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# Syntheses and structures of six compounds in the $A_2\text{Li}MS_4$ (A = K, Rb, Cs; M = V, Nb, Ta) family

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## Abstract

Six new compounds in the  $A_2LiMS_4$  (A = K, Rb, Cs; M = V, Nb, Ta) family, namely  $K_2LiVS_4$ , Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, And Rb<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub>, have been synthesized by the reactions of the elements in Li<sub>2</sub>S/S/A<sub>2</sub>S<sub>3</sub> (A = K, Rb, Cs) fluxes at 773 K. The A and M atoms play a role in the coordination environment of the Li atoms, leading to different crystal structures. Coordination numbers of Li atoms are five in K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, four in  $A_2LiVS_4$  (A = Rb, Cs) and Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, and both four and five in Rb<sub>2</sub>LiMS<sub>4</sub> (M = Nb, Ta). The  $A_2LiVS_4$  (A = Rb, Cs) structure comprises one-dimensional chains of  $\frac{1}{\infty}$ [LiVS<sub>4</sub>] tetrahedra. The Rb<sub>2</sub>LiMS<sub>4</sub> (M = Nb, Ta) structure is composed of two-dimensional  $\frac{2}{\infty}$ [LiMS<sub>4</sub>] layers. The Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub> structure contains one-dimensional  $\frac{1}{\infty}$ [LiNbS<sub>4</sub>] chains that are related to the Rb<sub>2</sub>LiMS<sub>4</sub> layers. The K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> structure contains a different kind of  $\frac{1}{\infty}$ [LiVS<sub>4</sub>] layer.

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# 1. Introduction

Since its discovery, the reactive-flux method [1] has led to the syntheses of about 40 new A/M/M'/Q (A = Na, K, Rb, Cs, Tl; M = Cu, Ag; M' = V, Nb, Ta; Q = S, Se, Te) quaternary compounds. Examples include  $K_3CuNb_2Se_{12}$  [2],  $CsCu_2MTe_4$  (M = Nb, Ta) [3],  $A_2$ AgTaS<sub>4</sub> (A = Tl, Rb) [4,5], NaCu<sub>2</sub>NbS<sub>4</sub> [6], and  $Rb_2CuVS_4$  [7]. In most of these compounds, the M and M' atoms are tetrahedrally coordinated by four Q atoms. The dimensionality of these structures is reduced as the ratio of alkali metal A to the transition metal (M,M') increases [8]. Take the K/Nb/Cu/Se system as an example: as one goes from Cu<sub>3</sub>NbSe<sub>4</sub> [9,10] to  $KCu_2NbSe_4$  [11] to  $K_2CuNbSe_4$  [2] to  $K_3NbSe_4$  [12] the dimensionality of the structures reduces from threedimensional to two-dimensional to one-dimensional and finally to a zero-dimensional salt. Conceptually, the series presents the progressive substitution of K for Cu.

Concomitant dimensional reduction occurs owing to the predilection of  $K^+$  to achieve higher coordination numbers than  $Cu^+$ .

Among ternary and quaternary metal chalcogenides containing alkali metals, those incorporating Li are the least common. Li generally adopts a lower coordination number than do its higher congeners. In sulfides, the coordination number of Li is often four (ALiS (A = K, Rb) [13,14], KLi $MS_2$  (M = Mn, Zn) [15], LiGaS<sub>2</sub> [16]); occasionally five (Li<sub>4</sub>GeS<sub>4</sub> [17-19], Li<sub>3</sub>AsS<sub>3</sub> [20]); and often six (LiBiS<sub>2</sub> [21,22], LiTiS<sub>2</sub> [23]). Here we investigate the substitution of Li for Cu in the K<sub>2</sub>CuNbSe<sub>4</sub> structure type [2], which consists of one-dimensional  ${}_{\infty}^{1}$ [CuNbSe<sub>4</sub><sup>2–</sup>] chains of edge-sharing CuSe<sub>4</sub> and NbSe<sub>4</sub> tetrahedra. Six new compounds, namely K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, and Rb<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub>, have been synthesized. Li shows coordination numbers four or five in these compounds. Among these compounds three are one-dimensional and three are two-dimensional; three different space groups are represented. Only Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> and Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> belong to the K<sub>2</sub>CuNbSe<sub>4</sub> structure type.

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## 2. Experimental

#### 2.1. Syntheses

The following reagents were used as obtained: K (Alfa, 98%), Rb (Aldrich, 98+%), Cs (Aldrich, 99.5%), V (Strem, 99.5%), Nb (Johnson Matthey, 99.8%), Ta (Aldrich, 99.9%), S (Alfa, 99.5%), and Li<sub>2</sub>S (Aldrich, 98%).  $A_2S_3$  (A = K, Rb, Cs), the reactive fluxes employed in the syntheses, were prepared by the stoichiometric reactions of the elements in liquid NH<sub>3</sub>. All these compounds were synthesized by the reaction of 1.0 mmol of M (M = V, Nb, Ta), 1.0 mmol of S, 0.5 mmol of Li<sub>2</sub>S, and 1.0 mmol of  $A_2S_3$  (A = K, Rb, Cs). A reaction mixture was loaded into a fused-silica tube under an Ar atmosphere in a glove box. The tube was sealed under a  $10^{-4}$  Torr atmosphere and then placed in a computer-controlled furnace. The sample was heated to 773 K in 8 h, kept at 773 K for 72 h, cooled at 3 K/h to 375 K, and then the furnace was turned off. The reaction mixture was washed with N,N-dimethylformamide. The products in the V reactions were composed of red needles and plates; those in the Nb and Ta reactions were pink blocks. Yields for the V reactions were greater than 90%; those for the Nb and Ta reactions were about 20%. Examination of selected crystals with an EDX-equipped Hitachi S-3500 SEM led to results consistent with the stated compositions. The compounds are extremely air-sensitive. They decompose in water and acetone.

#### 2.2. Structure determinations

Single-crystal X-ray diffraction data were collected with the use of graphite-monochromatized  $MoK\alpha$ radiation ( $\lambda = 0.71073$  Å) at 153 K on a Bruker Smart-1000 CCD diffractometer [24]. The crystal-to-detector distance was 5.023 cm. Crystal decay was monitored by recollecting 50 initial frames at the end of data collection. Data were collected by a scan of  $0.3^{\circ}$  in  $\omega$ in four groups of 606 frames at  $\varphi$  settings of  $0^{\circ}$ ,  $90^{\circ}$ ,  $180^{\circ}$ , and  $270^{\circ}$ . The exposure time was 5-15 s/frame. The collection of the intensity data was carried out with the program SMART [24]. Cell refinement and data reduction were carried out with the use of the program SAINT [24] and face-indexed absorption corrections were performed numerically with the use of the program XPREP [25]. Then the program SADABS [24] was employed to make incident beam and decay corrections.

The structures were solved with the direct methods program SHELXS and refined with the full-matrix least-squares program SHELXL of the SHELXTL suite of programs [25]. Each final refinement included anisotropic displacement parameters. One of the three independent K atoms in the  $K_2LiVS_4$  structure is disordered over two sites. None of the other structures displays any disorder. Additional experimental details are shown in Table 1 and in the Supplementary material. Tables 2–5 present selected metrical data.

Table 1

Crystal data and structure refinements for K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, and Rb<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub><sup>a</sup>

Compound	K <sub>2</sub> LiVS <sub>4</sub>	Rb <sub>2</sub> LiVS <sub>4</sub>	Cs <sub>2</sub> LiVS <sub>4</sub>	Rb <sub>2</sub> LiNbS <sub>4</sub>	Cs <sub>2</sub> LiNbS <sub>4</sub>	Rb <sub>2</sub> LiTaS <sub>4</sub>
Formula mass	264.32	357.06	451.94	399.03	493.91	487.07
Space group	C2/c	Fddd	Fddd	РĪ	ΡĪ	ΡĪ
Z	8	8	8	4	2	4
a (Å)	10.4788(7)	5.813(1)	5.8316(5)	7.0285(4)	6.9186(8)	7.0452(5)
$b(\mathbf{A})$	8.4250(6)	13.083(2)	13.610(1)	11.3919(7)	7.2518(8)	11.3929(9)
$c(\dot{A})$	17.9897(12)	23.164(4)	24.177(2)	11.8129(7)	9.761(1)	11.8205(9)
α (°)	90	90	90	71.761(1)	96.650(2)	71.747(1)
β (°)	94.748(1)	90	90	87.877(1)	92.239(2)	87.766(1)
γ (°)	90	90	90	83.876(1)	91.279(2)	83.652(1)
$V(\text{\AA}^3)$	1582.8(2)	1761.7(5)	1918.8(3)	893.18(9)	485.9(1)	895.5(1)
$\rho_c (g/cm^3)$	2.218	2.692	3.129	2.967	3.376	3.613
$\mu ({\rm cm}^{-1})$	32.5	129.56	92.93	130.14	93.93	239.11
$T_{\rm min}/T_{\rm max}$	0.582/0.789	0.067/0.247	0.108/0.445	0.072/0.302	0.117/0.310	0.017/0.130
q	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.025	0.025
$R(F)^{\mathrm{b}}$	0.0337	0.0145	0.0219	0.0293	0.0253	0.0353
$R_{\rm w} (F_{\rm o}^2)^{\rm c}$	0.0823	0.0356	0.058	0.086	0.0629	0.1083
$S^{\mathrm{d}}$	1.27	1.17	1.45	1.28	1.16	1.44

<sup>a</sup>T = 153(2) K and  $\lambda = 0.71073$  Å.

 ${}^{\mathrm{b}}R(F) = \sum ||F_{\mathrm{o}}| - |F_{\mathrm{c}}|| / |F_{\mathrm{o}}| \text{ for } F_{\mathrm{o}}^{2} > 2\sigma(F_{\mathrm{o}}^{2}).$ 

 ${}^{c}R_{w}(F_{o}^{2}) = \{\sum [w(F_{o}^{2} - F_{o}^{2})^{2}] / \sum wF_{o}^{4}\}^{1/2} \text{ for all data. } w^{-1} = \sigma^{2}(F_{o}^{2}) + (qP)^{2} \text{ and } P = [2F_{o}^{2} + \max(F_{o}^{2}, 0)]/3.$ 

<sup>d</sup>Least-squares goodness of fit:  $S = \{\sum [w(F_o^2 - F_o^2)^2] / (n-p)\}^{1/2}$ , where n = number of reflections and p = number of parameters refined.

Table 2 Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (°) for  $K_2LiVS_4$ 

Li–S2	2.496(5)	S3-V-S4	110.70(3)
Li–S4	2.497(5)	S1-V-S2	110.96(3)
Li–S2	2.536(5)	S2-Li-S4	82.7(1)
Li–S3	2.661(5)	S2–Li–S3	84.8(2)
Li–S4	2.711(5)	S4–Li–S4	88.7(3)
V–S3	2.1326(8)	S4–Li–S3	93.1(2)
V–S1	2.1414(7)	S2–Li–S4	95.2(2)
V–S2	2.1573(8)	S2–Li–S3	95.4(2)
V–S4	2.1613(8)	S4–Li–S2	112.7(2)
S2-V-S4	106.85(3)	S2–Li–S2	121.1(2)
S3-V-S2	108.42(3)	S2–Li–S4	126.1(2)
S3-V-S1	109.66(3)	S3–Li–S4	177.8(2)
S1-V-S4	110.21(3)		

Table 3 Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (°) for Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, and Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>

Bond/angle	Rb <sub>2</sub> LiVS <sub>4</sub>	Cs <sub>2</sub> LiVS <sub>4</sub>
Li–S×4	2.4030(4)	2.3988(6)
$V-S \times 4$	2.1595(4)	2.1548(6)
$S-Li-S \times 2$	93.63(2)	93.18(3)
$S-Li-S \times 2$	117.61(2)	118.09(3)
$S-Li-S \times 2$	118.24(2)	118.27(3)
$S-V-S \times 2$	108.47(2)	107.94(3)
$S-V-S \times 2$	109.61(2)	110.13(4)
$S-V-S \times 2$	110.34(2)	110.35(3)

Table 4						
Selected b	ond lengths (A	Å) and angle	s (°) for R	b <sub>2</sub> LiNbS <sub>4</sub> a	and Rb <sub>2</sub> TaV	$S_4$

# 3. Results

#### 3.1. Synthesis

K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>,  $Rb_2LiVS_4$ , Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, and Rb<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub> have been synthesized by the reactions of the elements in  $\text{Li}_2\text{S}/\text{S}/\text{A}_2\text{S}_3$  (A = K, Rb,Cs) fluxes at 773 K. The yields of the V compounds were over 90%; those of the Nb and Ta compounds were about 20%. Attempts to prepare the other three compounds in this series, namely K<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, K<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub>, and Cs<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub>, were unsuccessful. Failure to prepare K<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub> or K<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub> as opposed to K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> may be a manifestation of the relatively small ionic radius of  $V^{5+}$  compared with those of  $Nb^{5+}$  or  $Ta^{5+}$ . But given the minimal difference in ionic radii of the latter two cations it is not clear why Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub> could be prepared but not Cs<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub>.

# 3.2. Crystal structures

There are no S–S bonds in the structures of the compounds  $A_2$ LiMS<sub>4</sub> (A = K, Rb, Cs; M = V, Nb, Ta). Accordingly, the formal oxidation states of A, Li, V, and S are 1+, 1+, 5+, and 2–, respectively.

The crystal structure of  $K_2LiVS_4$  (space group C2/c) comprises two-dimensional  $^2_{\infty}[LiVS_4^{2-}]$  layers separated by K atoms. Each layer is built from edge-sharing tetrahedra NbS<sub>4</sub> and slightly distorted LiS<sub>5</sub> trigonal bipyramids (Fig. 1). The unit cell is displayed in Fig. 2.

Bond/angle	Rb <sub>2</sub> LiNbS <sub>4</sub>	Rb <sub>2</sub> LiTaS <sub>4</sub>	Angle	Rb <sub>2</sub> LiNbS <sub>4</sub>	Rb <sub>2</sub> LiTaS <sub>4</sub>
Li1-S3	2.381(8)	2.39(1)	S1-Li2-S6	80.0(3)	80.0(4)
Li1-S2	2.446(9)	2.45(1)	S6-Li2-S6	82.8(3)	82.5(4)
Li1–S7	2.481(9)	2.47(1)	S6-Li2-S1	89.5(3)	89.3(5)
Li1-S2	2.505(8)	2.50(1)	S1-Li2-S1	92.7(3)	92.9(5)
Li2–S8	2.466(9)	2.47(1)	S8-Li2-S6	97.9(3)	97.8(5)
Li2-S1	2.511(9)	2.49(2)	S8-Li2-S1	98.2(3)	98.5(5)
Li2-S6	2.528(9)	2.53(1)	S8-Li2-S6	113.2(4)	112.9(5)
Li2-S1	2.620(10)	2.63(2)	S8-Li2-S1	122.1(4)	122.6(6)
Li2-S6	3.013(10)	3.05(2)	S1-Li2-S6	123.7(4)	123.4(6)
M1-S5	2.257(1)	2.257(2)	S1-Li2-S6	163.8(4)	163.6(5)
M1-S6	2.264(1)	2.265(2)	S6-M1-S1	106.00(5)	106.05(7)
M1-S3	2.272(1)	2.269(2)	S6-M1-S3	108.51(3)	108.58(8)
M1-S1	2.276(1)	2.274(2)	S5-M1-S1	108.57(5)	108.69(8)
M2-S4	2.254(1)	2.257(2)	S5-M1-S3	110.00(5)	110.07(7)
M2-S7	2.259(1)	2.258(2)	S5-M1-S6	111.26(5)	111.22(8)
M2-S8	2.268(1)	2.264(2)	S3-M1-S1	112.45(5)	112.18(8)
M2-S2	2.288(1)	2.284(2)	S7-M2-S2	105.27(5)	105.48(7)
S7-Li1-S2	92.9(3)	93.3(4)	S4-M2-S2	108.79(5)	108.73(8)
S2-Li1-S2	101.8(3)	102.2(5)	S7-M2-S8	108.90(5)	108.81(8)
S3-Li1-S2	108.9(4)	109.1(6)	S4-M2-S7	110.60(5)	110.63(8)
S3-Li1-S7	110.5(3)	110.7(5)	S8-M2-S2	111.14(5)	111.17(8)
S3-Li1-S2	113.6(3)	113.1(5)	S4-M2-S8	111.93(5)	111.84(7)
S2-Li1-S7	125.2(4)	125.0(6)			

Table 5 Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (°) for  $Cs_2LiNbS_4$ 

Li–S1	2.426(7)	S1-Li-S4	110.5(3)
Li–S4	2.468(7)	S1-Li-S3	111.5(3)
Li–S3	2.494(7)	S1-Li-S4	114.4(3)
Li–S4	2.538(7)	S4–Li–S2	122.7(3)
Nb-S2	2.258(1)	S3–Nb–S4	105.69(4)
Nb-S3	2.262(1)	S2–Nb–S4	109.20(4)
Nb-S1	2.271(1)	S3-Nb-S1	109.38(4)
Nb-S4	2.292(1)	S2-Nb-S1	109.87(4)
S3-Li-S4	92.3(2)	S2-Nb-S3	110.43(4)
S4–Li–S4	101.7(3)	S1-Nb-S4	112.19(4)



Fig. 1. The  $\frac{2}{\infty}$ [LiVS<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>] layer in K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>.



Fig. 2. The unit cell of K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> down [010].

Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> and Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> are isostructural and of the K<sub>2</sub>CuNbSe<sub>4</sub> structure type (space group *Fddd*). The structure of Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> is displayed in Fig. 3. It consists of one-dimensional  $\frac{1}{\infty}$ [LiVS<sub>2</sub><sup>2-</sup>] chains separated by Rb atoms. Each chain is built from LiS<sub>4</sub> and VS<sub>4</sub> tetrahedra that share edges to form a  $\frac{1}{\infty}$ [LiVS<sub>2</sub><sup>2-</sup>] chain along [100], as shown in Fig. 4.

Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub> and Rb<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub> are isostructural, crystallizing in a new structure type (space group  $P\overline{1}$ ) different from the structure of  $A_2\text{LiVS}_4$  (A = Rb, Cs; space group *Fddd*). The unit cell of Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub> is shown in Fig. 5. The structure is composed of two-dimensional



Fig. 3. The unit cell of Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> down [100].



Fig. 4. The  $^{1}_{\infty}$ [LiVS<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>] chain in Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>.



Fig. 5. The unit cell of Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub> down [100].

 $_{\infty}^{2}$ [LiNbS<sub>4</sub>] layers (Fig. 6) separated by Rb atoms. Each  $_{\infty}^{2}$ [LiNbS<sub>4</sub>] layer is built from vertex- and edge-sharing NbS<sub>4</sub> tetrahedra, Li1S<sub>4</sub> tetrahedra, and distorted Li2S<sub>5</sub> trigonal bipyramids.

The structure of Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub> belongs to a new structure type (space group  $P\overline{1}$ ), as displayed in Fig. 7. The structure consists of one-dimensional  ${}^{1}_{\infty}$ [LiNbS<sup>2–</sup>] chains separated by Cs atoms, as shown in Fig. 8. Each chain is composed of vertex- and edge-sharing NbS<sub>4</sub> and LiS<sub>4</sub> tetrahedra, different from the chain in Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, which is built solely from edge-sharing VS<sub>4</sub> and LiS<sub>4</sub> tetrahedra. The structure of Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub> is related to that of Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>. The shape of the chain in Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>



Fig. 6. The  $^{2}_{\infty}$ [LiNbS $^{2-}_{4}$ ] layer in Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>.



Fig. 7. The unit cell of Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub> down [100].



Fig. 8. The  $\frac{2}{\infty}$ [LiNbS $_4^{2-}$ ] chain in Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>.

(Fig. 8) is somewhat similar to that of the  $^{2}_{\infty}$ [LiNbS<sub>4</sub>] layers in Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub> (Fig. 6).

The VS<sub>4</sub> tetrahedra in K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, and Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> (Tables 2 and 3) are minimally distorted. The range of V–S distances is 2.1326(8)–2.1613(8)Å and the range of S–V–S angles is 106.85(3)–110.96(3)°. These may be compared to V–S distances of 2.141(1)–2.170(1)Å and S–V–S angles of 108.54(4)–111.86(6)° in AVS<sub>4</sub> (A =Rb, Cs) [26]. Similarly, the  $MS_4$  (M =Nb, Ta) tetrahedra in Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, and Rb<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub> (Tables 4 and 5) are nearly regular with M–S distances ranging from 105.27(5) to 112.45(5)Å. These may be compared to M–S distances of 2.262(6)–2.287(6)Å and S–M–S angles of 107.71(4)–112.4(3)° in  $A_3MS_4$  (A = Na, Rb; M = Nb, Ta) [27]. The LiS<sub>4</sub> tetrahedra in Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub>, and Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub> (Tables 3–5) are somewhat less regular than the  $MS_4$  tetrahedra with Li–S distances ranging from 2.381(8) to 2.538(7) Å and S–Li–S angles ranging from 92.9(3) to 125.2(4)°. The Li–S distances in the LiS<sub>4</sub> tetrahedra in Li<sub>3</sub>AsS<sub>3</sub> range from 2.39(2) to 2.58(2) Å [20] whereas they are 2.52(2) and 2.53(1) Å in LiAuS [28]. Not surprisingly, the LiS<sub>5</sub> trigonal bipyramids in K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, and Rb<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub> are more distorted: Li–S distances range from 112.7(2) to 126.1(2)°, and S<sub>eq</sub>–M–S<sub>ax</sub> angles range from 80.0(3) to 98.5(5)°. The S<sub>ax</sub>–M–S<sub>ax</sub> angles range from 163.6(5) to 177.8(2)°(Tables 2 and 4).

The A–S coordination numbers and distance ranges are: 7, 3.021(7)–3.772(6)Å (K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>); 8, 3.3981(6)– 3.7259(6)Å (Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>); 8, 3.5222(7)–3.8246(7)Å (Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>); 7, 3.388(1)–3.638(1)Å (Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>); 9, 3.491(1)–4.069(1)Å (Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>); and 7, 3.390(2)– 3.645(2)Å (Rb<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub>). These are comparable to those in  $A_2$ AgMS<sub>4</sub> (A = K, Rb, Cs; M = Nb, Ta) [7].

## 4. Conclusions

The substitution of Li for Cu in the K<sub>2</sub>CuNbSe<sub>4</sub> structure type [2], which consists of one-dimensional  $^{1}_{\infty}$ [CuNbSe<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>] chains of edge-sharing CuSe<sub>4</sub> and NbSe<sub>4</sub> tetrahedra, has generally affected not only the dimensionality of the structure but also the structure type and space group. Only Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> and Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub> belong to the K<sub>2</sub>CuNbSe<sub>4</sub> structure type. In fact, among the six compounds, namely K2LiVS4, Rb2LiVS4, Cs2LiVS4,  $Rb_2LiNbS_4$ ,  $Cs_2LiNbS_4$ , and  $Rb_2LiTaS_4$ , three are one-dimensional and three are two-dimensional structures; there are three different space groups; there are four different structure types; there is one compound in which Li is five-coordinate; there are three in which Li is four-coordinate; and there are two in which Li is both four- and five-coordinate. It appears that the smaller the transition metal the lower the dimensionality, and the smaller the alkali metal the higher the dimensionality. One wonders whether structural information on the three other possible compounds in the series, namely  $K_2LiNbS_4$ ,  $K_2LiTaS_4$ , and  $Cs_2LiTaS_4$ , which we were unable to synthesize, would have simplified or further complicated these results.

## 5. Supplementary material available

Crystallographic data in CIF format have been deposited with FIZ Karlsruhe with the following CSD numbers: K<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, 414184; Rb<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, 414185; Cs<sub>2</sub>LiVS<sub>4</sub>, 414186; Rb<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, 414189; Cs<sub>2</sub>LiNbS<sub>4</sub>, 414187; and Rb<sub>2</sub>LiTaS<sub>4</sub>, 414186. These data may be obtained free of charge by contacting FIZ Karlsruhe at

+49 7247 808 666 (fax) or crysdata@fiz-karlsruhe.de (E-mail).

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