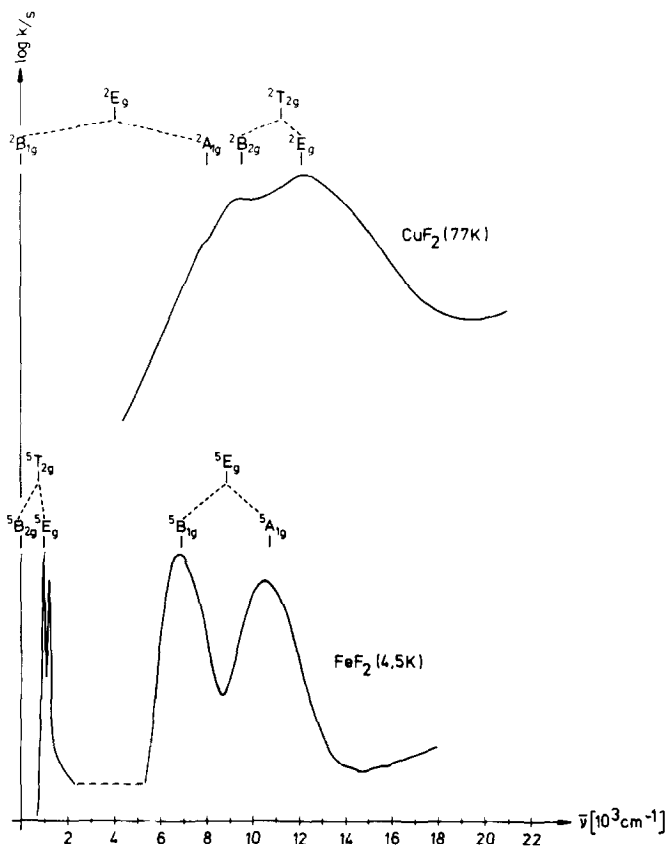


FIG. 1. Ligand field spectra and band assignments ( $O_h$  and  $D_{4h}$  symmetries) of  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$  in octahedral  $\text{F}^-$  coordination. [The splittings of the  $T_{2g}$  ( $3\delta_2$ ) and  $E_g$  levels ( $4\delta_1$ ), the octahedral ligand field parameter  $\Delta$ , as well as the Cu-F and Fe-F bond lengths in  $\text{CuF}_2$  and  $\text{FeF}_2$  are also given.] Note: The  ${}^5B_{2g} \rightarrow {}^5E_g$  transition in  $\text{FeF}_2$  is found by electronic Raman spectroscopy (2).

octahedra and the splitting of the  $\sigma$ -antibonding  $E_g$  ground state. The extent of the Jahn-Teller effect decreases, if the coordination is changed from octahedral to tetrahedral. The lower  $\Delta$  values in the case of tetrahedral coordination are equivalent to a weaker coupling of the  $d$  electrons to the ligand environment and induce smaller ground-state splittings and less distinct distortion effects of the transition metal tetrahedra (Fig. 2). The following discussion will be restricted to  $E_g$  ground states in octahedral coordination exclusively. The only vibrational mode in the  $O_h$ -point group, which can be active in removing the degeneracy of an electronic  $E_g$  state, is of  $E_g$  symmetry also. The linear coupling between electronic and

vibrational motions of these symmetries leads to a potential surface, which is called the "mexican hat" (Fig. 3a). The ring-like minimum positions of the lower potential curve correspond to the lower split level of the  $E_g$  ground state, while the vertical transition from this ring to the upper potential surface gives the energy of the first transition in the ligand field spectrum of  $\text{CuF}_2$  (Fig. 1). The positions on the ring of minimum energy are defined by the radial coordinate  $\rho$ —measuring the extent of the distortion of the octahedra—and by the angular parameter  $\varphi$ , which describes the symmetry of distortion. The distortion geometry may be of  $Q_\theta$  or  $Q_e$  symmetry or correspond to any linear combination between  $Q_\theta$  and  $Q_e$ . Taking

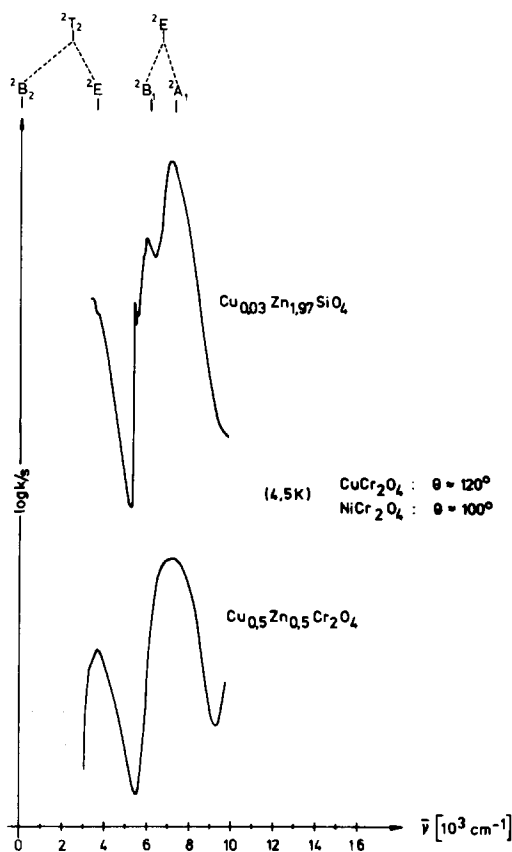


FIG. 2. Ligand field spectra of  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  in tetrahedral coordination of oxygen (phenacite and spinel) host lattices;  $3\delta_2 \approx 3600 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ ,  $4\delta_1 = 1200 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ .

nonlinear coupling terms between electronic and vibrational motions into account, the lower potential surface is slightly modified by an additional warping, however (Fig. 3b). The three additional minima at  $\varphi = 0, 120,$  and  $240^\circ$  represent tetragonal elongations of the octahedra along the  $x$ -,  $y$ -, and  $z$ -axes, respectively. These three “conformations” can be transformed into each other by rotations around a threefold axis. The three minima are separated by saddlepoints at  $\varphi = 180, 300,$  and  $60^\circ$ , positions which characterize tetragonally compressed octahedra. All other  $\varphi$  values correspond to orthorhombic distortions of the octahedra (3). This description takes into account the

experimental result that the tetragonal elongation is energetically slightly favored with respect to the compressed configuration for  $d^4, d^9,$  and low-spin  $d^7$  cations. Indeed, in all cases, in which  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  or low-spin  $\text{Co}^{2+}$  is isomorphously substituted into an *octahedral site of regular  $O_h$  symmetry*, the induced distortion geometry is elongated in nature—very frequently superimposed by a small orthorhombic component, however.

## 2. The Local and Cooperative Jahn-Teller Effect

The basic features of the local Jahn-Teller effect will be discussed now, taking mixed crystals  $\text{Ba}_2\text{Zn}_{1-x}\text{Cu}_x\text{WO}_6$  as a typical example. The cubic host lattice  $\text{Ba}_2\text{ZnWO}_6$  crystallizes in the ordered perovskite or elpasolite structure (Fig. 4). This lattice consists of a three-dimensional array of octahedra, which are linearly linked with each other by common corners. The octahedral sites are alternately occupied by the  $\text{Zn}^{2+}$  and  $\text{W}^{6+}$  ions, while the  $\text{Ba}^{2+}$  ions are 12-coordinated by the oxygen ligands. If  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  ions are doped into the  $\text{Zn}^{2+}$  site, an anisotropic EPR powder spectrum is obtained at low temperatures, which indicates statically distorted  $\text{CuO}_6$  octahedra with the geometry of a tetragonal elongation. Raising the temperature transforms the static deformation into a dynamical one (4).  $kT$  has become comparable to the energy barrier between the minima in the lower potential surface. The long axis of each of the elongated octahedra changes between the  $x$ -,  $y$ -, and  $z$ -directions—with a frequency which is fast with respect to the time scale of EPR spectroscopy. This means that the octahedra are regular in time average at high temperature. The ligand field spectra reflect the symmetry of tetragonally distorted  $\text{CuO}_6$  octahedra however, irrespective of whether the Jahn-Teller effect is static or dynamic in nature (Fig. 5).

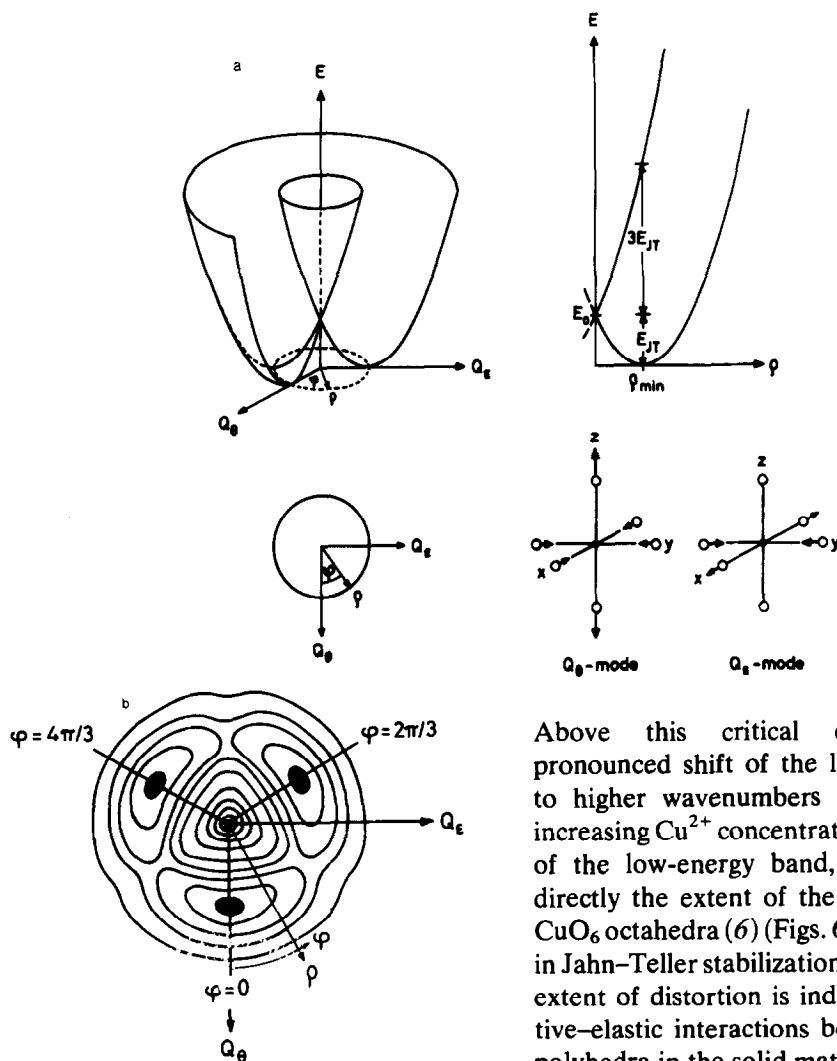


FIG. 3. (a) The linear coupling between an electronic  $E_g$  level and a vibrational  $E_g$  mode (components:  $Q_\theta, Q_\epsilon$ ) ( $4E_{JT} \equiv 4\delta_1$ ). (b) The influence of nonlinear coupling terms on the lower potential curve.

If the concentration of Jahn–Teller unstable cations in the solid matrix increases, however, cooperative–elastic interactions between the Jahn–Teller centers must be allowed for in addition. Figure 6 illustrates that a phase transition from the cubic host-lattice structure to a tetragonal lattice with  $c/a > 1$  occurs, if the  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  concentration is continuously raised in the mixed crystal series  $\text{Ba}_2\text{Zn}_{1-x}\text{Cu}_x\text{WO}_6$  till  $x = 0.23$  (5).

Above this critical concentration a pronounced shift of the ligand field bands to higher wavenumbers is observed with increasing  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  concentration—in particular of the low-energy band, which measures directly the extent of the distortion of the  $\text{CuO}_6$  octahedra (6) (Figs. 6, 7). This increase in Jahn–Teller stabilization energy and in the extent of distortion is induced by cooperative–elastic interactions between the  $\text{CuO}_6$  polyhedra in the solid matrix. In addition to this energetic effect the *long axes* of these polyhedra orientate *parallel* to each other

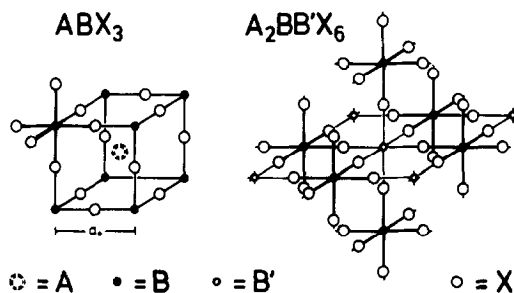


FIG. 4. The perovskite structure (left) and the framework of octahedra in the ordered perovskite (elpasolite) structure (right).

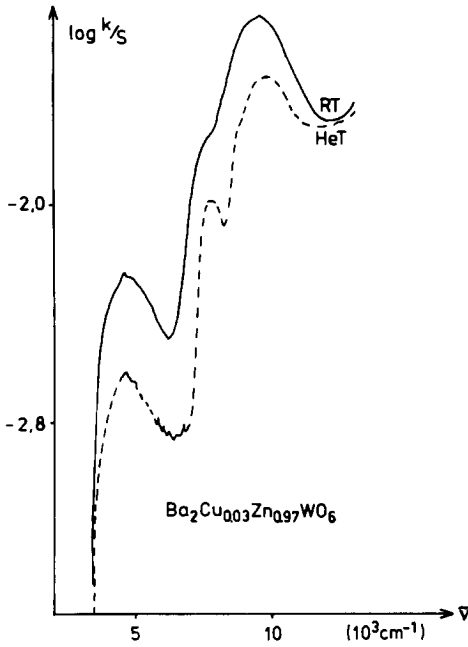


FIG. 5. Ligand field spectrum of cubic  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$ -doped  $\text{Ba}_2\text{ZnWO}_6$ .

above the critical concentration, leading to a distorted unit cell with  $c/a > 1$ . The symmetry of the cooperative Jahn–Teller ordering just described is called *ferrodistortive* (7, 8). The phase line, separating the cubic from the tetragonal modification, demon-

strates that the structure with higher symmetry is favored at higher temperatures (Fig. 6).

In the perovskite structure, in which every octahedral  $B$  site (Fig. 4) may be occupied by a Jahn–Teller unstable cation, a different kind of cooperative order is observed, which is called *antiferrodistortive* and which induces a tetragonal distortion of the unit cell with  $c/a < 1$  (7, 8). This order is best described by two ferrodistorive sublattices, the preferred long axes of which lie perpendicular to each other in the (001) planes (Fig. 8). This order is found if in fluoridic compounds of the stoichiometry  $A^I B^{II} \text{F}_3$  the  $B^{II}$  ion is  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  or  $\text{Cr}^{2+}$  and may be visualized by two vectors pointing towards  $\varphi \approx 120$  and  $240^\circ$  in the  $\rho\varphi$ -plane of the mexican hat (compare Fig. 3), which represent the two ferrodistorive sublattices. The resultant vector points toward  $\varphi = 180^\circ$  and describes the tetragonal compression of the unit cell.

An interesting class of compounds with respect to cooperative Jahn–Teller effects is the nitrocomplexes  $A_2^I \text{Ni}^{II} (\text{NO}_2)_6$  ( $A^I$ : Cs, Rb, Tl, K;  $B^{II}$ : Ca, Sr, Ba; Pb) with elpasolite-analogous structures. The  $\text{NO}_2$  groups link  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  and  $B^{2+}$  via common corners, with the nitrogen atoms bonded to the transition

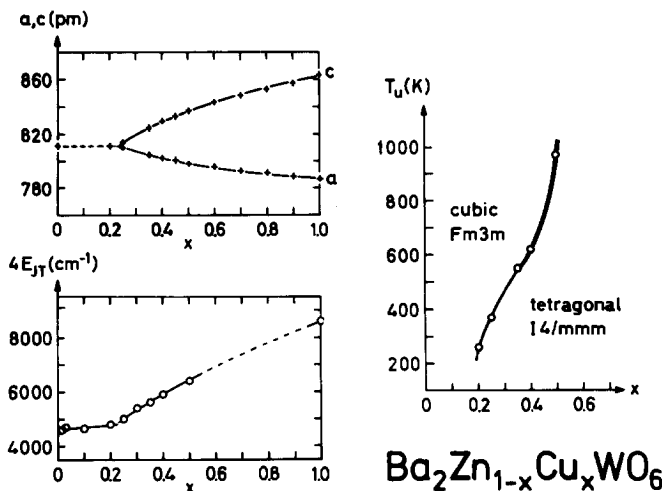


FIG. 6. Unit cell dimensions, phase line, and  ${}^2E_g$  ground-state splittings for mixed crystals  $\text{Ba}_2\text{Zn}_{1-x}\text{Cu}_x\text{WO}_6$ . (The phase transition is continuous below  $x = 0.35$  and of first order at  $x > 0.35$ ).

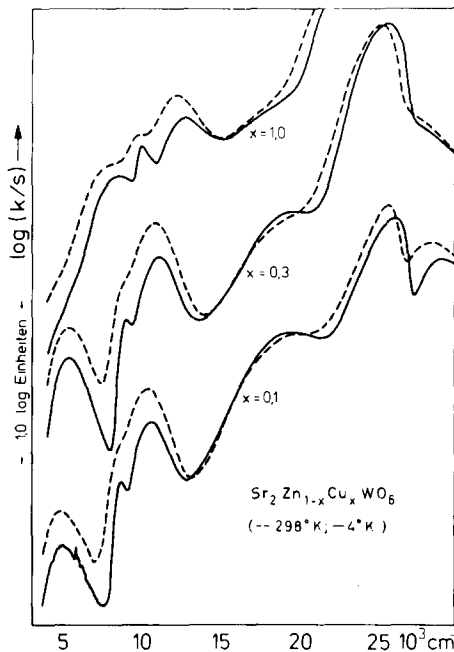


FIG. 7. Ligand field spectra of mixed crystals  $\text{Sr}_2\text{Zn}_{1-x}\text{Cu}_x\text{WO}_6$  (d-d transitions below  $15\,000\text{ cm}^{-1}$ ).

metal ion and the  $B^{2+}$  ions coordinated by 12 oxygen atoms (10, 11) (Fig. 9). If  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  is substituted by  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  the unit cells become pseudotetragonally distorted. The axial ratio is  $c/a > 1$ , if  $B$  is an alkaline earth ion. The cooperative order is ferrodistorive as in the elpasolite complexes discussed previously (13). While the  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  compounds remain pseudotetragonal up to their decomposition temperatures, the corresponding  $\text{Co}^{2+}$  complexes, which contain the  $d^7$  cation in the low-spin configuration, exhibit second-order phase transitions to cubic structures at higher temperatures (10, 14). The statically elongated  $\text{CoN}_6$  polyhedra undergo a transition to a dynamical distortion, as is easily deduced from the EPR spectra.

In the case of the  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  complexes with  $\text{Pb}^{2+}$  in the  $B$  site the low-temperature  $\gamma$  modifications crystallize pseudotetragonally again, but with  $c/a < 1$ . The elongated  $\text{CuN}_6$  octahedra exhibit an antiferrodistorive order this time (13, 15a). This pattern of cooperative Jahn-Teller order induces a

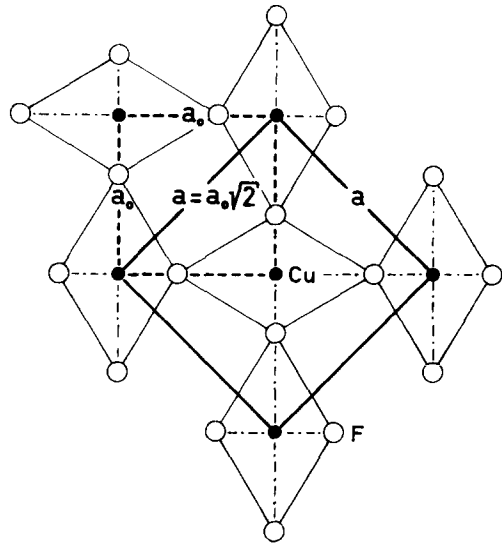


FIG. 8. Antiferrodistorive order of elongated octahedra in  $\text{KCuF}_3$  (9) (view into the (001) planes of the tetragonal structure).

strong distortion of the  $B$  coordination in the (001) planes (Fig. 10). While the highly polarizable  $\text{Pb}^{2+}$  ion tolerates this appreciable deformation of its coordination sphere, the ionic and rigid alkaline earth ions cannot

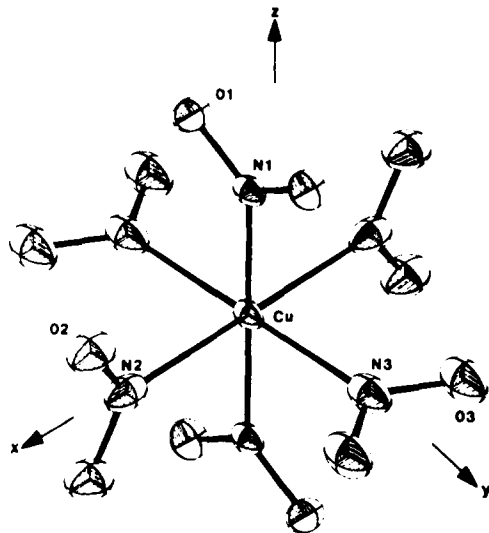


FIG. 9. The octahedral coordination of the transition metal ion by the nitrogens in complexes  $A_2T^{II}B^{II}(\text{NO}_2)_6$  ( $T^{II}$ : Ni, Cu, Co, Fe). [Neutron diffraction structural analysis of  $\beta\text{-Cs}_2\text{PbCu}(\text{NO}_2)_6$  (12).]

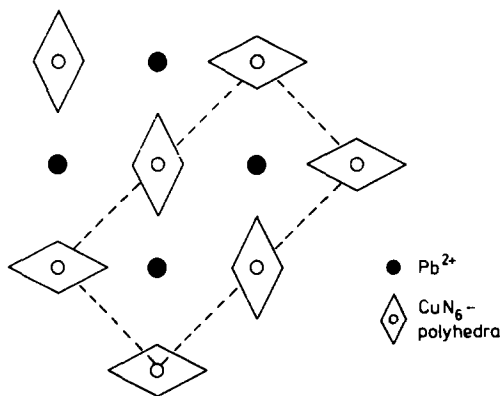


FIG. 10. Antiferrodistortive order of elongated  $\text{CuN}_6$  octahedra in  $\gamma\text{-A}_2\text{PbCu}(\text{NO}_2)_6$  (view into the (001) planes of the pseudotetragonal structure).

be stabilized in this type of cooperative order. Obviously the antiferrodistortive order is energetically slightly preferred with respect to the ferrodistorptive alternative in structures with corner-connected octahedra. Additional energetic effects, however, depending on the topology of the host-lattice structure, may nevertheless stabilize the ferrodistorptive order. The  $\gamma$  modifications show phase transitions to  $\beta$  structures, in which there is a dynamic equilibration of the long and short Cu–N bond lengths in the (001) planes, leading to tetragonally compressed  $\text{CuN}_6$  octahedra in time average. This dynamical process was suggested by EPR data (15) and supported by neutron diffraction structure analysis (12). The thermal ellipsoids of the N and O atoms in the “dynamic plane” are directed with their long axes along or parallel to the CuN bonds, in contrast to the situation along the pseudotetragonal  $c$  direction (Fig. 9). The planar dynamic  $\beta$  modification finally transforms into the cubic high-temperature  $\alpha$  phase, which is characterized by a three-dimensionally dynamic Jahn–Teller effect. Both phase transitions are of first order, as can be deduced from EPR spectroscopic, structural, and calorimetric measurements (8, 15, 16).

### 3. $\text{Cu}^{2+}(\text{Cr}^{2+}, \text{Mn}^{3+})$ in Tetragonally Compressed Octahedral Coordination (?)

We now proceed from the elpasolite- and perovskite-lattice to structures, in which the corner connection of the octahedra is interrupted in one dimension (Fig. 11). Layer structures of this kind—the  $\text{K}_2\text{ZnF}_4$  and  $\text{Ba}_2\text{ZnF}_6$  types for example—already contain slightly tetragonally compressed  $\text{ZnF}_6$  octahedra as a consequence of purely geometric anisotropy effects. In spite of this geometric feature, which should favor a tetragonally compressed coordination for  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  also, the compounds  $\text{Ba}_2\text{CuF}_6$  and  $\text{K}_2\text{CuF}_4$  contain elongated  $\text{CuF}_6$  octahedra in antiferrodistortive order, as follows from structural (17–19) and spectroscopic data (20). If  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  ions are incorporated into the  $\text{Zn}^{2+}$  site of  $\text{Ba}_2\text{ZnF}_6$  in lower concentrations, however, the EPR spectra of compressed  $\text{CuF}_6$  octahedra are observed (21) (Fig. 12). Angular overlap calculations

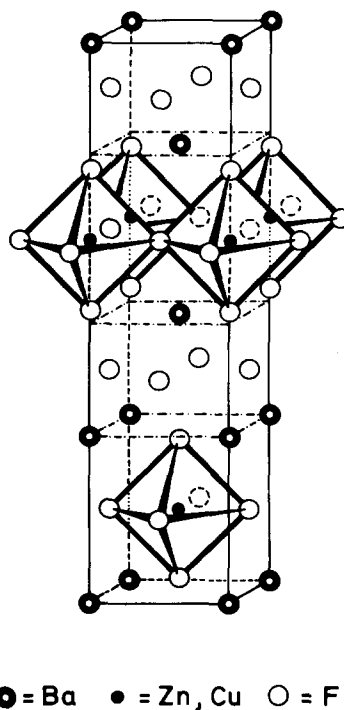


FIG. 11. The structure of  $\text{Ba}_2\text{ZnF}_6$  (17).

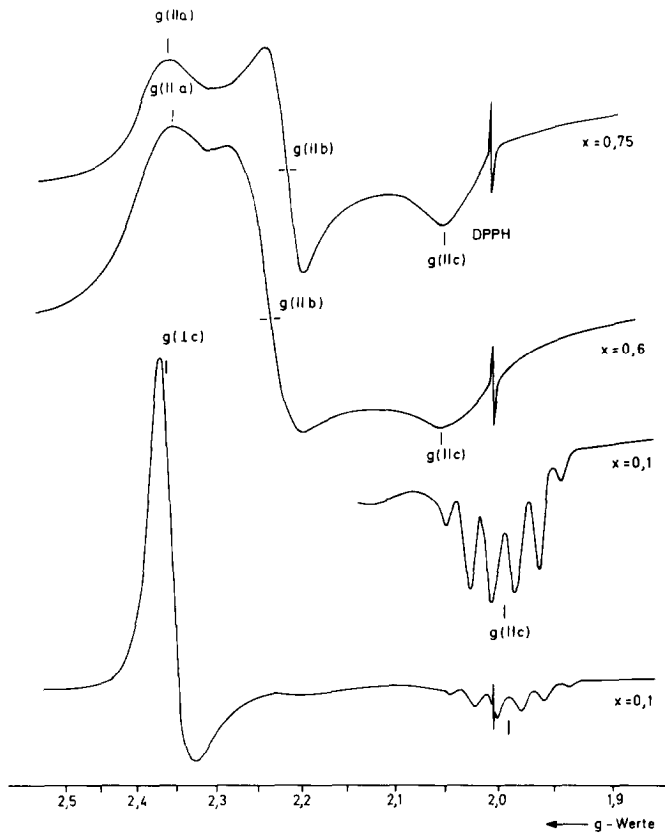


FIG. 12. EPR spectra of mixed crystals  $\text{Ba}_2\text{Zn}_{1-x}\text{Cu}_x\text{F}_6$  (21). [ $x = 0.1$ : compressed  $\text{CuF}_6$  octahedra;  $g_{\parallel} \leq 2.00 < g_{\perp}$ ;  $x = 0.75$ : (disturbed) antiferrodistortive order of elongated octahedra.]

on the basis of the ligand field energies show that the extent of compression exceeds by far the small host-lattice effect. We can conclude that there is a true Jahn–Teller stabilization in a compressed coordination geometry. Obviously the host-lattice distortion is energetically sufficient to overcompensate the difference in Jahn–Teller stabilization energy for the compressed and the elongated coordination. Increasing  $x$  in the mixed crystal series  $\text{Ba}_2\text{Zn}_{1-x}\text{Cu}_x\text{F}_6$  above 0.3, however, changes the coordination geometry from compressed to elongated. A cooperative acentric movement of the bridging fluorine ligands in the (001) planes along the  $\text{CuF}$  bond directions provides a simple mechanism by which the two alternative coordination geometries can be

transformed into one another (Fig. 13). At  $x \leq 0.3$  the potential surface of the ground state has only one minimum at  $\varphi = 180^\circ$ . With increasing  $x$  the vibronic Jahn–Teller coupling becomes larger, however, and two minima symmetrical to  $\varphi = 180^\circ$  develop, separated by a flat saddlepoint at  $\varphi = 180^\circ$ . Finally the two minima reach the positions  $\varphi \approx 120^\circ$  and  $\varphi \approx 240^\circ$ , corresponding to the two ferrodistortive sublattices, which characterize the antiferrodistortive order of elongated  $\text{CuF}_6$  octahedra (compare Fig. 3).

As already mentioned the same cooperative Jahn–Teller order is found in  $A_2^I\text{CuF}_4$  ( $A^I$ :  $\text{NH}_4^+$ ,  $\text{K}^+$ ,  $\text{Tl}^+$ ,  $\text{Rb}^+$ ). For the corresponding  $\text{Cr}^{2+}$  chlorides a tetragonally compressed  $\text{CrCl}_6$  coordination is reported, however, as the result of powder neutron



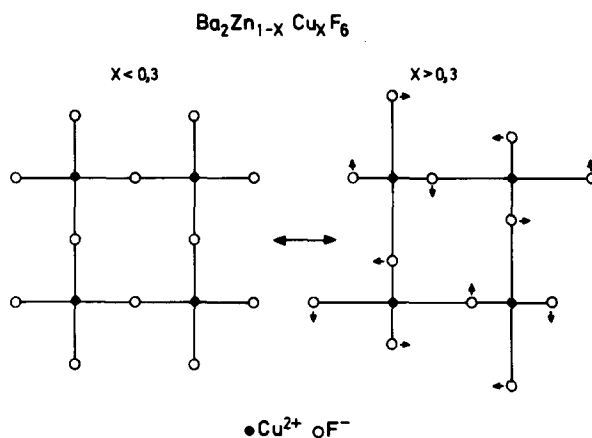


FIG. 13. The (001) planes of  $\text{Ba}_2\text{Zn}_{1-x}\text{Cu}_x\text{F}_6$ . [Left: compressed coordination; right: elongated  $\text{CuF}_6$  octahedra; The arrows indicate additional movements of the  $\text{F}^-$  ligands, leading to a somewhat disturbed antiferrodistortive order (21).]

diffraction data (22). Figure 14 shows the typical result of a magnetic susceptibility measurement, indicating parallel spin-spin interactions and ferromagnetic order at low temperatures (23), and Fig. 15 demonstrates that there is an interesting correlation between the magnetic structure and the cooperative Jahn-Teller order. It is easily deduced from a simple superexchange model that only an antiferrodistortive order of elongated  $\text{CrCl}_6$  octahedra can account for

ferromagnetic interactions. The alternative picture of compressed octahedra in ferrodistor-tortive order would unambiguously lead to antiferromagnetism. This result casts some doubt on the reported tetragonal compression of the  $\text{CrCl}_6$  octahedra in these compounds. The same antiferrodistortive order may be suggested for compounds of stoichiometry  $A^I\text{MnF}_4$ , which again contain corner-connected  $\text{MnF}_6$  polyhedra in two dimensions. Like the  $\text{Cr}^{2+}$  compounds just

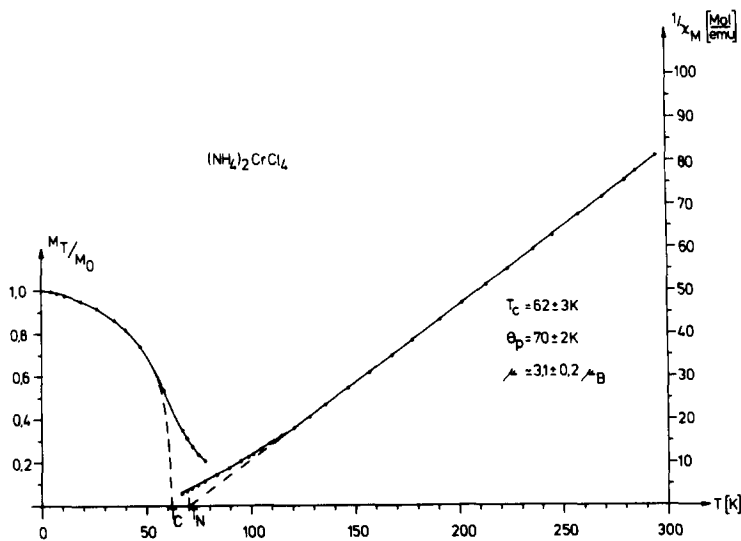


FIG. 14. Magnetic susceptibility and magnetization data for  $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{CrCl}_4$ .

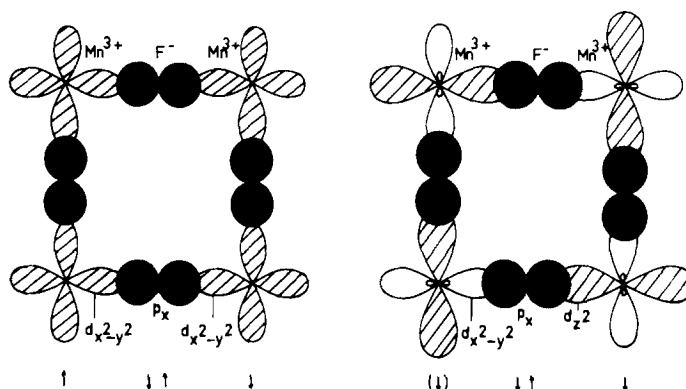


FIG. 15. Superexchange between  $d^4$  cations via common corners in perovskite or perovskite-type layer structures. [Left: compressed octahedra;  $d_{x^2-y^2}^1 - d_{x^2-y^2}^1 \rightarrow$  antiferromagnetism; right: elongated octahedra (anti-ferrodistortive order);  $d_{x^2}^1 - d_{x^2-y^2}^0 \rightarrow$  ferromagnetism.]

discussed, they exhibit ferromagnetism at low temperatures (24). The ligand field spectra (Fig. 16) demonstrate that the  $d^4$  cations  $\text{Cr}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Mn}^{3+}$  induce the same

drastic distortion effects as  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$ . The  $E_g$  groundstate splitting is about  $8000 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  for  $\text{Cr}^{2+}$  and even  $15,000 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  for  $\text{Mn}^{3+}$  in the compounds considered.

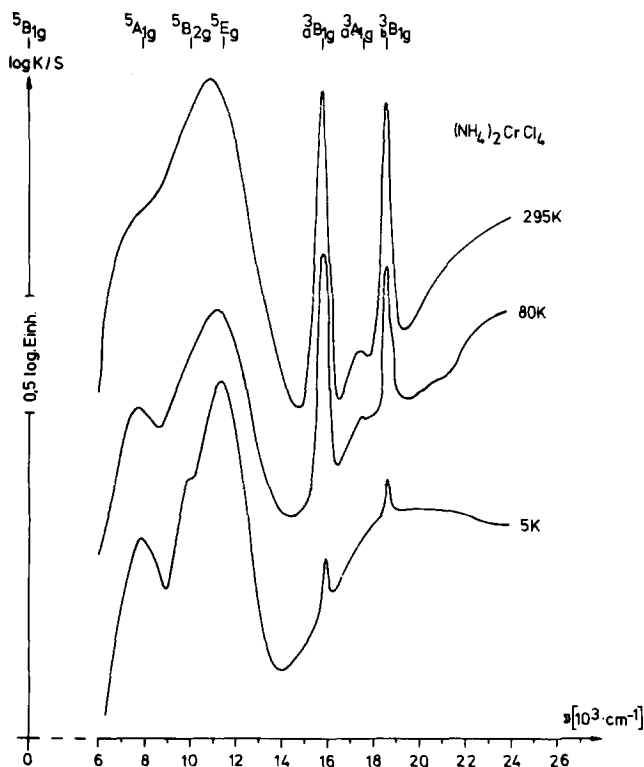
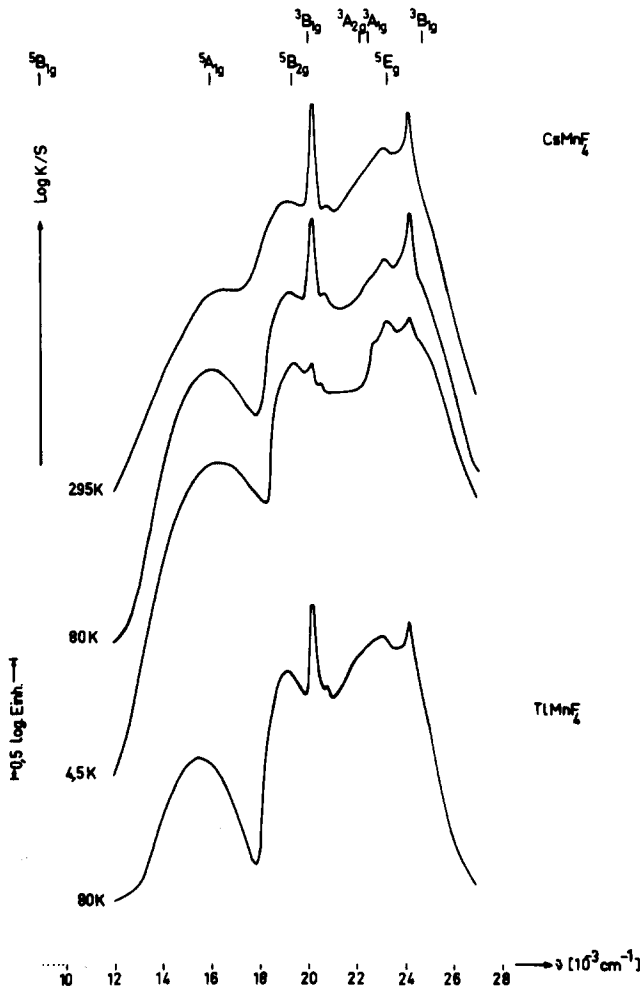


FIG. 16. Ligand field spectra of  $\text{Cr}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Mn}^{3+}$  in layer structures  $A_2\text{CrCl}_4$  (left) and  $A^1\text{MnF}_4$  (right).

4. Examples ( $\text{Cu}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Ni}^{3+}$ )

In the following, we present two characteristic examples of  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  compounds which illustrate how large the structural influence of a Jahn-Teller unstable cation may be in dependence on the geometry of the host-lattice structure. The perovskite and elpasolite structures with corner-linked octahedra are optimally adjustable to cooperative Jahn-Teller distortions. In  $\text{Ba}_2\text{CuWO}_6$ , for example, the  $\text{CuO}_6$  octahedra exhibit differences between long and short CuO bond lengths of  $0.44 \text{ \AA}$  and a  ${}^2E_g$  ground-state splitting of  $8600 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  (25).

Substituting W for Te changes the symmetry of connection between the octahedral sites (Fig. 17). Groups of three octahedra with common faces are connected by single octahedra via common corners (26). The sites occupied by  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  are more rigid as the consequence of the geometric fixation by a common face and hence less adjustable to tetragonal distortion effects than in the elpasolite structure. The bond length differences within the  $\text{CuO}_6$  polyhedra are indeed only about  $0.14 \text{ \AA}$ , if one averages over the trigonal distortion component imposed on the octahedra by the host-lattice structure. The ground-state splitting, with



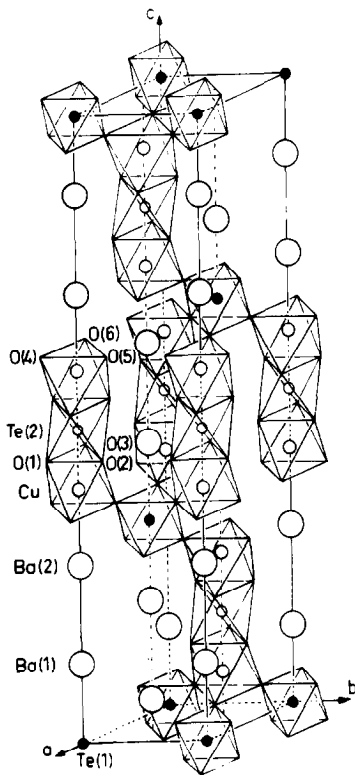


FIG. 17. The crystal structure of  $\text{Ba}_2\text{CuTeO}_6$ .

$7600\text{ cm}^{-1}$ , is also smaller than the splittings for only corner-linked octahedra.  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  ions may even completely change a host-lattice structure. It is possible to substitute exactly 75 mole% of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  by  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  in the perovskite structure of  $\text{CaTiO}_3$  (27) (Fig. 4), but hardly understandable that the small  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  ion can be incorporated into a 12-coordinated site without appreciable displacements of the oxygen positional parameters. Indeed, the neutron diffraction results show that 75% of these sites are strongly distorted such that four oxygen ligands set up a square-planar coordination with  $\text{Cu-O}$  bond lengths of  $1.95\text{ \AA}$ , while the additional eight oxygen atoms are only very weakly bound (28) (Fig. 18). It is possible to retain this cubic structure type (space group  $I2/m\bar{3}$ ), if the  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  position is empty ( $\text{Cu}_{3/4}\text{Ti}_{1/2}\text{Ta}_{1/2}\text{O}_3$ ), and even then, if the  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  sites are partly un-

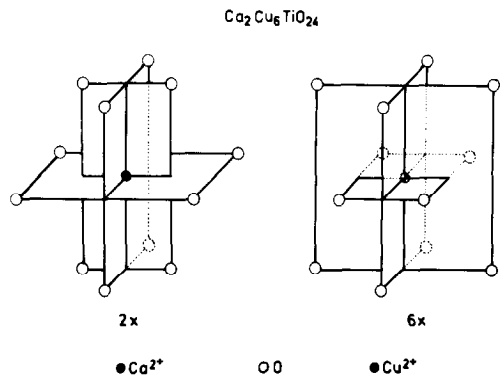


FIG. 18. The coordination polyhedra of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  in  $\text{Ca}_{1/4}\text{Cu}_{3/4}\text{TiO}_3$ .

occupied in addition (28). The last example refers to  $\text{CuTa}_2\text{O}_6$ , which crystallizes completely differently from  $\text{CuNb}_2\text{O}_6$  and  $\text{CuSb}_2\text{O}_6$ .

In conclusion, we discuss some results concerning cations with a  $d^7$  electronic configuration. It is well known that in elpasolite compounds  $A_2^I B^I T^{III} F_6$  ( $A^I$ : Cs, Rb, K;  $B^I$ : Rb, K) the  $\text{Co}^{3+}$  ions in the  $T$  site possess a high-spin ground state, while the  $\text{Ni}^{3+}$  in these compounds is low-spin configured (29). This behavior has not been well understood, because the crossover between the high-spin and low-spin configurations in octahedral coordination should occur at comparable ligand fields for related  $d^6$  and  $d^7$  cations, as is easily deduced from the Tanabe-Sugano diagrams. From the ligand field data and from the EPR spectroscopic  $g$  values of the  $\text{Ni}^{3+}$  elpasolites the energy level diagram of Fig. 19 could be calculated (30). From this diagram it follows that the high-spin configuration should indeed be more stable than the low-spin state in a *regular octahedral* coordination, in agreement with the isostructural  $\text{Co}^{3+}$  compounds (Fig. 19). The strong Jahn-Teller effect, however, leads to an appreciable splitting of the (excited)  ${}^2E_g$  level, so that a low-spin ground state is finally stabilized. While the Jahn-Teller distortion of the  $\text{Ni}^{III}F_6$  octahedra is dynamic at room

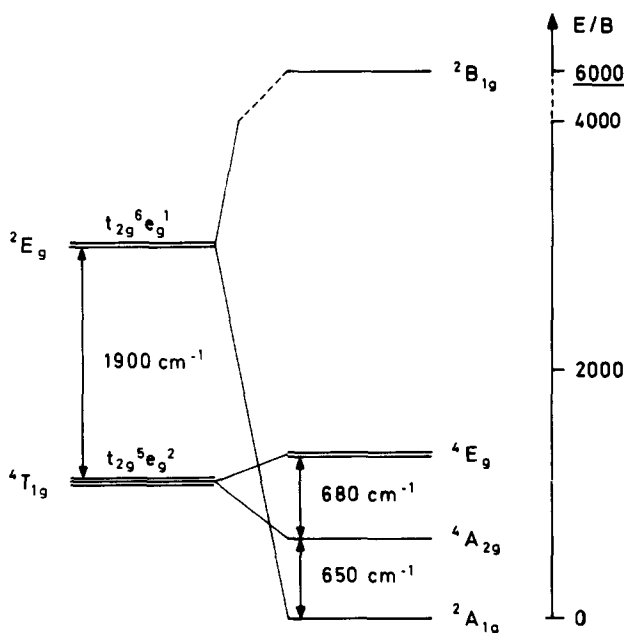


FIG. 19. Energy level diagram of  $\text{Ni}^{3+}$  in  $\text{Cs}_2\text{KNiF}_6$ . (Left: hypothetical  $O_h$  symmetry; right:  $D_{4h}$  symmetry.)

temperature, the tetragonal low-temperature modifications contain—as expected in analogy to  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$ —tetragonally elongated octahedra in ferrodistoritive order (30, 31). The EPR spectrum of  $\text{Cs}_2\text{NaNiF}_6$  is different from those reported above, because an isotropic high-spin signal of remarkable intensity is observed at about  $g \approx 4$  in addition to the anisotropic low-spin signal (Fig. 20). This result can be understood from the crystal structure, which is analogous to that of  $\text{Ba}_2\text{CuTeO}_6$  (Fig. 17). Half of the  $\text{Ni}^{3+}$  ions occupy the central octahedra of the groups, which are linked by common faces. They induce only relatively small Jahn-Teller effects, as was shown previously. Obviously the splitting of the  ${}^2E_g$  state is not sufficiently large to stabilize the low-spin configuration. The second half of the  $\text{Ni}^{3+}$  ions occupy the octahedra, which are linked exclusively by common corners as in the elpasolite structure, so that a low-spin ground state is energetically favored. The conclusion extrapolated from this example is that the

Jahn-Teller effect tends to stabilize the low-spin ground state of  $d^7$  cations already at lower ligand fields than expected for a regular octahedral coordination (30).

Finally, we give some arguments concerning how to decide whether a distortion is caused by Jahn-Teller instability or by nonelectronic effects. A conclusive decision is possible for octahedral  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$ , for example, by comparing the  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  compound in question with the stoichiometrically equivalent  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Zn}^{2+}$  compounds (Table II).  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Zn}^{2+}$  are similar to  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  in electronic configuration and ionic size, but they have orbitally nondegenerate ground states in octahedral coordination. If the  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  coordination is strongly distorted—in contrast to the  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  or  $\text{Zn}^{2+}$  octahedra—the Jahn-Teller effect is very likely the energetic reason. Surely the Jahn-Teller effect is a stereochemically and energetically important factor in the structural chemistry of transition metal compounds.

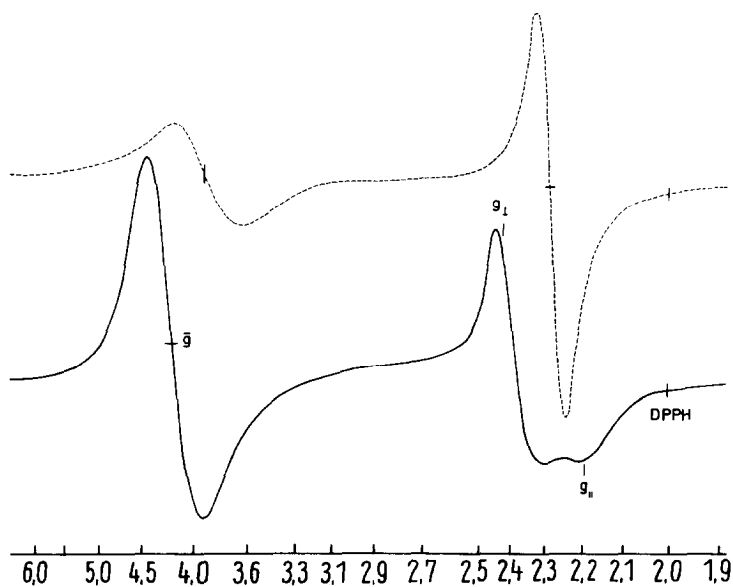


FIG. 20. EPR spectra of  $\text{Cs}_2\text{NaNiF}_6$ . ---, 77°K; —, 4.2°K.

TABLE II

BOND LENGTHS DATA (Å) AND CRYSTAL STRUCTURES OF  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  COMPOUNDS COMPARED WITH THE CORRESPONDING  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  COMPOUNDS

$\text{NiF}_2$ (Tetragonal)	1.98 (2×) 2.01 (4×)	$\text{CuF}_2$ (Monoclinic)	2.27 (2×) 1.93 (4×)	Rutile
$\text{KNiF}_3$ (Cubic)	2.00 <sub>5</sub> (6×)	$\text{KCuF}_3$ (Tetragonal)	2.25 (2×) 1.96 (2×) 1.89 (2×)	Perovskite
$\text{K}_2\text{NiF}_4$ (Tetragonal)	1.97 (2×) 2.00 (4×)	$\text{K}_2\text{CuF}_4$ (Tetragonal)	2.22 (2×) 1.92 (4×)	
$\text{Ba}_2\text{NiWO}_6$ (Cubic)	~2.09 (6×)	$\text{Ba}_2\text{CuWO}_6$ (Tetragonal)	2.42 (2×) 1.98 (4×)	Elpasolite
$\text{NiSb}_2\text{O}_6$ (Tetragonal)	—————→	$\text{CuSb}_2\text{O}_6$ (Monoclinic)		Trirutile
$\text{NiFe}_2\text{O}_4$ (Cubic)	—————→	$\text{CuFe}_2\text{O}_4$ (Tetragonal)		Spinel

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