Path-metadynamics: A computational study of conformational transitions in proteins

Díaz Leines, G.

Citation for published version (APA):
Acknowledgments

Achievements like the PhD are always the result of years of dedication and hard work, but equally or more important, they are the result of the support of several people and the lucky circumstances that allow us to follow this path and successfully finalize stages of life to continue and encounter new ones. For this reason, I want to thank the people that participated and supported me to complete one of the most important stages of my life which resulted in this PhD dissertation.

There are people in my work environment that I want to thank:

First, I would like to thank my promotor, Prof. Dr. Peter Bolhuis, because for me, working in my PhD was never more motivating and exciting as the time I spent discussing and improving my dissertation and research with him. I really want to thank him for all the scientific things I learned from him during the meetings, my talks and discussions, and for the motivation he inspired to my young scientific career in the last years. I appreciate his help as a huge impulse to complete this work, mainly when things look hard to complete.

I want to acknowledge Bernd Ensing and Jocelyne Vreede for all efforts to help and interest in my PhD project. To Jocelyne for the time to discuss about proteins and help with the writing skills. To Bernd for the discussions and for introducing me to the development of path-metadynamics.

I also want to give a special acknowledgement to Davide Branduardi, which trust and collaborative work has become an example for me during my research. Thanks a lot Davide for your time to teach me a way to explore with systematic detail the computational methodologies for free-energy calculations. Thanks for the patience and understanding with my dreamy-impatient energetic way to work during my PhD.

I want to specially thank my colleagues, friends and office mates, Murat Killiç and Anna Pavlova. All the conversations (scientific and not scientific), good moments,
and supportive spirit in hard moments along the PhD have been very important and crucial company for me to make it to the final. I thank you both a lot for your friendship!. It has been a luck for me to meet you guys as a scientist and as a friend. I really hope that we find each other in the future and I will remember these times with you as very special in my life. I wish you the best of luck in the next stages of your career and I admire you both as a person and as a scientist.

To all my office mates and MOLSIM colleagues, Wagner, Weina, Nazila, Rosanne, Jurriaan, David Swenson, Aatish, Faidon, Marcin, Ivan, Ariana, Arthur, Ran, Eva, Kush, Aurora, Donald, Lizhe, Francesco, and Evert Jan, thanks for the good times spent along the PhD. Thanks a lot Weina for the friendship, nice conversations and laughs we had recently, they gave me a lot of smiles and a good times in the group. Thanks a lot to David Dubbeldam for his support in science, equipment, cluster, programming and not less important, the very nice KFC lunch times!. Thanks to Evert Jan Meijer for his kindness and academic support along my PhD.

This achievement is also the result of the support of my supervisors and professors in the previous stages of my career with whom I had the luck to work with:

I want to give a special acknowledgement to my master supervisor Jutta Rogal for the amazing motivation and impulse provided to my research career, for all the things she taught me about theory, computational methods and science in general. I enjoyed a lot our scientific discussions and conversations!. I also want to thank you Jutta for being these years of my PhD a supportive company and a very good friend.

I also want to acknowledge Prof. Dr. Denis Boyer, because without his trust in my skills and his support in Mexico I wouldn’t be here. Thanks also a lot to Prof. Dr. Victor Romero and Prof. Dr. Rolando Castillo for all the support and motivation inspired in the initial stage of my scientific career in Mexico.

In my personal life outside university there is a quite large number of people who supported me a lot along my PhD. I hope I have the words to thank you all!

I want to give my most special and deep acknowledgement of this thesis to Jetze Sikkema. Thanks Jetze for your tremendous, brilliant support and tireless hours to read and listen to my ideas, dreams and this thesis. I really had a hard time to find words that wouldn’t result limited to express to you how important was and is your company for me in this achievement. Sharing this stage of my life with you has been essential to fulfil this dream. In fact, you expanded that dream, that to be honest was too limited without the component of love, now I have much more reasons in my life.
You have all my admiration Jetze. Fortunately we will have a lot of stages to share together to express what I want to say here, but in case you don’t get what I mean: El viento eres tu...

I want to also give a special acknowledgement to my parents, Sergio and Gloria. Sometimes the main support in a research project is not built from scientific discussions or academic experience, but from a constant and tireless effort to accompany someone in every stage, with amazing love, trust and patience. I am sure I am here mainly because of them, whose example of integrity and constant effort has been crucial in everything I do on daily basis.

I would also like to thank my brother Sergio and Martha simply for being people very important in my life, who give me strength and sense to do everything I do. You know what I mean, you are always with me present guys, everywhere. Hermano te quiero muchisimo y gracias por estar aqui hoy conmigo!

Another special acknowledgement to my close friends Arlene and Ivone for giving smiles, huge laughs, love and sense to my life. I would write you more girls, but you know how strong is our connection in life! :)

In general, I would like to acknowledge those people that are an example of smartness and effort in life through the adversity, people with a lot of heart, strength and a huge smile to offer in every circumstance: Arlene Adanary, Ivone Herrera, Lupita Serranos, Carlos Vera, Francisco Garcia, Mercedes Mendoza, Iliusí Vega, Nobuko Kotera, Joselynn Garcia. Thank you all, you have my admiration!

I want to thank my friend Joselynn Garcia, which I met in 2009 when I was back to Mexico. Joss, your support gave me daily force to go back to my life. Thanks for helping me to find that way to enrol myself again in this adventure!. Thanks also to Nobuko and Denise for your amazing help in this period of my life. And to my father and Jetze, you know I wouldn’t find the words to describe what it meant for me your company in those times, deep thanks to you both for helping me to find a way to start over this stage.

I also would like to give an acknowledgement to the people that I met in Amsterdam and made my stay outside university very lovely: Nobuko, Jutta, Femke, Albert, Peter, Feyza, Anna, Murat, Edith, Tjarda, Willem, Adriana, Mieke and Roel Sikkema.

To my rebellious and day-dream believer mexican friends in Amsterdam: Omar, Nayeli, Daniel, Benly, Gabriel, Amanda, Daniela, Oscar, Gabriela and Alejandro, thanks! I learned a lot with you about team effort and organization. An special acknowledgment to Daniela Flores Magón for helping to combine my artistic passion
with this dissertation (she painted the cover with watercolours!!!). And yes, we are 132!

I also thank all my family in Mexico, thanks for being there for me in many many ways every time I came back to Mexico during these years: my uncle Alfredo, my aunts Bertha, Maria Elena Diaz, Laura Diaz, Socorro Leines and my cousins Alfredo, Julia Diaz and Daniel. Thanks July for the support!! Thanks also to my grandpa Jesus and my grandma Gloria for all their love and support.

Thanks Jetze again for the translation in dutch!. Oh well, as you can see I kind of had a lot of people to thank really! :D