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Autor: Ballmer, P. / Blum, H. / Borer, W.J.
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Solid State Reactions and Defects in Verneuil Laser Rubies II

by P. Ballmer¹⁾, H. Blum, W. J. Borer²⁾, K. Eigenmann and Hs. H. Günthard

Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Laboratory of Physical Chemistry,
Universitätsstrasse 22, 8006 Zürich, Switzerland

(10. VI. 70)

Abstract. Results of new computations of crystal field spectra of Cr^{+3} in the interstitial site of the $\alpha\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3$ structure are presented. The results are used to support an assignment of the absorption band at 315 nm ascribed to a typical defect in Verneuil grown laser rubies.

1. Introduction

In a recent paper, W. Borer et al. [1] reported crystal field analysis results of a defect observed in Verneuil laser rubies. This defect is characterized by an absorption band near 315 nm and has been assigned to transitions between crystal field levels of Cr^{+3} at the interstitial site b in the $\alpha\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3$ structure [2]. In the meantime extensive crystal field calculations for transition metal ions have been made at this laboratory, based on $\alpha\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3$ crystal structure data given by Newnham [3], whereas earlier calculations were based on data published by Pauling et al. [4]. The use of the newer data led to significant changes of the crystal constants c_{lm} at sites b , c and e . In this paper we wish to report the corrected values for this constants and the energy levels for Cr^{+3} at site b .

2. Calculation of Crystal Field Constants

Using the same assumptions for the calculation of the crystal field parameters c_{lm} as in I, but basing on Newnham's crystal structure data for $\alpha\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3$, the results collected in Table I are obtained. With respect to the crystallographic data it should be mentioned, that Newnham's data were first transformed to rhombohedral axes³⁾. In these axes system the structural parameters for $\alpha\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3$ are⁴⁾

$$a = 5.128 \pm 0.0034 \text{ \AA} ,$$

$$\alpha = 55^\circ 17' \pm 3' 8'' .$$

¹⁾ Address: Djévahirdjian S.A., Monthey, Switzerland.

²⁾ Present address: Dept. of Electrical Engineering, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island 02881, USA.

³⁾ Loc. cit. [2], p. 20, c.f. Figure 2.5.3.

⁴⁾ Error derived from Newnham's data.

The following remarks concerning the crystal field coefficients listed in Table I seem to be in order

- the coefficients $c_{0,0}$ are uncertain to the limits given owing to the well known convergence difficulties for the unipole terms,
- the coefficients $c_{+4,-3}$, $c_{4,3}$ of sites *b* and *c* and $c_{1,\pm 1}$, $c_{2,\pm 2}$ of site *e* show considerable differences to earlier published values⁵⁾. In part the discrepancies originate from the new crystallographic data in part from the change in phase of the angle φ originating from the new choice of crystallographic axis and in part however from errors in the earlier computations. Since all coefficients c_{lm} , $m \neq 0$, depend on the choice of phase of the angle φ , the choice adapted for this paper is shown in Figure 1.

Table I
Lattice potentials at the various sites of the corundum structure.

Site	Rhombohedral coordinates	l	m	Coefficient real part	c_{lm} ^{a)b)c)} imag. part
<i>c</i>	– 0.148, – 0.148, – 0.148	0	0 ^{d)}	-8.628 ± 0.009	0
		2	0	0.06717	0
		4	– 3	+ 0.235078	0.044656
		4	0	0.188189	0
		4	+ 3	– 0.235078	0.044656
		0	0 ^{d)}	-0.349 ± 0.008	0
<i>b</i>	0, 0, 0	2	0	0.91569	0
		4	– 3	– 0.2044556	– 0.05278977
		4	0	0.463771	0
		4	+ 3	0.2044556	– 0.05278977
		0	0 ^{d)}	6.878 ± 0.009	0
		1	– 1	– 0.07824	0
<i>e</i>	0.055998, – 0.555998, 0.250001	1	0	0	0
		1	+ 1	+ 0.07824	0
		2	– 2	+ 0.0759626	0
		2	– 1	0	– 0.475755
		2	0	0.0743679	0
		2	+ 1	0	– 0.475755
		2	+ 2	0.0759626	0

^{a)} c_{lm} are the coefficients of the expansion $V(r, \vartheta, \varphi) = e_0 \sum_{l,m} c_{lm} r^l Y_l^m(\vartheta, \varphi)$ for the lattice potential. Their dimension is $\text{\AA}^{-(l+1)}$.

^{b)} Only those coefficients are given, which are necessary for a certain site symmetry and a certain electron configuration.

^{c)} The lattice sums were carried out over a nearly spherical region of 50 \AA radius.

^{d)} The confidence interval given in this table for c_{00} represents the standard deviation of the constant calculated for twenty statistically selected values of r within 47.5 and 50 \AA .

3. Crystal Field Energy Levels of Cr^{+3} in the Interstitial Site *b*

Using the same technique for the computation of the crystal field levels as in I the results shown graphically in Figure 2 are obtained. Only few comments should be made

⁵⁾ Loc. cit. [1], Table 6.

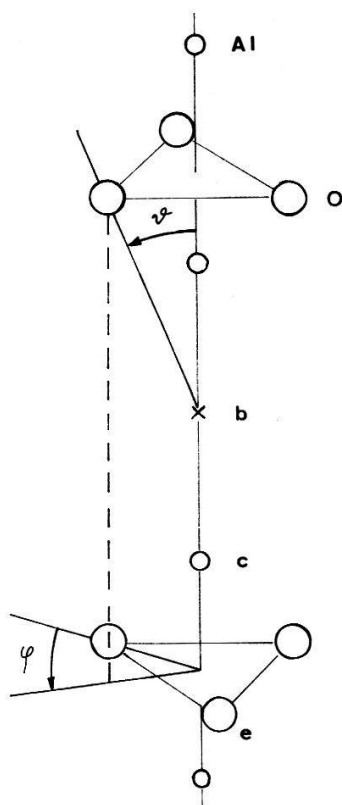


Figure 1
Rhombohedral unit cell of α - Al_2O_3 . The definitions of the spherical coordinates used in this work are given. Notation of sites is as given in Ref. [2].

- (i) the general pattern of the crystal field levels shows marked differences to that obtained in *I*,
- (ii) the newly obtained levels fulfil the Kramers degeneracy to within better 0.1 cm^{-1} . In *I* much larger discrepancies were obtained.

4. Assignment of the Defect Absorption Bands

Basing on Figure 2, the absorption band of the defect near 315 nm (31750 cm^{-1}) may be related to the transitions collected in Table 2.

Table 2

Calculated transitions in the UV/VIS region, which explain the observed 315 nm band [31746 cm^{-1}]

Energy of level [cm^{-1}] ^{a)}	Assignment to free ion levels
33042.2	$4 F - 4 P$
33138.9	$4 F - 4 P$
33237.1	$4 F - 4 P$
33336.8	$4 F - 4 P$

^{a)} Every level is doubly degenerate, according to Kramers theorem.

The results may be commented upon as follows:

- (i) the transitions assigned are both symmetry and spin allowed (in the free ion picture),
- (ii) the assignment proposed in *I* is not changed by the newly calculated crystal field levels for $\text{Cr}^{3+}(b)$.

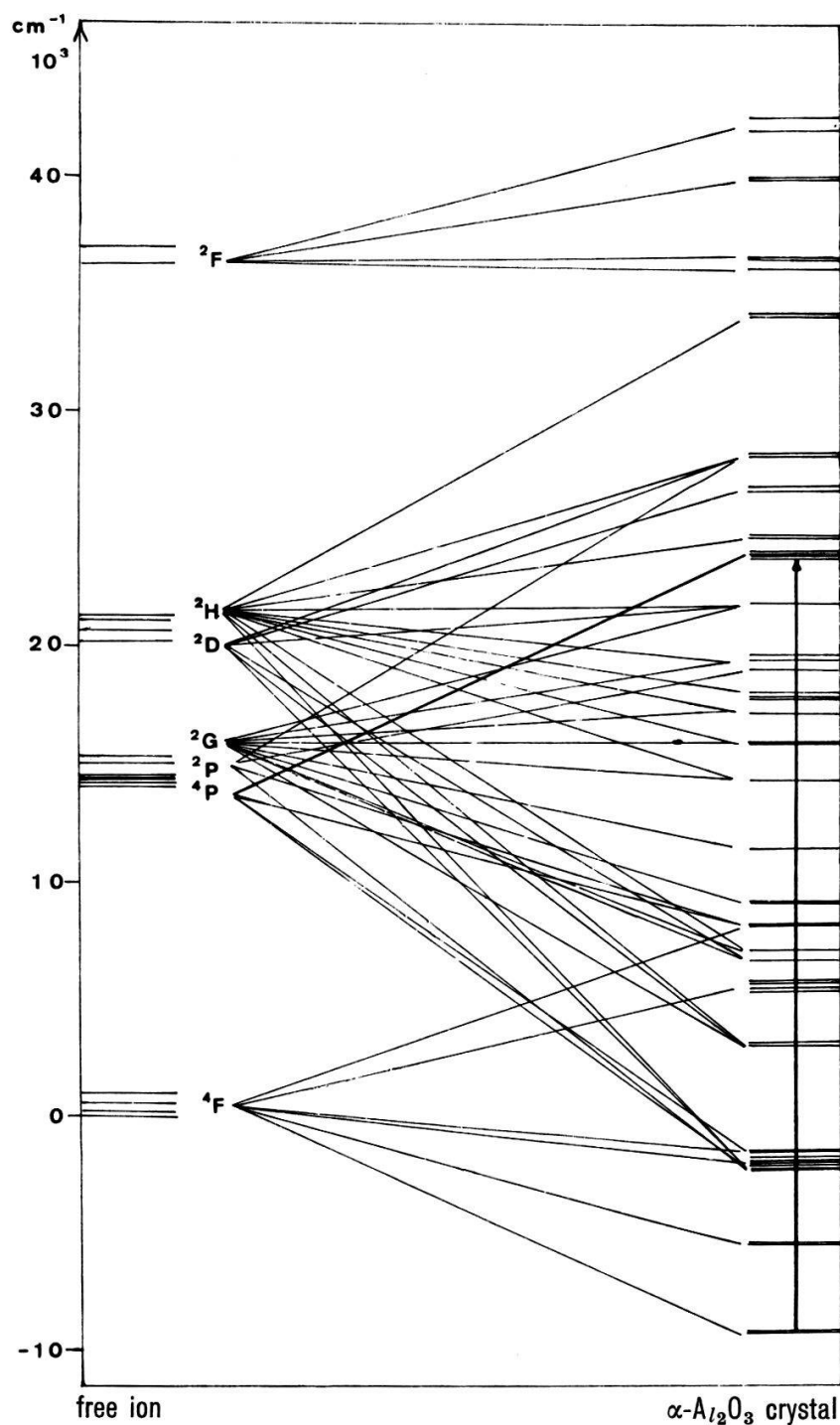


Figure 2
Energy level diagram for
interstitial Cr^{+3} ion (at the
right). For comparison the
levels of free Cr^{+3} ion are
given at the left.

Acknowledgment

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