

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**EFFECT OF Al^{3+} SUBSTITUTIONS AT
Cu-SITE AND Al_2O_3 ADDITION ON
ULTRASONIC VELOCITIES AND ELASTIC
ANOMALIES OF $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_{7-\delta}$
SUPERCONDUCTOR**

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Thesis submitted in fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science

Faculty of Applied Sciences

April 2013

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledge as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

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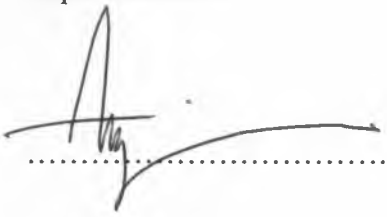
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Date : April 2013

ABSTRACT

The ultrasonic longitudinal and shear velocities were measured in $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_{7-\delta}$ ($\delta = 0.1$ and 0.7), $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_{3-x}\text{Al}_x\text{O}_{7-\delta}$ ($x=0.06$ and 0.1) and $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_{7-\delta} + y\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ ($y= 0.2$ and 0.4 wt%) superconductors in temperature ranges of $80\text{-}280\text{K}$ and $80\text{-}220\text{K}$, respectively. For $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_{7-\delta}$ ($\delta = 0.1$ and 0.7) samples, the absolute velocity (at 80K) showed to decrease when the oxygen content was reduced from $\text{O}_{6.9}$ to $\text{O}_{6.3}$. However, for $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_{3-x}\text{Al}_x\text{O}_{7-\delta}$ ($x=0.06$ and 0.1) samples, although both samples have same oxygen content ($\text{O}_{6.8}$), the absolute velocity also showed to decrease when the amount of Al^{3+} increased. In contrast, the absolute velocity for $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_{7-\delta} + y\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ ($y= 0.2$ and 0.4 wt%) samples showed to increase when the amount of nano-size Al_2O_3 increased, even though both samples have same oxygen content ($\text{O}_{6.8}$). Besides, a step-like elastic anomaly indicating sudden lattice stiffening was observed for $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_{6.9}$ around 260K but suppressed for $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_{6.3}$. This step-like elastic anomaly was suggested to be due to some kind of oxygen ordering process taking place in Cu-O chains of $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_{7-\delta}$. Moreover, partial substitution of Al^{3+} in $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_{3-x}\text{Al}_x\text{O}_{7-\delta}$ (where $x=0.06$ and 0.1) affected the step-like elastic anomaly to suppress and display a monotonous velocity change with temperature. The suppression of the step-like anomaly is due to the substitution of Al^{3+} which enters and disturbs Cu-O chains and interferes with oxygen ordering. In addition, the maximum T_C was observed at sample $x = 0.06$ and this related with enhanced value of the computed BCS electron-phonon coupling constant. Moreover, the addition of nano-size Al_2O_3 on $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_{7-\delta}$, showed the step-like elastic anomaly was slightly shifted from higher temperature (210K) to lower temperature (200K) when the amount of Al_2O_3 increased. The addition of nano-size Al_2O_3 is not expected to substitute directly into the $\text{EuBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_{7-\delta}$ unit cell; therefore it does not suppress the step-like elastic anomaly but only shifted it slightly to a lower temperature. In addition, observation of enhancement of electron-phonon coupling constant, λ together with suppression of the step-like anomaly for $x=0.06$ sample, indicates that the anomaly may not be a precursor for high-temperature superconductivity.

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