

#### Plan:

- I. Some basic concepts of cryo electron microscopy
- II. Similarities between structural biology methods
- III. Integrated structural biology examples using cryo-EM
- IV. Current & future challenges in cryo-EM
- V. Instrumentation & technical highlights towards multi-scale integration

#### **Electron Microscopy:**

A) material sciences

B) cellular biology (cell sections) C) molecular biology (extracted, purified single molecules)







Visual assignment of sample quality, visual annotation of cellular structure

Direct visualization, and more... 3D reconstruction! Involves a lot of image processing

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Some basic concepts of cryo electron microscopy

visualize biological complexes in a hydrated, functional state
images are 2D projections of a 3D object, i.e. they contain all internal features
requirement: see the object under different angles to be able to reconstruct it

particles in ~ random orientations







#### Some basic concepts of cryo electron microscopy

extracted, purified complexes, preserved in hydrated state:

flash-frozen in the buffer





 $\sim 0.5 \text{ mg/ml}$ sample conc.: [compare 3D crystallization: ~2-20mg/ml]

A transmission electron microscope

(TEM)

apertures

**Prioritize cryo-EM over negative** staining EM:

- avoids artifacts and limitation in resolution (~30Å) due to staining artifacts and flattening of the structures

- cryo-EM provides best specimen preservation:

source

sample

image

acquisition

compustage. specimen

no adsorption, no drying







Advantages of flash-freezing:  $\rightarrow$  vitrified water (amorphous ice)  $\rightarrow$  specimen conservation (frozen-hydrated)  $\rightarrow$  very weak ice sublimation in the vacuum of the microscope IGBMC  $\rightarrow$  fixation of particle orientations electrons object (3D)

transmission electron microscopy!

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scattered electrons

projection (2D)

- vacuum: ~10<sup>-6</sup> Pa - potentially high electron dose - potentially high resolution (λ≈ 0.025Å at 200kV) i.e. not limited by the wavelength or the optical system



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(amplitude contrast), IGBMC

**Unlike** cryo-EM: here only shadow because of light absorption information about internal features is lost, only contours of the object; same problem for negative staining...



Concept of 3D reconstruction: back-projection (franc.: rétro-projection)



**Reconstruction provides a 3D density map**, i.e. a structure with all internal features Requires to have angles assigned



**Transmission electron** 

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# **Scanning electron**



#### **Only surface!**

Structure determination and refinement in cryo-EM





#### Some basic concepts of cryo-EM & 3D reconstruction

By cryo-EM, we obtain:

- a "3D reconstruction" (initial or refined)
- a "cryo-EM map" or "density map"
- a "structure"

- back-projection

technically:

- angular reconstitution
  - random conical tilt
  - tilt series / tomogram

- NOT:
- an "envelope" (would be SAXS or neg. stain. EM)
- a "volume", units would be Å<sup>3</sup> (e.g. volume of a pocket, volume x density = mol. mass)
- a "surface", units would be Å<sup>2</sup> (e.g. interaction surface between 2 proteins)
- a "model", would be a molecular model *fitted to* the map (crystallography/cryo-EM) or a model *compatible with* SAXS data or NMR restraints; other "models": "homology model", "hypothetical model", "working model"

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Some basic concepts of cryo electron microscopy

#### **Basic aspects:**

- "resolution" corresponds to "spatial frequency" in image processing (1/ Å)
- Nyquist frequency is = 2 x pixel size, e.g. 1 Å / pixel  $\rightarrow$  Nyquist = 2 Å
- interpolations during 2D image alignment and 3D reconstruction limit the possible resolution to about 2/3 of the Nyquist frequency, i.e. here ~ 3 Å <sup>(exception: super-reso)</sup> Consider pixels in 3D: "voxel"

#### <u>Consider:</u>

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- any correlation calculation (e.g. alignment) is <u>biased</u> by the reference used
- resolution estimation, criteria used:
  - 0.5, arbitrary, historically from the virus field, tends to underestimate resol.
  - 0.143 (Henderson) and ½ bit (van Heel)
  - 3  $\sigma$ , not used anymore (over-estimation)
  - features in the map: can we see dsRNA helices (~10-12 Å resolution),
     α-helices (~8 Å), β-sheets (~5 Å) or side chains (4-2.5 Å depending on size)?

Some basic concepts of cryo-EM & 3D reconstruction

#### Correct terms are important:

A classification is based on a statistical analysis:

- multivariate statistical analysis (MSA) provides information on variance

(variability) which serves to merge similar images into class averages (classes);

- is independent of a reference
- classes *are NOT*: the sum of images that correlate best with a reference (through a multi-reference alignment)

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Single particle cryo-EM image processing and 3D reconstruction

#### I. Pre-processing

- Digitization of micrographs (negatives); not needed if CCD images
- particle selection, « boxing »
- correction of the contrast transfer function
- band-pass filtering and normalisation of particle images

#### **II. Structure determination**

- particle centering / alignments
- MSA (multivariate statistical analysis) + classification
- angle assignment
  - angular reconstitution
  - projection matching
- 3D reconstruction (first map)
- structure refinement
- resolution assessment: criteria + what you can resolve in the 3D map!
- map interpretation; fitting of known structures, <u>atomic model</u> building...

#### II. Similarities between structural biology methods

#### Is the purified sample homogeneous?

- What means homogeneity?
- same composition
- same functional state
- same structural state, i.e. same conformational state

Why do we need homogeneity?

- --> most structural biology approaches are <u>averaging techniques</u>:
- crystallography
- SAXS
- NMR
- EM and 3D reconstruction
- mass spectrometry (MALDI-TOF etc.)
- dynamic light scattering
- protein / RNA gel electrophoresis
- kinetic studies



- electron tomography
- other single molecule experiments



Complementarity of structural approaches: similarities between methods

crystallography: diffraction pattern







#### The importance of cryo-approaches

#### For both crystallography and cryo-EM:

- preservation of the hydrated, functional state
- reduction of irradiation damage
- mechanical stabilization of the sample

cryo-EM: flash-freezing, low salt, no cryo-protectants (would reduce image contrast)

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crystallography: cryo-protectants glycerol, PEG, high salt, oil, etc.



#### Complementarity of structural approaches: similarities between methods





#### Common problem: determination of the handedness

- crystallography: depends on correct processing of phased reflections
- SAXS: ambiguity cannot be resolved easily (unless clear fitting of crystal structure etc.)
- NMR: ambiguity solved by using chirality constraints
- single (cryo-)EM images are projections, i.e. mirrors are indistinguishable

#### **Determination of handedness in EM:**

- random conical tilt (Radermacher et al., J. Microsc. 1987)
- tomography (technically tricky on single particles)
- phase residual error using a tilt pair (Rosenthal & Henderson, JMB 2003)
- fitting of crystal structures (requires reasonable resolution)
- high-resolution features: right-handed protein and DNA/ARN helices!



#### III. Integrated structural biology examples using cryo-EM





#### Architecture of the RXR/VDR DR3 DNA complex Structure and function of full nuclear receptors 50S ribosomal subunit ~1.3MDa - architecture of full-length DNA-bound NR complexes - topology of full-length NR's bound to different response elements - mechanism of ligand- and DNA-dependent activation and co-regulator recruitment flash-frozen in the buffer - important targets for biomedical research (steroids, vitamin D etc.) 8 6 6 86 **Possible structural approaches:** BL LBD- NMR (DBI - crystallography - SAXS NRRE - cryo-EM NR complex 200kV data 100 Å Avoid a priories...: *molecular weight: ~100-150kDa* "textbook drawing" ~100 kDa was usually considered too small for cryo-EM... (limit >250kDa) IGBMC IGBMC IGBM Image processing: particle selection, classification, structure determination Image processing: particle selection, classification, structure determination **Re-projections**



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angle determination and 3D reconstruction

20 000 particles selected, defocus used: -2 to -4 µm MSA, classification, common-line angle assignment and refinement (Imagic) (no projection matching)





**Class** averages



"L"-shape

#### Architecture of the RXR/VDR DR3 DNA complex



#### Architecture of the RXR/VDR DR3 DNA complex



Architecture of nuclear receptors on DR1 response elements



#### **PPAR/RXR DR1**



different protein conformation in the crystal and in solution

Rochel et al., Nat. Struct. Mol. Biol., 2011.



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Maletta et al., Natu

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Maletta et al., Nature Communications, 2014.

IV. Current & future challenges in cryo-EM:

- how to push resolution to the atomic level?
- how to analyze flexible complexes?
- how to integrate towards the cellular level?

 $\rightarrow$  instrumentation

 $\rightarrow$  software developments for image processing

**Conformational changes of cats?** 



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Determining structures of multiple conformational states in a single sample

local 2D MSA (multi-variate statistical analysis)



30S 50S



Klaholz et al., *Nature* 2004; see Suppl. Mat. Klaholz, *Open J. of Stat.*, 2015.

#### Determining structures of multiple conformational states in a single sample

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#### Determining structures of multiple conformational states in a single sample



Simonetti *et al.*, *Nature*, 2008.

→ does both re-sampling and 3D classification; Klaholz, *Open J. of Stat.*, 2015. see also work by P. Penczek (bootstrapping (re-sampling), used primarily to find region of variance) see also S. Scheres/J-M Carazo (maximum likelihood parameter refinement and classification)

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#### Cooperative binding of the initiator tRNA and IF2 in the 30S initiation complex





#### Sorting out heterogeneity of complexes:

3D statistical analysis and 3D classification: 3D sampling and classification (3D-SC) Klaholz, Open J. of Stat., 2015.



→ does both re-sampling and 3D classification; see also work by P. Penczek (bootstrapping (re-sampling), used primarily to find region of variance) see also S. Scheres/J-M Carazo (maximum likelihood parameter refinement and classification)

Simonetti et al., Nature, 2008. used by Fischer et al., Nature, 2010; Papai et al., Nature 2010.

#### Structure determination of translation initiation factor IF2



	Native		Se-Met	
Data collection				
X ray source	SLS (Pilatus Detector)		SLS (Pilatus Detector)	
Space group	P212121		P212121	
Cell dimensions				
a, b, c (Å)	45.42, 61.46, 162.4		45.19, 60.93, 160.74	
α, β, γ(゜)	90, 90, 90		90, 90, 90	
Molecules/A.U	4		4	
Solvent Content (%)	50		50	
		Peak	Inflection	Remote
Wavelength(Å)	0.9194	0.9792	0.9796	0.9537
Resolution (Å)	50 - 1.95	50 - 2.4	50 - 2.4	50 - 2.4
Distance (mm)	200	450		
Exposure time (sec)	2	2		
Rsym (%)	9.7 (43.7)	7.1 (30.9)	6.5 (28.3)	15.6 (60.4)
Reflections	36, 743	33,368	33,414	68,585
Completeness (%)	100 (100)	99.6 (99.7)	99.5 (99.4)	99.6 (98.7)
Redundancy	10.96	4.67 (4.3)	4.77 (4.53)	4.98 (4.91)
Refinement				
Resolution (Å)	1.95			
No of reflections	32, 857			
Protein atoms	2886			
Solvent atoms	235			

Simonetti et al., Acta Cryst D, 2013.



# Cryo electron tomography

Electron Beam Missing Wedg

→ tomogram (i.e. a 3D reconstruction from tilt images)

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flagellar motor

Murphy et al,. Nature 2006, 442, 1062–1064.

Tomography of cellular structures

#### Towards higher complexity: molecular assemblies



Cryo electron tomography (cryo-ET) of

- purified complexes
- cell sections

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#### Cryo electron tomography of eukaryotic polyribosomes













sub-tomogram average structures from Polara + direct electron detector (Falcon 1),

 $\rightarrow$  single particle cryo electron tomography

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Myasnikov et al., Nature Comm. 2014.

# V. Instrumentation & technical highlights towards multi-scale integration <u>High-resolution electron microscopes:</u>

- ultra-stable specimen holders,
- high-resolution optics,
- parallel electron beam,
- aberration correction,
- use lower voltage for better contrast of small complexes,
- automatic data collection for single particle cryo-EM and cryo electron tomography (cryo-ET),
- standardize sample preparation (cryo-EM freezing, high-pressure freezing and ultra-microtomy for cell section)
- phase plates (Zernike, Volta etc.)

#### **High-sensitivity cameras:**

direct electron detectors, CMOS camera, counting events; is part of a "revolution" in cryo-EM and structural biology, like for Pilatus/Eiger detectors in X-ray crystallography

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Titan Krios installation 10-12.2013, CBI, Instruct/FRISBI-infrastructure access





**Reaching the atomic level...?** - large data sets, - image processing to high-resolution

→ see data set for the cryo-EM practicals

#### High-resolution electron microscopes and direct electron detectors





**CMOS** camera



Polara electron microscope

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#### High-resolution electron microscopes and direct electron detectors



CCD: multi stage conversion of electron

CMOS: direct conversion of electron energy without fiber or lens optics





**FEI** website



#### High-resolution electron microscopes and direct electron detectors



Atomic interpretation of cryo-EM maps

2 levels:

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- global positioning of crystal/NMR structures, protein domains etc.
- (ab initio) atomic modelling

#### High-resolution electron microscopes and direct electron detectors

- back-thinning of Si-layer
- counting mode
- super-resolution mode
- dose fractionation
- movie processing

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- beam-induced specimen drift correction
- exposure filtering (dose optimization / frame selection)

Brilot et al., JSB, 2012. Campbell et al., Structure, 2012. Li et al., Nat Methods, 2013. Ruskin et al., JSB, 2013. Liao et al., Nature, 2013. Fernández et al., Science 2013. McMullan et al., Ultramicr., 2014. Allegretti et al., eLife, 2014. Wong et al., eLife, 2014. Bartesaghi et al., PNAS, 2015. Scheres, eLife, 2014. Fischer et al., Nature, 2015. Khatter et al., Nature, 2015. Greber et al., Science, 2015. Bartesaghi et al., Science, 2015. Grant et al., eLife, 2015.



Ш/IV *IF2/GTP* I/II

# A fMet

•••

Simonetti *et al.*, *Nature, 2008.* 

2014

#### Atomic interpretation of cryo-EM maps



sorting → 5143 particles, representing 3% of the population in the sample, 6.6 Å reconstruction. Fernández *et al.*, Science 2013; V. Ramakrishnan & S. Scheres.

#### Atomic model building examples in cryo-EM



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Rotavirus VP6 cryo-EM structure; 3.8 Å resolution; α-helices, β-sheets, bulky side-chains; Individual stands in the β-sheet region are separated, loops connecting the strands are defined.

Near-atomic-resolution cryo-EM for molecular virology.

Hryc CF, Chen DH, Chiu W. Curr Opin Virol. 2011.

#### Fitting of crystal structures into cryo-EM maps and atomic model building

- manual fitting (e.g. O, Coot, Pymol, Chimera...)

Fitting procedures:

- real s
- global search
   refinement
- real space fitting
- reciprocal space fitting

#### At ~8-20 Å resolution:

- fit complete structures, protein or RNA domains, factors; usually backbone is enough. Rigid body or flexible fitting (e.g. Situs, MDFF, Flex-EM, iMODfit, ...)

- use full maps or difference maps

#### At ~3-5 Å resolution:

- atomic model building: start with poly-Ala model, check register (position of Cα atom), check secondary structure elements (e.g. direction of α-helices), refine with crystallography programs (CNS, Buster, Phenix, CCP4,...), add side-chains if clearly visible,

use information from multi-sequence alignments; check geometry with Ramachandran plot In general: be careful with local minima and over-fitting/over-interpretation!

modelling

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#### Atomic model building examples in cryo-EM



Rotavirus VP6 cryo-EM structure; <u>3.8 Å resolution</u>; α-helices, β-sheets, bulky side-chains; Individual stands in the β-sheet region are separated, loops connecting the strands are defined.

Near-atomic-resolution cryo-EM for molecular virology.



Hryc CF, Chen DH, Chiu W. Curr Opin Virol. 2011.



Defocus: from -0.6 to -1.4 (4.5) μm Magnification: 59k Pixel Size: 1.08Å Quantifoil Grids R2/2 Conc.: 0.5mg/ml Final no. of particles: 24,000 Movie processing (3 frames only)





#### Atomic structure of the human ribosome

Structure determination at < 3 Å resolution by single particle cryo-EM



#### Atomic structure of the human ribosome

#### Atomic model building:

combining cryo-EM and X-ray crystallography refinement procedures





and phases from refined atomic model

( = crystal structure refinement, 2mFo-DFc,  $\sigma$ -weighted)

#### Usage of feature enhanced map for cryo-EM



#### Atomic structure of the human ribosome

Comparison of maps determined by cryo-EM and X-ray crystallography

human 80S

cryo-EM map





human 80S, Phenix map, 2mFo-DFc



70S crystal structure at 2.8 Å resolution (Selmer *et al.*, *Science* 2006)



New challenges... yet changing scales: combined focused-ion beam milling and scanning electron microscopy





Orlov et al., Sci. Rep., 2015.

Super-resolution imaging of histones within chromatin complexes: SharpViSu, a pipeline for processing of super-resolution data

SharpViSu:

A pipeline for:

- Drift correction
- Chromatic aberration correction
- Voronoi-weighted image representation
- Resolution estimation (FRC)



#### User interface:



New challenges... yet changing scales: super-resolution microscopy and correlative imaging



Super-resolution imaging of histones within chromatin complexes: SharpViSu, a pipeline for processing of super-resolution data



- statistical quantification

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Andronov et al., Scien. Rep, 2016.



Andronov et al., Bioinformatics, 2016.







#### **Driving scientific project:**

Integrative structural biology of gene expression regulation

nucleoprotein complexes, biomedical targets



Hosts the national and European infrastructures FRISBI and Instruct

http://www.structuralbiology.eu/ http://frisbi.eu



please read the 2 papers for the journal club tomorrow evening



Oléron 2016