



A classification scheme for mantle-derived garnets in kimberlite: a tool for investigating the mantle and exploring for diamonds

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Abstract

A new empirical method has been devised for classification of mantle-derived garnets in kimberlite. Simple chemical screens have been developed to distinguish between garnets from different parageneses, based on Mg, Fe, Ca, Cr, Ti and Na values of published analyses of garnets from >2000 ultramafic xenoliths in kimberlite. Although crustal garnets are typically uncommon as xenocrysts in kimberlite, the first step in the classification is to screen these from the mantle population, using data from >600 garnet-bearing crustal rocks. Such a screen may also prove useful in evaluating the source (crust vs. mantle) of garnet in kimberlite exploration samples. Subsequent steps divide mantle garnets into eclogite, peridotite and Cr-poor megacryst groupings, and sub-groups of the peridotite (lherzolite, harzburgite, wehrlite) and eclogite (Groups I and II and A, B, C and grosspyrite) populations. Important features of this classification include the fact that it is based on distinctions between groups of fundamental geological significance (e.g., peridotite vs. eclogite) and it is based on a large, well-documented and well-understood xenolith database. As it utilizes oxide values and molar ratios of major and minor elements, the rationale for the screens is readily understood and it is simple to use.

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1. Introduction

Our knowledge of the constitution of the inaccessible parts of the interior of Earth comes from a variety of sources, including cosmochemical modelling and geophysical studies. Direct study of actual samples of the deep interior of Earth, such as the upper mantle, is made possible by the occurrence of such material as tectonically emplaced slices in orogenic belts (e.g., Alpine peridotites) and as accidental inclusions of mantle material brought to the surface by

some kimberlites and other alkaline volcanic rocks. Intact rocks (xenoliths) are ideal samples to study, but these are not as abundant as are single crystals (xenocrysts) derived by the disaggregation of mantle rocks during the typically violent transport to the surface in the host magmas. Great progress has been made in the study of the composition and structure of the upper mantle through xenocryst investigations, especially studies of xenocrystal garnet and chromite (e.g., Gurney and Switzer, 1973; Sobolev et al., 1973, 1975; Boyd and Gurney, 1982; Schulze, 1989b; Griffin et al., 1999; Grutter et al., 1999; Pokhilenko et al., 1999). Most attention has been turned towards garnet, as it occurs in a variety of rock types, such as eclogites and peridotites, rocks prevalent in most

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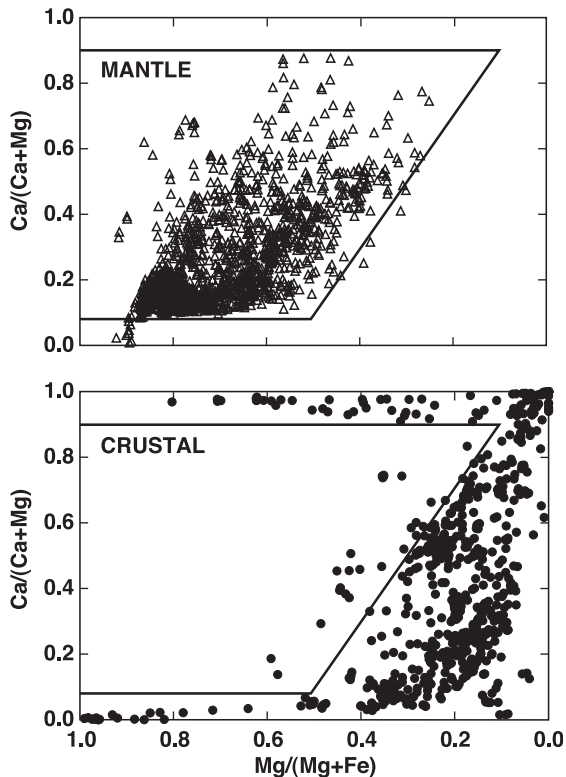


Fig. 1. Distinction between mantle-derived garnets and those from crustal rocks, in terms of $Mg/(Mg+Fe)$ and $Ca/(Ca+Mg)$. As discussed in the text, mantle-derived garnets are from peridotites (lherzolites and harzburgites), eclogites, alkremites and Cr-poor megacrysts. Crustal sources of garnets are dominantly amphibolite to granulite grade meta-pelites and meta-basites, in which garnets are rich in the almandine and spessartine components, but also included are less common garnets rich in the grossular, uvarovite, andradite and pyrope end members.

upper mantle xenolith suites in kimberlite and thus thought to dominate the upper mantle.

A serious drawback of dealing with xenocrysts is that, as they are single crystals, the nature of their parent rock prior to disaggregation is uncertain. One must make inferences about the characteristics of the intact parent rocks based on chemical, and to some extent physical, characteristics of the xenocrysts. To this end, a number of classification schemes have been devised to assist in deciphering more about the pre-disaggregation host of the xenocryst garnets.

Chemical screens have been proposed to help distinguish between garnets from various parageneses,

although most workers have dealt with a restricted range of rock types. Sobolev et al. (1973), for example, outlined the field of compositions of garnets from lherzolites, relative to those from harzburgites and wehrlites, in terms of their CaO and Cr_2O_3 contents and Gurney (1984) proposed a screen to distinguish between garnets from lherzolites and low-Ca garnet harzburgites, also based on CaO and Cr_2O_3 contents. Jago and Mitchell (1989) devised a cluster analysis scheme to group garnets from individual kimberlites based on chemical similarities, although the linkage of the various groups with xenolith types was tenuous. Ramsay (1992) presented graphical screens to subdivide garnets from various rock types.

The most comprehensive and widely used classification scheme for mantle-derived garnets is the cluster analysis of Dawson and Stephens (1975), in which

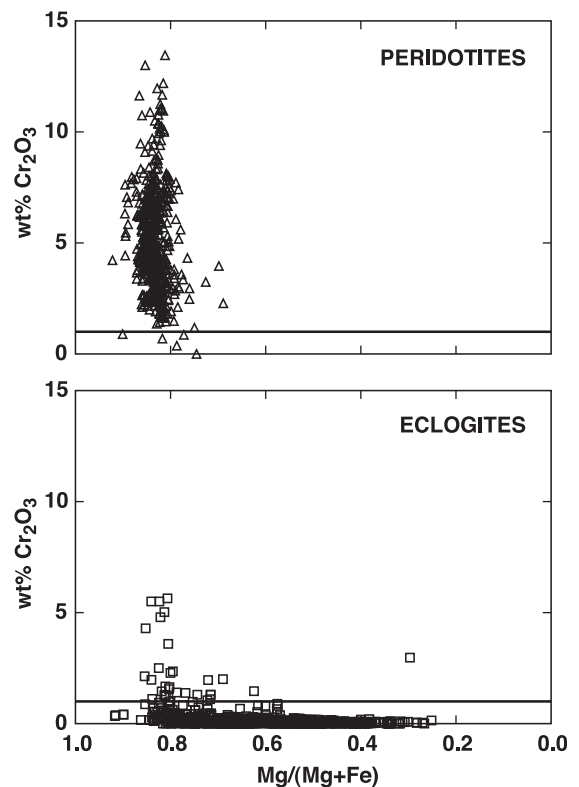


Fig. 2. Variation in Cr_2O_3 and $Mg/(Mg+Fe)$ in garnets from eclogites and peridotites. A value of 1 wt.% Cr_2O_3 is used to discriminate between the two groups, with peridotite garnet values above this and those of eclogite garnets below.

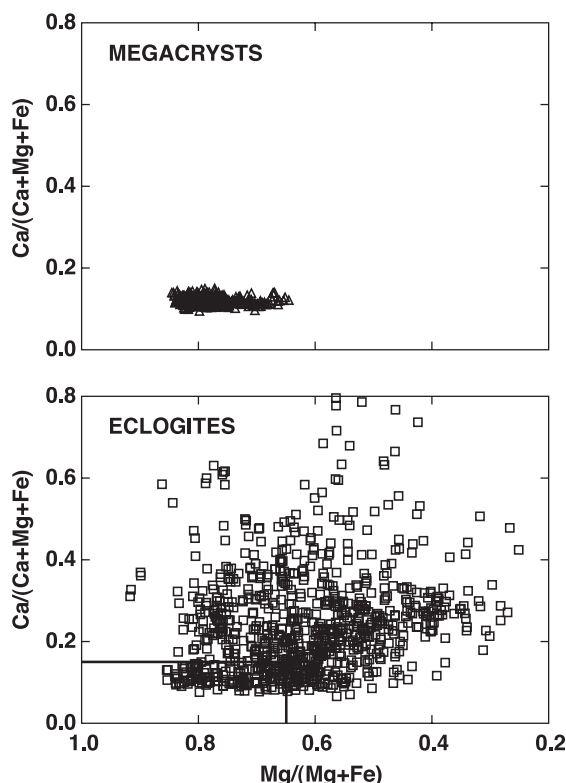


Fig. 3. Variation in $Mg/(Mg+Fe)$ and $Ca/(Ca+Mg+Fe)$ that assist in discrimination between garnets from the Cr-poor megacryst suite and those from eclogites. The solid lines enclose the range of eclogite garnet compositions that overlap with those of Cr-poor megacrysts. Eclogite garnets within this range are distinguished from megacrysts using Ti content in Fig. 4.

garnets from kimberlite are classified into 12 groups based on FeO, MgO, CaO, TiO_2 and Cr_2O_3 contents. Drawbacks of this scheme, however, include the facts that some groups contain garnets from more than one rock type, some rock types fall into two different groups (e.g., Cr-poor megacrysts can be classified into both Groups 1 and 2) and some garnets used to set up the classification are apparently of crustal derivation. Furthermore, the database was relatively small, utilizing only 136 xenoliths, and a substantial number of garnets (163) were single crystals of unknown, or at least uncertain, paragenesis. Danchin and Wyatt (1979) used a similar technique, although their method divided garnets into an unwieldy 52 groups.

A new classification scheme for mantle garnets is presented in this paper. It is based on chemical

analyses of 2073 garnets in mantle xenoliths from kimberlite, together with analyses of 624 garnets from crustal rocks. Figs. 1–7 illustrate the chemical screens that allow distinction between garnets from different parageneses. Figs. 8–11 are flow charts outlining steps using the chemical screens, first to discriminate crustal from mantle garnets (Fig. 8), followed by subdivision of mantle garnets into groups representing those from peridotite, eclogite and the Cr-poor megacryst suite (Fig. 9). Figs. 10 and 11 illustrate subdivision of the eclogite and peridotite groups, respectively. By connecting to the University of Toronto web site at <http://www.geology.utoronto.ca/faculty/schulze.html>, an Excel macro that executes this classification can be downloaded.

The screens are based on Ca, Mg, Fe, Cr, Ti and Na contents of the garnets. Routine modern electron microprobe procedures should typically provide data of high enough quality that analytical accuracy should not be a concern in applying this classification to new garnet data. The one possible exception, however, is the quality of sodium analyses. If garnets classified as eclogite-derived are to be divided into Groups I and II on the basis of their Na_2O contents (as described in a later section), care must be taken to ensure that appropriate WDS microprobe methods have been

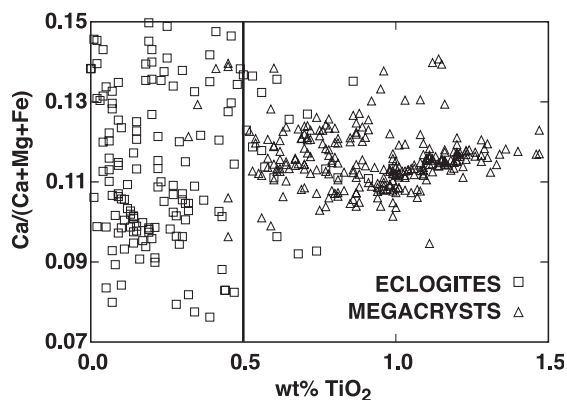


Fig. 4. Variation in TiO_2 and $Ca/(Ca+Mg+Fe)$ in garnets from Cr-poor megacrysts with $Cr_2O_3 < 1$ wt.% and those from eclogites with $Mg/(Mg+Fe) > 0.65$ and $Ca/(Ca+Mg+Fe) < 0.15$. A cut-off value of 0.5 wt.% TiO_2 is used to discriminate between the two groups. Most of the eclogite garnets with $TiO_2 > 0.5$ wt.% are from a single locality, the Kaalvallei kimberlite, as discussed in the text.

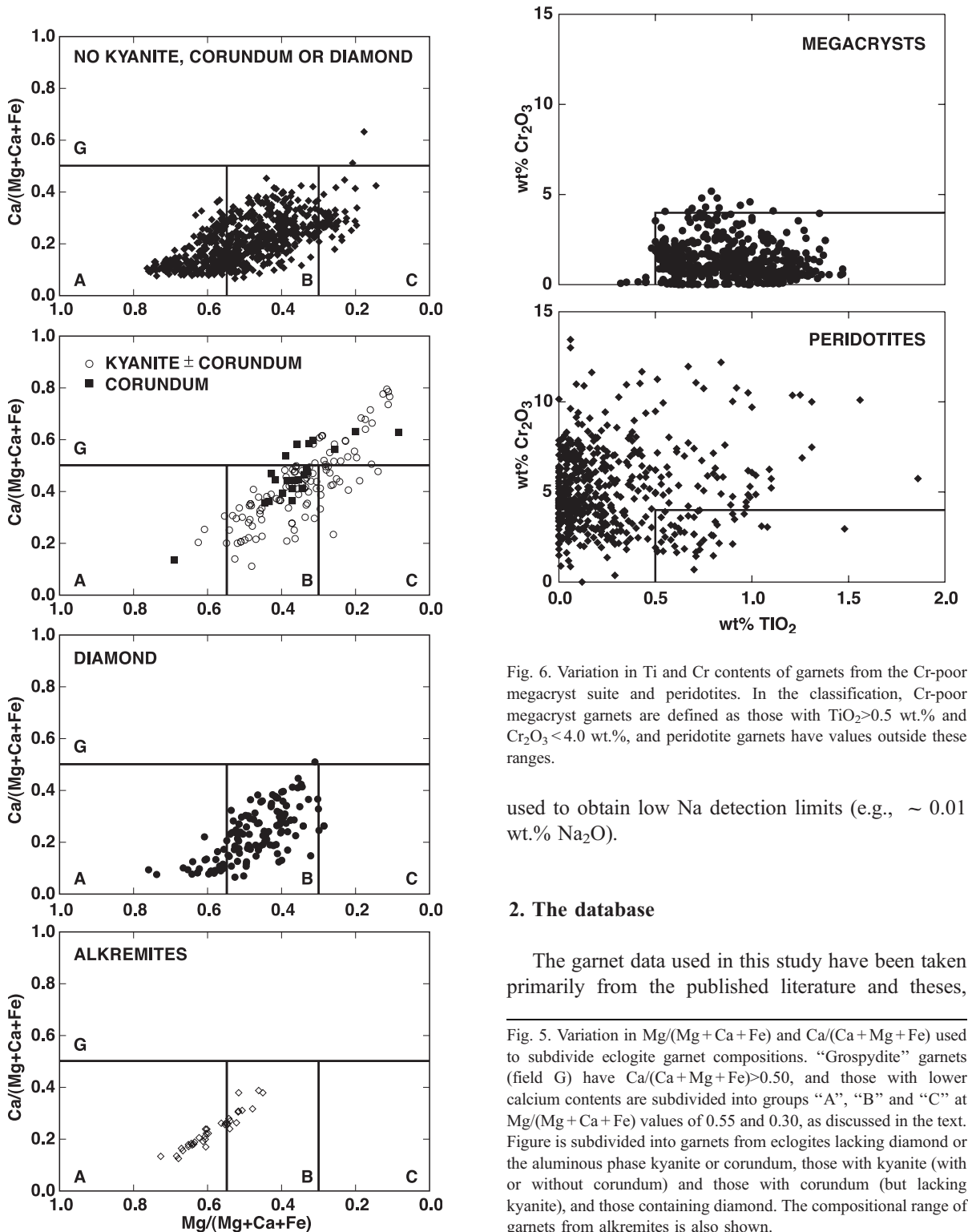


Fig. 6. Variation in Ti and Cr contents of garnets from the Cr-poor megacryst suite and peridotites. In the classification, Cr-poor megacryst garnets are defined as those with $\text{TiO}_2 > 0.5$ wt.% and $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3 < 4.0$ wt.%, and peridotite garnets have values outside these ranges.

used to obtain low Na detection limits (e.g., ~ 0.01 wt.% Na_2O).

2. The database

The garnet data used in this study have been taken primarily from the published literature and theses,

Fig. 5. Variation in $\text{Mg}/(\text{Mg}+\text{Ca}+\text{Fe})$ and $\text{Ca}/(\text{Ca}+\text{Mg}+\text{Fe})$ used to subdivide eclogite garnet compositions. “Grosopydite” garnets (field G) have $\text{Ca}/(\text{Ca}+\text{Mg}+\text{Fe}) > 0.50$, and those with lower calcium contents are subdivided into groups “A”, “B” and “C” at $\text{Mg}/(\text{Mg}+\text{Ca}+\text{Fe})$ values of 0.55 and 0.30, as discussed in the text. Figure is subdivided into garnets from eclogites lacking diamond or the aluminous phase kyanite or corundum, those with kyanite (with or without corundum) and those with corundum (but lacking kyanite), and those containing diamond. The compositional range of garnets from alkremites is also shown.

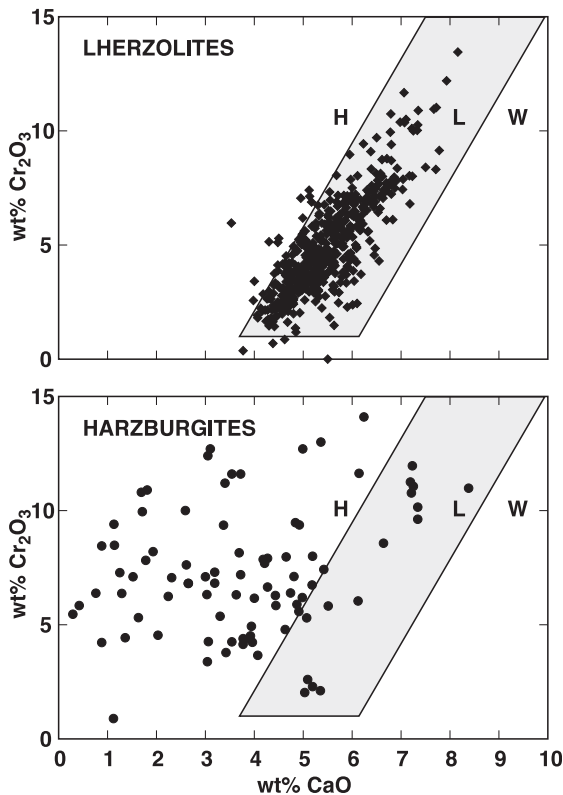


Fig. 7. Variation in CaO and Cr₂O₃ in garnets from lherzolites and harzburgites. Garnets from lherzolites are dominantly in the shaded area within the solid lines, with the points at CaO values significantly below the lower lherzolite limit likely not to be in equilibrium with both clinopyroxene and orthopyroxene. Garnets from harzburgites (lacking modal clinopyroxene) fall both within the lherzolite field, indicating equilibration with clinopyroxene, and at CaO values below the lherzolite field. The latter are typical of peridotite–suite garnets in diamonds. Garnets from wehrlites, not in equilibrium with orthopyroxene, will plot at CaO values above those of the lherzolite field. Fields defined in this classification are harzburgite (H), lherzolite (L, shaded field) and wehrlite (W).

and some previously unpublished microprobe analyses have also been used. These new WDS data (obtained at the University of Toronto) consist of analyses of 56 eclogite garnets from Kaalvallei and Bobbejaan and 94 lherzolite garnets from Kimberley dumps, Hamilton Branch and Liqobong. By connecting to the University of Toronto web site at <http://www.geology.utoronto.ca/faculty/schulze.html>, these new data can be downloaded. Although some published analyses included calculated Fe₂O₃ values, all iron values used in this study have been recalculated

to total Fe as FeO, the typical method used to report electron microprobe data.

2.1. Crustal garnets

The most common occurrence of garnet in crustal rocks is in medium to high-grade meta-pelites and meta-basites. These garnets are rich in the almandine end-member, Fe₃Al₂Si₃O₁₂, and can have significant Mn contents (spessartine end-member, Mn₃Al₂Si₃O₁₂). Such garnets dominate the crustal component of the database as they are readily obtainable from the published literature. A specific search was also made for less common compositions of crustal garnets, including those rich in the grossular (Ca₃Al₂Si₃O₁₂), andradite (Ca₃Fe₂Si₃O₁₂), uvarovite (Ca₃Cr₂Si₃O₁₂), and pyrope (Mg₃Al₂Si₃O₁₂) end-members. Crustal garnet compositions in the database are from Dunn (1978), Nixon (1979), Percival (1981), Pattison et al. (1982), Chopin (1984), Cortesogno and Lucchetti (1986), von Knorring et al. (1986), Chopin et al. (1991), Gordon et al. (1991, 1994), Pattison (1991), Bégin and Pattison (1994), Fitzsimons and Harley (1994), Pattison and Bégin (1994), Nyman et al. (1995), Santos de Lima et al. (1995), Fitzsimons (1996), Guiraud et al. (1996), Hartel and Pattison (1996), Knudsen (1996), Kryza et al. (1996), Shaw and Arima (1996), Thöni and Miller (1996), Whitney et al. (1996, 2001), Azor and Ballèvre (1997), Cartwright et al. (1997), Simon et al. (1997), Willner et al. (1997), Rosenberg et al. (1998), Vance and Mahar (1998), Parthasarathy et al. (1999), Abd El-Naby et al. (2000), Bose et al. (2000), Clarke et al. (2000), Cooke et al. (2000), Fraser et al. (2000), Gayk and Kleinschrodt (2000), Gupta et al. (2000), Jones and Strachan (2000), Moraes and Fuck (2000), Parkinson (2000), Zhao et al. (2000), Bruno et al. (2001), Compagnoni and Hirajima (2001), Garcia-Casco et al. (2001), Habler and Thoni (2001), Harangi et al. (2001), Lang and Gilotti (2001), Pita and de Waal (2001), Rolland et al. (2001), Rotzler and Romer (2001), Satish-Kumar et al. (2001), Schmadicke et al. (2001), Scrimgeour et al. (2001), Stowell et al. (2001), White et al. (2001) and Zeh and Millar (2001).

2.2. Mantle-derived garnets

All of the garnets in this category are from ultramafic xenoliths from kimberlites, specifically lherzo-

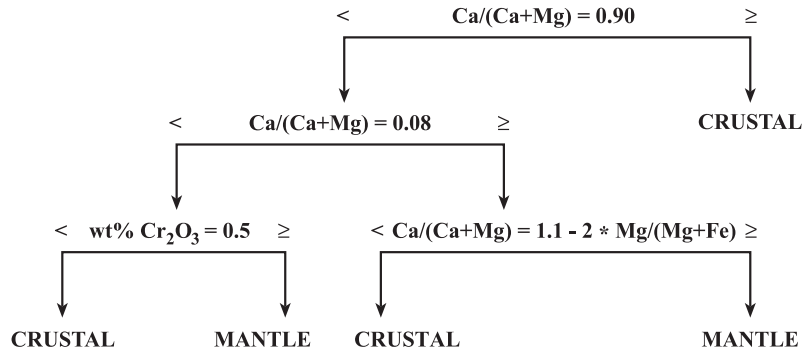
CRUSTAL vs. MANTLE GARNETS:

Fig. 8. Flow chart illustrating the steps used to distinguish between garnets derived from crustal rocks and those of mantle origin.

lites, harzburgites, eclogites, and Cr-poor megacrysts. Garnet inclusions in diamonds were not included as in some instances their compositions are well outside of the range of compositions of minerals from ultramafic xenoliths (e.g., Gurney et al., 1984; Schulze, 1997). Table 1 lists the regional distribution of the kimberlite sources of the 2073 mantle xenoliths in the database. Approximately half of the samples are from kimberlites on the Kaapvaal Craton. Specific locations can be obtained from the references cited.

Eclogite garnet data are from Sobolev et al. (1968, 1994), Meyer and Brookins (1971), Chinner and Cornell (1974), Reid et al. (1976), Smyth and Hatton

(1977), Shee (1978), Shee and Gurney (1979), Boyd and Danchin (1980), Ater (1982), Tollo (1982), McGee and Hearn (1984), Robinson et al. (1984), Smyth and Caporuscio (1984), Spetsius et al. (1984), Hall (1985), MacGregor and Manton (1986), McCandless and Gurney (1986), Ford (1987), Schulze and Helmstaedt (1988), Sommerville (1988), de Bruin (1989), Hills and Haggerty (1989), Smith et al. (1989), Taylor and Neal (1989), Schulze (1992, 1997), Jerde et al. (1993a,b), Jacob et al. (1994), Viljoen (1994, 1995), Fung and Haggerty (1995), Beard et al. (1996), Schulze et al. (1996, 1997, 2000), Taylor et al. (1996), Viljoen et al. (1996),

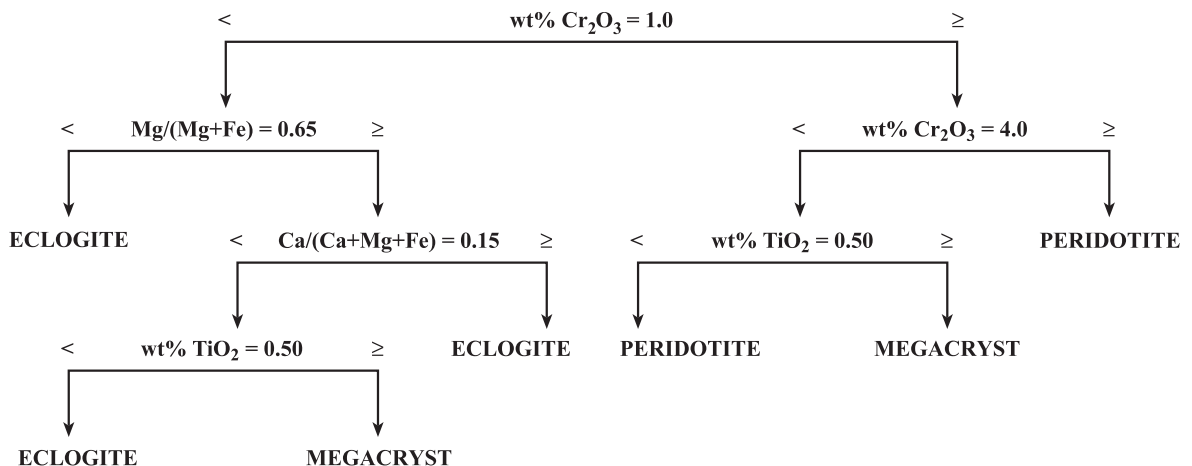
MANTLE GARNETS:

Fig. 9. Flow chart illustrating the steps used to subdivide mantle garnets into groups representing those from eclogites, peridotites and Cr-poor megacrysts.

ECLOGITE GARNETS:

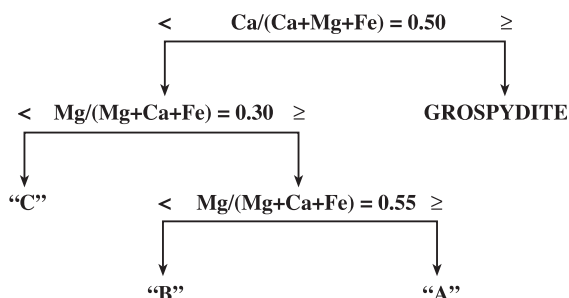


Fig. 10. Flow chart illustrating the steps used to subdivide eclogite garnets. Eclogite garnets are further subdivided into Groups I and II using sodium content, if reliable values for Na_2O values are available. See text for discussion.

Snyder et al. (1997), El Fadili and Demaiffe (1999), Kopylova et al. (1999) and this paper. Alkremite garnets, used for comparison with other rock types but not specifically used to define the chemical screens, are from Nixon et al. (1978), Shee (1978), Exley et al. (1983), Mazzone and Haggerty (1989a,b), and Viljoen (1994).

Harzburgite garnet data were taken from Pokhilenko et al. (1977, 1991, 1993), Dawson et al. (1978), Sobolev et al. (1984) Nixon et al. (1987), Boyd and Nixon (1988), Hops (1989), Skinner (1989), Viljoen et al. (1992), Boyd et al. (1993), Schulze (1995), Pearson et al. (1994, 1999), Schulze et al. (1997) and Burgess and Harte (1999). Lherzolite garnet data are from Boyd (1973), Cox et al. (1973), Nixon and Boyd (1973b), Hearn and Boyd (1975), Boyd et al. (1976), Danchin and Boyd (1976), Pokhilenko et al. (1977, 1991), Smith (1977), Sobolev (1977), Bishop et al. (1978), Boyd and Nixon (1978), Carswell et al.

(1979), MacGregor (1979), Boyd and Danchin (1980), Robey (1981), Shee et al. (1982), Hearn and McGee (1984), Mitchell (1984), Sobolev et al. (1984), Eggler et al. (1987), Hops (1989), Nehru and Reddy (1989), Skinner (1989), Hall (1991), Pearson et al. (1994, 1999), Viljoen et al. (1994), Vicker (1997), Burgess and Harte (1999), Kopylova et al. (1999) and this paper.

Analyses of garnets belonging to the Cr-poor megacryst suite are from Nixon and Boyd (1973a), Jakob (1977), Robey (1981), Hops (1989), de Bruin (1991) and Schulze (1997).

3. Distinction between crustal and mantle garnets

As kimberlites pass through both the uppermost upper mantle and the entire thickness of the continental crust on their rise to Earth's surface, they are likely to contain garnets derived from both mantle and crustal regions. In most kimberlites, mantle-derived xenoliths appear to be far more abundant than xenoliths that belong to the crustal portion of the crystalline basement, although locally garnet-bearing (and other) crystalline crustal rocks may be relatively abundant (e.g., Dawson and Smith, 1987). In studies of garnet xenocrysts from 32 kimberlites from South Africa and North America (4500 garnets), Schulze (1993, 1994) found that 2/3 of the kimberlites contained some crustal garnets and 3% of all the garnet xenocrysts in these kimberlites were derived from crustal rocks (using an earlier formulation of this classification scheme). Approximately one-quarter of the garnet xenocrysts in the Lace kimberlite are crustal (Schulze, 1994). Thus, it is important to be able to

PERIDOTITE GARNETS:

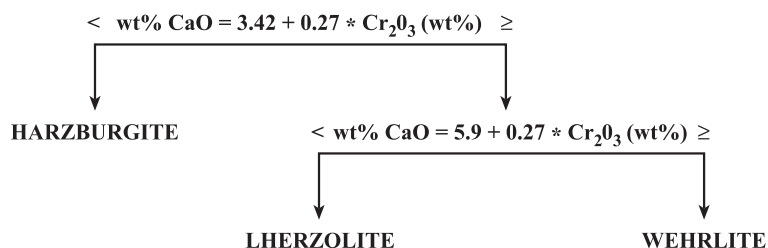


Fig. 11. Flow chart illustrating the steps used to subdivide peridotite garnets into harzburgite, lherzolite and wehrlite subgroups.

Table 1
Geographic–tectonic distribution of samples in database

| | Lherzolite | Harzburgite | Megacryst | Eclogite |
|----------------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| Kaapvaal Craton | 208 | 55 | 422 | 458 |
| Kaapvaal margin | 14 | | 27 | |
| Zimbabwe Craton | | | | 117 |
| West African Craton | | | | 87 |
| Congo Craton | 12 | | | 16 |
| Tanzanian Craton | 3 | | | |
| Namaqua Belt | 55 | | | |
| Siberian Platform | 18 | 29 | | 116 |
| Dharwar Craton | 6 | | | |
| Slave Craton | 26 | 5 | | 28 |
| Superior Craton | 82 | | | 9 |
| Grenville Province | 43 | | | |
| Canadian Cordillera | 2 | | | |
| Wyoming Craton | 15 | | | |
| Yavapai-Mazatzal Belt, USA | 14 | | 98 | 96 |
| Adeladian Belt, Australia | | | 12 | |
| Total | 498 | 89 | 559 | 927 |

screen out crustal garnets from kimberlite xenocryst populations in order to interpret properly the mantle population. Furthermore, in kimberlite and diamond exploration work, in which most garnets from sediment samples are likely to be derived from exposed crustal rocks, it is essential to be able to screen out the crustal garnet population in the search for the kimberlite-derived (i.e., mantle) garnets.

Garnets from crustal and mantle sources are compared in Fig. 1, in terms of $\text{Ca}/(\text{Ca} + \text{Mg})$ and $\text{Mg}/(\text{Mg} + \text{Fe})$ values (mole proportions). In general, crustal garnets are characterized by lower $\text{Mg}/(\text{Mg} + \text{Fe})$ values relative to those from mantle rocks, but many crustal garnets with very high or low values of $\text{Ca}/(\text{Ca} + \text{Mg})$ overlap mantle garnets in terms of $\text{Mg}/(\text{Mg} + \text{Fe})$.

With the exception of some Ca-poor Cr-pyropes from harzburgites, mantle garnets do not extend to the very low $\text{Ca}/(\text{Ca} + \text{Mg})$ values of some of the pyrope-rich garnets in high-grade quartzites and whiteschists, such as those described from coesite-bearing rocks in the Alps (e.g., Chopin, 1984) and a cut-off of $\text{Ca}/(\text{Ca} + \text{Mg}) = 0.08$ discriminates between the Mg-rich, Ca-poor crustal garnets and most of the Mg-rich mantle garnets that have higher values of $\text{Ca}/(\text{Ca} + \text{Mg})$. The crustal Ca-poor pyropes are essentially Cr-free, however, whereas similarly magnesian and

Ca-poor mantle garnets (such as diamond-bearing low-Ca garnet harzburgites) are Cr-rich. Mantle garnets with $\text{Ca}/(\text{Ca} + \text{Mg}) < 0.08$ have Cr_2O_3 contents above 0.5 wt.%, and this cutoff is used in addition to distinguish between Ca-poor, Mg-rich garnets from the crust and those from the mantle (Fig. 1). The upper limit of $\text{Ca}/(\text{Ca} + \text{Mg})$ values for mantle garnets is 0.90.

For garnets of intermediate $\text{Ca}/(\text{Ca} + \text{Mg})$ values ($0.08 < \text{Ca}/(\text{Ca} + \text{Mg}) < 0.90$), the two garnet groups are divided at $\text{Ca}/(\text{Ca} + \text{Mg}) = 1.1 - 2\text{Mg}/(\text{Mg} + \text{Fe})$, with mantle garnets having $\text{Mg}/(\text{Mg} + \text{Fe})$ values above this and those from crustal rocks below (Fig. 1). Five mantle garnets, all from eclogites, and 27 crustal garnets fall outside of the defined boundaries for these rock types, representing < 1% and 4% of the database for each rock type, respectively (Table 2). The discriminant line has been chosen to favour correct classification of mantle garnets, as few crustal garnets are expected to occur in most kimberlites and the classification is primarily intended for use with garnets in kimberlite. If this discriminant is used for garnets from exploration samples, some Mg-rich crustal garnets could be incorrectly classified as mantle-derived (specifically eclogitic). In the absence of a significantly larger number of additional clearly mantle-derived garnets in such an exploration sample (e.g., Cr-pyropes and Cr-poor megacryst garnets), as predicted by garnet populations from known kimberlites (Schulze, 1997), such a result should be viewed with suspicion.

Table 2

Comparison of garnet classifications: classification proposed in this paper vs. rock name given in the literature for garnets in the database

| Name in proposed classification | Literature rock name | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | Crustal (624) ^a | Lherzolite (498) | Harzburgite (89) | Megacryst (559) | Eclogite (927) |
| Crustal | 597 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Wehrlite | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Lherzolite | 0 | 438 | 15 | 12 | 22 |
| Harzburgite | 0 | 12 | 72 | 0 | 4 |
| Megacryst | 0 | 45 | 0 | 541 | 21 |
| Eclogite | 27 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 873 |
| % Agreement | 96 | 88 | 81 | 97 | 94 |

^a Number in parentheses indicates number of garnets from that rock type in the database.

4. Subdivision of mantle garnets

4.1. Eclogite vs. peridotite

The three general categories of mantle garnets considered in this paper are eclogite, peridotite, and Cr-poor megacryst. Eclogites are essentially biminer- alic garnet–clinopyroxene rocks that may contain a variety of accessory minerals, such as rutile, kyanite, diamond, graphite and coesite. With few exceptions, the silicates in rocks termed “eclogite” have low Cr₂O₃ contents, and cut-off values at modest levels of Cr₂O₃ (0.5–4.0 wt.%; e.g., Gurney, 1984; Schulze, 1989b) have been proposed to distinguish eclogite- derived garnets from those from peridotites. A cut-off of 1.0 wt.% Cr₂O₃ is used in this classification. In the database, garnets from 29 of 927 rocks described as eclogite have Cr₂O₃>1.0 wt.% (3% of eclogite gar- nets) and only 5 of 541 peridotitic garnets have Cr₂O₃<1.0 wt.% (less than 1% of peridotitic garnets) (Fig. 2).

4.2. Pyroxenites

One group that is not distinguished in this classi- fication is “pyroxenite”. Rocks rich in pyroxene and poor in, or free of, olivine are common, though typically not abundant, in many xenolith suites in kimberlites. They undoubtedly have a variety of ori- gins. The Cr-rich eclogites in the database would be called garnet clinopyroxenites by many workers, and some garnet pyroxenites, especially those containing primary spinel (e.g., Egger et al., 1987), are probably more closely related to peridotites than to eclogites. Two-pyroxene garnet websterites may be also be modal variants of peridotites (e.g., Cox et al., 1973) and others may be closely related to eclogites (e.g., Hatton, 1978). Some Ti-rich pyroxenites may be cumulates related to the Cr-poor megacryst suite (e.g., Kopylova et al., 1999). In the classification scheme proposed here, such garnets will be classified as the variety of peridotite, eclogite or Cr-poor megacryst that they would most closely resemble chemically.

4.3. Eclogite vs. Cr-poor megacryst

Although peridotite garnets are distinct from eclo- gite garnets in terms of Cr₂O₃, the other important

type of garnet from the mantle, from the Cr-poor megacryst suite (e.g., Egger et al., 1979; Gurney et al., 1979; Schulze, 1987) overlaps both eclogitic and peridotitic garnets in Cr₂O₃ content. Unlike the large variation in Ca/(Ca+Mg+Fe) and Mg/(Mg+Fe) exhibited by eclogite garnets, however, Cr-poor mega- cryst garnets show only a small range in these values, illustrated in Fig. 3. Compositions of only two mega- cryst garnets of 559 in the database (<1%) are outside of the ranges 0.09<Ca/(Ca+Mg+Fe)<0.15 and Mg/ (Mg+Fe)>0.65. Cr-poor megacryst garnets typically have elevated Ti contents relative to eclogite garnets, however, and the two groups can be effectively separated on the basis of TiO₂, Mg/(Mg+Fe) and Ca/(Ca+Mg). Only 150 eclogite garnets in the data- base overlap Cr-poor megacryst garnets in terms of Ca/(Ca+Mg) and Mg/(Mg+Fe). Comparison of Ti contents of these two groups (megacrysts with Cr₂O₃<1.0 wt.% and the sub-set of 150 eclogitic garnets) in Fig. 4 shows little overlap, and a distinc- tion between the two groups is made at 0.5 wt.% TiO₂. Seven of the 265 Cr-poor megacryst garnets with Cr₂O₃ below 1.0 wt.% have less than 0.5 wt.% TiO₂ (3% of this megacryst sub-group and 1% of the whole megacryst suite). Eighteen eclogite garnets have TiO₂>0.5 wt.%, which would cause them to be mis-classified as garnets belonging to the Cr-poor megacryst suite. Fourteen of those are from the Kaalvallei kimberlite, however, which is anomalous in the Ti-rich eclogites that occur there (Viljoen, 1994). Aside from the Kaalvallei Ti-rich eclogite garnets, only four other eclogite garnets have TiO₂ values corresponding to the Cr-poor megacryst field (less than 1% of the 927 eclogites in the database). Even including the Kaalvallei Ti-rich eclogites, only 2% of the eclogites overlap garnets from the Cr-poor megacryst suite (Table 2).

4.4. Subdivision of eclogite garnets

Although mantle eclogites contain a wide variety of primary accessory minerals (e.g., rutile, kyanite, co- rundum, diamond, graphite, coesite, sanidine, ortho- pyroxene, ilmenite, apatite, zircon, phlogopite, titanite, spinel, amphibole, sulphides), and their garnets and clinopyroxenes range widely in composition, there are few paragenetic or chemical screens that allow mean- ingful subdivision of this group. One classification

that has gained wide acceptance, however, is based on the Na₂O content of eclogitic garnet. Many eclogite suites have garnets with bimodal distribution of Na contents, which has been especially well documented in samples from the Roberts Victor Mine (e.g., MacGregor and Carter, 1970; Hatton, 1978; McCandless and Gurney, 1989; Schulze et al., 2000). Based on Roberts Victor and other eclogite suites (e.g., Gurney, 1984), eclogite garnets are divided into two groups at 0.07 wt.% Na₂O. Group II eclogite garnets have <0.07 wt.% Na₂O and those from Group I have ≥0.07 wt.% Na₂O.

The high sodium content of Group I eclogite garnets has been proposed as a diamond exploration tool, as the garnets in most diamond-bearing eclogites have Na₂O > 0.07 wt.% and are classified as Group I. Of the 145 diamond-bearing eclogites in the database, only seven have Na₂O < 0.07 wt.%. Group I eclogite garnets are not completely correlative with diamonds, however, as garnets from many graphite-bearing eclogites have Na₂O > 0.07 wt.% (e.g., Grutter and Quadling, 1999), and most Group I eclogites do not contain any carbon polymorph.

Not all published eclogite garnet data have reliable sodium values. Sodium is typically not reported for analyses obtained using energy dispersive microprobe methods, and some older wavelength dispersive microprobe data are imprecise. In this classification scheme, sub-division into Groups I and II based on sodium content of garnet is applied at the end of the routine in appropriate cases, modifying the other eclogite sub-groupings suggested below.

Kyanite-bearing eclogites are well known and fairly common and corundum-bearing examples also occur, but are less abundant. Kyanite eclogites with high Ca garnets (Ca/(Ca + Mg + Fe) > 0.50) are referred to as grospsydites (e.g., Sobolev et al., 1968). In Fig. 5, eclogites containing kyanite and/or corundum are compared with eclogites lacking these aluminous minerals, and it is clear that most eclogites in which garnets have Ca/(Ca + Mg + Fe) > 0.50 also contain kyanite and/or corundum. Thus, garnets with Ca/(Ca + Mg + Fe) > 0.50 are classified as G-type (for grospsydite), although not all such garnets necessarily represent disaggregated kyanite eclogites, which is part of the true definition of grospsydite. Some garnets with Ca/(Ca + Mg + Fe) > 0.50 are from kyanite-free, corundum-bearing eclogites and a few contain neither

corundum nor kyanite (Fig. 5). Furthermore, it is clear from the wide variation in Ca/(Ca + Mg + Fe) contents of garnets from corundum/kyanite eclogites that the presence of these aluminous minerals is not restricted to eclogites with high calcium garnets.

Eclogitic garnets with Ca/(Ca + Mg + Fe) < 0.50 have been subdivided into three groups, based on their Mg/(Mg + Ca + Fe) values (Fig. 5). These three groups, termed A, B and C have ranges of Mg/(Mg + Ca + Fe) as illustrated in Fig. 5, corresponding to the compositional breaks suggested by Coleman et al. (1965) in their study of eclogites from a variety of geologic settings. The original three Groups A, B and C were established in order to “subdivide the various types [of eclogite] into geologically similar occurrences” (Coleman et al., 1965, p. 485) and it was *not* their intention to use these groupings to classify eclogites based on garnet composition. [At that time, the mineral chemical database for mantle eclogites was so small that all mantle eclogite garnets were thought to be pyropic and correspond to Group A. It has since been shown that mantle eclogites have an extremely wide compositional range (e.g., MacGregor and Carter, 1970; Hatton, 1978; Ater, 1982; Fung and Haggerty, 1995). The A, B and C designations are used here solely to divide the large compositional range into smaller, but arbitrary, fields (with no particular petrologic significance), to facilitate discussion of various eclogite populations. For example, diamond-bearing eclogites (Fig. 5) can be described as primarily belonging to Group B, with Group A examples being less abundant, and Group C and grospsydite varieties being extremely rare. The compositional ranges and A, B, C designations have been chosen for historical purposes, consistent with continued use of the Coleman et al. (1965) terminology (e.g., Fung and Haggerty, 1995; Snyder et al., 1997).

Also illustrated in Fig. 5 are compositions of garnets from alkremites (Ponomarenko, 1975), which are garnet–spinel rocks, some of which contain corundum (e.g., Nixon et al., 1978). Ponomarenko (1975) considered alkremites to belong to an “ultramafic” paragenesis. They are much less abundant and less widely distributed than are either peridotites or eclogites. Although their mineral assemblage is distinct from eclogites (alkremites lack clinopyroxene and primary spinel is extremely rare in mantle eclogites; Viljoen, 1994), and they have only a small range

in composition, in terms of Ca/Mg/Fe values (Fig. 5), as well as Ti, Cr and Mn contents, their garnets are similar in composition to some in eclogites. In garnet composition, alkremites form a sub-group of the eclogites and thus in the classification scheme alkremite garnets are grouped with those from eclogites.

4.5. Cr-poor megacryst vs. peridotite

As noted above, eclogites with $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3 > 1.0$ wt.% are uncommon, and most garnets with $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3 > 1.0$ wt.% are from peridotites and the Cr-poor megacryst suite. As the name implies, Cr-poor megacryst garnets do not have very high Cr_2O_3 contents, and those with $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3 < 1.0$ wt.% were distinguished from eclogites above. Garnets from most Cr-poor megacryst suites have $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3 < 2\text{--}3$ wt.%, especially those from Group I kimberlites in southern Africa (e.g., Nixon and Boyd, 1973a,b; Gurney et al., 1979), although those from North America (e.g., Eggler et al., 1979; Schulze, 1997), and from Group II kimberlites in southern Africa (e.g., Moore and Gurney, 1991), can reach Cr_2O_3 values above 4 wt.% (Fig. 6).

Garnets in most peridotites are considerably richer in Cr_2O_3 . Cr_2O_3 values above 5 wt.% are typical and those above 10 wt.% are not uncommon (Fig. 6).

Titanium contents are also useful in distinguishing between garnets that belong to the Cr-poor megacryst suite and those from peridotites. Megacryst garnets are mostly above 0.5 wt.% TiO_2 whereas those from peridotites, though occupying a large range, have TiO_2 contents primarily below that value. The smallest overlap between these two groups occurs by defining megacryst garnets as having $\text{TiO}_2 > 0.50$ wt.% and $\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3 < 4.0$ wt.%, and peridotite garnets having compositions outside this range, as illustrated in Fig. 6. Using these values as screens, 12 of 559 Cr-poor megacryst garnets and 45 of 587 peridotites are incorrectly classified, 5% of the summed populations of the two groups. Within some individual kimberlite populations, there is no overlap between garnets from the megacryst suite and those from “sheared” peridotites, such as at Jagersfontein (Hops, 1989).

Most of the peridotite garnets that correspond in composition to Cr-poor megacrysts occur in the population of high-temperature, deformed (“sheared”) peridotites (e.g., Nixon and Boyd, 1973a,b). This is not surprising, as many workers have concluded that

the parent magma of the megacrysts has infiltrated the sheared peridotites and metasomatised them (e.g., Gurney and Harte, 1980) and so the similarities in composition between the two groups reflect genetic links. As many of the Ti-rich garnets in the high-temperature peridotites are zoned (e.g., Smith and Boyd, 1992), whereas garnet megacrysts are typically homogeneous, a test for homogeneity in suspect garnets might assist in distinguishing one type of Ti-rich, Cr-poor garnet from the other.

4.6. Subdivision of peridotite garnets

Pyroxene-bearing peridotites (i.e., not dunites) are subdivided into lherzolite, harzburgite and wehrlite, based on the presence or absence of modal orthopyroxene and clinopyroxene. Harzburgites contain orthopyroxene and lack clinopyroxene, wehrlites contain clinopyroxene but lack orthopyroxene and lherzolites contain both clinopyroxene and orthopyroxene. Sobolev et al. (1973) showed that Ca and Cr correlate positively in garnets from lherzolites, and the field of garnets from lherzolites in the database is shown in terms of wt.% CaO and wt.% Cr_2O_3 (Fig. 7). Garnets that plot within the field defined by the lherzolite garnets are classified as lherzolite, those with CaO values above the lherzolite field are termed wehrlite, and those with CaO values below the lherzolite field are termed harzburgite. The lower limit of the lherzolite field in this figure ($\text{CaO} = 3.42 + 0.27\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3$, with oxide values in weight percent) is taken from Fig. 3 of Gurney (1984), dividing the garnets termed G9 and G10 in his study of peridotite–suite garnets included in diamonds. Garnets termed G9 correspond to those from lherzolites and those termed G10 correspond to harzburgite garnets. The upper CaO limit of the lherzolite field in Fig. 7 is drawn to enclose the lherzolite garnets in the database, and be parallel to the lower CaO limit. Four lherzolite garnets have Cr_2O_3 contents below 1.0 wt.%, and 12 plot below the lower CaO limit. Of the latter, two significantly within the harzburgite field are in a zoned garnet from Jagersfontein described by Burgess and Harte (1999). The composition of the core of this garnet is so far into the harzburgite field that it is probably not in equilibrium with the clinopyroxene in the rock and thus is not considered in defining the lherzolite field (also see Pokhilenko et al., 1999). A similar situation was

documented in a lherzolite from the Roberts Victor mine by Viljoen et al. (1994), who concluded that a low-CaO garnet in a lherzolite was out of equilibrium with the clinopyroxene in the peridotite, which probably represented late, metasomatic introduction of clinopyroxene into a low-Ca garnet harzburgite.

Fig. 7 also illustrates compositions of garnets from rocks described as in the literature as harzburgites. As this type of garnet does not have much influence on the screens used for classification, only a few sources were used for data, simply to illustrate how harzburgite garnets might be classified. A significant proportion (~ 17%) of these garnets plot in the lherzolite field. This suggests that the minerals in these rocks are in equilibrium with clinopyroxene, though it does not appear in the mode of the rock. Such garnets would be classified as lherzolite-derived, and are common in harzburgites (Schulze, 1995).

Most peridotite–suite garnets that occur as inclusions in diamonds correspond to compositions in the harzburgite field (the G10 garnets of Gurney, 1984), and this chemical characteristic has proven to be one of the most valuable features of garnets used in diamond exploration. Further subdivisions of the harzburgite field have been used by Gurney (1980) to give “scores” to garnet xenocryst populations, “scores” used in ranking the diamond potential of individual kimberlites. Versions of these harzburgite subdivisions have been illustrated by Hill (1989), Griffin et al. (1992), and Lee (1993), but are not utilized in this classification scheme.

Garnets that plot above the lherzolite field, in the wehrlite field, are not common in kimberlites. Some true garnet wehrlites have been described (e.g., Sobolev et al., 1973; Schulze, 1989a) and garnets from rocks referred to as Cr-rich eclogites also fall within the wehrlite field. Most of the unusual green garnet xenocrysts, rich in the uvarovite component, such as those described by Sobolev et al. (1973), Clarke and Carswell (1977) and Schulze (1989) correspond to wehrlite garnets.

5. Evaluation of the classification scheme

Table 2 is cross-tabulation comparing original rock names in the literature for garnets in the database with names that would be assigned to them using the new

classification. The original name is returned in over 93% of the cases.

Three suites of mantle garnets not included in the database have also been used to independently evaluate the new classification. They are garnets from peridotites from Letseng-la-Terae, Lesotho (new data from Moore and Lock, 2001), garnet megacrysts from Orapa, Botswana (Shee, 1978) and garnets from eclogites from the Jagersfontein kimberlite in South Africa (Dawson and Smith, 1986; Pyle and Haggerty, 1998). Garnets from these populations have been classified using the new scheme in this paper, and results are compared with the names given to the rocks in the original studies.

Of the 17 clinopyroxene-bearing peridotites from Letseng, all are classified as peridotite. Garnets from 16 of these are classified as lherzolite and one as harzburgite (though very near the lherzolite field). All 20 of the Orapa garnet megacrysts are classified as megacrysts by the new classification scheme. Of the 76 eclogites from Jagersfontein, one Cr-rich ($\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_3 = 1.59$ wt.%) garnet would be classified as a lherzolite garnet. One Ti-rich eclogite garnet (0.90 wt.% TiO_2) would be classified as derived from the Cr-poor megacryst suite. As the clinopyroxene with which this garnet coexists (Pyle and Haggerty, 1998) is anomalous relative to other eclogite clinopyroxenes at Jagersfontein, but similar to Cr-poor clinopyroxene megacrysts from this location (Hops, 1989), it is likely that the sample was originally mis-classified, but is correctly classified in the new scheme. The remaining 74 Jagersfontein eclogite garnets are classified as eclogite-derived. Eclogites with Na_2O values of both Groups I and II occur, although there is not a clear separation between the two groups at $\text{Na}_2\text{O} = 0.07$ wt.%. In terms of $\text{Mg}/(\text{Mg} + \text{Ca} + \text{Fe})$ values, Group C eclogites are absent and the ratio of Group B to Group A is about 2:1.

Thus, the new classification scheme yields satisfactory results in classifying garnets from mantle xenoliths of known paragenesis for the three suites used here, and for the original data in the database.

6. Concluding remarks

The mantle garnet classification scheme proposed in this paper is thought to represent a significant

improvement over those currently available in the published literature. It is based on a large body of published data of garnets from mantle xenoliths in kimberlites worldwide. The chemical screens utilized to distinguish between populations typically only “mis-classify” a few percent of garnets from any given rock type, giving a high degree of confidence in their general applicability to garnets from unknown sources.

Although the primary intention of the classification is to understand better garnets from the upper mantle, to aid in furthering our knowledge of the constitution of this inaccessible part of Earth, several features of the scheme have direct applicability to the more practical pursuit of exploration for kimberlites and diamonds. With this scheme, garnets from crustal sources can be screened out from exploration samples, and in a single sequence of steps those that have a high probability of indicating the presence of diamonds (e.g., Group I eclogites and low-Ca garnet harzburgites) can be identified.

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