

Properties of Magnesium Oxide in Super-Earths

F. Soubiran^{1,2}, B. Militzer^{2,3}

¹ LGLTPE - ENS de Lyon, Lyon, France

² Earth and planetary science department, University of California, Berkeley,
United States

³ Astronomy department, University of California, Berkeley, United States

The Kepler spacecraft led to the discovery of numerous Super-Earth-type planets. Little is known about them, as there is no equivalent in the Solar System. It is uncertain whether they have a convective mantle like the Earth. It is also unclear if their mantle is insulating or conducting. In the latter case, for instance, the mantle could generate a magnetic field via dynamo processes. In order to better understand the properties of the silicates under pressure-temperature conditions relevant for the interiors of Super-Earth, we studied MgO, one silicate end-member, with *ab initio* simulations based on density functional theory. We explored its phase diagram and complete equation of state. We also determined its electronic transport properties, conductivity and reflectivity, to characterize its behavior in the different phases. We find that liquid and solid MgO behave differently and discuss the consequences for the planetary interiors.