高温高圧下におけるオリビンと窒素の反応

Reaction between olivine and nitrogen at high pressure and high temperature

*鍵 裕之¹、久保 俊智¹、星野 由紀子¹、八木 健彦¹、篠崎 彩子²、大藤 弘明⁴、中野 智志⁵、中尾 愛子⁶、岡田 $ext{e}^{3}$

*Hiroyuki Kagi¹, Toshinori Kubo¹, Yukiko Hoshino¹, Takehiko Yagi¹, Ayako Shinozaki², Hiroaki Ohfuji⁴, Satoshi Nakano⁵, Aiko Nakao⁶, Taku Okada³

1.東京大学大学院理学系研究科附属地殻化学実験施設、2.名古屋大学大学院環境学研究科、3.東京大学物性研究所、4.愛媛大学地球深部ダイナミクス研究センター、5.物質材料研究機構、6.理化学研究所
1.Geochemical Research Center, Graduate School of Science, The University of Tokyo, 2.Graduate
School of Environmental Studies, Nagoya University, 3.ISSP, The University of Tokyo, 4.GRC, Ehime
University, 5.NIMS, 6.RIKEN

Volatiles represented by hydrogen greatly affect deep-earth dynamics. Behavior of volatiles will contribute to understandings of budget of light elements, evolution of the earth, geodynamics and so on. Among volatile components, behavior of nitrogen in the deep earth is still unclear. Nitrogen is a main constituent of atmosphere and also exists in the crust by substituting potassium ions in silicate minerals. Chondrite-normalized nitrogen concentration of the bulk earth is one order of magnitude lower than those other volatiles such as He, Ne, Ar, H₂O and so on. There could be a hidden nitrogen reservoir in the deep earth. We are going to test a possibility of a hidden nitrogen reservoir from high pressure and high temperature experiments.

San Carlos olivine or synthetic forsterite were loaded as a starting material in a diamond anvil cell with nitrogen in liquid state or compressed gas (180 MPa). After applying pressure at 5 GPa, a sample was heated using CO_2 laser or fiber laser. X-ray diffraction patterns, SEM-EDS images, XPS spectra were obtained on the recovered samples.

XRD measurements on the recovered samples revealed the formation of $enstatite (MgSiO_3)$ suggesting the decomposition of Mg_2SiO_4 into $MgSiO_3$ and MgO. This reaction is contrastive to the reaction occurring in H_2 fluid (Shinozaki et al., 2013), Mg_2SiO_4 decomposed into SiO_2 and MgO. Moreover, EDS mapping observations revealed that there are some Mg-rich (Si-depleted) spots.

XPS spectra shown in Fig. 1 revealed that nitrogen was detected from an olivine sample recovered from 5 GPa and 1700 K. Before Ar-sputtering, species assignable to NH_4^+ is dominant. Presumably, the sample surface is covered with adsorbed molecules. After Ar-sputtering, a broad band attributable to intrinsic nitrogen reacted with the mineral was observed. The present results suggest the formation of nitride species (N^{3-}) in a mantle-derived silicate mineral. This study proposes nitride as a hidden nitrogen reservoir in the deep mantle.

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