A study of possible extra-framework cation ordering in Pbca leucite structures with stoichiometry RbCsX2+Si5O12 (X = Mg, Ni,Cd)

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A study of possible extra-framework cation ordering in *Pbca* leucite structures with stoichiometry RbCsX^{2+}Si$_5$O$_{12}$ (X = Mg, Ni, Cd).

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Leucites are silicate framework structures with some of the silicon framework cations partially replaced by divalent or trivalent cations. A monovalent extraframework alkali metal cation is also incorporated to balance the charges. We have previously reported *Pbca* leucite structures with the stoichiometries Cs$_2$$X^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ (X = Mg, Mn, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, Cd) and Rb$_2$$X^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ (X = Mg, Mn, Ni, Cd). These orthorhombic leucite structures have all the silicon and non-silicon framework cations completely ordered onto separate crystallographic sites. This structure has 5 distinct Si sites and 1 X site; there are also 2 distinct sites for the extra-framework Cs or Rb. We have recently synthesised leucite analogues with two different extra-framework cations, these have the stoichiometry RbCsX^{2+}Si$_5$O$_{12}$ (X = Mg, Ni, Cd). The initial Rietveld refinements assumed 50% Cs and 50% Rb on each of the two extra-framework cation sites. The refined structures for X = Ni and Cd have (within error limits) complete extra-framework cation site disorder. However, for X = Mg there is partial ordering of the extra-framework cation sites, the site occupancies are:- Cs1 0.37(3), Rb1 0.63(3), Cs2 0.63(3), Rb2 0.37(3).

I. INTRODUCTION

Synthetic anhydrous analogues of the silicate framework minerals leucite ($KAlSi_2O_6$) and pollucite ($CsAlSi_2O_6$) can be prepared with the general formulae $A_2BSi_5O_{12}$ and $ACSi_2O_6$; where A is a monovalent alkali metal cation, B is a divalent cation and C is a trivalent cation. These structures all have the same topology with B and C cations partially substituting onto tetrahedrally coordinated sites (T-sites) in the silicate framework and charge balancing A cations sitting in extra-framework channels. The A cations can be replaced by ion exchange, Cs containing silicate framework minerals are of potential technological interest as storage media for radioactive Cs from nuclear waste (Gatta *et al*, 2008).

We have used X-ray and neutron powder diffraction to determine and Rietveld refine the ambient temperature crystal structures of leucite analogues with the general formulae $A_2BSi_5O_{12}$ and $ACSi_2O_6$. Crystal structures have been refined in the $Ia\bar{3}d$ cubic and $I4_1/a$ tetragonal space groups (A = K, Rb, Cs; B = Mg, Mn, Co, Cu, Zn; C = Fe^{3+}; Bell *et al*; 1994a, 2010; Bell and Henderson; 1994ab, 2018). These structures all have **disordered** T-site cations and also have A cation sites fully occupied with either K, Rb or Cs. Crystal structures have also been refined at ambient temperature for $P2_1/c$ monoclinic crystal structures of leucite analogues with the general formulae $A_2BSi_5O_{12}$ (A = K, B = Mg, Fe^{2+}, Co, Zn; Bell *et al*; 1994a, Bell and Henderson; 2018) and also for $Pbca$ orthorhombic (A = Rb; B = Mg, Mn, Ni, Cd; Bell and Henderson; 1996, 2009, 2016) and (A = Cs; B = Mg, Mn, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, Cd; Bell *et al*; 1994b, 2010, Bell and Henderson; 1996, 2009.) These structures all have **ordered** T-site cations and also have A cation sites fully occupied with either K, Rb or Cs. $Cs_2ZnSi_5O_{12}$ undergoes a reversible phase transition from $Pbca$ to $Pa\text{-}3$ on heating to 566K (Bell and Henderson, 2012). $K_2MgSi_5O_{12}$ undergoes a phase transition from $P2_1/c$ to $Pbca$ on heating to 622K (Redfern and Henderson, 1996).

In this paper we report the Rietveld refinements of the $Pbca$ crystal structures of three more tectosilicate, cation-ordered leucite analogues with both Rb and Cs on the A cation sites; these have the stoichiometry of $RbCsX^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ (X = Mg, Ni, Cd). The $Pbca$ structure has two different sites for A cations, this study is to discover whether these sites have Rb and Cs cation order?

II. EXPERIMENTAL

A. Sample synthesis.

$Rb_2X^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ and $Cs_2X^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ were prepared from appropriate stoichiometric mixtures of Rb_2CO_3, Cs_2CO_3, SiO_2, and XO (X = Mg, Ni, Cd; Bell *et al*, 1994b; Bell and Henderson; 1996, 2009, 2016) and then 50:50 mixtures of the Rb and Cs samples were made for each of the three pairs of samples with the same X^{2+} cation. For X = Ni the starting materials were both glasses, the mixture was sealed in a gold capsule and heated in a furnace at 1173 K for 7 days. For X = Cd and Mg the starting materials were both crystalline, the mixtures were

sealed in a gold capsule (X = Cd) or a Pd-Ag alloy capsule (X = Mg) and these were heated in a furnace at 1173 K for 6 hours.

B. X-ray Powder Diffraction data collection.

After heating the samples were removed from the metal capsules, ground with a mortar and pestle and then mounted on low-background silicon wafers with a drop of acetone prior to ambient temperature X-ray powder diffraction. Data were collected for the X = Mg and Cd samples with a PANalytical X'Pert Pro MPD using Cu $K\alpha$ X-rays, a graphite monochromator and a 2.122 °2θ wide 100 channel X'Celerator area detector. For X = Mg data were collected in 8 scans lasting 61 hours in total which were summed together. These data were collected over the range 10-100 °2θ with a step width of 0.0167 °2θ and an effective counting time of 5150 seconds per point. The beam size was defined with a 20mm mask, fixed antiscatter (¼ °) and divergence (⅛ °) slits. For X = Cd data were collected in 8 scans lasting 64 hours in total which were summed together. These data were collected over the range 10-100 °2θ with a step width of 0.0167 °2θ and an effective counting time of 5570 seconds per point. The beam size was defined with a 15mm mask, fixed antiscatter (¼ °) and divergence (⅛ °) slits. For the X = Ni sample data were collected with a PANalytical Empyrean diffractometer using Co $K\alpha$ X-rays with an iron β-filter and a 3.3473 °2θ wide 255 channel PIXEL-3D area detector. Data were collected in 2 scans over 28 hours. These data were collected over the range 15-100 °2θ with a step width of 0.0131 °2θ and an effective counting time of 2487 seconds per point, the beam size was defined with a 20mm mask, fixed divergence antiscatter (¼ °) slit and automatic divergence slit with a 20mm long beam footprint. These diffracted intensities for the X = Ni sample were summed and then converted from automatic divergence slit mode to fixed divergence slit mode in High Score Plus (PANalytical, 2009) prior to data analysis. No smoothing or α$_2$ stripping was done on any of these data. Both diffractometers were calibrated with an external NIST 640e silicon standard.

C. X-ray Powder Diffraction data analysis.

Analyses of the summed powder diffraction data for each sample showed that all samples were single-phase and isostructural with the *Pbca* structure of $Cs_2CdSi_5O_{12}$ (Bell *et al*, 1994b). Rietveld refinements were done using FULLPROF (Rodríguez-Carvajal, 1993), using the structures of $Rb_2XSi_5O_{12}$ (Bell and Henderson; 1996, 2009, 2016) as starting models but with half the Rb replaced by Cs. Backgrounds were fitted by linear interpolation between a set of background points with refinable heights. The Thompson-Cox-Hastings Pseudo-Voigt function (van Laar and Yelon; 1984), convoluted with asymmetry due to axial divergence (Finger *et al*, 1994), was used to model the profile shape. For X = Mg data over the range 10-71.5 °2θ were used for data analysis as there were no visible Bragg reflections above 71.5 °2θ. For X = Cd the whole 10-100 °2θ range was used and for X = Ni the whole 15-100 °2θ range was used. Soft distance restraints were used on the Si-O and X-O distances. Si-O distances were restrained at 1.61±0.01Å; this distance is intermediate over the typical distance for tetrahedrally coordinated Si-O in framework silicates (1.59-1.63Å; *International Tables for X-ray Crystallography,* 1985, Vol. III). Ni-O and Mg-O distances were restrained at 1.89±0.01Å; these distances are similar to those determined for X = Ni (Bell and

Henderson; 1996, 2016), $K_2MgSi_5O_{12}$ (Bell *et al*, 1994a) and $Cs_2MgSi_5O_{12}$ (Bell and Henderson; 2009) leucites. Cd-O distances were restrained at 2.23±0.01Å; these distances are similar to those determined for X = Cd (Bell *et al*, 1994b; Bell and Henderson; 2009, 2012) leucites.

In these Rietveld refinements all atoms were located on the *Pbca* 8c Wyckoff general position. There are two distinct extraframework alkali metal cation sites for Rb and Cs. There are six T-sites, one for divalent X^{2+} cations and five for silicon cations, there are also twelve oxygen anion sites. Isotropic atomic displacement parameters were constrained to be the same for all sites occupied by silicon. Isotropic atomic displacement parameters were also constrained to be the same for all sites occupied by oxygen. As there is only one X^{2+} cation site then this site had no constraint on the isotropic atomic displacement parameter. Initial refinements had 50% Rb and 50% Cs on each of the two extraframework alkali metal cation sites, these site occupancies were allowed to refine but were constrained so that the sum of the occupancies for each element over the two sites was 100%. Isotropic atomic displacement parameters were constrained to be the same for Rb and Cs on the same alkali metal cation site but different to the isotropic atomic displacement parameters for Rb and Cs on the other alkali metal cation site. VESTA (Momma and Izumi, 2011) was used to plot crystal structures.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

Crystal structures have been refined for $RbCsX^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ (X = Mg, Ni, Cd) leucite analogues from X-ray powder diffraction data. All are isostructural with their *Pbca* $Rb_2XSi_5O_{12}$ and $Cs_2XSi_5O_{12}$ analogues, with divalent X cations ordered onto separate T-sites than those occupied by Si. Table 1 shows the comparison of the refined lattice parameters and A cation site occupancies for $RbCsX^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ compared to the published values for $Rb_2XSi_5O_{12}$ (Bell and Henderson; 1996, 2009, 2016) and $Cs_2XSi_5O_{12}$ (Bell and Henderson; 1996, 2009; Bell *et al*, 1994b). Table 2 similarly shows refined interatomic distance and angles; the mean X-O and Si-O distances are close to the constraint distances, the mean O-X-O and O-Si-O angles are close to the ideal tetrahedral angle of 109.47°. Table 3 similarly shows the tetrahedral angle variances for the X and Si sites (Robinson *et al*, 1971) in the silicate framework structures.

A. $RbCsMg^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ structure.

Figures 1 and 2 respectively show the Rietveld difference and the VESTA crystal structure plots for the refined crystal structure of $RbCsMg^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$, in Figure 2 light blue (Cs^+) and pink (Rb^+) shadings show the occupancies of the two A cation sites. Table 1 shows that this crystal structure has a unit cell volume which is approximately intermediate between those for $Rb_2Mg^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ and $Cs_2Mg^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$. The refined occupancies of the two extraframework A sites are:- Rb1 0.63(3), Cs1 0.37(3); Rb2 0.37(3), Cs2 0.63(3); there is some partial, but not complete, ordering of these occupancies. The greater occupancy of the larger Cs^+ cation

on the extraframework $A2$ cation site is reflected in the larger $A2$-O distance compared to $A1$-O (see Table 2). Table 2 also shows that the mean Si-O-Si and Si-O-X angles are similar for all X = Mg structures. Table 3 shows that the MgO_4 tetrahedron in the silicate framework structure for $RbCsMg^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ is less distorted than those for $Rb_2Mg^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ and $Cs_2Mg^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$.

B. $RbCsNi^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ structure.

Figures 3 and 4 respectively show the Rietveld difference and the VESTA crystal structure plots for the refined crystal structure of $RbCsNi^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$, in Figure 4 light blue (Cs^+) and pink (Rb^+) shadings show the occupancies of the two A cation sites. Table 1 shows that this crystal structure also has a unit cell volume which is approximately intermediate between those for $Rb_2Ni^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ and $Cs_2Ni^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$. The refined occupancies of the two extraframework A sites are:- Rb1 0.49(6), Cs1 0.51(6); Rb2 0.51(6), Cs2 0.49(6). Within error limits there is complete disorder of these occupancies. For X = Ni the A-O distances for each of the 2 extraframework A cation sites are the same within error limits reflecting the disorder of Rb and Cs over these 2 sites. Table 2 also shows that the mean Si-O-Si angles are similar for all X = Ni structures but the corresponding Si-O-X angles are all smaller. The Si-O-X angle for $Rb_2Ni^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ is smaller than those for $RbCsNi^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ and $Cs_2Ni^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$. Table 3 shows that the NiO_4 tetrahedron in the silicate framework structure for $RbCsNi^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ is slightly less distorted than those for $Rb_2Ni^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ and $Cs_2Ni^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$.

C. $RbCsCd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ structure.

Figures 5 and 6 respectively show the Rietveld difference and the VESTA crystal structure plots for the refined crystal structure of $RbCsCd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$, in Figure 6 light blue (Cs^+) and pink (Rb^+) shadings show the occupancies of the two A cation sites. Table 1 shows that this crystal structure has a unit cell volume larger than that for $Rb_2Cd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ (Bell and Henderson, 1996) and smaller than that for $Cs_2Cd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ (Bell et al, 1994). However, table 1 shows that this crystal structure has a unit cell volume much closer to (but still smaller) than that for $Cs_2Cd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ than that for $Rb_2Cd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$. The refined occupancies of the two extraframework A sites are:- Rb1 0.52(2), Cs1 0.48(2); Rb2 0.48(2), Cs2 0.52(2). Within error limits there is complete disorder of these occupancies, similar to $RbCsNi^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$. For X = Cd the A-O distances for each of the 2 extraframework A cation sites are also the same within error limits reflecting the disorder of Rb and Cs over these 2 sites. Table 3 shows that the CdO_4 tetrahedra in the silicate framework structure for $RbCsCd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ is less distorted than those for $Rb_2Cd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ and $Cs_2Cd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$. As was also seen for X = Ni, all X = Cd structures have larger mean Si-O-Si angles than the corresponding mean Si-O-X angles.

D. Comparison of $RbCsX^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ structures.

The refined structure for X = Mg shows that having two different extraframework cation species results in structural changes compared to the structures with only one type extraframework cation. There are different mean A-O distances for the two A sites and partial A site cation ordering. For all X = Mg structures (with both one and two different extraframework cation species) the mean Si-O-Si and Si-O-X angles are similar.

However the refined structures for both X = Ni and Cd have similar mean A-O distances for the two A sites and no A site cation ordering. For all X = Ni and Cd structures (with both one and two different extraframework cation species) the mean Si-O-Si angles are larger than the corresponding Si-O-X angles. We have reported (Bell and Henderson; 2018) that this is the usual relationship for ordered $P2_1/c$ leucites and reflects the presence of weaker X-O bonds in the tetrahedral framework leading to greater degrees of framework collapse about the cavity cation sites.

The refined unit cell volumes for the X = Mg and X = Ni (see Table 1) are approximately intermediate between the unit cell volumes for the corresponding structures with only one extraframework cation species. The unit cell volumes for the $Rb_2X^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ structures are smaller than the volumes for the $RbCsX^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ structures by approximately the same amount that the corresponding unit cell volumes are larger for $Cs_2X^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ structures. However for X = Cd (see Table 1) the unit cell volume for the $Rb_2Cd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ structure is much smaller than that for the $RbCsCd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ structure, and the unit cell volume for the $RbCsCd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ structure is almost as large as the volume for the $Cs_2Cd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ structure. This relationship might suggest that the framework is close to being fully expanded for a mean cavity cation radius slightly lower than that for Cs.

IV. CONCLUSIONS.

Crystal structures have been refined for $RbCsX^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$ (X = Mg, Ni, Cd) leucite analogues. These are isostructural with their $Pbca$ $Rb_2XSi_5O_{12}$ and $Cs_2XSi_5O_{12}$ analogues. For X = Mg there is partial ordering of the Rb and Cs cations over the alkali metal cation A sites. However, for X = Ni and Cd these alkali metal cations are completely disordered.

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Table 1 - refined lattice parameters and A site occupancies

cations		lattice parameters			
A^+	X^{2+}	a(Å)	b(Å)	c(Å)	V(Å^3)
Rb	Mg	13.422(1)	13.406(1)	13.730(1)	2470.5(4)
Rb Cs	Mg	13.5676(9)	13.7115(1)	13.5366(9)	2518.2(3)
Cs	Mg	13.6371(5)	13.6689(1)	13.7280(5)	2559.0(2)
Rb	Ni	13.469(3)	13.480(3)	13.442(2)	2440.6(8)
Rb Cs	Ni	13.5399(5)	13.563(1)	13.560(1)	2490.1(3)
Cs	Ni	13.6147(3)	13.6568(5)	13.6583(5)	2539.5(1)
Rb	Cd	13.4121(1)	13.6816(1)	13.8558(1)	2542.53(5)
Rb Cs	Cd	13.6935(3)	13.8030(3)	13.8592(4)	2619.6(1)
Cs	Cd	13.6714(1)	13.8240(1)	13.8939(1)	2625.86(6)

cations		A site cation occupancies			
A^+	X^{2+}	A1 Rb	A1 Cs	A2 Rb	A2 Cs
Rb	Mg	1	0	1	0
Rb Cs	Mg	0.63(3)	0.37(3)	0.37(3)	0.63(3)
Cs	Mg	0	1	0	1
Rb	Ni	1	0	1	0
Rb Cs	Ni	0.49(6)	0.51(6)	0.51(6)	0.49(6)
Cs	Ni	0	1	0	1
Rb	Cd	1	0	1	0
Rb Cs	Cd	0.52(2)	0.48(2)	0.48(2)	0.52(2)
Cs	Cd	0	1	0	1

Table 2 - refined interatomic distances and angles

cations		interatomic distances			
A^+	X^{2+}	A1-O(Å)	A2-O(Å)	X-O(Å)	mean Si-O(Å)
Rb	Mg	3.48(3)	3.50(3)	1.90(3)	1.62(4)
Rb Cs	Mg	3.45(5)	3.62(5)	1.90(3)	1.61(2)
Cs	Mg	3.51(4)	3.57(5)	1.87(5)	1.61(5)
Rb	Ni	3.37(6)	3.51(6)	1.90(2)	1.64(2)
Rb Cs	Ni	3.48(9)	3.5(1)	1.89(5)	1.61(5)
Cs	Ni	3.42(5)	3.5(1)	1.88(4)	1.63(5)
Rb	Cd	3.41(2)	3.45(2)	2.22(1)	1.61(2)
Rb Cs	Cd	3.50(3)	3.55(2)	2.24(2)	1.61(2)
Cs	Cd	3.47(2)	3.53(2)	2.24(2)	1.59(2)

cations		interatomic angles (°)			
A^+	X^{2+}	mean Si-O-Si	mean Si-O-X	mean O-Si-O	mean O-X-O
Rb	Mg	141(2)	144(2)	108(2)	113(1)
Rb Cs	Mg	144(1)	145(1)	109(3)	109(3)
Cs	Mg	146(1)	143(1)	109(3)	109(2)
Rb	Ni	143(2)	125(2)	108(4)	109(3)
Rb Cs	Ni	145(3)	135(2)	108(6)	109(5)
Cs	Ni	142(3)	135(3)	109(3)	110(2)
Rb	Cd	142(1)	121.1(9)	109.4(9)	109.7(6)
Rb Cs	Cd	145(1)	122.9(8)	109(2)	109(1)
Cs	Cd	147(2)	127(1)	109(1)	109.5(7)

Table 3 - tetrahedral angle variance

cations		O-T-O variance (T = X, Si)	
A^+	X^{2+}	σ^2 (X) deg^2	mean σ^2 (Si) deg^2
Rb	Mg	107	246(172)
Rb Cs	Mg	43	147(51)
Cs	Mg	80	151(136)
Rb	Ni	44	309(112)
Rb Cs	Ni	42	262(133)
Cs	Ni	47	79(13)
Rb	Cd	163	26(13)
Rb Cs	Cd	59	134(25)
Cs	Cd	94	47(23)

Tetrahedral angle variance [σ^2, deg^2]: $\sigma^2 = \Sigma(\theta-109.47)^2/5$ (Robinson *et al*, 1971) where θ is the O-T-O tetrahedral angle. Mean variance and standard deviation is given for the 5 Si tetrahedral sites in each structure.

Figure captions

Figure 1. Rietveld difference plot for $RbCsMg^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$. Blue circles represent observed data points, red line represents calculated data points, green line represents difference curve and purple crosses represent positions of Bragg reflections. R-factors for this refinement were:- R_p =1.2305, Rwp = 1.5794, R_{exp} = 1.6182, χ^2 = 0.9526. Miller indices are shown for some of the stronger peaks in the powder diffraction plot.

Figure 2. VESTA structure plot for $RbCsMg^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$, viewed down [111] showing a channel for extraframework Rb^+ and Cs^+ cations. SiO_4 tetrahedra are shown in blue, MgO_4 tetrahedra are shown in orange with O^{2-} anions are shown in red. Pink (Rb^+) and light blue (Cs^+) shadings show the occupancies of the two A cation sites.

Figure 3. Rietveld difference plot for $RbCsNi^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$. Blue circles represent observed data points, red line represents calculated data points, green line represents difference curve and purple crosses represent positions of Bragg reflections. R-factors for this refinement were:- R_p =1.6058, Rwp = 2.7720, R_{exp} = 0.8916, χ^2 = 9.6659. Miller indices are shown for some of the stronger peaks in the powder diffraction plot.

Figure 4. VESTA structure plot for $RbCsNi^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$, viewed down [111] showing a channel for extraframework Rb^+ and Cs^+ cations. SiO_4 tetrahedra are shown in blue, NiO_4 tetrahedra are shown in grey with O^{2-} anions are shown in red. Pink (Rb^+) and light blue (Cs^+) shadings show the occupancies of the two A cation sites.

Figure 5. Rietveld difference plot for $RbCsCd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$. Blue circles represent observed data points, red line represents calculated data points, green line represents difference curve and purple crosses represent positions of Bragg reflections. R-factors for this refinement were:- R_p =3.5399, Rwp = 4.5294, R_{exp} = 3.0185, χ^2 = 2.2516. Miller indices are shown for some of the stronger peaks in the powder diffraction plot.

Figure 6. VESTA structure plot for $RbCsCd^{2+}Si_5O_{12}$, viewed down [111] showing a channel for extraframework Rb^+ and Cs^+ cations. SiO_4 tetrahedra are shown in blue, CdO_4 tetrahedra are shown in green with O^{2-} anions are shown in red. Pink (Rb^+) and light blue (Cs^+) shadings show the occupancies of the two A cation sites.