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A-site-ordered $AA'_3B_4O_{12}$ quadruple perovskites (with twelve-fold coordinated A and square-planar co-ordinated A’ sites) were discovered in 1967. Since then, there have been considerable research efforts to synthesize and characterize new members of such perovskites. These efforts have led to the discoveries of many interesting physical and chemical properties, such as inter-site charge transfer and disproportionation, giant dielectric constant, multiferroic properties, reentrant structural transitions and high catalytic activity. The first member of A-site columnar-ordered $A_2A''A''B_4O_{12}$ quadruple perovskites (with ten-fold coordinated A, square-planar coordinated A’ and tetrahedrally coordinated A” sites), $\text{CaFeTi}_2\text{O}_6$, was discovered in 1995, and for 19 years it was the only representative of this family. In the last few years, $A_2A''A''B_4O_{12}$ perovskites have experienced rapid growth. Herein, we present a brief overview of the recent developments in this field and highlight an under-investigated status and great potential of $A_2A''A''B_4O_{12}$ perovskites in comparison with well-known $AA'_3B_4O_{12}$ perovskites.

Introduction

$\text{ABO}_3$ compounds crystallize in a number of structure types [e.g., perovskites, $\text{LiNbO}_3$, corundum, ilmenite, hexagonal $\text{BaMnO}_3$-type structures ($2H$, $4H$, $6H$, $15R$ and so on), hexagonal LuMnO$_3$-type, pyroxenes, rare earth sesquioxide structures (A, B and C (bixbyite)), $\text{AlFeO}_3$, $\text{KSbO}_3$, $\text{PbReO}_3$, $\text{CaIrO}_3$ and so forth] depending on the relative size of the A and B cations and on the nature of cations. The perovskite-type structure is one of the most important and adaptive structures in inorganic chemistry, and it has the largest number of representatives. It is built from a framework of corner-shared $\text{BO}_6$ octahedra that form cavities, which are filled with A cations. The ideal perovskite structure is cubic (space group $Pm\bar{3}m$) with $a_0 \approx 3.8$ Å. However, the cubic structure is rarely realized at room temperature because of the mismatch among the sizes of A, B and O. The mismatch, which is usually described by the Goldschmidt tolerance factor, leads to different distortions. Distortions can be considered as tilts of rigid $\text{BO}_6$ octahedra in a first approximation. And tilts, in turn, are described by using the Glazer tilt system and B–O–B bond angles. There are basically 15 tilt systems in $\text{ABO}_3$ perovskites. In simple $\text{ABO}_3$ perovskites, the B–O–B tilt angles are within the range of 140–180°.

A special class of the perovskite family is formed for the $a' a''a''$ tilt system with very large B–O–B tilt angles of about 140–145° (space group of the parent structure is $\text{Im}3$). It is the so-called A-site-ordered quadruple perovskites, $AA'_3B_4O_{12}$, $A_2A''A''B_4O_{12}$.
which have a twelve-fold coordinated A site and a square-planar coordinated A’ site. The A’ site is typically occupied by Jahn–Teller cations [such as, Cu$^{2+}$ and Mn$^{2+}$] or other cations which allow a square-planar coordination: Cu$^{2+}$, Fe$^{2+}$, Fe$^{3+}$, Co$^{2+}$, Co$^{3+}$, Ni$^{2+}$, Pd$^{2+}$, and Pb$^{2+}$; R$^{3+}$ (R = rare earths), Ce$^{4+}$, Bi$^{3+}$ and Th$^{4+}$. Therefore, they can also be suggested calling them A-site columnar-ordered quadruple perovskites. These efforts have led to the discoveries of many interesting physical and chemical properties, for example, giant dielectric constant, inter-site charge transfer and disproportionation, multiferroic properties, reentrant structural transitions, and high catalytic activity.

Another special class of the perovskite family can be formed with the $a’a’c$-type tilt system and with very large B–O–B tilt angles of about 140–150° (space group of the parent structure is $P4_{3}/nmc$). In such a case, compounds with the $A_{2}A’A’_{2}O_{12}$ stoichiometry are formed. Therefore, they can also be called A-site-ordered quadruple perovskites, where A’ is the site with a square-planar coordination and A” is the site with a tetrahedral coordination. To distinguish them from $A’A’_{2}B_{2}O_{12}$, we suggest calling them A-site columnar-ordered quadruple perovskites. The first representative of this subfamily, CaFeTi$_2$O$_6$, was discovered just in 1995.9,19,20 CaFeTi$_2$O$_6$ was the only representative of such quadruple perovskites for almost 19 years, and this distortion of perovskites was considered to be highly exotic and rare.3,4 Only in 2014 was another representative reported, CaMnTi$_2$O$_6$.21 In the last few years, $A_{2}A’A’’_{2}O_{12}$ quadruple perovskites have experienced rapid growth.18,22–24 The purpose of this frontier article is to highlight their under-investigated status and great potential and to attract attention of the perovskite and high-pressure communities. The $A_{2}A’A’’_{2}O_{12}$ quadruple perovskites are compared with the $A’A’_{2}B_{2}O_{12}$ ones.

Crystal structure descriptions

Simple ABO$_3$ perovskites can have, and $A’A’_{2}B_{2}O_{12}$ and $A_{2}A’’A’’_{2}B_{2}O_{12}$ quadruple perovskites have very strong tilts of the BO$_6$ octahedral sublattice with the B–O–B bond angles reaching 140–145°. In simple ABO$_3$ perovskites, such strong tilts are realized in compounds with quite small A cations, for example, A = Sc and In.25,26 The ABO$_3$ perovskites with such strong tilts usually have GdFeO$_3$-related distortions26 with the (ideal) space group $Pmnn$ ($\sqrt{2}a \times 2b \times \sqrt{2}c$) and the tilt system of $a’b’a’$, which means that BO$_6$ octahedra are rotated in one direction (in-phase) along the $b$ axis and in opposite directions (out-of-phase) along the $a$ and $c$ axes (in cubic axes of the original $Pm\bar{3}m$ cell) (Fig. 1a). The $A’A’_{2}B_{2}O_{12}$ quadruple perovskites have a $2a \times 2a \times 2a$ cell and the $a’a’$ tilt system, which means that BO$_6$ octahedra are rotated in one direction along all three crystallographic directions (Fig. 1b). The $A_{2}A’A’_{2}B_{2}O_{12}$ quadruple perovskites have a $2a \times 2a \times 2a$ cell and the $a’a’c$-type tilt system, which means that BO$_6$ octahedra are rotated in one direction along the $a$ and $b$ axes and in opposite directions along the $c$ axis (Fig. 1c). Therefore, on considering the B sublattice, all three perovskites are very similar to each other and differ from each other by a number of the in-phase (very strong) tilts of the BO$_6$ octahedra.

The different numbers of the in-phase BO$_6$ tilts (determined, of course, primarily by the stoichiometry) create different numbers and types of cavities for A cations (Fig. 2). There is one type of cavity in the case of ABO$_3$, and the coordination number is reduced from twelve (in the ideal cubic ABO$_3$) to eight. The AO$_6$ polyhedra are connected by edges to form a three-dimensional (3D) network (Fig. 2a).

There are two types of cavities in the case of $A’A’_{2}B_{2}O_{12}$ with a ratio of 1 : 3. The A site keeps a twelve-fold coordination as in the ideal cubic ABO$_3$, and the A’ site has four very short A’–O bond lengths, four much longer A’–O bond lengths, and four very long A’–O bond lengths (in total, still twelve). The four very short A’–O bond lengths form a square-planar coordination. The AO$_{12}$ polyhedra are isolated from each other. The AO$_6$ squares are also isolated from each other (Fig. 2b), and they are oriented in such a way that they are orthogonal to each other, but they are 3D-connected through the longer A’–O bond lengths. The AO$_{12}$ and AO$_6$ polyhedra are 3D-connected through edges.

There are three types of cavities in the case of $A_{2}A’A’’_{2}B_{2}O_{12}$ with a ratio of 2 : 1 : 1. Therefore, such perovskites have intrinsic triple A-site ordering. The A site has a ten-fold coordination (plus two very long bond lengths), and both A’ and A” sites have four very short A’–O and A”–O bond lengths with similar values of 1.9–2.1 Å, four much longer bond lengths, and four very long bond lengths (in total, still twelve). The four very short A’–O bond lengths form a square-planar coordination. However, the four very short A”–O bond lengths form a tetrahedral coordination (Fig. 2c). Therefore, the A’ and A” sites have fundamentally different coordination environments, and they should be distinguished even though they have similar bond lengths. The AO$_{10}$ polyhedra are connected through edges and form chains (columns) along the $c$ axis. The AO$_6$ squares and AO$_{10}$ tetrahedra are separated from each other, but they are connected through the longer A’–O bonds to form chains (columns) along the $c$ axis. Because of the existence of the $\text{AO}_{10}$–$\text{AO}_{10}$ columns and the $\text{A}’\text{O}_{4}$–$\text{A}’\text{O}_{4}$ columns (or columns consisting of isolated AO$_6$ and AO$_{10}$ units), $A_{2}A’A’’_{2}B_{2}O_{12}$ perovskites can be called A-site columnar-ordered perovskites. Connections of the AO$_{10}$ and AO$_6$ polyhedra through edges, the AO$_{10}$ and AO$_{10}$ polyhedra through corners and the AO$_{10}$–AO$_{10}$ columns through corners create a 3D network. Tetrahedral coordination is usually not realized in oxygen-stoichiometric ABO$_3$ perovskites; only the removal of oxygen in ordered manners creates tetrahedral sites.4
perovskites are oxygen-stoichiometric perovskites with tetrahedral sites.

Known examples and expected compositions of A₂A′A″B₄O₁₂

The number of reported A₂A′A″B₄O₁₂ perovskites is so limited at the moment that they all can be simply listed here (for example, in the chronological order of discovery and in the short formulae): CaFeTi₂O₆ (space group P4₂/nmc),⁹⁻¹⁰⁻¹⁹⁻²⁰⁻²⁷ CaMnTi₂O₆ (space group P4₂/nmc),²¹⁻²⁸⁻²⁹ RnMnSnBO₆ (R = La, Pr, Nd and Sm) (space group P4₂/nmc),²² RMnGaTiO₆ (R = Sm and Gd) (space group P4₂/nmc),¹⁸ RMnMn₂O₆ = RMn₂O₆ (R = Gd-Tm and Y) (space group Pmmn),²³ CaMnFeReO₆,²⁴ CaMnMnReO₆ and Ca₃CuMnFe₂Re₂O₁₂ (space group P4₁/nmc).²⁴ We recently prepared R₃⁺₂Mn³⁺Mn²⁺[Mn³⁺₂Ti⁴⁺₁]₆O₁₂ (space group P4₁/nmc), R₃⁺₂Mn³⁺Ga³⁺[Mn³⁺₄]₆O₁₂ (space group P4₁/nmc) and R₃⁺₂Cu²⁺Mn²⁺[Mn³⁺₄]₆[Sn⁺⁴₃]₂B₂O₁₂ (space group Pmmn), where [B] means the presence of one B site and [B₁][B₂] means a B-site order.¹⁰ (We note that it was not possible to precisely determine the degree of Cu²⁺ and Mn²⁺ ordering and Mn³⁺ and Ga³⁺ ordering in the last two compounds with X-ray powder diffraction).

Because of the similarities in the B sublattice (Fig. 1), it is expected that the B site of A₂A′A″B₄O₁₂ can be occupied by most of the B-type cations for perovskites and their different combinations (a list of examples is given in the second paragraph of Introduction).

The A sites in all three families retain large environments with some variations in the coordination numbers. Therefore, it is expected that the A site of A₂A′A″B₄O₁₂ can be occupied by many typical A cations for perovskites (a list of examples is

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**Fig. 1** Connections of BO₆ octahedra along different directions in (a) ABO₃ simple perovskites, (b) A₂A′₂B₄O₁₂ quadruple perovskites and (c) A₂A′A″B₄O₁₂ quadruple perovskites, emphasizing different tilt systems. A, A′ and A″ sites are shown by spheres. SG: space group.
given in the second paragraph of Introduction). Despite the twelve-fold coordination of the A site in AA′3B4O12, we are not aware of any such perovskites with A = Ba2+. This fact shows that strong and almost fixed tilts of the BO6 octahedra put additional limits on the size of A-type cations that can be forced into the A site. All rare-earth elements (except Ce and Pm) and Ca2+ were found so far at the A site of AA′AA″B4O12. The size of Na+ is close to those of Ca2+ and La3+13,24 therefore, we can also expect such compounds with A = Na+. We also emphasize that depending on compositions at the A′, A″ and B sites, ranges of stability of AA′AA″B4O12 (A = R = rare-earths) vary from R = La–Sm22 for RMnMnSbO6 to R = Gd–Tm and Y23 for RMnMn2O6 (in all cases, we always mean the synthesis conditions used; stability ranges can change if the synthesis pressure is increased or other conditions are altered). It means that a number of different rare-earth elements should always be checked when preparing such compounds with different B-site contents. A similar tendency was also observed in AA′3B4O12: for example, RMn4(AlTi3)O12 is formed for R = La–Sm, but not for R = Gd–Lu;14 RMn2O3 is formed for R = La–Er and Y, but not for R = Tm–Lu.23 On the other hand, RCu3Mn3O12 can be prepared for all R at a relatively low pressure of 2 GPa.35

The A′O4 sites of AA′A′′B4O12 and AA′AA″B4O12 are identical. Therefore, it is expected that they can be occupied by the same cations. They are listed and highlighted by bold letters in Table 1, which also gives some other cations with a possible square-planar coordination. We note that there are reports about the presence of Li+ (e.g., in (Li1.333Cu1.333)Ta4O12)36 and very small amounts of Fe3+ and Ti4+ at the A′ site of AA′3B4O12.37,38 Mn3+, Cu2+, Fe2+ and Mn2+ were found so far in the A′ site of AA′AA″B4O12 quadruple perovskites.

Table 1. A list of some cations (in the order of increasing radius) that can have a square-planar oxygen coordination environment39 and their ionic radii

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cation</th>
<th>Radius (Å)</th>
<th>Cation</th>
<th>Radius (Å)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cu2+</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>Fe3+</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ni2+(LS)</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>Pd2+</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mn3+</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>Pb2+</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cu2+</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>Mn2+</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co2+</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>Ag+</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pt2+</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>Au3+</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cr2+</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Cr2+</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Radii are taken from ref. 34 (for the square-planar [SQ] coordination if available) except for Mn2+ and Cu2+ (rSQ[Mn2+/Cu2+]) = l(Mn/Cu-O) – r(O2−), where l(Mn–O) = 1.91 Å and l(Cu–O) = 1.88 Å are the average Mn–O and Cu–O bond distances in AMn2O3 and ACu3V3O12 quadruple perovskites (taking the four shortest Mn/O–Cu bonds and r(O2−) = 1.4 Å). Cations marked by bold letters (Cu2+, Mn3+, Cu2+, Co2+, Fe2+, Pd2+, Pb2+ and Mn2+) were found in the A′ site of AA′A′′B4O12 quadruple perovskites; note that Li+ (together with Cu2+)46 and very small amounts of Ti4+ and Fe3+ were also reported.37,38 Mn3+, Cu2+, Fe2+ and Mn2+ were found so far in the A′ site of AA′AA″B4O12 quadruple perovskites. LS: low-spin.
octahedral environments (similar to NiCr₂O₄ and CuCr₂O₄) can be stabilized at the A²⁺ site with an even stronger preference for such an environment.³⁹ Therefore, strong competition among cations can have a tetrahedral coordination, and their ionic radii can have a tetrahedral oxygen coordination environment³⁹ and their overlap.³⁹ Bold letters show cations found at the A²⁺ site of AA'B₄O₁₂ quadruple perovskites. HS: high-spin.

### Known distortions

The parent structure of AA'B₄O₁₂ has the space group Im3 (no. 204). All distortions from the direct group–subgroup relations are experimentally realized (except for the same Im3 symmetry with 6a_p × 6a_p × 6a_p) (Fig. 4). These distortions are exemplified in CaCu₃Ti₄O₁₂ (the parent structure),¹⁵,⁴⁰ CaCu₃Ga₂Sb₂O₁₂,⁴¹ Ce₀.₃Cu₃Ti₄O₁₂,⁴² [Li₁.₃₃Cu₁.₃₃]Nb₂O₁₂,³⁶ CaCu₃Fe₂O₁₂,⁴,³⁸ A²⁺Mn₇O₁₂ (A = Cd, Ca, Sr and Pb),³¹,³² and BiCu₂Mn₆.₈O₁₂.¹⁶ Most of these distortions are temperature-driven, that is, they are observed on cooling for a particular composition, and there exists a high-temperature parent modification. However, there are a few composition-driven distortions, that is, they are determined by a particular composition and take place during the synthesis.³¹,³² The I2₃ distortion in [Li₁.₃₃Cu₁.₃₃]Nb₂O₁₂ could be temperature-driven (caused by Nb displacements), but no evidence (no phase transitions to the parent structure) was reported;³⁶ this is why we call it composition-driven. There are a number of temperature-driven distortions that cannot be described by the direct group–subgroup paths, for example, in LaMn₇O₁₂ (Im3 ⇒ [Immm] ⇒ I2/m),⁴³ NaMn₇O₁₂ (Im3 ⇒ [Immm] ⇒ [I2/m] ⇒ C2/m),⁴,⁴⁵ and BiMn₇O₁₂ (Im3 ⇒ [Immm] ⇒ I2/m ⇒ Im ⇒ I1).⁴⁶ and there is one such composition-driven distortion in Cu₂⁺Ta₂O₁₂ (Im3 ⇒ [Pm3] ⇒ Pmmm),³⁷ where space groups in parentheses give group–subgroup links. Despite a large number of AA'B₄O₁₂-type compounds, proper polar distortions are realized only in one case of BiMn₇O₁₂ due...
The parent structure of $A_2A^+B_4O_{12}$ has the space group $P4_2/nmc$ (no. 137). There are seven distortions from the direct group–subgroup relations (except for the same $P4_2/nmc$ symmetry with $2a_p \times 2a_p \times 6a_d$ and $6a_d \times 2a_p \times 2a_p$) (Fig. 5). Three of them have already been found experimentally. Surprisingly, a temperature-driven proper polar distortion takes place in CaMnTi$_2$O$_6$ without any effects of lone electron pairs. This is a quite promising fact in comparison with the $A_2A^+B_4O_{12}$ family. Rock-salt B-site (space group $P4_2/n$) and layered B-site (space group $Pmnn$) orders have already been realized in $A_2A^+B_4O_{12}$. The reported $P4_2/n$ distortion is composition-driven. The $Pmnn$ distortion in RMnMn$_2$O$_6$ could be temperature-driven, but no evidence (no phase transitions to the parent structure at 630 K) was found so far; this is why we call it composition-driven. It is interesting that the $Pmnn$ model has potential for an additional 1:1 rock-salt A-site order (that is, it has two independent A sites: A1 and A2), which might be realized, for example, in a hypothetical compound $[\text{Ca}^{2+}]_3[\text{Bi}^{3+}]_3\text{Na}^+\text{Mn}^{2+}_2\text{Mn}^{2+}_2\text{Mn}^{2+}_2\text{Mn}^{3+}_2\text{Mn}^{3+}_2\text{Mn}^{3+}_2\text{O}_{12}$ (it is just given to illustrate compositional design principles). The polar $P4_2/nmc$ distortion has potential for an additional 1:1 columnar A-site order: $[\text{Na}^+]_3[\text{Nd}^{3+}]_3[\text{Mn}^{2+}]_3[\text{Mn}^{2+}]_3[\text{Mn}^{2+}]_3[\text{Ti}^{4+}]_4\text{O}_{12}$ (a hypothetical compound to illustrate compositional design principles). $A1\text{O}$ and $A2\text{O}$ distances in the $Pmnn$ (e.g., RMnMn$_2$O$_6$) and $P4_2/nmc$ (e.g., CaMnTi$_3$O$_6$) models are different; therefore, there might be driving forces for the ordering of cations with different oxidation states and sizes. The rock-salt A-site ordering is rare in $A_{2}A'B_{4}O_{12}$.

### Physical and chemical properties of $A_2A^+B_4O_{12}$

As already mentioned, CaMnTi$_3$O$_6$ crystallizes in a polar space group. This compound shows a structural phase transition from $P4_2/nmc$ to the parent $P4_2/nmc$ structure at 630 K. The phase transition is accompanied by sharp dielectric constant anomalies and the loss of second-harmonic generation signals. Moreover, a room-temperature ferroelectric P–E hysteresis loop was demonstrated. These results proved that CaMnTi$_3$O$_6$ is ferroelectric at a ferroelectric Curie temperature of 630 K. The shifts of Mn$^{2+}$ cations at the A site from the square-planar plane and Ti$^{4+}$ cations from the center of the TiO$_6$ octahedra are responsible for the polar distortion. Polarization was calculated to be about 0.3 C m$^{-2}$, and a highly tunable semiconducting energy band gap was predicted in CaMnTi$_3$O$_6$. The $P4_2/nmc$-to-$P4_2/nmc$ ferroelectric transition was also found at room temperature at about 7 GPa. Without the assistance from the B sublattice, the interaction among magnetic cations at the A’ and A” sites is usually very weak (at least, among Mn$^{2+}$): CaMnTi$_3$O$_6$ has the Néel...
temperature \( T_{\text{A,N}} \) of about 10 K,\(^{21}\) while SmMnGaTiO\(_6\) was reported to order at \( T_{\text{A,N}} = 3 \) K, and no ordering was found in GdMnGaTiO\(_6\).\(^{18}\) In the case of SmMnGaTiO\(_6\) and GdMnGaTiO\(_6\), even small disordering of Ga\(^{3+}\) and Mn\(^{2+}\) between the A’ and B sites could suppress a long-range magnetic ordering. On the other hand, magnetic interactions through Ti\(^{4+}\) could be enhanced in CaMnTi\(_2\)O\(_6\) resulting in higher \( T_\text{N} \) similar to a higher magnetic transition temperature in CaCu\(_4\)Ti\(_4\)O\(_{12}\) in comparison with CaCu\(_3\)Ge\(_3\)O\(_{12}\) and CaCu\(_3\)Sn\(_3\)O\(_{12}\).\(^{3,27}\) No cooperative long-range magnetic order of the parent compound, CaFeTi\(_2\)O\(_6\), was found down to 4.2 K.\(^{27}\)

The presence of magnetic cations at the B sites significantly enriched magnetic behaviours. First, the ordering temperature of Mn\(^{3+}\) at the A’ and A” sites can reach \( T_{\text{A,N}} = 70 \) K in CaMnFeReO\(_6\)\(^{24}\) and \( T_{\text{A,C}} = 100 \) K in CaMnMnReO\(_6\).\(^{24}\) Second, the magnetic ordering of Mn\(^{3+}\) at the A’ and A” sites can be either antiferromagnetic (\( T_{\text{A,N}} \) in CaMnFeReO\(_6\))\(^{24}\) or ferromagnetic (\( T_{\text{A,C}} \) in CaMnMnReO\(_6\))\(^{24}\) and \( T_c = 76 \) K in NdMnMnSbO\(_6\).\(^{22}\) Magnetic cations at the B sublattice can order first with much higher temperatures as in CaMnFeReO\(_6\) at \( 42 \) K driven by order of the Nd moments.\(^{22}\) Another interesting observation is that when the B site is solely occupied by Mn with the average oxidation state higher than +3, there seems to be a tendency for a layered B-site structure, and/or at the B site) for the same atom; examples with Mn known so far are: RMnMnO\(_6\), R\(_2\)MnMn\([\text{Mn}_3\text{Ti}]_B\)O\(_{12}\) and R\(_2\)CuMnMn\(_2\)O\(_{12}\). Mn\(^{3+}\) and Mn\(^{4+}\) at the A’ site can be distinguished by Mn-O bond lengths: \( l[\text{Mn}^{3+}\text{O}_6] \sim 2.1 \) Å and \( l[\text{Mn}^{4+}\text{O}_6] \sim 1.91 \) Å. Other good candidates for such same-atom charge-ordered scenarios are Cu, Co and Fe (Fig. 3). Another interesting observation is that when the B site is occupied by Mn with the average oxidation state higher than +3, there seems to be a tendency for a layered B-site ordering with the appearance of one layer consisting of highly distorted (by the Jahn–Teller effect) Mn\(^{3+}\)O\(_6\) octahedra.

Very few compositions of AA’B\(_2\)O\(_4\) can be prepared at ambient pressure (for example, \( [\text{Li}_{1.313}\text{Cu}_{1.333}\text{Nb}]_B\text{O}_{12.36} \), Cu\(_{1.47}\)Ta\(_4\)O\(_{12.47}\), CaMn\(_{1.47}\), and CaCu\(_3\)Ti\(_4\)O\(_{12.47}\)).\(^{3}\) The majority of AA’B\(_2\)O\(_4\) requires HP and HT synthesis conditions. All known A\(_2\)AA’B\(_2\)O\(_4\) require HP and HT conditions. They were prepared at 12 GPa–1670 K for CaFeTi\(_2\)O\(_6\),\(^{20}\) 7 GPa–1470 K for CaCu\(_3\)Ti\(_4\)O\(_{12}\),\(^{21}\) 10 GPa–1470 K for RMnMnSbO\(_6\),\(^{22}\) 6 GPa–1370 K for RMnGaTiO\(_6\),\(^{18}\) 6 GPa–1670 K for RMnMnReO\(_6\),\(^{23}\) and 10 GPa–1670 K for CaMnFeReO\(_6\) (and others).\(^{24}\)

The geometry of A\(_2\)AA’B\(_2\)O\(_4\) under synthesis conditions is crucial for the realization of ordering of different cations between the A’ and A” sites. In general, three situations are possible for compounds with the A\(_2\)AA’B\(_2\)O\(_4\) stoichiometry. First, the structure can have one crystallographic A site (e.g., with the maximum symmetry of \( Pmn\bar{m}m \) and \( a_p \sim a_p \times a_p \)). In this case, we will probably have GaFeO\(_4\)-type structures (simple ABO\(_3\) perovskites) with random distribution of all A cations at one site after quenching and pressure release.\(^{22}\) Second, the structure can have two crystallographic A sites with the 1:1 ratio (e.g., with \( P4/mnm \) symmetry and \( \sqrt{2}a_p \times \sqrt{2}a_p \times a_p \) considered in ref. 29). In this case, it is difficult to expect noticeable ordering of different cations between the A’ and A” sites. Third, the structure can have three A sites with the 2:1:1 ratio (e.g., with \( I4/mmm \) symmetry and \( 2a_p \times 2a_p \times 2a_p \)). In this case,
the ordering of different cations between the A’ and A” sites can be realized. If the second case takes place (for some compositions), a modification of synthesis conditions could help to increase the ordering. In most cases, samples are quenched after the synthesis, but slow cooling could drive (partial) ordering. We are not aware of any in situ HP and HT studies of either AA’3B6O12 or A2A’A”B6O12.

Some arguments in favor of the terminology

The AA’3B6O12 and A2A’A”B6O12 quadruple perovskites have many common structural features (Fig. 1 and 2). The parent structures of both families have the doubled lattice parameter along all three crystallographic directions, 2a_p × 2a_p × 2a_p, in comparison with a simple ABO3 perovskite with a_p ≈ 3.8 Å resulting in eight ABO3 formula units in their unit cell. The simplest composition with integer numbers can be written as AA’3B6O12 (Z = 2), corresponding to four ABO3 units. This is why such perovskites are called quadruple. This formula reflects the presence of the A and A’ cations with quite different coordination environments with the 1:3 ratio. Because 1 and 3 are odd numbers (and A and A’ are quite different cations), this formula is retained in the majority of cases. However, there are very few exceptions when A’ = A (for example, CuCu3V4O12 and MnMn3Mn4O12).³³,⁴⁸ For such cases, the formula can be reduced to simple ABO3 (Z = 8). However, this formal formula reduction does not eliminate the structural features of such perovskites – they still belong to the A-site-ordered quadruple perovskite family. Note that perovskites and perovskite-related compounds with the 1:3 B-site ordering can also be referred to as (B-site-ordered) quadruple perovskites.⁴⁹,⁵⁰ By analogy, the simplest composition with integer numbers can be written as A2A’A”B6O12 (Z = 2), which reflects quite different coordination environments for the A, A’, and A” sites with the 2:1:1 ratio. The A2A’A”B6O12 formula corresponds to quadruple perovskites. It turns out that A” = A’ in many cases for perovskites reported so far, and the formula can be reduced to the double perovskite one, AA’B6O3. However, this formal formula reduction does not reflect the structural features of such perovskites, which still belong to the A-site columnar-ordered quadruple perovskite family, A2A’A”B6O12, Ca3CuMnFe2Re2O12,²⁴ R2CuMnMn3Mn4O12 (or R2CuMnMn3O12)³⁰ and R2MnGaMnO12 (or R2GaMnO12)¹⁰ already require the quadruple formula to write them in integer numbers.

Conclusion

A-site columnar-ordered A2A’A”B6O12 quadruple perovskites are in the incipient stage of research. They can be considered as an extended and more complex version of the A-site-ordered AA’3B6O12 quadruple perovskites (with twelve-fold coordinated A and square-planar coordinated A’ sites) because A2A’A”B6O12 has ten-fold coordinated A and square-planar coordinated A’ sites plus an additional tetrahedrally coordinated A” site. This A” site gives an additional degree of freedom in A2A’A”B6O12 because the number of elements that can have a tetrahedral environment is larger than that with a square-planar environment. The A2A’A”B6O12 perovskites are the only oxygen-stoichiometric perovskites with tetrahedral sites. This article highlights great potential of A2A’A”B6O12 and gives some design principles.

Note added in proof

After this paper was accepted, the synthesis of ferroelectric Ca2–xMnxTl4O8 (x = 0.6) by a spark plasma sintering method was reported.⁵¹

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts to declare.

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