

---

ORDER, DISORDER, AND PHASE TRANSITION  
IN CONDENSED SYSTEM

---

# Effect of an $\text{Eu}^{3+}$ Impurity on the Antiferrodistortion and Ferroelectric Instabilities in an $\text{EuTiO}_3$ Bulk Crystal and Thin Films

V. S. Zhandun\*, N. G. Zamkova, and V. I. Zinenko

Kirensky Institute of Physics, Siberian Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, Krasnoyarsk, 660036 Russia

\*e-mail: jvc@iph.krasn.ru

Received May 30, 2014

**Abstract**—The existence of an antiferrodistortion transition in  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  is disputable, and this question needs to be answered. One of the possible causes is the presence of an  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity in a sample. A nonempirical polarizable ion model is used to study the effect of a trivalent  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ion impurity on the antiferrodistortion and ferroelectric instabilities of an  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  crystal in the bulk and the thin-film states. Lattice dynamics calculation shows that a bulk impurity-free  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  crystal has no unstable modes throughout the entire phase space volume. The addition of an  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity leads to a significant softening of the rotational mode, the distortion in which makes tetragonal phase  $I4/mcm$  (which is experimentally observed) energetically favorable. In going from the bulk crystal to the thin film, the vibration spectrum of the impurity-free film has unstable antiferrodistortion and rotational modes. The addition of an  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity enhances the antiferrodistortion instability, which fully or partly suppresses ferroelectricity.

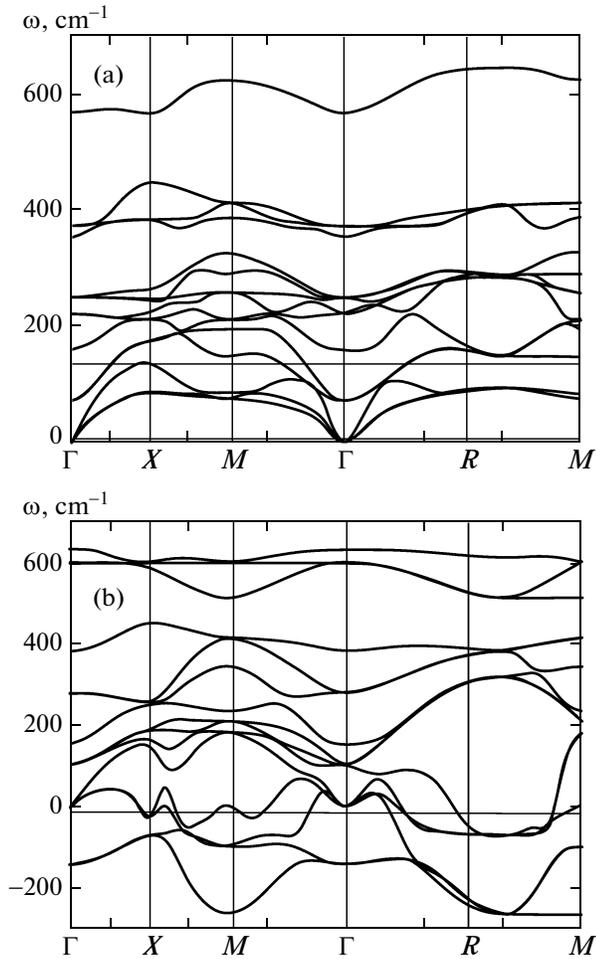
**DOI:** 10.1134/S1063776115010070

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  oxide solidifies into a perovskite structure with space group  $Pm3m$  and unit cell parameter  $a = 3.9 \text{ \AA}$ , which is very close to the lattice parameter of  $\text{SrTiO}_3$  [1].  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  was studied in numerous experimental and theoretical works, and interest in this compound has been recently quickened and is caused by the possibility of coexistent magnetic and electric order parameters. At  $T_N = 5.3 \text{ K}$ ,  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  undergoes an antiferromagnetic phase transition [2, 3]. A ferroelectric phase transition in a bulk  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  crystal is not detected up to the liquid-helium temperature. The ab initio calculations of the  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  lattice (perovskite structure) dynamics also do not reveal a ferroelectric instability in the crystal lattice, and the polar mode turns out to be harder than in  $\text{SrTiO}_3$  [4]. Nevertheless, by analogy with  $\text{SrTiO}_3$ , the authors of [5, 6] attribute  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  to quantum paraelectrics. The calculation [7] of the properties of thin  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  films showed that a ferroelectric instability appears in them when tensile stresses are applied to the films [8]. As for the structural antiferrodistortion transition in  $\text{EuTiO}_3$ , conflicting data on this subject are available, as on the transition in  $\text{SrTiO}_3$  and the transition related to the rotation of the  $\text{TiO}_6$  ( $a^0a^0c^-$  in the designations in [9]) oxygen octahedron. Using ab initio VASP calculations, the authors of [4] showed that the polar modes in the phonon spectrum of this compound are stable and that additional strong instabilities also exist at

boundary points  $R$  and  $M$  in the Brillouin zone. The energies of possible phases  $I4/mcm$ ,  $Imma$ , and  $R\bar{3}c$ , which are associated with antiferrodistortion distortions  $a^0a^0c^-$ ,  $a^0b^-b^-$ , and  $a^-a^-a^-$  of the cubic phase, turned out to be close to each other. Using ab initio calculations, the authors of [10] concluded that the antiferrodistortion instability in an  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  is caused by the hybridization of the  $f$  electrons of Eu and the  $d$  electrons of Ti. The effect of Hubbard  $U$  on the stability of the rotational mode was studied, and an increase of  $U_{\text{Eu}}$  ( $f$  electrons of Eu become more localized) was found to stabilize the antiferrodistortion mode. Such a transition from the cubic  $Pm3m$  ( $z = 1$ ) phase into the tetragonal  $I4/mcm$  phase ( $z = 2$ ) was experimentally detected [11–14], and the transition temperatures differ substantially in different experiments (from 162 K [12] to 282 K [11]). On the other hand, the authors of [15] studied the temperature dependence of the specific heat of  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  and did not detect anomalies related to structural transitions down to the liquid-helium temperature. They explained this behavior by the fact that, at the transition temperatures detected in other experiments, oxygen octahedra undergo local antiferrodistortion deformation and the crystal structure remains cubic as a whole. Therefore, they concluded that an internal disorder is important for an analysis of the antiferrodistortion transition in  $\text{EuTiO}_3$ .

When studying  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  by various techniques, the authors of [16] detected a phase transition into the tet-



**Fig. 1.** Phonon spectrum of bulk (a)  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$  and (b)  $\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$  crystals. Imaginary frequencies are negative.

agonal  $I4/mcm$  phase, which is related to antiferrodistortion lattice deformation, at  $T = 300$  K in some cases and found no tangential lattice distortions down to  $T = 100$  K in other cases. Based on these data, they assumed that the different antiferrodistortion transition temperatures detected experimentally and the existence of a structural transition in  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  can be related to the presence of either a trivalent  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ion impurity or oxygen vacancies in samples. The authors of [5, 17] also noted that, apart from the divalent  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$  ion, the trivalent  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ion can also exist in  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  during its growth.

Therefore, the purpose of this work was to study the effect of trivalent  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ion impurities in an  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$  crystal on the ferroelectric and antiferrodistortion instabilities in a bulk crystal and thin crystal films.

## 2. CALCULATION PROCEDURE

The calculations were performed in terms of a non-empirical polarizable ion model using the density functional theory in the local density approximation [18]. The effective charges were calculated according to [19]. The equilibrium lattice parameter was obtained by minimizing the total crystal energy at various trivalent  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity concentrations. The calculation of thin films was carried out in periodic layer geometry: the films were considered to consist of periodic alternating  $\text{EuO}$  and  $\text{TiO}_2$  atomic planes. To isolate the layers from each other, we introduced a vacuum layer four perovskite lattice parameters thick between them. We used the virtual crystal approximation to calculate the lattice dynamics and the energetics of  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  crystals doped with  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  [20].

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Bulk Crystal

The lattice dynamics of an  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  crystal having a perovskite structure with space group  $Pm3m$  was calculated using the minimum lattice parameter, which turned out to be  $a = 3.82$  Å for an  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$  crystal (which is smaller than the experimental parameter by approximately 2%) and  $a = 3.87$  Å for a hypothetical  $\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$  crystal.

Figure 1 shows the phonon spectra of the crystals in the symmetric directions of the Brillouin zone, and Table 1 gives the high-frequency permittivity and the effective Born charges for the compounds with di- and trivalent europium ions.

As is seen in Fig. 1, the phonon spectrum of  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$  has no unstable modes, and the vibration frequencies of “potential” unstable modes have rather high values, about  $100$   $\text{cm}^{-1}$ . The latter modes are represented by the transverse polar  $\Gamma_{15}$  ( $q = 0$ ) mode and the modes related to the “rotation” of the oxygen octahedron, namely,  $R_{25}$  ( $q = 1/2(b_1 + b_2 + b_3)$ ) and  $M_3$  ( $q = 1/2(b_1 + b_2)$ ), where  $b_\alpha$  is the reciprocal lattice vector. These results for  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$  contradict the calculation results in [4], where unstable modes  $R_{25}$  and  $M_3$  were detected (see Introduction). We repeated the calculation of [4] using the VASP software package

**Table 1.** Effective charges  $Z^*$  (in units of  $e$ ) and high-frequency permittivity  $\epsilon$  for a bulk  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$  crystal and a hypothetical  $\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$  crystal

	$Z^*(\text{Eu})$	$Z^*(\text{Ti})$	$Z^*(\text{O}_\perp)$	$Z^*(\text{O}_\parallel)$	$\epsilon$
$\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$	2.68	5.70	-5.0	-1.71	4.51
$\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$	3.78	4.15	-2.2	-2.81	5.08

and two lattice parameters, namely, the equilibrium and experimental parameters. Note that the calculation in [4] was performed using the experimental lattice parameter, which is smaller than the equilibrium parameter obtained in our calculation by 1%. Using the equilibrium unit cell parameter ( $a = 3.94 \text{ \AA}$ ), we obtained unstable modes  $R_{25}$  and  $M_3$  ( $\omega \approx 80 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ ), the eigenvectors of which correspond to the rotation of the oxygen octahedron.

As is seen from Fig. 1b, the hypothetical  $\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$  compound, where  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  fully substitutes for  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Ti}^{3+}$  substitutes for  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$ , has high unstable vibration modes, which occupy the entire reciprocal space volume. The softest modes with a frequency of about  $250 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  correspond to the instability of the lattice with respect to the rotation of the  $\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_6$  octahedron.

The physical cause of this instability in the  $\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$  compound can be illustrated by the example of triply degenerate mode  $R_{25}$ . The squared frequency of mode  $R_{25}$  for a perovskite structure can be analytically expressed in terms of dynamic matrix elements as follows:

$$\omega_i^2 = e_i - g_i, \quad i = 1, 2, 3, \quad (1)$$

where  $e_1 = d_{O_1}^{yy}$  are the diagonal and  $g_1 = d_{O_1O_2}^{xy}$  are the off-diagonal elements of the dynamic matrix (DM), and  $e_2, e_3$  and  $g_2, g_3$  can be obtained by the cyclic permutation  $O_1(0.0, 0.5, 0.5) \rightarrow O_2(0.5, 0.0, 0.5) \rightarrow O_3(0.5, 0.5, 0.0)$  and  $y \rightarrow z \rightarrow x$ . Table 2 gives the calculated contributions to DM elements  $e_1$  and  $g_1$  for  $\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$  and  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$ . In both cases, the main contributions to  $\omega_{R_{25}}^2$  are made by Coulomb long- and short-range contributions, and the competition between them determines the sign of  $\omega_{R_{25}}^2$ . The difference between the short-range contributions is insignificant and appears because of the difference between the lattice parameters of  $\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$  and  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$ , whereas the long-range Coulomb contributions to the diagonal elements of DM in  $\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$  are almost half the contributions in  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$ . The Coulomb contribution to  $\omega_{R_{25}}^2$  is positive for  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$  and exceeds the negative contribution of the short-range term in DM, whereas both contributions in  $\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$  are negative, which results in a negative value of  $\omega_{R_{25}}^2$  and, hence, an antiferrodistortion instability.

The following three versions of charge compensation to ensure electroneutrality are possible when a trivalent  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ion impurity is introduced: compensation occurs via vacancy formation at site  $A$  in the perovskite structure occupied by an  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$  ion ( $\text{Eu}_{1-x}^{2+}\text{Eu}_{2x/3}^{3+}\square_{x/3}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$ ); vacancy appears at site  $B$

**Table 2.** Contributions to the dynamic matrix ( $10^{-4}$  au) of  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  in a perovskite structure

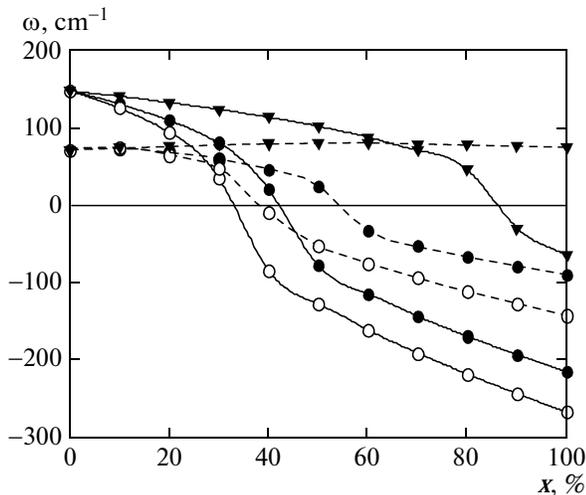
	$\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$			$\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$		
	$e$	$g$	$\omega_{R_{25}}^2$	$e$	$g$	$\omega_{R_{25}}^2$
Short-range contribution	-4	9	-13	-4	2	-12
Coulomb contribution	71	48	23	37	46	-9

occupied by a  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$  ion ( $\text{Eu}_{1-x}^{2+}\text{Eu}_x^{3+}\text{Ti}_{1-x/4}^{4+}\square_{x/4}\text{O}_3$ ), where  $\square$  is a vacancy; and finally,  $\text{Ti}^{3+}$  ions substitute for some  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$  ions ( $\text{Eu}_{1-x}^{2+}\text{Eu}_x^{3+}\text{Ti}_{1-x}^{4+}\text{Ti}_x^{3+}\text{O}_3$ ).

We calculated the minimum lattice parameter for each version of charge compensation and complete substitution of trivalent for divalent europium and found that the formation of a vacancy at the  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$  sites decreases the equilibrium lattice parameter by  $0.05 \text{ \AA}$  and the substitution of  $\text{Ti}^{3+}$  for  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$  increases it by  $0.05 \text{ \AA}$ . The calculation during a change in the  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity concentration was calculated using the lattice parameters computed by Vegard's law [21].

The lattice dynamics calculation showed that the modes related to the rotation of the oxygen octahedron and the polar mode are softened during the charge compensation via the formation of a vacancy at site  $A$  of the perovskite structure when  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  gradually substitutes for divalent  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$ . Nevertheless, these modes remain hard up to high concentrations (Fig. 2). The situation changes when a vacancy forms at site  $B$  of the perovskite structure or when  $\text{Ti}^{3+}$  substitutes for  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$ . It is seen in Fig. 2 that, as the  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ion concentration increases, the antiferrodistortion mode also softens and becomes soft at an  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  concentration  $x = 0.35$  (substitution of  $\text{Ti}^{3+}$  for  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$ ) and  $x = 0.45$  (vacancy at the  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$  site).

When a vacancy forms at the site of the  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$  ion during the introduction of an  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity, we found that the distortion of the crystal in the eigenvector of the antiferrodistortion mode at a trivalent ion impurity concentration  $x = 0.45$  makes the tetragonal phase favorable. This phase is associated with rotation  $a^0a^0c^-$  (space group  $I4/mcm$ ) and is experimentally observed in the  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  compounds where a structural transition exists. A further increase in the  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  concentration leads to the fact that, first, rotation  $a^0b^-b^-$  and, then, rotations  $a^-a^-a^-$  and  $a^-a^-c^+$  become favorable. Table 3 gives the energies of these most favorable low-symmetry phases at several  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  concentrations and the angles of oxygen octahedron rotation that correspond to the energy minimum in these phases. As is seen from Table 3, the energies of the phases with distortions  $a^0a^0c^-$ ,  $a^0b^-b^-$ ,  $a^-a^-a^-$ , and  $a^-a^-c^+$  are close at the given  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  concentrations. It should be noted that the authors of [4], where the calculation was per-



**Fig. 2.** Antiferrodistortion and ferroelectric mode frequencies vs. the  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity concentration in a bulk  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  crystal for various versions of charge compensation. (triangles) Vacancy at the  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$  site, (filled symbols) vacancy at the  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$  site, (open symbols) substitution of  $\text{Ti}^{3+}$  for  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$ . (dashed lines) Ferroelectric and (solid lines) antiferrodistortion modes. Imaginary frequencies are negative.

formed with the VASP software package, also obtained close energies of the phases related to rotations  $a^0a^0c^-$ ,  $a^0b^-b^-$ , and  $a^-a^-a^-$ . In the case of charge compensation with the substitution of  $\text{Ti}^{3+}$  for  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$ , the energies of all the phases noted above are also close to each other, and the phases with rotations  $a^-a^-a^-$  and  $a^-a^-c^+$  are most favorable at various concentrations.

As for the ferroelectric instability, it is seen from Fig. 2 that the polar mode frequency squared becomes negative at a higher  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity concentration, which makes a ferroelectric phase transition unlikely (since the antiferrodistortion transition is known to suppress the ferroelectric instability).

### 3.2. Thin Films

The calculation procedure described above was applied to computing the lattice dynamics and the

energies of the low-symmetry phases in thin  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  films of the following thicknesses: two perovskite unit cells (5 monoatomic layers) and eight perovskite unit cells (17 monoatomic layers). In contrast to the bulk crystal, the vibration spectrum of an  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$  film has antiferrodistortion instabilities at point  $M$  of the Brillouin zone and a ferroelectric instability at the center of the Brillouin zone for the films with both thicknesses. The Eu ions located on the film surface mainly undergo displacement in the eigenvector of the ferroelectric mode, and the displacement of the atoms in the film volume is small and decreases toward the center of the film, which is most pronounced at a film thickness of 17 monolayers. As for the eigenvector of the antiferrodistortion modes, there are two unstable antiferrodistortion modes with close frequencies in the five-layer film; these modes are related to the rotations of two oxygen octahedra toward one side ( $a^0a^0c^-$  in the designations of Glazer) and toward different sides ( $a^0a^0c^+$  in the designations of Glazer). As the film thickness increases, the number of antiferrodistortion modes at point  $M$  of the two-dimensional Brillouin zone increases, since some points in the cubic Brillouin zone in the  $M-R$  direction pass to point  $M$  of the two-dimensional zone when lattice parameter  $c$  of the perovskite structure increases severalfold and since the perovskite structure has an almost dispersion-free vibration branch the eigenvectors of which correspond to the rotation of the oxygen octahedron for any point in the  $M-R$  direction. The 17-layer film has six such unstable modes. The squared frequencies of these unstable rotational modes are close to each other at point  $M$ . Two modes of them, which are related to rotations  $a^0a^0c^-$  and  $a^0a^0c^+$  of oxygen octahedra, are softest, as in the case of the five-layer film. The oxygen atoms located near the surface undergo the maximum displacement during rotation.

When a trivalent  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ion impurity is added, the antiferrodistortion and ferroelectric modes are significantly softened irrespective of the type of charge compensation (see Fig. 3).

The calculation of the energies of the phases distorted in the eigenvectors of the antiferrodistortion

**Table 3.** Difference between the energies  $E$  (meV) of the cubic and distorted antiferrodistortion phases and the angle of oxygen octahedron rotation  $\theta$  in a bulk  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  crystal vs. impurity  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  concentration  $x$

$x$	$a^0a^0c^-$	$\theta$	$a^0b^-b^-$	$\theta$	$a^-a^-a^-$	$\theta$	$a^-a^-c^+$	$\theta$
$\text{Eu}_{1-x}^{2+}\text{Eu}_x^{3+}\text{Ti}_{1-x/4}^{4+}\square_{x/4}\text{O}_3$								
0.45	-8.4	5.1°	-7.0	5.8°	-7.8	5.0°	-7.6	5.0°
0.5	-19.4	6.1°	-20.6	6.8°	-19.7	7.2°	-20.2	7.2°
0.6	-62.6	8.6°	-63.4	8.6°	-63.9	9.4°	-66.7	9.4°
$\text{Eu}_{1-x}^{2+}\text{Eu}_x^{3+}\text{Ti}_{1-x}^{4+}\text{Ti}_x^{3+}\text{O}_3$								
0.35	-10.2	5.7°	-10.8	5.3°	-11.4	5.5°	-11.4	6.0°
0.4	-31.3	7.3°	-32.9	7.6°	-34.8	7.6°	-35.2	8.2°

and ferroelectric modes showed that both types of distortion in these modes are favorable. Table 4 gives the energies of the ferroelectric and antiferrodistortion phases along with the angles of rotation of a near-surface oxygen octahedron for three  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  concentrations,  $x = 0, 0.2,$  and  $0.5$ . In this case, the  $Pmm2$  ferroelectric phase is more favorable than the antiferrodistortion  $P4/mbm$  phase in  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$  and  $\text{Eu}_{0.8}\text{Eu}_{0.133}\square_{(x/3)0.066}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$ . However, as the  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  concentration increases, the antiferrodistortion phase becomes more favorable for all versions of charge compensation. The substitution of trivalent titanium ions for tetravalent ions ( $\text{Eu}_{1-x}\text{Eu}_x\text{Ti}_{1-x}^{4+}\text{Ti}_x^{3+}\text{O}_3$ ) is the most favorable energy version of charge compensation, as in the case of the bulk crystal (see Table 4).

The ferroelectric instability is retained in the antiferrodistortion phase in the five-layer film after the rotation of the oxygen octahedron at the center of the Brillouin zone. The phase distorted in the eigenvector of the antiferrodistortion mode and, then, the eigenvector of the soft polar mode has polar symmetry group  $Pm$ . In the case of the 17-layer film, the rotation of the oxygen octahedron leads to the disappearance of the ferroelectric instability in the antiferrodistortion phase during the formation of a vacancy at the  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$  or the  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  site.

The spontaneous polarization in the polar  $Pmm2$  and  $Pm$  phases for all films with various types of charge compensation during the introduction of an  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity was calculated by the formula

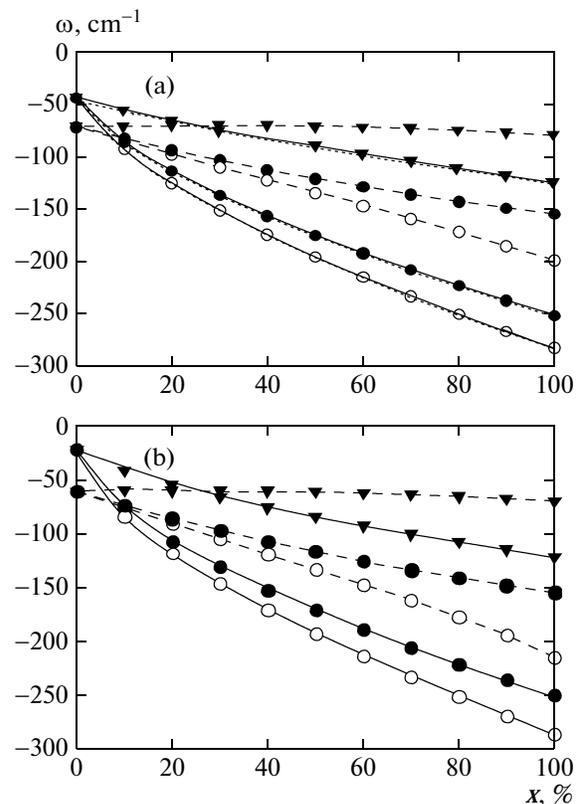
$$P_\alpha = \sum_{k,\beta} Z_{k,\alpha\beta}^* \Delta u_{k,\beta},$$

where  $Z_{k,\alpha\beta}^*$  are the effective Born charges in the nonpolar phase and  $\Delta u_{k,\beta}$  is the difference between the atom coordinates in the nonpolar and polar phases. The calculated values of spontaneous polarization are given in Table 5.

As is seen from Table 5, the polarization in the thick 17-layer films is lower than in the five-layer films and is absent for certain versions of charge compensation when an impurity is added. This behavior can be related to the fact that, as the number of monoatomic layers increases, the properties of a thin film tend toward the properties of the bulk crystal, where ferroelectricity is absent at any  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity concentrations. As would be expected, an increase in the  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity concentration enhances both the octahedron rotation-related distortions and the polar distortions. However, the antiferrodistortion deformation partly or completely suppresses the ferroelectric lattice instability, which leads to lower polarization in a thin film with an  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity as compared to the impurity-free compound.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The main results of this work are as follows.



**Fig. 3.** Ferroelectric and antiferrodistortion mode frequencies in thin  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  films vs. the impurity  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  concentration for various versions of charge compensation: (a) five-layer film and (b) 17-layer film. (triangles) Vacancy at the  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$  site, (filled symbols) vacancy at the  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$  site, (open symbols) substitution of  $\text{Ti}^{3+}$  for  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$ . (dashed lines) Ferroelectric and (solid lines) antiferrodistortion modes. Imaginary frequencies are negative.

Using a nonempirical polarizable ion model, we studied the properties of  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$  with an  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity in the bulk and the thin-film states and found that the phonon spectrum of bulk  $\text{Eu}^{2+}\text{Ti}^{4+}\text{O}_3$  has no unstable modes. This result is in conflict with the results of the *ab initio* calculation of the lattice dynamics with the VASP software package [4] and is supported by the results of the experimental studies of specific heat [13] and XRD [14], where no anomalies indicating a structural phase transition in  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  samples were detected down to low temperatures. However, the calculation demonstrates that the unstable modes in a hypothetical  $\text{Eu}^{3+}\text{Ti}^{3+}\text{O}_3$  crystal occupy the entire phase space volume. The partial substitution of the trivalent for the divalent ion was studied in the virtual crystal approximation. Although this approximation is rather rough, the results of calculating the impurity-containing compound have a qualitative character and are thought to be interesting.

First, the addition of an  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ion impurity instead of  $\text{Eu}^{2+}$  results in the appearance and enhancement of the antiferrodistortion instability in the bulk crystal.

**Table 4.** Difference between the energies  $E$  (meV) of the cubic and distorted ferroelectric and antiferrodistortion phases and the angle of oxygen octahedron rotation  $\theta$  in thin  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  films vs. impurity  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  concentration  $x$ 

$x$	5 monolayers			17 monolayers		
	$E_s$	$E_{af}$	$\theta$	$E_s$	$E_{af}$	$\theta$
0	-18.0	-2.3	3.2°	-2.2	-0.1	1.2°
	$\text{Eu}_{1-x}^{2+}\text{Eu}_x^{3+}\text{Ti}_{1-x/4}^{4+}\square_{x/4}\text{O}_3$					
0.2	-62.8	-66.1	6.6°	-14.0	-16.2	7.0°
0.5	-175.7	-299.0	9.6°	-43.0	-100.2	10.4°
	$\text{Eu}_{1-x}^{2+}\text{Eu}_{2x/3}^{3+}\square_{x/3}\text{Ti}_{x/3}^{4+}\text{O}_3$					
0.2	-12.1	-7.8	3.8°	-1.4	-0.7	3.0°
0.5	-9.2	-23.6	5.2°	-1.1	-19.6	5.0°
	$\text{Eu}_{1-x}^{2+}\text{Eu}_x^{3+}\text{Ti}_{1-x}^{4+}\text{Ti}_x^{3+}\text{O}_3$					
0.2	-89.0	-104.6	7.3°	-19.1	-26.7	7.9°
0.5	-323.0	-514.3	11.0°	-82.5	-367.6	11.2°

The calculation results demonstrate that the phase with octahedron rotation  $a^0a^0c^-$  and symmetry  $I4/mcm$  is energetically favorable when the cubic structure is distorted in the eigenvectors of modes  $R_{25}$  and  $M_3$  in the case of vacancy formation at the  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$  site and low  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  concentrations. It is this phase that is experimentally detected in the  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  compound, which undergoes a structural phase transition. Thus, the appearance of an antiferrodistortion instability was found to be related to an increase in the valence of the Eu ion and a decrease in the valence of the Ti ion, which agrees with the results in [10], where the antiferrodistortion transition in  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  was assumed to be

caused by the hybridization of the  $f$  electrons of Eu and the  $d$  electrons of Ti.

Second, the lattice dynamics calculation of a thin  $\text{EuTiO}_3$  film showed that its vibration spectrum has ferroelectric and antiferrodistortion instabilities. The ferroelectric  $Pmm2$  phase is more favorable in the impurity-free compound, and the addition of an  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity leads to the energetically favorable antiferrodistortion deformation that causes the formation of the nonpolar  $P4/mbm$  phase. However, the polar mode, the distortion in which gives polar phase  $Pm$ , remains unstable in the nonpolar phase in five-layer films. The polar phase appears in 17-layer films after the rotation of the oxygen octahedron only when  $\text{Ti}^{3+}$  substitutes for  $\text{Ti}^{4+}$  during the addition of an  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  impurity.

**Table 5.** Spontaneous polarization ( $\mu\text{C}/\text{cm}^2$ ) in the polar phases of thin films of two thicknesses at various impurity  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  concentrations

$x$	5 monolayers	17 monolayers
	$P_x$	$P_x$
0	51.6	20.7
	$\text{Eu}_{1-x}^{2+}\text{Eu}_x^{3+}\text{Ti}_{1-x/4}^{4+}\square_{x/4}\text{O}_3$	
0.2	23.2	—
0.5	30.3	—
	$\text{Eu}_{1-x}^{2+}\text{Eu}_{2x/3}^{3+}\square_{x/3}\text{Ti}_{x/3}^{4+}\text{O}_3$	
0.2	12.5	3.5
0.5	20.1	—
	$\text{Eu}_{1-x}^{2+}\text{Eu}_x^{3+}\text{Ti}_{1-x}^{4+}\text{Ti}_x^{3+}\text{O}_3$	
0.2	26.8	8.1
0.5	32.7	11.3

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was supported by the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (project no. 12-02-00025-a) and the program Leading Scientific Schools of the President of the Russian Federation (project no. NSh-924.2014.2).

## REFERENCES

1. T. Katsufuji and H. Takagi, Phys. Rev. B: Condens. Matter **64**, 054415 (2001).
2. T. R. McGuire, M. W. Shafer, R. J. Joenk, H. A. Alperin, and S. J. Pickart, J. Appl. Phys. **37**, 981 (1966).
3. C.-L. Chien, S. DeBenedetti, and F. D. S. Barros, Phys. Rev. B: Solid State **10**, 3913 (1974).
4. K. Z. Rushchanskii, N. A. Spaldin, and M. Lezaic, Phys. Rev. B: Condens. Matter **85**, 104109 (2012).

5. S. Kamba, D. Nuzhnyy, P. Vanek, M. Savinov, K. Knizek, Z. Shen, E. Santava, K. Maca, M. Sadowski, and J. Petzelt, *Europhys. Lett.* **80**, 27002 (2007).
6. G. J. Conduit and B. D. Simons, *Phys. Rev. B: Condens. Matter* **81**, 024102 (2010).
7. J. H. Lee, L. Fang, E. Vlahos, X. Ke, Y. W. Jung, L. F. Kourkoutis, J.-W. Kim, P. J. Ryan, T. Heeg, M. Roeckerath, V. Goian, M. Bernhagen, R. Uecker, P. C. Hammel, K. M. Rabe, S. Kamba, J. Schubert, J. W. Freeland, D. A. Muller, C. J. Fennie, P. Schiffer, V. Gopalan, E. Johnston-Halperin, and D. G. Schlom, *Nature (London)* **466**, 954 (2010).
8. C. J. Fennie and K. M. Rabe, *Phys. Rev. Lett.* **97**, 267602 (2006).
9. A. M. Glazer, *Acta Crystallogr., Sect. B: Struct. Crystallogr. Cryst. Chem.* **28**, 3384 (1972).
10. T. Birol and C. J. Fennie, *Phys. Rev. B: Condens. Matter* **88**, 094103 (2013).
11. A. Bussmann-Holder, J. Köhler, R. K. Kremer, and J. M. Law, *Phys. Rev. B: Condens. Matter* **83**, 212102 (2011).
12. M. Allieta, M. Scavini, L. J. Spalek, V. Scagnoli, H. C. Walker, C. Panagopoulos, S. S. Saxena, T. Katsufuji, and C. Mazzoli, *Phys. Rev. B: Condens. Matter* **85**, 184107 (2012).
13. J. Köhler, R. Dinnebier, and A. Bussmann-Holder, *Phase Transitions* **85**, 949 (2012).
14. J.-W. Kim, P. Thompson, S. Brown, P. S. Normile, J. A. Schlueter, A. Shkabko, A. Weidenkaff, and P. J. Ryan, *Phys. Rev. Lett.* **110**, 027201 (2013).
15. D. Bessas, K. Z. Rushchanskii, M. Kachlik, S. Disch, O. Gourdon, J. Bednarcik, K. Maca, I. Sergueev, S. Kamba, M. Ležaić, and R. P. Hermann, *Phys. Rev. B: Condens. Matter* **88**, 144308 (2013).
16. V. Goian, S. Kamba, O. Pacherova, J. Drahokoupil, L. Palatinus, M. Dusek, J. Rohlicek, M. Savinov, F. Laufek, W. Schranz, A. Fuith, M. Kachlik, K. Maca, A. Shkabko, L. Sagarna, A. Weidenkaff, and A. A. Belik, *Phys. Rev. B: Condens. Matter* **86**, 054112 (2012).
17. J. H. Lee, X. Ke, N. J. Podraza, L. Fitting Kourkoutis, T. Heeg, M. Roeckerath, J. W. Freeland, C. J. Fennie, J. Schubert, D. A. Muller, P. Schiffer, and D. G. Schlom, *Appl. Phys. Lett.* **94**, 212509 (2009).
18. E. G. Maksimov, V. I. Zinenko, and N. G. Zamkova, *Phys.—Usp.* **47** (11), 1075 (2004).
19. M. Born and K. Huang, *Dynamical Theory of Crystal Lattices* (Clarendon, Oxford, 1954).
20. L. Bellaiche and D. Vanderbilt, *Phys. Rev. B: Condens. Matter* **61**, 7877 (2000).
21. A. R. Denton and N. W. Ashcroft, *Phys. Rev. A: At., Mol., Opt. Phys.* **43**, 3161 (1991).

*Translated by K. Shakhlevich*