

The Crystal Structure of Silver Permanganate*

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The crystal structure of silver permanganate, AgMnO_4 , as reported by Sasvari, has been found to be incorrect. A new structure has been determined from three-dimensional X-ray intensity data. Compared with the original structure, the positions of the Ag and Mn atoms are interchanged while altogether new positions have been assigned to the oxygen atoms. Refinement with partial anisotropic thermal motion parameters has decreased R to below 0.09. The tetrahedral permanganate group is regular to within the experimental error, and has an average Mn–O bond length of $1.61 \pm 0.01 \text{ \AA}$ (not corrected for thermal motion).

Introduction

The original determination of the structure of silver permanganate by Sasvari (1938), was based on 140 re-

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flexions obtained from X-ray oscillation photographs about the three crystallographic axes. Assuming regular tetrahedral permanganate groups, packing arguments led to the structure shown in Fig. 1. Although monoclinic (space group $P2_1/n$ with $\beta = 92\frac{1}{2}^\circ$), the structure was considered to be a slight distortion of the orthorhombic barite structure (Wyckoff, 1965), which is also the structure type of the related substance, potassium permanganate (Ramaseshan, Venkatesan & Mani, 1957), shown in Fig. 2.

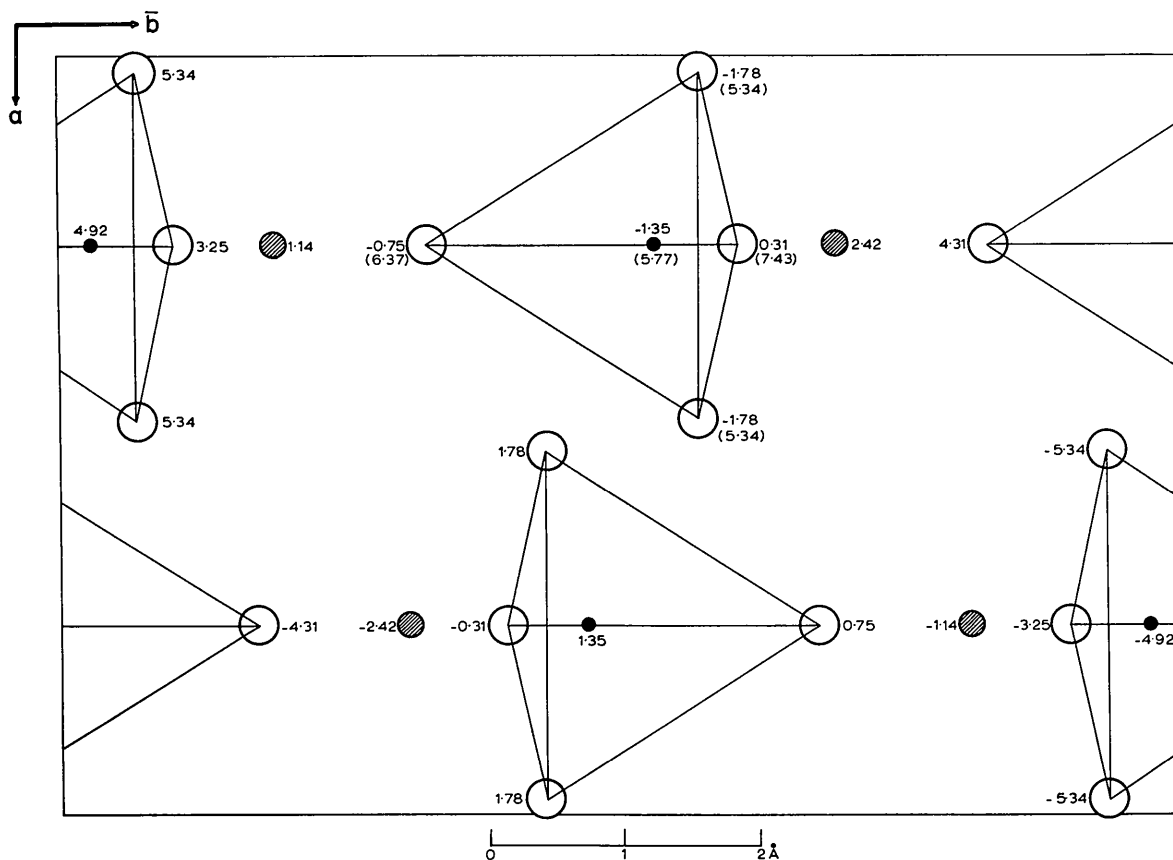


Fig. 1. The structure of silver permanganate, in the [001] projection with z coordinates of the atoms given in Å , after Sasvari. The large open circles represent the oxygen atoms, the small black circles the manganese while the shaded circles represent the silver atoms.

The R value for Sasvari's structure determination of silver permanganate is calculated as 0.34, while the Mn-O distances in the permanganate group vary from 1.4 to 1.8 Å. The structure cannot be refined, showing that serious errors probably exist in the data and the structure. In particular, the method of intensity measurement seems crude by present standards, no allowance was made for absorption corrections, which could be 50% for some reflexions, and the indexing was apparently done on a pseudo-orthorhombic lattice, since no negative indices were assigned.

There is thus considerable doubt as to the correctness of the reported structure. It is not surprising that the positions of the heavy atoms (silver and manganese) agree with those in potassium permanganate, but the oxygen positions seem suspect. The structure was therefore redetermined.

Experimental

Silver permanganate was prepared in the standard manner from silver nitrate and potassium permanganate. Suitable needle-shaped single crystals were selected under a polarizing microscope where they showed oblique extinction. The face development was usually imperfect with prominent striations and pits, so that accurate optical goniometry was not attempted. Crystals

were mounted on the goniometer head with the needle direction as the rotation axis.

Herbstein (unpublished) had previously checked the unit cell and space group given by Sasvari. In accordance with the earlier work, the needle direction is chosen as the c axis and the space group is $P2_1/n$ (related by transformation to $P2_1/c$, no. 14 in *International Tables for X-ray Crystallography*, 1952) where b is the unique monoclinic axis, and β is close to 90° . The cell constants were redetermined and the values used in the present study were $a=5.64$, $b=8.33$ and $c=7.12 \pm 0.02$ Å and $\beta=92.25 \pm 0.25^\circ$, where the errors indicate the approximate r.m.s. deviations of different measurements. The corresponding values given by Sasvari were $a=5.66$, $b=8.27$ and $c=7.12$ Å and $\beta=92^\circ 29.5'$. On the zero-level Weissenberg photograph the absence $I(hk0)=0$ for $k=2n+1$, expected for a barite-type structure, is obeyed only approximately. The structure therefore cannot have symmetry mg in the $[001]$ projection, as had been implied. A precession photograph showed clearly that $I(h0l) \neq I(h\bar{0}l)$, conflicting with another of Sasvari's simplifying assumptions.

A set of three-dimensional intensity data was collected on equi-inclination Weissenberg photographs with the multiple film technique. Mo $K\alpha$ radiation was used to minimize absorption corrections. The linear absorption

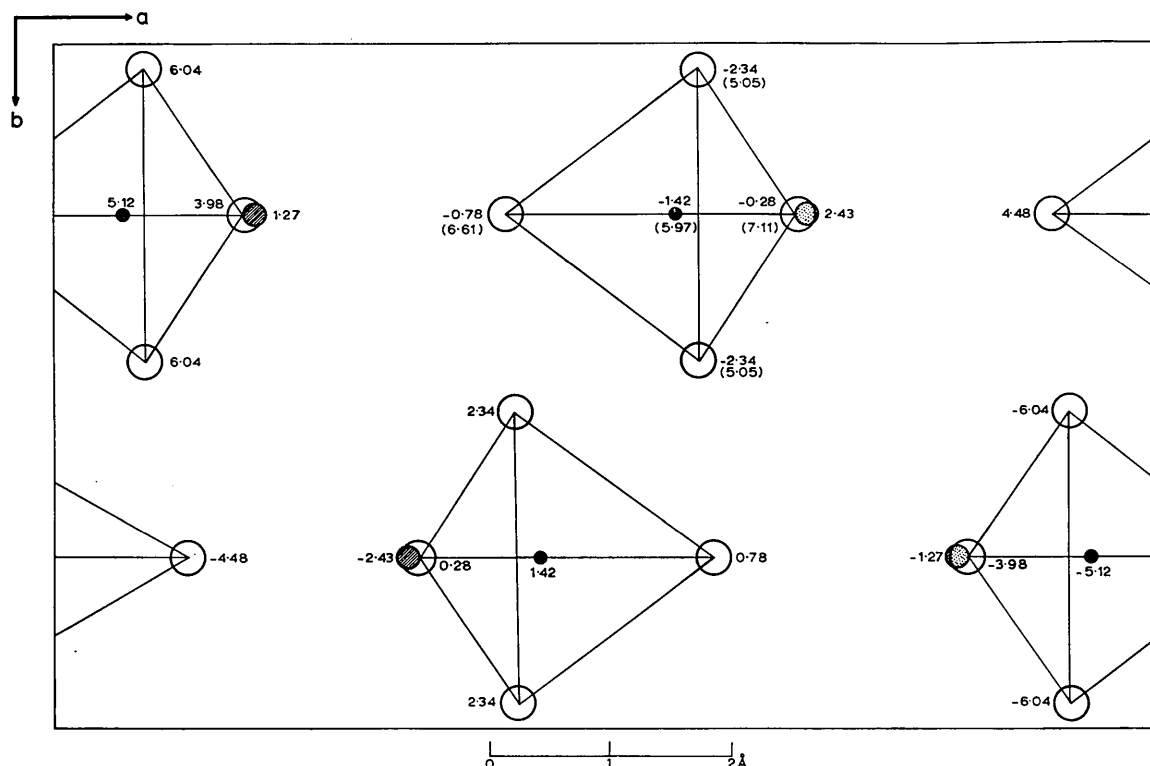


Fig. 2. The structure of potassium permanganate, after Ramaseshan, Venkatesan & Mani, drawn in the $[001]$ projection to facilitate comparison with silver permanganate above. (Same key as for Fig. 1, except that the shaded circles represent the potassium atoms.)

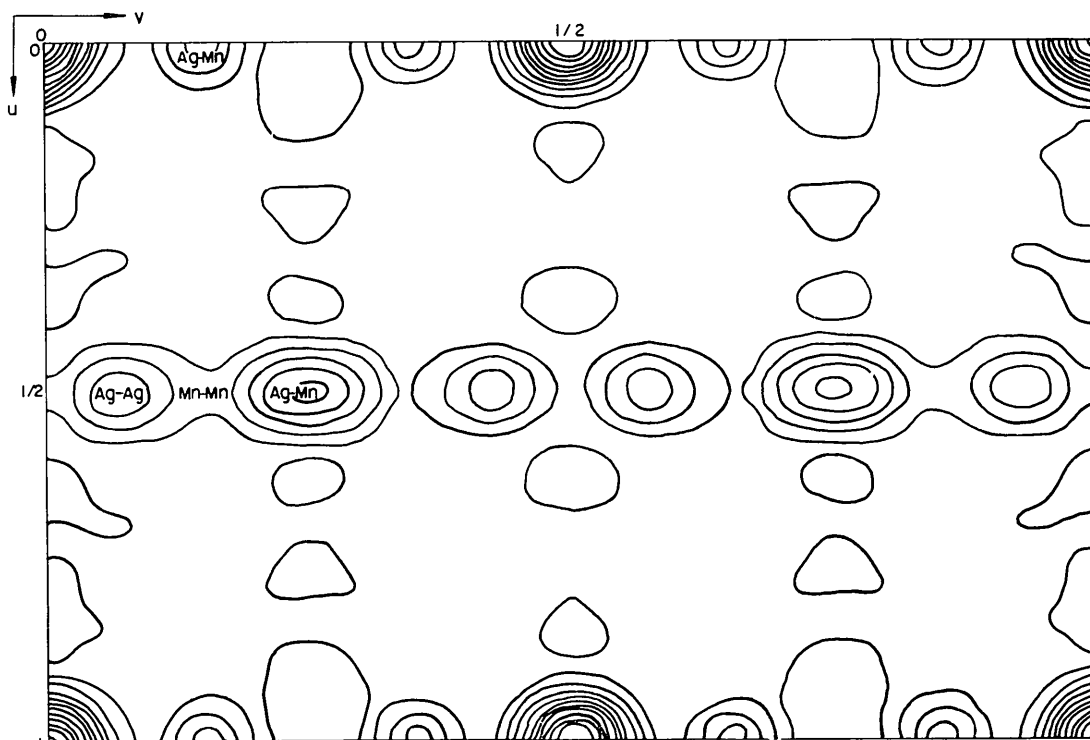


Fig. 3. The Patterson projection $P(uv)$ of silver permanganate. Contours are all positive, and drawn at equal but arbitrary intervals

coefficient of silver permanganate for this radiation is 95 cm^{-1} , and sufficient intensity was available with a crystal diameter somewhat less than 0.3 mm . With this radiation, the interfilm factor is too low to obtain a useful range in intensities. Hence metal foil 0.025 mm thick, was placed between the sheets in the multiple film pack to increase the interfilm factor to a value close to that normally obtained with $\text{Cu K}\alpha$ radiation. In order to save time, two cameras, each with its own crystal, were used simultaneously to record the different layer lines. Data from layers $hk0$ – 10 were used in subsequent calculations. A further two layers $hk11$, 12 were also photographed, but the data from these were not included since the photographs were of poor quality.

In view of the expected pseudo-orthorhombic symmetry of the structure, it was essential to use an indexing scheme that was internally consistent for the different layer lines. It was only necessary to ascertain the correct sign of the h index for each reflexion, since the k and l indices could always be chosen positive in view of the relationships $I(hkl) \equiv I(\bar{h}\bar{k}l) \equiv I(h\bar{k}l)$. This is naturally done subject to the requirement that $+\mathbf{a}$, $+\mathbf{b}$ and $+\mathbf{c}$ form a right-handed set of axes with $\beta > 90^\circ$. Complicating features were the β angle close to 90° , and the fact that two crystals were used on two cameras for which the directions of spindle rotation relative to carriage movement were in opposite senses. Different cross-checks were used, and at no stage was there any uncertainty about the correct indexing.

The spot intensities were measured by visual comparison with a calibrated wedge. For each three layers, a new wedge was made with the same crystal as had been used in recording the intensity photographs, and thus the spots on the wedge were roughly of the same size as those to be measured. On higher layer lines the extended spots were measured. By interrelating the different wedges, and making a correction for different exposure times, the intensities for the various layers were placed on roughly the same relative scale.

Data processing

The large amount of work involved in processing the data associated with more than 2500 reflexions was done on an IBM 704 computer with the aid of two specially written programs. The first of these was designed to yield a set of measured intensities (on a relative scale) for each layer line from the multiple film measurements. The second program applied the necessary corrections to the intensities to give either corrected intensities or structure factors (F_2^2 or F_0) as required. The standard corrections for equi-inclination Weissenberg photographs are a combined Lorentz-polarization factor (Cochran, 1948), spot-shape factor for higher layer lines (Phillips, 1954), α_1, α_2 splitting factor (Rae & Barker, 1961; Boonstra, 1966), a cylindrical approximation for absorption (*International Tables*, 1959) and an optional scale factor to put all the layers on the same relative or absolute scale.

The $hk0$ data were processed first and the structure investigated in projection because it was hoped that the uncertainty about Sasvari's structure would be cleared up rather quickly. The two-dimensional work proved that Sasvari's structure was incorrect, so that a complete redetermination had to be done. Initially only the data from layers $hk0-7$ were used, but later the extra data $hk8-10$ were included.

The calculations involved in the structure determination were done on an IBM 704 computer with the following standard crystallographic programs:

(i) *MIFR 1: Two- and Three-Dimensional Crystallographic Fourier Summation Program for the IBM 704 Computer*. M.I.T. Tech. Rep. Sly, W.G. and Shoemaker, D.P. (1960).

(ii) *ORXLS: A Crystallographic Least-Squares Refinement Program for the IBM 704*. O.R.N.L. Rep. No. 59-4-37. Busing, W.R. and Levy, H.A. (1959).

(iii) *ORXFE: A Crystallographic Function and Error Program for the IBM 704*. O.R.N.L. Rep. No. 59-12-3. Busing, W.R. & Levy, H.A. (1959).

A simple model of the structure would consist of silver and permanganate ions, Ag^+ and MnO_4^- respectively. In this description, however, the term 'atom' is used to refer to the silver, and to the constituent manganese and oxygen of the permanganate group. The

scattering factors used are those for the uncharged atoms, as given in *International Tables for X-ray Crystallography* (1962).

The structure in projection [001]

The Patterson projection $P(u, v)$ shown in Fig. 3 has symmetry mm , but contains an additional pseudo-mirror plane at $v = \pm \frac{1}{2}$. This is a result of the pseudo-absence $I(hk0) \approx 0$ for $k = 2n + 1$, which holds strictly for the barite structure. In agreement with Sasvari's structure, it is immediately deduced that $x(\text{Ag}), x(\text{Mn}) = \frac{1}{2}$. The assignment of peaks as shown, yields the coordinates $y(\text{Ag}) = 4\frac{1}{4}/120$ and $y(\text{Mn}) = 22\frac{3}{4}/120$, which correspond to Sasvari's structure but with the Ag and Mn positions interchanged. Another possible set of coordinates exists, but this possibility was definitely excluded at a later stage and will not be discussed any further.

In order to find possible oxygen positions, first the y and then the x coordinates of the heavy atoms were refined, and Fourier and difference Fourier maps calculated. In these maps, the pseudo-symmetry of the heavy atom positions produces two possible peaks for each oxygen atom – the one corresponding to the real, and the other to a ghost atom. Four such pairs were

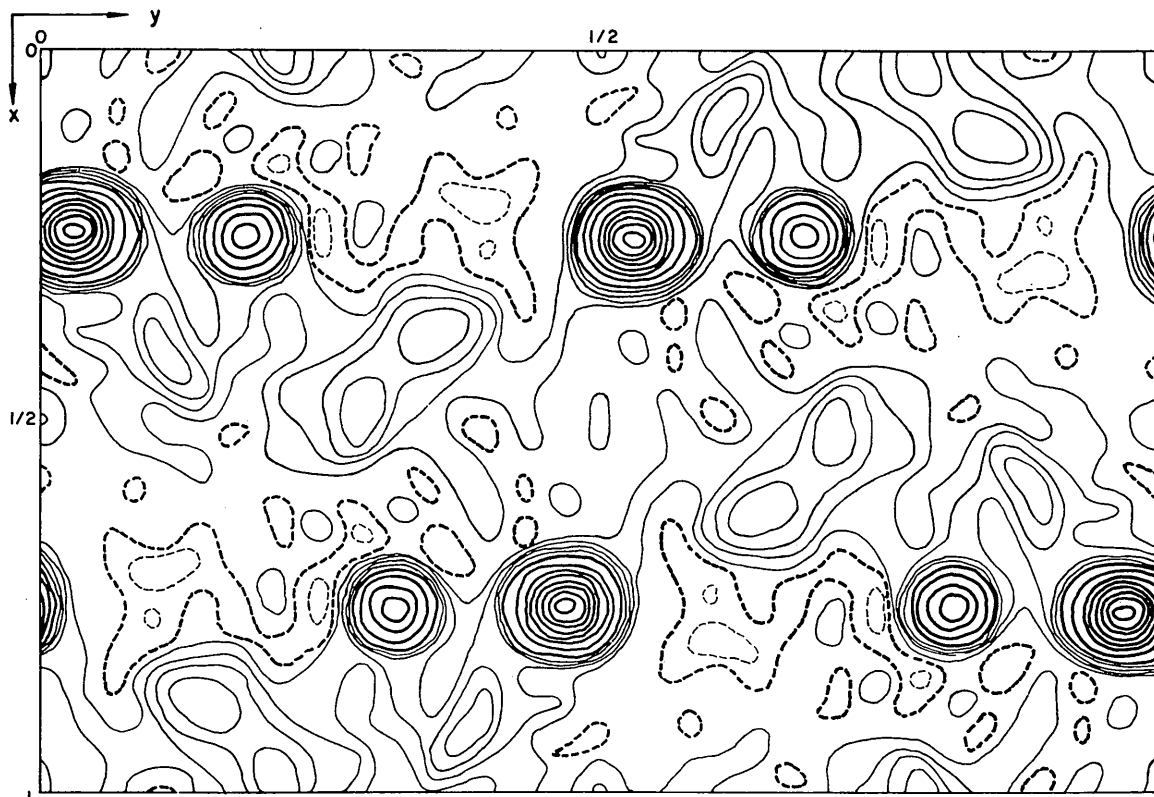


Fig. 4. The final electron density projection $\rho(xy)$ obtained for silver permanganate by refinement of the two-dimensional trial structure. Contours are at equal but arbitrary intervals with zero level given by thick dotted lines, positive contours by solid lines and negative contours by thinner dotted lines.

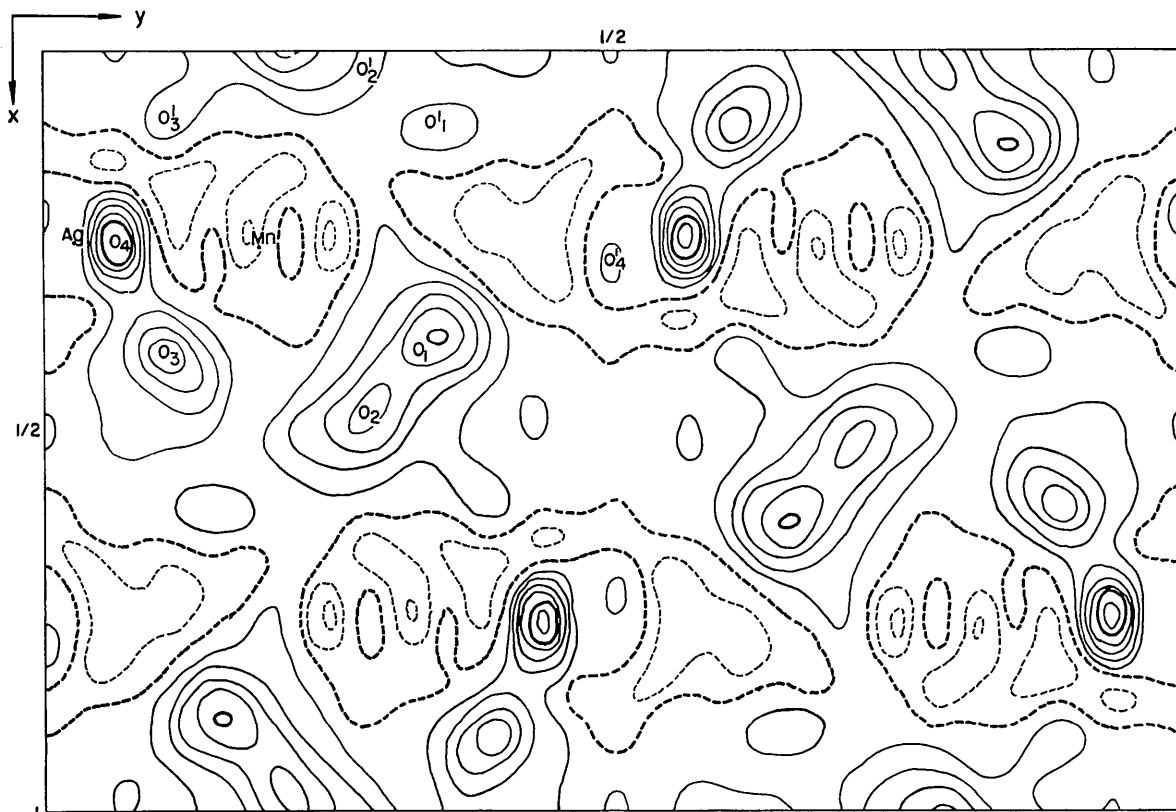


Fig. 5. The difference projection corresponding to Fig. 4, with the Ag and Mn atoms removed to show the oxygen positions O(1)–(4), and the ghost peaks O(1')–(4').

observed on the difference map (after removing the heavy atoms) and the real positions selected by considering the peak heights. The structure thus found refined in projection to $R=0.21$, and the final electron density maps are shown in Figs. 4 and 5. An oxygen position such as O(1) is obviously preferred to the ghost position O(1'). The only uncertainty was in the correct position O(4), which overlaps with the Ag atom in projection, and here a wrong choice was made. The later refinement showed that the atom O(4) had to be shifted by a small amount in y to the other side of the Ag atom.

In this projection, it is clear that the positions of the silver and manganese atoms are interchanged compared with the structure proposed by Sasvari, and completely new positions are assigned to the oxygen atoms.

The three-dimensional trial structure

The complete trial structure was deduced from the three-dimensional Patterson synthesis $P(uvw)$. The heavy atom positions satisfy the higher orthorhombic pseudo-symmetry and the small departure of β from 90° cannot affect the interpretation of the Patterson synthesis. The Harker peaks yielded the positions of the heavy atoms directly, and by restricting the choice

of asymmetric unit, the trial coordinates can without loss of generality be given as

$$\begin{aligned} x(\text{Ag}) &= x(\text{Mn}) = \frac{1}{4} \\ y(\text{Ag}) &= \frac{2}{60}, \quad y(\text{Mn}) = \frac{11}{60} \\ z(\text{Ag}) &= \frac{10}{60}, \quad z(\text{Mn}) = -\frac{20}{60}. \end{aligned}$$

In the unit cell there are four symmetry-related Ag positions, and each oxygen atom in the asymmetric unit hence gives rise to four distinct but related Ag–O vectors, with peaks in $P(uvw)$ at $x(\text{Ag}) \pm x(\text{O})$, $y(\text{Ag}) \pm y(\text{O})$, $z(\text{Ag}) \pm z(\text{O})$; $\frac{1}{2} + x(\text{Ag}) \pm x(\text{O})$, $\frac{1}{2} + y(\text{Ag}) \pm y(\text{O})$, $\frac{1}{2} + z(\text{Ag}) \pm z(\text{O})$. In each set, either the three upper or the three lower signs are taken. Such peaks of roughly the expected height were readily found for the oxygen atoms O(1), (2) and (3). The corresponding but weaker Mn–O peaks could then be found at the predicted positions and yielded shortest Mn–O distances of 1.70, 1.58 and 1.74 Å respectively. The same process could not yield the position of the oxygen atom O(4), and this was finally predicted from the other three oxygen positions by assuming that they, or their symmetry related atoms, form a regular tetrahedral arrangement around the Mn atom. In this way some peaks could be identified, corresponding to a Mn–O distance of 1.74 Å.

Refinement

Refinement of layer line scale factors, positional coordinates and isotropic temperature factor of all the atoms of the trial structure deduced above, was successful and readily yielded an R value of 0.18. Calculations of R for the different layer lines individually, showed conclusively that the indexing of the layers was internally consistent. That the indexing was further correct for the trial structure chosen, was confirmed by calculating interatomic distances in the MnO_4 group for the cases $\beta=92\frac{1}{4}$ and $87\frac{3}{4}^\circ$. The group was clearly more regular with $\beta=92\frac{1}{4}^\circ$, and this removed the last uncertainty about the trial structure.

The scale factors of the layer lines, as applied to the structure factors, varied on a relative basis from 1.0 for the zero layer to about 3.0 for the uppermost layers. The experimental cause of this variation was traced to a fault in the high tension supply of the X-ray generator, which resulted in a gradual increase in output over a period of weeks. The attempt to place the intensities of the different layers on approximately the same scale was therefore unsuccessful. This was the reason for the presence of the severe diffraction ripples observed in the Patterson synthesis, in the c direction, which masked most of the interatomic vectors associated with the oxygen atom O(4). A further consequence was that no attempt could be made to do a full anisotropic refinement. Nevertheless, a number of improvements could be introduced and are described briefly.

On inspecting the listing of F_o and F_c (observed and calculated structure factors respectively), it was found that the strongest reflexions had F_o values consistently low compared with F_c . This was attributed to extinction and/or overexposure on the film, and a total of 20 such reflexions were excluded from the refinement. Absorption corrections, varying on a relative scale up to 6% on the zero layer, and up to 10% on the seventh layer, were applied to the observed structure factors. These small but systematic corrections should make the values obtained for the temperature factors more meaningful physically (Srivastava & Lingafelter, 1966). Dispersion corrections were included in the scattering factors of Ag and Mn (*International Tables*, 1962), only the real term being used as recommended by Ramaseshan, Venkatesan & Mani (1957).

Up to this stage unobserved reflexions were assigned a structure factor value corresponding to $I_{\text{unobs}} = \frac{1}{3}I_{\text{min}}$ (Hamilton, 1955) before correction (De Vries, 1965).

With the short wavelength used, reflexions were not observed above about $2\theta=90^\circ$, and even below this value roughly half of the reflexions were unobserved. It is clearly incorrect to give all unobserved spots the same I_{unobs} value, independent of 2θ . The apparent contradiction arises because it is not generally appreciated that Hamilton's formula is based on an approximation which is only valid if I_{min} is small compared with I_{av} (the average intensity of the reflexions at the angle of diffraction corresponding to the unobserved reflexion). The formula should therefore not be used in regions of the film where there are a large number of unobserved reflexions, or where the observed intensities are weak. It was therefore rather arbitrarily decided to include only those unobserved reflexions which occur at $\sin \theta/\lambda$ values less than about half the maximum value corresponding to observed reflexions. In this way 95% of the unobserved reflexions were excluded from the refinement. This led to a considerable reduction in R (about 0.08), with no significant changes in the atomic positions.

In the later stages of the refinement, a weighting scheme (based on the usual assumption $w=1/\sigma^2$) was introduced. Initially an estimate of σ was obtained by using the method of Hughes (1941). Later an experimental method of obtaining σ was used, and although this gave a slightly lower R value there were no significant changes in parameters. In this scheme, each reflexion is treated on merit and the e.s.d. is obtained from the measured intensity values on the films of the multiple film pack, and from the intensity wedge used. The most important effect of weighting was a marked increase in the atomic temperature factors, coupled with an increase in layer line scale factors. The atomic parameters obtained with isotropic refinement and corresponding to an R value of 0.104 for the $hk0-10$ data are given in Table 1.

By repeating the refinement firstly with only the $hk0-4$ data, and secondly with $hk0-7$ data, it was clearly shown that the oxygen atom O(4) was most susceptible to the effect of series termination. Changes in atomic coordinates were minimal, but $\sigma(z)$ for O(4) was always considerably bigger than for the other oxygen atoms, and there were noticeable differences in temperature factors. The temperature factors for the other three oxygen atoms were virtually identical and the average varied from 2.08 ± 0.15 , 2.23 ± 0.11 to 2.11 ± 0.10 with cut-off after the fourth, seventh and tenth layer respectively, showing no significant trend.

Table 1. Atomic parameters for silver permanganate, obtained from isotropic refinement with $R=0.104$ and based on 1439 $hk0-10$ reflexions, as fractional coordinates $\times 10^4$

	x	$\sigma(x)$	y	$\sigma(y)$	z	$\sigma(z)$	B	$\sigma(B)$
Ag	2439	0001	0328	0001	1647	0001	1.82	0.02
Mn	2573	0002	1868	0002	6608	0001	1.22	0.02
O(1)	3829	0013	3492	0010	5921	0008	2.05	0.10
O(2)	-0139	0014	2233	0010	7153	0008	2.17	0.10
O(3)	4044	0014	1190	0010	8445	0008	2.12	0.10
O(4)	2520	0019	0590	0013	4963	0011	2.97	0.14

Table 2. Observed and calculated structure factors (F_o and F_c) on 10 × absolute scale, corresponding to partial anisotropic refinement with R=0.087

Table with 15 columns of h, k, l indices and corresponding F_o and F_c values. The table is organized into 15 vertical sections, each corresponding to a different (h, k, l) reflection. Each section contains multiple rows of data points. The first column of each section lists the reflection indices (h, k, l), and the subsequent columns list the observed (F_o) and calculated (F_c) structure factor values. The values are presented in a grid-like format, with some cells containing multiple values separated by commas or semicolons. The table is dense with numerical data, covering a wide range of reflection indices from 0 0 0 to approximately 10 10 10.

* Marks reflexions given zero weight and F_{obs} values followed by minus sign are unobserved reflexions included in refinement.

atoms are interchanged almost exactly, and completely new positions assigned to the oxygen atoms. Silver permanganate cannot be regarded as having a slightly deformed barite structure, because although there is a formal correspondence in the heavy atom positions, the orientation of the oxygen tetrahedron is quite different.

The thermal parameters obtained indicate that the motion of the Mn atom is small and isotropic, whereas that of the Ag atom is decidedly anisotropic. This seems reasonable since the Mn atom is at the center of the large permanganate group, while the smaller Ag atom

is relatively free. This agrees with results obtained for CsMnO_4 (Prout & Nassimbeni, 1966). More recently in an accurate refinement of the structure of KMnO_4 , Palenik (1967) also found that the motion of the Mn atom is nearly isotropic, and that the permanganate group can be considered as a rigid body.

Bond lengths and angles found in the present study for the permanganate group are given in Table 5. The observed departures from regularity are mostly associated with O(4) and are probably due to the series termination effect. Within the experimental errors, the permanganate group is a regular tetrahedron with an

Table 5. Bond lengths and angles in the permanganate group

R=0.087 with partial anisotropic refinement, no correction for thermal motion.

	Distance	e.s.d.		Angle	e.s.d.
Mn-O(1)	1.612 Å	0.010 Å	O(1)-Mn-O(2)	110.9°	0.4°
-O(2)	1.631	0.008	-O(3)	108.1	0.3
-O(3)	1.625	0.007	-O(4)	109.0	0.4
-O(4)	1.571	0.008	O(2)-Mn-O(3)	109.3	0.3
Av. Mn-O	1.610	0.004	-O(4)	108.7	0.4
O(1)-O(2)	2.670	0.011	O(3)-Mn-O(4)	110.8	0.4
-O(3)	2.621	0.009	Av. O-Mn-O	109.5	0.2
-O(4)	2.591	0.012			
O(2)-O(3)	2.656	0.010			
-O(4)	2.602	0.012			
O(3)-O(4)	2.630	0.011			
Av. O-O	2.628	0.007			

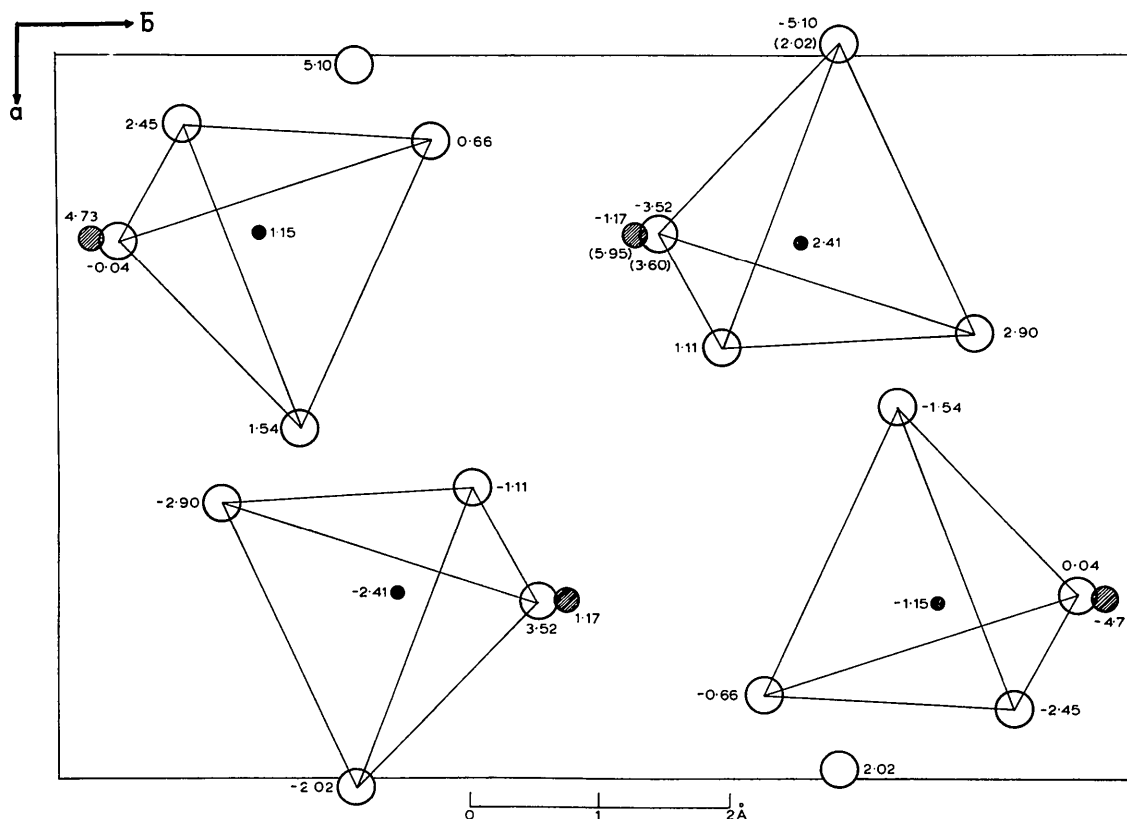


Fig. 6. The new structure of silver permanganate in [001] projection for comparison with Figs. 1 and 2, using the same key as Fig. 1.

average Mn–O bond length of 1.61 ± 0.01 Å. The e.s.d. is here set at a somewhat higher value to allow for the effect of some possible systematic errors. This bond length is in close agreement with the result of 1.629 Å found in KMnO_4 by Palenik after applying a correction of 0.022 Å for anisotropic motion. Such a correction cannot be made in the present study on account of the incomplete thermal motion data.

The structure as seen in the [001] projection seems to consist of stacks of MnO_4 tetrahedra and rows of Ag atoms extending in the *c* direction. The difference in *z* coordinates of the Ag and Mn atoms closest in projection is almost exactly $\frac{1}{2}$, and leads to a regular zigzag Ag–Mn–Ag–Mn chain running in the *c* direction. This description probably has no significance since there are closer Ag–Mn (and Ag–O) approaches in other directions. Each Ag atom is in fact surrounded by seven MnO_4 groups with Ag–Mn distances varying between 3.51 and 3.81 Å, and corresponding close Ag–O approaches between 2.33 and 2.67 Å. The shortest Ag–Ag and Mn–Mn distances are 3.63 and 4.33 Å respectively, while the closest approaches between oxygen atoms in different permanganate groups vary from 2.81 to 3.06 Å. The shortest Ag–O and non-bonded O–O distances are markedly shorter than the corresponding distances in KMnO_4 (2.62 and 3.06 Å respectively). The present structure is clearly more compact since the molecular volume of AgMnO_4 is about 15% smaller than that of KMnO_4 . The closer approaches found in AgMnO_4 compared to KMnO_4 can probably be attributed to the fact that AgMnO_4 is not a truly ionic compound, but contains a measure of covalent bonding. Unfortunately, accurate data for similar permanganates are not available.

The investigation of the structural aspects of the thermal decomposition of silver permanganate, which led to this structure determination, was undertaken at the suggestion, and under the initial guidance of Dr F.H. Herbstein. In the present work, helpful discussions with Dr G. Gafner are gratefully acknowledged.

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The Crystal Structure of Cd_3As_2

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A Weissenberg study of the structure of Cd_3As_2 has shown that the unit cell is tetragonal ($a = 12.67 \pm 0.01$ Å, $c = 25.48 \pm 0.02$ Å, $Z = 32$, space group $I4_1cd$). Arsenic ions are approximately cubic close-packed and Cd ions are tetrahedrally coordinated. The main difference between the present structure and that proposed by von Stackelberg & Paulus lies in the disposition of the vacant tetrahedral sites. Both structures are geometrically related to the fluorite structure.

Introduction

The crystal structure of Cd_3As_2 was determined by von Stackelberg & Paulus (1935) as tetragonal ($a = 8.95$, $c = 12.65$ Å, space group $P4_2/nmc$) with As ions approximately in a cubic close-packed array. Cd ions

were tetrahedrally coordinated and each As ion was surrounded by Cd ions at six of the eight corners of a distorted cube, the two vacant sites being at diagonally opposite corners of a cube face.

In the same paper von Stackelberg & Paulus also reported the crystal structure of Zn_3As_2 as being the