SOLUBILITY OF GALLIUM IN SPHALERITE AND WURTZITE AT 800°C AND 900°C

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Abstract

Solubilities of gallium in sphalerite and wurtzite were investigated at 800°C and 900°C by means of phase-equilibrium experiments. In the system Zn–Ga–S, the maximum solubility of Ga in sphalerite is 24.9 atomic % at 900°C and 16.3 atomic % at 800°C. In the system Zn–Fe–Ga–S, gallium solubility is more than 21.4 atomic % in wurtzite at 900°C, more than 15.6 atomic % in wurtzite at 800°C. The cell parameters of Ga-bearing sphalerite and Ga-bearing wurtzite decrease dramatically with increasing gallium content.

Keywords: gallium, solid solution, sphalerite, wurtzite, cell parameters.

SOMMAIRE

Nous avons étudié la solubilité du gallium dans la sphalérite et la wurtzite à 800° et 900° C en utilisant des expériences de synthèse. Dans le système Zn-Ga-S, la sphalérite peut contenir jusqu'à 24.9% de Ga (base atomique) à 900° C, et 16.3% à 800° C. Dans le système Zn-Fe-Ga-S, la solubilité du gallium dans la wurtzite est supérieure à 21.4% à 900° C et 15.6% à 800° C, tandis qu'elle est supérieure à 27.4% dans la sphalérite à 800° C. Les paramètres du réseau de la sphalérite et de la wurtzite gallifères diminuent de façon dramatique à mesure qu'augmente la teneur en gallium.

(Traduit par la Rédaction)

Mots-clés: gallium, solution solide, sphalérite, wurtzite, paramètres réticulaires.

INTRODUCTION

Gallium is found in nature in oxide, silicate and sulfide minerals (Johan *et al.* 1983, Bernstein 1986). The main Ga-containing sulfide minerals are renierite, germanite and gallite. According to Sheka *et al.* (1966), the dominant host of Ga in sulfide ores is sphalerite; the concentration of Ga varies between tens and hundreds of ppm. Some high values of gallium have been reported in a zinc sulfide phase in meteorites. A zinc sulfide found in the Yamato-74370 (EH4) chondrite contains up to 5.8 wt.% Ga (Nagahara & El Goresy 1984), and that from the Qingzhen (EH3) chondrite, up to 1700 ppm Ga (Woolum *et al.* 1984). Sphalerite in a metal sulfide nodule of the Qingzhen (EH3) chondrite contains between 2.05 and 3.70 wt.% Ga (Rambaldi *et al.* 1986).

We have measured the solubilities of gallium in sphalerite and wurtzite by synthetic phaseequilibrium experiments, and here present results on the first study of the system Zn-Fe-Ga-S. Natural Ga-bearing zinc sulfide, particularly that in meteorites, commonly contains considerable Fe, so that this system is of greater relevance than the Fefree system Zn-Ga-S, which had previously been studied at 900°C by Hahn *et al.* (1955).

STARTING MATERIALS AND THEIR SYNTHESIS

Three elements (Fe, Ga and S), all of 99.9% or better purity, and three synthetic monosulfides (ZnS, FeS and GaS) were used as starting materials. ZnS was used as a commercially available white, powdered reagent, in wurtzite form. FeS was synthesized by reacting iron and sulfur in an evacuated silica glass tube at 400°C for two days in order to obtain initial reaction without bursting the tube, and then at 500°C for five days to obtain homogenization. The product was determined by X-ray powder diffraction (FeK α radiation) to be troilite (FeS).

The synthesis of GaS was difficult. Gallium melts at 29.8°C, and its liquid does not mix with liquid sulfur, which melts at 119°C, because a thin layer of gallium sulfide forms at the interface and inhibits further reaction. Despite this, Klemm & Vogel (1934) managed to synthesize GaS from elements using a V-shaped silica tube. Rustamov & Mardakhaev (1964) used an oscillation method to react gallium and sulfur completely. Lieth *et al.* (1966, 1967) synthesized GaS by sublimation using a silica boat in a long silica tube.

Our method for synthesizing GaS was as follows. Gallium and sulfur in an atomic ratio of 1 to 1 were sealed in a 20-cm-long evacuated silica glass tube. The sample tube was heated from 200°C to 850°C in a furnace that was inclined at about 10°; the temperature was increased by 50°C per day for 14 days. The sample tube was removed from the furnace a few times a day and shaken in order to mix unreacted molten gallium and sulfur. Yellow homogeneous GaS was obtained. The X-ray powder data for our synthetic GaS are compared in Table 1 with those for synthetic GaS obtained by Hahn & Frank (1955b). Goodman *et al.* (1985) proposed that there are in fact three polymorphs of GaS: β -GaS, HP-GaS and ϵ -GaS. Beta-GaS is a well-established polymorph that is stable at room temperature and pressure; it crystallizes in the hexagonal space-group $P6_3/mmc$, and its unit-cell dimensions are: *a* 3.585, *c* 15.50 Å (Hahn & Frank 1955b, Wyckoff 1963).

TABLE	1.	X-RAY	POWDER-	DIFFRACTION	DATA	FOR	Gas

Hahn &	Frank (1	955b)	This study. T001-1						
d(Å)	I	hkl	dobs(Å)	denia(Å)	I				
7.75	st(-)	002	7.75	7.73	59				
3.875	st(-)	004	3.870	3.866	100				
3.105	st	100	3.100	3.101	3				
3.044	st	101	3.036	3.047	2				
2.882	55	102	2.876	2.878	1				
2.661	m	103	2.853	2.657	2				
2.583	S	006	2.576	2.577	17				
2.423	5-n	104	2.419	2.419	1				
2.194	m(+)	105	2.187	2.190	5				
1.986	55	106	1.9831	1.9820	1				
1.938	555	008	1.9333	1.9328	2				
1.803	st(+)	107	1,7989	1.7992	11				
1.793	st	110	1.7897	1.7905	7				
1.746	ss(-)	112	1.7445	1.7443	1				
1.644	-	108	1.6399	1.6403	1				
1.627	s-n	114	1.8247	1.6247	ĩ				
1.552	55(-)	200	1.5516	1.5506	ī				
1.550	-	00 <u>10</u>	1.5465	1.5462	1				
hex.		·······	hex						
8	3.585	A		a 3.58100	(7) A				
е	15.50	A		c 15.462(3) A				

TABLE 2. X-RAY POWDER-DIFFRACTION DATA FOR a-Ga2Ss

Goodyear	et al.	(1961)	Thi	s study, TO20	3
d(A)	I	khl	dobs(Å)	doslo(Å)	I
5.33	ns	110	5.34	5.33	20
4.77	m	200	4.775	4.769	16
4.73	W	111	4.732	4.728	7
3.515	W	311	3.519	3.518	5
3.488	WIL	202	3.496	3.494	9
3.209	VS	020	3.215	3.211	64
3.010	8	402	3.014	3.013	100
2.844	wm	310	2.848	2.849	15
2.824	ns	112	2.830	2.828	25
2.742	WD	021	2.748	2.749	5
2.654	w(b)	220 002	2.683 2.658	2.663	4 3
2.378	VW	400	2.384	2.384	ī
2.359	VW	222	2.363	2.364	1
2.206	m	511	2.209	2,209	13
2.193	*	203	2.197	2.197	7
2.185	W	313	2.190	2.190	7
2.098	VW	602	2.103	2.102	3
2.085	wm	513	2.089	2.090	6
2.040	W		2.046		3
1.903	vw(b)				
1.884	VW		1.8868		2
1.851	VS		1.8533		29
1.824	w				
1.810	VW				
a 1	2.637 A		а. В.	12.852(4) A	
b I	3.411 A		b	6.421(3) A	
c ·	7.03a A		c	7.048(2) A	
ß=13	1.07°		β=1	31.07(3)	

This is the polymorph that we synthesized. HP-GaS has a high-pressure structure that can be derived from the β structure. ϵ -GaS has a lower symmetry. P6m2 (Goodman et al. 1985). Both HP-GaS and ϵ -GaS are metastable forms of GaS, and their fields of stability are not known precisely. If the heating rate is too high during synthesis or the mixing between liquid gallium and liquid sulfur is inefficient, a sugar-like, transparent white crystalline material that has excess gallium metal is produced. This material is Ga₂S₃, as determined by X-ray powder diffraction and electron-microprobe analysis. According to Hahn & Frank (1955a), Ga₂S₃ also has three polymorphs, named α , β and γ . Beta-Ga₂S₃ is the disordered, high-temperature phase that has a wurtzite structure, γ -Ga₂S₃ is the disordered, lowtemperature phase that has a sphalerite structure, and α -Ga₂S₃ is a superstructure phase with a wurtzite structure. The fields of thermal stability of these three phases are not well known. As shown in Table 2, X-ray data for our Ga₂S₃ agree with those for α - Ga_2S_3 obtained by Goodyear *et al.* (1961).

SYNTHETIC PHASE-EQUILIBRIUM EXPERIMENTS IN THE SYSTEM Zn-Fe-Ga-S

Meteorites that contain a Ga-bearing zinc sulfide contain metallic iron and troilite and, therefore, have formed at a low sulfur fugacity. Thus, many of our experiments incorporated an FeS + Fe buffer. Five assemblages of starting materials were used: A: (ZnS + GaS) + 2(FeS + Fe), B: (ZnS + 2GaS) + 2(FeS + Fe), C: (ZnS + 4GaS) + 2(FeS + Fe), D: ZnS + GaS + FeS, and E: ZnS + 2GaS. Starting materials were mixed by grinding in an agate mortar and were sealed in evacuated silica tubes. These were heated in an electric furnace at 900°C or 800°C and were quenched in cold water after heating for 13 to 41 days (900°C runs) or for 26 to 56 days (800°C runs).

Products were examined by reflected light microscopy and by X-ray powder diffractometry (Mn-filtered FeK α radiation), with Si as an internal standard. Cell parameters were calculated for some phases by the least-squares method from precisely measured *d*-values. The phase assemblages produced are shown in Table 3. The chemical compositions of the phases were determined with an ETEC electron microprobe using metallic iron, GaP, synthetic sphalerite and synthetic troilite as standards. The analytical results, each an average of several grains, are shown in Table 4. All analytical errors are within 0.1 wt.%.

(Fe,Ga) alloy

An alloy of Fe and Ga was obtained in runs T009,

b=rather broad

Run no.	Temp.(°C)	Reactants	Bulk c	omposi	tions	(At.%)	Heating	Products
			Zn	Fe	Ga	S	days	
T009	900	ZnS+GaS +2(FeS+Fe)	10.0	40.0	10.0	40.0	41	wz+po+Y
T022	900	ZnS+2GaS +2(FeS+Fe)	8.3	33.3	16.7	41.7	20	wz+Y
T039	800	ZnS+GaS +FeS	16.7	16.7	16.7	50.0	13	wz+Y
T033	900	ZnS+4GaS +2(FeS+Fe)	6.2	25.0	25.0	43.8	19	wz+Y
T027	900	ZnS+2GaS	16.7	0.0	33.3	50.0	22	sp+GaS+Ga
T010	800	ZnS+GaS +2(FeS+Fe)	10.0	40.0	10.0	40.0	56	wz+po+Y
T023	800	ZnS+2GaS +2(FeS+Fe)	8.3	33.3	16.7	41.7	34	wz+Y
T 04 0	800	ZnS+GaS +FeS	16, 7	16.7	16.7	50.0	29	wz+Y
T034	800	ZnS+4GaS +2(FeS+Fe)	8.2	25.0	25.0	43.8	26	sp+Y
T028	800	ZnS+2GaS	16.7	0.0	33.3	50.0	28	sp+GaS+Ga

TABLE 3. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS FOR THE SYSTEM Zn-Fe-Ga-S AT 900°C AND 800°C

wz:wurtzite, po:pyrrhotite, Y:alloy (Fe,Ga), sp:sphalerite

TABLE 4. CHEMICAL COMPOSITION OF ALLOY Y, PYRRHOTITE AND SPHALERITE-WURTZITE

	Run no.	no. Temp.(°C)		Weight %				Atomic %			
-			Zn	Fe	Ğa	S	total	Zn	Fe	Ga	S
allo	y Y									•	
	T009	900	0.0	73.7	27.1	0.0	100.8	0.0	77.3	22.7	0.0
	T022	900	0.0	69.3	29.2	0.0	98.5	0.0	74.8	25.2	0.0
	T039	900	0.0	69.2	31.6	0.0	100.8	0.0	73.2	26.8	0.0
	T033	900	0.0	67.1	32.7	0.0	99.8	0.0	72.0	28.0	0.0
	T010	800	0.0	73.8	26.1	0.0	99.9	0.0	77.9	22.1	0.0
	T023	800	0.0	72.6	26.3	0.0	98.9	0.0	77.5	22.5	0.0
	T040	800	0.0	69.4	28.1	0.0	87.5	0.0	75.5	24.5	0.0
	T034	800	0.0	70.3	31.0	0.0	101.3	0.0	73.9	26.1	0.0
pyrr	hotite										
	T009	900	0.0	63.7	0.0	36.6	100.3	0.0	50.0	0.0	50.0
	T010	800	0.0	63.2	0.0	36.6	99.8	0.0	49.8	0.0	50.2
spha	lerite-w	irtzite									
	T009 1	z 900	18.6	34.2	10.9	37.8	101.5	12.7	27.4	7.1	52.8
	T022 v	₹ z 9 00	16.1	23.2	23.1	37.0	99.4	11.5	19.3	15.4	53.8
	T039 v	z 900	25.0	16.1	22.0	37.0	100.1	17.9	13.5	14.7	53.9
	T033 🖡	z 900	11.4	17.5	32.0	38.3	99.1	8.2	14.8	21.4	55.8
	T027 s	sp 900	27.6	0.0	36.6	36.9	101.1	20.1	0.0	24.9	55.0
	T010 s	z 800	21.0	34.2	6.9	36.5	98.5	14.8	28.2	4.5	52.5
	T023 t	wz 800	15.6	22.6	23.5	37.8	99.5	11.1	18.7	15.6	54.6
	T040 r	z 800	25.4	15.3	21.9	36.9	99.5	18.2	12.9	14.8	54.1
	T034 s	sp 800	10.9	8.8	40.2	38.6	98.5	7.9	7.5	27.4	57.2
	T028 £	sp 800	40.3	0.0	23.8	36.3	100.4	29.5	0.0	16.3	54.2

T022, T039 and T033 at 900°C and T010, T023, T040 and T034 at 800°C. The alloy is yellowish white in reflected light and shows no anisotropism. It is optically similar to iron, but has a distinctly different X-ray-diffraction pattern. Table 5 shows the Xray data of α -iron, an alloy of composition Fe₇₀Ga₃₀ (Dasarathy 1964), and our alloy Fe_{77.9}Ga_{22.1} (run T010). Alpha-iron has a bodycentered cubic cell, whereas alloy Fe₇₀Ga₃₀ has a primitive cubic cell (Dasarathy 1964). The five diffraction lines observed for our alloy (Fe_{77.9}Ga_{22.1})

TABLE 5. X-RAY POWDER-DIFFRACTION DATA FOR Q-IRON AND ALLOY Y

1. c	a-iro	n	2. alloy	, Fez	oGaso	3. alloy, Fevr.sGazz.1				
d(A)	I	hkl	d(Å)	I	hkl	dobs(Å)	doelo(A) I	hkl	
			3,7000	W	100					
			2.5903	W	110					
			2.1210	VVS	111	2.148	2.144	100	112	
2 0268	100	110				2.054	2.056	88	103	
			1.8384	VS	200	1.8594	1.8602	96	200	
			1.6457	vw	210					
			1.5080	vvw	211					
4332	20	200								
			1.3010	6	220	1.3153	1.3154	85	220	
			1.2280	VVW	221	1.2394	1.2394	74	222	
1.1702	30	211	1.1664	VVW	310					
oubic			cubic			tetragonal				
a 2.6	3664	A	a 3.6	1834 A		a 3.720(1	l) Å, c	7.40	(1)	

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TABLE 6. X-RAY POWDER-DIFFRACTION DATA FOR SPHALERITE

PDF 5-566			T028		T02	7	T034		
Ga	conter	nt	16.3 4	at.%	24.9	at.%	27.4	at.%	
d(Å)	I	hkl	d(Å)	I	d(Å)	I	d(Å)	I	
3.123 2.705 1.912	100 10 51	111 200 220	3.070 2.856 1.8785	100 2 43	3.044 2.641 1.8648	100 4 40	3.037 2.827 1.8570	100 1 44	
a 5	.4060	Å	5.313(1) A	5.278(2) A	5.253(2) Å	

TABLE 7. X-RAY POWDER-DIFFRACTION DATA FOR WURTZITE

PDF 5-492		T009		T022		T039		T033		
Ga	conte	nt	7.1	at.X	15.4	at.%	14.7	at.%	21.4	at.2
d(A)	I	hk l	d(A)	I	d(Å)	I	d(Å)	I	d(Ā)	ī
3.309	100	100	3.300	100	3.273	100	3.271	100	3.255	86
3.128	88	002	3.115	77	3.087	83	3.087	75	3.066	100
2.825	84	101	2.918	68	2.891	80	2.888	82	2.873	68
2.273	29	102	2.267	33	2.245	40	2.245	40	2.232	32
1.911	74	110	1.9085	62	1.8901	66	1.8895	79	1.8777	92
1.764	52	103	1.7592	58	1.7433	63	1.7433	71	1.7327	67
a	.820	4	3.818(L) &	3.780(3.778/	1) A	3 756(1) 8
e f	3.260	4	6.233(2	2) A	8.177(2	2) A	6.178(2) A	6.140(2) A

can be indexed using a tetragonal cell having a 3.720(1), c 7.40(1) Å (Table 5). We have named this alloy "phase Y". Compositions are listed in Table



Fig. 1. Relationship between unit-cell parameter a of Gabearing sphalerite and composition, expressed as Ga/(Zn+Fe+Ga) ratio. The range in a of Ga-free sphalerite is from Barton & Toulmin (1966). Numbers in brackets express the atomic % of Ga and Fe. 4. At 900°C, gallium contents of alloy Y vary from 22.7 to 28.0 atomic %, and at 800°C from 22.1 to 26.1 atomic %. These compositional variations are consistent with the gallium contents of the bulk compositions of the reactants. We did not obtain the Fe₇₀Ga₃₀ phase reported by Dasarathy (1964).

Sulfides

Pyrrhotite was obtained in runs T009 at 900°C and T010 at 800°C (Table 3). It contains neither Zn nor Ga and is nearly stoichiometric FeS (troilite) (Table 4). Ga-bearing sphalerite, Ga-bearing wurtzite, or their mixture were obtained from all runs (Table 3). Microscopically, both Ga-bearing sphalerite and Gabearing wurtzite are grey with bluish tint, have no anisotropism, and are very similar in appearance to Ga-free sphalerite or Ga-free wurtzite. These two minerals could be distinguished only by X-ray powder diffraction (Tables 6, 7). Results of microprobe analyses are listed in Table 4.

DISCUSSION

Variations of cell parameters of sphalerite and wurtzite

Barton & Toulmin (1966) determined the dependence of the unit-cell parameter a of sphalerite on its Fe content: a = 5.4093 + 0.0005637X - $0.000004107X^2$, where X is mole % FeS in solid solution. The maximum value of a they obtained is 5.4280 Å for sphalerite containing 56 mole % FeS. The maximum increase in a thus is only 0.0187 Å. In contrast, the effects of Ga on the unit-cell parameters of sphalerite and wurtzite are very large (Tables 6 and 7, respectively). Figure 1 is a plot of the unit-cell parameter a of Ga-bearing sphalerite versus chemical composition, given as the atomic ratio Ga/(Zn + Fe + Ga). Figure 2 is a similar plot for Ga-bearing wurtzite. The unit-cell parameters of sphalerite and wurtzite decrease dramatically with increasing gallium content. On the other hand, an increase in the iron content increases the cell parameters of both phases. Therefore, for Gabearing zinc sulfide containing much iron (e.g., T009 with 27.4 atomic % Fe), the values of a and c deviate from the straight lines in Figures 1 and 2. The difference in a between Ga-free sphalerite and Garich (27.4 atomic % Ga) sphalerite T034 at the same Fe content of 7.5 atomic % is 0.164 Å, almost an order of magnitude larger (and in the opposite direction) than the entire range that results from Fe substitution (Barton & Toulmin 1966). The differences in a and c between pure wurtzite and Fe-bearing, Garich wurtzite T033 are 0.064 Å and 0.12 Å, respectively.

Hahn et al. (1955) measured the variations of cell parameters of phases along the Ga₂S₃-ZnS binary join at 900°C. About 20 mole % ZnS can be accommodated in solid solution in Ga₂S₃. The solid solution has the sphalerite structure, and a increases with increasing ZnS content. More than 30 mole % Ga₂S₃ can be incorporated in ZnS. This solid solution has the wurtzite structure, and a and c decrease with increasing Ga₂S₃ content. Hahn et al. suggested that a tetragonal $ZnGa_2S_4$ phase occupies the middle range along this binary join. Dissolution of 30 mole % Ga₂S₃ in ZnS produces the composition Zn_{24.1}Ga_{20.7}S_{55.2}. In our investigation of the GaS-ZnS binary join, Ga-bearing sphalerite was obtained over the compositional range from Zn_{20.1}Ga_{24.9}S_{55.0} at 900°C to Zn_{29.5}Ga_{16.3}S_{54.2} at 800°C, with no indication of a tetragonal $ZnGa_2S_4$ phase.

The dramatic decrease in cell volume of Gabearing zinc sulfide with increasing Ga content is explained by considerations of ionic size and valence. The ionic radii of Zn^{2+} and Ga^{3+} are 0.74 Å and 0.62 Å, respectively. Furthermore, in order for Ga to enter into the sphalerite or wurtzite solid solution, vacancies must be created to maintain charge balance. The probable solid-solution model is written (Zn,Fe,Ga, \Box)S, where \Box represents a vacancy, or (Zn,Fe,Ga)_{1-x}S.

Stability relations between wurtzite and sphalerite in the system Zn-Fe-Ga-S

Scott & Barnes (1972) determined a univariant sphalerite-wurtzite boundary as a function of sulfur fugacity and temperature at 1 bar. They proposed that in the pure Zn-S system, sphalerite is stable at relatively high sulfur fugacity, and wurtzite is stable at low sulfur fugacity. The effect of solid solutions on this relationship is not well known, although substitution of Fe for Zn increases the sulfur fugacity over which sphalerite is stable (Barton & Toulmin 1966, Hutchison & Scott 1981). As shown in Table 3, most runs in the present experiments were performed by using FeS + Fe as reactants and thus should have been buffered at or near the low sulfur fugacity defined by the pair iron + troilite. However, iron was totally consumed in many of these experiments. Runs T009 at 900°C and T010 at 800°C were buffered by pyrrhotite + alloy Y and produced wurtzite, in agreement with the stability relations of Scott & Barnes (1972). The products of runs T022, T039, and T033 at 900°C and of runs T023 and T040 at 800°C are wurtzite + alloy Y, which indicates that they, too, were carried out at low sulfur fugacity. Run T027 at 900°C and runs T034 and T028 at 800°C produced sphalerite, indicative of high sulfur fugacity. Our data are not yet sufficiently numerous to provide unequivocal phase diagrams for the system Ga-Fe-Zn-S.



Fig. 2. Relationship between unit-cell parameters of Gabearing wurtzite and composition, expressed as Ga/(Zn+Fe+Ga) ratio. A) Data for *a*; B) data for *c*. Values of *a* and *c* of Ga-free wurtzite are from PDF 5-0492. Numbers in brackets express the atomic % of Ga and Fe.

Solubility of gallium in sphalerite and wurtzite

Runs T027 at 900°C and T028 at 800°C, with reactants ZnS + 2GaS, produced the univariant assemblage sphalerite + GaS + Ga. Therefore, 24.9 atomic % Ga for T027 and 16.3 atomic % Ga for T028 are the maximum solubilities of Ga in sphalerite in the ternary system Zn–Ga–S at 900°C and 800°C, respectively. Univariant assemblages were not obtained in the system Zn–Fe–Ga–S, so that the maximum solubility of Ga in zinc sulfide is not known for the quaternary system. The maximum Ga contents measured were 21.4 atomic % Ga for wurtzite at 900°C (run T033), 15.6 atomic % Ga for wurtzite at 800°C (run T023), and 27.4 atomic %Ga for sphalerite at 800°C (run T034). These values are considerably larger than those reported for Gabearing zinc sulfides in meteorites (Nagahara & El Goresy 1984, Woolum *et al.* 1984, Rambaldi *et al.* 1986), which indicates, not unexpectedly, that the zinc sulfide in these meteorites is not saturated with Ga and therefore can provide no P-T information.

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