

# Contents

|          |                                                          |           |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Introduction</b>                                      | <b>1</b>  |
| 1.1      | Outline of the Thesis                                    | 3         |
|          | References                                               | 3         |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Representation of Atomic Environments</b>             | <b>5</b>  |
| 2.1      | Introduction                                             | 5         |
| 2.2      | Translational Invariants                                 | 6         |
| 2.2.1    | Spectra of Signals                                       | 6         |
| 2.2.2    | Bispectrum                                               | 7         |
| 2.2.3    | Bispectrum of Crystals                                   | 8         |
| 2.3      | Rotationally Invariant Features                          | 9         |
| 2.3.1    | Bond-Order Parameters                                    | 10        |
| 2.3.2    | Power Spectrum                                           | 12        |
| 2.3.3    | Bispectrum                                               | 13        |
| 2.3.4    | 4-Dimensional Bispectrum                                 | 17        |
| 2.3.5    | Results                                                  | 19        |
|          | References                                               | 21        |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Gaussian Process</b>                                  | <b>23</b> |
| 3.1      | Introduction                                             | 23        |
| 3.2      | Function Inference                                       | 23        |
| 3.2.1    | Covariance Functions                                     | 25        |
| 3.2.2    | Hyperparameters                                          | 27        |
| 3.2.3    | Predicting Derivatives and Using Derivative Observations | 28        |
| 3.2.4    | Linear Combination of Function Values                    | 29        |
| 3.2.5    | Sparsification                                           | 30        |
|          | References                                               | 31        |

|          |                                                                                             |    |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>4</b> | <b>Interatomic Potentials</b>                                                               | 33 |
| 4.1      | Introduction                                                                                | 33 |
| 4.2      | Quantum Mechanics                                                                           | 34 |
| 4.2.1    | Density Functional Theory                                                                   | 35 |
| 4.3      | Empirical Potentials                                                                        | 39 |
| 4.3.1    | Hard-sphere Potential                                                                       | 39 |
| 4.3.2    | Lennard–Jones Potential                                                                     | 39 |
| 4.3.3    | The Embedded-Atom Model                                                                     | 40 |
| 4.3.4    | The Modified Embedded-Atom Model                                                            | 41 |
| 4.3.5    | Tersoff Potential                                                                           | 43 |
| 4.4      | Long-Range Interactions                                                                     | 44 |
| 4.5      | Neural Network Potentials                                                                   | 44 |
| 4.6      | Gaussian Approximation Potentials                                                           | 45 |
| 4.6.1    | Technical Details                                                                           | 47 |
| 4.6.2    | Multispecies Potentials                                                                     | 48 |
|          | References                                                                                  | 49 |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Computational Methods</b>                                                                | 51 |
| 5.1      | Lattice Dynamics                                                                            | 51 |
| 5.1.1    | Phonon Dispersion                                                                           | 51 |
| 5.1.2    | Molecular Dynamics                                                                          | 53 |
| 5.1.3    | Thermodynamics                                                                              | 53 |
|          | References                                                                                  | 56 |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Results</b>                                                                              | 57 |
| 6.1      | Atomic Energies                                                                             | 57 |
| 6.1.1    | Atomic Expectation Value of a General Operator                                              | 57 |
| 6.1.2    | Atomic Energies                                                                             | 59 |
| 6.1.3    | Atomic Multipoles                                                                           | 60 |
| 6.1.4    | Atomic Energies from ONETEP                                                                 | 60 |
| 6.1.5    | Locality Investigations                                                                     | 62 |
| 6.2      | Gaussian Approximation Potentials                                                           | 64 |
| 6.2.1    | Gaussian Approximation Potentials for Simple Semiconductors: Diamond, Silicon and Germanium | 65 |
| 6.2.2    | Parameters of GAP                                                                           | 66 |
| 6.2.3    | Phonon Spectra                                                                              | 67 |
| 6.2.4    | Anharmonic Effects                                                                          | 69 |
| 6.2.5    | Thermal Expansion of Diamond                                                                | 71 |
| 6.3      | Towards a General Carbon Potential                                                          | 73 |
| 6.4      | Gaussian Approximation Potential for Iron                                                   | 75 |
| 6.5      | Gaussian Approximation Potential for Gallium Nitride                                        | 77 |
| 6.6      | Atomic Energies from GAP                                                                    | 79 |
| 6.7      | Performance of Gaussian Approximation Potentials                                            | 81 |
|          | References                                                                                  | 81 |

|          |                                      |           |
|----------|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>7</b> | <b>Conclusion and Further Work</b>   | <b>83</b> |
| 7.1      | Further Work                         | 84        |
| <b>8</b> | <b>Appendices</b>                    | <b>85</b> |
| 8.1      | A: Woodbury Matrix Identity          | 85        |
| 8.2      | B: Spherical Harmonics               | 86        |
| 8.2.1    | Four-Dimensional Spherical Harmonics | 86        |
| 8.2.2    | Clebsch–Gordan Coefficients          | 88        |