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ARTICLE

# First-principles Study on Effect of Pressure and Temperature on Mechanical, Thermodynamic Properties, and Electronic Structure of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al Alloy

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**Abstract:** The influence of temperature and pressure on the electronic, elastic, structural, and thermodynamic properties of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al alloy was investigated by performing a first-principles study. The calculated elastic constants, equilibrium lattice constants, and elastic modulus agree well with the recorded theoretical and experimental data. The calculated elastic constants indicate that  $C_{11}$  is more sensitive than  $C_{12}$  and  $C_{44}$  to pressure. The Young's modulus, bulk modulus, and shear modulus increase with the increase of pressure. The ratio of bulk to shear modulus (B/G) and anisotropy factor A were also analyzed. The Debye temperature was obtained by calculating the elastic constants, and it changes with the change in the pressure. The thermal expansion coefficient, normalized volume, heat capacity, bulk modulus, and Debye temperature  $\Theta_D$  were determined and analyzed using the quasi-harmonic Debye model at pressures of 0~60 GPa and temperatures of 0~1600 K. Finally, the density of states and Mulliken population were investigated and the effect of pressure on these was analyzed.

Key words: Ni-based alloys; electronic structure; mechanical properties; thermodynamics properties; first-principles

Because of the high strength, elevated thermal stability, high work hardening rate at room temperature, and high temperature oxidation resistance of Ni-based alloys, they have been widely applied in practical production and life<sup>[1-3]</sup>. The L1<sub>2</sub>-ordered phase Ni<sub>3</sub>Al is an important intermetallic compound in Ni-based alloys<sup>[4]</sup>, exhibiting excellent physical properties that make them attractive for high temperature structural materials applications.

Recently, many theoretical and experimental studies have been performed on the structure and mechanical properties of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al. For example, Hou et al<sup>[5]</sup> calculated the elastic, structural, and electronic properties of Ni<sub>3</sub>X (X=Al, Ga, Ge) under pressure using first-principles calculations. Guo et al<sup>[6]</sup> recorded the mechanical, structural, and magnetic characteristics of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al from first-principles and experimental studies. Boucetta et al<sup>[7]</sup> studied the mechanical properties of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al under high pressures using the plane-wave pseudo potential (PWPP) method. Yasuda et al<sup>[8]</sup> confirmed the elastic stiffness of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al at room temperature using the rectangular parallelepiped resonance method. However, to our knowledge, neither experimental nor theoretical studies have been conducted on the elastic, thermodynamic, and electronic properties of the Ni<sub>3</sub>Al alloy at different temperatures and pressures. As far as we know, the pressure and temperature have an important influence on the physical properties of the material. However, the effects of temperature on physical and mechanical properties of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al have seldom been reported. Thus, systematic investigation on structural, elastic, thermodynamic and electronic properties of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al under temperature and pressure can determine the value

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of the basic parameters, such as lattice parameters, elastic constants and Debye temperature, and provide insight into the nature of the solid-state theory. It would be useful for understanding and designing the relevant alloys<sup>[9]</sup>.

Here, we studied the elastic, thermodynamic, structural, and electronic properties of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al. The relationships between the pressure and the anisotropy factor A, Young's modulus E, shear modulus G, bulk modulus B, Debye temperature  $\Theta$ , and Poisson's ratio v were systematically studied. Second, the relationships among the pressure, temperature, and thermodynamic properties were studied using the quasi-harmonic Debye model. Finally, the pressure dependence of the electronic properties of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al alloy was calculated. The results enable the valuable assessment of some properties that are difficult to measure by experimental methods.

### **1** Computational Methods

The elastic, structural, thermodynamic, and electronic properties of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al alloy were calculated using the Cambridge sequential total energy package (CASTEP)<sup>[10]</sup> based on the density functional theory (DFT)<sup>[11,12]</sup>. The electronic exchangecorrelation potential energy was determined using the generalized gradient approximation (GGA)<sup>[13]</sup> of the Perdew-Wang (PW91)<sup>[14]</sup> version. The value of the kinetic cut-off energy for plane waves was set to 330 eV<sup>[15]</sup>. The k-points were  $8 \times 8 \times 8$  and the total energy was less than  $5.0 \times 10^{-7}$  eV/atom<sup>[16]</sup>. The Pulay schemes<sup>[17]</sup> of density mixing and a finite basis set correction were used to evaluate the stress and energy. The positions of the atoms had been relaxed in the model using the total force and energy by the BFGS scheme<sup>[18]</sup>, considering the criterion of cell optimization (displacement of  $5.0 \times 10^{-5}$  nm, RMs force of  $5.0 \times 10^{-5}$  eV/nm, and stress of 0.01 GPa). The electronic structure and total energy were recorded using cell optimization with a SCF tolerance of 5.0  $\times 10^{-7}$  eV. The states Ni 3d<sub>8</sub> 4s<sub>2</sub> and Al 3s<sub>2</sub> 3p<sub>1</sub> were taken as the fundamental setting for the calculations.

Using the quasi-harmonic Debye model<sup>[19]</sup> to study the thermodynamic properties of the Ni<sub>3</sub>Al alloy, the non-equilibrium Gibbs function  $G^*(V; P, T)$  is as follows:

$$G^*(V; P, T) = E(V) + PV + A_{\text{vib}}(\Theta(V); T)$$
(1)

where,  $A_{vib}$  represents the Helmholtz free energy of the lattice vibrations, E(V) represents the all of the energy of every unit cell, PV represents the requirement of constant hydrostatic pressure, and  $\Theta(V)$  represents the Debye temperature. The details of the calculations can be found in Ref. [20].

### 2 Results and Discussion

### 2.1 Structural properties

Ni<sub>3</sub>Al has the structure of ordered C15-type with group Pm3m (No. 221), the highest point symmetry  $O_h^7$ , and the Pearson symbol cP4. The Ni atoms occupy the 3c site (0, 1/2, 1/2) and the Al atoms take up the 1a site (0, 0, 0), as shown in Fig.1.

The calculated lattice parameters  $a_0$ , volume  $V_0$ , pressure derivative  $B_0'$ , and the bulk modulus  $B_0$  at 0 GPa are shown in



Fig.1 Crystal structure of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al alloy

Table 1, together with the available theoretical<sup>[21,22]</sup> and experimental data<sup>[23]</sup>. The obtained results of the lattice parameter coincide with the previous theoretical and experimental records, and the pressure derivative and bulk modulus accord with a previous report. Our experimental data agree with the theoretical results, proving that our calculated results are accurate.

In order to obtain the pressure derivative  $B_0'$  and the bulk modulus  $B_0$ , geometry optimization of the cell volume at different pressures was performed using generalized gradient approximation (GGA). The recorded volume and pressure coincided with the result obtained using the third-order Birch-Murnaghan equation as follows<sup>[24]</sup>:

$$P = \frac{3}{2} B_0 \left[ \left( \frac{V}{V_0} \right)^{-7/3} - \left( \frac{V}{V_0} \right)^{-5/3} \right] \cdot \left\{ 1 + \frac{3}{4} (B' - 4) \cdot \left[ \left( \frac{V}{V_0} \right)^{-2/3} - 1 \right] \right\}$$
(2)

The changes in the cell volume  $V/V_0$  and the lattice parameter  $a/a_0$  of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al are plotted in Fig.2. It is easy to observe the decrease in  $V/V_0$  and  $a/a_0$  with increasing pressure. However, there is no available reference to compare this to. The functions of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al can be obtained by the  $V/V_0$  and  $a/a_0$  curve:

 $a/a_0 = 0.9992 - 0.00165P + 1.6792 \times 10^{-5}P^2$ (3)

 $V/V_0 = 0.9982 - 0.00475P + 2.8537 \times 10^{-5}P^2$ (4)

In order to obtain the steady state structure of  $Ni_3Al$ , the cell volume and total energy were calculated using several lattice constant values. The relationship between the calculated energy and volume is shown in Fig.3. By coincide with it to the Birch-Murnaghan equation of states (EOS)<sup>[24]</sup>, the calculated total energy and cell volume of the steady-state structure are

Table 1 Recorded equilibrium lattice constant  $a_0$ , volume  $V_0$ , bulk modulus  $B_0$  and its first pressure derivative  $B_0'$  from the Birch-Murnaghan equation of states (EOS) of Ni<sub>1</sub>Al

	a <sub>0</sub> /nm	$V_0 / \times 10^{-3}  \mathrm{nm}^3$	B <sub>0</sub> /GPa	$B_0'$
Present	0.3578	45.769	185.247	4.75
Exp. [21]	0.3572	45.576	171	-
Cal. [22]	0.3574	45.652	182.0	4.70
Cal. [23]	-	-	179.9	4.73



Fig.2 Variations of lattice parameter  $a/a_0$ , cell volume  $V/V_0$  of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al at different pressures



Fig.3 Curve of calculated total energy versus primitive cell volume of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al

-4128.6335 eV and  $45.4993 \times 10^{-3}$  nm<sup>3</sup>, respectively, which agree well with the geometry optimization results.

### 2.2 Elastic properties

The elastic constant is a significant material parameter, and can provide important details regarding the mechanical stability<sup>[25]</sup>. The elastic constants are very important for studying the mechanical properties of Ni-Al alloys under various pressures. By geometry optimization, we can determine the elastic constant of a single crystal.

The calculated Ni<sub>3</sub>Al phases in the present study are cubic crystal. The elastic constants are  $C_{11}$ ,  $C_{12}$ , and  $C_{44}$ . The related mechanical stability requirements are as follows<sup>[26]</sup>:  $C_{11}+2C_{12}>$ 0 and  $C_{11}>|C_{12}|$ ,  $C_{44}>0$ . The recorded results of the elastic constants are listed in Table 2 at 0 pressure, together with

theoretical<sup>[5,7]</sup> and experimental values<sup>[8]</sup>. The mechanical stability requirements are obtained for Ni<sub>3</sub>Al, and the calculated values of the elastic constants agree well with the experimental and theoretical data. Hence, selection of the requirements and calculations of the elastic constants should be done appropriately.

The changes in the elastic constants with pressure are shown in Fig.4a. We determine that  $C_{11}$ ,  $C_{12}$ , and  $C_{44}$  increase with the increasing pressure, while the change in  $C_{11}$  with pressure is more significant than those of  $C_{12}$  and  $C_{44}$ . This is because  $C_{11}$ represents the elasticity in length, while  $C_{44}$  and  $C_{12}$  represent the elasticity in shape. The transverse strain could result in shape changes, but cannot lead to volume changes<sup>[27]</sup>. Hence,  $C_{11}$  is more significant than  $C_{44}$  and  $C_{12}$ .

The Cauchy pressure ( $C_{11}-C_{44}$ ) is usually used to study the angular characteristics of atomic bonding in metals even than in compounds<sup>[25]</sup>. When the Cauchy pressure is negative (positive), it indicates that the object is nonmetallic (metallic). Ni<sub>3</sub>Al has a positive Cauchy pressure, indicating that it is a ductile material. Furthermore, the Cauchy pressure increases when the pressure increases (Fig.4a), i.e., the ductility of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al increases when the pressure increases.

The shear moduli *G*, bulk moduli *B*, Poisson's ratio *v*, and Young's moduli *E* of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al were calculated using the Voigt-Reuss-Hill (VRH) formula<sup>[28]</sup>. For the cubic system, the calculation formulas are as follows<sup>[29]</sup>:

$$B = \frac{1}{3}(C_{11} + 2C_{12}) \tag{5}$$

$$G_{\rm V} = \frac{1}{5} (3C_{44} + C_{11} - C_{12}) \tag{6}$$

$$G_{\rm R} = \frac{5(C_{11} - C_{12})C_{44}}{3(C_{11} - C_{12}) + 4C_{44}} \tag{7}$$

$$G = \frac{1}{2}(G_{\rm V} + G_{\rm R}) \tag{8}$$

$$E = \frac{9GB}{3B+G} \tag{9}$$

$$\nu = \frac{(E - 2G)}{2G} \tag{10}$$

The calculated results of the polycrystalline Young's modulus E, shear modulus G, and bulk modulus B under various pressures are shown in Fig.4b. It was determined that the calculated G, E, and B increase when the external pressure

Table 2 Recorded Cauchy pressure  $(C_{12}-C_{44})$ , elastic constants  $C_{ij}$ , Poisson's ratio v, elastic modulus and anisotropy factor A of Ni<sub>2</sub>Al at 0 GPa

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	$C_{11}/\text{GPa}$	$C_{12}$ /GPa	C44/GPa	C <sub>12</sub> –C <sub>44</sub> /GPa	<i>B</i> /GPa	G/GPa	E/GPa	G/B	V	Α
Present	235.22	163.35	121.67	41.67	187.31	74.82	198.09	0.399	0.324	2.017
Exp. [8]	221.0	146.0	124.0	22.0	171	76.9	200.73	0.449	0.304	-
Cal. [5]	225.3	157.6	121.1	36.5	180.2	72.9	192.74	0.405	0.321	-
Cal. [7]	228.4	160.4	123.8	36.6	183.1	74.1	195.73	0.404	0.322	-



Fig.4 Parameters variations of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al with the changing of pressure: (a) elastic constants, (b) elastic modulus, and (c) B/G, Poisson's ratio v and anisotropy factor A

increases, indicating that with the increasing pressure, the hardness can be improved. It is generally known that the material resistance to volume and shape changes can be measured using the bulk modulus *B* and the shear modulus  $G^{[30]}$ . It was found that the calculated bulk modulus is much larger than the shear modulus, which means that the resistance to volume change of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al is much better than the resistance to shape change.

The ratio of G/B, Poisson's ratio v, and anisotropy factor A are shown in Fig.4c. Pugh<sup>[30]</sup> reported the ductile and brittle characteristics of materials are predicted using the ratio of shear modulus to bulk modulus (G/B) of polycrystalline phases. The high (low) G/B values are related to the brittleness (ductility). The critical value is a very important value, and is about 0.57 for the brittle-ductile transition. The recorded G/B values of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al are lower than 0.57, indicating ductility. The recorded G/B values of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al decrease with an increase in pressure, illustrating that ductility would be better than before with the pressure increase. It is an important parameter of Poisson's ratio  $\nu$  to quantify the stability resist shear<sup>[24]</sup>, and the value of the Poisson's ratio v ranges from 0.25~0.5. The recorded Poisson's ratio values of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al at different pressures are in the range of 0.32~0.37 and increase with the increasing pressure, indicating that the interatomic forces are the central forces.

The elastic anisotropy of the crystal is widely used in engineering science because it is possible to induce microcracks. A=1 indicates an absolutely isotropic material. When the value becomes larger or smaller than the standard value, it predicts the level of elastic anisotropy<sup>[31]</sup>. The changes in the anisotropy factor with the changes in pressure are shown in Fig.4c. It was determined that the value of A increases with the increasing pressure, and Ni<sub>3</sub>Al can be considered as an elastically anisotropic material because its A value is larger than 1.0.

The heat capacity and Debye temperature  $\Theta_D$  at low temperature could be obtained using the electronic structures and the elastic constants of the compound. The Debye temperature provides some insights into the thermodynamic

properties of an elastic material<sup>[32]</sup>; it can be used to distinguish the low and high temperature areas of the solid. For  $T > \Theta_D$ , the material has an energy of  $k_B T$ ; and for  $T < \Theta_D$  it is predicted that high-frequency materials would be frozen in the foreseeable future<sup>[33]</sup>.  $\Theta_D$  is calculated by the average values of sound velocity as follows<sup>[34,35]</sup>:

$$\Theta_{\rm D} = \frac{h}{k_{\rm B}} \left[ \frac{3n}{4\pi} \left( \frac{N_{\rm A}\rho}{M} \right) \right]^{1/3} v_{\rm m} \tag{11}$$

$$v_{\rm m} = \left[ \frac{1}{3} \left( \frac{2}{v_{\rm s}^3} + \frac{1}{v_{\rm l}^3} \right) \right]^{1/3}$$
(12)

$$v_{1} = \sqrt{(B + \frac{4}{3}G)\frac{1}{\rho}}$$
(13)

$$v_{\rm s} = \sqrt{G/\rho} \tag{14}$$

where,  $k_{\rm B}$  represents the Boltzmann constant, *h* represents the Planck's constant, *n* represents the number of atoms in a molecular formula,  $N_{\rm A}$  represents the Avogadro constant, *M* represents molecular mass,  $\rho$  represents the density,  $v_{\rm I}$  represents the longitudinal sound velocity,  $v_{\rm s}$  represents the shear sound velocity, and  $v_{\rm m}$  represents the average sound velocity.

The dependence of density  $(\rho)$ , shear  $(v_s)$  and average wave velocity  $(v_m)$ , longitudinal sound velocities  $(v_l)$ , and Debye temperature  $(\Theta_D)$  under various pressures from 0 to 60 GPa are listed in Table 3. It was determined that the Debye temperature increases with an increase in the pressure. The Debye temperature of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al at 0 GPa and 0 K is 471.67 K, which agrees with the available experimental data of  $462\pm5$  K<sup>[36]</sup> and  $460.0\pm10$  K<sup>[37]</sup> obtained from elastic constants at room temperature. These values are close to our results, indicating that the previous results were precise and the present calculated results are accurate. However, it is difficult to compare the calculated and experimental data of the Debye temperature of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al under various pressures. Therefore, the present calculated results can be used to predict the results of the experiments in future.

### 2.3 Thermodynamic properties

The quasi-harmonic Debye model was used to study the

average wave velocity (v <sub>m</sub> ), longitudinal sound velocitie							
$(v_{\rm l})$ and Debye temperature $(\boldsymbol{\Theta}_{\rm D})$ for Ni <sub>3</sub> Al							
P/GPa	$\rho$ / $\times$ 10 <sup>3</sup> kg·m <sup>-3</sup>	$v_{\rm m}/{\rm m}\cdot{\rm s}^{-1}$	$v_{l}/m \cdot s^{-1}$	$v_{\rm s}/{\rm m}\cdot{\rm s}^{-1}$	$\Theta_{\rm D}/{\rm K}$		
0	7.369	3570.07	6241.49	3186.42	471.67		
10	7.738	3739.36	6658.81	3333.56	502.15		
20	8.057	3890.16	7038.84	3464.61	529.48		
30	8.338	3980.05	7324.87	3541.18	547.95		
40	8.595	4136.93	7689.63	3678.72	575.32		
50	8.831	4186.86	7872.26	3720.82	587.54		
60	9.048	4279.13	8154.51	3800.18	605.39		

Table 3 Pressure (*P*) dependence of density ( $\rho$ ), shear ( $v_s$ ) and average wave velocity ( $v_m$ ), longitudinal sound velocities ( $v_i$ ) and Debve temperature ( $\Theta_n$ ) for Ni<sub>2</sub>Al

thermodynamic properties of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al at high pressures and temperatures. The effects of pressure and temperature were studied over the range of 0~60 GPa and 0~1600 K. Fig.5a shows the volume as a function of temperature and pressure. It was found that the calculated volume recorded by the quasi-harmonic Debye model is 133.05 bohr<sup>3</sup> at 0 GPa and 0 K, which agrees with the experimental value of 131.26 bohr<sup>3[21]</sup> and calculated value of 131.48 bohr<sup>3[22]</sup>. Furthermore, the volume increases smoothly with the increasing temperature, while the volume decreases smoothly when the pressure increases, with the temperature being a constant, indicating that the crystal structure of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al becomes stable with the increasing pressure. The ratio of volume  $V/V_0$  agrees with the pressure and temperature, as shown in Fig.5b. It was observed that the  $V/V_0$  curves become steeper with the increasing pressure, indicating that Ni<sub>3</sub>Al is compressed more easily with the increasing pressure.



Fig.5 Variations of volume (a) and  $V/V_0$  (b) of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al with the changing of temperature and pressure

The bulk modulus with the change in pressure and temperature is plotted in Fig.6. The calculated value of the bulk modulus using the quasi-harmonic Debye model is 185.42 GPa at 0 GPa and 0 K, which agrees with the experimental value of 171.0 GPa<sup>[21]</sup> and calculated value of 182.0 GPa<sup>[22]</sup>. Furthermore, the bulk modulus decreases with an increase in temperature when the pressure is a constant, while it increases with increasing pressure. The hardness of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al can be represented by the bulk modulus, and the changes in the bulk modulus can be used to define the changes in the hardness. Therefore, we concluded that the hardness of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al increases with an increase in pressure, but it increases with the decreasing temperature.

The heat capacity  $C_v$  change with the change in the pressure and temperature is shown in Fig.7. It was determined that  $C_v$ increases with an increase in temperature, and it increases with a decrease in pressure, indicating that  $C_v$  is more sensitive to pressure, and  $C_v$  increases rapidly at temperatures below 800 K at a constant pressure. This increase in  $C_v$  obeys Debye's law<sup>[38]</sup>. The  $C_v$  is approximate to the constant data at very high temperatures, and this is known as the Dulong-Petit limit<sup>[39]</sup>. However, there are no experimental values or theoretical calculations of the heat capacity of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al available currently, which can be used for comparison. Therefore, the calculated values in the present study can be used as a reference for further experimental studies.

The changes in the thermal expansion coefficient  $\alpha$  by changing the pressure and temperature are displayed in Fig.8. For a given pressure, it was found that  $\alpha$  increases rapidly at temperatures below 500 K, while its value at 800 K is only slightly smaller than that at 1000 K, indicating that the rate of increase in  $\alpha$  becomes slower at high temperatures. Furthermore, when *T*<500 K,  $\alpha$  increases slowly with the decreasing pressure, but  $\alpha$  decreases quickly with the increasing pressure at high temperatures.

The temperature dependences of the Debye temperature  $\Theta_{\rm D}$  are shown in Fig.9. It was found that the calculated  $\Theta_{\rm D}$  obtained by the quasi-harmonic Debye model is 475.82 K at 0



Fig.6 Variations of bulk modulus of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al with the changing temperature at different pressures



Fig.7 Variations of heat capacity of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al with the changing of temperature at different pressures



Fig.8 Variations of thermal expansion coefficient of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al with the changing of temperature at different pressures

GPa and 0 K, which agrees with the calculated results (465.36 K)<sup>[5]</sup> and experimental values  $(462\pm5 \text{ K})^{[36]}$  derived from the elastic data. Furthermore, the  $\Theta_D$  increases markedly but decreases slowly with an increase in pressure. These results

agree with the general behavior that the Debye temperature decreases with an increase in the temperature in intermetallic compounds<sup>[40]</sup>. The influence of temperature on  $\Theta_D$  is obviously smaller than that of the pressure. We hope that the thermodynamic properties obtained by the quasi-harmonic Debye model can provide more insight into the physical properties of the Ni<sub>3</sub>Al alloy.

### 2.4 Electronic properties

It is important to understand the influence of pressure on the electronic structure and bonding. To understand this better, the local density of states (PDOS) and total density of states (TDOS) of the Ni<sub>3</sub>Al alloy were calculated. The PDOS of Ni-Al alloy is illustrated in Fig.10a, and TDOS, plotted at pressures of 0, 30, and 50 GPa is shown in Fig.10b.

As shown in Fig.10a, we found that the energy states were higher than the Fermi level, indicating that the Ni<sub>3</sub>Al phases have metallic properties. Furthermore, most of the bonding peaks usually show an energy range from -10 eV to 20 eV, because the valence electron numbers of the Ni(s), Ni(d), Al(s), and Al(p) orbits. Moreover, it is obvious that hybridization



Fig.9 Variations of Debye temperature with the changing of temperature under different pressures



Fig.10 Variations of density of states of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al under various pressures: (a) zero pressure and (b) high pressure (vertical dotted lines are the Fermi level)

		8	8 ° 1	1	
Pressure/GPa	Mulliken Charge/e	Bond length/nm	Pressure/GPa	Mulliken Charge/e	Bond length/nm
0	Ni <sup>-0.09</sup> Al <sup>+0.26</sup>	0.252935	40	Ni <sup>-0.07</sup> Al <sup>+0.22</sup>	0.240292
10	Ni <sup>-0.08</sup> Al <sup>+0.25</sup>	0.248849	50	Ni <sup>-0.07</sup> Al <sup>+0.20</sup>	0.238135
20	Ni <sup>-0.08</sup> Al <sup>+0.24</sup>	0.245523	60	Ni <sup>-0.06</sup> Al <sup>+0.19</sup>	0.236206
30	Ni <sup>-0.08</sup> Al <sup>+0.23</sup>	0.242730			

Table 4 Mulliken charges and bond length of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al phases at different pressures

between the Ni and Al atoms forms a covalent bond.

The TDOS at pressures of 0, 30, and 60 GPa is depicted for understanding the TDOS of the Ni<sub>3</sub>Al phases at different pressures, as shown in Fig.10a. It was found that the shape change of the TDOS curves is slight, indicating that the Ni<sub>3</sub>Al phases maintain the stability of the structure and show no structural changes for pressures up to 60 GPa. Besides, the TDOS decreases with an increase in the external pressure. It can be deduced that there is a variation in the interaction potentials in the Ni<sub>3</sub>Al phases because the interatomic distances shrink under pressure, which results in a decrease in the entire electronic energy levels.

For further understanding the relative covalence and ionicity of the  $Ni_3Al$  phases at different pressures, the Mulliken charge and bond length were also calculated, as displayed in Table 4. The (+) and (–) represent the gains and losses of electronic charge, respectively. The calculated values demonstrate that the velocity of charge transport from the Ni atom to the Al atom decreases with an increase in pressure, and bond lengths decrease with the increasing pressure. This data can be used as a comparison for experimental studies. It is remarkable that the absolute magnitudes of the atomic charges rely heavily on the fundamental setting<sup>[41]</sup>. However, the recorded bond lengths and charge transfer trend are important for a better understanding of the bonding characteristics.

### 3 Conclusions

1) The structural, elastic, electronic, and thermodynamic properties of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al at different temperatures and pressures were analyzed by performing a first-principles study. The calculated elastic constants, equilibrium lattice constants, and elastic modulus coincide well with other theoretical and experimental records. The bulk modulus  $B_0$  and its pressure derivative  $B_0'$  for Ni<sub>3</sub>Al is 185.247 GPa and 4.75, respectively.

2) The shear modulus, Poisson's ratio, bulk modulus, elastic constants, Young's modulus, and anisotropy factor of Ni<sub>3</sub>Al were determined at various pressures. Under applied pressure, the elastic stiffness constant  $C_{11}$  changes to a greater extent than  $C_{12}$  and  $C_{44}$  do. The shear modulus, Young's modulus, and bulk modulus increase with an increase in pressure. B/G and the anisotropy factor A were also determined.

3) The Debye temperature was obtained by calculating the elastic constants, and it changes with a change in the pressure. The normalized volume, heat capacity, Debye temperature, thermal expansion coefficient, and bulk modulus were

obtained and analyzed using the quasi-harmonic Debye model at temperatures of  $0\sim1000$  K and pressures of  $0\sim50$  GPa, and the results were interpreted.

4) The DOS and Mulliken population analysis were performed.  $Ni_3Al$  is structurally stable and the velocity of charge transport from the Ni atom to the Al atom increases with the increasing pressure.

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## 第一性原理研究压力和温度对 Ni<sub>3</sub>Al 合金力学性能、热力学性能和电子结构的影响

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**摘 要:**采用基于密度泛函理论的第一性原理研究了压力和温度对 Ni<sub>3</sub>Al 合金的力学性能、热力学性能和电子结构的影响。计算结果表明:弹性常数、晶格常数和弹性模量的计算值与理论值和实验值十分吻合,其中压力对弹性常数 C<sub>11</sub>的影响比 C<sub>12</sub>和 C<sub>44</sub>更明显,杨氏模量(E)、体模量(B)和剪切模量(G)随着压力的增加而增大。同时还对 Ni<sub>3</sub>Al 合金的泊松比和各向异性因子做了分析,计算了德拜 温度与压力关系。采用准谐德拜模型,预测了 Ni<sub>3</sub>Al 合金在压力(0~60 GPa)、温度(0~1600 K)下的热膨胀系数、热焓、体模量和德 拜温度。最后就压力对 Ni<sub>3</sub>Al 合金的态密度和电荷密度的影响做了分析。

关键词: 镍基合金; 电子结构; 力学性能; 热力学性能; 第一性原理

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