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1 **Elasticity of Pseudo-proper Ferroelastic Transition from Stishovite to Post-Stishovite at**
2 **High Pressure**

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9

10 **Abstract**

11 Elastic moduli (C_{ij} 's) of single-crystal stishovite and post-stishovite are determined using
12 Brillouin light scattering, impulsive stimulated light scattering, and X-ray diffraction up to 70
13 GPa. The C_{12} of stishovite converges with the C_{11} at ~55 GPa, where the transverse wave V_{ST}
14 propagating along [110] also vanishes. Landau modelling of the C_{ij} 's, B_{1g} optic mode, and lattice
15 parameters reveals a pseudo-proper type ferroelastic post-stishovite transition. The transition
16 would cause peculiar anomalies in V_S and Poisson's ratio in silica-bearing subducting slabs in the
17 mid-lower mantle.

18
19 *Introduction*-Ferroelastic transitions are physical phenomena in which crystals undergo a
20 change in point group ("a change of forms") with a symmetry-breaking shear strain [1,2].
21 Ferroelastic crystals are thus regarded as mechanical analogues of ferromagnetics and
22 ferroelectrics, which are at the heart of novel multiferroic materials for condensed matter physics
23 research and industrial applications [3,4]. Hydrostatic pressure generated in a diamond anvil cell
24 (DAC) can serve as a more effective thermodynamic means than temperature to induce a very

25 large spontaneous strain so the mechanism of the ferroelastic transition could be deciphered [5].
26 To better understand its underlying driving force, it is of paramount importance to investigate the
27 full sets of elastic moduli (C_{ij} 's) across the transition [6,7]. Insofar, high-pressure experimental
28 studies on ferroelastic transitions are often limited to optic modes by Raman and infrared
29 spectroscopy as well as lattice parameters and equation of states (EoS) by X-ray diffraction
30 (XRD) [8,9]. Reliable measurements on the full C_{ij} 's, however, remain limited due to technical
31 challenges in measuring single-crystal sound velocities of both paraelastic and ferroelastic
32 phases across the transition.

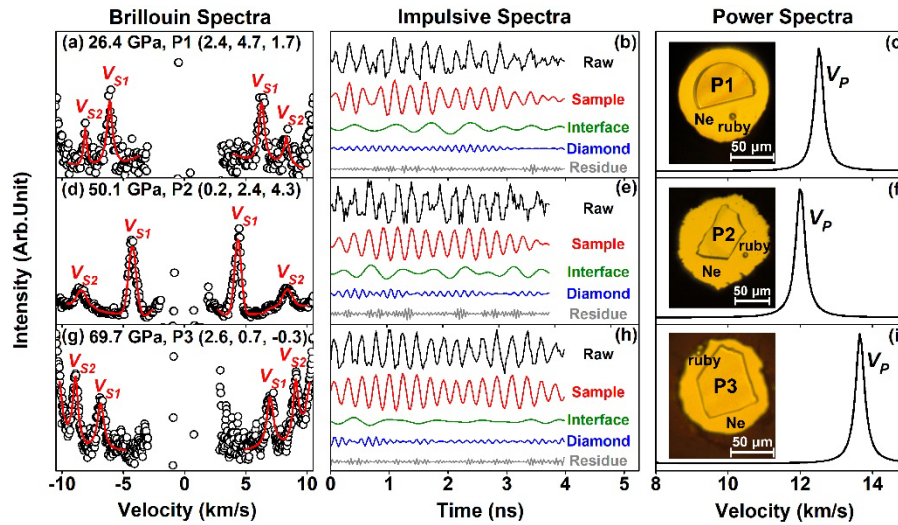
33 Ferroelastic transitions occur naturally in oxides and silicates in Earth's deep crust and
34 mantle, and have been reported to cause seismic velocity anomalies [10,11]. The ferroelastic
35 transition in stishovite (SiO_2) is of particular interest in geophysics due to its abundance of ~25
36 vol% in basaltic subducting slabs [12]. Stishovite is a prototype of six-fold coordinated oxides
37 and silicates, and is known to display a number of unusual physical properties: a high density of
38 4.28 g/cm^3 , high adiabatic bulk modulus (K_S) of 308 GPa, and high shear modulus (μ) of 228
39 GPa at ambient conditions [13,14]. Stishovite has also attracted significant interest in materials
40 science as an analog for finding novel superhard and incompressible materials [15]. Previous
41 studies have shown that rutile-type stishovite (space group: $P4_2/mnm$; point group: 422)
42 transforms into CaCl_2 -type post-stishovite (space group: $Pnmm$; point group: 222) at ~50-55 GPa
43 and room temperature [16]. The tetragonal-to-orthorhombic transition is manifested by a
44 softening of the B_{1g} optic mode in stishovite [17]. In a pseudo-proper type Landau model, the
45 order parameter for the transition is bilinearly coupled with a symmetry-breaking shear strain in
46 post-stishovite [18] and the modelled elastic moduli show a significant shear softening across the
47 transition [19-21]. Furthermore, first-principle calculations showed that the transition is driven

48 by a strong coupling between elastic moduli and softening of the B_{1g} mode [22,23]. Direct
49 experimental measurements on single-crystal V_P and V_S velocities to derive full C_{ij} 's of stishovite
50 and post-stishovite at high pressure would provide key information about the nature of the
51 ferroelastic transition. However, reliable determinations of the full C_{ij} 's of stishovite are
52 currently limited to ~ 12 GPa using the Brillouin light scattering (BLS) technique [14,24-26].
53 This limitation is mainly due to the relatively high V_P of stishovite at ~ 12 -13 km/s that would
54 have overlapped with the V_S of diamond anvils in DACs. Advent on high-pressure velocity
55 measurements of stishovite is also needed to enhance our knowledge of the ferroelastic
56 transition.

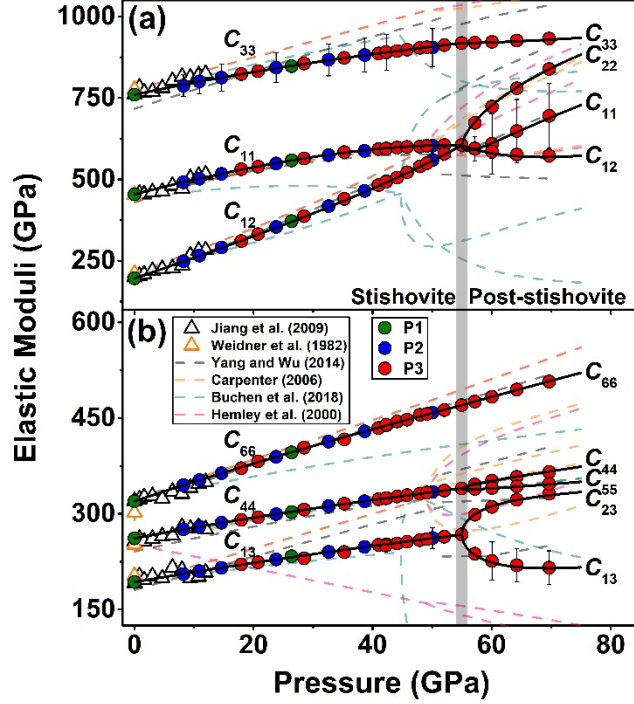
57 In this letter, we have used both Impulsive Stimulated Light Spectroscopy (ISLS) and BLS
58 techniques to measure V_P and V_S of single-crystal stishovite and CaCl_2 -type post-stishovite up to
59 70 GPa at room temperature. Together with complementary XRD results, we have solved their
60 full C_{ij} 's and analyzed acoustic wave dispersions along critical points of the first Brillouin zone
61 across the post-stishovite transition. Based on the pseudo-proper type Landau modelling, our
62 results reveal that the transition is driven by the soft B_{1g} mode. The coupling between the order
63 parameter and the symmetry-breaking spontaneous strain is manifested by $(C_{11}-C_{12})$ approaching
64 zero and a disappearance of $V_{S[110]}$ propagating along $[110]$ and polarized along $[1\bar{1}0]$. These
65 results of the post-stishovite transition are also used to provide new insights into other
66 ferroelastic transitions as well as abnormal seismic wave signatures in subducting slabs in the
67 lower mantle.

68 *Results*-The collected BLS and ISLS spectra up to 70 GPa display high signal-to-noise ratios
69 and are used to derive V_P and V_S of single-crystal stishovite and post-stishovite at high pressure
70 (Figs. 1 and S1-S5; Tables SI and SII; Text S1 and S2 in [27]) [28-34]. Two transverse acoustic

71 velocities with mutually orthogonal polarizations, V_{S1} and V_{S2} , are observed in BLS spectra of
 72 both phases, where V_{S2} is larger than V_{S1} by definition. Together with the EoS from XRD results
 73 (Figs. S6 and S7; Tables SIII and SIV) [27,35-37], the V_{S1} , V_{S2} , and V_P values as a function of
 74 azimuthal angles are used to solve for full C_{ij} 's of stishovite and post-stishovite at each
 75 experimental pressure using Christoffel's equations [38]. Uncertainties of all elastic constants
 76 except C_{11} of the post-stishovite phase are sufficiently small for examinations of their pressure-
 77 dependent trends across the transition [39] (Text S3 in [27]). Our derived C_{ij} 's of stishovite at
 78 pressures below 12 GPa are consistent with a previous BLS study (Fig. 2) [14].



79
 80 FIG. 1. Representative BLS and ISLS spectra of single-crystal stishovite and post-stishovite at
 81 high pressure. Pressures and crystallographic orientations of each platelet are labeled in BLS
 82 panels. Open circles in (a), (d), and (g) are collected raw BLS data while red lines are best fits to
 83 derive V_{S1} and V_{S2} of the crystal. ISLS spectra in (b), (e), and (h) display signals of the sample,
 84 interface, and diamond extracted from the raw data. (c), (f), and (i) are modelled power spectra
 85 for the derived V_P of the sample. Inserts show representative optical images of the sample
 86 chambers.



87

88 FIG. 2. Elastic moduli of single-crystal stishovite and post-stishovite at high pressure. Solid
 89 circles are derived C_{ij} 's values in this study and solid black lines represent best fits using Landau
 90 theory modelling [20,40]. Error bars are smaller than symbols when not shown. The grey vertical
 91 band represents the ferroelastic transition region at ~ 55 GPa. Literature data are also plotted for
 92 comparison [14,19,23,24,41,42].

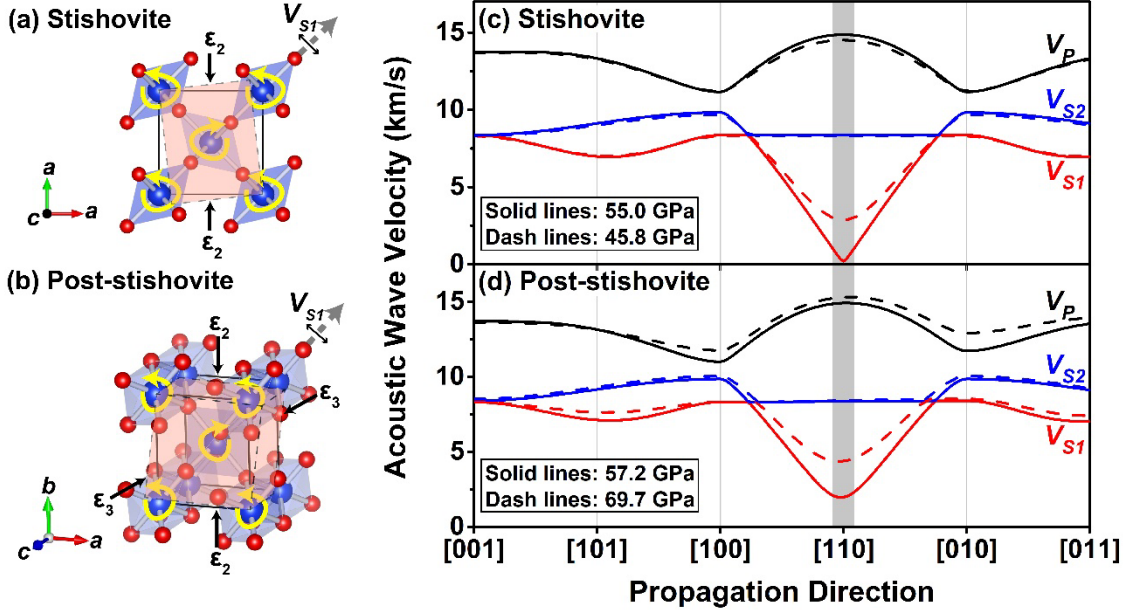
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94 The derived C_{ij} 's of stishovite show that all but C_{11} and C_{12} moduli increase almost linearly
 95 with increasing pressure up to 55 GPa (Fig. 2). The three moduli sets of stishovite, principle
 96 longitudinal moduli (C_{11} and C_{33}), shear moduli (C_{44} and C_{66}), and off-diagonal moduli (C_{12} and
 97 C_{13}), gradually diverge from each other at high pressure. These indicate that the stishovite lattice
 98 is experiencing enhanced anisotropic compressional and shear strains with increasing pressure.
 99 Most importantly, the C_{12} modulus, which relates a compressional stress (σ) to a perpendicular
 100 compressional strain (ϵ), increases significantly with pressure, while the C_{11} modulus flattens
 101 above ~ 40 GPa. These lead to the convergence of C_{11} and C_{12} at ~ 55 GPa. That is, the $(C_{11} -$
 102 $C_{12})/2$ constant, which reflects the response of a crystal to deformation caused by shear stress

103 along the [110] direction [43], vanishes at the transition [Fig. 3(a)]. This, in turn, is responsible
104 for the second-order lattice distortion transition where the tetragonal a axes of the stishovite
105 phase split into the orthorhombic a and b axes in the post-stishovite phase [Figs. 3(b) and S7(a)].
106 Such shear-induced lattice distortion also results in rotation of SiO_6 octahedra within the a axes
107 plane, causing softening of the B_{1g} optic mode [Figs. 4(a) and S8; Table SV].

108 Crossing into the orthorhombic post-stishovite, three new elastic moduli C_{22} , C_{55} , and C_{23}
109 emerge and deviate from C_{11} , C_{44} , and C_{13} , respectively, with increasing pressure (Fig. 2). The
110 three principle longitudinal moduli follow the trend $C_{33} > C_{22} > C_{11}$ which indicates anisotropic
111 lattice distortion: the two polar Si-O bonds in the a - b plane are more compressible than the four
112 equatorial Si-O bonds in the planes parallel to the c axis in SiO_6 octahedra, consistent with XRD
113 refinement results [16]. On the other hand, off-diagonal C_{12} and C_{13} moduli, which relate to shear
114 distortion in the [110] and [101] directions, respectively, soften with increasing pressure [Fig.
115 3(b)]. This leads to an enhanced transverse wave velocity in these directions, and thus, stabilizes
116 the orthorhombic post-stishovite phase [Fig 3(d)].

117 The elastic moduli results are further used to analyze V_P and V_S dispersions along the principal
118 crystallographic axes ([100], [010], and [001]) and diagonal directions of the principle lattice
119 planes ([101], [011], and [110]) across the post-stishovite transition [Figs. 3(c), (d), and 4(b)].
120 Results show that $V_{S/[110]}$ propagating along [110] and polarizing along $[1\bar{1}0]$ vanishes at ~ 55
121 GPa, while all other acoustic waves vary minimally across the transition.



122

123 FIG. 3. **Lattice distortions** and acoustic wave velocity dispersions across the post-stishovite
 124 transition at high pressure. (a) and (b) depict **the lattice shear distortion** across the ferroelastic
 125 transition. Blue and red spheres denote Si and O atoms, respectively. The tetragonal (a) and
 126 orthorhombic (b) unit cells under strains are schematically shown in red areas with dashed lines.
 127 **The strains, labelled as ϵ_2 and ϵ_3 , depict that the off-diagonal moduli, C_{12} and C_{13} , become**
 128 **anomalous (see Fig. 2).** (c) and (d) show velocity dispersions of V_P (black lines), V_{S2} (blue lines),
 129 and V_{S1} (red lines) across the transition. **The V_{S1} disappears at the transition that propagates along**
 130 **$[110]$ [dashed gray lines with arrows in (a) and (b)] and has polarization along $[1\bar{1}0]$ (thin black**
 131 **lines with arrows).**

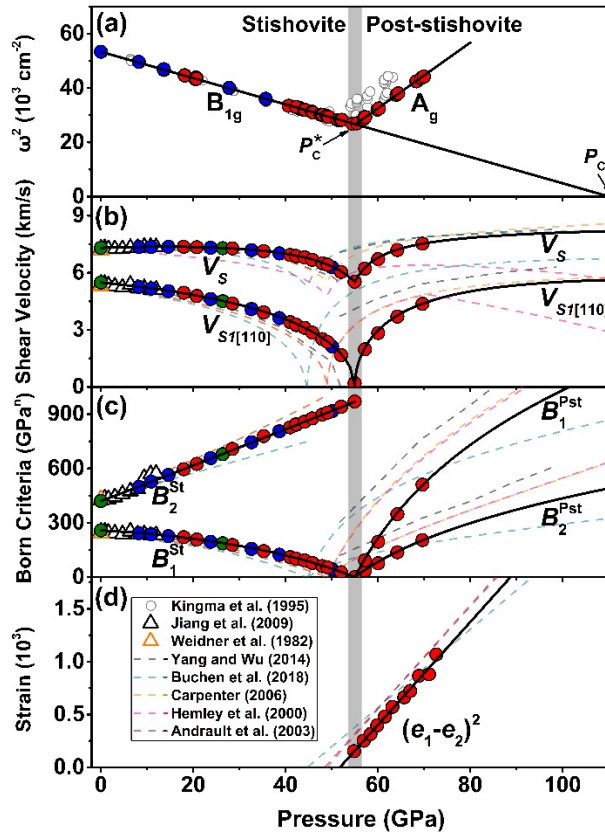
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133 *Discussion and Implications-* **In order to better understand the transformation mechanism, our**
 134 **experimental C_{ij} 's results as well as Raman and X-ray diffraction data are modelled using the**
 135 **Landau theory with a pseudo-proper type energy expansion where the soft B_{1g} mode would lead**
 136 **to the phase transition (Figs. 2, 4, S9, and S10; Table SVI; Text S4 and S5 in [27]). This Landau**
 137 **model assumes that the order parameter (Q) is coupled bilinearly with the symmetry-breaking**
 138 **spontaneous strain, $(e_1 - e_2)/\sqrt{2}$ (Eqs. S13 to S15) and the coupling would lead to a nonlinear**
 139 **decrease of the $(C_{11} - C_{12})$ approaching zero at the transition. The Landau modelling results are**
 140 **very consistent with our experimental elastic moduli across the transition (Fig. 2).**

141 We have also examined the elastic stability across the post-stishovite transition using Born
 142 stability criteria [Fig. 4(c)] [44]. Born criteria reflecting the shear stability and the bulk modulus
 143 of stishovite are $B_1^{St} = C_{11} - C_{12} > 0$ and $B_2^{St} = C_{33}(C_{11} + C_{12}) - 2C_{13}^2 > 0$, respectively. The
 144 $(C_{11}-C_{12})$ value in the B_1^{St} criterion is an eigenvalue to a strain eigenvector with the B_{1g}
 145 symmetry and the $(e_1-e_2)/\sqrt{2}$ spontaneous strain based on the group theory [21]. Based on the
 146 Landau theory, the consequence of the coupling between the order parameter and the
 147 spontaneous strain is that the $(C_{11}-C_{12})$ value becomes zero at the transition. The B_2^{St} , relating to
 148 bulk modulus, remains positive and monotonously increases with pressure. That is, the unit cell
 149 volume is subjected to a continuous bulk compression without exhibiting a discontinuous volume
 150 collapse in the second-order lattice distortion transition. Furthermore, two Born criteria for the
 151 shear stability of the orthorhombic post-stishovite are $B_1^{Pst} = C_{11}C_{22} - C_{12}^2 > 0$ and $B_2^{Pst} =$
 152 $C_{11}C_{22}C_{33} + 2C_{12}C_{13}C_{23} - C_{11}C_{23}^2 - C_{22}C_{13}^2 - C_{33}C_{12}^2 > 0$. These values also become zero at
 153 the transition. Finally, the transverse acoustic wave $V_{S/[110]}$ and the two Born stability criteria,
 154 B_1^{Pst} and B_2^{Pst} , reemerge at pressures above the transition. The A_g mode in post-stishovite, which
 155 has similar vibrational rotations to those of the B_{1g} mode, is also stiffened with increasing
 156 pressure.

157 Putting all the pieces together, our results provide a comprehensive picture for the stishovite
 158 to post-stishovite ferroelastic transition. Stishovite undergoes an anisotropic compression under
 159 high pressure, which leads to a shear-driven lattice distortion and the softening of the B_{1g} optic
 160 mode. The reduction of symmetry, a change of forms from the tetragonal point group to the
 161 orthorhombic point group, across the transition induces the symmetry-breaking spontaneous
 162 strain in the low-symmetry post-stishovite phase. The soft mode would become imaginary at the
 163 critical pressure ($P_C = \sim 110.2$ GPa). However, the transition actually occurs at $P_C^* = \sim 55$ GPa,

164 much lower than the P_C , due to a bilinear coupling between the order parameter and the
 165 symmetry-breaking $(e_1-e_2)/\sqrt{2}$ spontaneous strain [Fig. 4(a) and (d)]. This coupling further
 166 results in the eigenvalue B_1^{St} ($C_{11}-C_{12}$) and acoustic wave $V_{S1[110]}$ nonlinearly decreasing to zero
 167 with increasing pressure up to P_C^* . Therefore, the post-stishovite transition is clearly driven by
 168 the soft B_{1g} mode and belongs to the pseudo-proper Landau-type phase transformation [21].



169
 170 FIG. 4. Optical, elastic, and mechanical behaviors across the post-stishovite transition. (a)
 171 Pressure dependence of squared Raman shifts (ω^2) of B_{1g} and A_g mode, where the transition
 172 pressure (P_C^*) and critical pressure (P_C) are labelled. (b) $V_{S1[110]}$ vanishes and aggregate V_S
 173 softens at the transition. (c) Born stability criteria B_1^{St} (in GPa), B_1^{Pst} (in $5 \times 10^2 \text{ GPa}^2$)
 174 (B_2^{St} (in 10^3 GPa^2) does not. (d) Squared symmetry-breaking spontaneous strain $(e_1-e_2)^2$
 175 emerges in the post-stishovite phase. Experimental data from
 176 this study are plotted as solid circles. Black solid lines are results from the Landau model. Early
 177 studies are also shown for comparison [14,17-19,23,24,41,42]. The grey vertical band shows the
 178 transition pressure.

179 The nature of the post-stishovite transition could be used to understand other ferroelastic
180 systems such as the tetragonal-monoclinic transition in BiVO_4 at 1.5 GPa [45]. The optic B_g
181 mode in tetragonal BiVO_4 softens close to the transition while the A_g mode in the monoclinic
182 structure stiffens after the transition [46]. The transverse wave V_{SI} in the (001) plane vanishes at
183 the transition in both phases [47]. Our results can thus help elucidate the nature of the ferroelastic
184 transition in other systems.

185 Our results also have implications on deep-mantle geophysics, where the post-stishovite
186 transition likely occurs at ~ 1800 km (or 77 GPa and 1706 K) in cold subducting slabs [48].
187 Using our elasticity data and theoretical predictions to evaluate the high pressure-temperature
188 effect on elasticity [23], the post-stishovite transition would have a minimum aggregate V_S of
189 5.52 km/s and a Poisson's ratio of 0.363 at ~ 1800 km depth [49]. Considering a subducting slab
190 containing mid-ocean ridge basalt with ~ 25 vol% of stishovite [12], the post-stishovite transition
191 would result in approximately 5.4% reduction in V_S and 5.5% enhancement in Poisson's ratio
192 (Text S6 in [27]) [50,51]. The effects of the ferroelastic transition on the aforementioned seismic
193 parameters are expected to be distinct from structural transitions and temperature-compositional
194 perturbations more commonly found in the mantle. Seismic observations on the mantle with
195 reduced V_S and enhanced Poisson's ratio near subducting slabs can thus be used as telltale signs
196 [10] to relate to the naturally occurring ferroelastic transition.

197 *Conclusion-* The experimentally-derived full C_{ij} 's, Raman, and X-ray diffraction data of single-
198 crystal stishovite and post-stishovite reveal the nature of the ferroelastic transition at ~ 55 GPa.
199 Under quasi-hydrostatic pressure, enhancement of the anisotropic compression leads to the
200 tetragonal-orthorhombic lattice distortion, which is manifested in softening of the B_{1g} optic
201 mode. Due to the coupling of the order parameter with the spontaneous strains, the ferroelastic

202 transition occurs at 55 GPa where the C_{11} modulus converges with the C_{12} modulus and $V_{S[110]}$
203 vanishes. As the distortion continues into the orthorhombic post-stishovite phase, large
204 spontaneous strains occur while $V_{S[110]}$ recovers in the ferroelastic phase. The post-stishovite
205 transition can be well explained by the pseudo-proper type energy expansion within the
206 framework of Landau theory. The transition is expected to occur in subducting slabs containing
207 basalt at ~1800 km depth with seismic signatures of ~5.4% V_S reduction and ~5.5% Poisson's
208 ratio enhancement in the lower mantle.

209

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