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Monoclinic symmetry of the hcp-type ordered areas in bulk cobalt

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The gradual ferromagnetic spin reorientation in the hcp phase of cobalt between 230 °C and 330 °C reported for a Co single crystal [1] suggests that this phase cannot have a hexagonal symmetry [2,3]. This hypothesis is verified positively by synchrotron radiation diffraction (MSPD@ALBA) and neutron diffraction (SPODI@MLZ and D2B@ILL) on the powder of cobalt [3]. The analysis of diffraction data has been done by using a specific set of Bragg peaks, which are not affected by the stacking faults present in abundance in hcp-Co [1,4]. The crystal structure of the hcp-type ordered areas of cobalt is described by a monoclinic symmetry with the magnetic space group C2'/m', where the former hexagonal [001] axis is no longer perpendicular to the hexagonal layers. The hexagonal [001] and [010] axes make an angle equal $\alpha \approx 90.10(1)^\circ$, while the angle between in-plane [100] and [010] axes equals $\gamma \approx 120.11(1)^\circ$. The monoclinic symmetry provides an approximate description of the crystal structure of the stacking faulted hcp-Co areas coexisting with fcc-Co areas [3].

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