Accepted Manuscript

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Mei Tang, Zhen-Wei Niu, Xiu-Lu Zhang, Ling-Cang Cai

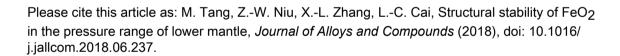
PII: S0925-8388(18)32358-2

DOI: 10.1016/j.jallcom.2018.06.237

Reference: JALCOM 46573

To appear in: Journal of Alloys and Compounds

Received Date: 20 March 2018
Revised Date: 18 June 2018
Accepted Date: 19 June 2018



This is a PDF file of an unedited manuscript that has been accepted for publication. As a service to our customers we are providing this early version of the manuscript. The manuscript will undergo copyediting, typesetting, and review of the resulting proof before it is published in its final form. Please note that during the production process errors may be discovered which could affect the content, and all legal disclaimers that apply to the journal pertain.



Submitted to Journal of Alloys and Compounds

Structural stability of FeO₂ in the pressure range of lower mantle

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Mei Tang², Zhen-Wei Niu^{1,*}, Xiu-Lu Zhang¹, and Ling-Cang Cai³

¹Laboratory for Extreme Conditions Matter Properties, Southwest University of Science and Technology, 621010

Mianyang, Sichuan, China

²Institute of Atomic and Molecular Physics, College of Physical Science and Technology, Sichuan University,

7 Chengdu 610065, China;

³ National Key Laboratory for Shock Wave and Detonation Physics Research, Institute of Fluid Physics, Chinese

Academy of Engineering Physics, Mianyang 621900, China

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Abstract: Recently the finding of a new iron oxide pyrite-type FeO₂ is reported to involve in the oxygen cycles occurred in Earth's mantle. Understanding of the stability of FeO2 at high pressures will be critical to model the cyclical process of oxygen in the lower mantle. Here we report the possible pressure-driven phase transition of FeO2 in the pressure range of lower mantle by combining particle swarm optimization method and different density functional theory (DFT) techniques. We find a possible pressure-driven phase transition from PNNM symmetry phase to PA-3 symmetry (Pyrite-type) phase in the pressure range of lower mantle. Nevertheless, the stability of the PNNM symmetry phase is highly affected by temperature change. The possible pressure-driven phase transition is disappeared when the temperature exceeded 800 K. It is also found that the PNNM symmetry phase is mechanically unstable when temperature is beyond 800 K. Finally, the reactions Gibbs free energies of two possible decomposition reactions of FeO₂ are calculated from different DFT techniques. It is found that the pyrite-type FeO₂ decomposes to Fe₂O₃ and O₂ is the more likely scenario in the relative low-pressure and high-temperature region. However, more detailed calculations, where the phase transitions and the different spin state of

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iron oxides are also taken into account, are needed to clarify this decomposition reaction.

26 **Keywords:** pyrite-type FeO₂, elastic constants, structural stability, high pressure

27 **PACS numbers:** 62.20.Dc; 71.15.Mb; 91.35.-x

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Corresponding author. E-mail: z.w.niu@foxmail.com

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