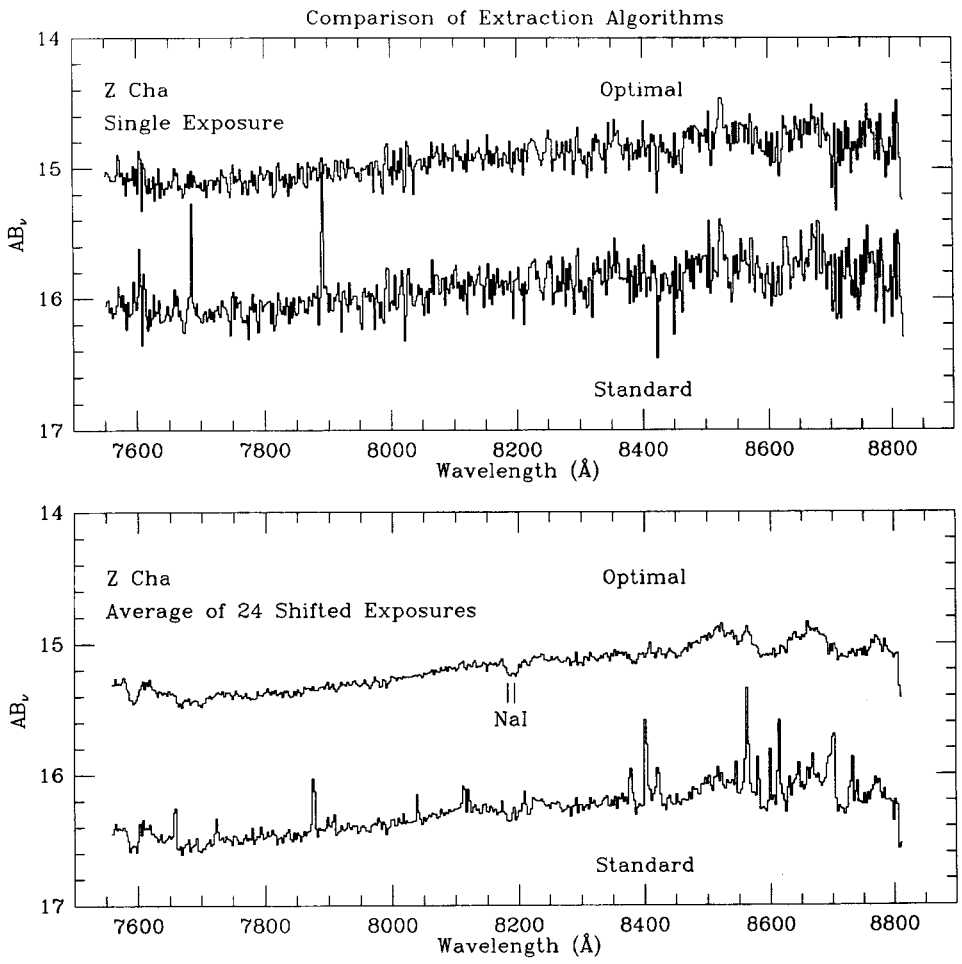

FIG. 2–Optimal and standard spectra of the dwarf nova Z Cha. Increased signal-to-noise ratio and rejection of cosmic rays are illustrated by the representative single exposure in the upper frame. The lower frame shows the average of 24 such spectra, each first shifted to remove the radial-velocity variation of the secondary star. The optimal spectrum reveals Na I absorption from the secondary star of Z Cha. In the standard spectrum, shifted by 1 magnitude, the doublet is lost in the noise. From Horne (1986, PASP 98:609-617).