

MASTER'S THESIS

Conductivity fluctuations in yttrium barium cooper oxides

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CONDUCTIVITY FLUCTUATIONS
IN
YTTRIUM BARIUM COPPER OXIDES

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ABSTRACT

This work concerns conductivities in high- T_c superconductors at temperatures above T_c , at which the transition from the normal to the superconducting state occurs. The materials studied are polycrystalline yttrium barium copper oxides containing different oxygen deficiencies (δ) and various concentrations (X) of zinc in substitution for copper. The conductivity, σ , consists of two components: the normal-state σ , and the paraconductivity due to local thermodynamic fluctuations into the superconducting state. By extrapolating from the linear region I separate each set of measured $\sigma(T)$ data into the two components. It is found that the residue resistivity belonging to the normal state rises with both δ and X . T_c first increases then decreases with increasing δ , but it drops continuously with increasing X . On the other hand, oxygen deficiency enhances conductivity fluctuations, provided that zinc doping is absent or low, but zinc substitution depresses the fluctuations, at small δ . The paraconductivity component has been analysed with the Aslamazov-Larkin and the Lawrence-Doniach models, with the latter offering the best fit. From such analyses the Ginsburg-Landau coherence lengths and the superconducting layers separations can be estimated. The Ginsburg temperatures have also been obtained, and their trends with δ and X are consistent with that of coherence lengths. These deductions provide evidence that the supercurrent is confined to the Cu-O₂ planes, but the Cu-O chains take part in the formation of superconducting pairs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Aim of the Research Project	
1.2 Historical Perspectives	
1.3 Applications of Superconductors	
1.4 Comparison between Conventional and High- T_c Superconductivities	
1.5 Approach of this Work	
CHAPTER 2: THEORY	6
2.1 Ginsburg-Landau (GL) Theory	
2.1.1 Basic Principles	
2.1.2 Coherence Length	
2.2 Fluctuations	
2.2.1 Spatial Variation of Fluctuations	
2.2.2 Time Dependence of Fluctuations	
2.2.3 Models of Conductivity Fluctuations	
2.3 Normal State Resistivity of YBCO	
2.4 Crystal Structure	
2.4.1 The Structure of Perovskites	
2.4.2 Crystal Structure of YBCO	
2.4.3 Oxygen Ordering	
2.5 Electronic Structure of YBCO	
CHAPTER 3: MATERIALS FABRICATION	19
3.1 Preparation of Powder Admixtures	
3.2 Calcination	
3.3 Sintering	
CHAPTER 4: MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUES	25
4.1 The Cryostat	
4.2 Resistivity Measurement	
4.3 Changing Sample Oxygen Stoichiometry	
4.4 Experimental Procedures	

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	35
5.1 Normal-State Resistivity	
5.2 Effects of Zn Substitution and Oxygen Content on T_c and Transition Width	
5.3 Double Normal-Superconducting Transitions	
5.4 Conductivity Fluctuations	
5.4.1 General Considerations	
5.4.2 Extraction of Conductivity Fluctuations	
5.4.3 Fitting of Normal-State Resistivity	
5.4.4 Linear Region in Normal-State Resistivity	
5.4.5 Temperature Region and Magnitude of Fluctuations	
5.4.6 Paraconductivity in $YBa_2Cu_3O_7$	
5.4.7 Model Fitting of Paraconductivity	
5.4.7.1 Aslamazov-Larkin 2D/3D model	
5.4.7.2 Lawrence-Doniach model	
5.4.8 Validity of GL (AL and LD) Theory	
5.4.9 Critical Fluctuations	
5.4.10 Estimation of Materials Parameters	
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS	75
REFERENCES	79
APPENDICES	83
VITA	93