# Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> - Crystal Structure Refinement, and Structural Relationship with Ti<sub>11</sub>CuP<sub>8</sub>,Nb<sub>8</sub>P<sub>5</sub> and Some Other Compounds

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The crystal structure of  $Ti_7P_4$  containing 2.1 atom-% copper has been refined using X-ray single-crystal diffractometry. The symmetry is monoclinic, space group C2/m, with lattice parameters: a=14.474(4) Å, b=3.4094(3) Å, c=13.616(2) Å and  $\beta=104.597(16)^\circ$ .  $Ti_7P_4$  is isotypic with Nb<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub>. The refinement indicates a partial substitution of copper for titanium in the M(4) position. The environment of the M(4) atoms has a great similarity to that of the copper atoms in TiCuSi and  $Zr_3Cu_4Si_4$ . The structural relationships between  $Ti_7P_4$  and some similar silicides, arsenides and phosphides are described.

Work at this institute has established the existence of a series of compounds with composition  $M_7X_4$  isostructural with  $Nb_7P_4$  in the binary Nb-As, Nb-P, Ta-P and Ti-P systems.  $^{1-4}$  There is also evidence for the occurrence of an  $Nb_7P_4$  type compound in the Hf-As system.  $^5$  Crystals of  $Ti_7P_4$  and other titanium-rich phosphides in ternary Ti-Cu-P samples were found to contain only a few atomic percent copper in solution.  $^4$  The recent structure determination of the  $Ti_{11}CuP_8$  phase  $^6$  has stimulated interest in the detailed crystal structures of the other titanium phosphides containing copper. In the present paper the results of the structure refinement of  $Ti_{7-x}Cu_xP_4$  with x=0.23 are reported.

#### **EXPERIMENTAL**

Preparation. A copper-rich ternary alloy of nominal composition Ti<sub>0.02</sub>Cu<sub>0.97</sub>P<sub>0.01</sub> (approx. 2.5 g) was prepared <sup>7</sup> by initially reacting copper (Outokumpu Oy, Pori, Finland; as analyzed better than 99.99 %) and red phosphorus (Kebo, Stock-

holm, Sweden; better than 99 %) in an evacuated silica ampoule at 800 °C for three days and subsequently melting the reaction products together with lumps of titanium (Koch-Light Laboratories, Colnbrook, England; claimed purity 99.95 %) in a cold-crucible induction furnace. The sample was inhomogeneous even after annealing at 800 °C for 12 days. Small metallic crystals of  $(Ti,Cu)_7P_4$   $\alpha$ - $Ti_5P_3$ ,  $(Ti,Cu)_14P_9$  and  $\beta$ - $(Ti,Cu)_5P_3$  were isolated by dissolving the copper matrix in nitric acid.<sup>4</sup>

It was found that all the  $(Ti,Cu)_7P_4$  crystals examined were twinned (with (001) as twinning plane). Even after crushing the crystals into smaller fragments it was not possible to select any which were not twinned. Nevertheless, the ratio of the volume of the smaller twin to the larger could be decreased. A crystal with a small satellite in the twin orientation was used for intensity measurements. The crystal was needle-shaped (the long axis coincident with the *b* axis of the unit cell) with the approximate dimensions  $20 \times 20 \times 130 \ \mu m$ . Only the (100) and (001) faces were well-developed.

X-Ray diffraction measurements and data reduction. The single-crystal intensity data were collected using a Nonius CAD 4-F automatic diffractometer, controlled by a PDP 8/A computer. The  $\omega$ -2 $\theta$  scan technique was used and reflections from one quarter of the reciprocal sphere were recorded to a maximum in  $2\theta$  of 86°. The cell dimensions of the crystal investigated were determined by least-squares refinement of the averages,  $\bar{\theta}_i$ , of the setting angles of 24 Friedel pairs of reflections with  $15^{\circ} < 2\overline{\theta}_{i} < 50^{\circ}$ . MoK $\alpha$  radiation ( $\lambda$ =0.71069 Å) was used for this measurement as well as for the intensity data collection. The intensities were corrected for Lorentz, polarization and absorption effects. Absorption correction was carried out using the Gaussian grid method and a linear absorption coefficient of 97.4 cm<sup>-1</sup> (calculated with mass absorption coefficients from Ref. 8, assuming two atomic percent copper in the crystal). The minimum and maximum transmission factors obtained were 0.778 and 0.856. Correction for absorption in the smaller twin individual could not be applied. The systematic error arising was, however, considered to be negligible due to the small size and low absorption. In total, 2671 reflections were recorded, of which 1979 displayed positive intensities. Due to the twin type the (0kl) reflections were completely overlapped by the (0kl) reflections of the smaller component crystal. All 57 (0kl) reflections were used in the refinement, however, with a separate scale factor. From the two scale factors the ratio of the intensities from the main and "satellite" twin crystal respectively was found to be approximately 5:1. In total 150 reflections were deleted due to overlap with non-equivalent reflections from the smaller twin crystal.

Calculations. All calculations were performed with the computers NORD 100 and IBM 1800 using a system of programs described by Lundgren.<sup>9</sup>

### STRUCTURE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The preliminary data obtained from Weissenberg films indicated a C-centred monoclinic cell. The conditions for (hkl) reflections were h+k=2n, which is consistent with the space groups C2, Cm or C2/m. The centrosymmetric C2/m (No. 12) space group was chosen and finally confirmed in the refinement.

The structure was refined using a full-matrix least-squares program 9 and the atomic coordi-

nates <sup>2</sup> of Nb<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> as initial values for the positional parameters. The quantity minimized was  $\Sigma w(|F_o^2| - k^2|F_c^2|)^2$ . Each reflection was assigned a weight w given by eqn. (1), where  $\sigma_c$  is the standard deviation

$$w^{-1} = \left[\sigma_c(F_o^2)\right]^2 + (p|F_o^2|)^2 \tag{1}$$

of  $F_o^2$ , based on counting statistics, and p and empirical parameter, chosen to obtain a satisfactory weight analysis (p was 0.036 in the final refinement). The agreement indices are defines in eqns. (2) and (3), where  $F_o^2$  has been multiplied by

$$R(F^{2}) = \sum (|F_{0}^{2}| - |F_{c}^{2}|) / \sum |F_{0}^{2}| \qquad (2)$$

$$R_{w}(F^{2}) = \left[ \sum w(|F_{o}^{2}| - |F_{c}^{2}|)^{2} / \sum w|F_{o}^{2}|^{2} \right]^{1/2}$$
 (3)

 $1/k^2$ . Complex neutral-atom scattering factors were used. Extinction effects were hardly dicernible and thus no correction was applied. Initially, the following parameters were refined: 2 scale factors, 20 positional parameters, and 12 isotropic temperature factors. The refinement on  $F^2$ , based on 1829 positive reflections, converged rapidly, and the agreement factors obtained were:

$$R(F^2) = 0.130$$
,  $R_{\omega}(F^2) = 0.131$  and  $R(F) = 0.126$ 

The possibility of Cu/Ti substitution was then examined. Following the principle of good space filling, the smaller metal atoms (Cu) should pref-

Table 1. Structure data for  $Ti_{6.77}Cu_{0.23}P_4$  from refinement based on  $F^2$ . Space group C2/m (No. 12), Z=4. Standard deviations within parentheses. Cell dimensions: a=14.474(4) Å, b=3.4094(3) Å, c=13.616(2) Å and  $\beta=104.597(16)^\circ$ . The anisotropic temperature factor is of the form:  $\exp[-2\pi^2(U_{11}h^2a^{*2}\cdots+2U_{13}hla^*c^*)];\ U_{12}=U_{23}=0$ .

Atom	Posi-	Positional parameters			$U_{ii} \times 10^4  (\text{Å}^2)$				
	tion	x	у	z	$U_{11}^{3}$	$U_{22}$	$U_{33}$	$U_{13}$	$B(\mathring{A}^2)$
Ti(1)	2(a)	0	0	0	_	_	_	-	0.27(2)
Ti(2)	2(d)	0	1/2	1/2	_	-	_	_	0.27(2)
Ti(3)	4(i)	0.42787(10)	0	0.82790(11)	64(5)	14(6)	60(5)	11(4)	$(0.39(2))^b$
$M(4)^a$	4(i)	0.19672(9)	0	0.31057(11)	59(5)	44(6)	91(5)	10(4)	$(0.52(2))^b$
Ti(5)	4(i)	0.20654(10)	0	0.79365(10)		_ ` ´	_ ` `	_ ` ´	0.33(2)
Ti(6)	4(i)	0.33944(9)	0	0.03274(10)	_	_	_	_	0.33(2)
Ti(7)	4(i)	0.00261(9)	0	0.66348(10)	47(5)	20(6)	38(5)	3(4)	$(0.29(2))^b$
Ti(8)	4(i)	0.17794(9)	0	0.54059(10)	<b>-</b> `´	`´	_`´		0.28(2)
P(1)	4(i)	0.17847(14)	0	0.10806(15)			_	_	0.34(3)
P(2)	4(i)	0.37191(14)	0	0.60404(15)	62(8)	20(9)	42(7)	7(6)	$(0.35(3))^b$
P(3)	4(i)	0.36957(14)	0	0.34190(15)	54(8)	13(8)	35(7)	0(6)	$(0.31(3))^{b}$
P(4)	4(i)	0.06097(14)	0	0.84898(15)	71(8)	32(9)	20(7)	11(6)	$(0.31(3))^b$

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> M(4)=0.77(1)Ti+0.23(1)Cu. <sup>b</sup> Temperature factor from refinement assuming only isotropic thermal vibrations.

erentially occupy the positions which have small coordination numbers i.e. M(1), M(2) and M(4). Only in the M(4) site was a significant Cu/Ti substitution found. The least-squares refinement on  $F^2$  gave an occupancy of 0.386 ( $\sigma = 0.007$ ) for Ti and 0.114 for Cu (reset), and the following R-values:  $R(F^2) = 0.124$ ,  $R_w(F^2) = 0.122$  and R(F) =0.122. A Hamilton R-factor significance test 10 favoured the last model at the 99.5 % confidence level. Refinements under the assumption of Cu/Ti substitution in other metal positions with higher coordination numbers did not reveal any significant copper occupancy. A subsequent refinement with anisotropic temperature factors for all atoms showed that only six atoms could be regarded as anisotropic. The introduction of anisotropic factors for these six atoms led to somewhat improved agreement index. A Hamilton test 10 favoured the model with the six anisotropic atoms at the 99.5 % confidence level. The final refinement on  $F^2$  gave the following agreement values (1829 reflections):

$$R(F^2) = 0.116$$
,  $R_w(F^2) = 0.115$  and  $R(F) = 0.119$ .

The shifts in the final cycle were less than  $0.03\sigma$ . The total number of parameters varied was 53 (two scale factors, one occupancy factor, 20 positional parameters and 30 temperature factors). The agreement factors for a refinement on  $F^2$  omitting observations with  $F_o^2 < 3\sigma(F_o^2)$  were (1126 reflections):  $R(F^2) = 0.081$ ,  $R_w(F^2) = 0.102$  and R(F) = 0.056. The standard deviations were, however, on the average 17 % larger than those for the refinement of the more complete intensity material.

A normal probability  $\Delta R$ -plot <sup>11</sup> after the final refinement displayed a very slightly S-shaped line with a slope of 0.92 and an intercept of -0.16 on the expected  $\Delta R$  axis (no value fell outside the range  $\pm 4\sigma$ ), indicating that the  $\Delta R$  are randomnormally distributed with some underestimation of  $\sigma(F^2)$ . The standard deviation of an observation of unit weight, <sup>12</sup> S, was 1.19. A final difference Fourier map exhibited no electron density exceeding 4% of a phosphorus peak in the  $F_o$  synthesis. The results from the final refinement are presented in Table 1. The interatomic distances are given in Table 2.

A list of observed and calculated structure factors can be obtained on request from the Institute of Chemistry, University of Uppsala, Sweden.

Table 2. Interatomic distances (Å) in  $Ti_{6.77}Cu_{0.23}P_4$  less than 3.5 Å. Standard deviations within parentheses. M(4) = 0.77 Ti + 0.23 Cu.

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Ti(1) - 2P(4)	2.434(2)	Ti(7) - P(4)	2.453(2)
-2P(1)	2.632(2)	-2P(2)	2.524(2)
-4Ti(3)	2.873(1)	-2P(3)	2.531(2)
-4Ti(6)	3.005(1)	-2Ti(2)	2.796(1)
-2Ti(1)	3.409(0)	$-\mathbf{M}(4)$	2.995(2)
		-Ti(5)	3.037(2)
Ti(2) - 2P(3)	2.480(2)	-2Ti(3)	3.211(2)
-2P(2)	2.602(2)	-Ti(8)	3.300(2)
-4Ti(7)	2.796(1)	$-\mathrm{Ti}(8)$	3.374(2)
-4Ti(8)	3.022(1)	-2Ti(7)	3.409(0)
-2Ti(2)	3.409(0)	( . )	(1)
211(2)	2.102(0)	Ti(8) - 2P(3)	2.548(2)
Ti(3) - 2P(4)	2.534(2)	-2P(2)	2.562(2)
-2P(1)	2.534(2)	-21(2) -P(2)	2.302(2)
-2P(1)	2.591(2)		2.722(2)
-2M(4)	2.828(2)	-2M(4)	2.907(2)
-2Ti(1)	2.873(1)	-2Ti(2)	3.022(1)
$-\mathbf{P}(2)$	2.950(2)	-2Ti(8)	3.105(2)
$-\mathrm{Ti}(5)$	3.120(2)	-M(4)	3.211(2)
-2Ti(7)	3.211(2)	$-\mathrm{Ti}(7)$	3.300(2)
$-\mathrm{Ti}(\hat{6})$	3.349(2)	$-\mathrm{Ti}(5)$	3.365(2)
-2Ti(3)	3.409(0)	$-\operatorname{Ti}(7)$	3.374(2)
$-\operatorname{Ti}(6)$	3.425(2)	-2Ti(8)	3.409(0)
11(0)	3.723(2)	211(0)	3.407(0)
M(4) - 2P(2)	2.414(2)	P(1) - 2Ti(5)	2.519(2)
$-\mathbf{P}(3)$	2.430(2)	-2Ti(6)	2.529(2)
$-\mathbf{P}(1)$	2.703(2)	-2Ti(3)	2.591(2)
-2Ti(5)	2.808(2)	$-\mathrm{Ti}(1)$	2.632(2)
			2.703(2)
-2Ti(3)	2.828(2)	-M(4)	
-2Ti(8)	2.907(2)	$-\mathrm{Ti}(6)$	2.773(2)
-Ti(7)	2.995(2)	-2P(1)	3.409(0)
$-\mathrm{Ti}(8)$	3.211(2)		
-2M(4)	3.409(0)	P(2) - 2M(4)	2.414(2)
		-2Ti(7)	2.524(2)
Ti(5) - P(4)	2.410(2)	-2Ti(8)	2.567(2)
$-2\dot{P}(1)$	2.519(2)	$-\mathrm{Ti}(2)$	2.602(2)
-2P(3)	2.550(2)	$-\mathrm{Ti}(8)$	2.722(2)
-2M(4)	2.808(2)	$-\mathrm{Ti}(3)$	2.950(2)
$-\mathrm{Ti}(7)$	3.037(2)	-2P(2)	3.409(0)
		$-2\Gamma(2)$	3.409(0)
-2Ti(6)	3.119(2)	D(2) M(4)	2.420(2)
-Ti(3)	3.120(2)	P(3) - M(4)	2.430(2)
$-\operatorname{Ti}(6)$	3.338(2)	-Ti(2)	2.480(2)
-Ti(8)	3.365(2)	-2Ti(7)	2.531(2)
-2Ti(5)	3.409(0)	-2Ti(8)	2.548(2)
		-2Ti(5)	2.550(2)
Ti(6) - 2P(1)	2.529(2)	-P(3)	3.409(0)
-2P(4)	2.532(2)	-2P(4)	3.463(2)
$-\mathbf{P}(1)$	2.773(2)	( ' )	- · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
-2Ti(1)	3.005(1)	P(4) - Ti(5)	2.410(2)
-2Ti(1) $-2Ti(6)$	2.003(1)	-Ti(1)	
	3.040(2)	- 11(1)	2.434(2)
-2Ti(5)	3.119(2)	-Ti(7)	2.453(2)
$-\mathrm{Ti}(5)$	3.338(2)	$-2\mathrm{Ti}(6)$	2.532(2)
$-\mathrm{Ti}(3)$	3.349(2)	-2Ti(3)	2.534(2)
-2Ti(6)	3.409(0)	-2P(4)	3.409(0)
-Ti(3)	3.425(2)	-2P(3)	3.463(2)

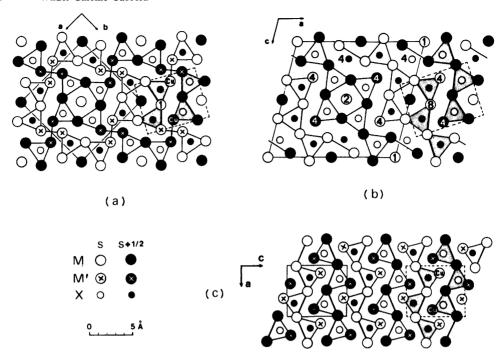


Fig. 1. Projections, along the short axis, of the structures of (a)  $Nb_5Cu_4Si_4$  (M'=Cu, s=0), (b)  $Ti_7P_4$  (s=0;  $Nb_7P_4$  type) and (c) TiCuSi (M'=Cu, s=1/4; TiNiSi type).

#### **DISCUSSION**

The complete single-crystal analysis has shown that Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> is indeed a new member of the Nb<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> structure<sup>2</sup> family. A projection of the Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> structure along the b-axis is illustrated in Fig. 1b. There are four non-equivalent phosphorus atoms in the structure. The environment of the phosphorus atoms is triangular prismatic (with metal atoms at the corners of the prism) with 1-3 additional metal neighbours outside the quadrilateral faces of the prism. The axis of the triangular prism is perpendicular to the b-axis for P(4) and parallel to the b-axis for the P(1)-P(3) atoms. Only the triangular prisms about the latter phosphorus atoms, which have high coordination numbers (8, 9), are indicated in Fig. 1b. The structure may thus be described as being built up of M<sub>6</sub>P triangular prisms and distorted body-centred cubic M<sub>8</sub>M units interconnected to form chains, which are infinite in the [101] direction, with extra phosphorus atoms (P(4)) between the chains. Adjacent chains are displaced by half the unit cell length in the direction of the projection in Fig. 1b.

The Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> structure is closely related to that of the metal richer silicides Nb<sub>5</sub>Cu<sub>4</sub>Si<sub>4</sub><sup>13</sup> and TiCuSi<sup>14</sup> (E phase, ordered anti-PbCl<sub>2</sub>, TiNiSi type <sup>15</sup>) regarding the occurrence of groups of four triangular prisms within a unit indicated by dashed lines in Fig. 1 (coincident with the unit cell of TiCuSi). Furthermore, fragments of two zig-zag chains of trigonal prisms are shaded in Fig. 1 to emphasize the relationships among the structures. The fragment consists of two prisms for Nb<sub>5</sub>Cu<sub>4</sub>Si<sub>4</sub> (Fig. 1a) and three prisms for Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> (Fig. 1b). In the TiCuSi structure, where a zig-zag chain of prisms is infinite in the a direction (Fig. 1c), no body-centred metal units occur. However, the coordination of corresponding atoms in the common structural unit (within dashed lines) is similar; e.g. the coordination of Nb(1) in Nb<sub>5</sub>Cu<sub>4</sub>Si<sub>4</sub>, Ti(8) in Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> and titanium in TiCuSi are almost identical, while the environment of M(4) in Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> is very similar to that of copper in TiCuSi and Nb<sub>5</sub>Cu<sub>4</sub>Si<sub>4</sub> (the positions of the atoms are indicated in Fig. 1). In the present refinement it was found that 23 % of the titanium in the M(4) site of Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> has been replaced by copper. This fact is an indication of the close

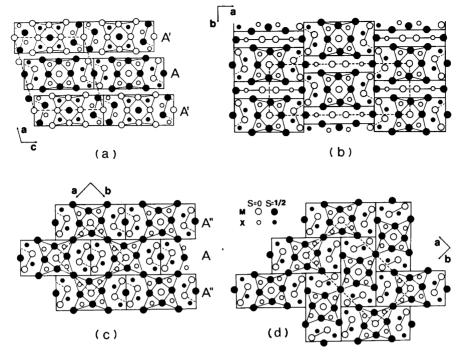


Fig. 2. Comparison among the structures of (a)  $Ti_7P_4$ , (b)  $Nb_8P_5$ , (c)  $V_3As_2$  and (d)  $Ti_{11}CuP_8$  as viewed along the short axis.

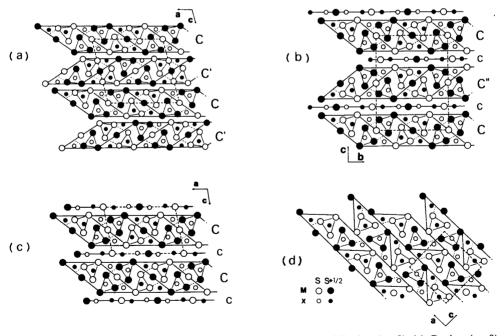


Fig. 3. Relationship between the structures of (a)  $Ti_7P_4$  (s=0), (b)  $Nb_4As_3$  (s=0), (c)  $Cr_4As_3$  (s=0) and (d)  $Hf_3P_2$  (s=1/4) as viewed along the short axis.

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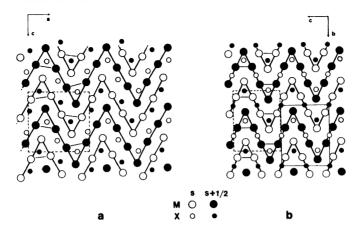


Fig. 4. Comparison of the structure of (a)  $Hf_3P_2$  (s=1/4) with (b)  $V_3AsC$  (s=0; filled  $Re_3B$  type) projected along the short axis.

similarity of the environment of M(4) in  $Ti_7P_4$  with that of copper in TiCuSi and  $Nb_5Cu_4Si_4$ . A star-like building block, consisting of a bodycentred cubic metal unit with four triangular prisms linked to it, is also discernible in the structures of  $Nb_5Cu_4Si_4$  and  $Ti_7P_4$ . The sequence of star-like blocks in the  $[\bar{1}10]$  direction of  $Nb_5Cu_4Si_4$  is identical to that of the blocks in the a direction of  $Ti_7P_4$ , as shown in Figs. 1a and 1b.

Examination of the manner of packing of the triangular prisms and/or body-centred metal units in the less metal-rich arsenides and phosphides V<sub>3</sub>As<sub>2</sub>,<sup>16</sup> Nb<sub>4</sub>As<sub>3</sub>,<sup>17</sup> Cr<sub>4</sub>As<sub>3</sub>,<sup>18</sup> Nb<sub>8</sub>P<sub>5</sub>,<sup>19</sup> Ti<sub>11</sub>CuP<sub>8</sub> and Hf<sub>3</sub>P<sub>2</sub><sup>20</sup> reveals resemblances with that in Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub>. This is demonstrated in Figs. 2 and 3, where the structures are shown in projection along the short axis. To make the similarities evident the structure of Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> has been partitioned into slabs and described in two additional ways: as a sequence of slabs packed in the a direction (Fig. 2a, slabs type A) or c direction (Fig. 3a, slabs type C). A slab of type A is related to one of type A' by a center of symmetry and a slab of type C is related to one of type C' by an operation of a pseudo-reflection glide plane. When slabs of type A are allowed to share metal atoms the structure of V<sub>3</sub>As<sub>2</sub> is obtained as illustrated in Fig. 2c, where a slab of type A is related to one of type A" by a slip of  $a/\sqrt{2}$  in the [110] direction. By stacking extra layers of atoms (type c) between the C slabs the structures of Nb<sub>4</sub>As<sub>3</sub> (Fig. 3b, C and C" slabs) and Cr<sub>4</sub>As<sub>3</sub> (Fig. 3c, only C slabs) are obtained. A slab of type C is related to one of type C" by a reflection operation.

Using the notations given, the four structures can be described by the stacking sequence of slabs, or slabs and atom layers:

The structures of Ti<sub>11</sub>CuP<sub>8</sub> (Fig. 2d) and Nb<sub>8</sub>P<sub>5</sub> (Fig. 2b) can be described as different arrangements of a rectangular block (fragment of the slab of type A) centred at sites of high point symmetry. In Nb<sub>8</sub>P<sub>5</sub> the parallel blocks are tied together by segments of atoms to form thicker slabs, which are stacked in the a direction, and adjacent slabs are related by a glide reflection operation. Fragments of the C slabs can be used to describe the structure of Hf<sub>3</sub>P<sub>2</sub> as illustrated in Fig. 3d, where the fragments are connected in another manner to form a new type of slabs stacked in the c direction. Adjacent slabs are also related by a glide reflection operation. It should be observed as well that the structure of Hf<sub>3</sub>P<sub>2</sub> is related to that of V<sub>3</sub>AsC<sup>21</sup> (filled Re<sub>3</sub>B type<sup>22</sup>). A comparison of Fig. 4a with Fig. 4b shows that the Hf<sub>3</sub>P<sub>2</sub> structure can be regarded as a distortion of the filled Re<sub>3</sub>B type.

The relationships between  $Hf_3P_2$ ,  $Ti_{11}CuP_8$  and  $Nb_8P_5$ , between  $V_3As_2$ ,  $Ti_{11}CuP_8$  and  $(Ti,Cu)_{14}P_9^{23}$  ( $Zr_{14}P_9$  type <sup>24</sup>), and between  $\beta$ - $V_4As_3$  ( $Cr_4As_3$  type) and  $\alpha$ - $V_4As_3$  ( $Nb_4As_3$  type) have also been discussed in Refs. 6, 23 and 25, respectively, using other descriptions of the structures.

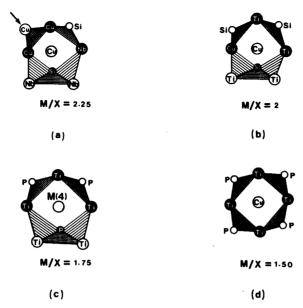


Fig. 5. Projections, as in Fig. 1, of the copper environment in the structures of (a)  $Nb_5Cu_4Si_4$ , (b) TiCuSi, (c)  $Ti_{7-x}Cu_xP_4$  (M(4)=0.77 Ti+0.23 Cu) and (d)  $Ti_{11}CuP_8$ .

The changes of the atomic arrangement around the copper atom in some transition-metal silicides and phosphides, when the M/X ratio decreases from 2.25 (Nb<sub>5</sub>Cu<sub>4</sub>Si<sub>4</sub>) to 1.50 (Ti<sub>11</sub>CuP<sub>8</sub>) are illustrated in Fig. 5 in projection along the short axis. The copper atom in these compounds has twelve nearest neighbours (only distances shorter than the length of the short axis are considered). Eight of these are situated at the corners of a quadrangular prism (corner atoms) with four further atoms outside the rectangular faces of the prism (face atoms). In Nb<sub>5</sub>Cu<sub>4</sub>Si<sub>4</sub> (Fig. 5a) each copper atom is surrounded by three silicon, four niobium and five copper atoms. The arrangement of atoms around copper in TiCuSi is shown in Fig. 5b. The main difference in nearest neighbour environment of copper in Nb<sub>5</sub>Cu<sub>4</sub>Si<sub>4</sub> and TiCuSi is the replacement of a face metal atom (indicated by an arrow in Fig. 5a) by a non-metal atom. Half of the face atoms and two of the corner atoms in TiCuSi are thus non-metals. The coordination of M(4) in  $Ti_7P_4$ (Fig. 5c) and that of copper in TiCuSi are very similar to that of copper in Zr<sub>3</sub>Cu<sub>4</sub>Si<sub>4</sub><sup>14</sup> (Gd<sub>6</sub>Cu<sub>8</sub>Ge<sub>8</sub> type <sup>26</sup>). The difference in environment of copper in these phases is the number of small metal neighbours, being three in Zr<sub>3</sub>Cu<sub>4</sub>Si<sub>4</sub>, two in TiCuSi and none in Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub>. In the metal poorer phase Ti<sub>11</sub>CuP<sub>8</sub>

the coordination polyhedron of the copper atom (Fig. 5d) is more regular than that of M(4) in  $Ti_7P_4$ . All *corner* atoms are metals and all *face* atoms are non-metals. The difference between the environment of M(4) in  $Ti_7P_4$  and that of copper in  $Ti_{11}CuP_8$  can be regarded as an interchange between a *face* metal atom and a *corner* non-metal atom. The slightly distorted capped cubic environment also occurs in  $Ti_7P_4$  around M(1) and M(2) (Fig. 1b), but dissolved copper atoms prefer the M(4) site. However, in the  $(Ti_1Cu)_{14}P_9$  phase,  $^{23}$  with a M/X ratio of 1.56, the copper atoms populate a similar site to that of the copper atoms in  $Ti_{11}CuP_8$ .

The isotropic temperature factors of the atoms in  $Ti_7P_4$  (Table 1) and the Ti-P distances (Table 2) show no great differences from those found in  $\alpha$ - $Ti_5P_3$ <sup>7</sup> and  $Ti_{11}CuP_8$ .<sup>6</sup> A closer look at Table 2 reveals that all the seven P(4)-Ti distances are shorter than the sum of the tetrahedral covalent radius for phosphorus (1.10 Å) and the Goldschmidt metal radius (CN 12). The average distance between the M(4) atom with  $r_{M(4)}=0.77r_{Ti}+0.23r_{Cu}$  and its four phosphorus neighbours is 2.490 Å, which is slightly shorter than the radius sum of 2.51 Å (weighted radius for the M(4) atoms used), while the average of the M(4)-Ti distances (2.911 Å) is slightly larger than the radius sum (2.86 Å).

The Ti-Ti interatomic distances are somewhat shorter than the corresponding Nb-Nb distances in Nb<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> owing to the greater size of the niobium atom as compared to titanium.

In the present study the copper content of the crystal investigated was found to be 2.1(1) atom-% (the composition of the crystal is thus Ti<sub>6.77</sub> Cu<sub>0.23</sub> P<sub>4</sub>). There are apparent discrepancies in the cell parameters between the present ternary specimen (single-crystal data, Table 1; copper alloy with nominal Ti/P=2) and that in Ref. 4 (powder data, copper alloy with nominal Ti/P = 3) with the same reported copper content. There might be significant differences in copper composition, however, since the ternary specimens had not been in complete equilibrium. Furthermore, the composition of the titanium-richer specimen (Ref. 4) was determined using an electron microprobe and the accuracy of the analysis was relatively low. The unit cell volumes of the above-mentioned ternary specimens are smaller than that reported4 for binary Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub>, which was measured on a titaniumrich sample. From the present data it is not possible, however, to establish unambiguously the range of homogeneity of Ti<sub>7</sub>P<sub>4</sub> in the Ti-P and Ti-Cu-P systems.

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