

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

DOCTORAL THESIS

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# Simulating the thermal conductivity of lower mantle minerals

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*A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements*

*for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy*

*in the*

Institute of Geophysics and Tectonics

School of Earth and Environment

April 18, 2019



## Declaration of Authorship

I, Ben TODD, declare that this thesis titled, “Simulating the thermal conductivity of lower mantle minerals” and the work presented in it are my own. I confirm that:

- This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University.
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- Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed.
- Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work.
- I have acknowledged all main sources of help.
- Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself.

Signed:

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Date:

---



*Do it!*  
*Just do it!*

*Don't let your dreams be dreams.*  
*Yesterday you said tomorrow, so just do it!*  
*Make your dreams come true!*  
*Just do it!*

*Some people dream of success,*  
*while you're gonna wake up,*  
*and work hard at it!*  
*Nothing is impossible!*

*You should get to the point,*  
*where anyone else would quit,*  
*and you're not going to stop there.*  
*No, what are you waiting for?*

*Do it!*  
*Just do it!*  
*Yes you can!*  
*Just do it!*

*If you're tired of starting over,*  
*stop*  
*giving*  
*up.*

Shia LeBeouf



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

# *Abstract*

Faculty of Environment

School of Earth and Environment

Doctor of Philosophy

**Simulating the thermal conductivity of lower mantle minerals**

by Ben TODD

The Thesis Abstract is written here (and usually kept to just this page). The page is kept centered vertically so can expand into the blank space above the title too...





## *Acknowledgements*

The acknowledgments and the people to thank go here, don't forget to include your project advisor...



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# List of Abbreviations

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>CMB</b>               | Core-mantle boundary                                      |
| <b>LLSVP</b>             | Large, low-shear-velocity province                        |
| <b>ULVZ</b>              | Ultra low velocity zone                                   |
| <b>TBL</b>               | Thermal boundary layer                                    |
| <b>DAC</b>               | Diamond anvil cell  |
| <b>MgSiO<sub>3</sub></b> | Magnesium Silicate  |
| <b>FeSiO<sub>3</sub></b> | Iron Silicate   |
| <b>bdg</b>               | bridgmanite   |
| <b>pv</b>                | perovskite  |
| <b>ppv</b>               | post-perovskite   |
| <b>LAMMPS</b>            | Large-scale Atomic/Molecular Massively Parallel Simulator |
| <b>DFT</b>               | Density Functional Theory                                 |
| <b>MD</b>                | Molecular Dynamics  |
| <b>EMD</b>               | Equilibrium Molecular Dynamics                            |
| <b>NEMD</b>              | Non-equilibrium Molecular Dynamics                        |
| <b>DM</b>                | Direct Method   |
| <b>GK</b>                | Green-Kubo  |
| <b>ACF</b>               | Auto-correlation function                                 |
| <b>MFP</b>               | Mean free path  |
| <b>FSE</b>               | Finite-size effects                                       |
| <b>BPT</b>               | Ballistic phonon transport                                |



# Physical Constants

Boltzmann constant  $k_B = 1.380\,648\,528 \times 10^{-23} \text{ J K}^{-1}$

Boltzmann constant  $k_B = 8.617\,330\,350 \times 10^{-5} \text{ eV/K}$



# List of Symbols

|          |                   |                        |
|----------|-------------------|------------------------|
| $a$      | distance          | m                      |
| $P$      | power             | W (J s <sup>-1</sup> ) |
| $\omega$ | angular frequency | rad                    |





*For/Dedicated to/To my...*



## Chapter 1

# Thermal conductivity and the Earth's interior

### 1.1 Introduction to the problem

The nature of heat transport within a substance is controlled by its thermal conductivity. This influences the thermal evolution and heat budget of the Earth, but is poorly constrained across relevant conditions. Experiments can measure the conductivity of material, but not at the high pressure/temperature conditions found in the deep Earth. Computer simulations allow materials and their conductivities to be modelled on an atomic-scale, but care must be taken to achieve accurate results. This involves setting up the material to faithfully replicate its expected real-world counterpart, and choosing a simulation method which includes realistic atomic interactions. In this chapter, I will introduce thermal conductivity and the deep earth, considering the effects of the former on the latter.

#### 1.1.1 Man-made applications with thermal conductivity

Knowledge of the thermal conductivity of solids is key for a wide range of technological applications, in addition to developing our understanding of natural systems. Conductivity determines whether a material is a conductor or insulator of heat, both of which have many uses, technological or otherwise. Oven gloves introduce an insulating, low conductivity layer between our hands and a hot object which would otherwise cause injury. Vacuum flasks utilise a low conductivity construction to keep liquids hot, houses have wall insulation to keep the heat in. While

a saucepan may have an insulating rubber handle, it may also have a conductive copper base, allowing it to heat up quickly with an even temperature distribution.

Heat exchangers are found in many systems, where one substance is used to cool or heat another. While the heat transfer is affected by the thermal conductivity of the media in question, the material that separates the two must have high conductivity for the system to be efficient. Domestic examples include central heating system, fridges, and cars. Industrial examples include solar water heating, and power plants, from geothermal to nuclear.

Thermoelectric materials convert waste heat into electricity, thereby improving the efficiency of domestic, automotive, and industrial processes. They are proposed to increase the sustainability of our current electricity base, but suitable materials must have a low thermal conductivity (Snyder and Toberer, 2008).

### 1.1.2 Conductivity in the Earth

Within the lower mantle, thermal conductivity influences the rate at which heat is transferred from core cooling towards the surface, and more importantly the mechanisms by which it does so (Lay et al., 2008). High thermal conductivity systems will preferentially transport heat by conduction. Systems will convect (ADVECT?) where there is too much heat to be transported by conduction alone (i.e. low conductivity conditions).

Observations of plume structures and cyclic subduction patterns (see Garnero and McNamara, 2008) suggest convective behaviour in the lower mantle. Thermal conductivity is poorly constrained in this region, obtaining a comprehensive depth profile is not a trivial task. Additional difficulties are pressure, temperature, and compositional dependences, including isotopic variation (Tang and Dong, 2010; Dalton et al., 2013; Tang et al., 2014) and inclusion of impurities (Manthilake et al., 2011; Ammann et al., 2014; Ohta et al., 2014).

### 1.1.3 AIMS / WHAT I DO THAT IS DIFFERENT TO OTHERS

The aim of the work presented in this thesis is to model thermal conductivity at the core mantle boundary (CMB). I will running simulations at high pressure and

varying temperatures, considering the effects of composition across an entire solid solution.

By parameterising the temperature and compositional-dependence, thermal conductivity can be determined as a function of both at any condition. This is of particular use to LEMA because of REASONS.

In order to perform this parameterisation, I will need to explore the equations that describe these dependencies, adapting them where necessary to compliment my result set.

Working on the atomic-scale, compositional variations are more important than in a sample of bulk material. A relatively low amount of possible sites for impurities to be placed means clumping is possible, and must be considered when randomly substituting atoms.

Fundamental characteristics of heat transport in atomic systems mean that the size of the system / number of atoms affect the magnitude of the conductivity result. Measures exist to quantify these effects, but simulations may yield incorrect results if system size is not considered. I will look into this to validate my calculated results, but also to offer analysis of these finite size effects (FSE) for atomic simulations in general.

## 1.2 Defining thermal conductivity

Thermal conductivity is a material property, indicative of the ease with which heat is transferred through conduction. For known substances thermal conductivity spans about six orders of magnitude, from silica aerogels with  $0.005 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  (Lee et al., 1995) to graphene with  $5000 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  (Balandin et al., 2008).

The transfer of thermal energy can occur between an object and its surroundings, two bodies brought into contact, or along a temperature gradient within an object. The possible mechanisms by which this can occur are conduction, convection, and radiation. Conduction is the transfer of heat by atomic vibrations and electron transport in metallic substances (such as in the outer core). Convection is the motion of thermal energy via a moving medium, generally in liquids and gases (but expected in the mantle). Density differences are the driving force for convection, due to the

volume change associated with thermal expansion. Radiation refers to the transport of heat by electromagnetic radiation in the form of photons.

I am primarily concerned with the atomic vibrations of lattice conduction through the lower mantle, and secondly the convective behaviour therein. Mantle minerals are expected to be insulators, meaning there is no contribution from electron transport. The radiative component of thermal conductivity in the mantle is thought to be small (Goncharov et al., 2008), and will not be determined as part of this work. In the event that radiation contributes significantly to the effective thermal conductivity (Keppler et al., 2008), it can simply be added to the lattice component.

Convection in the mantle is dependent on the thermal conductivity, and will occur if heat cannot be sufficiently transported by conductive processes. The value of the Rayleigh number describes the behaviour of heat flow in a fluid, relative to a critical value for the system. Many variables are required to determine the Rayleigh number, but most importantly here it is inversely proportional to thermal conductivity. If the calculated Rayleigh number is lower than the critical value, conduction is the dominant process. When the Rayleigh number is greater, the ratio between it and the critical value describes the vigour and style of convection.

### 1.2.1 Mechanisms of heat transport

CRYSTAL LATTICE DIAGRAM SOMEWHERE IN THIS SECTION? - crystalmaker/specific, or generally vague?

The transport of heat, rather than the transport of hot material, can be split into three components which contribute to the overall thermal conductivity of a material. These transport mechanisms can be explained on an atomic level, and in the case of this study within a crystal lattice. Atoms have translational symmetry within a crystal, the lattice can be thought of a regular, repeating pattern of atomic arrangement.

Electrical thermal conductivity refers to the transport of heat via free electrons in an atomic structure. Radiative thermal conductivity is the transport of heat via photons, or packets of electromagnetic energy. Phonons are packets of vibrational energy, a quasiparticle used to describe atomic motions which contribute to lattice thermal conductivity (often referred to as just “conductivity” elsewhere in this thesis).

### Electron

Close parallels exist between thermal and electrical conduction. The conduction of thermal energy in metals is predominantly due to the motion and interaction of free electrons. Heat is transferred as electrons move and collide in the lattice. There is no net transport of electrons in order to maintain charge neutrality within the lattice. Lower mantle minerals are semiconductors, and thus electrical thermal conductivity is of little significance to this project.

### Photon

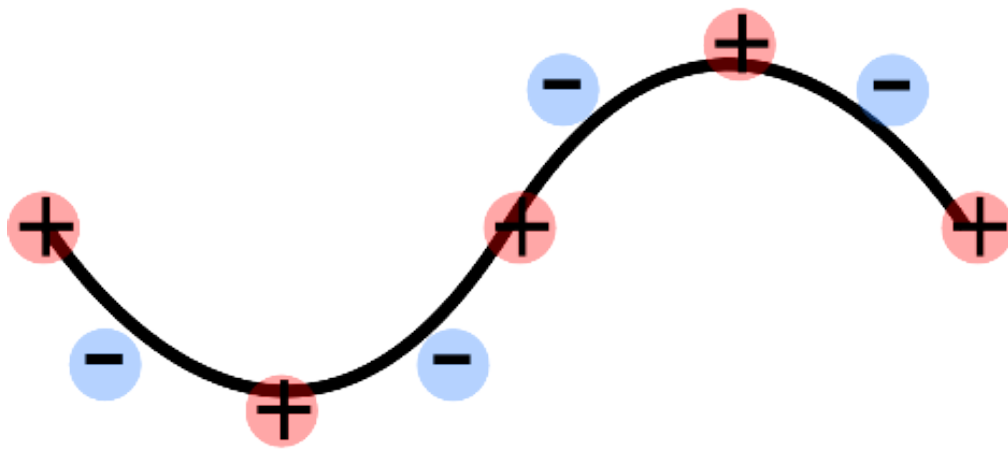
Any body with a non-absolute zero temperature emits thermal radiation as light, or photons. Radiative thermal conductivity is determined by a material's optical absorptivity, which describes how heat is transferred by electromagnetic radiation within a material. On the atomic scale, charged particles vibrate and emit light. Energy is transferred from one particle to another when this light is scattered or absorbed. The transfer of heat by radiation is limited similarly to the transfer of visible light, with difficulty passing through opaque media. Unlike lattice conductivity at mantle conditions, radiative conductivity increases with temperature (Hofmeister, 1999). This relation has been used to assume thermal conductivity could be constant through the lower mantle if radiative processes are significant, where the lattice component decreases at the same rate the radiative increases (Tang et al., 2014).

### Phonon

The final way heat is conducted is by the vibration of atoms, where the velocity of an atom is proportional to its heat. As an atom vibrates, forces act on neighbouring atoms, inducing motion. Hot atoms in a closed system transfer energy to cold atoms in this way, until energy and temperature are both equilibrated. Considering a crystalline arrangement of atoms, there is long-range structure and well-defined bonds between atoms. Much like standing waves on a string, atoms can vibrate in-phase. These patterns of vibrations are called phonons, and can be differentiated by wavelength and the relative motions of atoms.

There are two types of phonon, acoustic and optical, differentiated by the atomic motions they embody (see Fig. 1.1). Both types can be longitudinal or transverse, referring to the motion of atoms relative to the direction of energy propagation. Longitudinal motion means atoms in a line move closer and further apart with no vertical displacement. Transverse motion refers to vertical displacement of atoms off the line, with no lateral motion along it. The former is like extension/compression of a spring, the latter a standing wave on a string.

## Acoustical Mode



## Optical Mode



FIGURE 1.1: STOLEN FROM UNI WARWICK  
<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/physics/current/postgraduate/regs/mpagswarwick/ex5/phonons/>



((((IS THIS STUFF CORRECT???) Acoustic phonons are propagated by atoms displaced in-phase from their equilibrium positions, generating forces on their neighbours and thus subsequent displacement. Optical phonons are propagated by the opposite motion of adjacent positive and negatively-charged ions (conserving momentum, the lighter atom moves further). This motion is generated from the electric fields of external electromagnetic radiation ((OR DOES MOTION GENERATE EM FIELD?)), and is typically of a higher energy than its acoustic counterpart.

Similar to how photons have wave particle duality, phonons are known as quasi-particles. This is useful for explaining how phonons waves interact with structural discontinuities and in phonon-phonon collisions. As a particle, a phonon is a quantised packet of vibrational energy. Unlike electronic heat conduction, there is a net motion of phonon particles from hot to cold regions.

A phonon's mean free path (MFP) is the average distance it travels before scattering. The further the average phonon travels, the more efficient the heat transport and thus higher the thermal conductivity. A number of effects cause phonons to scatter: (1) collisions with other phonons in the lattice, (2) boundaries or defects in the material, and (3) impurities in the atomic structure. The MFP can be determined via Matthiessen's rule, which states the total thermal resistivity (inverse of conductivity) is equal to the sum of individual resistivities,

$$\frac{1}{\kappa} = \frac{1}{\kappa_{\text{ph}}} + \frac{1}{\kappa_{\text{b}}} + \frac{1}{\kappa_{\text{d}}} , \quad (1.1)$$

where **p**honon, **b**oundary, and **d**efect scattering effects are considered. The distance a phonon travels is proportional to conductivity, thus inversely proportional to resistivity. The shorter the phonon path of an effect, the more it influences and contributes to, or detracts from, the MFP. This is displayed in the equation, where the inverse of the smallest number contributes the most to the sum.

### 1.2.2 What affects it?

Lattice thermal conductivity can be expressed in the form

$$\kappa_{\text{lat}} = \frac{1}{3} C_v v l , \quad (1.2)$$

where  $C_v$  is the volumetric heat capacity,  $v$  is the acoustic phonon velocity, and  $l$  is the phonon mean free path.

### Pressure

Volume of the material decreases with increasing pressure, with increasing depth into the Earth. This tends to increase the bulk and shear moduli, causing the seismic wave velocity, and thus the acoustic phonon velocity, to increase. Referring back to Eq. 1.2, increasing pressure causes a conductivity increase.

### Temperature

The phonon MFP increases with the volumetric heat capacity, until the saturation and convergence of this parameter at a material's Debye temperature (see Fig. 1.2). Lattice conductivity is proportional to the MFP (Eq. 1.2), so also increases with temperature up to the Debye limit.

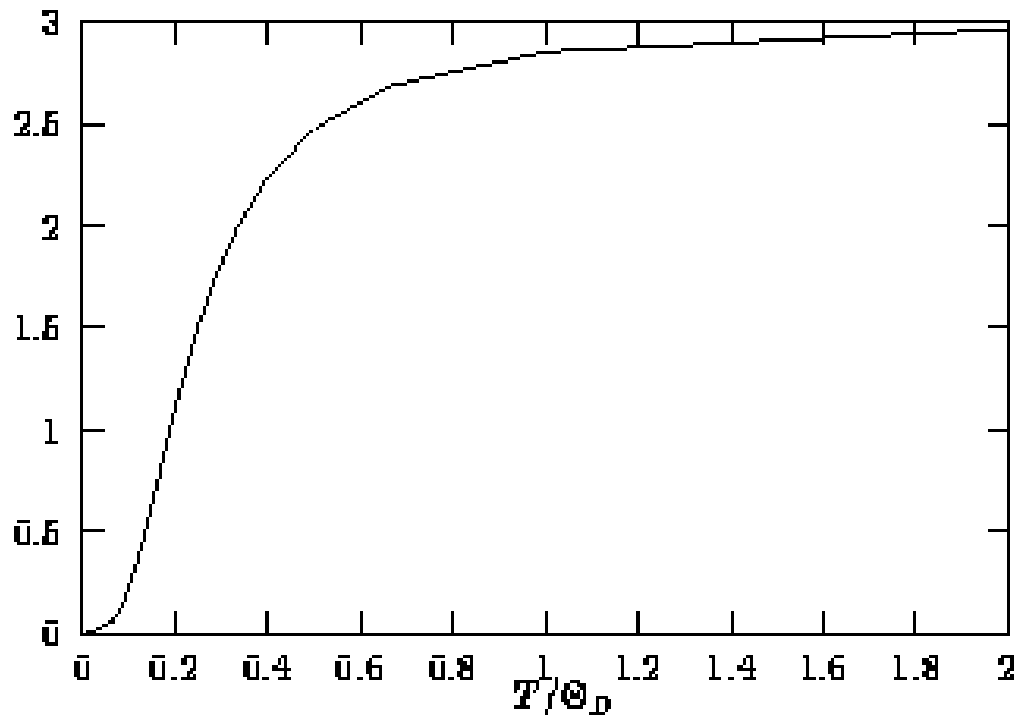


FIGURE 1.2: <http://borisv.lk.net/matsc597c-1997/systems/Lecture4/node4.html>

Phonon-phonon scattering occurs as long as there are phonons, the effect of which increases with temperature past the Debye temperature. Conductivity change is inversely proportional to temperature at this point, decreasing, and eventually

saturation (see Fig. 1.3), to a minimum value as the MFP reaches its minimum (on the order of atomic spacing). Bridgmanite is above its Debye temperature for all lower mantle conditions I will consider. I can safely assume its conductivity will decrease with rising temperature.

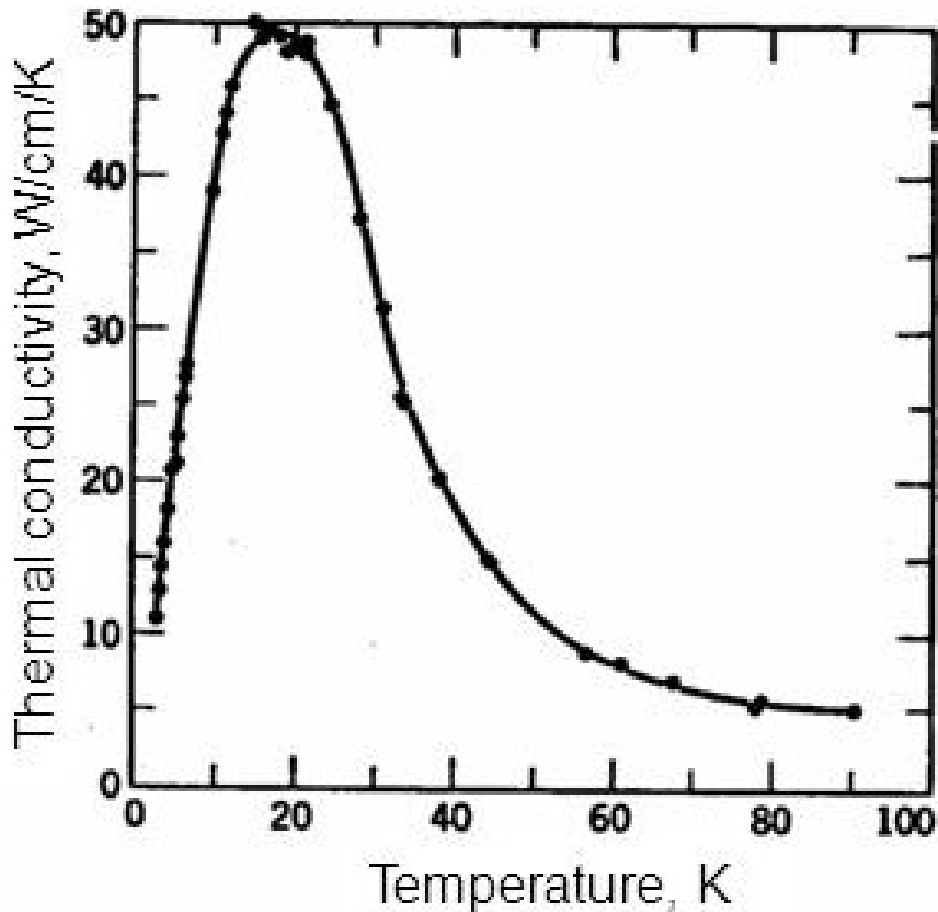


FIGURE 1.3: <https://slideplayer.com/slide/9699097/31/images/29/Thermal+Conductivity+Metals+Dielectrics+Wiedemann-Franz+law%3A.jpg>

### Composition

Considering a “pure” material, like  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  bridgmanite, the two sources of scattering are phonon-phonon, and phonon-boundary. Addition of impurities, such as in  $(\text{Mg,Fe})\text{SiO}_3$  perovskite, introduces phonon-impurity scattering and can reduce conductivity (refer back to Eq. 1.2). The effect of impurities is less significant at

high temperatures, when conductivity is already reduced by phonon-phonon scattering. When the phonon-impurity path is much shorter than those of other scattering sources however, impurities can greatly reduce conductivity (via Matthiessen rule, above). Because of these relations, impurities will affect conductivity more higher in the mantle, with the effect reducing towards the CMB. The effect of impurities on thermal conductivity will be discussed extensively in CHAPTER FOUR.

### 1.3 Structure of the Earth



FIGURE 1.4: THE IDEA HERE IS FOR ME TO MAKE A FIGURE THAT INCLUDES ON THE MOST RELEVANT BITS OF THE EARTH, BASED OFF WHAT I MENTION IN FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS. ADD SCALEBAR/DISTANCES? TEXT ON FIGURE? MARK CMB? MARK ATMOSPHERE/SURFACE?

The average radius of the Earth is 6371 km, the properties of which change dramatically with depth to the centre. I will be focussed on the lower mantle, particularly the region close to the core (the core mantle boundary, CMB). Events in the lower mantle influence (and are influenced by) the upper mantle and lithosphere

above, and the core below. Heat transport throughout the Earth is influenced by thermal conductivity, which in turn affects the dynamics of the system, the surface expression of this being plate tectonics. Heat flow also affects the core geodynamo, which produces the Earth's magnetic field.

### 1.3.1 Lower mantle

The lower mantle encompasses the region after the mantle transition zone (660 km deep,  $\sim 1900$  K,  $\sim 25$  GPa) to the CMB (2900 km deep,  $\sim 4000$  K, 136 GPa). The composition of this region can be approximated as 75% bridgmanite ( $\text{MgSiO}_3$ , magnesium silicate perovskite), 20% periclase ( $\text{MgO}$ , magnesium oxide), and 5% calcium silicate ( $\text{CaSiO}_3$ ) perovskite (Trønnnes, 2009). All of which are insulators and past their Debye temperatures at lower mantle conditions, with the potential for the inclusion of impurities such as iron and aluminium.

The exact nature of impurities is complicated to resolve, as there are a lot of variables. Iron comes in ferrous and ferric varieties, which can have varying electron spin states. The amount of iron is not partitioned evenly throughout the mineral phases, periclase taking a larger proportion than bridgmanite for example. The nature of partitioning changes with physical conditions, where post-perovskite may behave differently to bridgmanite.

A popular opinion is that bridgmanite is stable in the lower mantle until the bottom few 100 km, where it undergoes a pressure-driven phase change to post-perovskite (Murakami et al., 2004; Oganov and Ono, 2004). In places, close proximity to the CMB might transform post-perovskite back to perovskite structure due to the increased temperature. This “double crossing” of the bridgmanite stability range can be imaged seismically, where lens-like bands of post-perovskite are shown to pinch out laterally (Lay et al., 2006).

The lower mantle is not heterogeneous, with large-scale features around the CMB. Two large low shear velocity provinces (LLSVPs) can be found roughly underneath Africa and the Pacific. An associated feature is the ultra-low velocity zones (ULVZs), identified around the edges of LLSVPs. These can be observed seismically, but the reason they exist is unclear. It is suggested they are “thermo-chemical features”, hotter and denser than the regular lower mantle. Increasing temperature

and density tend to reduce seismic velocity, with increased density to offset the additional buoyancy from raised temperature. “Thermo” intuitively refers to the change in temperatures, while “chemical” changes are required to explain density increase. As a result, thermal conductivity will vary within these regions. Adding impurities such as iron would be a possible cause for density increase, such that the conductivity change should be quantified.

### **1.3.2 Lithosphere and upper mantle**

The lithosphere (from 0 km depth) and upper mantle lie above the transition zone (to 660 km depth), which marks the top of the lower mantle. Although the chemistry of these regions is similar to that of the lower mantle, the physical conditions and mineral phases are different. Eruptive and subductive behaviour associated with plate tectonics is perhaps the most obvious consequence of mantle dynamics at the Earth's surface, and generally to humanity.

The “rocky” portion of the Earth (from the surface down to CMB) is largely some form of silicate mineral, often with magnesium and iron. The two main mineral transitions from the Earth's surface to the top of the lower mantle are pyroxene to garnet (40%), and olivine through wadsleyite to ringwoodite (60% Trønnes, 2009). The olivine to wadsleyite change occurs at 410 km, marking the top of the mantle transition zone. Wadsleyite transitions to ringwoodite through this zone until 660 km, at which point it breaks down into lower mantle bridgmanite and ferropericlase.

### **1.3.3 Inner and outer core**

The region beyond the CMB (starts at 2900 km depth) includes the core, comprised of its outer and inner sections. The liquid outer core extends to 5100 km depth, where the pressure-driven transition to solid inner core occurs. The composition of the core is dominated by iron, with various light elements suggested as possible alloying components.

Relative to the lower mantle, the outer core is a vigorously convecting system, and the core-side CMB can be considered to be an isothermal boundary. The main relevance to the lower mantle is the heat transfer across the CMB, the rate of which

depends on the mantle conductivity and temperature. A second concern is that of chemical transfer between core and mantle, where iron from the core would be swapped various light mantle elements. Fe-content may increase in the lower mantle with CMB proximity, which in turn affects conductivity and the temperature profile for CMB heat flux.

## 1.4 Previous work - geophysics

### 1.4.1 STUFF THAT IS INFLUENCED BY CONDUCTIVITY

Thermal conductivity in the deep Earth influences dynamic processes such as mantle convection and heat loss from the core (Lay et al., 2008). In this section I will discuss the prominent thermal conductivity-dependent processes.

#### Mantle dynamics

In the lower mantle thermal conductivity changes with pressure, temperature, and composition, influencing features on a large scale. For example, Naliboff and Kellogg (2006) used numerical models of mantle convection to show size and stability of convective plumes are sensitive to thermal conductivity above the core mantle boundary (CMB).

Dubuffet and Yuen (2000) investigated the effects of temperature and pressure-dependent thermal conductivity on mantle convection, finding that depth-dependent thermal conductivity encouraged heat transport via convective plumes. Compared to a constant conductivity model, vertical heat transfer was concentrated to these “pipe-like” structures, despite the horizontally-averaged heat flow for both systems being around the same value. Variable conductivity, even in one dimension, increased the spatial and temporal stability of convection. Plumes were thicker, had heads of larger surface area, and were hotter, compared to the uniform conductivity mantle model.

#### Heat flow

The most accessible estimate of the Earth’s energy is the total heat flow at the surface, of which a value of  $46 \pm 3$  TW is accepted as the upper bound. Sources of surface

heat flow include; radiogenic heating ( $20 \pm 3$  TW), mantle cooling (8–28 TW), and the conduction of heat across the CMB from core cooling (Lay et al., 2008). Conductive heat flow is constrained by thermal conductivity, a model of which is not available for all Earth conditions.

Better constraints on thermal conductivity are required to estimate CMB heat flow. This in turn would tell us more about the temperatures either side of the CMB, as well as the presence and nature of the lower mantle thermal boundary layer (TBL). Employing the most commonly used value for lower mantle conductivity,  $10 \text{ W m}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}$  (Lay et al., 2008), heat flow across the CMB is expected to be 5–13 TW (Lay et al., 2008). The value of  $10 \text{ W m}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}$  used by Lay et al. (2006) is an estimate of lowermost mantle thermal conductivity, based on extrapolation of a measurement at ambient conditions (Osako and Ito, 1991). Both higher and lower values have been proposed ( $4\text{--}16 \text{ W m}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}$ , Manthilake et al., 2011), illustrating how poorly constrained thermal conductivity is at CMB-relevant pressure/temperature conditions.

### Geomagnetism

Using shear wave velocity as a proxy for CMB heat flow, Gubbins et al. (2007) showed that variations in mantle temperature gradients above the CMB can influence Earth's geodynamo. The present day magnetic field at the surface has four lobes, and these align above regions of fast shear wave velocity on the CMB. Ignoring compositional effects in the mantle, seismically-fast regions can be assumed to be cold. Considering Fourier's law (CITE), colder regions facilitate larger heat flows through steeper temperature gradients from the isothermal CMB.

Gubbins et al. (2007) recreate the geomagnetic observation of the aforementioned lobes using a core geodynamo simulation, where the upper boundary (CMB, lowermost mantle bottom) condition was a laterally varying heat flux. Knowing the thermal conductivity, especially as it changes with temperature, would better constrain mantle boundary conditions used in this and similar core dynamics models (Ammann et al., 2014).



### 1.4.2 DETERMINATIONS OF TC FOR EARTH MATERIALS/CONDITIONS

A range of atomic scale simulation methods are available to determine the lattice thermal conductivity of materials. These are invaluable for calculating thermal conductivity at conditions of which experiments are difficult, i.e. the extreme conditions found in the Earth's lower mantle (pressures and temperatures up to 136 GPa and 4000 K at the core-mantle boundary).

Many studies assume lowermost mantle thermal conductivity to be  $10 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  (e.g. Lay et al., 2008), but uncertainty in the extrapolation of experimental results made at low pressures and temperatures gives a range of 4–16  $\text{Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  (Brown and McQueen, 1986; Osako and Ito, 1991; Hofmeister, 1999; Goncharov et al., 2009; Manthilake et al., 2011; Ohta et al., 2012).

The significance of radiative thermal conductivity, the transport of heat by photonic processes, is poorly constrained in the lower mantle. Until proven otherwise, it is convenient to assume the radiative component is small compared to the lattice component. The two components can simply be added to determine the total conductivity, a correction that can be applied to my results at a later date.

I give a review of experimental and computational determinations of conductivity for Earth-relevant conditions, where the Direct and Green-Kubo calculation methods are elaborated later on in Section REF (somewhere in chap2).

#### Experiments

There have been several computational studies to calculate the lattice thermal conductivity of bridgmanite at CMB conditions. Osako and Ito (1991) measured the lattice thermal conductivity of  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  perovskite, using a modified Ångström method. They investigated a temperature range of 160–340 K at ambient pressure. At 300 K, a conductivity of  $5.1 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  was obtained. This value is reported by the authors to be consistent with chemical and structural analogues,  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  enstatite ( $5.0 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ ) and  $\text{CaTiO}_3$  perovskite ( $4 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ ). The authors extrapolated the value to mantle conditions, neglecting radiative thermal conductivity. They predicted a value of  $3.0 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  just beneath the mantle transition zone at 1900 K, and  $12.0 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  at the top of the D'' layer at 2500 K, a four-fold increase. Thermal conductivity is

highlighted as an important indicator of lowermost mantle structure, whether or not the D'' layer can behave as a thermal boundary between core and mantle.

Manthilake et al. (2011) measured MgSiO<sub>3</sub> perovskite at 26 GPa and 473–1073 K, and periclase at 8 and 14 GPa between 373–1273 K. In order to estimate values of thermal conductivity at the top and bottom of D'' for a lower mantle compositional model of 4 perovskite : 1 periclase, the authors extrapolated their measurements to high temperature and pressure. For an iron-free mantle, thermal conductivities of  $18.9 \pm 1.6 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  and  $15.4 \pm 1.4 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  are estimated for the top of D'' and CMB respectively. Similarly, for a mantle composition with Fe, thermal conductivities of  $9.1 \pm 1.2 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  and  $8.4 \pm 1.2 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  are calculated. This highlights the importance of impurities in controlling thermal conductivity in the lower mantle.

Ohta et al. (2012) measured the lattice thermal diffusivity of MgSiO<sub>3</sub> perovskite and post-perovskite at room temperature and pressures up to 144 GPa (using a diamond-anvil cell and light heating thermoreflectance). These results suggest a majority perovskite lowermost mantle would have conductivity of  $\sim 11 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ , and that parts of the lowermost mantle where post-perovskite is stable will have a conductivity approximately 60% higher. The authors suggest that these differences in conductivity between phases will not have a large effect on CMB heat flux, assuming the double-crossing perovskite phase model. The lattice conductivity of MgSiO<sub>3</sub> perovskite is shown to increase with pressure and decrease with temperature as expected. The inclusion of impurities is expected to decrease lattice thermal conductivity.

## Calculations

Haigis et al. (2012) used the Green-Kubo method (refer to REF) to calculate the lattice thermal conductivity of bridgmanite, post-perovskite, and periclase at lower mantle conditions. Assuming an iron-free composition with four parts bridgmanite to one part periclase, a model is constructed of density and temperature-dependent thermal conductivity along a geotherm. This model suggests great variation over the lower mantle, with a value of  $9.5 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  at the top and  $20.5 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  above D''. Based on the results of Manthilake et al. (2011), Haigis et al. suggest the inclusion of iron will lower thermal conductivity by up to half, bringing their result in line

with Lay et al. (2006) ((10 WMK???)). The authors estimate the CMB heat flux to be 10.8 TW for an iron-bearing perovskite/periclase aggregate, dropping slightly to 10.6 TW for a similar post-perovskite aggregate. These values match other predictions of CMB heat flux (e.g. Lay et al., 2008).

Dekura et al. (2013) used *ab initio* anharmonic lattice dynamics with density functional theory (DFT) to calculate the lattice thermal conductivity of bridgmanite. At temperature of 300 K, they found conductivity increases from  $9.8 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  at 23.5 GPa to  $43.6 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  at 136 GPa. Temperature-dependence was found to be negative at 100 GPa, where conductivity decreases from  $28.1 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  at 300 K to  $2.3 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  at 4000 K. The pressure and temperature conditions used cover the entire range of accepted lower mantle conditions. From their results they calculated a Rayleigh number ( $Ra$ ) of  $10^5$ – $10^7$  for the mantle, in agreement with the geophysically-expected thermal convection (when  $Ra < 10^3$ – $10^4$ ). These results suggest that a CMB region at 136 GPa and 3200 K will have a conductivity of  $5.3 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ , corresponding to a heat flux of 3–6 TW.

Ammann et al. (2014) used the direct method, a non-equilibrium molecular dynamics technique, to calculate the lattice thermal conductivity of bridgmanite and post-perovskite under  $D''$  conditions. They found the conductivity of post-perovskite to be around 50% larger than bridgmanite for the same conditions ( $12 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  compared to  $8.5 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ ). This relation is true even in the TBL, where increases in temperature reduce lattice conductivity for all  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  phases. An interesting result of their work is the observation of anisotropy for post-perovskite conductivity. This may lead to a feedback mechanism, influence the formation and stability of convective plume structures.

Ammann et al. also investigated the effects of impurities on conductivity, substituting magnesium with iron. They increase the mass of Mg atoms to resemble Fe, which tends to reduce conductivity. The lower mantle distribution of iron is not yet well-understood, specifically the partitioning between bridgmanite, post-perovskite, and periclase. Interestingly, the authors observed saturation in the conductivity reduction associated with atomic impurities, even for small Fe concentrations (see 1.5). Extrapolations of variable-composition experimental results must be

applied carefully, increasing iron content past a certain point will not reduce conductivity any further.

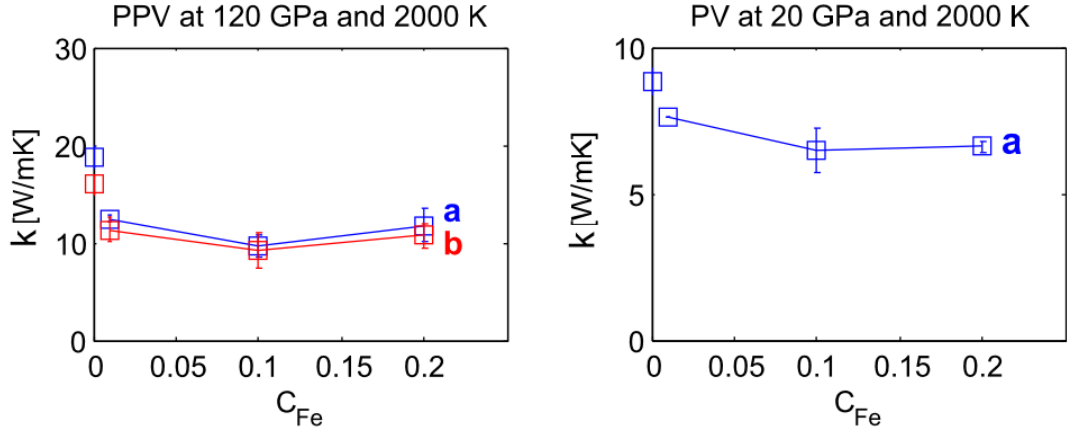


FIGURE 1.5: Thermal conductivity decrease due to inclusion of impurities is shown to saturate with increasing Fe-content, for  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  post-perovskite and perovskite phases. **a** and **b** refer to crystallographic directions along which conductivity was calculated. Figure modified from Ammann et al. (2014).

Tang et al. (2014) performed first-principles calculations to assess the thermal conductivity of  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  and the effect of Fe inclusions therein. These results feed into a model of conductivity along a lower mantle geotherm, of aggregate composition 4 bridgmanite: 1 periclase with 12.5% Fe impurities. Their calculations model  $(\text{Mg,Fe})\text{SiO}_3$  by increasing atomic mass, but not changing the force constants, in a manner similar to Ammann et al. (2014). The inclusion of impurities has little effect at 136 GPa–4000 K, on the order of a few percent, but they note MgO is affected more considering its higher conductivity. The observation that conductivity is reduced less when it is already small due to the effect of temperature, matches the saturation described in Ammann et al. (2014), but in turn disagrees with Haigis et al. (2012). The uncertainty is large when experimental data is extrapolated, especially when considering the (temperature-dependent) effect of impurities.

Ghaderi et al. (2017) investigate the lattice conductivity of bridgmanite using ab initio lattice dynamics calculations, considering a range of pressures at room temperature (mirroring previous experimental measurements).  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  conductivity is found to increase from  $10.7 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  at 0 GPa, to  $59.2 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  at 100 GPa. Conductivity is extrapolated to lower mantle conditions and determined for a sample

geotherm. The value initially increases with depth as the effect of increasing pressure dominates, until around 400 km above the CMB, where temperature effects take over and conductivity reduces. A value of  $\sim 5.2 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  for CMB conditions of 136 GPa and 4000 K.

The authors also discuss anisotropy, after observing differences of  $\sim 25\%$  between the most ( $\kappa_{zz}$ ) and least ( $\kappa_{xx}$  and  $\kappa_{yy}$ , depending on pressure) conductive crystallographic directions. This observation is similar to that from Ammann et al. (2014).

The concept of a minimum phonon mean free path is discussed by Ghaderi et al. (2017), the idea that a minimum MFP causes conductivity to saturate at high temperatures, showing a dependence different to the expected  $1/T$ . The authors suggest an explanation for this phenomena, which is radiative heat transport. The cause of low MFP is called into question, whether it be small group velocities, or short phonon lifetimes. In any case, the authors assume the minimum MFP to not be correct, and extrapolate to high temperatures with a  $1/T$  relation.

### Radiative conductivity

Hofmeister (1999) produced a model of thermal conductivity for the entire mantle using data from infrared reflectivity methods. The radiative component at maximum was found to be small compared to the lattice conductivity, between 10–15% depending on the geotherm model used. This corresponds to radiative conductivity values of  $0.67\text{--}0.82 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  compared to  $5.8\text{--}6.7 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  for the total conductivity at the top of  $D''$ .

Keppler et al. (2008) studied the near-infrared and optical absorption spectra of silicate perovskite up to pressures of 125 GPa at room temperature. From both their tests and visual inspection, it can be shown that their synthesised perovskite remains transparent at high pressures. Extrapolating their results to high temperatures (4500 K) they suggest that the maximum radiative thermal conductivity above the CMB is around  $10 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ , implying that radiative conductivity is likely to be an important component of the total conductivity at lower mantle conditions. The study does not measure the variation of absorption spectra with temperature and pressure, of which experimentation is currently unfeasible.

Goncharov et al. (2008) performed a similar optical absorption spectra analysis up to 133 GPa, but with the opposite conclusion to Keppler et al. (2008). They agreed the radiative conductivity was dependent on the amount, redox state, and spin state of iron, but disagreed with its significance. Goncharov et al. (2008) estimated radiative conductivity would not exceed  $0.54 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  at the top of the D'' layer, a value in line with Hofmeister (1999) and at odds with Keppler et al. (2008).

Tang et al. (2014) re-evaluated the works of Keppler et al. (2008) and Goncharov et al. (2008) to create a profile of radiative conductivity in the lower mantle. Tang et al.'s profile suggests that the previous works have a more reasonable agreement than they show, using analysis which gives an upper bound on the conductivity. Radiative heat transfer is inhibited in the same way as conductive, by impurities and grain boundaries which are not considered when calculating this upper bound. Unlike lattice thermal conductivity, radiative conductivity increases with temperature, steeply so in the mantle thermal boundary layer. When the opposing temperature dependencies of lattice and radiative conductivity are considered in tandem, they suggest that the thermal conductivity of the lower mantle is largely temperature-independent above the D'' region at around  $3 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ . Thermal conductivity is found to increase to  $5.5 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  in the TBL, due to the increased significance of the radiative component.

More recently, Lobanov et al. (2017) determine the radiative conductivity of post-perovskite ( $1.2 \pm 0.2 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ , 10% Fe), bridgmanite ( $2.2 \pm 0.4 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ , 10% Fe), and ferropericlase ( $0.2 \pm 0.1 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ , 15% Fe). They measure optical absorption from diamond anvil cell experiments, extrapolating radiative conductivity from absorption coefficients to lower mantle conditions ( $\sim 130 \text{ GPa}$ ,  $4000 \text{ K}$ ). While they model radiative conductivity generally increasing towards the CMB, it decreases from bridgmanite to post-perovskite. Ferropericlase is found to be less radiative than either of the (Mg,Fe)SiO<sub>3</sub> phases, with all of the considered minerals having higher lattice conductivities compared to radiative. The authors conclude by suggesting that the lattice conductivity will decrease faster than radiative with the inclusion of Fe-impurities, changing the relative significance from low to high Fe content. The results from this study agree with the previous works, that radiative heat

transport is not the dominant process in the lower mantle compared to lattice conductivity, but it cannot be ignored however.

TABLE 1.1: THIS TABLE IS NOT UPDATED FOR GHADERI OR LOBANOV. Comparison of previous lower mantle thermal conductivity values.

| Paper                   | Type                   | Material                               | Pressure (GPa)                  | Temp. (K) | Thermal Conductivity ( $\text{Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ ) | Notes   |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--|---------------------------------|-----------|--|---|
| Osako and Ito, 1991     | Experiment             | MgSiO <sub>3</sub> perovskite          | 0                               | 300       | 5.1  | Measurement, w / analogues<br>Extrapolation                     |
|                         |                        | MgSiO <sub>3</sub> enstatite           | 0                               | 300       | 5.0  |   |
|                         |                        | CaTiO <sub>3</sub> perovskite          | 0                               | 300       | 4  |   |
|                         |                        | MgSiO <sub>3</sub> perovskite          | 24                              | 1900      | 3  |   |
| Manthilake et al., 2011 | Experiment             | 4 MgSiO <sub>3</sub> pv : 1 periclase  | 127                             | 2500      | 12   | Extrap., mantle model (w / Fe)<br>Extrap., mantle model (no Fe) |
|                         |                        |  | 127                             | 2600      | $9.1 \pm 1.2$  |   |
|                         |                        |  | 136                             | 4100      | $8.4 \pm 1.2$  |   |
|                         |                        |  | 127                             | 2600      | $18.9 \pm 1.6$   |   |
| Ohta et al., 2012       | Experiment             | MgSiO <sub>3</sub> perovskite          | 136                             | 3700      | $15.4 \pm 1.4$   | Extrapolation   |
|                         |                        | MgSiO <sub>3</sub> post-perovskite     |                                 |           | $9.0 \pm 1.6$  |   |
|                         |                        | 4 MgSiO <sub>3</sub> pv : 1 periclase  |                                 |           | $16.8 \pm 3.7$   |   |
|                         |                        | 4 MgSiO <sub>3</sub> ppv : 1 periclase |                                 |           | $11.0 \pm 2.0$   |   |
| Haigis et al., 2012     | Green-Kubo Calculation | 4 MgSiO <sub>3</sub> pv : 1 periclase  | 24                              | 2200      | 9.5  | Calculation   |
|                         |                        |  | 127                             | 2900      | 20.5   |   |
|                         |                        | Pv / periclase aggregate               | 136                             | 3739      | $16.4 \pm 2.7$   |   |
|                         |                        | Pv / periclase aggregate w / Fe        |                                 |           | $16.6 \pm 2.7$   |   |
| Dekura et al., 2013     | Lattice Dynamics       | MgSiO <sub>3</sub> perovskite          | Pv / periclase aggregate w / Fe | 3200      | 8.2  | Extrapolation, mantle model                                     |
|                         |                        |  | Pv / periclase aggregate w / Fe |           | 8.3  |   |
|                         |                        |  | 23.5                            | 300       | 9.8  |   |
|                         |                        |  | 136                             | 300       | 43.6   |   |
| Ammann et al., 2014     | Direct method          | MgSiO <sub>3</sub> perovskite          | 100                             | 300       | 28.1   | Calculation   |
|                         |                        |  | 100                             | 300       | 2.3  |   |
|                         |                        |  | 100                             | 4000      | 5.3  |   |
|                         |                        |  | 136                             | 3200      | 5.3  |   |
| Tang et al., 2014       | Peierls Boltzmann      | 4 MgSiO <sub>3</sub> pv : 1 periclase  | 136                             | 3739      | 8.5  | Calculation   |
|                         |                        |  | 24                              | 2000      | 12   |   |
|                         |                        |  | 127                             | 3000      | 2.5  |   |
|                         |                        |  | 136                             | 4000      | 3.5  |   |
|                         |                        |  |                                 |           | 5.5  | Including Fe, with radiative                                    |



## 1.5 Thesis outline

!!! I SAY “i” ALOT, I DO THIS, I DO THAT

In this Chapter, I introduced the concepts surrounding thermal conductivity generally and in the deep earth. A great deal of uncertainty surrounds this parameter at those conditions, which I explore in subsequent chapters.

In Chapter 2, I provide an overview of the methods and expand on issues. I outline my computational approaches, for the non-equilibrium molecular dynamics direct method and equilibrium molecular dynamics Green-Kubo method. I show convergence of computed conductivity with respect to simulation time and physical conditions.

In Chapter 3, I investigate the effect of system size and shape on the converged, computed conductivities. By comparing and contrasting methodologies, I am able to establish the requisite system properties to obtain accurate results at a given condition. This leads me to analyse previous works, and suggest results which may not be correct due to effects of simulation size.

In Chapter 4, I apply my converged computational techniques to investigate the effect of introducing Fe impurities into bridgmanite, and how this affects the resultant conductivity across the entire endmember suite. Furthermore the effect is constrained across multiple lower mantle temperatures, allowing me to create a model of (Mg,Fe)SiO<sub>3</sub> conductivity as a function of temperature.

In Chapter 5, I discuss the temperature and compositional-dependence on heat flow across the CMB, and the effect this has on the whole lower mantle. A review of findings will be presented with suggestions for future work, both in thermal conductivity computations and applications thereof to deep earth studies.

### 1.5.1 Aims

(The questions I answered)

### 1.5.2 Objectives

(The things I did)



## Chapter 2

# Computing thermal conductivity

In Chapter 1, I introduced the key concepts surrounding this study. I will be investigating the magnitude of thermal conductivity throughout the deep Earth, considering the effect of physical conditions and Fe impurities.

I will be using computation to obtain results, a key part of which is ensuring the simulations behave faithful to the material of interest, and to the physical processes which operate in bulk materials. In this chapter, I introduce the background to calculating conductivity through simulation, and show fundamental system setup and parameter convergence.

The following chapters apply theory introduced here to investigate how conductivity is affected by; system shape and size, and adding impurities to an otherwise regular crystal structure.

## 2.1 Atomic-scale modelling

Knowledge of thermal conductivity is important for modelling the deep earth, but can not be measured experimentally at core mantle boundary conditions. Atomic scale simulations sidestep experimental limitations, but system size must be chosen carefully in order to determine accurate conductivity values.

A range of atomic scale simulation methods are available to determine the lattice thermal conductivity of materials. These are invaluable for calculating thermal conductivity at conditions of which experiments are difficult, e.g. the extreme conditions found in the Earth's lower mantle (pressures and temperatures up to 136 GPa and 4000 K at the core-mantle boundary).

### 2.1.1 Computational regimes

Before you can calculate material properties of interest, you need to determine how the atoms will interact with one another in your system. I do not mean the magnitude of the interactions or the parameters you choose to replicate a material, but the specific theoretical approach of atomic-scale modelling. There are multiple regimes for doing so, a couple of which are described below.

#### Molecular dynamics

In a molecular dynamics (MD) calculation, atoms in a simulation cell have masses, velocities, and forces acting between them. At each computational timestep the net force on each atom is calculated from all the other atoms. Accelerations are then calculated from Newton's second law of motion, which are used to update the velocities and positions of the atoms. The process is repeated, iteratively updating parameters every timestep (see Figure 2.1).

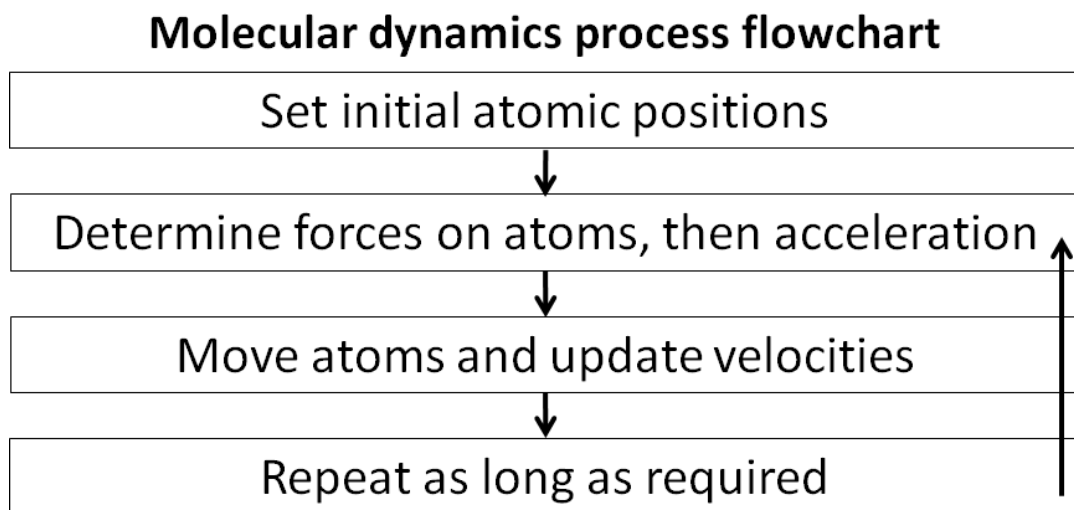


FIGURE 2.1: follow arrows to learn how to MD simplified. DO I EVEN NEED THIS FIGURE?

At zero temperature, a parameter such as unit cell volume will converge, but this is not true when finite temperatures are considered. Temperature fluctuations mean cell volume will constantly change, regardless of simulation length. The solution is to take the cumulative average of a parameter over many timesteps, which converges eventually.

There are 3 styles of molecular dynamics ensemble that I will utilise over the course of this project to perform different kinds of calculations. These are NPT, NVT, and NVE, where N refers to the number of atoms, P to pressure, T to temperature, V to volume, and E to energy. The number of atoms is kept constant in all cases presented here.

In NPT and NVT simulations, the system is thermostatted to a specified temperature. In NPT a barostat is also set, and the cell volume is allowed to equilibrate with the pressure and temperature conditions. This kind of simulation is performed before calculating parameters like thermal conductivity, in order to recreate physical conditions (like the CMB, i.e. 136 GPa, 4000 K). One cannot simply equilibrate the system at high pressure and then run temperature initialisation, this adds the effect of thermal pressure. If this equilibration is performed incorrectly, it is possible to end up with a CMB at 145 GPa for example, ultimately causing conductivity results to be overestimated (as they increase with pressure). When considering temperature while barostatting, thermal pressure will increase system volume accordingly whilst achieving the target pressure.

Once the cell is of a suitable volume for the conditions of interest, the temperature of the system (via the velocities of the atoms) can be initialised through computation in the NVT regime. Freedom to control the initial temperature condition is great for studies where repeatability or gathering a sample of data is important. The structure, conditions, and subsequent computation workflow don't change, but the result will vary in a given distribution from the random nature of atomic velocities and motion. While pressure is free to change, it will remain constant assuming the aforementioned NPT equilibration is performed to obtain a suitable cell volume. Volume can't change, and temperature is thermostatted, so there are no variations in thermal pressure.

Once a reasonable distribution and steady average temperature are obtained, a system can be computed in the NVE ensemble. For both the direct and Green-Kubo methods I utilise, conductivity results are determined in this regime. The kinetic and potential energies of the atoms are held constant, allowing local temperature variations. The same point about variable pressure applies here as well as with NVT, but an overall consistent average temperature means a similarly average pressure.

NVE is used over the similar NVT when calculating parameters, as thermostating can artificially influence the dynamics of the system.

### **Lattice dynamics**

!!! ADD A REFERENCE AND FORGET ABOUT IT? DO I NEED TO SAY WHY I AM NOT USING LD? WHY AM I NOT USING LD!?

An alternative approach to MD is lattice dynamics (LD), where the response of all atoms to the motion of one is considered. Each atom in the simulation cell is perturbed in turn, the motions and response of the other atoms stored in a 3 by 3 tensor for each atom pairing. The tensor takes significant time to compute compared to a single MD timestep, but can be used to calculate various material properties once obtained. The focus of this study will be on MD approaches, but LD results from literature will be reviewed for comparison.

### **2.1.2 Calculating atomic interactions**

Once we have decided on something like MD or LD to run simulations, we need to establish how the atoms will interact with one another in the simulation cell. This means the forces that act between them, how things like atomic separation and charge are considered. There are varying forms of varying complexity available, with multiple parameterisations to describe the interaction. In this next section I present the general ideas, and the specific models applied in my work.

### **Density functional theory**

!!! ANY OTHER ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES THAT NEED TO GO IN AROUND HERE?

Density functional theory (DFT) is a way of determining accurate interatomic forces. The properties of the electrons are considered along with the nuclei, which increases the computational cost and simulation run time. This additionally limits the size of systems, or number of atoms (on the order of thousands), that can be considered. Calculating from first principles in this manner should only be considered if you know the system parameters for converged results, and they can be completed

on a suitable timescale. I will be opting for a different approach, as I wish to investigate a large amount of big systems systems, potentially for multiple compositional variations.

### Classical interatomic potentials

The alternative to DFT is to use empirically-derived potentials to calculate the interatomic forces. Whereas calculating from first principles considers the interactions of atoms and their outer shell electrons, interatomic potentials use an approximation of the electronic potential component (i.e. a classical atomic model).

Systems on the order of millions of atoms can be considered with atomic potentials, due to significantly reduced computational cost compared to DFT. The trade-off is accuracy however, which is controlled by the characteristics of the employed potential. These potentials are set up to reproduce a set of experimental results, but there is no certainty they reflect true values outside their calibrated range of conditions. A realistic model reproduces the structural, elastic, and thermal properties of a material. A common feature of classical potentials is to underestimate the diagonal terms of the elastic constant tensor, and overestimate the off-diagonal, where the discrepancy increases with pressure (Chen et al., 2012).

#### 2.1.3 Finite-size effects

Computational techniques are not hindered by the reproduction of physical conditions like experiments, this does not mean they are without limitations however. Finite-size effects refer to when the number of atoms, or system shape and size, affects the computed result, compared to that of an infinite system. In the case of thermal conductivity, the problem arises when phonons are truncated by boundaries in the simulation cell. As discussed in Chapter 1.2.1, phonons have wave-like properties, including wavelength.

When a simulation cell is shorter than a phonon's wavelength, that phonon cannot be represented in the system. This will mean a calculation is tending to underestimate conductivity, the phonon population is not being fully represented. Another scenario is if the phonon mean free path is longer than the distance between boundaries in a system, in this case phonon scattering behaviour is not being reproduced

accurately. This leads to overestimations, where phonons are able to transport heat unimpeded, and conductivity is strongly dependent on system size (Tadano et al., 2014).

The FSE observed for a material change with thermal conductivity/phonon MFP, and thus are sensitive to pressure, temperature, and composition. Requiring a minimum simulation cell size to recreate phonon behaviour accurately can be a problem when employing DFT calculations, where systems sizes must be kept small to maintain computational efficiency. Testing system size is also a problem, as calculations of large systems must be performed to check convergence of small system results.

### Why use LAMMPS?

LAMMPS (Large-scale Atomic/Molecular Massively Parallel Simulator) is a classical molecular dynamics code (Plimpton, 1995). I will be using it to look at large systems (up to the order of  $10^5$  atoms) and assess how size and shape of the simulation cell affects results. While calculations using interatomic potentials are not as accurate as those using DFT, a main focus of this work will be on the observations of conductivity change between systems of varying size. The  $\text{Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  result isn't as important as confirming phonon behaviour is not being artificially influenced.

While not considered here, the system size parameters I determine for bridgmanite at a range of temperatures and pressures could be used in a DFT calculation. This ensures a DFT calculation would be using a large enough arrangement of atoms, while providing a useful reliability check for my classical results. This of course assumes my determined system is feasible to compute with DFT.

#### 2.1.4 Oganov's bridgmanite potential

The interatomic potential I will be using was developed by Oganov et al. (2000). Many potentials exist for  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  perovskite (REF), but the aforementioned robust up to lower mantle pressures and temperatures. The interatomic potential function includes ionic, covalent, and van der Waals components. The dominant long-range term is the Coulomb interaction, and the short-range interactions are described using a Buckingham potential with the Born-Mayer potential, and a  $C/r^6$  van der



Waals term. The equation for pair-wise potential (summed for potential energy of the system) takes the form

$$V_{ij}^{\text{Buck}} = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_i q_j}{r_{ij}} + b_{ij} \exp\left(\frac{-r_{ij}}{\rho_{ij}}\right) - \frac{c_{ij}}{r_{ij}^6}, \quad (2.1)$$

where  $q_i$  and  $q_j$  are the charges of atoms  $i$  and  $j$ ,  $r_{ij}$  is the distance between them,  $b_{ij}$  is the pre-exponential repulsive parameter for the pair,  $\rho_{ij}$  is the repulsion exponent, and  $c_{ij}$  is the van der Waals parameter. There are three sets of these parameters, for each of the interacting atomic pairs (shown in Table 2.1). The charges for Mg, Si, and O atoms are 1.9104, 2.9043, and  $-1.6049$ , respectively.

TABLE 2.1: Parameters used to define Oganov et al. (2000)'s  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  perovskite potential.

| Bond $ij$ | $b_{ij}$ (eV) | $\rho_{ij}$ (Å) | $c_{ij}$ (eV.Å <sup>6</sup> ) |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Mg-O      | 1041.435      | 0.2866          | 0                             |
| Si-O      | 1137.028      | 0.2827          | 0                             |
| O-O       | 2023.800      | 0.2674          | 13.83                         |

## CALIBRATING CUTOFFS

!!! BUT WHAT DID I DECIDE ON THOUGH? ADD FIGURE AND EXPLAIN PROCESS!

Part of applying classical potentials is setting up the distance over which they act, the maximum separation between two atoms before they are not paired for force calculation. Too small a cut-off distance, and the material is not being replicated faithfully. Too large a cut-off, you are performing more calculations than you need, increasing computation time. The potential between two atoms is inversely proportional to their separation (see Eq. 2.1), “cutting off” in this manner is acceptable when the potential is tending towards zero with increasingly large interatomic distance. I consider two cut-off distances, for both the Coulombic and the Buckingham interactions.

## COMPARING RESULTS

For my calculations to be valid, I have to be able to reproduce other results calculated using the Oganov et al. (2000) potential in LAMMPS. Oganov et al. provide

lattice parameters for a unit cell, along with elastic constants and the bulk and shear moduli. I reproduced their results to acceptable accuracy (see Table 2.2, page 33), using LAMMPS and the lattice dynamics code GULP (Gale, 1997). Of particular note in this table is the agreement of the static LAMMPS and GULP results, showing the potential has been implemented identically for both codes. With regards to the 300 K results, GULP and LAMMPS differ, but only by around 1% for each property. The standard error on the LAMMPS values is smaller than the difference with the GULP values, this disparity is caused by the use of lattice dynamics (LD) opposed to molecular dynamics (MD). The GULP (LD) values are believed to be more accurate in this case, as 300 K is likely below the Debye temperature for perovskite. Calculations run below this temperature will not accurately recreate the material's thermal properties, due to the inactivity of some phonon modes. This will not be a concern when calculating thermal conductivity, as I will be using temperatures on the order of thousands of Kelvin.

Ammann et al. (2014) used GULP and the Oganov et al. (2000) potential, and provide unit cell lattice parameters for sample lower mantle pressures and temperatures. I reproduced their data to within  $\sim 0.1\%$  (see Table 2.3, page 34), the above mentioned difference between LD and MD reducing at increased temperatures.

TABLE 2.2: Comparison of  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  perovskite properties calculated using the Oganov et al. (2000) potential at 0 GPa

| Property              | Oganov et al. (Static) | GULP (Static) | LAMMPS (Static) | GULP (LD, 300 K) | LAMMPS (MD, 300 K) |
|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| a (Å)                 | 4.7822                 | 4.7875        | 4.7875          | 4.8074           | 4.8022             |
| b (Å)                 | 4.8960                 | 4.9001        | 4.9002          | 4.9193           | 4.9140             |
| c (Å)                 | 6.9322                 | 6.9366        | 6.9366          | 6.9598           | 6.9530             |
| V (Å <sup>3</sup> )   | 162.31                 | 162.73        | 162.73          | 164.59           | 164.08             |
| C <sub>11</sub> (GPa) | 500                    | 507           | 507             | 492              | 487                |
| C <sub>22</sub> (GPa) | 509                    | 519           | 519             | 502              | 498                |
| C <sub>33</sub> (GPa) | 398                    | 411           | 411             | 395              | 395                |
| C <sub>12</sub> (GPa) | 116                    | 125           | 125             | 117              | 116                |
| C <sub>13</sub> (GPa) | 210                    | 209           | 209             | 205              | 201                |
| C <sub>23</sub> (GPa) | 188                    | 192           | 192             | 185              | 184                |
| C <sub>44</sub> (GPa) | 174                    | 177           | 177             | 172              | 170                |
| C <sub>55</sub> (GPa) | 189                    | 189           | 189             | 186              | 184                |
| C <sub>66</sub> (GPa) | 102                    | 108           | 108             | 103              | 102                |
| K <sub>H</sub> (GPa)  | 270.4                  | 276.5         | 276.5           | 266.8            | 269.9              |
| G <sub>H</sub> (GPa)  | 146.3                  | 150.1         | 150.0           | 145.2            | 145.7              |

a, b, c, and V represent lattice vectors and unit cell volume.  $C_{xx}$  denotes elastic constants.  $K_H$  and  $G_H$  are the Voigt-Reuss-Hill averaged bulk and shear moduli. The MD LAMMPS elastic constants have standard error on the order of 0.1.

TABLE 2.3: Comparison of calculated  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  perovskite unit cell parameters with Ammann et al., 2014

| Pressure (GPa) | Value          | Lattice parameter ( $\text{\AA}$ ) at a given temperature (K) |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|----------------|----------------|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|                |                | 1000  |        |        | 2000   |        |        | 3000   |        |        |
|                |                | a   | b      | c      | a      | b      | c      | a      | b      | c      |
| 20             | My work        | 4.7281  | 4.8336 | 6.8215 | 4.7701 | 4.8676 | 6.8670 | 4.8220 | 4.9102 | 6.9127 |
|                | Standard error | 0.0001  | 0.0001 | 0.0001 | 0.0001 | 0.0001 | 0.0001 | 0.0006 | 0.0006 | 0.0006 |
|                | Ammann et al.  | 4.7281  | 4.8342 | 6.8221 | 4.7708 | 4.8685 | 6.8653 | 4.8293 | 4.9169 | 6.9070 |
| 130            | % Difference   | 0.00  | 0.01   | 0.01   | 0.02   | 0.02   | 0.02   | 0.15   | 0.14   | 0.08   |
|                | My work        | 4.3787  | 4.5180 | 6.3290 | 4.3985 | 4.5265 | 6.3495 | 4.4191 | 4.5352 | 6.3706 |
|                | Standard error | 0.0001  | 0.0001 | 0.0001 | 0.0001 | 0.0001 | 0.0001 | 0.0001 | 0.0001 | 0.0001 |
| 130            | Ammann et al.  | 4.3807  | 4.5192 | 6.3236 | 4.4003 | 4.5244 | 6.3438 | 4.4203 | 4.5347 | 6.3691 |
|                | % Difference   | 0.05  | 0.03   | 0.08   | 0.04   | 0.05   | 0.09   | 0.03   | 0.01   | 0.02   |

Data produced using LAMMPS is compared with the GULP results of Ammann et al., 2014, across a range of pressure/temperature conditions. The standard error is calculated from 1E6 timesteps of NVT simulation. The percent difference refers to the variation between my work and Ammann et al.'s.

## 2.2 Computing thermal conductivity

!!! WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO GO HERE? FIXED ENDS? SINUSOIDAL TEMPERATURE PERTURBATION?

I will be using two approaches, both utilising classical interatomic potentials, to calculate thermal conductivity throughout this thesis. They will be explained later in this section, and are as follows,

(1) The non-equilibrium molecular dynamics-based “direct method”, where thermal conductivity is calculated from an imposed heat flux and corresponding temperature gradient via Fourier’s Law (Müller-Plathe, 1997; Nieto-Draghi and Avalos, 2013).

(2) Equilibrium molecular dynamics based on the Green-Kubo relations to determine the thermal conductivity from heat flux fluctuations and their time-dependence (Green, 1954; Kubo, 1957; Kubo, 1966; Schelling et al., 2002).

Stackhouse and Stixrude (2010) review other methods to compute thermal conductivity, including the above, but also

(3) Anharmonic lattice dynamics (Tang and Dong, 2009).

(4) Combined quasiharmonic lattice dynamics and molecular dynamics method (Koker, 2009).

The Green-Kubo and direct method use the same underlying atomic model, but calculate thermal conductivity differently. They have their own unique system setup procedures, data processing work flows, and finite-size effects. In the following sections, each method will be considered individually, before a review of literature comparing the two, and how I will use them to analyse their FSE.

### 2.2.1 Direct method

The direct method is the computational implementation of a typical experiment to measure thermal conductivity, using Fourier’s law to relate heat flux ( $q$ ) and temperature gradient ( $\nabla T$ ) to thermal conductivity ( $k$ )

$$q = -k\nabla T . \quad (2.2)$$

### System setup

In the direct method energy is transferred from one group of atoms to another at regular intervals, creating hot and cold regions between which heat flows (see Figure 2.3.a). This heat transfer process is implemented by taking the velocity of the lowest energy atom in the hot section, and swapping it with the highest energy atom in the cold section (Müller-Plathe, 1997). The resultant temperature gradient is measured by calculating the temperature of individual groups of atoms along the direction of the heat flux. Thermal conductivity is equal to the ratio of imposed heat flux to the resulting temperature gradient. This can be shown in a rearranged version of Fourier's law

$$k = -\frac{\langle J \rangle}{\langle dT/dx \rangle} , \quad (2.3)$$

where  $k$  is thermal conductivity,  $\langle J \rangle$  is heat flux through a unit cross-sectional area, and  $\langle dT/dx \rangle$  is the temperature gradient between hot and cold regions.

Simulation cells tend to be long relative to their cross-sectional area, defined as height by width (see Figure 2.2). Cell boundaries are periodic and the hot and cold sections are half the cell length apart, meaning heat flows in both directions from hot to cold (one of which is across the length-end periodic boundary). This results in two similar temperature gradients which can be averaged.

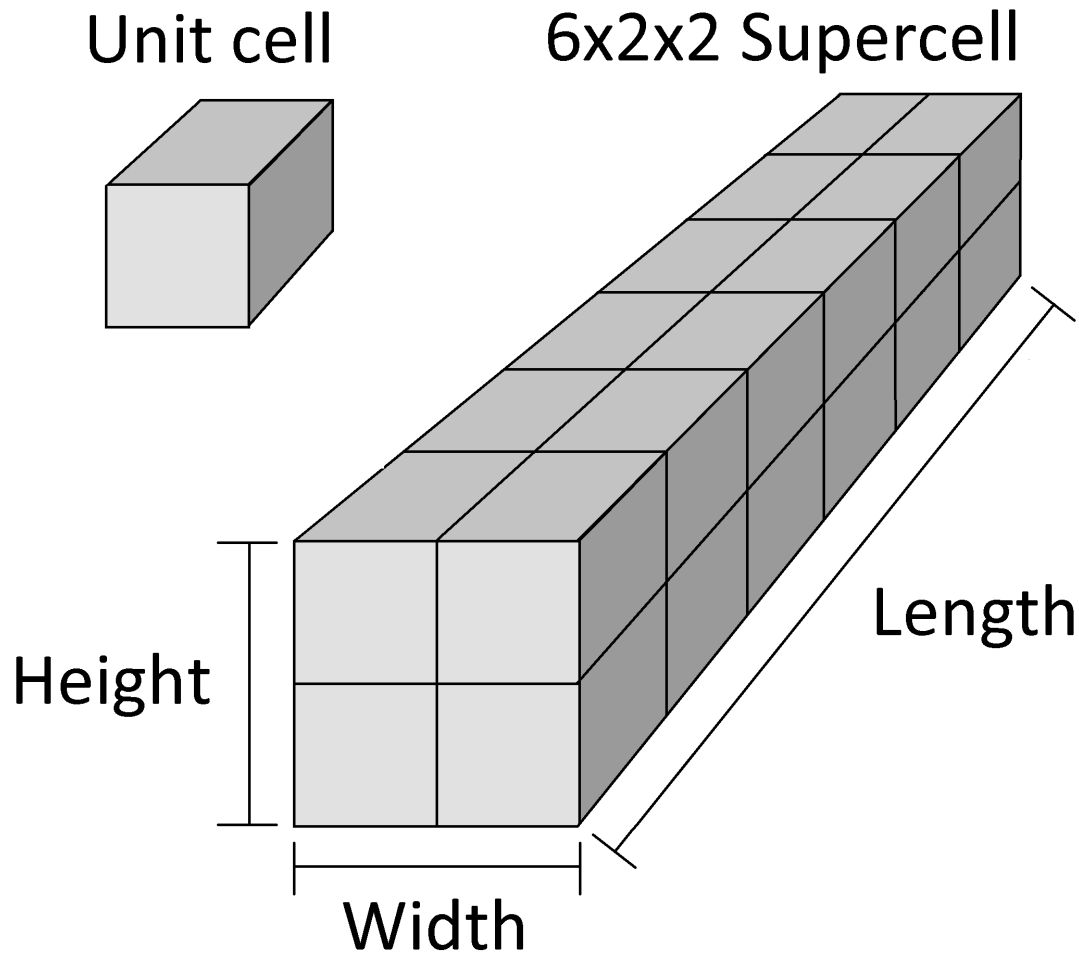


FIGURE 2.2: The unit cell represents the smallest box of atoms that can be replicated to produce a crystal structure. A supercell is an arrangement of unit cells.

### Data processing

In the immediate vicinity of hot and cold regions, the temperature gradient exhibits non-linear behaviour (see Figure 2.3.b) due to the non-Newtonian nature of the heat exchange. Care must be taken to measure the linear portion, which is located roughly in the middle third of the temperature gradient.

The finite size of the simulation cell truncates the mean free path, underestimating conductivity compared to that of the bulk material ( $k_\infty$ ). Using results from simulations of varying cell length ( $L$ ), conductivity is extrapolated to a length-independent value (where  $b$  is a material dependent parameter),

$$k_L^{-1} = bL^{-1} + k_\infty^{-1}. \quad (2.4)$$

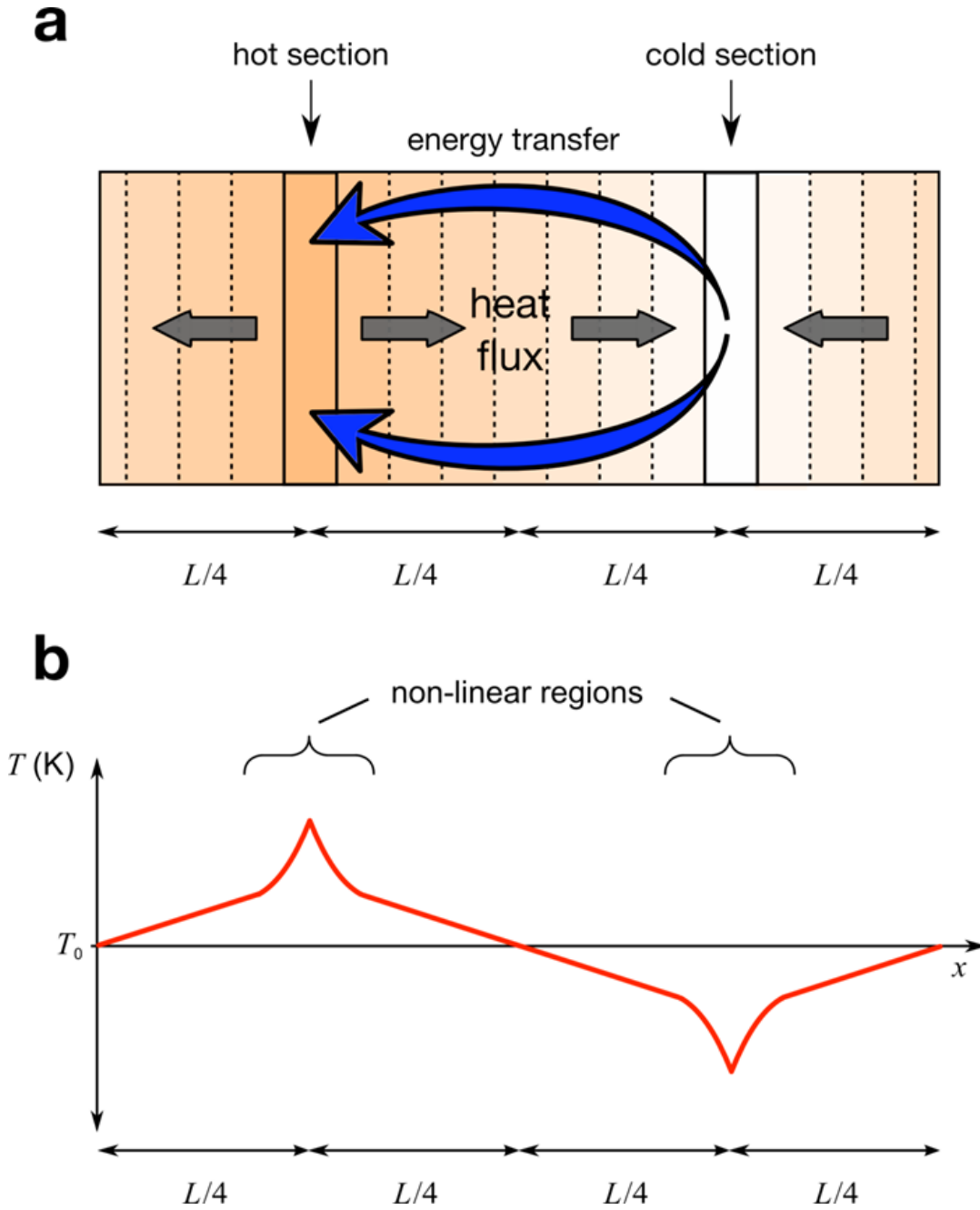


FIGURE 2.3: a. Movement and distribution of heat in the direct method. Orange to white scale represents temperature  
 b. Temperature profile along DM simulation cell  
 (modified from Stackhouse et al., 2015).

Inverse conductivities from direct method simulations are plotted against corresponding inverse cell lengths. A straight line is fit to the data and extrapolated to the y-axis (at which the inverse cell length equals zero and real length equals infinity), where the intercept gives the inverse of the bulk material conductivity (Schelling et al., 2002).



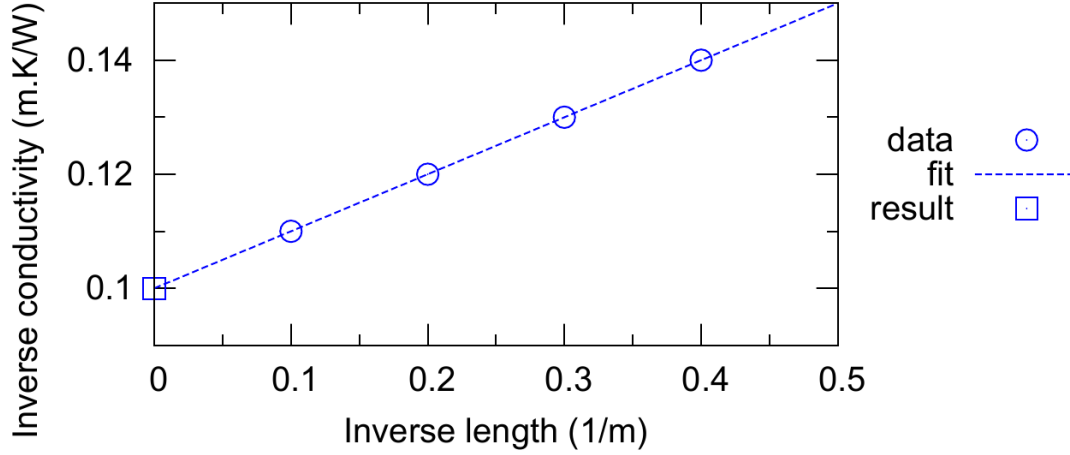


FIGURE 2.4: Idealised example of linear extrapolation procedure. Inverse computed conductivities are plotted against inverse simulation lengths. Extrapolation to y-axis gives conductivity of an infinite system length, i.e. the bulk material.

### Finite-size effects

From kinetic theory [[[REF?]]], conductivities computed by the direct method ( $k_L$ ) are dependent on length of simulation cell,

$$k_L = \frac{1}{3} C_V v l_L, \quad (2.5)$$

where  $C_v$  is the volumetric heat capacity,  $v$  is the average phonon drift velocity, and  $l_L$  is the phonon mean free path.

Problems arise when the data do not support the aforementioned linear trend. There are two effects of finite system size that can cause an individual direct method simulation to diverge away from an inferred/expected linear trend, both of which result in overestimation of the length-dependent conductivity data point. First, when the distance between hot and cold sections (controlled by cell length) is shorter than the MFP, phonons travel ballistically (i.e. without any scattering events) from heat source to sink (Sellan et al., 2010). Conductivities in shorter length cells are overestimated when this occurs, reducing the gradient of the linear fit and thus underestimating the extrapolated conductivity.

For a given length, conductivity is dependent on the CSA, or aspect ratio of the simulation cell. Conductivity is overestimated due to an underestimation of

phonon-phonon scattering, from sparse phonon phase sampling in cells where cross-section is small compared to length. Phonons that aren't resolved cannot contribute to phonon-phonon scattering effects. Reduced scattering means heat transport is artificially more efficient than expected from the bulk material.

### 2.2.2 Green-Kubo

Equilibrium molecular dynamic (EMD) simulations consider systems with constant average temperatures, and a net heat flux of zero. The Green-Kubo method is an example of EMD, looking at heat flux caused by temperature fluctuations. The lattice thermal conductivity of the system is related to the duration of these variations. I will use the Green-Kubo method to compute, but also to validate direct method results and workflow. While the direct method has complex finite-size effects based on length and cross-sectional area, Green-Kubo is simpler in that number of atoms is the main factor. As long as the system is big enough, there is no need to care about arranging the cells or extrapolation procedures.

#### Methodology

The Green-Kubo method uses auto-correlation functions (ACFs) to quantify time-dependence of heat fluxes (shown in Figure 2.5, and Equation 2.6). Instantaneous heat fluxes can be used to determine how energy is dissipated within a system.

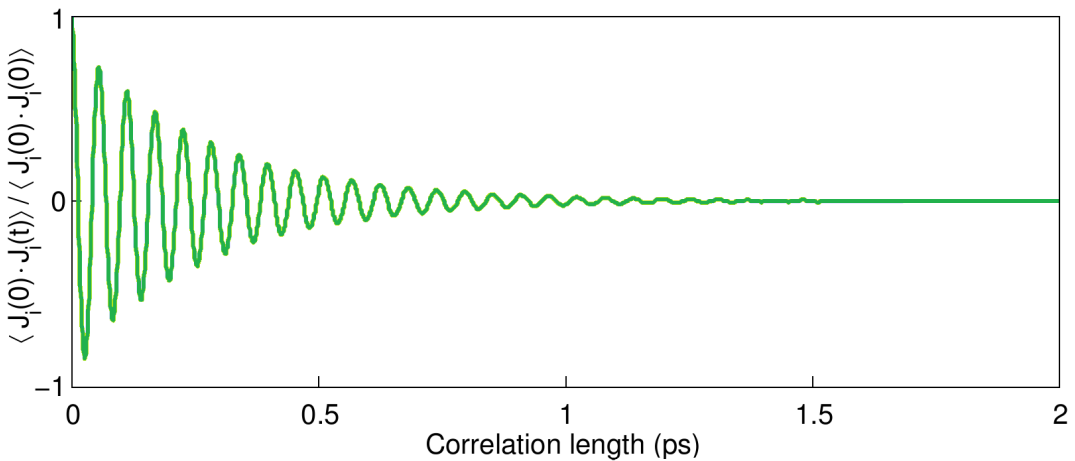


FIGURE 2.5: Normalised ACF. Correlation is taken over a longer length than shown on this plot (100 ps), however the function decays to less than 1% of its initial value at 2 ps. It continues to oscillate about zero, with a positive average value.

The heat flux data required to generate the ACF is obtained from MD simulation in the NVE regime. As always, it is necessary to perform the NPT cell size convergence, and preliminary NVT to populate the atomic velocities.

The auto-correlation is obtained over the series of net heat flux in each crystallographic direction, for a timescale up to a chosen correlation length.

$$ACF_i = \langle J_i(0) \cdot J_i(t) \rangle, \quad (2.6)$$

where  $i$  specifies direction,  $J$  is heat flux, and  $t$  is the correlation length. This acts as a cut-off, the significance of correlating points far apart in time decreases with the separation. The correlation length could be as long as the simulation length, but for large time differences there would be fewer and fewer heat flux pairs. This means there would be increased uncertainty on points of decreasing relevance. The correlation lengths I use are much shorter than the simulation length.

The integral of heat flux ACF is proportional to thermal conductivity via the Green-Kubo equation (see Figure 2.6 and Equation 2.7),

$$\kappa_i = \frac{V}{k_B T^2} \int_0^\infty \langle J_i(0) \cdot J_i(t) \rangle dt, \quad (2.7)$$

where  $V$  is the simulation cell volume,  $k_B$  is the Boltzmann constant, and  $T$  is the average temperature of the system. In this study we use Green-Kubo results as an independent check on the direct method, as they do not have the same finite size-effects. Obtaining a converged conductivity result simply depends on using a large enough cell volume / number of atoms.

### Data processing

The individual integrals obtained from the Green-Kubo show variation from the average combined integral on the order of the mean. Many simulations from different initial temperature conditions are required in order to ensure good sampling of conductivity, as well as ensuring the computation time for each is long enough for convergence. This makes Green-Kubo a computationally expensive method, especially for large systems.

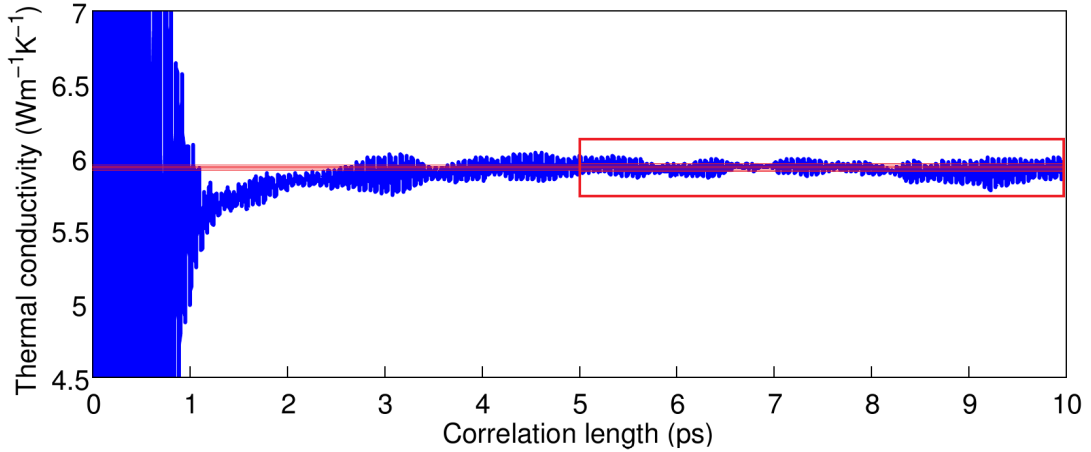


FIGURE 2.6: Integrated ACF, multiplied by constants to get thermal conductivity. Large variation in the first 1 ps corresponds to the correlation time where the ACF is unconverged (still decaying / large oscillations). Thermal conductivity is averaged from correlation time of 5 – 10 ps (region in red box).

From a large sample of integrals, the mean integral is examined to find a time window of convergence. This region exists after the initial large variations, and before any drift behaviour. This correlation window is then applied to all integrals separately, yielding a population of conductivities and uncertainties. I then applied a weighted average to this information, obtaining a conductivity for the entire population.

The ACF should decay to zero as correlation time tends to infinity, however noise in the ACF prevents this. This will ultimately cause the integral to diverge/drift on long timescales. Howell (2012) fits a series of exponential decays to their ACF, forcing the expected decay to zero and subsequent (constant) integral convergence. This represents a significant improvement on the conductivity estimate at long correlation lengths, but is mostly similar with the un-fit integrals early in the correlation.

!!! (STACKHOUSE 2010 REFERENCES Volz and Chen 2000; Sun and Murthy 2006)

## 2.3 Previous work

!!! INSERT TEXT HERE?

### 2.3.1 Method comparison

A wealth of data comparing the conductivities yielded by non-equilibrium and equilibrium molecular dynamics is available for silicon, at temperatures around 1000 K. Schelling et al. (2002) consider Sillinger-Weber silicon, and find good agreement in conductivity results, once FSE are addressed. Sellan et al. (2010) consider the same material and find the two methods don't agree at a lower temperature of 500 K, although it is argued by Howell (2012) that their direct method finite-size scaling was inappropriate. Howell performs their own calculations and review of literature, finding consistent results between the methods and the suite of studies considered. Wang and Ruan (2017) contribute further results consistent with Howell for SW Si at 1000 K, as well showing agreement between methods for graphene and silicene at 300 K.

Dong et al. (2018) show consistency between NEMD and EMD for silicene and Si nanowires. Turney et al. (2009) show very coherent agreements for Lennard-Jones argon across a range of simulation methods, including NEMD, EMD Green-Kubo, along with Boltzmann transport equation and lattice dynamics approaches. None of these studies consider a material as complicated as bridgmanite however, of which I will show the equivalence (or lack thereof) of computed conductivity between the direct and Green-Kubo methods.

### 2.3.2 Bridgmanite FSE

!!! ALSO CONSIDER STACKHOUSE 2015?

As introduced earlier, Ammann et al. (2014) used NEMD to calculate the thermal conductivity of bridgmanite. For conditions of 20 GPa and 2000K, they observe convergence with respect to cross-sectional area (CSA) with dimensions of  $2 \times 2$  unit cells (UC), irrespective of crystallographic direction. They only consider cell lengths up to 32 unit cells however, which means they may be missing the effect underestimated phonon-phonon scattering for a small CSA. Their extrapolation is not incorrect for the results that they have (see their Figure 3), but the gradient can be seen to decrease when  $3 \times 3$  CSA is considered. The computed conductivity of cells over 20 UC decreases as this area increases, possibly due to increased phonon-phonon scattering

effect. I will investigate this further by studying longer systems with larger CSAs.

## 2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I introduced atomic-scale modelling, how it can be performed, and how atoms can be made to behave like realistic materials. I outline molecular dynamics methodologies for computing thermal conductivity, and potential problems associated with them. In the following chapter I will apply these techniques to study the effects of finite simulation size on computed bridgmanite conductivity result. I will use and compare both of the techniques, as they have independent finite-size effects (FSE).

Once the methodology is checked to have minimized FSE, I will calculate how temperature and composition affect bridgmanite conductivity at CMB conditions. This will feed into calculations of lower mantle heat flux, and how thermo-and/or-chemical piles, the large low shear velocity provinces (LLSVPs), influence lateral variations therein. This will be compared with observed shear wave velocity reductions to offer insight into the extend of LLSVP temperature and chemical heterogeneity.

## Chapter 3

# Constraining the finite-size effects of molecular dynamics methods to compute thermal conductivity

### 3.1 Introduction

Knowledge of the thermal conductivity of solids is key in a wide range of technological applications and for our understanding of natural systems. For example, in the Earth's lower mantle thermal conductivity controls the nature of planetary convection (Tosi et al., 2013), and the heat flux out of the core which powers the geotherm. Low thermal conductivities are required in thermoelectric materials, to maximise the efficiency of heat-electricity conversion (Snyder and Toberer, 2008).

A range of atomic scale simulation methods are available to determine the lattice thermal conductivity of materials. These are invaluable for calculating thermal conductivity at conditions of which experiments are difficult, e.g. the extreme conditions found in the Earth's lower mantle (pressures and temperatures up to 136 GPa and 4000 K at the core-mantle boundary).

(MOVE - to where though?) Many studies assume lowermost mantle thermal conductivity to be  $10 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  (e.g. Lay et al., 2008), but uncertainty in the extrapolation of results made at low pressures and temperatures gives a range of 4 - 16  $\text{Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  (Brown and McQueen, 1986; Osako and Ito, 1991; Hofmeister, 1999; Goncharov et al., 2009; Manthilake et al., 2011; Ohta et al., 2012).

### 3.1.1 Finite-size effects

#### THE PROBLEM OF FSE IN COMPUTATIONAL TECHNIQUES

##### EXACERBATED BY RANGE OF LOWER MANTLE CONDITIONS

The effect of FSE on conductivity results depends on the magnitude of conductivity/phonon MFP/physical conditions. At low  $\kappa$ /low MFP/high T/ (my 4000 K), no BPT is observed, and short cells ( $>16$  unit cells) can be used for extrapolation. In fact, short cells must be used to extrapolate, unless CSA considerations are made to ensure convergence of long cell results.

At high  $\kappa$ /high MFP/low T (my 1000 K), BPT must be considered at the shorter cells (just 6?). Effectively there is a "sweet-spot", a window of cell lengths for a given CSA that produce consistently-converged results. Long cells outside of the window require a larger CSA, short cells outside show BPT. At 4000 K the lower limit of the window is smaller than the minimum cell length considered, and the upper limit is between 16-24 unit cells. For 1000 K the lower limit of the window moves inside the simulated cell length range around 6-8 unit cells (OR MORE?). The upper limit of the window appears to be larger than 96 unit cells, including all long cells up to this value produces an extrapolation in agreement with GK.

## 3.2 Computational approaches

In this section I talk about my specific approaches to applying the methods discussed in Chapter 2

### 3.2.1 Direct method

The simulation supercell is split into sections along its length, each half a unit cell wide. Two of these sections, half the supercell length apart, are designated as the heat source and heat sink. We measure (HOW?) the temperature in all sections to obtain the temperature gradient. Heat flows in both directions from the hot section because of cell periodicity (REF BACK), meaning there are two temperature gradients to average. Where  $L$  is supercell length in unit cells and  $S (= 2L)$  gives the number of sections, we obtain  $S/2 + 1$  temperature points to fit the gradient. Because the temperature gradient is non-linear around the heat source and sink, we ignore  $S/12$



sections (rounded to nearest integer) from both ends of the temperature gradient. For a given simulation cell we fit  $S/3 + 1$  points to obtain the temperature gradient. We use a minimum supercell length of 6 unit cells (12 sections, 5 data points), in order for sufficient fitting of the temperature gradient. [HOW NECESSARY IS THIS PARA, VERY JARGONY]

(MOVE TO RESULTS?) Changing the width of the heated sections has no effect on the conductivity result. Furthermore, changing the width (and thus number) of temperature bins has no effect on the sampled gradient, assuming resolution is large enough to capture the non-linear region around the heat source/sink.

An important factor for utilising the direct method is maintaining a sensible temperature gradient where Fourier's law remains valid, i.e. conductivity is constant along the length of the cell. Thermal conductivity is strongly temperature-dependent at upper lower-mantle conditions (1000 K), it is therefore undesirable to have substantially different conductivities as a function of temperature across the cell. The opposite case is also true, the difference in temperature between hot and cold sections must be larger than the uncertainty in the average system temperature.

We typically observe fluctuations in temperature of around  $\pm 50$  K during temperature equilibration, and look for temperature increases/decreases on the order of 10% the mean temperature. We control the magnitude of the gradient by altering the interval at which heat is exchanged. To produce the desired gradients we find shorter intervals are required as cell length decreases, cross-sectional area increases, and system equilibrium temperature decreases.

### 3.2.2 Green-Kubo

The bridgmanite unit cell does not have cell dimensions resembling a cube (a:b:c = 1:1:1.4), so we use supercell structures of 3x3x2, 4x4x3, 5x5x4, 6x6x4 etc. to make an approximately cubic simulation cell (((WHY IS IT CUBIC THOUGH, I HAVEN'T CONVINCED MYSELF YET))). Temperature initialisation (NVT) of 1 ns is run to ensure convergence of system pressure and temperature. To obtain heat flux autocorrelation functions, a simulation for each initial temperature condition is run for X ns, with 9 successive repeats for a total of 10 jobs. This gives 10 ACFs from each

initial condition. Simulation runs are split in this manner to be feasible computationally, jobs submitted to the high-performance computing facilities have a maximum length of 48 hours. Each job finished in this manner produces an ACF, somewhat of a bootstrapping process on the total simulation series.

TABLE 3.1: 4000 K

| Supercell | Simulation length | # initial conditions | Total run time |             |
|-----------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------|
| 3x3x2     | 10 ns             | 20                   | 2 $\mu$ s      |             |
| 4x4x3     | 10 ns             | 30                   | 3 $\mu$ s      |             |
| 5x5x4     | 5 ns              | 20                   | 1 $\mu$ s      | 1.7 $\mu$ s |
|           | 1 ns              | 70                   | 0.7 $\mu$ s    |             |
| 6x6x4     | 1 ns              | 80                   | 0.8 $\mu$ s    |             |

TABLE 3.2: 1000 K

| Supercell | Simulation length | # initial conditions | Total run time |  |
|-----------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|--|
| 3x3x2     | 1 ns              | 20                   | 0.2 $\mu$ s    |  |
| 4x4x3     | 1 ns              | 50                   | 0.5 $\mu$ s    |  |
| 5x5x4     | 1 ns              | 50                   | 0.5 $\mu$ s    |  |
| 6x6x4     | 1 ns              | 50                   | 0.5 $\mu$ s    |  |

In this study we compute ACFs up to correlation lengths of 100 ps, with (100,000) 1 fs timesteps. This length is longer than required but selected as a proof of concept to show convergence in the conductivity result, additionally to display the extent and behaviour of drift in the integrals for long correlation times. We show in Figure ?? that the magnitude of the ACF decays to much less than 1% of its initial value around a correlation time of 2 ps, inferring the start of convergence for the integral and thus conductivity.

ACFs produced by each simulation are integrated separately, and averaged into a single series. This process is performed for heat fluxes in each crystallographic direction, to allow analysis of anisotropy and finite system size effects. From this combined integral we pick a window of correlation lengths to capture a flat, converged region (or the section just after the 'bottleneck' if convergence is not obvious). This correlation length window is then applied to all integrals constituent to the combined series, giving a sample integral averages and corresponding standard deviations. A weighted average is then taken of these data points, to give a single value with uncertainty. This value is directly proportional to thermal conductivity, as given by Equation 2.7. REFERENCING TOO FAR BACK? REPEAT EQUATION?

Considering bridgemanite at lower mantle conditions, we find correlation time windows in the range of 2-30 ps to be suitable. At the low-end, this allows the initial high-variability in integral value to be ignored. At the high-end, the time is long enough for good sampling of the integral, but short enough to ignore the drift-effects. The magnitude and range of the window typically increases with conductivity (or with decreasing temperature etc.), e.g. 2-10 ps at 4000 K, and 10-30 ps at 1000 K.

### 3.3 Results

#### 3.3.1 Green-Kubo

A supercell volume of  $3 \times 3 \times 2$  (((REFER TO GRAPH, WILL NEED 1000K TOO))) fails to reproduce conductivities on the same order as the larger cells for all directions. We identify  $4 \times 4 \times 3$  and larger cells as being converged with respect to cell volume (((PROBLEMATIC STATEMENT, NOT CONVINCING, BY WHAT METRIC?))). This is a useful result in terms of computation efficiency, as  $6 \times 6 \times 4$  supercells are 3 times as large (VOLUMINOUS? REFERENCE ATOM COUNT?) as  $4 \times 4 \times 3$ .

#### 3.3.2 Direct method

When determining finite-size effects, it is important to consider the scenario with largest phonon mean-free paths. Phonon MFPs are largest at low temperatures (beyond the Debye temperature) and high pressures. In light of this we consider pressure of 136 GPa and temperatures of 1000 K and 4000 K. 136 GPa / 4000 K represents the expected conditions of the core-mantle boundary, whereas 136 GPa / 1000 K is unphysical in the context of the Earth but maximises MFP. UPDATE - GK RUINS EVERYTHING

By computing conductivities across a range of cell lengths we show that direct method simulations with small cross-sectional areas fail to produce converged results with respect to larger CSAs. Without considering any extrapolation, it is clear that small CSA cells overestimate conductivity (Figures ?? & ??) at conditions of both 1000 K and 4000 K. On both figures the results for cells with CSA  $2 \times 2$  and larger plot

close to on top of each other. Producing the same results as 8x8 cells, we conclude that cells with CSA of 2x2 are suitable for direct method simulations of bridgmanite.

Now considering CSAs of 2x2, we examine the divergence of conductivity result with cell length from an expected linear trend (Figure ??). As mentioned in Section ??, cells that are too long or short cause a conductivity result to be overestimated. At 4000 K we find that cells up to 24 unit cells length ( $<0.06$  in inverse length) produce a reasonably linear trend. At this condition, there is no reasonable overestimation due to short cells and ballistic phonon transport. However at 1000 K where the MFP is longer, a cell of length 6 unit cells (inverse length 0.167) produces conductivity larger than expected. The same long-cell divergence is found  $>24$  unit cells length, the onset of insufficient phonon sampling. For all direct method simulations of bridgmanite at lower mantle conditions, we recommend employing cell lengths of 8 -  $<24$  unit cells. Due to the increasing computational cost associated with cell length (especially for ab initio methods), we recommend the longest cells be 16 unit cells. FINITE SIZE EFFECTS INCREASE WITH MFP/KAPPA

Now we consider CSA of 2x2 and supercell lengths of 8, 10, 12, and 16 unit cells for comparison with the results from Green-Kubo. After performing a weight least squares regression (extrapolation) on the direct method results, we obtain a conductivity with uncertainty. Figure ?? shows the extrapolation and Green-Kubo result (at  $x = 0$ ). They agree within error, meaning we have chosen a suitable set of criteria for working with direct method results. DO I NEED TO PROVE THAT OTHER LENGTHS/EXTRAPOLATIONS DON'T MATCH GK? FINE AT HIGH T / SHORT MFP, LOW T / HIGH MFP NEEDS LONGER CELLS TO EXTRAPOLATE, OR MORE SHORTER CELLS IGNORED.

### 3.4 Summary

For bridgmanite (at conditions representing the lower mantle), we show that use of the direct method for calculation of thermal conductivity will lead to an overestimate if the simulation cell is too long ( $>16$  unit cells, 4000 ONLY!!!). Small cross-sectional areas ( $<2 \times 2$  unit cells) also overestimate the thermal conductivity. This informs future work using Density Functional Theory, and will allow a model of lower mantle

conductivity considering composition to be established [[[OOPS]]].

(ASSUMING THE RESULTS ARE CORRECT AND AGREE WITH GK) We see the non-linear region as described by Sellan et al. (2010) for the cell length of 6 unit cells at 1000 K, which has individually higher conductivity than expected from the linear fit through data points corresponding to lengths of 8-16 unit cells. When included in the extrapolation, this reduces the gradient of the fit, raising the intercept and thus causing conductivity to be underestimated. At temperature of 4000 K, the 6 length cell is inline with the fit through other cells with length less than 16 unit cells. As the ratio of cell length to phonon MFP increases with temperature, we believe the onset of divergence as described by Sellan et al. moves to the right (??? - MENTION ACTUAL EFFECT - QUANTIFY RATHER THAN REFERENCING GRAPH). A shorter MFP needs shorter cell lengths to display divergent conductivity, of which we have not sampled (at high temperature). DOING THE DIRECT METHOD WITH CELLS OF LENGTH LESS THAN 6 UNIT CELLS AT ANY TEMPERATURE IS A BAD IDEA BECAUSE ...

We find conductivity is definitely dependent on CSA, but we were not able to increase CSA enough to eliminate aspect ratio-dependent divergence as reported by Hu et al. (2011). This does support our conclusion ignoring long cell lengths however, in order to keep the aspect ratio within a reasonable limit and ensure a linear fit is extrapolated. (EVEN THOUGH 48x8x8 HAS A SMALLER RATIO than 8x2x2?)

(WAFFLE ALERT) Ignoring the specifics of this study, we stress the importance of performing finite-size analysis when performing direct method calculations. Direct method cells spanning a range of lengths must be considered to find the linear regime for extrapolation. Cross-sectional area must be increased until the conductivity result converges. The same can be said about the Green–Kubo method, where the result converges with increasing volume. These effects vary with phonon mean-free path, sensitive to pressure, temperature, and compositional variations such as impurities. Completing finite-size effect analysis at conditions with the largest phonon mean-free path / thermal conductivity ensure all other conditions represent converged results. We believe classical molecular dynamics with interatomic potentials

to be an excellent way of quantifying these effects quickly, performing ab initio methods (SHOULD I TAKE THIS SENTENCE OUT, NO PROOF OF THIS CLAIM).

## Chapter 4

# Modelling the thermal conductivity of Fe-bearing bridgmanite at the CMB

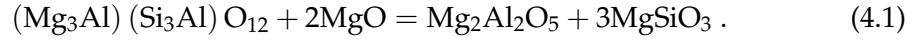
As stated earlier (REF), there are no experiments that can reach the high pressures and temperatures necessary to replicate the conditions of the lower mantle. The addition of impurities into minerals further complicates the matter. In addition to pressure and temperature-dependence, composition must be considered for full evaluation.

DISCUSS/RE-ITERATE EARLIER-DISCUSSED SEMI-RELEVANT EXPERIMENTS HERE, MANTHILAKE

### 4.1 Simulating the effect of atomic impurities

The bulk of the lower mantle comprises bridgmanite (~70%, and its high-pressure polymorph post-perovskite), ferropericlase (~20%), along with others (~10%) such as calcium silicate perovskite  $\text{CaSiO}_3$  (Trønnes, 2009). The composition can vary within these mineral archetypes, significantly the concentration of iron impurities. Magnesium is replaced with iron in  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  and  $\text{MgO}$  compositions, leading to  $\text{FeSiO}_3$  and  $\text{FeO}$  endmembers. Aluminium can similarly be substituted for Magnesium and Silicon (as in Brodholt, 2000) where, ((DOES THIS NEED TO BE IN, WITH

AN EQ NUMBER?))



Impurities reduce thermal conductivity by providing more opportunities for phonon scattering events. An impurity is an irregularity to a propagating phonon, much like a speedbump to a car. They have different properties to the atoms the phonon expects to meet from crystal regularity, namely mass and their bonds with neighbouring atoms. For this reason that the thermal conductivity of a solid solution is lower at intermediate compositions than at the endmembers. Even if one endmember has lower conductivity than the other, an irregular mix of the two can produce even lower values.

#### 4.1.1 How do impurities affect conductivity?

The effect of impurities on lattice thermal conductivity is approximated by Klemens (1960) and Padture and Klemens (1997), a review of which can be found in the Supplementary Material of Stackhouse et al. (2015). Equations hereafter in this section with a SS-prefix refer to their position in this supplementary material. The lattice thermal conductivity of a binary solid solution is given (Eq. SS6) as

$$\kappa_{\text{SS}} = \kappa_{\text{V}} \left( \frac{\omega_0}{\omega_{\text{D}}} \right) \arctan \left( \frac{\omega_{\text{D}}}{\omega_0} \right), \quad (4.2)$$

where  $\omega_0$  is the phonon frequency at which the mean free path is equal to that of the solute atoms, and  $\omega_{\text{D}}$  is the phonon frequency corresponding to the maximum of the acoustic branch in the phonon spectrum (the Debye frequency).  $\kappa_{\text{V}}$  is the compositionally-weighted (Voigt) average of endmember conductivities,

$$\kappa_{\text{V}} = (1 - C) \kappa_1 + C \kappa_2, \quad (4.3)$$

where  $\kappa_1$  and  $\kappa_2$  are the solid solution endmember conductivities, and  $C$  is the fractional concentration of the second endmember (Eq. SS7).



**$\omega_0/\omega_D$  overview**

When  $\omega_0 \gg \omega_D$ ,  $\arctan(\omega_D/\omega_0) \rightarrow (\omega_D/\omega_0)$ , so  $k_{SS} \rightarrow k_V$ , the conductivity including the effect of impurities tends toward the endmember linear average. This is the scenario when other factors, such as Umklapp processes at high temperatures, have caused conductivity to decrease significantly. Adding impurities at this point has little additional effect, conductivity is already close to its saturated minimum.

On the other hand, when  $\omega_D \gg \omega_0$ ,  $\arctan(\omega_D/\omega_0) \rightarrow \pi/2$ , but  $(\omega_0/\omega_D) \ll 2/\pi$ , so  $k_{SS} < k_V$ , and impurity scattering has a noticeable effect on the resultant conductivity. Adding impurities affects conductivity in this fashion when phonon-phonon collisions are not the dominant conductivity reducing process, like at low temperatures compared to the conditions mentioned in the above case. Additional information on  $\omega_0$  will be given at the end of this subsection.

**What effects the magnitude of impurity scattering?**

That factors that affect the severity of impurity scattering are temperature, the mass difference between the impurity and what it replaced, and the concentration of said replacements. The ratio of the phonon frequencies in Eq. 4.2 can be expressed (Eq. S11) as

$$\left(\frac{\omega_0}{\omega_D}\right)^2 = \frac{1}{(6\pi^2)^{1/3}} \frac{T}{3\varepsilon T_0}, \quad (4.4)$$

where  $T$  is temperature,  $T_0$  is the temperature associated with  $\omega_0$ , and  $\varepsilon$  is related to the mass difference and proportion of endmembers by

$$\varepsilon = \frac{(M_2 - M_1)^2}{\bar{M}^2} C (1 - C), \quad (4.5)$$

where  $M_i$  is the atomic mass of the  $i$ -th endmember,  $\bar{M}$  is the mean atomic mass of the solid solution, and  $C$  is the proportion of endmembers (Eq. SS9).

As the temperature increases, so too does the left-hand side of Equation 4.4. As discussed earlier, this reduces the effect of scattering caused by impurities, which will be relevant at CMB conditions where temperature is large ( $\sim 4000$  K).

$\varepsilon$  increases with the mass difference of the endmembers, and the impurity concentration. Increasing  $\varepsilon$  tends to reduce the phonon frequency ratio, meaning impurity scattering will affect the resultant conductivity more. The atomic masses of Mg and Fe are 24 and 56, so  $\text{FeSiO}_3$  is 1.32 times heavier than  $\text{MgSiO}_3$ .

As an aside, Equation 4.5 predicts that isotopic variations will have little effect on conductivity, where the mass changes are typically small (e.g.  $^{24}\text{Mg}$  to  $^{25/26}\text{Mg}$ ) and abundances are low (Mg standard atomic weight is 24.3, the ratio of  $^{24}\text{Mg}$  to heavier isotopes is roughly 4:1). Mass difference is an additional reason why Fe impurities are more interesting theoretically than Al. The mass of Al is 27, compared to Mg with 24 and Si at 28.

The composition control term in Equation 4.5,  $C(1 - C)$ , increases from 0 to 0.25, when  $x = 0.5$ .  $\varepsilon$  increases with composition up to 50%, the furthest point away from both endmembers, therefore the condition of most disorder in the model. While I investigate the full range of  $C$ , most of the lower mantle (Mg,Fe) $\text{SiO}_3$  is going to have compositions up to 20% Fe ((REF)). Knowledge of conductivity up to  $\text{FeSiO}_3$  composition is interesting if ultra low velocity zones are thermochemical features of high Fe content (e.g. Mao et al., 2004; Dobson and Brodholt, 2005).

!!! MANTLE COMPOSITION REFERENCE NEEDED ABOVE

#### 4.1.2 $\omega$ and $\tau$ in depth

$\omega_0$  is defined (by Klemens, 1960, Eq. 11) as the frequency at which

$$\tau'(\omega_0) = \tau_u(\omega_0), \quad (4.6)$$

where  $\tau'$  and  $\tau_u$  are the contributions of point defect scattering and Umklapp processes respectively to the effective phonon relaxation time (Klemens, 1960, Eq. 2 & 3), where

$$1/\tau' = A\omega^4, \quad (4.7)$$

and

$$1/\tau_u = B\omega^2. \quad (4.8)$$

The effective phonon relaxation time of the system, using the Matthiesen Rule (modified from Klemens, 1960, Eq. 7), is

$$\frac{1}{\tau(\omega)} = \frac{1}{\tau_u} + \frac{1}{\tau'} . \quad (4.9)$$

When Equation 4.6 is satisfied, the effective relaxation time will equal to half of either its constituents,

$$\frac{1}{\tau(\omega_0)} = \frac{1}{\tau_u} + \frac{1}{\tau'} = \frac{1}{\tau_{\omega_0}} + \frac{1}{\tau_{\omega_0}} = \frac{2}{\tau_{\omega_0}} . \quad (4.10)$$

When  $\tau' \neq \tau_u$ , the effective relaxation time will tend toward the smaller of the two as the difference increases. I illustrate in Figure 4.1 that a process' relaxation time will dominate the other in the effective behaviour when it is around 1,000 times smaller. At the point where the contribution is equal (i.e. 0.5), the  $\omega_0$  criterion is satisfied (Eq. 4.6). The contribution varies linearly when the magnitudes of the relaxation times are comparable, adopting an arctan-like form when they vary greatly.

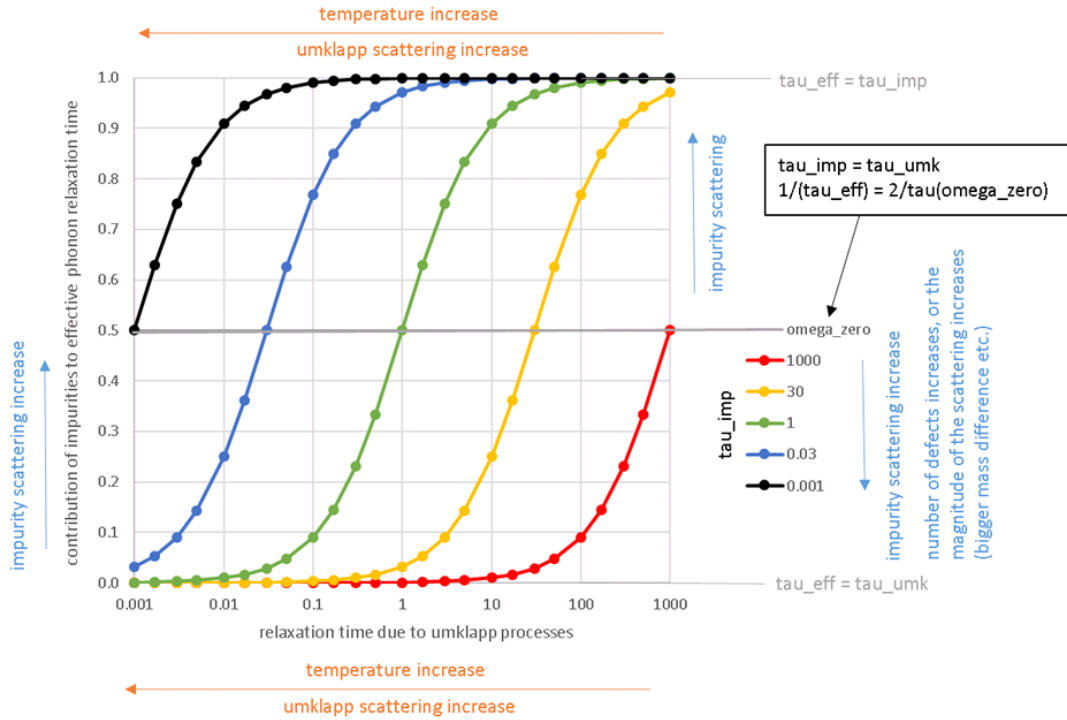


FIGURE 4.1: For a series of  $\tau'$ , their contribution to the effective phonon relaxation time is plotted against  $\tau_u$ . The quantity on the y-axis is the normalised difference in effective phonon relaxation time, comparing just Umklapp processes to Umklapp and the impurity scattering effect (as in Eq. 4.9).

For a CMB-like condition of high temperature, Umklapp process relaxation time

is short (left hand side of Fig. 4.1). Adding impurities (reducing  $\tau'$ ) doesn't contribute much to an already large scattering effect. Where the Umklapp process relaxation time is longer (temperatures decreasing towards Debye temperature), even adding a small amount of atomic impurity can influence the effective system behaviour. Considering the average phonon velocity, a longer relaxation time means a greater distance travelled, or phonon mean free path.

Calling back to Equation 4.7 & 4.8,  $A$  and  $B$  are constants, where only the latter is temperature-dependent ( $T$ ). The contribution of point defect scattering to the effective phonon relaxation time is constant with temperature (varying with impurity concentration and composition). It is the relative magnitude of  $\tau_u$ , which decreases with temperature ( $\propto 1/T$ , via  $B$ ), to  $\tau'$  that influences the effect of impurities on thermal conductivity (see Equation 4.9).

The two relaxation time terms above can be equated via Equation 4.6, showing  $\omega_0$  is similarly temperature-dependent

$$\begin{aligned} A\omega_0^4 &= B(T)\omega_0^2, \\ \omega_0^2 &= B(T)/A, \\ \omega_0 &\propto T. \end{aligned} \tag{4.11}$$

The Debye frequency is a constant, so

$$\left(\frac{\omega_0}{\omega_D}\right) \propto T. \tag{4.12}$$

As temperature increases (above the Debye temperature), conductivity decreases because of Umklapp processes. The significance of point defect scattering (but not the magnitude of its relaxation time) decreases as the effect of phonon-phonon scattering increases. Therefore the relative conductivity decrease due to impurities is inversely proportional with temperature, and less important as conductivity tends towards its saturated minimum.

## 4.2 Methodology

In this section I outline the process of taking Fe from chemistry to computer, by fitting my own coefficients to a Buckingham potential. I also go over how the Fe is incorporated into the  $\text{MgSiO}_3$ , considering its placement and concentration.

### 4.2.1 How does iron behave?

ELECTRONIC THERMAL CONDUCTIVITY???

I use two methods to introduce iron impurities to my bridgmanite models. The first approach is to simply create a magnesium atom with the mass of an iron atom, without changing any coefficients of the interatomic potentials from Oganov et al. (2000). Despite being an obviously "quick and dirty" method, (I will show) this is a reasonable first-order approximation(((PROVE IT!))). As the variation in mass number from Mg to Fe is large (24 to 56, a 133% increase), it is likely to change the behaviour of the system more than a subtle change in the atomic interactions.

MENTION MORE AMMANN IRON STUFF HERE, QUANTIFY/DATA? Approximating Fe with heavier Mg atoms is used by Ammann et al. (2014) to investigate  $(\text{Mg,Fe})\text{SiO}_3$  with 20% impurity content at 20 GPa and 2000 K. They found the effect of adding impurities in this manner was variable on a number of factors (crystallographic direction, interatomic potential), and observed saturation in the conductivity decrease with concentration.

The second approach to add Fe into the  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  system is to fit interatomic potentials, as well as using the aforementioned mass change for a more realistic model. I adapted the Oganov et al. (2000)  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  Buckingham interatomic potential ( $U$ ) to include the Fe-O interaction (see Table 4.1). I determined two short-range potential parameters,  $b$  and  $\rho$ , shown in Eq. 11 from Oganov et al. (2000),

$$U_{ij}(R_{ij}) = \frac{z_i z_j}{R_{ij}} + b_{ij} \exp\left(-\frac{R_{ij}}{\rho_{ij}}\right) - \frac{c_{ij}}{R_{ij}^6}, \quad (4.13)$$

where  $ij$  refers to an atom pair,  $R$  is interatomic distance,  $z$  is atomic charge, and  $c$  relates to the Van der Waals force (zero for non O-O interactions). We determine  $\rho$  in the same fashion as Oganov et al. (2000), calculated from the atomic first ionisation

potentials,

$$\rho_{ij} = \frac{1.85}{\sqrt{I_i} + \sqrt{I_j}}. \quad (4.14)$$

$b$  is constrained using the GULP code (Gale, 1997), using the calculated  $\rho$  value for Fe-O. We fit to structural information from Parise and Wang (1990), an experimental study of  $(\text{Mg}_{0.9}, \text{Fe}_{0.1})\text{SiO}_3$  bridgmanite at ambient conditions. This study was chosen as it matches the conditions at which Oganov et al. (2000) fit their potential.

TABLE 4.1: Parameters used to define Oganov et al. (2000)'s  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  perovskite potential, including my fit Fe-O values.

| Bond $ij$ | $b_{ij}$ (eV) | $\rho_{ij}$ (Å) | $c_{ij}$ (eV.Å <sup>6</sup> ) |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Mg-O      | 1041.435      | 0.2866          | 0                             |
| Si-O      | 1137.028      | 0.2827          | 0                             |
| O-O       | 2023.800      | 0.2674          | 13.83                         |
| Fe-O      | 1440.437      | 0.2846          | 0                             |

Despite potential fitting being an improvement on solely changing atomic mass, it is not perfect as I do not vary atomic charge from Mg to Fe. The problem is additionally complicated by the Fe-partitioning between  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  and  $\text{MgO}$ , the effect of ferrous vs. ferric iron, and how spin state affects properties such as conductivity as it varies along the geotherm (((REFS?))). These additional complexities are beyond the scope of this project, where only ferrous iron will be considered. The effects of impurities (i.e. some kind of irregular atom) is interesting, even if the exact chemistry is not accurate.

!!! Validate potentials

!!! Validate Fe vs. heavy Mg, isotope mass

## 4.2.2 Where do the impurities go?

Iron is substituted with magnesium into the bridgmanite atomic structure. The unit cell contains 4 Mg atoms, and the smallest direct method cell I employ is a 6x2x2 supercell. Therefore the smallest amount of iron that can be added is 1/96 atoms, a concentration just over 1%. A simple MATLAB script (((APPENDIX/ONLINE?))) is used to modify LAMMPS input files, randomly selecting a specified proportion of Mg atoms to be replaced with Fe. When a Mg atom changes to Fe, its mass and interatomic potential properties change.

Due to the microscopic nature of the system, we do not want all of the added iron to be concentrated together in the simulation cell, especially in a heat source/sink region. To avoid this we order Mg atoms by length along supercell, and change a single atom every so many. For example, changing 1/4 atoms is different to changing 24/96. The latter has a higher variance in Fe per unit length, and the former chooses one atom to swap for every four along the system. These distributions are illustrated in Figure 4.2. After iron is added, the standard direct method or Green-Kubo workflow is followed.

### 4.3 Results

Lattice thermal conductivities obtained from Green-Kubo calculations are plotted against temperature in Figure 4.3, for Mg and Fe-endmembers and the 50/50 solid solution mix.

Conductivity decreases with temperature, approximately following  $\kappa \propto 1/T^{0.9}$  at the pressure of 136 GPa considered here. This is in contrast to the typically expected  $\kappa \propto 1/T$  relation, indicating some kind of saturation in conductivity decrease with temperature.

FeSiO<sub>3</sub> has a consistently lower conductivity than MgSiO<sub>3</sub>, although both species may converge given a high enough, albeit unphysical, lower mantle temperature. This suggests there is a minimum conductivity associated with the crystal structure, reached first by FeSiO<sub>3</sub> with its inherently lower conductivity.

The 50% solid solution has a consistently lower conductivity than MgSiO<sub>3</sub>, and a lower than or equal to relation to FeSiO<sub>3</sub>. This is again to be expected, conductivity decreases from endmember to intermediate compositions as impurity concentration increases. It can be seen that conductivity differences are very small at high temperatures for FeSiO<sub>3</sub> and the solid solution. If FeSiO<sub>3</sub> has already reached its theoretical minimum, adding impurities will do little to decrease it further.

An alternative perspective to Figure 4.3 is presented in Figure 4.4, where Green-Kubo conductivity results are plotted as a function of Fe impurity content for several temperature series. Conductivity generally decreases with increasing temperature

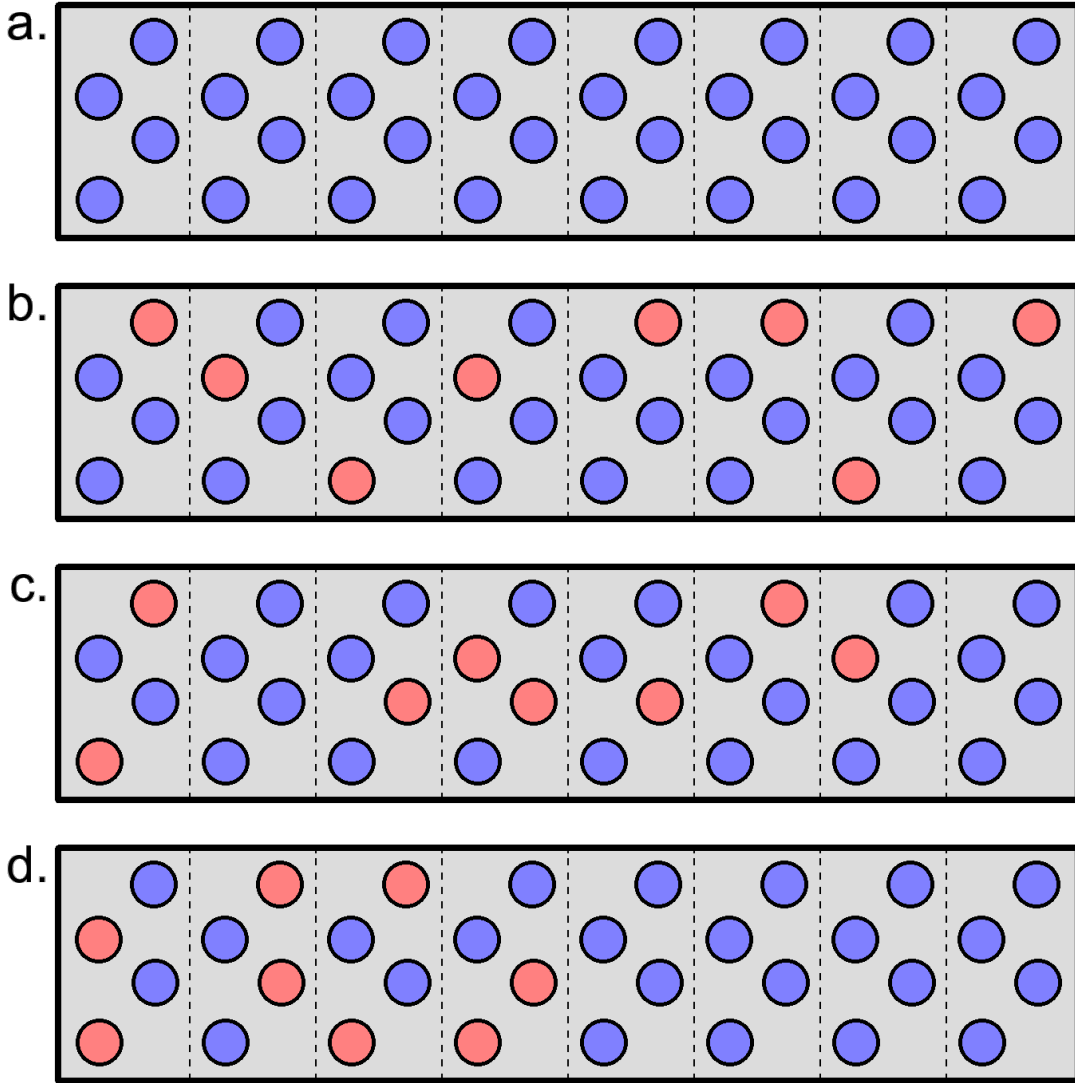


FIGURE 4.2: A cartoon showing the side view of Mg atoms in  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  along a supercell of dimensions  $8 \times 1 \times 1$ , where dashed lines mark a cell boundary. **a.** shows a  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  endmember composition (blue balls), with no Fe replacements. **b-d.** all show  $(\text{Mg,Fe})\text{SiO}_3$ , with 25% Fe substitution (red balls). **b.** shows a homogeneous distribution along a length unit, equal to a cell, or 1 substitution out of every possible 4 along length. **c.** shows the same Fe% concentration (8/32 replaced), but with a random distribution along the length. **d.** again has the same composition, but all the iron is clumped in the first half of the length. This scenario produces greatly differing temperature gradients on both halves when applying the direct method.

at all compositions, though the change becomes minimal at temperatures above 3000 K.

The  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  endmember has a consistently higher conductivity than the  $\text{FeSiO}_3$ . This can be explained by the reduction in shear modulus and increase in density associated with adding Fe, which decreases seismic velocity and thus conductivity.

The amount of Mg atoms replaced with Fe has a variable effect on conductivity.



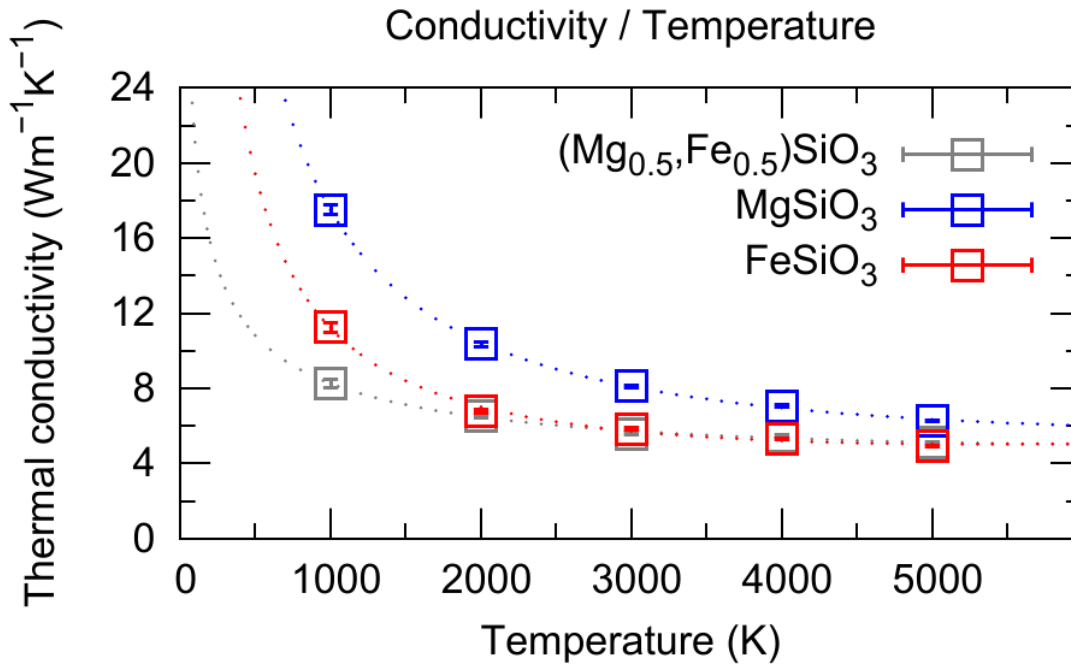


FIGURE 4.3: Data points are GK conductivity results, dotted line is the fit from Equation 4.25.

A better way to label the effect is impurities added to an endmember, i.e. Fe is added to  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  and Mg to  $\text{FeSiO}_3$ , which always serves increase phonon scattering and decrease conductivity. The decrease from this effect saturates towards a 50% compositional mix. At high temperatures, this effect is minimal when adding Mg to  $\text{FeSiO}_3$ . The conductivity could already be close to its theoretical minimum due to temperature effects, little reduction is observed from adding impurities.

A simple interpolation between endmember conductivities is insufficient, the presence of a compositional mix has an effect. This effect is itself temperature-dependent, the trough-like trend flattens with increasing temperature. These temperature and compositional dependences can be combined, allowing conductivity to be determined for a range of possible CMB conditions (Figure 4.5).

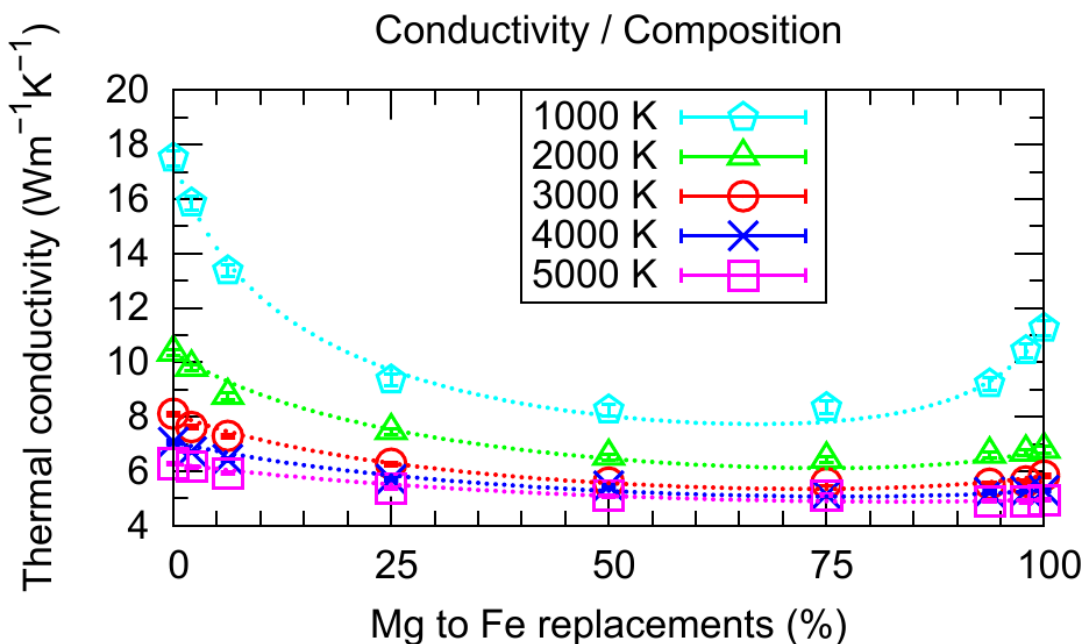


FIGURE 4.4: Computed thermal conductivities plotted as a function of Fe concentration for a range of temperatures. Dotted line for each series represents the model fit.

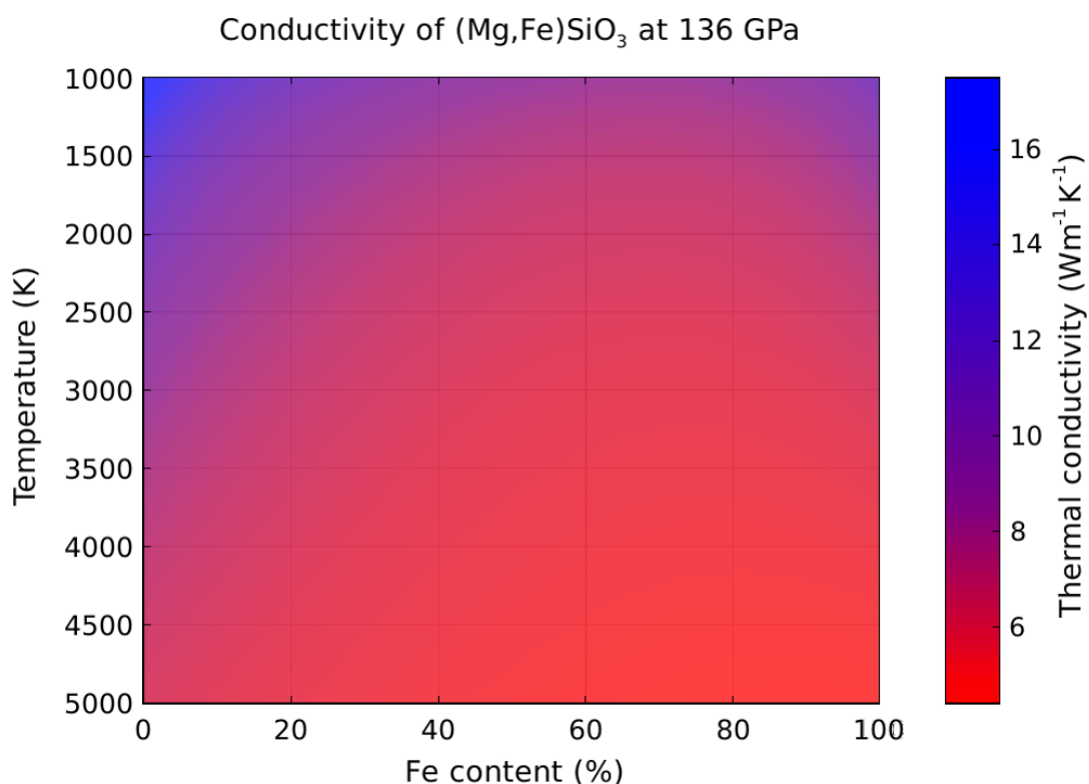


FIGURE 4.5: Modelled conductivity, shown plotted against temperature and composition. Note the sensitivity of the colour scale, showing low conductivities as dominant at high temperatures and intermediate compositions. High values are found only at low temperatures, and even then they rapidly decay and saturate to  $<8\text{Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$ . Such conditions are unphysical at 136 GPa within the lower mantle.

## 4.4 Parameterising composition and temperature effects on CMB conductivity

In this section I develop a model for the lattice thermal conductivity of (Mg,Fe)SiO<sub>3</sub> perovskite at CMB conditions. Whilst the CMB is a small section of the lower mantle, it marks the heat flow boundary from core to mantle. Mantle-side thermal conductivity controls the nature of this heat flow, making it an important parameter in studies on both sides of an important interface. The CMB is isobaric at 136 GPa, and isothermal at an uncertain temperature. Fe-content can vary with position. In terms of making a model I can collect data at one pressure condition, and investigate how an array of temperatures and compositions affect thermal conductivity.

Due to uncertainty in the lower mantle's composition, properties like thermal conductivity are often averaged considering the abundance of each mineral component. There are also solid solutions to consider though, particularly the concentration of Fe in MgSiO<sub>3</sub>, as well as the phase boundary between bridgmanite and MgSiO<sub>3</sub> post-perovskite.

The conductivity of an intermediate composition is not a simple weighted average of the endmember values, you cannot interpolate linearly. This can be seen in Figure 4.3, where the (Mg<sub>0.5</sub>,Fe<sub>0.5</sub>)SiO<sub>3</sub> results do not plot between those of MgSiO<sub>3</sub> and FeSiO<sub>3</sub>.

### 4.4.1 Parameterising the data fit

Equations and functional forms exist for the temperature and compositional dependence of thermal conductivity, and it is possible to combine the two. The basic idea is to determine the conductivity of MgSiO<sub>3</sub> and FeSiO<sub>3</sub> endmembers at the temperature of interest, and then apply the (temperature-dependent) effect of composition.

Padture and Klemens (1997) propose a model for how impurities affect lattice thermal conductivity of a solid solution, which Ohta et al. (2017) use to fit experimental ferropericlase data. Following a similar methodology, I fit the functional form to my (Mg,Fe)SiO<sub>3</sub> perovskite results at various temperatures (1000 K, 2000 K, 3000 K, 4000 K, and 5000 K). In an additional step, I establish how the functional

forms change with temperature, the temperature-dependence of the compositional-dependence if you will.

Okuda et al. (2017) present a temperature scaling relation for lattice conductivity (originally from Manthilake et al., 2011), fit to their experimental results of bridgmanite. I apply this temperature scaling to computational results of  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  and  $\text{FeSiO}_3$  at 136 GPa. With the temperature dependence of these endmembers and of the compositional effect, I am able to determine the conductivity of any composition, interpolating to temperatures in the range 1000 K to 5000 K, at 136 GPa pressure representative of the CMB.

The aforementioned temperature dependence from Manthilake et al. (2011) considers density, allowing conductivity to be determined as a function of temperature and pressure. In the examples I will present, I am only concerned with systems at 136 GPa. All density changes will result from thermal expansion, and the equations will be altered to accomodate this.

### Compositional dependence

The lattice thermal conductivity of a solid-solution as a function of temperature and composition can be approximated by the following equation (first seen as Eq. 4.2),

$$\kappa_{\text{SS}} = \kappa_{\text{V}} \left( \frac{\omega_0}{\omega_{\text{D}}} \right) \arctan \left( \frac{\omega_{\text{D}}}{\omega_0} \right), \quad (4.15)$$

where  $\omega_0$  is the phonon frequency at which the Umklapp/regular processes and impurity scattering effects' contributions to the mean free path and relaxation time (distance and time respectively travelled by a phonon) are equal. In terms of generating thermal resistance, neither effect dominates over the other at this frequency.  $\omega_{\text{D}}$  is the phonon frequency corresponding to the maximum of the acoustic branch in the phonon spectrum (the Debye frequency).  $\kappa_{\text{V}}$  is the conductivity of the solid solution in the absence of impurity scattering (previously as Eq. 4.3, modified for the specific (Mg,Fe) $\text{SiO}_3$  endmembers)

$$\kappa_{\text{V}} = (1 - C) \kappa_{\text{MgSiO}_3} + C \kappa_{\text{FeSiO}_3}, \quad (4.16)$$

where  $C$  is the fractional concentration of Fe, and  $\kappa_{\text{MgSiO}_3}$  and  $\kappa_{\text{FeSiO}_3}$  the temperature dependent conductivities of the endmembers. The ratio of the phonon frequencies can be expressed as

$$\left(\frac{\omega_0}{\omega_D}\right)^2 = \frac{\chi^T}{C(1-C)}, \quad (4.17)$$

where  $\chi$  is a temperature-dependent constant, and  $T$  is the temperature of interest (Padture and Klemens, 1997).  $\chi$  can be thought of as a measure of resistance to the effects of impurity scattering. The  $\kappa$  against  $C$  relationship (Figure 4.4) shows a larger effect of impurity scattering in the form of greater curvature when  $T$  and  $\chi$  are lower (see Table 4.2). For a given  $T$  and  $C$ , increasing  $\chi$  causes the phonon frequency ratio  $\left(\frac{\omega_0}{\omega_M}\right)$  to increase which, as discussed in Section 4.1.1, means  $\kappa_{\text{latt}}$  tends towards  $\kappa_i$ .  $\chi$  is fit to the data at each temperature, but for the model we need it as a function of temperature. Figure 4.6 shows a plot of  $\chi$  against  $T$  with a power law (LEFT/B.) and 4th-order polynomial (RIGHT/B.), the former of which is a poor fit and the latter an egregious overfitting.

TABLE 4.2: DOCUMENT BIT

|  |    | Temperature (K) |        |        |        |        |
|--|----|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|  |    | 1000            | 2000   | 3000   | 4000   | 5000   |
| Conductivity (Wm <sup>-1</sup> K <sup>-1</sup> ) | Mg | 17.51           | 10.36  | 8.11   | 7.07   | 6.28   |
|  | Fe | 11.26           | 6.79   | 5.84   | 5.30   | 4.95   |
| Volume (Å <sup>3</sup> )                         | Mg | 5960            | 6017   | 6075   | 6136   | 6199   |
|  | Fe | 6253            | 6310   | 6369   | 6431   | 6500   |
| $V_{\text{ref}}/V(T)$                            | Mg | 1               | 0.9906 | 0.9811 | 0.9714 | 0.9616 |
|  | Fe | 1               | 0.9909 | 0.9817 | 0.9723 | 0.9619 |
| $\chi$   |    | 0.9973          | 0.9992 | 0.9996 | 0.9998 | 0.9999 |
| $\chi^T$   |    | 0.0649          | 0.2035 | 0.2748 | 0.4277 | 0.7494 |

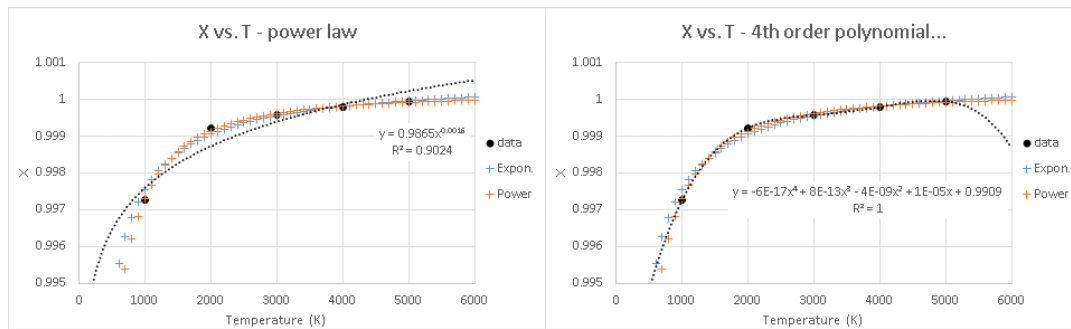


FIGURE 4.6: The fit  $\chi$  values plotted against  $T$ , with power law (LEFT/A.) and 4th order polynomial (RIGHT/B.) trendlines (both black). Blue and orange series are the exponential and power law fits obtained from plotting  $\chi^T/T$  (see Figure 4.7).

The lack of an obvious trend in  $\chi$  against  $T$  can be mitigated by plotting  $\chi^T$  over  $T$ , and fitting either a exponential or power law relationship (Figure 4.7). I use the following power law-relationship,

$$\chi^T = AT^B, \quad (4.18)$$

where  $A$  is the coefficient and  $B$  is the exponent to be determined. The magnitudes of these fit parameters are  $3.468 \times 10^{-6}$  and 1.426 respectively. This fit represents the temperature-dependence better, both statistically and sensitivity-wise compared to an exponential relationship ( $\chi^T = Ae^{BT}$ ). The value of  $\chi^T$  at high  $T$  has a lesser effect on the conductivity-composition relationship than at low  $T$ , where the power law fit matches the data closer. In Figure 4.6, we can see that both the power law and exponential  $\chi^T$  over  $T$  relationships fit the data better than the  $\chi$  over  $T$  power law or polynomial relations.

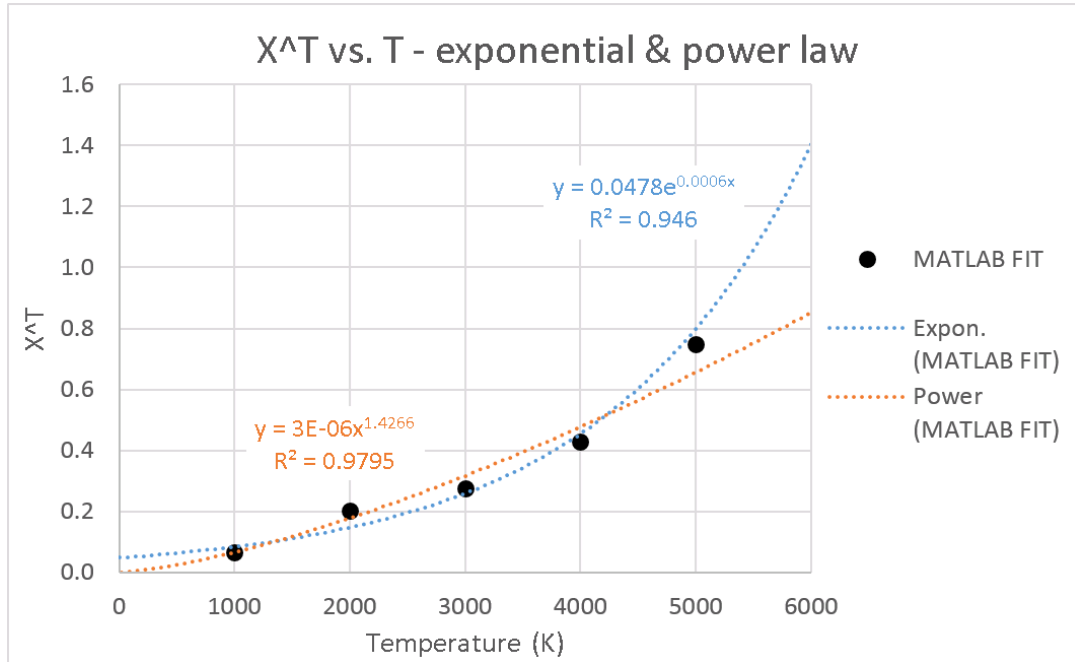


FIGURE 4.7: Exponential fit in blue (more curved), power law in orange (flatter)

#### Why does this model work?

At this point, we have all the pieces in place to qualitatively describe how the equation for modelling a solid solution's thermal conductivity (Eq. 4.15) works and why.

The first part is to scale a linearly interpolate the conductivity of two endmembers, at a given temperature, to the composition of interest. This ( $\kappa_V$ , Eq. 4.16) will be an overestimate of the true value, the conductivity is more complicated than a weighted average of the endmembers.

Increasing impurity mass difference and concentration (towards  $\sim 50\%$ ) increase the magnitude of point defect scattering. Mass difference is always constant in this study. Concentration varies, but as discrete values across the various temperatures. For a given concentration at varying temperature, the mass difference and thus magnitude of point defect scattering is constant. Despite this, conductivity decrease due to adding impurities is not constant with varying temperature.

As temperature increases (through the range of conditions considered here) the magnitude of thermal/Umklapp scattering increases, tending to decrease conductivity (Figure. 4.3). The key thing in determining the effect of adding impurities is to consider the relative magnitudes of thermal scattering to defect scattering. As this ratio increases, with temperature, the significance of the defect scattering diminishes. An increase in thermal scattering reduces conductivity directly, but also reduces the change in conductivity associated with adding impurities.

This can be seen in Figure. 4.4, where the actual conductivity and curvature of the model fit decrease with temperature. “Curvature” in this sense can be measured by the area between the model and a straight line between endmembers. The model becomes more similar to the endmember line (area decrease) as temperature increases, as the effect of thermal scattering increases relative to defect scattering. An additional diagram is provided in Figure 4.8, showing how the

In the context of the model, the effect of this ratio is handled by the arctan segment of Eq. 4.15 (as alluded to in Figure. 4.2). The  $(\omega_0/\omega_D)$  term (Eq. 4.17) contains the temperature and chemical ( $\chi$ ), and concentration ( $C$ ) variables to control the scaling effect on  $\kappa_V$ .

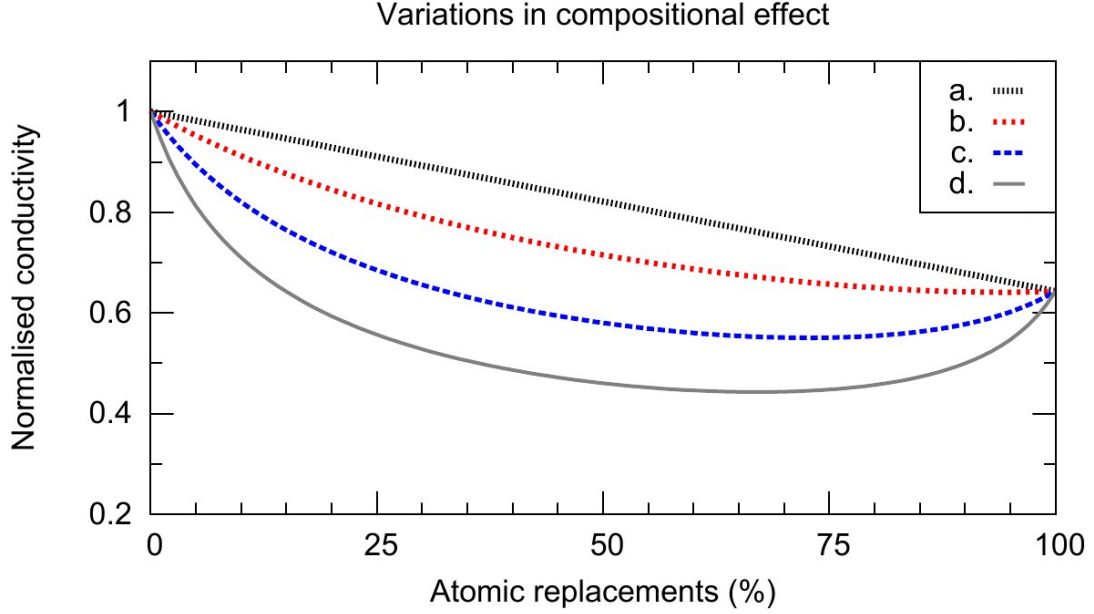


FIGURE 4.8: A graph showing how the relative magnitudes of defect and thermal scattering affect the resultant conductivity. Conductivity values are normalised to the maximum, the  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  value in this case. This figure does not show how the magnitude of conductivity variations with temperature, but the magnitude of conductivity changes from adding impurities.

**a.** shows the compositionally-weighted average of endmember conductivities. It represents the conductivity in absence of defect scattering, but with the addition of heavier Fe atoms having the effect of reducing conductivity.

**d.** represents conductivity if impurity scattering were to dominate over Umklapp processes. As with **a.**, this series is hypothetical, and the physical result lies somewhere inbetween the two.

**b.** & **c.** represent a solid solution at hot and cold conditions respectively. **b.** would be found at a higher temperature, where increased thermal scattering reduces the significance of defect scattering. **c.** represents a colder condition with fewer Umklapp processes, where impurities are more relevant and there is a larger decrease relative to **a.**, compared to the hot case (**b.**).

### Temperature dependence

The conductivities of  $\kappa_{\text{MgSiO}_3}$  and  $\kappa_{\text{FeSiO}_3}$  from Equation 4.16 can be scaled with temperature, giving an adjusted value

$$\kappa_{\text{adj}} = \kappa_{\text{ref}} \left( \frac{\rho}{\rho_{\text{ref}}} \right)^g \left( \frac{T_{\text{ref}}}{T} \right)^a. \quad (4.19)$$

$\rho$  is density,  $g$  and  $a$  are exponents which control the nature of the density and temperature-dependence, and “ref” denotes a reference value (Manthilake et al., 2011; Okuda et al., 2017). This equation is fit to the data, anchored around the values



of the reference data point (the fit is shown in Figure 4.3). I fit to the data point at 1000 K, as the conductivities at higher temperatures become more similar, converging towards a minimum point. Anchoring to 1000 K reduces the error in the fit, on account of the relatively larger conductivity at this temperature.

For a given composition, the mass of the simulated system does not change with temperature. The number and type of atoms remains constant, while thermal effects cause density variations. The density relation in Equation 4.19 can be reformulated as

$$\frac{\rho}{\rho_{\text{ref}}} \equiv \frac{V_{\text{ref}}}{V}, \quad (4.20)$$

because  $\rho \propto V^{-1}$ , where  $V$  is the volume of the system in question. This leads to a modified version of Equation 4.19

$$\kappa_{\text{adj}} = \kappa_{\text{ref}} \left( \frac{V_{\text{ref}}}{V} \right)^g \left( \frac{T_{\text{ref}}}{T} \right)^a. \quad (4.21)$$

The exponent  $g$  (Manthilake et al., 2011) represents the rate of change of lattice thermal conductivity with density, at a constant temperature,

$$g = (\partial \ln \kappa_{\text{latt}} / \partial \ln \rho)_T. \quad (4.22)$$

The density/volume changes that I observe result from thermal effects, i.e. not at a constant temperature and not pressure-driven. The rate of change in conductivity with density in my data are better represented as something like

$$h \sim (\partial \ln \kappa_{\text{latt}} / \partial \ln \rho)_P, \quad (4.23)$$

where pressure ( $P$ ) is the condition kept constant. The significance here is that pressure-driven and temperature-driven density changes affect the conductivity differently. At constant temperature, conductivity and density increase with pressure. The opposite is true at constant pressure for the material and temperatures considered here, conductivity and density decrease with increasing temperature. The result is  $g$  and  $h$  having opposite polarities based on the scenarios they describe.

Volume does not need to be input ((INDEPENDENT?)) variable for the model,

as all the data are obtained from constant pressure (136 GPa) calculations and any volume variations relate to thermal expansion. I express the volume ratio shown in Equation 4.21 as

$$\frac{V_{\text{ref}}}{V(T)} \approx mT + c, \quad (4.24)$$

a simple linear function of temperature (see Figure 4.9), where  $m$  is the gradient and  $c$  the intercept (as you might expect).

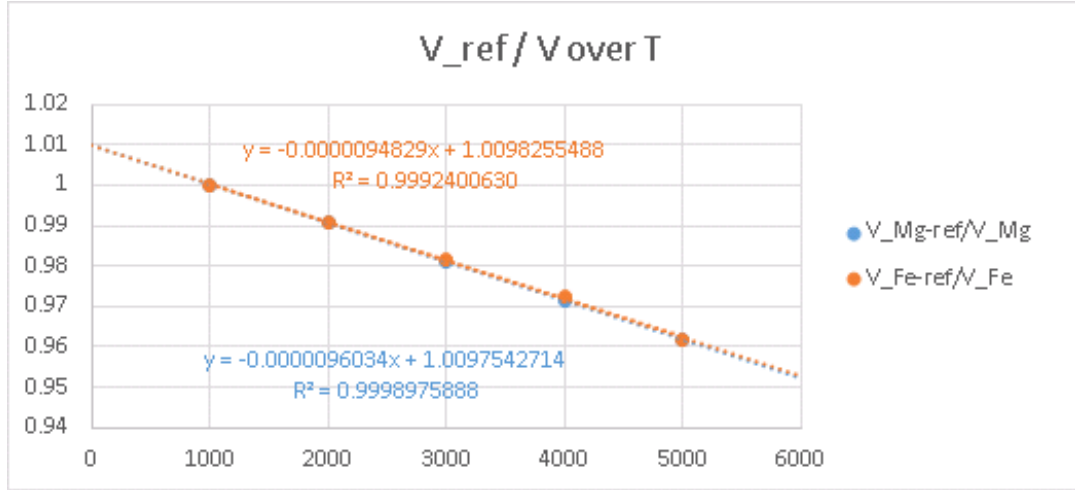


FIGURE 4.9:  $V_{\text{ref}}/V$  can be expressed as a simple linear function of  $T$ .

With Equation 4.24, we rewrite Equation 4.19 one more time,

$$\kappa_{\text{adj}} = \kappa_{\text{ref}} (mT + c)^h \left( \frac{T_{\text{ref}}}{T} \right)^a. \quad (4.25)$$

This equation allows me to obtain a conductivity value at any temperature within the fit range, comprising a reference conductivity and temperature for the material in question, with constants ( $m$ ,  $c$ ,  $h$ , &  $a$ , see Table 4.3) fit to data across a range of temperatures. This scaling process is necessary to obtain  $\kappa_{\text{MgSiO}_3}$  and  $\kappa_{\text{FeSiO}_3}$ , which have their own reference values and fit constants, for use in Eq. 4.16.

## 4.4.2 MEAN FREE PATH

### MFP FROM DM EXTRAPOLATION

### REFERENCE SCHELLING FOR EQUATION

TABLE 4.3: Mg and Fe refer to MgSiO<sub>3</sub> and FeSiO<sub>3</sub> endmembers, SS the solid solution with a 50% mix.

|                | Composition |           |           |
|----------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
|                | Mg          | SS        | Fe        |
| $\kappa_{ref}$ | 17.51       | 8.26      | 11.26     |
| $h$            | -10.93      | -5.52     | -17.32    |
| $a$            | 0.896       | 0.428     | 0.913     |
| $m$            | -9.60E-06   | -9.47E-06 | -9.48E-06 |
| $c$            | 1.00975     | 1.00965   | 1.00983   |

The conductivities from supercells ( $\kappa_L$ ) of varying length ( $L$ ) obtained via direct method calculations fit the form (modified from Stackhouse and Stixrude, 2010)

$$\frac{1}{\kappa_L} = \left[ \frac{12}{C_v v} \right] \frac{1}{L} + \left[ \frac{3}{C_v v} \frac{1}{\Lambda_{ph-ph}} \right], \quad (4.26)$$

where  $C_v$  is the volumetric isochoric heat capacity,  $v$  is the phonon group velocity, and  $\Lambda_{ph-ph}$  is the mean free path associated with phonon–phonon scattering. When the inverse conductivities are plotted against the inverse cell lengths, extrapolation to the y-axis ( $1/L = 0$ ) gives the bulk material ( $L \rightarrow \infty$ ) conductivity, and its associated phonon mean free path. The two square-bracketed terms in the above equation represent the gradient and intercept respectively, of such a line fit to data and extrapolated ((FIGURE)).

I can rewrite Equation 4.26 with the following simplifications

$$M = \left[ \frac{12}{C_v v} \right], \text{ and } \frac{M}{4} = \frac{3}{C_v v},$$

giving

$$\frac{1}{\kappa_L} = M \frac{1}{L} + \left[ \frac{M}{4} \frac{1}{\Lambda_{ph-ph}} \right].$$

When  $1/L = 0$ , the extrapolated conductivity can be equated to the gradient and effective mean free path

$$\frac{1}{\kappa} = \frac{M}{4} \frac{1}{\Lambda},$$

and thus

$$\Lambda = \frac{M}{4} \kappa.$$

Using the gradient and conductivity from direct method calculations at 136 GPa,

4000 K, and a supercell cross-sectional area of  $12 \times 12$ , the mean free path is equal to  $0.23 \pm 0.03$  nm. This value is roughly half the width of the unit cell in the A/x-direction, or the width of a direct method temperature section.

### SCALING MFP TO QUANTIFY PHONON-DEFECT SCATTERING

This MFP value is obtained from a conductivity representative of bulk  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  bridgmanite, therefore I can assume it is the effective MFP in the absense of phonon-defect or phonon-boundary scattering ((MATTHIESEN)). MFP is direct proportional to conductivity ((REF)), therefore I propose scaling the 4000 K GK conductivity results ((REF)) to try and quantify the phonon-defect scattering associated with adding iron. When considering the effect of impurities on conductivity, the effective MFP depends on phonon-phonon and phonon-defect interactions

$$\frac{1}{\Lambda} = \frac{1}{\Lambda_{\text{ph-ph}}} + \frac{1}{\Lambda_{\text{ph-d}}} .$$

The MFP determined from the direct method extrapolation can be matched with the equivalent 0% Fe, 4000 K Green-Kubo result on Figure REF. If  $7.07 \text{ Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$  is proportional to an effective MFP of 0.23 nm, I can scale this MFP value by the  $\text{MgSiO}_3$  endmember-normalised conductivities ((ADD FIGURE)).

I make the assumption that the data points/curve of Figure REF represent the effective MFP, the linear interpolation between endmembers the phonon-phonon scattering MFP. The interpolated conductivities do not capture the non-linear effects of defect scattering, at constant temperature the change in conductivity is proportional to the change in mass associated with changing Mg to Fe.

The deficit between computed and interpolated conductivity can be imagined as phonon-defect contribution to  $\Lambda$ , the bigger the gap at a given composition, the greater significance of  $\Lambda_{\text{ph-d}}$ . I will obtain the phonon-defect MFP by subtracting the inverse of the two, as in

$$\frac{1}{\Lambda_{\text{ph-d}}} = \frac{1}{\Lambda} - \frac{1}{\Lambda_{\text{ph-ph}}} .$$

**C(1-C) MODEL LIMITATIONS**

Using this method to determine  $\Lambda_{\text{ph-d}}$ , I am able to observe how its magnitude changes with composition. Taking the 4000 K model-fit conductivities, the largest effect of phonon-defect scattering (smallest MFP) is at a composition around 50%. This is to be expected, and is set by the  $C(1 - C)$  term in Equation REF. However, when the raw 4000 K data is used to determine  $\Lambda_{\text{ph-d}}$ , the greatest effect is at a composition between 25% and 50% (albeit closer to 25%). The model is assuming that an equal number of each type of atom creates the most phonon-defect scattering, but I believe it is when each type of atom contributes equal to the system's mass ((INFORMAL, THERE IS SCIENCE TO BACK THIS UP SOMEWHERE)). The composition at which this mass contribution scenario is satisfied can be calculated by

$$C_{\text{mass}} = \frac{A_{\text{Mg}}}{A_{\text{Mg}} + A_{\text{Fe}}} ,$$

where  $A$  is atomic mass, Mg corresponds to  $C = 0$  and Fe to  $C = 1$ . For Mg and Fe,  $C_{\text{mass}} = 0.3$ , or 30% Fe to 70% Mg. This is the turning point in phonon-defect scattering, it increases up to this composition, and decreases after. Even if conductivity decreases overall due to phonon-phonon effects, this is the point of minimum  $\Lambda_{\text{ph-d}}$ .

**DM ANALYSIS - PH-B SCATTERING AND SHORTEST CELL**

WORK OUT A TON OF DM MFPs???

I can do something similar with direct method results, taking the extrapolated MFP as the phonon-phonon contribution (as in Equation 4.26), and the computed conductivity as the effective. Subtracting these two may give info on the effects of phonon-boundary scattering, for impurity-free systems anyway.

**MASS VS. POTENTIAL IN MODELLING FE**

I believe mass is the most important thing for the magnitude of phonon-defect scattering. I am to prove this by running calculations where the mass of the impurities are kept the same as Mg, only changing their potential to match my fitted Mg-Fe

interaction. I predict conductivity will be largely unchanged with varying composition.

## Chapter 5

# Using STUFF to do THINGS

### 5.1 Draft words

I am able to construct a model of lower mantle heat flux, including the effect of LLSVP properties. Using LEMA, I specify a CMB base condition, and a TBL condition at some height above it. In all models I consider, the CMB will be isothermal. The TBL will have a variable mean temperature, and regions of higher and lower temperature. The lower mantle has an average Fe%, but the LLSVPs are enriched compared the depleted surrounding bulk lower mantle. By varying the temperature and composition at the CMB, conductivity can be altered using the model from PREVIOUS-REF. The difference in temperature between CMB and TBL, and the undulations on the latter, control the lower mantle temperature gradient.

Heat flux can be calculated using conductivity and temperature gradient via FOURIER'S LAW. While the magnitude of the heat flux will change with parameters, perhaps more interesting is the lateral variation of this parameter. This will show how the lower mantle heat flux is sensitive to the conditions therein, and what condition or combination of conditions is most significant. The results from these calculations can then be compared to observables, dismissing scenarios which are unfeasible or unstable. There are many variables in the lower mantle, and observables to compare to. The variable conductivities from this work will play an important role in constraining CMB heat flux.

I can use spherical harmonics to generate structures that resemble LLSVPs. The centre of LLSVPs are approximately(/loosely?) located on the equator, antipodal

at  $0^\circ$  and  $180^\circ$  longitude (the African and Pacific LLSVPs respectively). A first order approximation for this geometry is the spherical harmonic  $Y_2^2$ , four quadrants of varying polarity around the polar axis. This looks good, but the projection is misleading in that it actually extends to the poles. It can be improved by stacking  $Y_2^0$  on top of it, enhancing regions on the equator and reducing everything towards the poles. The results is two circular patterns, each located at opposite sides of the equator.

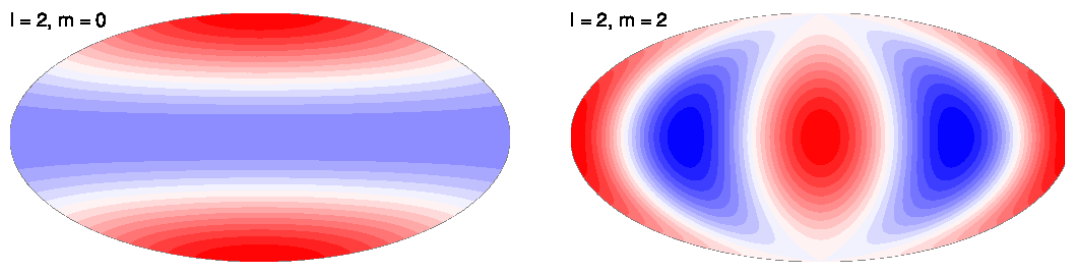


FIGURE 5.1: Source: <http://www-udc.ig.utexas.edu/external/becker/teaching-sh.html>  
 These two harmonics are added together, amplifying blue regions on the equator, and diminishing everything else.

For the  $Y_2^2$  pattern, the areas of positive and negative amplitude regions are equal. For the  $Y_2^0$ -combined model, the distribution of polarities is not even. By the way something like temperature is set up in the model, having a mean value with a “ $\pm$ ” range leads to hotter hots, and warmer colds. There is more of the cold, surrounding mantle compared to LLSVP-designated regions, the LLSVPs have to be hotter than the surrounding mantle is colder.

Conductivity cannot be probed from the surface, but seismic velocities can be inferred from tomography. The same processes that affect conductivity generally affect shear wave velocity in the same fashion, be it increase or decrease. I can use  $V_S$  observations as an analogue to make inferences about the lower mantle.

When conductivity is kept constant across the whole CMB, variations in heat flux are determined solely by the lower mantle temperature profile. The reverse is also true, with constant temperature gradient above the CMB, conductivity controls lateral heat flow variations. This is a vast oversimplification, just talking about possible endmembers, in reality there will be both temperature and compositional factors affecting heat flux. Conductivity itself is temperature-dependent, further tying the



two variables together.

When modelling LLSVPs, we are assuming they are thermochemical piles, that they are hotter and denser (e.g. high Fe%) than the surrounding lower mantle. Increasing temperature reduces conductivity, as does increasing impurity inclusion. By modelling LLSVPs as purely thermal piles (i.e. increasing their temperature), we see a reduction in heat flux. This flux is further reduced when Fe content is increased, as conductivity decreases with impurity content. By altering temperature and composition in tandem, I will be able to suggest sets of lower mantle conditions which reproduce observations.

While this model is of dubious use in constraining the exact nature of CMB heat flux, inferences can be made on the relative variations laterally. How much heat is impeded passing through a LLSVP? How extreme do temperature and compositional variations need to be to significantly affect the distribution of heat flow? An important parameter will be that of the lateral variation in heat flux

$$q^* = \frac{q_{\max} - q_{\min}}{q_{\text{mean}}} , \quad (5.1)$$

where max and min refer to the calculated extremes, and mean the average over the whole CMB. The larger the value of  $q^*$ , the smaller the heat flux through the LLSVPs. While the magnitudes of heat flux may not be accurate, using  $q^*$  will let me make comments on thermal conductivity's role in the Earth heat engine for a wide range of possible lower mantle conditions.

### 5.1.1 Notes

#### VARIABLES TO PLAY WITH

Temp-cmb, Temp-tbl, Temp-diff, Temp-hot, Temp-cold,

Height-tbl, Height-llsvp (peak height, how is shape considered, sph. harm.?)

Comp-mean, Comp-lm, Comp-llsvp,

The things I can vary are temperature, composition, and TBL thickness. Temperature and thickness amount to the same thing in the model however, which is the thermal gradient.

Temperature variations are set at the top of the model (1000 km above CMB). The temperature is constant all the way down to the TBL, at which it increases up to the CMB temperature. I only need to plot the temperature gradient at the CMB. WHAT IS THE POINT OF THE TBL THEN? OR RATHER, WHAT IS THE POINT OF MANTLE ABOVE THE TBL?

In the real world, Fe may be localised. in the model, it is constant radially up.

I need to fiddle with parameters to obtain realistic change in shear velocity. I can then record this and  $q^*$  "about 2% shear wave anomaly" - vary temp to get this, then comp, then both

Changing temperature at the top of the model changes gradient. Changing temperature at the bottom also changes conductivity.

Keep the top around 1000 K cooler?

Turn notebook into function with input arguments, then run in a loop.

Investigate thermo mantle, chemical mantle, and then thermochemical. How sensible are these models? How feasible are they?

Lateral temperature variations are different to radial variations!

use model to link tomography

what range could  $q^*$  occupy, and why would jon and chris care?

PLAN

Refresh LLSVP theory

Ask question about how conductivity can affect heat flux and the lower mantle generally. "given what we now know about the effect of T and Fe on K, can we say what these models imply for CMB heat flux?"

Introduce heat flux and the lateral variation. "for Q and  $q^*$ , what is it, what do we know, what does it mean?"

LEMA - what is, why am i using it, how does it work "i will use LEMA to explore" - numerical tests

CHEBYSHEVYS related to LEMA section? -numerical tests "1D CMB heat flux"

Future work / conclusion / caveats / limitations. i am only using bridgmanite, future work would be to add MgO

## Chapter 6

# Summary/Discussion/Conclusion

### 6.1 Main Section 1

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#### 6.1.1 Subsection 1

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## Appendix A

# Frequently Asked Questions

### A.1 How do I change the colors of links?

The color of links can be changed to your liking using:

```
\hypersetup{urlcolor=red}, or  
\hypersetup{citecolor=green}, or  
\hypersetup{allcolor=blue}.
```

If you want to completely hide the links, you can use:

```
\hypersetup{allcolors=.}, or even better:  
\hypersetup{hidelinks}.
```

If you want to have obvious links in the PDF but not the printed text, use:

```
\hypersetup{colorlinks=false}.
```



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