

Elastic Properties of Polycrystalline Magnesium, Iron, and Manganese Carbonates to 10 Kilobars

NIKOLAS I. CHRISTENSEN

*Department of Geological Sciences and Graduate Program in Geophysics
University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195*

Compressional- and shear-wave velocities to 10 kb and the chemistry for naturally occurring polycrystalline aggregates of magnesite MgCO_3 , siderite FeCO_3 , and rhodochrosite MnCO_3 are reported. Velocity-density relationships for the magnesite-siderite series show a dependence on mean atomic weight similar to that observed for the olivine series. Iron substitution for magnesium in carbonates decreases the shear modulus and increases Poisson's ratio. The bulk modulus, however, changes relatively little with iron substitution. Manganese substitution in carbonates affects the velocities and elastic parameters in much the same way as iron.

An important source of information on the composition of the earth's interior is derived from measurements of elastic-wave velocities in rocks and minerals. Birch [1961a] has shown that, to a first approximation, compressional-wave velocities are related to density and mean atomic weight. This relationship has been used to obtain mantle compositions by estimating velocities in olivine aggregates with varying iron content [e.g., Birch, 1961b, 1969; Christensen, 1968]. Recently, new experimental data on the elastic properties of the olivine series have become available from single-crystal studies [Graham and Barsch, 1969; Kumazawa and Anderson, 1969] and from measurements of hot pressed synthetic aggregates [Chung, 1970; Mizutani *et al.*, 1970] and naturally occurring dunites [Mao *et al.*, 1970; Christensen and Ramananantoandro, 1971]. The results of these studies agree well with compressional-wave-density relationships predicted by Birch [1961a] and show that shear-wave velocities in olivine also decrease with increasing iron content.

Many minerals are undoubtedly present in the upper mantle, and it is important to establish how variations in composition within different mineral groups affect elastic-wave velocities and moduli. Birch [1961a] observed that, in addition to the olivine series, an isostructural line connecting spinel to magnetite on a velocity-density plot was approximately at right angles to lines of constant mean atomic weight. Recently, Liebermann [1970] has shown that the

substitutions of 3d transition elements for magnesium and aluminum in the spinel and corundum lattices have similar effects on velocity-density relationships.

In this paper velocities and elastic moduli are presented for three carbonate end members: magnesite, siderite, and rhodochrosite. The changes in elastic properties with iron-magnesium substitution in carbonates are shown to be remarkably similar to the olivine series. The data for rhodochrosite are used to estimate the effect of manganese substitution on the elastic properties of minerals.

SAMPLES AND DATA

The samples are naturally occurring aggregates. Chemical analyses determined by atomic absorption and expressed in weight per cent are given in Table 1. X-ray diffraction patterns of the siderite and rhodochrosite show no additional minerals present in either sample. Thus the moderate amounts of calcium in the rhodochrosite and the moderate amounts of manganese and magnesium in the siderite are within the crystal lattices in solid solution. A small peak that was observed at a d value of 3.04 Å for the magnesite sample suggests that some of the calcium in the chemical analysis of this specimen is present as calcite.

Velocities to 10 kb were measured for each sample in three mutually perpendicular directions from cores 1.9 cm in diameter and 4 to 5 cm in length by a pulse transmission technique similar to that described by Birch [1960]. These velocities and the bulk densities of each core