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New accurate compression data for γ -Fe₂SiO₄.

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Abstract

The equation of state for γ -Fe₂SiO₄ was determined by single-crystal X-ray diffraction up to 10.2 GPa at room temperature. The pressure – volume data, measured at 10 different pressures, do not show any evidence of a phase transformation and were fit by a third-order Birch-Murnaghan equation of state. The following coefficients were refined simultaneously: $V_0 = 559.44(6) \text{ \AA}^3$, $K_{T0} = 187.3(1.7) \text{ GPa}$, and $K' = 5.5(4)$. This result implies that the Mg/Fe substitution along the γ -Fo-Fa join does not significantly affect the bulk modulus. The sample shows higher K' than other compositions along the Fo-Fa join, which generally have $K' \sim 4$. Based on our results we can calculate the sound bulk velocity of γ -Fe₂SiO₄ up to the pressures of the Transition Zone. Due to the larger K' of γ -Fe₂SiO₄, the difference in bulk sound velocity between the two end-members decreases with increasing pressure.

Keywords: γ -Fe₂SiO₄; elastic properties; single-crystal; X-ray diffraction

1. Introduction

Ringwoodite (γ -olivine with spinel-like structure and [Mg,Fe]₂SiO₄ composition) is among the most investigated phases in Earth sciences (e.g. Weidner et al. 1984; Duffy and Anderson 1989; Ridgen

and Jackson 1991; Hazen et al. 1993; Kiefer et al. 1997; Sinogeikin et al. 1997; Matsui 1999; Jackson et al. 2000; Frost 2003; Li 2003; Higo et al. 2006) due to its abundance in the Transition Zone of the Earth's mantle (about 55%, Anderson 1995) and to the characteristic polymorphic transformations which are probable causes of seismic discontinuities at depths of 410 km (α -olivine to β -olivine transformation) and 525 km (β -olivine to γ -olivine transformation, see Frost 2003 and references therein). Moreover, at the transition from the upper to the lower mantle, ringwoodite breaks down to ferropericlase + Mg-perovskite, which should be the primary cause of the major seismic discontinuity at 660 km depth (e.g. Chudinovskikh and Boehler 2001).

In the last decade several experimental and computational works have been mainly focused on the effect that water substitution has on the thermodynamic properties of ringwoodite. It has been shown that H₂O can be hosted by the ringwoodite structure up to more than 2 weight % (e.g. Kohlstedt et al. 1996; Smyth et al. 2003; Demouchy et al. 2005; Smyth 2006) and that water incorporation has a strong effect on the elastic properties of ringwoodite with a reduction of the bulk modulus that can reach 6-7% (e.g. Inoue et al. 1998; Wang et al. 2003; Smyth et al. 2004; Manghnani et al. 2005; Jacobsen et al. 2004; Jacobsen and Smyth 2006). Less constrained is the effect of Fe substitution on the elastic properties of ringwoodite. A recent phase diagram calculated at 1400°C for the Mg₂SiO₄ – Fe₂SiO₄ binary join defines the polymorphic phase relations as a function of pressure (Frost 2003). For Mg/(Mg+Fe) > 0.4 α -olivine directly transforms to ringwoodite with a complete transformation occurring at about 13 GPa. The transformation pressure decreases with increasing Fe content and reaches 11 GPa for Mg/(Mg+Fe) ~ 0.6. Thermodynamic data (e.g. bulk modulus, thermal expansion, molar volume) for iron-rich ringwoodites are, however, scarce and show some discrepancies. For instance the experimental work by Ridgen and Jackson (1991) reported for pure γ -Fe₂SiO₄ a value of bulk modulus $K_{T0} = 201$ GPa and a value of its first pressure derivative $K' = 5.59$. Hazen (1993) demonstrated the strong effect of Fe²⁺ on the elastic properties of Mg-ringwoodite with an increase in bulk modulus for pure γ -Fe₂SiO₄ by about 13%,

going from 184 GPa of Mg_2SiO_4 to 207 GPa of Fe_2SiO_4 with K' ranging from values slightly greater than 4 for Mg-end member to values lower than 4 for the Fe-rich samples. More recent studies proposed various relationships to determine the change in K_{T0} as a function of Fe^{2+} in ringwoodite: $K_{T0} = 184(2) + 36(5) \times X_{\text{Fe}}$ (GPa) (Sinogeikin et al. 1998); $K_{T0} = 184(2) + 16(1) \times X_{\text{Fe}}$ (GPa) (Higo et al. 2006). The recent work by Higo et al. (2006) also proposed that the first pressure derivative K' remains virtually constant along the join at values of 4-4.5. Liu et al. (2008) studied a $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$ sample finding a significant increase in the adiabatic bulk modulus ($K_s = 204.5$ GPa) with respect to Mg_2SiO_4 composition. However, Matsui et al. (2006), studying a ringwoodite sample with composition $\text{Mg}_{1.80}\text{Fe}_{0.20}\text{SiO}_4$, found negligible differences in bulk modulus with respect to the pure Mg_2SiO_4 end-member. The most recent study on ringwoodite under high-pressure conditions is from Ganskow et al. (2010) who investigated two hydrous samples with composition $\text{Mg}_{0.97}\text{Fe}_{1.00}\text{Si}_{0.98}\text{H}_{0.14}\text{O}_4$ and $\text{Mg}_{1.23}\text{Fe}_{0.77}\text{Si}_{0.98}\text{H}_{0.07}\text{O}_4$. For such samples the authors found $V_0 = 543.32(7) \text{ \AA}^3$, $K_{T0} = 186.5(9)$ GPa and $V_0 = 539.01(5) \text{ \AA}^3$, $K_{T0} = 184.1(7)$ GPa, respectively, with a K' close to 4 for both the samples investigated.

It appears, therefore, that while for the end-member Mg_2SiO_4 composition there is a general agreement on an average value of bulk modulus of 184 GPa, for the Fe-richer samples the data show a larger degree of scatter going from 185 to 209 GPa and K' from 4.1 to 5.6. In this work we have conducted high-pressure in situ measurements on a single-crystal of $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$ up to 10.2 GPa by X-ray diffraction in a diamond anvil cell to determine accurate values of the unit-cell lattice parameters at different pressures. From these data we calculate precise values of both bulk modulus and its first pressure derivative to compare with those of Mg-richer ringwoodites with the final aim of clarifying the effect of iron on the compressibility of ringwoodite spinel.

1.1. Experimental procedure

The sample studied in this work is a fragment of the sample MA75 earlier studied by Taran et al. (2009) synthesized at 7 GPa and 1100°C for 24 hours in a multi-anvil apparatus. The sample has

some impurity of Mg (0.03 a.p.f.u.) and Fe^{3+} (0.10 a.p.f.u.). The synthesis was performed under hydrous conditions (about 3 weight % of H_2O) to obtain crystals of high quality. The low temperature used during the syntheses did not cause the entrance of much water in the crystal structure of $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$, in fact, the water content for the sample Ma75 studied in the work lies between 0.1 (IR spectroscopy, Taran et al. 2009) and 0.2 weight % (SIMS determination, Koch-Müller personal communication).

The single crystal for the high-pressure study was selected based on the lack of twinning (checked by preliminary single-crystal analysis) and on sharpness of diffraction profiles (typical half-widths of reflections were between 0.05° and 0.06° in ω). The size of the chosen crystal was $130 \times 80 \times 40 \mu\text{m}^3$. The sample was loaded in a BGI-type diamond-anvil cell, using a steel gasket (T301) preindented to 80 μm with a hole diameter of 250 μm . The diameters of the diamond culets were 600 μm . A 4:1 mixture of methanol:ethanol was used as pressure transmitting medium (such mixture transmits the pressure hydrostatically throughout the entire range of pressure investigated in this work as demonstrated by Angel et al. 2007 and confirmed by the constancy of the obtained diffraction profiles). A quartz crystal, used as an internal diffraction pressure standard (Angel et al. 1997), was also loaded into the pressure cell. Unit-cell parameters were determined by X-ray diffraction experiments at the Bayerisches Geoinstitut (Bayreuth) on a HUBER four-circle diffractometer operating at 50 kV and 40 mA, centering not less than 14 reflections for each high-pressure experiment, in the 2θ range between 10° and 30° . Full details of the instrument and the peak-centering algorithms are provided by Angel et al. (2000). During the centering procedure the effects of crystal offsets and diffractometer aberrations were eliminated from refined peak positions by the eight-position centering method of King and Finger (1979). Unconstrained unit-cell parameters, obtained by vector least-squares (Ralph and Finger 1982), were measured at 10 different pressures from room pressure up to about 10.2 GPa. The unit-cell parameters were found

to be similar, within one estimated standard deviation, to the symmetry-constrained ones. The resulting unit-cell volumes and are reported in Table 1.

2. Results

2.1. Equation of state: isothermal bulk modulus and first pressure derivative.

The unit-cell volume of the γ -Fe₂SiO₄ sample studied in this work is shown as a function of pressure in Figure 1. No evidence of a phase transition is observed up to the maximum pressure reached. The unit-cell volume undergoes a reduction of about 2.1% at 10.2 GPa indicating a marked stiffening of the structure with respect to upper mantle silicates such as olivine and pyroxene. The pressure-volume data reported in Table 1 were fitted to a third-order Birch-Murnaghan equation of state (Birch 1947, BM3-EoS) using the EoS-FIT5.2 program (Angel 2000). The unit-cell volume, V_0 , the bulk modulus, K_{T0} , and its first pressure derivative, K' , were refined simultaneously and the following EoS coefficients were obtained: $V_0 = 559.44(6) \text{ \AA}^3$, $K_{T0} = 187.3(1.7) \text{ GPa}$, $K' = 5.5(4)$. The fitting procedure shows very low values of ΔP_{\max} (this parameter is defined as $|P_{\text{obs}} - P_{\text{calc}}|_{\max}$ and in our experiments it reaches only 0.038 GPa) and χ^2 (0.96) close to 1 (Angel 2000). Moreover, the F_E - f_E plot (based on the eulerian strain $f_E = [(V_0/V)^{2/3} - 1]/2$ and the normalized stress $F_E = P/[3f_E(1 + 2f_E)^{5/2}]$) showed in Figure 2 indicates that the BM3-EoS well describes well our pressure – volume data (Angel 2000) and the positive slope confirms that K' is greater than 4. In Figure 2 the intercepts on the F_E axis gives a value of bulk modulus of 188.7(9) GPa, while the slope (slope = $3K_{T0}(K'-4)/2$) provides a value of K' of 5.3(3). The differences between the values obtained by the pressure – volume least-squares refinement using the BM3 EoS and the F_E - f_E plot tool are within standard deviations, again indicating high accuracy of the data.

2.2. Relationships among isothermal bulk modulus, its first pressure derivative and pressure.

The correlation between the bulk modulus and its first pressure derivative is close to 100% (e.g. Angel 2000) and therefore, to determine K' , it is crucial to obtain a very reliable bulk modulus. This correlation must be also taken into account when a set of EoS parameters are determined by a least-squares refinement (as done for our $P - V$ data using EosFit 5.2 software), which considers the refined values of K_{T0} and K' as independent. Such procedure, in fact, could underestimate the errors in the determination of K_{T0} and K' . A useful tool to better represent more realistic errors in the determination of K_{T0} and K' is the construction of a confidence ellipse (Angel 2000), which takes into account the correlation between the two EoS parameters. The confidence ellipse for our sample is reported in Figure 3. The plot not only shows the strong negative correlation between K_{T0} and K' but at the same time provides a better visualisation of their uncertainties. For example the error on K_{T0} calculated using the ellipse is 2.7 GPa instead of 1.7 GPa from the assumption of independent parameters. For K' the uncertainty increases from 0.4 to 0.5.

The variation of K_T with pressure up to 20 GPa is shown in Figure 4. As expected, K_T increases with increasing pressure (it has been recently reported for some feldspars, Benusa et al. [2005]; Nestola et al. [2008], and for antigorite, Nestola et al. [2010], an anomalous behaviour of K_T with pressure showing an unexpected softening) and, due to the K' value larger than 4, the rate at which the bulk modulus increases is larger than for Mg_2SiO_4 ringwoodite.

3. Discussion

3.1. Bulk modulus, first pressure derivative and composition.

The value of the bulk modulus obtained in this study is practically the same within the uncertainties of that determined using different techniques for anhydrous Mg_2SiO_4 ringwoodite (Hazen 1993; Jackson et al. 2000; Li 2003). The major difference between the two end-members is the inconsistency of K' , which is 5.5 for our $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$ sample and 4 for $\gamma\text{-Mg}_2\text{SiO}_4$. Our result of $K' = 5.5$ is in agreement with that reported for a $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$ by Ridgen and Jackson (1991). As a

consequence of the larger value of K' , γ -Fe₂SiO₄ will become stiffer than the Mg-end-member at high pressures. The bulk modulus found in this study is slightly smaller than those reported in the literature (Rigden and Jackson 1991; Hazen 2003) and would imply that Mg/Fe substitution has little effect on the elastic properties of ringwoodite. It has been shown that both water incorporation in ringwoodite (Inoue et al. 1998; Wang et al. 2003; Manghnani et al. 2003; Jacobsen et al. 2004; Jacobsen and Smyth 2006) as well as the presence of vacancies in the spinel structure (Nestola et al. 2009) decreases the bulk modulus with respect to anhydrous and stoichiometric samples. The γ -Fe₂SiO₄ sample investigated in this study has marginal water content (less than 0.2 %), it is therefore unlikely that this quantity would visibly affect its bulk modulus. The presence of 0.1 apfu of Fe³⁺ is, however, slightly more significant. Taran et al. (2009) observed by means of Mössbauer spectroscopy that Fe³⁺ appears to occupy the octahedral sites in the ringwoodite structure, but the authors could not rule out that some Fe³⁺ occupying the tetrahedral site. Structure refinement recently performed using single-crystal X-ray diffraction on a fragment of the same crystal studied in this work indicates a nearly equal distribution of Fe³⁺ over both the octahedral and tetrahedral sites (Princivalle et al., unpublished data). If all Fe³⁺ occupies the octahedral sites, we should expect a non-negligible number of vacancies due to the oxidation of Fe which is not balanced by the protonation of oxygens (McCammon et al. 2004) given the insignificant amount of water in our sample. This would result in a slightly more compressible structure than that of stoichiometric ringwoodite. If Fe³⁺ is equally distributed among octahedral and tetrahedral sites, as suggested by Taran et al. (2009) and the recent refinements, then its effect on the compressibility of ringwoodite is less obvious. The tetrahedral site occupied by Fe³⁺ are likely softer than those occupied by Si, however we can also expect the octahedral sites with trivalent iron being stiffer than those with Fe²⁺. Moreover, the coupled substitution results in only 0.05 apfu of Fe³⁺ in each site, which may be too little to have an observable effect on the compressibility of ringwoodite.

3.2. Bulk sound velocity at Transition Zone pressures

Using the EoS parameters calculated in this work we can calculate the bulk sound velocity V_Φ ($V_\Phi = \sqrt{K_T / \rho}$) for $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$. The same calculation has been performed for Mg_2SiO_4 ringwoodite ($\text{Fo}_{100}\text{Fa}_0$) using the unit-cell volume provided by Hazen (1993) and the bulk modulus provided by Sinogeikin et al. (1998) with $K' = 4$. In a recent work on two intermediate hydrous $\text{Mg}_{0.97}\text{Fe}_{1.00}\text{Si}_{0.98}\text{H}_{0.14}\text{O}_4$ (ideal $\text{Fo}_{50}\text{Fa}_{50}$) and $\text{Mg}_{1.23}\text{Fe}_{0.77}\text{Si}_{0.98}\text{H}_{0.07}\text{O}_4$ (ideal $\text{Fo}_{62}\text{Fa}_{38}$) compositions (Ganskow et al. 2010), the ringwoodite samples were investigated in the same laboratory and with the same diamond cells used in the present work. The authors found a $K_{T0} = 186.5(9)$ GPa and $184.1(7)$ GPa, respectively, with a K' close to 4 for both the samples. Also for these two samples the bulk sounds velocities have been calculated down to the Transition Zone (Figure 5). Given the similar bulk moduli of all samples independent of iron content, the bulk sound velocity decreases with increasing the molar fraction of Fa. At room pressure (Fig. 5) we obtain:

$$V_\Phi \text{ (Km/s)} = 7.16(4) \text{ km/s} - 0.96(7) \times [X_{\text{Fa}}]$$

At pressures typical of the Transition Zone (e.g. 540 km, 18 GPa), the difference in the bulk sound velocity between the two end-members is much smaller (Fig. 5) due to the larger K' of $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$. Because studies of ringwoodite with various Fe and water contents (Sinogeikin et al. 2001; Higo et al. 2006; Ganskow et al. 2010) consistently yield $K' \sim 4$, similar to the value for the Mg_2SiO_4 end-members, it appears that a different compression mechanism may be responsible for the stiffer behaviour of $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$ at high-pressures. It is still an open question whether Fe-rich (i.e. $\text{Fa} > 50$) also have a K' larger than 4.

The only available data on the variation of K_{T0} as a function of temperature are from studies of Mg_2SiO_4 end-member (Meng et al. 1993) and $\text{Mg}_{1.91}\text{Fe}_{0.09}\text{SiO}_4$ (Sinogeikin et al. 2003) ringwoodites. For these two samples the authors obtain an almost identical value $\partial K_T / \partial T = -0.027/0.028$ GPa/K. For a temperature of 2100 K typical of the Transition Zone K_T would assume a value of about 135 GPa at least for Fe-poor compositions. The only available data of $\partial K_T / \partial T$ obtained for richer-Fe compositions have been carried out on the β -olivine phase with composition

$\text{Mg}_{1.68}\text{Fe}_{0.32}\text{SiO}_4$ (Fei et al. 1992). We conclude that $\partial K_T / \partial T$ does not show any dependence on Fe content. A comparison between β -olivine and γ -olivine is not trivial and the same statement reported about the effect of Fe on $\partial K_T / \partial T$ for γ - Fe_2SiO_4 cannot be simply applicable. In order to fully determine the thermo-elastic behaviour of ringwoodite spinel as a function of Fe content further works therefore are still necessary.

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Figure captions

Figure 1. Evolution of the unit-cell volume as a function of pressure for the spinel studied in this work.

Figure 2. F_E-f_E plot (see the text) for the sample of $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$ investigated in this work. The solid line represents the weighted fit of the experimental data.

Figure 3. Confidence ellipse for $\Delta = 2.3$ (Δ indicating the level confidence, e.g. $\Delta = 2.3$ is for a confidence level of 68.3%, the equivalent 1σ for a normal distribution of a single variable, see for more details Angel 2000) for the sample of $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$ studied in this work.

Figure 4. Evolution of bulk modulus K_{T0} as a function of pressure for $\gamma\text{-Fe}_2\text{SiO}_4$ here studied.

Figure 5. Bulk sound velocity as a function of pressure for different compositions along the Fo-Fa join: $\text{Fo}_0\text{Fa}_{100}$ (this study), $\text{Fo}_{50}\text{Fa}_{50}$ and $\text{Fo}_{62}\text{Fa}_{38}$ (Ganskow et al. 2010), $\text{Fo}_{100}\text{Fa}_0$ (Hazen 1993 and Sinogeikin et al. 1998).

Table 1.

<i>P</i> (GPa)	<i>V</i> (Å ³)	BM3-EoS coefficients	
0.00010(1)	559.38(7)	<i>V</i> ₀ (Å ³)	559.44(6)
2.060(9)	553.55(4)	<i>K</i> _{T0} (GPa)	187.3(1.7)
2.740(10)	551.62(4)	<i>K'</i>	5.5(4)
3.713(13)	548.98(6)	<i>β</i> (GPa ⁻¹)	-0.00534
5.290(14)	544.92(4)	[#] <i>χ</i> ²	0.96
7.914(17)	538.52(4)	^{\$} <i>ΔP</i> _{max} (GPa)	0.038
10.214(12)	533.38(4)		
*8.857(12)	536.28(5)		
*6.342(15)	542.34(4)		
*4.322(10)	547.41(4)		

Notes: *data measured during decompression. [#]Weighted value (see Angel 2000). ^{\$}Difference between the observed and refined pressure.

FIGURE 1

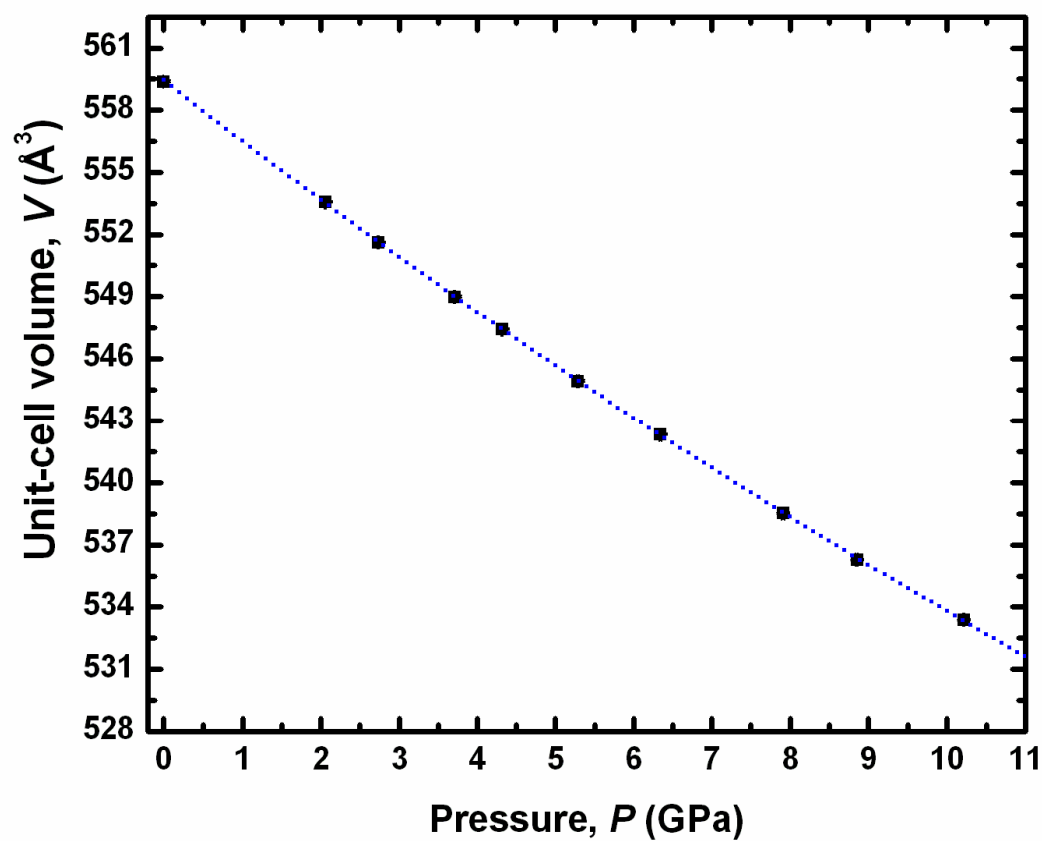


FIGURE 2

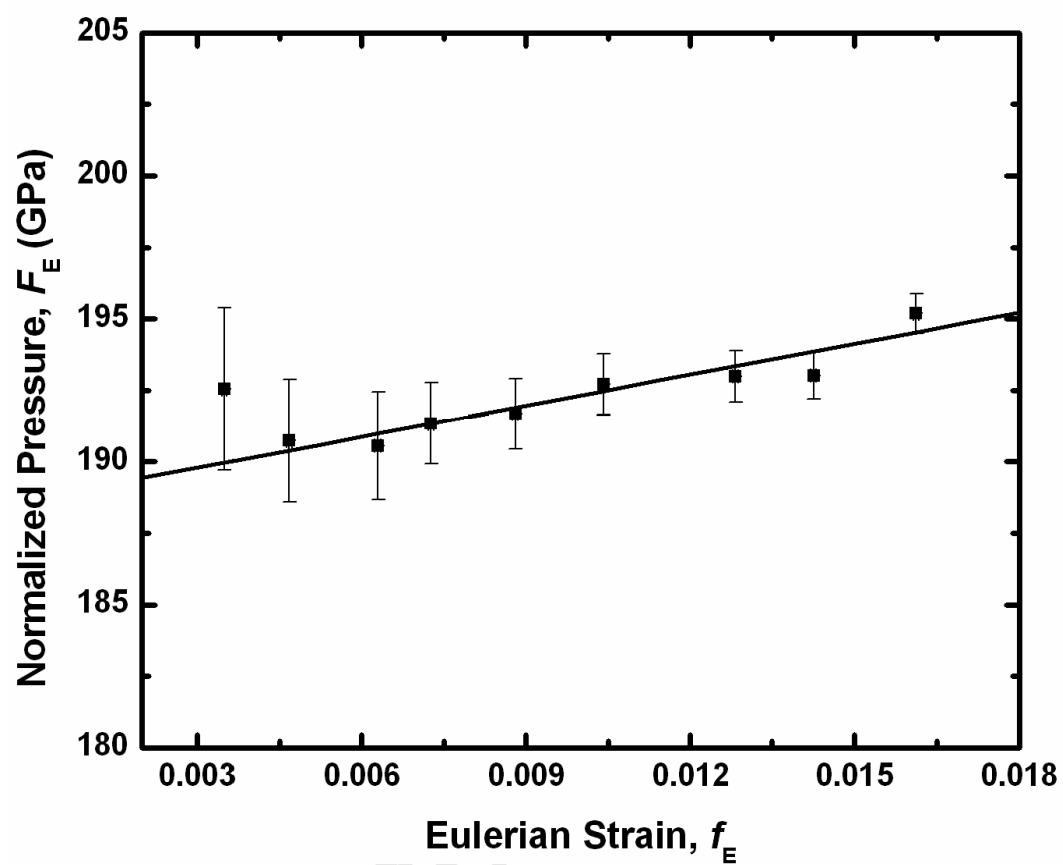


FIGURE 3

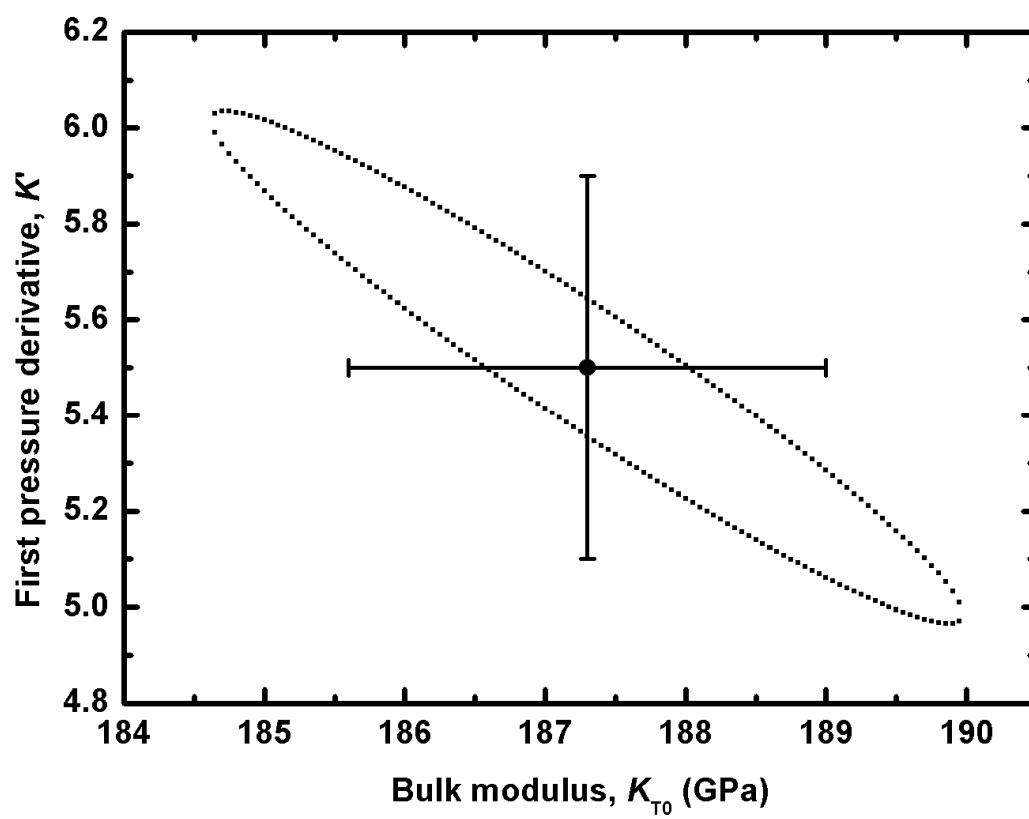


FIGURE 4

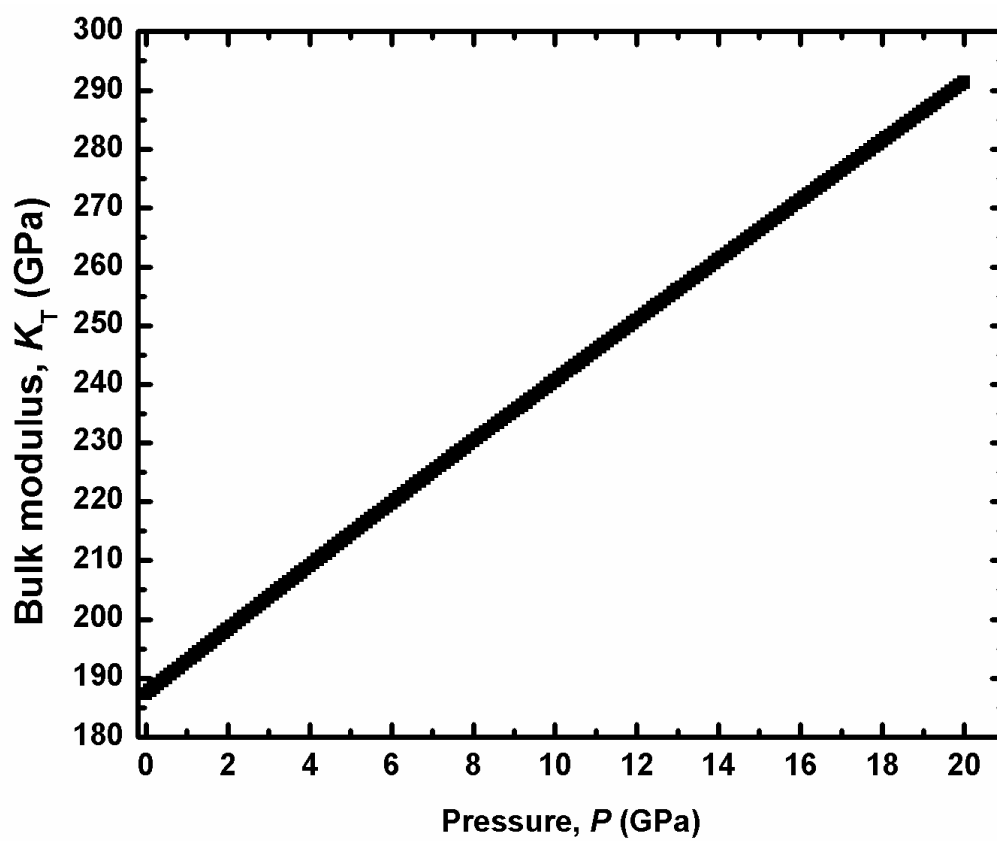


FIGURE 5

