Syntheses, Crystal Structures, and Optical and Magnetic Properties of Some CsLnCoQ₃ Compounds (Ln = Tm and Yb, Q = S; Ln = Ho and Yb, Q = Se)

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Dedicated to Professor Welf Bronger on the Occasion of his 75th Birthday

Abstract. The four new compounds CsTmCoS₃, CsYbCoS₃, CsHoCoSe₃, and CsYbCoSe₃ have been synthesized at 1123 K. These black-colored isostructural compounds crystallize in the KZrCuS₃ structure type with four formula units in space group Cmcm of the orthorhombic system. The structure of these compounds is composed of \( \frac{2}{3}[\text{LnCoQ}_3^-] \) layers separated by Cs atoms. Because there are no Q\( = \)Q bonds, the formal oxidation states of Cs/Ln/Co/Q are \( 1^+ / 3^+ / 2^+/ 2^- \), respectively. CsHoCoSe₃ shows paramagnetic behavior with \( \mu_{\text{eff}} = 11.9(1) \mu_B \), whereas CsYbCoS₃ displays an antiferromagnetic-like transition at \( -2.7 \) K with \( \mu_{\text{eff}} = 5.85(1) \mu_B \). Both CsYbCoS₃ and CsYbCoSe₃ exhibit optical band gaps in the near infrared region and broad absorption bands at lower energies.

Keywords: Cobalt; Rare earth; Chalcogenides; Solid-state chemistry; Crystal structures; Optical properties; Magnetic properties

1 Introduction

Many AM’MQ₃ and AkM’MQ₃ compounds (A = alkali metal, Ak = alkaline-earth metal, M’ = lanthanide or actinide, M = transition metal, Q = S, Se, or Te) (Table 1) possessing the KZrCuS₃ structure type \([1]\) have been synthesized by means of the reactive-flux method \([2]\). Many of these isostructural compounds have been discovered by means of simple chemical substitution of M’, M, or Q. These compounds show varied and interesting physical properties. Some examples include: KUCuSe \(_3\) \([3]\), a narrow gap p-type semiconductor with electrical conductivity as high as 0.1 S/cm at 300 K; CsCeCuS \(_3\) \([3]\), a paramagnetic p-type semiconductor with an electrical conductivity of 1 S/cm at 298 K and the unusual formal valence representation \( \text{Cs}^{1+} \text{Ce}^{3+} \text{Cu}^{1+} (\text{S}^{2-})_2 (\text{S}^{2-})_2 \); and EuM’CuS \(_3\) \([4]\) (M’ = Tm – Lu) that display ferromagnetic or ferrimagnetic transitions at low temperatures.

Both from experiment and first-principles electronic structure calculations, it is found that the band gaps of the ALnMQ \(_3\) materials (A = Rb, Cs; Ln = rare-earth metal; M = Mn, Zn, Cd, Hg) can be tuned through simple chemical substitution of Ln, M, or Q \([5–7]\). For some of these compounds, there is also a slight dependence of band gap on crystal orientation \([5, 8]\). Most of these compounds show Curie-Weiss behavior \([7]\), except for the compounds Ln = Yb/M = Mn, Zn that show magnetic transitions at temperatures below \( \sim 10 \) K. Thus these ALnMQ \(_3\) compounds are a new class of magnetic semiconductors with tunable band gaps that show potential applications in magnetic storage devices \([9, 10]\) and photonics devices such as optical waveguides \([11]\), optical filters \([12]\), spontaneous emitters \([13]\), and photon traps \([14]\). However, no ALnMQ \(_3\) compounds containing a magnetic transition metal such as Fe, Ni, or Co have been successfully prepared to date. Yet incorporation of a magnetic transition metal may lead to different magnetic properties.

Here we report the syntheses, crystal structure, optical, and magnetic properties of four new CsLnCoQ \(_3\) compounds, namely CsTmCoS \(_3\), CsYbCoS \(_3\), CsHoCoSe \(_3\), and CsYbCoSe \(_3\).
2 Experimental Part

Syntheses. The following reagents were used as received: Cs (Aldrich, 99.5 %), Ho (Alfa Aesar, 99.9 %), Tm (Strem, 99.9 %), Yb (Strem, 99.9 %), CoS (Alfa Aesar, 99.5 %), CoSe (Alfa Aesar, 99+ %), S (Alfa Aesar, 99.99 %), Se (Cerac, 99.99 %), CsCl (Strem, 99.999 %), and CsI (Aldrich 99.99 %). Cs2Q3 (Q = S, Se), the reactive fluxes [2] employed in the syntheses, were prepared by the stoichiometric reactions of the elements in liquid NH3. Reaction mixtures were loaded into carbon-coated fused-silica tubes in an Ar filled glovebox. These tubes were sealed under a 0.013 Pa atmosphere and then placed in a computer-controlled furnace. Upon completion of the heating and cooling cycle, each reaction mixture was washed with de-ionized water and dried with acetone. The CsLnCoQ3 compounds are stable in air.

Black needles of CsLnCoS3 (Ln = Tm, Yb) were obtained from the reaction of 0.3 mmol of Cs2S3, 0.5 mmol of CoS, 0.5 mmol of Ln, and 0.5 mmol of S; 150 mg of CsI were added to promote crystallization. The samples were heated to 773 K in 7 h, kept at 773 K for 24 h, heated to 1123 K in 24 h, kept at 1123 K for 96 h, cooled at 4 K/h to 573 K, and then the furnace was turned off. Generally, the yields of these compounds were 50–70 % based on Ln.

Black needles CsLnCoSe3 (Ln = Ho, Yb) were obtained from the reaction of 0.3 mmol of Cs2Se3, 0.5 mmol of CoSe, 0.5 mmol of Ln, and 0.5 mmol of Se; 150 mg CsCl were added to promote crystal growth. The samples were heated to 1123 K in 48 h, kept at 1123 K for 50 h, cooled at 4 K/h to 573 K, and then the furnace was turned off. The yields of these compounds were 50–60 % based on Ln.

Energy-Dispersive X-ray (EDX) analyses were carried out with the use of an Hitachi S-3500 SEM. Data were collected with an accelerating voltage of 20 keV, a working distance of 15 mm, and a collection time of 60 s. Selected single crystals of CsTmCoS3, CsYbCoS3, CsHoCoSe3, and CsYbCoSe3 showed the presence of Cs, Ln, Co, and Q at an approximate ratio of 1:1:1:3. No evidence for the presence of Cl or I was found.

Single-crystal X-ray diffraction data for CsTmCoS3, CsYbCoS3, CsHoCoSe3, and CsYbCoSe3 were collected on a Bruker Smart 1000 CCD diffractometer [15] at 153 K with the use of monochromatized Mo Kα radiation (λ = 0.71073 Å). The crystal-to-detector distance was 5.023 cm. Crystal decay was monitored by recollecting 50 initial frames at the end of the data collection. The diffracted intensities were generated by a scan of 0.3° in ω in groups of 606 frames for each of the θ settings 0°, 90°, 180°, and 270°. The exposure times varied from 15 to 20 s/frame. Intensity data were collected with the program SMART [15]. For each compound, cell refinement and data reduction were carried out with the program SAINT [15] and a numerical face-indexed absorption correction was made with the use of the program XPREP [16]. Finally, the program SADABS [16] was employed to make incident beam and decay corrections.

The crystal structures were solved in space group Cmcm of the orthorhombic system with the direct-methods program SHELXS [16] and refined anisotropically with the full-matrix least-squares program SHELXL [16]. The program STRUCTURE TIDY [17] was used to standardize the positional parameters. Additional crystallographic details are given in Table 2 and in Supporting Information. Table 3 presents selected metrical data for CsTmCoS3, CsYbCoS3, CsHoCoSe3, and CsYbCoSe3.

DC magnetic susceptibility measurements were carried out with the use of a Quantum Design MPMS5 SQUID magnetometer. The composition of a given sample was verified by EDX measurements. Single crystals of CsHoCoSe3 (23.7 mg) and CsYbCoSe3 (5.4 mg) were ground and loaded into gelatin capsules. In the temperature range 5–300 K for CsHoCoSe3 and 1.8–380 K for CsYbCoSe3, both zero-field cooled (ZFC) and field cooled (FC) measurements were carried out with an applied field of 500 G (0.05 T). The susceptiblity data were corrected for core diamagnetism [18]. The inverse molar susceptibility χ−1 in the temperature range 100–300 K for CsHoCoSe3 (ZFC) and 100–380 K for CsYbCoSe3 (ZFC) was fit by a least-squares method to the Curie-Weiss equation $\chi^{-1} = (T - \theta_C)/C$, where C is the Curie constant and $\theta_C$ is the Weiss constant. The effective magnetic moment $\mu_{eff}$ was calculated from the equation $\mu_{eff} = (7.997C)^{1/2} \mu_B$ [19].

Single-crystal absorption measurements over the range 900 nm (1.38 eV) to 1700 nm (0.73 eV) at 293 K were performed on a single crystal of CsYbCoS3 with the use of a Nikon TE300 inverted microscope coupled by a fiber optic to a near-infrared spectrometer (128L-1.7T1, T.E. Cooled InGaAs Array). The single selected crystal of CsYbCoS3 was face-indexed and its crystal dimensions were measured by means of the video attachment on a Bruker Smart-1000 CCD diffractometer. Crystal dimensions were [010], [001]: 120, 24, 20 μm, respectively. The single crystal was positioned at the focal point above a 20 x objective with the use of a gonimeter mounted on a translation stage (Line Tool Company). Fine alignment of the microscope assembly was achieved by maximizing the transmission of the lamp profile. Unpolarized light originating from a tungsten-halogen lamp impinged on the crystal and the
transmitted light was then spatially filtered before being focused into the 400 µm core diameter fiber coupled to the spectrometer. The absorbance spectra of light perpendicular to both the (010) and (001) crystal faces of CsYbCoS3 were collected. The optical band gaps were calculated by means of a linear regression technique described previously [5].

**Diffuse reflectance spectra** over the range 200 nm (6.21 eV) to 2600 nm (0.48 eV) at 298 K of CsYbCoSe3 were obtained with a Varian Cary 5000 UV-vis/NIR double-beam spectrometer equipped with a diffuse reflectance accessory. The sample was prepared from selected single crystals of CsYbCoSe3 that were ground into a fine powder and inserted into a customized sample holder. The absorption (α/S) data were calculated from the reflectance data with the use of the Kubelka-Munk function α/S = (1−R)²/2R, where R is the reflectance at a given energy, α is the absorption coefficient, and S is the scattering coefficient [20].

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Syntheses

The compounds CsTmCoS3, CsYbCoS3, CsHoCoSe3, and CsYbCoSe3 were obtained in 50–70% yields from the reactions of Ln, CoQ, Q, and Cs2Q3 at 1123 K. The trends of Ln radius vs. M radius discovered in previous syntheses of CsLnMSe3 [5, 7, 8] persist here. Thus, the CsLnCoQ3 materials could only be obtained for the smaller rare-earth elements Tm and Yb, whereas the CsLnCoSe3 materials could be obtained over a greater range of Ln radii, namely for Ln = Sm, Gd, Tb, Er, Ho, Tm, Yb, and Y, as confirmed by EDX and powder diffraction measurements. However, only for Ho and Yb were crystals obtained that were suitable for single-crystal X-ray diffraction studies. SEM microscopy indicated that the crystals of the other compounds were made up of bundles of thin needles.

3.1 Crystal Structure

The isostructural compounds CsTmCoS3, CsYbCoS3, CsHoCoSe3, and CsYbCoSe3 possess the KZrCuS3 structure type [1], crystallizing with four formula units in space group Cmcm of the orthorhombic system. The unit cell of CsLnCoQ3 is illustrated in Figure 1. Each Cs atom (site symmetry mm) is coordinated to eight Q atoms to form a bicapped trigonal prism; each Ln atom (site symmetry 2/m) is coordinated to six Q atoms to form a distorted octahedron; and each Co atom (site symmetry mm) is coordinated to four Q atoms to form a distorted tetrahedron. Each CoQ4 tetrahedron shares edges with four LnQ6 octahedra along [001] to form a two-dimensional 2[LnCoQ3]₉⁻ layer. These layers, which stack perpendicular to [010] (Fig. 2), are separated by Cs atoms. These in turn form a layer composed of face- and edge-sharing CsQ8 bicapped trigonal prisms. Each CsQ8 prism has two face-sharing neighbors along [100] and four edge-sharing ones along [001] to form a 2[CsQ8] layer in the ac plane. Each LnQ6 octahedron edge shares with two other octahedra along [100] to form a one-dimensional 1[LnQ4] chain. The MQ4 tetrahedra share vertices with two neighboring tetrahedra along [100] to form a one-dimensional 1[MQ3] chain. Note,
each Q1 atom is bonded to two Ln atoms and three Cs atoms, whereas each Q2 atom is bonded to two M atoms, one Ln atom, and two Cs atoms. Because there are no Q–Q bonds in the structure, the formal oxidation states of Cs/Ln/C are 1+/3+/2+/2−, respectively. These materials are valence precise and are expected to be semiconductors.

Selected metrical data for CsTmCoS3, CsYbCoS3, CsHoCoSe3, and CsYbCoSe3 are displayed in Table 3. These bond lengths are consistent, for example, with those of 2.735(6) Å for Tm–S in CsTmS2 [21]; 2.677(2) – 2.694(2) Å for Yb–S in CaYbInS4 [22]; 2.839(1) Å for Ho–Se in CdHo3Se4 [23]; 2.752(3) – 2.934(2) Å for Yb–Se in Rb3Yb2Se12 [24]; 3.532(3) – 3.861(2) Å for Cs–S in Cs2Au2Cd2S4 [25]; 3.4281(8) – 3.9527(3) Å for Cs–Se in CsSm2CuSe4 [26]; 2.365(2) Å for Co–S in Cs2Co2S2 [27]; and 2.473(2) Å for Co–Se in Cs2Se2 [27]. Consistent with the trends seen earlier, distortions from ideal symmetry of the LnQ6 octahedra and MQ4 tetrahedra are greater for Q = S than for Q = Se. Such distortions may affect the degree of magnetic coupling between Co2+ and Ln3+.

3.3 Magnetic Properties

The molar magnetic susceptibility $\chi_m$ and its inverse $\chi_m^{-1}$ of CsHoCoSe3 (ZFC) as a function of temperature are illustrated in Figure 3. FC and ZFC susceptibility data for CsHoCoSe3 are very similar and do not show evidence for magnetic ordering between 5 to 300 K. The compound is paramagnetic, obeying Curie-Weiss behavior $\chi_m^{-1} = (T - \theta_p)/C$, in the temperature region 100 – 300 K with values of $C = 17.98(1)$ emu K mol$^{-1}$, $\theta_p = -43.84(3)$ K, and $\mu_{eff} = 11.9(1)$ $\mu_B$. Below 100 K there is a slight deviation from Curie-Weiss behavior as a result of crystal-field effects [28].

The compounds CsHoZnSe3 [8] and CsHoMnSe3 [7] are Curie-Weiss paramagnets with $\mu_{eff}$ values of 10.55(1) and 12.23(7) $\mu_B$, respectively. The theoretical values are 10.6 and 12.1 $\mu_B$, respectively [29]. The results for CsHoMnSe3 are consistent with the presence of high-spin Mn2+ where the crystal field is assumed to be in an ideal tetrahedral state. In contrast, comparison of the experimental and calculated $\mu_{eff}$ values of 11.9(1) $\mu_B$ vs. 12.50 $\mu_B$ (L-S coupling) or 11.28 $\mu_B$ (spin only) for the present compound CsHoCoSe3 indicates that the orbital magnetic moment of Co2+ is quenched. What the spin state of Co2+ is in this compound is unclear; both high-spin and low-spin states contribute to a total of three unpaired spins.

Figure 4 shows $\chi_m^{-1}$ vs. $T$ (both FC and ZFC) for CsYbCoS3. As distinct from results for the previously studied AYbMQ3 (M = Mn, Zn) compounds [7, 8], the FC and ZFC data are very similar and there is a sharp magnetic transition at $\sim 2.7$ K. Curie-Weiss behavior is observed in the temperature region of 100 – 380 K with values of $C = 4.29(2)$ emu K mol$^{-1}$, $\theta_p = -102.54(5)$ K, and $\mu_{eff} = 5.85(1)$ $\mu_B$. The calculated values of $\mu_{eff}$ are 8.03 $\mu_B$ (L-S coupling) and 5.96 $\mu_B$ (spin-only) [29]. Hence the orbital moment of Co2+ is again quenched. The large negative Weiss constant $\theta_p$ of $-102.54(5)$ K indicates considerable antiferromagnetic coupling, presumably between Co2+ and Yb3+. Note this $\theta_p$ is larger than that of $-89.94(4)$ K in CsYbMnSe3 [7]. Thus the coupling between Yb3+ and Co2+ in CsYbCoS3 is probably greater than that between Yb3+ and Mn2+ in CsYbMnSe3 and is consistent with the shortest Yb–Co distance of 3.307(3) Å being less than the shortest Yb–Mn distance of 3.487(5) Å. Note a broad magnetic transition was observed in CsYbMnSe3.

3.4 Optical Properties

From the absorption spectra of CsYbCoS3 (Fig. 5), direct optical transitions of 1.15 eV for the (010) crystal face and 1.18 eV for the (001) crystal face were derived. This variation in optical transition with crystal orientation is minimal, whereas in CSYbZnSe3 and CsSmZnSe3 variations with crystal orientation of 0.1 to 0.2 eV were observed (Table 4).
CsLnCoQ₃ Compounds (Ln = Tm and Yb, Q = S; Ln = Ho and Yb, Q = Se)

Figure 5 Optical band gaps of CsYbCoS₃ for the (010) crystal face and the (001) crystal face.

Table 4 Single-crystal optical band gaps /eV of ALnMQ₃ materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>(010) face</th>
<th>(001) face</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tr>
<td>CsYbCoS₃</td>
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<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>This work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>[7]</td>
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<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>[5]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2.12</td>
<td>[7]</td>
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<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.12</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2.12</td>
<td>[6]</td>
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<td>[6]</td>
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<td>2.4</td>
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<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>[8]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The colors of the ALnMQ₃ materials follow the trends noted earlier and are consistent with the first-principles calculations on CsYZnSe₃ [5] and CsGdZnTe₃ [6] that showed that the ALnMQ₃ materials were direct-band gap semiconductors whose band gaps were governed by the composition of the two-dimensional \(\text{[LnMQ₃]}\) anionic framework. The colors of CsYbCoQ₃ (Q = S, Se) are black. From the sequence of energy levels of p orbitals, 3p (S) < 4p (Se) < 5p (Te), the optical band gap of CsYbCoSe₃ should be less than that of CsYbCoS₃, as observed. The band gap deduced from the diffuse reflectance spectra (Fig. 6) of CsYbCoSe₃ is \(\sim 0.95\) eV, which is \(\sim 0.2\) eV less than that in CsYbCoS₃. Both compounds exhibit a broad absorption band below their respective optical band gap that may possibly originate from \(d-d\) transitions of Co. These isostructural materials are valence precise and are semiconductors, as indicated from their optical spectra. Should CsYbCoTe₃ be synthesized, it should exhibit a very narrow band gap or perhaps even be metallic.

Figure 6 Diffuse reflectance spectrum of CsYbCoSe₃.

Supporting material. The crystallographic files in cif format for CsTmCoS₃, CsYbCoS₃, CsHoCoSe₃, and CsYbCoSe₃ have been deposited with FIZ Karlsruhe as CSD numbers 417508, 417509, 417507, and 417510, respectively. These data may be obtained free of charge by contacting FIZ Karlsruhe at +49 7247 808 666 (fax) or crysdata@fiz-karlsruhe.de (email).

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