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# CUPERCONDUCTORS SUPERCONDUCTORS

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Man F. Yan Editor

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# Introduction

In the past eighteen months, there has been a phenomenal interest in ceramic superconductors. Scientific and technological contributions of ceramists to this fast growing field have been widely reported. In recognition of this increasing interest, the American Ceramic Society has held three different technical symposia on ceramic superconductors during the annual and fall meetings in the past year. The latest symposium on ceramic superconductors was held in Cincinnati, OH, on May 1-5, 1988. The timeliness and continued interest in this field was attested to by the total of 161 invited and contributed papers, which were scheduled into seventeen sessions. The plenary lecture by Dr. J. George Bednorz, the 1987 Nobel Laureate in Physics, attracted over 1000 attendees.

Based on the high level of interest on the part of the attendees, the American Ceramic Society decided to solicit papers from this symposium and from researchers working with ceramic superconductors and to publish these papers in a timely fashion. This volume is the result of that solicitation. It contains 62 papers, each of which was reviewed by at least one reviewer and many of which were revised prior to acceptance for publication. This volume is the second publication by the American Ceramic Society devoted to ceramic superconductors—the first was published in *Advanced Ceramic Materials* as Volume 2, Number 3B, July 1987.

Several papers in this volume report the recent advances in crystal chemistry and phase equilibria of the different classes of novel ceramic superconductors. A significant interest has been shown in oxidation kinetics and high temperature defect chemistries, which are important considerations in ceramic processing and superconducting properties. Magnetic and electrical properties of the ceramic superconductors have been documented in this book; these properties are also correlated with different chemical compositions and processing conditions. Conductivity data at microwave frequencies have been characterized. Mechanical properties of these ceramic superconductors and their interactions with the environment are addressed in several papers. The extensive material characterizations also provide a useful scientific basis for their technological applications.

Processing of these novel superconductors remains the primary focus of this volume. New crystal growth techniques, novel powder synthesis methods, ceramic densification, and microstructural development are described in depth. The fabrication and properties of polymer/ceramic composites are also reported; these composites may provide a new degree of freedom in the design and application of ceramic superconducting devices. Other diverse processing techniques are illustrated by papers on magnetron sputtering, screen printing, tape casting, and sol-gel spin coating methods to fabricate thin and thick film superconductors.

The low critical current density of ceramic superconductors is probably the most important factor in limiting their applications. Thus, a significant research effort has focused on increasing the critical current density of these superconductors, and many papers in this volume are devoted to solutions to this problem. For example, the Melt-Textured-Growth process for bulk ceramics and the Liquid-Gas-Solidification process for thick and thin films are described. These two methods provide microstructural configurations which have the highest critical current densities yet reported. Hot forging, hot pressing, and magnetic casting techniques are also shown to enhance the texture development and increase the critical current density in ceramic superconductors. Furthermore, several papers in this book provide useful analytical data to elucidate the effects of compositions, microstructures, and grain boundary chemistry on the critical current density of these novel ceramics.

The success of this volume is the result of the efforts of many people. I gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Ilhan Aksay, Harlan Anderson, Helen Chen, Dudley Chance, Ye Chou, Uma Chowdhry, David Johnson, Ronald Loehman, Donald Murphy, Mani Nair, Roger Poeppel, Catharine Rice, Jenifer Taylor, Harry Tuller, and Wayne Young in serving as session chairs at the symposium. Manuscripts submitted for publication were also reviewed by John Blendell, Allen Bruce, Daniel Button, Helen Chen, Yet Chiang, William Coblenz, Timothy Dinger, Stephen Freiman, Rosario Gerhardt, Andreas Glaeser, Gideon Grader, Michael Gyorgy, John Halloran, Carol Handwerker, Mark Harmer, Shin-Ichi Hirano, Jau Jean, Sungho Jin, David Johnson, Lynn Johnson, Hung Ling, Robert Newnham, Henry O'Bryan, George Peterson, Roger Poeppel, Ahmad Safari, Tom Shaw, Donald Smyth, Jenifer Taylor, Robert Vest, Eva Vogel, and Wayne Young. Furthermore, I am pleased to acknowledge the efforts of John Blum, Edwin Fuller, Cornelius Moynihan, Catherine Simmons, and Nancy Tighe in coordinating the co-sponsorship of this symposium among the Electronics, Basic Science, and Glass Divisions of the American Ceramic Society. I also thank Jan Graham and Bill Douglas for organizing the symposium, Pam Achter for managing the publication of this volume, and Su Yan for coordinating the correspondence with authors and reviewers. Their help is sincerely appreciated.

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# STRUCTURAL PATTERNS IN HIGH T SUPERCONDUCTORS

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#### ABSTRACT

It is proposed that the basic structural features of all of the high T superconducting oxides discovered so far can be described in terms of an extended Ruddlesden-Popper series of structures having the general formula mAO-nABO3, where A is some combination of large cations (Ba, Bi, Ca, Sr, or Tl) and B is Cu. This extension accommodates a variable number of AO layers in a sequence having the NaCl structure separating two-dimensional slabs having a variable number of ABO3 layers with the perovskite structure. The superconducting compositions can be characterized in terms of different values of the integers m and n, and their structures in terms of the corresponding numbers of sequential NaCl and perovskite layers.

#### INTRODUCTION

The number of high temperature superconducting oxide compositions has recently increased. In addition to the original  $\text{La}_2$ — $\text{Sr CuO}_4$ , and the subsequently discovered YBa $_2$ Cu $_3$ O $_6$ + $_x$ , there have now been added Bi-containing and Tl-containing compositions. All of these have highly defective structures, relative to fully occupied prototypes, and are thus of immediate interest to the defect chemist. It is important to note any structural patterns that exist in these materials. absence of a detailed theoretical model for superconductivity in these oxides, such patterns can assist in the search for additional superconducting oxides, and may even contribute to the development of a better theoretical understanding. Almost all of the presently known high T superconductors fit either the basic perovskite formula ABO, or are large-cation-rich relative to this composition. It will be shown that the structures of these materials can be related to a generalized form of the Ruddlesden-Popper (R-P) series of compounds (1), in which two-dimensional perovskite-like slabs are separated by layers of excess large-cation oxide in the NaCl structure. The approach will emphasize general patterns of the structures and will ignore deviations from ideality that result from minor distortions and displacements.

### COHERENCY BETWEEN THE PEROVSKITE AND NaC1 STRUCTURES

Thirty years ago, Ruddlesden and Popper described a series of structures in the Sr-Ti-O system that can be related to the general formula SrO-nSrTiO $_3$ , or Sr Ti O Nembers of the series thus include Sr TiO $_4$ , Sr Ti O Sr Ti O Nembers of the series thus include Sr TiO $_4$ , Sr Ti O Nembers of the series thus include Sr TiO $_4$ , Sr Ti O Nembers of the series thus include Sr TiO $_4$ , Sr Ti O Nembers of the series thus include Sr TiO $_4$ , Sr Ti O Nembers of Sr Ti O Nembers has the Kentral Structure, and the last member has the ideal perovskite structure. The structures can be described as two-dimensional slabs of perovskite-like structure, n unit cells thick, separated by a single layer of SrO in the NaCl structure. The structure of Sr Ti O is shown in Fig. 1. This homologous series of structures is an example of the persistence with which materials try to retain the essence of the perovskite structure, even when the composition differs widely from the ideal ABO stoichiometry (2).

The R-P structural series depends on a coherent relationship between the perovskite and NaCl structures. Two alternative unit cells for the perovskite structure are shown in Fig. 2. The top and bottom planes of both cells are emphasized with heavy lines and show that in version (A) they consist of aligned squares containing  $A_{\downarrow}0$ , centered on 0 with A at the corners. In version (B), these top and bottom planes are squares containing  $A0_{\downarrow}$ , centered on A with 0 at the corners. The actual stoichiometric content of the layers containing these squares is A0 in both cases. It is seen in Fig. 3 that these same types of squares exist in the NaCl structure, but that in this case they alternate back and forth from  $A0_{\downarrow}$  to  $A_{\downarrow}0$ . In the NaCl structure the  $A0_{\downarrow}$  and  $A_{\downarrow}0$  squares follow directly after one another, with no intervening material. In the perovskite structure, the  $A0_{\downarrow}$  or  $A_{\downarrow}0$  squares are separated by the  $B0_{\downarrow}$  part of the perovskite composition. The commonality of the  $A0_{\downarrow}$  and  $A_{\downarrow}0$  structural components makes it possible to switch from the perovskite structure to the NaCl structure, and vice versa, in a coherent way that is the essence of the R-P structures.

Examination of Fig. 1 shows that within the bottomost perovskite slab, the unit cell is defined by a vertical sequence of SrO<sub>4</sub> squares, centered on the Sr. Between the slabs, there is a lateral shift such that this transforms within the next perovskite slab into a vertical sequence of Sr<sub>4</sub>O squares, centered on the O. The sequence alternates from one perovskite slab to the next, and the slabs are alternately shifted laterally back and forth. Between the slabs, the shift from SrO<sub>4</sub> to Sr<sub>4</sub>O corresponds to the NaCl structure, as shown in Fig. 3. The insertion of this extra layer of SrO into the perovskite structure serves as a phase-shifter that displaces each perovskite slab laterally from its nearest neighbors. In the following discussion, it will be seen how the structures of the high T superconductors can be fit into this structural pattern.

## La-Sr-Cu-0

The 35 K superconductors, La 1-x Sr CuO $_4$  with x about 0.15, can be viewed as acceptor-doped La CuO $_4$ , with the latter in the first R-P (n=1), or K  $_2$  NiF  $_4$ , structure. An early view of a very similar

composition is shown in Fig. 4 (3). The material appears to maintain a nearly full O sublattice, so that the acceptor doping, i.e. Sr substituted for La, results in an elevation of the formal oxidation state of the Cu above the undoped value of +2. This is probably best considered as the formation of the equivalent number of holes that support the p-type conductivity of the material. In this case, the insertion of the alternate layers of large cation oxide having the NaCl structure gives an inherent layering of the structure that separates the Cu-O planes that are thought to contribute to the superconductivity.

# Y-Ba-Cu-O

The ideal perovskite YCuO2, with all of the Cu in the trivalent state, can be viewed as the prototype for the 95 K superconducting material commonly known as 1-2-3, and this is shown in Fig. 5a in the form of three successive unit cells  $_{13}^{13}$   $_{3}^{13}$  Cu $_{3}^{0}$ . This is then very heavily acceptor-doped, i.e. 2/3 of the Y is replaced by Ba , with a corresponding reduction of the O-content to YBa $_{2}^{13}$ Cu $_{3}^{13}$ 0, since the elevation of the oxidation state of the Cu above +3 is not a viable alternative. As shown in Fig. 5b, the oxygen that is missing relative to the perovskite structure is localized around the Y, which much prefers to be 8-coordinated, since it is too small for 12 coordination [the ionic radius, for 8-coordination for  $Y^{+3}$  is 0.1155 nm, compared with (4)]. It is important for the Y and Ba to order 0.156 nm for Ba' themselves in the sequence shown so that this localized oxygen deficiency separates the structure into the layers that seem to be essential for superconductivity. It is not possible to maintain the Cu in the +3 state at atmospheric pressure, so an additional oxygen is lost, giving the structure shown in Fig. 5c for the composition YBa<sub>2</sub>Cu<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>. This oxygen is lost from the top and bottom planes of the strūctūrė. If the vacancies are disordered within these planes, the structure is tetragonal, and the material is not superconducting; if they are ordered in parallel lines as shown, the structure is orthorhombic, and the material is superconducting. In order to obtain a superconducting material, it is necessary to anneal the oxide at low temperatures (near 500°C) in pure  $0_2$ , both to raise the oxygen content to nearly  $0_7$  (actually to about  $0_{6,92}$ ) and to give the orthorhombic, ordered structure. At this composition, the average oxidation state of the Cu is +2.33 ( $2\text{Cu}^{+2}$  +  $1\text{Cu}^{+3}$ ), but again, these do not correspond to individual species with different ionic charges, but to a corresponding concentration of hole species. The orthorhombic structure has both planes and chains of Cu-O, and it has been proposed that the latter are related to the high T of this structure. It is possible to further reduce the material to YBa<sub>2</sub>Cu<sub>3</sub>O<sub>6</sub>, in which all of the oxygen is missing from the top and bottom planes, as shown in Fig. 5d (5). This is a remarkably oxygen-deficient version of the perovskite structure, with ions facing each other in adjacent subcells through a layer of Cu without intervening oxygens. This composition represents a phase boundary for the system, since further reduction results in irreversible It has been shown that this is the stoichiometric decomposition. composition for this system, from a thermodynamic point of view, and that the superconducting compositions are oxygen-excess, p-type versions of this reference state (6).

# The Bi-Containing Materials

There have been reports of various superconducting compositions in the Bi-alkaline earth-Cu-O system. The earliest example had the approximate formula Bi\_Sr\_CuO\_6 and a T\_ of about 20 K (7). Major interest in this system was stimulated by the discovery of Bi\_Sr\_CaCu\_2O\_8 with a T\_ of 85 K (8-11). More recently, Bi\_Sr\_Ca\_2Cu\_3O\_{10} and BiSrCaCu\_2O\_x (12,13) have been reported with T\_s of about 110 K.

The structure of Bi<sub>2</sub>Sr<sub>2</sub>CaCu<sub>2</sub>0<sub>8</sub> has been described as orthorhombic with a and b about 5.4 Å, and c about 30 Å (9,11). In some cases a superstructure has been noted that extends the b axis to 5 x 5.4 = 27 Å (9-11). A notable feature of the structures of all of these materials is the presence of double Bi-O layers. This is not a new structural feature as indicated by the following quote from the fourth edition (1975) of "Structural Inorganic Chemistry", by Å. F. Wells (14): "--series of complex oxides with tetragonal or pseudotetragonal symmetry which all have the a dimension of the unit cell close to 3.8 Å, and are based on sequences of Bi<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> layers---interleaved with portions of perovskite-like structure." These so-called Bi-layer compounds have been of interest for some time for their piezoelectric properties. It will be seen that this quotation is a useful description of the Bi-containing superconductors, since the tetragonal symmetry can be viewed as an approximate subcell of the orthorhombic unit cell in the same way that the Å<sub>2</sub>O and AO<sub>4</sub> squares define a subcell of the NaCl structure (3.8 x  $\sqrt{2}$  = 5.4 $\sqrt{3}$ .

Tarascon et al. have described the structure of  $Bi_2Sr_2CaCu_2O_8$  in terms of the tetragonal subcell with a = 3.817 A and c = 30.6 A as shown in Fig. 6 (10). All of the investigators agree on the cation sequence along the c axis, although they differ somewhat on details of the symmetry. In this version, the Ca at the midpoint of the cell defines a mirror plane between the top and bottom halves that each contain the unit  $\text{Bi}_2\text{Sr}_2\text{CaCu}_2\text{O}_8$ . The Ca serves a similar purpose here as the Y does in the  $1-2^{2}$ 3 compound, in that every layer that contains Ca localizes a layer of missing oxygens at that level within an otherwise normal cubic perovskite cell, because of its preference for a coordination number of less than 12. Above and below the central perovskite-like cell centered on Ca is a layer of SrO, much like the SrO layers in the R-P series. However, rather than reverting then to another perovskite layer, the SrO layer is followed by two successive BiO layers. The SrO-BiO-BiO sequence follows a NaCl structural pattern of squares, SrO,-Bi,O-BiO,, before there is then a terminal perovskite-like cell centered on Cu, and with Sr on the top corners and Ca on the bottom corners. The oxygen that would normally be at the center of the bottom, Ca-containing plane is missing (as is the one that would be in the center of the topmost plane of the full unit cell). The sequence along the c axis is then: two successive Ca-Sr-Cu perovskite-like units, centered on the Cu, then a triple R-P type sequence of BiO-BiO-SrO, then a Ca-Cu perovskite-like unit, centered on Ca, then three more R-P layers, etc. The R-P layers, in the NaCl pattern, serve as lateral structural shifters, just as they do in the  $SrO-nSrTiO_3$  R-P series. The first layer would shift the next

perovskite unit laterally, the second will shift it back into alignment, and the third one shifts it again, so that in this structure, successive perovskite units are laterally shifted. This structure shares a feature in common with the Y-Ba-Cu-O material, in that there are two successive Cu-O planes, rather than only a single one as in La-Sr-Cu-O.

The structural pattern described above suggests that we should consider a more generalized version of the R-P formula, namely, mAO-nABO3, where there can be multiple NaCl-type layers, as well as multiple perovskite-type layers. The homologous series based on SrO-nSrTiO3 is then a special case with m = 1. Bi $_2$ Sr $_2$ CaCu $_2$ O8 can then be derived from the ideal prototype 3SrO-2SrCuO3, where the Cu is formally +4. This is relieved to Cu+3 by replacing 2SrO with 2BiO+, where the Bi+3 acts as a donor dopant. Another oxygen is lost, giving SrO-2BiO-2SrCuO25, and SrO is replaced by CaO to localize part of the missing oxygen. The oxidation state of the Cu is then formally +2, and to obtain the superconducting material it is raised to about +2.2 by oxidizing the material from O8 to O8 2 (9).

 $_{\rm Bi_2Sr_2Cu_0}$  and  $_{\rm Bi_2Sr_2Ca_2Cu_3O_{10}}$  have similar structures except that the two-dimensional perovskite-like slabs are only one perovskite unit thick in the former, and are three units thick in the latter. Their ideal prototypical formulas are then  $_{\rm 2Bi0 \cdot Sr0-SrCa_2Cu_3O_9}$ , or  $_{\rm 3AO-ABO_3}$  and  $_{\rm 3AO-3ABO_3}$ .

There has been a very recent report of a superconducting cubic perovskite that contains no Cu (15). Its formula was given as  $^{\text{Ba}}_{0.6}^{\text{K}}_{0.4}^{\text{BiO}}_{3}^{\text{with a T}}_{\text{c}}^{\text{of }30~\text{K}}.$ 

## The T1-Containing Materials

The Tl analogs of the Bi-containing materials have also been prepared, and they fit the same structural pattern, i.e.  ${\rm Tl_2Ba_2Cu0_6}$  (3AO-ABO\_3),  ${\rm Tl_2Ba_2CaCu_2O_8}$  (3AO-2ABO\_3), and  ${\rm Tl_2Ba_2Ca_2Cu_3O_{10}}$  (3AO-3ABO\_3) (16-18). Once again, the smaller Ca serves to localize planes of missing oxygen relative to the filled perovskite structure.

#### SUMMARY

It is suggested that almost all of the high temperature superconducting oxides reported to date can be treated as members of an extended version of the Ruddlesden-Popper family of structures that provides for a variable number of AO layers in sequence as well as the usual variable number of ABO<sub>3</sub> layers in sequence. The generalized formula is then mAO-nABO<sub>3</sub>, and the stoichiometries of the superconducting compounds correspond to four different combinations of m and n along with some systematically missing oxygens. These compounds are summarized below:

Compound	ideal prototype mAO-nABO <sub>3</sub>	m:n	% missing oxygen	T <sub>c</sub>
La <sub>1.85</sub> Sr <sub>0.15</sub> CuO <sub>4</sub>	A0-AB0 <sub>3</sub>	1:1	0	35 K
YBa <sub>2</sub> Cu <sub>3</sub> O <sub>7</sub>	ABO <sub>3</sub>	0:1	22	95 K
Bi <sub>2</sub> Sr <sub>2</sub> CuO <sub>6</sub>	3A'0-A"B0 <sub>3</sub>	3:1	0	12 K
	$3A' = Bi_2Sr$			
	A'' = Sr			
Bi <sub>2</sub> Sr <sub>2</sub> CaCu <sub>2</sub> O <sub>8</sub>	3A'0-2A"B0 <sub>3</sub>	3:2	11	85 K
	3A' = Bi2Sr			
	2A" = SrCa			
$^{\mathrm{Bi}}2^{\mathrm{Sr}}2^{\mathrm{Ca}}2^{\mathrm{Cu}}3^{\mathrm{O}}10$	3A'0-3A"B0 <sub>3</sub>	3:3	17	110 K
	3A' = Bi2Sr			
	$3A'' = SrCa_2$			
T1 <sub>2</sub> Ba <sub>2</sub> Cu0 <sub>6</sub>	3A'0•A"B0 <sub>3</sub>	3:1	0	84 K
	$3A' = Tl_2Ba$			
	A" = Ba			
T1 <sub>2</sub> Ba <sub>2</sub> CaCu <sub>2</sub> O <sub>8</sub>	3A'0-2A"B0 <sub>3</sub>	3.2	11	110 K
	$3A' = Tl_2Ba$			
	2A" = BaCa			
Tl <sub>2</sub> Ba <sub>2</sub> Ca <sub>2</sub> Cu <sub>3</sub> O <sub>10</sub>	3A'0-3A"B0 <sub>3</sub>	3.3	17	125 K
	3A' = Tl <sub>2</sub> Ba			
	$3A'' = BaCa_2$			
Ba <sub>0.6</sub> K <sub>0.4</sub> Bi <sub>0</sub> 3	ABO <sub>3</sub>	0:1	0	30 K

All of the materials contain Cu-O planes that in most cases are separated from one another by a plane that contains only a relatively small cation, Y or Ca , and no oxygen. The Cu in the Cu-O planes is (at least) 4-coordinate, although in La Sr CuO there are essentially complete octahedra around each Cu. In the other compounds there is a fifth, more distant, oxygen that could be considered to give an approximate 5-coordination in a square pyramidal configuration. It should be noted that none of the Bi and Tl-containing compounds have the Cu-O chains that had been thought to be important for high Tc superconductivity in the 1-2-3 compound. It has more recently been suggested that the number of successive Cu-O planes is an important factor in determining  $T_{\rm c}$ .

The one high T oxide reported to date that does not seem to fit this structural pattern is YBa $_2$ Cu $_4$ O $_8$  with a T of 80 K. This material is BO $_2$ -rich relative to ABO $_3$ , and thus does not correspond to the AO-rich R-P composition. The structure is still somewhat related, however, in that it contains double layers of perovskite-like structure, centered on Cu, with Y and Ba as the large cations. These are separated by double Cu-O layers with square planar Cu sharing edges within the layer. Thus Cu is serving the dual purpose of centering the perovskite cells, and of separating the perovskite layers in a way that is roughly analogous to that of the Bi and T\$\mathcal{L}\$. It is thus related to the 3A'O-2A"BO structures with 3A' = Cu\_Ba and 2A" = BaY and has a formal structural relationship with Bi $_2$ Sr $_2$ CaCu $_2$ O $_8$ . It has a T that is typical of those structures that have two adjacent perovskite cells.

There is a developing tendency to relate the T 's with the number of successive Cu-O "planes" in the structure. This is equivalent to the number of perovskite cells in sequence, since each perovskite cell has a  $\text{CuO}_2$  plane across its middle. The two descriptions are thus interchangeable.

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