Light Harvesting in Photosynthesis



First step: Need to establish the structure of the underlying system

Phase Problem and Conventional Solutions

Phase Problem

 $\rho(xyz) = \frac{1}{V} \sum_{h = -\infty} \sum_{k = -\infty}^{\infty} \sum_{l = -\infty}^{\infty} F(hkl) e^{i\alpha(hkl)} e^{-2\pi i (hx + ky + lz)}.$



Method	Requirement
Multiple Isomorphous Replacement	Two or more isomorphous heavy metal derivatives
Molecular Replacement	Known structure of highly homologous protein

Structure of LH-II of *Rs. molischianum* Obtained Through a Computationally Derived Search Model



molecular replacement through modeling



Summary of Crystallographic Data

- space group P4212
- resolution range 8-2.4 A
- unique reflection 30309
- completeness 87.2
- R-factor (%) 21.1
- free R-factor (%) 23.2

Koepke et al., Structure, 4, 581 (1996)

B850 band

B800 band •

spectrum



B800 BChl-a Binding Site



B850 BChls of LH-II of Rs. molischianum



The light harvesting system displays a hierarchy of integral, functional units Hu and Schulten, Biophys J., 75, 683-694 (1998)

Photosynthetic membrane generates ATP using light energy





Hu and Schulten, Biophys J., **75**, 683-694 (1998) Ritz *et al.*, **J. Lumin.**, **76-77**, 310-321 (1998) Hu *et al.*, PNAS, **95**, 5935-5941 (1998) Koepke *et al.*, Structure, **4**, 581-597 (1996) Hu *et al.*, J. Phys. Chem., **B 101**, 3854-3871 (1997) Cory *et al.*, J. Phys. Chem., **B 102**, 7640-7650 (1998) Damjanovic *et al.*, **Phys. Rev. E**, **59**, 3293-3311 (1999) Ritz *et al.*, Photosyn. Res., 66:125–144, 2000. Ritz *et al.*, J. Phys. Chem. B, 105:8259–8267, 2001. Sener *et al.*, **Phys. Rev. E**, 65:031916, 2002. Hu *et al.*, Quart. Rev. Biophys., 35:1–62, 2002. Damjanovic *et al.*, **Phys. Chem.** B, 106:7948–7960, 2002.

We need to know also the structure of 'the LH-I ring! We use again modeling, replacing subunit of LH-II by that of LH-I

Molecular modeling of integral, functional units with more than 10⁶ atoms necessary

Modeling the Structure of LH-I of *Rb. sphaeroides* (1)

subunit of LH-II

subunit of LH-I



LH-I – RC Complex of *Rb*. *Sphaeroides*

Model agrees well with EM map







Xiche Hu

View from top



Structure of Light Harvesting System





The Hard Earned Model



Here is a lesson to impatient physical scientists to learn: There is no royal road to the model! In the present case and many others, the model is arrived at not through superior inteligence of the physical scientist, but through long (2 years) collaboration with life scientists, in the present case crystallographers (Michel, Cogdell, Glasgow) and electron microscopists (Ghosh, Stuttgart).

Structural unit of Light Harvesting Complex II (LH-II) from Rh. molischianum



LH-II ring of 8 structural units



•8 heterodimers (8 alpha-apoproteins, 8 beta-apoproteins)
•24 BChIs (8 B850a, 8 B850b and 8 B800)
•8 carotenoids

24 Bacteriochlorophyls and their transition dipole moments in LH-II



Rate of Excitation Transfer from BChl i to BChl j



Induced dipole-induced dipole interaction coupling between excited state of BChI i and ground state of BChI

$$k_{ij} = \frac{2\pi}{\hbar} |U_{ij}|^2 J_{ij} \qquad U_{ij} = C \frac{[\hat{d}_i \cdot \hat{d}_j - 3(\hat{d}_i \cdot \hat{r}_{ij})(\hat{d}_j \cdot \hat{r}_{ij})]}{r_{ij}^3}$$

16 BChls are arranged in a ring of 8 heterodimers. Within each dimer, the distance between BChls is 8.9 A, between heterodimers, the distance between BChls is 9.2 A. The transition dipole moments of the BChls, indicated as arrows, are approximately tangential to the ring and show an antiparallel arrangement for a pair of neighbouring BChls.

8.9 nm

B850 BChl aggregate from LH-II of the purple bacterium Rs. molischianum

transition dipole moments

Eigenvalue Problem for a Circular Dimerized Aggregate



Quantum Chemical Determination of Aggregate



The Effect of Dynamic Disorder



LH2 in membrane: 85,000 atoms; equilibrated for 2ns with NAMD2; NpT ensemble; periodic boundary condition; full electrostatics (PME)

Followed by 0.8ps simulation, trajectory output every 2fs with quantum chemistry calc. of exc. energy, interpolated to "sample" every 0.5 fs



Polaron Coherence Length (one mode)

Polaron spectrum in leading order perturbation theory

$$E_k = \epsilon_k + \frac{g^2 \omega_0^2}{M} \sum_q \frac{1}{\epsilon_k - \epsilon_{k+q} - \omega_0}$$
$$|k;0\rangle = |k;0\rangle + \frac{g\omega_0}{\sqrt{M}} \sum_q \frac{1}{\epsilon_k - \epsilon_{k+q} - \omega_0} |k+q;1_q\rangle$$

Exciton coherence size (inverse Participation ratio)

$$L_{\rho} = \left[\left(\sum_{ij} |\rho_{ij}| \right)^2 \right] \left[M \sum_{ij} |\rho_{ij}|^2 \right]^{-1}$$
$$\rho_{ij} = \sum_k C_k^*(i) C_k(j) \exp(-\beta E_k)$$

Dynamic disorder slightly reduces the coherence size of the exciton



Absorption Spectrum – Polaron Model

Step 1: BChl energy gap fluctuations from MD/QC simulations

 $\delta \epsilon(t) = \epsilon(t) - \epsilon_0$ (all modes)



Absorption Spectrum – Polaron Model

Step 1: BChI energy gap fluctuations from MD/QC simulations

Step 2: Autocorrelation function

$$\delta\epsilon(t) = \epsilon(t) - \epsilon_0$$

$$\mathcal{C}(t) = \left< \delta \epsilon(t) \delta \epsilon(0) \right>$$



Absorption Spectrum – B850 Excitons



Spectral Properties of Light-Harvesting Complexes and the Role of Static Disorder

Recall effective Hamiltonian description for a BChl ring:

 $= H_0 = \begin{pmatrix} \varepsilon_a & v_1 & W_{13} & W_{14} & \mathsf{L} & v_2 \\ v_1 & \varepsilon_b & v_2 & W_{24} & \mathsf{L} & W_{2N} \\ W_{31} & v_2 & \varepsilon_a & v_1 & \mathsf{L} & W_{3N} \\ W_{41} & W_{42} & v_1 & \varepsilon_b & \mathsf{L} & W_{4N} \\ \mathsf{M} & \mathsf{M} & \mathsf{M} & \mathsf{M} & \mathsf{O} & \mathsf{M} \\ v_2 & W_{N2} & W_{N3} & W_{N4} & \mathsf{L} & \varepsilon_b \end{pmatrix}$ E_a and E_b are the site energies. vI and v2 are nearest neighbor interactions.

The non-nearest neighbor interactions are given by a dipole-dipole term:

 $U_{ij} = C \frac{[\hat{d}_i \cdot \hat{d}_j - 3(\hat{d}_i \cdot \hat{r}_{ij})(\hat{d}_j \cdot \hat{r}_{ij})]}{r_{ij}^3}$

Thermal (static) disorder as a random matrix ensemble:

$$H = H_0 + R$$

 \dots where *R* is a matrix randomly choosen from a certain distribution.

deterministic + random Melih Sener and K. Schulten. Physical Review E, 65:031916 (2002)

We are interested in spectral properties:



Independence of spectral density and absorption spectrum from type of random distribution (universality)

1. Spectral density:



•Spectral fluctuations are model independent. (reminiscent of *Central Limit Theorem.*)

• *Distribution* of **R** is largely irrelevant. (i.e. a Gaussian is as good as any other distribution.)

• *Symmetry class* of R becomes irrelevant at *large N* (i.e. R can be real symmetric or complex hermitian.)

•The *width* of **R** needs to be carefully taken into account.

 $H = H_0 + R$

 $\rangle \equiv \int d[R] P(R) L$

Universality means model independence! (L) Melih Sener and K. Schulten. Physical Review E, 65:031916 (2002)

Independence of spectral density and absorption spectrum from type of random distribution (universality)



11500

12500 Energy (1/cm)

12000

13000

13500

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 $H = H_0 + R$

Universality means model independence! $\langle L \rangle = \int d[R]^{p}(R)L$ Melih Sener and K. Schulten. Physical Review E, 65:031916 (2002)

11500

12000 12500 Energy (1/cm) 13000

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<u>Spectral density can be computed analytically</u> in case of Gaussian unitary disorder

$$H = H_0 + R$$
$$\left\langle \mathsf{L} \right\rangle = \int d[R] P(R) \mathsf{L}$$
$$P(R) = N_R \exp\left(-\frac{1}{2v^2} Tr(R^+R)\right)$$



Road Map:

•Express spectral density as an integral over matrices

•Reduce the (large) matrix integral to a (small) super-matrix integral (Hubbard-Stratonovitch transformation)

•Evaluate the super-matrix integral using harmonic analysis on super-groups (Harish-Chandra-Itzykson-Zuber integrals) •The final expression is given in terms of the unperturbed spectrum, .

Melih Sener and K. Schulten. Physical Review E, 65:031916 (2002)

Spectral density can be computed analytically in case of Gaussian unitary disorder

Final expression for the spectral density in terms of the unperturbed spectrum:



... final symbolics is evaluated using *Mathematica*.

Melih Sener and K. Schulten. Physical Review E, 65:031916 (2002) When combined with *universality* this approach grants us analytical insight into the spectra of light-harvesting complexes.

Effective Hamiltonian for Entire Photosynthetic Unit



$$k_{DA} = \frac{2\pi}{\hbar} |U_{DA}|^2 J_{DA}$$
$$J_{DA} = \int S_D(E) S_A(E) dE \quad \text{exp.}$$
The effective Hamiltonian derived for an LH-II ring is extended to the entire system of light harvesting complexes.
i.e., LH-I and LH-IIs, assuming LH-II nearest neighbour couplings and dipolar coupling for non-nearest neighbour interactions, for a geometry of closest packed LH-I and LH-II proteins.

Excitation Transfer in Photosynthetic Unit



Yield, Loss, and Overall Decay Rates in Light Harvesting System



The Role of the Carotenoids in Light Absorption and Excitation Flow



Two Channels for Car-Chl Transfer



Hamiltonian



Separation into donor, acceptor, and interaction contributions: $H = H_D + H_A + V_{DA}$ (only π atomic orbtals included, no polarizability effects!)

Describe the effect of V_{DA} in perturbation theory, i.e., evaluate matrix elements accounting for transition of excitation from *donor* to *acceptor*

We relied considerably on N. Nagae, Kakitani, T. Kato, M. Mimuro, J. Chem. Phys, 98, 10 (1993)

$$\begin{aligned}
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\left[U_{DA}^{c} &= \sum_{ijks} \left(\phi_{i} \phi_{j} | \phi_{R} \phi_{S} \right) \left\langle \Psi_{D}^{i} \Psi_{A} | \sum_{\sigma,\sigma} c_{i\sigma}^{*} c_{j\sigma} c_{s\sigma}^{*} c_{s\sigma}^{*} c_{s\sigma}^{*} | \Psi_{D} \Psi_{A}^{*} \right\rangle \\
&= \frac{1}{2} \sum_{\sigma,\sigma} c_{i\sigma}^{*} c_{j\sigma} c_{s\sigma}^{*} c_{s\sigma}^{*} = {}^{00} O_{j}^{i} {}^{00} O_{s}^{R} \quad \stackrel{oo}{\longrightarrow} O_{j}^{i} = \sum_{k,l} S_{k}^{-\frac{1}{2} 00} \widetilde{O}_{j}^{i} S_{l,l}^{+} \\
&\quad \text{non-orthogonal operators} \\
\end{aligned}$$
Singlet Excitations
$$\begin{aligned}
\left[U_{DA}^{c} &= 2 \sum_{ijks} \left(\phi_{i} \phi_{j} | \phi_{R} \phi_{S} \right) \left\langle \Psi_{D}^{*} | ^{00} O_{j}^{i} | \Psi_{D} \right\rangle \left\langle \Psi_{A} | ^{00} O_{s}^{R} | \Psi_{A}^{*} \right\rangle \\
&= \frac{1}{2} \sum_{ijks} \left(\phi_{i} \phi_{s} | \phi_{R} \phi_{s} \right) \left\langle \Psi_{D}^{*} \Psi_{A} | \sum_{\sigma,\sigma} c_{i\sigma}^{*} c_{j\sigma}^{*} c_{s\sigma}^{*} | \Psi_{D} \Psi_{A}^{*} \right\rangle \\
&= \frac{1}{2} \sum_{\sigma,\sigma} c_{i\sigma}^{*} c_{j\sigma}^{*} c_{s\sigma}^{*} c_{s\sigma}^{*} = {}^{00} O_{j}^{i} {}^{00} O_{s}^{R} \\
&= -{}^{10} O_{j}^{i} {}^{00} O_{s}^{R} + {}^{10} O_{j}^{i} {}^{1-1} O_{s}^{R} + {}^{1-1} O_{j}^{i} {}^{1} O_{s}^{R} \\
&= -{}^{10} O_{j}^{i} {}^{00} O_{s}^{R} + {}^{10} O_{j}^{i} {}^{1-1} O_{s}^{R} + {}^{1-1} O_{j}^{i} {}^{0} O_{s}^{R} \\
&= -{}^{10} O_{j}^{i} {}^{00} O_{s}^{R} + {}^{10} O_{j}^{i} {}^{1} \Psi_{D} \right\rangle \left\langle \Psi_{A} | ^{00} O_{s}^{R} | \Psi_{A}^{*} \right\rangle \\
&= \text{Triplet Excitations} \\
&= U_{DA}^{Es} = 2 \sum_{ijks} \left(\phi_{i} \phi_{s} | \phi_{R} \phi_{j} \right) \left\langle \Psi_{D}^{*} | ^{10} O_{j}^{i} | \Psi_{D} \right\rangle \left\langle \Psi_{A} | ^{1-1} O_{s}^{R} | \Psi_{A}^{*} \right\rangle \\
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Transition Matrix Elements

Express coupling in terms of 2nd quantization for non-orthogonal orbitals Factor coupling into donor and acceptor contributions: Coulomb coupling is rank zero tensor (singlet transitions only) Exchange coupling is rank one tensor (singlet and triplet transitions)

No triplet results will be shown!

Conversion times and efficiencies for photons absorbed into the **carotenoid** (LYC) S_2 state in LH2 of *Rs. molischianum*



Photosynthetic Apparatus of Purple Bacteria Function Achieved Through Large Structures



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The Quantum Physics of Photosynthesis

Thorsten Ritz,^[b] Ana Damjanović,^[c] and Klaus Schulten*^[a]

Biological cells contain nanoscale machineries that exhibit a unique combination of high efficiency, high adaptability to changing environmental conditions, and high reliability. Recent progress in obtaining atomically resolved structures provide an opportunity for an atomic-level explanation of the biological function of cellular machineries and the underlying physical mechanisms. A prime example in this regard is the apparatus with which purple bacteria harvest the light of the sun. Its highly symmetrical architecture and close interplay of biological functionality with quantum physical processes allow an illuminating demonstration of the fact that properties of living beings ultimately rely on and are determined by the laws of physics.

KEYWORDS:

carotenoids · chromophores · electronic excitation transfer · photosynthesis · proteins

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See also: www.ks.uiuc.edu