



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**SYNTHESIS AND MORPHOLOGY OF HIGH DENSITY  
BARIUM ZIRCONATE CERAMICS**

**SELVARAJAN SUBRAMANIAM**

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BARIUM ZIRCONATE CERAMICS**

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**By**

**SELVARAJAN SUBRAMANIAM**

**Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirement for the  
Degree of Master of Science in the Institut Teknologi Maju  
Universiti Putra Malaysia**

**August 2001**



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of University Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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**Chairman : Associate Professor Dr Mansor Hashim**

**Faculty : Institute of Advance Technology**

Barium Zirconate ( $\text{BaZrO}_3$ ) is an inert target material with high resistance to temperature and chemical reaction, which can be used as a crucible. In some literatures,  $\text{BaZrO}_3$  with small particle size is also proposed as material for multilayer capacitors. In this research high dense  $\text{BaZrO}_3$  has been synthesized through a common method, solid-state reaction, where large amount of fine  $\text{BaZrO}_3$  powder can be obtained and further sintered at high temperature to gain high density material.

In this study, nitrate precursors were used to lower the formation temperature of  $\text{BaZrO}_3$ . The raw materials ( $\text{Ba}(\text{NO}_3)_2$  and  $\text{ZrO}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$  in 1:1 molar ratio) were calcined at  $800^\circ\text{C}$  for 8h to obtain a fine and pure  $\text{BaZrO}_3$  crystal. The calcine powder was analysed with X-ray diffraction to confirm that there were no unwanted impurities. The calcined powder was also analysed with laser particle-size analyser and scanning electron microscope to gain more information on the particle sizes and morphology. The



low temperature of calcination produced fine powder ( $< 1\mu\text{m}$ ). Fine powders always facilitate fast boundary diffusion during sintering.

Sintering the green pellet between  $1200^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $1700^{\circ}\text{C}$  showed vast information of morphology changes.  $\text{BaZrO}_3$  with  $0.6\mu\text{m}$  was obtained at  $1200^{\circ}\text{C}$  with dwell time of 24h. Further sintering at  $1600^{\circ}\text{C}$  for 6h produced a high dense pellet with no or near zero porosity and about 90% density compared to theoretical value. The crystallite size is ranged between  $0.36\mu\text{m}$  to  $0.44\mu\text{m}$ . However, the pellets had shrink of about 13%.

To prevent the large shrinkage, sintering aids were used. Magnesium oxide ( $\text{MgO}$ ), Yttrium oxide ( $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$ ), Aluminium oxide ( $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ ), and Barium Stannum oxide ( $\text{BaSnO}_3$ ) were added up to 5% separately with the calcined  $\text{BaZrO}_3$  powder and sintered between  $1500^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $1700^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Interestingly, with the presence of  $\text{MgO}$ ,  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$  and  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  the sintering shrinkage was reduced to only 2%. Even though there was some level of porosity,  $\text{BaZrO}_3$  with  $\text{MgO}$  and  $\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$  pellets with shown about 90% densification.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia bagi memenuhi keperluan Ijazah Master Sains

**SINTESIS DAN MORFOLOGI BARIUM ZIRCONATE  
DENGAN KETUMPATAN TINGGI**

Oleh

**SELVARAJAN SUBRAMANIAM**

Ogos 2001

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Bariun Zirconate ( $\text{BaZrO}_3$ ) adalah sejenis bahan sasaran lengai yang mempunyai ketahanan yang tinggi terhadap suhu dan tindakbalas kimia.  $\text{BaZrO}_3$  boleh digunakan sebagai bekas untuk memanaskan bahan lain pada suhu yang tinggi. Mengikut kajian,  $\text{BaZrO}_3$  yang mempunyai saiz partikel yang kecil boleh digunakan sebagai penebat untuk kapasitor berlapis. Dalam kajian ini,  $\text{BaZrO}_3$  yang berketumpatan tinggi telah dihasilkan secara tindak balas keadaan pepejal bagi menghasilkan serbuk  $\text{BaZrO}_3$  yang halus dan memberikan bahan ketumpatan tinggi apabila disinter pada suhu tinggi.



Dalam kajian ini, sebatian nitrat digunakan sebagai bahan asas (bukan sebatian oksida atau karbonat, yang biasa digunakan) untuk mengurangkan suhu tindakbalas pembentukan BaZrO<sub>3</sub>. Bahan-bahan tindakbalas (Ba(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> and ZrO(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>.H<sub>2</sub>O dalam kuantiti 1:1 molar) telah dipanaskan bersama-sama pada suhu 800<sup>0</sup>C selama 8 jam untuk mendapatkan BaZrO<sub>3</sub> yang tulen dan yang mempunyai saiz hablur yang kecil. Hasilnya telah dianalisis dengan alat X-ray untuk menentukan ketulenannya. Hasilnya juga telah dianalisis dengan 'laser particle size analyser' dan mikroskop elektron untuk mendapat maklumat yang lebih mendalam mengenai saiz dan morfologinya. Suhu tindakbalas yang rendah telah menghasilkan saiz butir hasil tindakbalas yang kecil (< 1µm). Saiz butir yang kecil dapat mempercepatkan tindakbalas antara partikal-partikal BaZrO<sub>3</sub> semasa pensinteran.

Seterusnya, pelet dibentuk dari hasil tindakbalas di atas dan disinterkan antara suhu 1200<sup>0</sup>C dan 1700<sup>0</sup>C. Julat suhu yang besar dapat memberi maklumat yang jelas mengenai perubahan morfologi. BaZrO<sub>3</sub> yang dipanaskan pada suhu 1200<sup>0</sup>C selama 12 jam mempunyai partikel bersaiz 0.6µm. Pemanasan yang seterusnya pada 1600<sup>0</sup>C selama 6 jam telah menghasilkan BaZrO<sub>3</sub> yang hampir tidak ada keliangan serta mempunyai ketumpatan hampir 90% berbanding dengan nilai teori. Saiz kristal BaZrO<sub>3</sub> berjulat antara 0.36µm to 0.44µm. Walau bagaimanapun, pelet yang dihasilkan ini telah mengalami pengecutanan yang besar iaitu sebanyak lebih dari 13%.

Untuk mengurangi pengecutan ini, bahan yang membantu pensinteran (sintering aid) telah digunakan. Magnesium oksida, Yttrium oksida, Aluminium oksida and Barium Stannum oksida ditambah sehingga 5% secara berasingan kepada BaZrO<sub>3</sub> dan dipanaskan antara suhu 1500<sup>0</sup>C dan 1700<sup>0</sup>C. Dengan kehadiran Magnesium oxida, Yttrium oxida dan Aluminium oxida dapat mencegah pengecutan. Pengecutan yang berlaku hanya sebanyak 2% sahaja. Walaupun, mempunyai sedikit sebanyak keliangan BaZrO<sub>3</sub> dengan Magnesium oksida dan Yttrium oksida telah menghasilkan pelet yang mempunyai ketumpatan hampir 90%.



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I certify that an Examination Committee meet on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2001 to conduct the final examination of Selvarajan Subramaniam on his Master of Science thesis entitle “Synthesis and Morphology of High Density Barium Zirconate ceramics” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.



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**SELVARAJAN SUBRAMANIAM**

**Date** : 9/11/01

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	ii
<b>ABSTRAK</b>	iv
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	vii
<b>APPROVAL SHEETS</b>	viii
<b>DECLARATION FORM</b>	x
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	xi
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	xiii
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	xiv
<b>NOMENCLATURE</b>	xviii
 <b>CHAPTER</b>	
<b>I INTRODUCTION</b>	
History of Ceramics	1
Relevance, Importance and Application of ceramics	1
General Introduction of Alkaline-Earth-Zirconium-Oxides	4
The Objective of Work	6
<b>II LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	
Introduction	8
Perovskite Structure	9
Polycrystalline Structure	10
BaZrO <sub>3</sub> and Relevance	12
<b>III THEORY</b>	
Introduction	20
Powder Fabrication Technique	23
Milling	23
Calcination	25
Grading	26
Compacting	27
Solid State Sintering	29
Additives	32
Characterization	34



	Thermal Analysis	34
	Structural (Physical) Characterization	36
	X-ray Diffraction Analysis	37
	Qualitative Phase Analysis	38
	Density	40
	Microstructural Characterization	41
	Scanning Electron Microscopy	42
<b>IV</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	
	Introduction	49
	Materials	49
	Sample preparation	50
	Equipment	52
	DTA-TG	52
	X-ray Diffraction	52
	Microstructural analysis	53
	Density	54
<b>V</b>	<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	
	Introduction	64
	Calcination	65
	Sintering BaZrO <sub>3</sub>	76
	Sintering BaZrO <sub>3</sub> with dopant	95
<b>VI</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
	Introduction	115
	Conclusions	116
	Recommendations	117
	<b>REFERENCES</b>	118
	<b>APPENDIX</b>	122
	<b>BIODATA OF THE AUTHOR</b>	124



## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
4.1	Temperature and soak time for calcination raw powders.	55
4.2	Temperature and soak time for sintering calcined powder with or without sintering aid.	55
4.3	Type of sintering aid and its' weight in percentage used for sintering BaZrO <sub>3</sub> from temperature 1500 <sup>0</sup> C to 1700 <sup>0</sup> C.	56
5.1	Calculated lattice parameters and crystalline size for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> from the X-ray diffractograms on powders with different thermal history.	68
5.2	Calculated lattice parameters and average crystal size for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> from X-ray diffractograms on polish pellets with different thermal history.	93
5.3	Density measured through Archimedes' principle for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> pellets.	93
5.4	Physical properties comparison of BaZrO <sub>3</sub> between the materials in market (by Superconductive) and result obtained from thesis.	94
5.5	Density measured for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> with sintering aid by using Principle Arrchimedes.	112
5.6	Shrinkage in BaZrO <sub>3</sub> with the effect of various type and amount of sintering aid with temperature.	113



## LIST FOR FIGURES

Figure		Page
1.1	The pie chart shows the various applications in ceramics market.	5
2.1	Perovskite Structure.	11
2.2	Temperature dependence of the dielectric constant of alkaline-earth zirconates.	17
2.3	Dielectric constant at 1 Mc vs temperature.	17
2.4	Dielectric quality factor at 1Mc vs. temperature.	18
2.5	Pressure – temperature phase diagram for BaO – ZrO <sub>2</sub> system.	19
2.6	Relative dielectric constant, temperature coefficient of dielectric constant and dielectric for (Ba, Ca, Sr) ZrO <sub>3</sub> .	20
3.1	Block diagram for general ceramic processing.	44
3.2	Diagram of a typical refractory microstructure made from powders with a large range of sizes.	45
3.3	Typical Furnas curve indicating the particle size distribution which will give maximum packing density during shape forming.	45
3.4	Development of ceramics microstructure during sintering.	46
3.5	Thermogravimetry (TG) record for mass changes as a function of temperature.	47
3.6	Temperature difference between sample and an inert reference as a function of temperature.	47
3.7	A combination result of TG and DTA as a function of temperature.	48



Figure	Page	
3.8	Derivation of Bragg's law for X-ray diffraction.	
4.1	Flow chart for solid – state reaction route.	55
4.2	Temperature – Time graph showing soaking time and temperature for calcination.	56
4.3	Temperature – time graph showing temperature and time for sintering.	57
5.1	Simultaneous TG-DTA profile for the 1:1 molar mixture of $\text{Ba}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ and $\text{ZrO}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot \chi\text{H}_2\text{O}$ .	69
5.2	X-ray diffractogram of calcined powder at $700^\circ\text{C}$ without soaking.	70
5.3	X-ray signatures for calcined powder at $800^\circ\text{C}$ and $1000^\circ\text{C}$ .	71
5.4	Intensity ratio of the most intense peak of $\text{BaZrO}_3$ (hkl-110) with that of ( $\Delta$ ) $\text{BaCO}_3$ and ( $\bullet$ ) $\text{ZrO}_2$ respectively.	72
5.5a	Particle size analysis for powder calcined at $800^\circ\text{C}/8\text{h}$ .	73
5.5b	Particle size analysis for powder calcined at $1000^\circ\text{C}/8\text{h}$ .	73
5.6	Microstructural features for calcined powder at $800^\circ\text{C}/8\text{h}$ and $1000^\circ\text{C}/4\text{h}$ .	74
5.7	Pycnometric densities in raw and calcined powders.	75
5.8	X-ray diffraction patterns in sintered compacts of $\text{BaZrO}_3$ derived from precursors calcined at $800^\circ\text{C}/8\text{h}$ .	82
5.9	X-ray diffraction patterns in sintered compacts of $\text{BaZrO}_3$ derived from precursors calcined at $1000^\circ\text{C}/4\text{h}$ .	83
5.10	X-ray diffraction pattern of $\text{BaZrO}_3$ for sample fired at $1500^\circ\text{C}/6\text{h}$ .	84
5.11	Comparative X-ray diffractograms of $\text{BaZrO}_3$ sintered in the range $1200^\circ\text{C}$ to $1700^\circ\text{C}$ .	85
5.12	SEM surface micrograph for sample sintered at $1200^\circ\text{C}$ to $1400^\circ\text{C}$ with powder calcined at $800^\circ\text{C}/8\text{h}$ .	86



Figure	Page
5.13 SEM surface micrograph for sample sintered at 1200 <sup>o</sup> C to 1400 <sup>o</sup> C with powder calcined at 1000 <sup>o</sup> C /8h.	87
5.14 SEM fracture micrograph for sample sintered at 1400 <sup>o</sup> C /2h.	88
5.15 Microstructural development in BaZrO <sub>3</sub> samples (fractured) soaked for 6h at (a) 1400 <sup>o</sup> C, (b) 1500 <sup>o</sup> C and (c) 1540 <sup>o</sup> C.	89
5.16 Microstructural features in BaZrO <sub>3</sub> sintered at 1600 <sup>o</sup> C for 2h.	90
5.17 Microstructural evolution in BaZrO <sub>3</sub> (fractured surface) sintered at 1600 <sup>o</sup> C for: (a) 6 and (b) 12h and (c) 1600 <sup>o</sup> C /12h to 1700 <sup>o</sup> C /0h.	91
5.18 Microstructural comparison between sample sintered at 1600 <sup>o</sup> C/12h and micrograph for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> marketed by Superconductive Ltd.	92
5.19 XRD pattern of BaZrO <sub>3</sub> synthesized with 5 wt % of MgO as sintering aid between temperature 1500 <sup>o</sup> C and 1700 <sup>o</sup> C.	100
5.20 XRD pattern of BaZrO <sub>3</sub> synthesized with 2 wt % of Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> as sintering aid between temperature 1500 <sup>o</sup> C and 1700 <sup>o</sup> C.	101
5.21 XRD pattern of BaZrO <sub>3</sub> synthesized with 0.5 wt % of Y <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> as sintering aid between temperature 1500 <sup>o</sup> C and 1700 <sup>o</sup> C.	102
5.22 XRD pattern of BaZrO <sub>3</sub> synthesized with 5 wt % of BaSnO <sub>3</sub> as sintering aid between temperature 1600 <sup>o</sup> C and 1700 <sup>o</sup> C.	103
5.23a Microstructural features for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> with 0.5% of MgO as sintering aid and sintered at between 1500 <sup>o</sup> C and 1700 <sup>o</sup> C.	104
5.23b Microstructural features for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> with 2% of MgO as sintering aid and sintered at between 1500 <sup>o</sup> C and 1700 <sup>o</sup> C.	105
5.23c Microstructural features for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> with 5% of MgO as sintering aid and sintered at between 1500 <sup>o</sup> C and 1700 <sup>o</sup> C.	106
5.24a Microstructural features for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> with 0.5% of Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> as sintering aid and sintered at between 1500 <sup>o</sup> C and 1700 <sup>o</sup> C.	107

Figure		Page
5.24b	Microstructural features for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> with 2% of Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> as sintering aid and sintered at between 1500°C and 1700°C.	108
5.24c	Microstructural features for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> with 5% of Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> as sintering aid and sintered at between 1500°C and 1700°C.	109
5.25	Microstructural features for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> with 0.5% of Y <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> as sintering aid and sintered at between 1500°C and 1700°C.	110
5.26	Microstructural features for BaZrO <sub>3</sub> with 5% of BaSnO <sub>3</sub> as sintering aid and sintered at between 1500°C and 1700°C.	111
5.27	The shrinkage % evaluated as a function of the temperature.	114

## NOMENCLATURE

$\theta$	angle
$\rho$	density
$\lambda$	wavelength
$\mu\text{m}$	micrometer
$^{\circ}\text{C}$	temperature in Celsius
$\text{\AA}$	$10^{-10}\text{m}$
a, b, c	crystal edges
BBC	central ion
d-spacing	interplanar spacing
DTA	Differential Thermal Analysis
FCC	face central ion
Ghz	Gigahezt
h, k, l	Miller indices
JCPDS	Joint Committee for Powder Diffraction Standards
K	Kelvin
Kgf	kilogram force
La	Lanthanum
m	mass
P	pressure
Pa	Pascal



Pb	Plumbum
ppm	part permillion
PVA	Polyvinyl alcohol
Q	dielectric quality factor
SEM	Scanning Electron Microscope
Sn	Stanium
Sr	Stronium
SSR	Solid-state reaction
TCK	Temperature coefficient of dielectric constant
TG	Thermogravitmetry
V	volume
wt	weight
XRD	X-ray diffraction



# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### History of Ceramics

Hand mixing, hand building, scratch and slip decorating of earthenware can be backdated to even before 5000 B.C. Since then the use of ceramics has been growing slowly with time. Shaping by processed material in slip cast mould and firing in a close kiln was subsequently developed. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the use of ceramic materials became more important due to its stability and capability to withstand thermal resistance. With the development of new and sophisticated equipment such as X-ray diffraction (XRD) and Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, material systems have become more refined, and special compounds were developed, synthesised and fabricated into the products used for refractory and electronic applications (James, 1998).

### Relevance, Importance and Application of Ceramics

Ceramic materials are polycrystalline inorganic materials which consist of metallic and/or non-metallic elements bound together primarily by ionic and/or covalent bonds. The chemical composition of ceramic materials varies considerably,

from simple compound to mixture of many complex phases bonded together. The properties of ceramics are also varying due to their bonding characteristics. The wide range of materials that are known as ceramics includes most of the natural minerals of the earth such as the silicates, oxides, carbonates, sulphides, as well as glasses and glass ceramics. These ceramic materials have relatively high melting temperatures and high chemical stability in many hostile environments due to the stability of their strong bonds. These materials also are typically insulative to the passage of electricity and heat due to the absence of conductive electron(s).

In general, ceramics materials used for engineering applications can be divided into two groups. Firstly the traditional ceramics made from three basic compounds clay, silica ( $\text{SiO}_2$ ), and feldspar ( $\text{K}_2\text{OAl}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot 6\text{SiO}_2$ ), such as porcelain. Secondly the engineering ceramics which are pure or nearly pure compounds, such as, alumina ( $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ ), silicon carbide ( $\text{SiC}$ ), silicon nitride ( $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$ ) and zirconia ( $\text{ZrO}_2$ ) etc (William and Rainforth, 1994).

Advanced ceramics are further classified into two groups, viz., structural and electronic ceramics. The study of advanced ceramic materials such as electronic ceramics involves many disciplines including chemistry, physics, metallurgy, mechanical engineering and materials science.

Electronic ceramics originally were used only as electrical insulators. However, depending on their composition and the fabrication cycle used, current electronic ceramics exhibit a wider range of properties (that is, their polarisation, mechanical, and optical responses) which may be controlled through composition

control, chemical substitution, doping, and fabrication conditions, and in some cases due to the unique inherent characteristics.

To understand the behaviour of ceramics, the need to understand the relationship between the observed material properties and the underlying physical phenomena responsible for those properties is warranted. For example, the presence of oxygen vacancy point defects in  $ZrO_2$  ceramics leads to their use as oxygen sensor in automotive and other applications. Different applications of ceramics depend on material structural features from the atomic to the macrostructural level. Features such as atomic arrangement (crystal structure), point defects, domain structure, and microstructure are defined to the observed electronic properties of the material.

Chemical synthesis occupies a central position in advanced ceramics development because the experimental methods allow control of properties. Electronic ceramics such as  $BaTiO_3$  and  $SrTiO_3$  are used as capacitors,  $SnO_2$  and  $ZrO_2$  are used as gas sensors, and  $(Mn,Zn) Fe_2O_4$  is used as a magnet. Some electronic ceramics are used as superconductors, varistors and piezoelectrics (Segal, 1989). The electronic ceramic market shown in Figure 1.1 indicates that the maximum percentage goes to cutting tools industry (24%) and follows by electronic (integrated circuit) industry (21%). The third industrial application of electronic ceramics is devoted to capacitor industry (18%). (Iftetan, 1999)

Ceramics technology consists of initial densification and sintering of the raw powder so that the phase and crystalline structures and the microstructure of the final product satisfy the given requirement. The raw materials may be either simple

compounds (e.g. oxides) of metals or more complex compounds that, during the fabrication process, decompose to form simple oxides. In order to ensure desired phase composition of the powder mixture, the materials are subjected to thermal treatment such as calcination. In the case of non-oxides, such as silicon carbide, silicon nitride and aluminium nitride, the processing requires a special environment and equipment.

### **General Introduction of Alkaline-Earth Zirconates**

The double oxides of general formula  $MBO_3$  formed between the oxides of alkaline- earth metals ( $M= Ca, Sr, Ba$  and  $Mg$ ) and those of some group IV elements. These oxides are of great importance to industrial and technological application. For instance, the alkaline–earth carbonates are the well known precursors to innumerable inorganic and ceramics syntheses and reaction, while alkaline–earth silicates are of relevance and direct bearing in the slag chemistry of industrial production of iron and steels. Similarly, the discovery of superconductivity in ‘copper-free’ cubic perovskite systems such as  $BaPb_{1-x}Sb_xO_3$  ( $T_c = 3.5$  K at  $x = 0.25$ ) and  $BaPb_{2-1-x}Ba_xO_3$  ( $T_c = 13$  K at  $x = 0.3$ ) has triggered much activity in the pseudobinary alkaline earth oxide- $PbO(O_2)$  system (Iftetan, 1999). In addition, the technological impact of closely structure-related titanates ( $MTiO_3$ ) of the alkaline-earth metals is too great to be overlooked, of which Sr, Ba and Mg titanates are the most important electroceramics.





The alkaline-earth zirconates having the general chemical formula  $MZrO_3$  (M= Ca, Sr and Ba) with perovskite structure, have been projected as potential structural and electronic ceramics. In suitable doped forms they have been claimed to become ionic and/or electronic conductors. Corresponding titanates,  $BaTiO_3$  and  $SrTiO_3$  are well-known electroceramic material and commercially produced as low dielectric constant, high resistance and low TCK (temperature coefficient of dielectric constant) components. However, there is a lack of reliable technical information on the  $BaZrO_3$  system in the published literature. Most of the available literature is limited to the procedure to produce fine  $BaZrO_3$  powder through various sintering methods.

### **The Objective of Work**

In view of the importance of  $BaZrO_3$  system as potential ceramics for applications such as:

- ◆ Inert substrate for thin film deposition
- ◆ Structural material such as crucibles for reaction, melting and sintering experiments of oxides and non-oxides, and

the information gaps in the reported research, this study was taken up. This investigation was to study the systematic trend in the properties of the resulting ceramic powder and dense pellets. Synthesis of  $BaZrO_3$  in phase pure form has been carried out by conventional yet modified solid-state reaction (SSR). The objective