Communicating helices: molecular simulation of allosteric receptor proteins
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Back in February 2007, when I stepped out of the Central Station of Amsterdam for the first time, I was hoping for an adventure into something I had never done - investigating biomolecules at atomic resolution. Fortunately, Prof. Peter G. Bolhuis offered me this chance to work in the beautiful and distinguished city of Amsterdam. Unlike the pleasant flat bike tracks in the Netherlands, the path towards this doctoral thesis turns out to be very rough and rugged.

Among a large number of PhD students around the world, an interesting saying is being passed around: "Long time ago, people who sacrificed their sleep, family, food, laughter and other joys of life were called saints. Now they are called PhD students". This is only partially true. In addition to the necessary struggling, I was also gifted by many lifelong friends and sincere support from the people around me.

First of all, I shall express my gratitude to my promotor - Prof. Peter G. Bolhuis, without whom I would never be able to enjoy these years in Amsterdam. Prof. Bolhuis has been very kind and patient in familiarizing me with theoretical basis of molecular simulations and the front research questions in the field. This is extremely important for a "non-standard" student as me, who had been supposed to become an engineer rather than a scientist. I was also very lucky to have Dr. Jocelyne Vreede as my daily supervisor, since she has been enjoying the reputation among all members of the MOLSIM group to be highly warm-hearted. Jocelyne assisted me in virtually all practical aspects of preparing, performing and analyzing Molecular Dynamics simulations. Her assistance has strongly influenced my research style and skills, especially in the initial stage of my doctoral study. I send my best wishes to Peter and Jocelyne for continuous success in their career.

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Life is hard, sharing makes it worth living.

Science is hard, curiosity makes it worth doing.

Thanks to all my family and friends.