

# Copper and iron proteins

Hendrik Küpper, Advanced Course on Bioinorganic Chemistry & Biophysics of Plants, summer semester 2021  
based on a lecture of Peter Kroneck, Universität Konstanz

# Elements that are known to be essential for plants

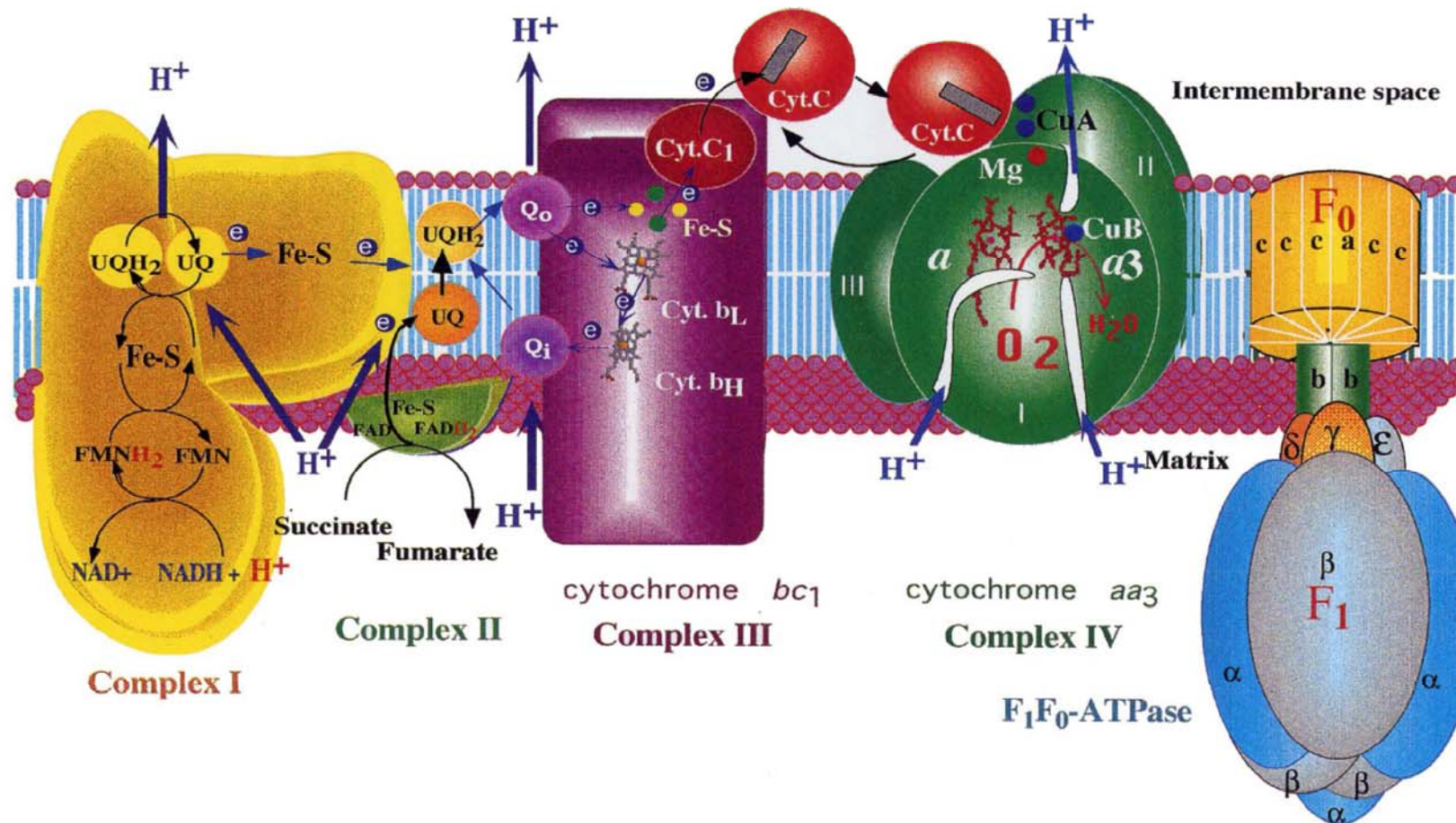
H	Essential and Beneficial Elements in Higher Plants																He
Li	Be	<div> <div></div> Essential Mineral Element                     <div></div> Beneficial Mineral Element                     <div></div> Essential Nonmineral Element                 </div>										B	C	N	O	F	Ne
Na	Mg											Al	Si	P	S	Cl	Ar
K	Ca	Sc	Ti	V	Cr	Mn	Fe	Co	Ni	Cu	Zn	Ga	Ge	As	Se	Br	Kr
Rb	Sr	Y	Zr	Nb	Mo	Tc	Ru	Rh	Pd	Ag	Cd	In	Sn	Sb	Te	I	Xe
Cs	Ba	Lu	Hf	Ta	W	Re	Os	Ir	Pt	Au	Hg	Tl	Pb	Bi	Po	At	Rn
Fr	Ra	Lr	Rf	Db	Sg	Bh	Hs	Mt									
		La	Ce	Pr	Nd	Pm	Sm	Eu	Gd	Tb	Dy	Ho	Er	Tm	Yb		
		Ac	Th	Pa	U	Np	Pu	Am	Cm	Bk	Cf	Es	Fm	Md	No		

Typical roles of copper and iron proteins

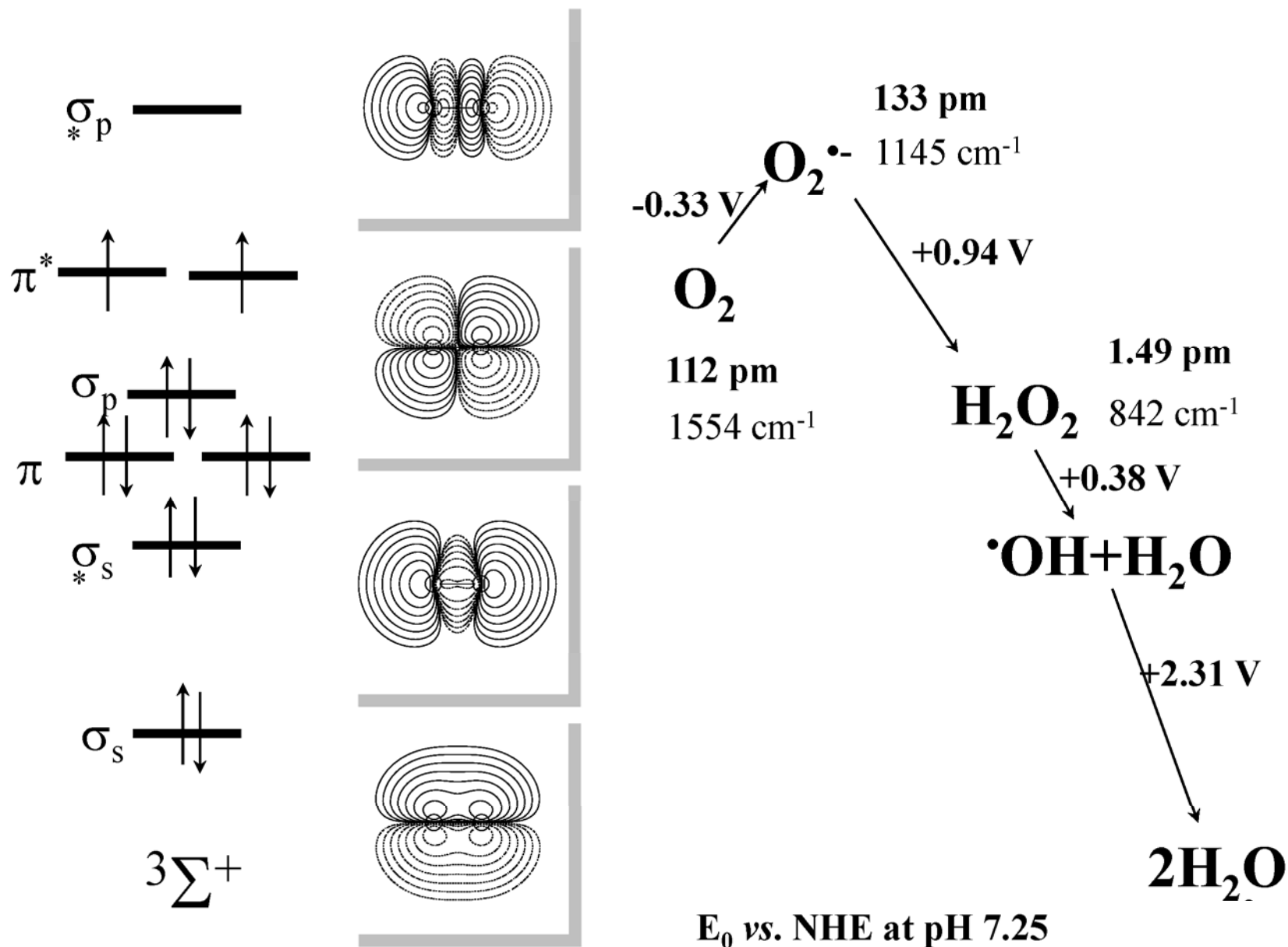
- Reductions and oxidations of substrates
- Oxygen transport
- In several metabolic functions, enzyme variants exist that can replace each other if an organism suffers from deficiency of one of these two metals

# Respiration = reduction of $O_2$ to $H_2O$

Synthesis of ATP – proton-coupled electron transfer (PCET)



# Dioxygen Activation



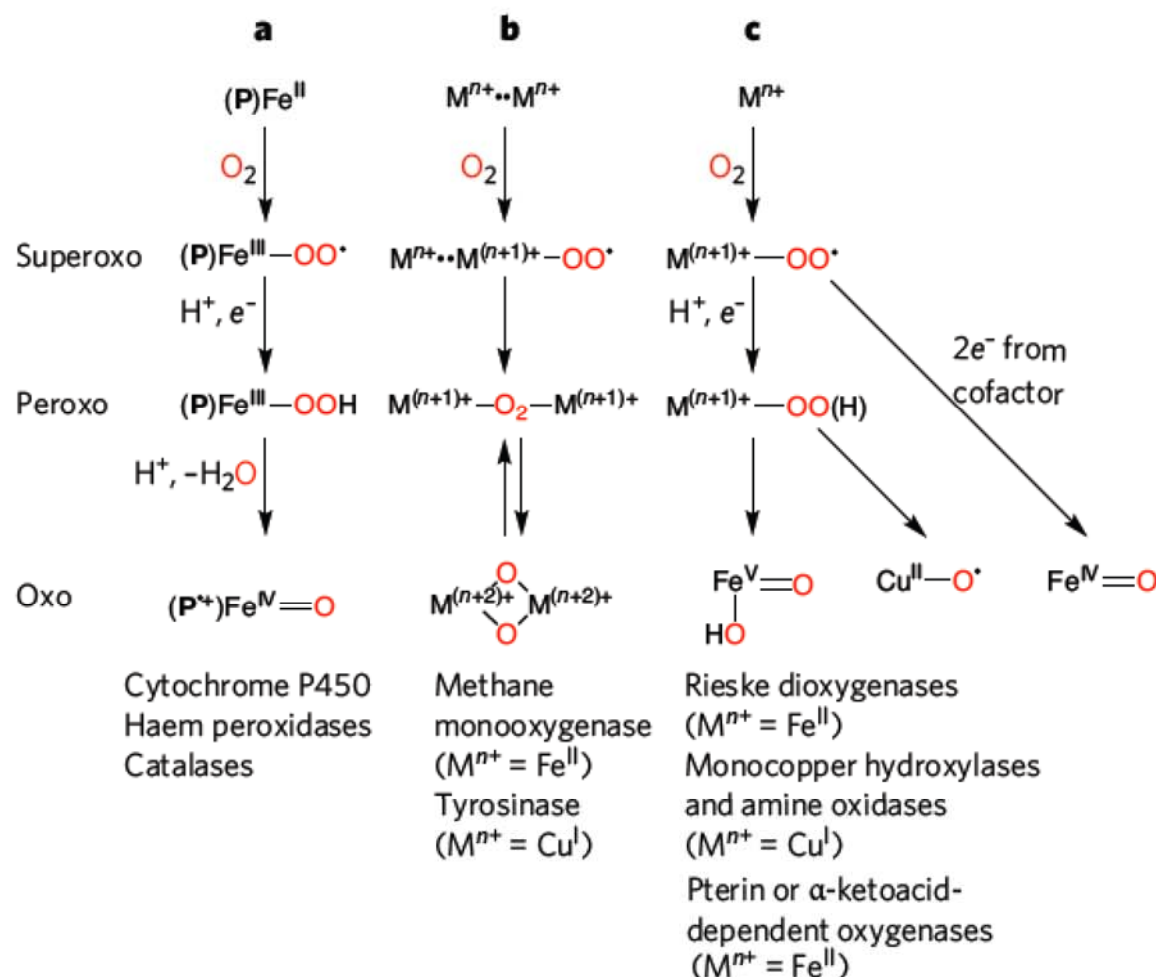
# Activation of O<sub>2</sub> – Reaction Types

- **Reversible binding of O<sub>2</sub> – Myoglobin, Hemoglobin (Fe), Hemocyanin (Cu-Cu)**
- **O<sub>2</sub><sup>•-</sup> dismutation – Superoxide Dismutase (Mn, Fe, Ni, Cu, Zn)**  
$$\text{O}_2^{\bullet-} + \text{O}_2^{\bullet-} + 2\text{H}^+ \rightarrow \text{O}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O}_2$$
- **H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> decomposition – Catalase (Mn, heme-Fe)**  
$$2 \text{H}_2\text{O}_2 \rightarrow 2 \text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{O}_2$$
- **Oxygenases (focus on Monooxygenase Cytochrome P450)**  
$$\text{R-H} + \text{O}_2 + \text{NADPH} + \text{H}^+ \rightarrow \text{R-OH} + \text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{NADP}^+$$
- **Oxidases (2-electron reduction to H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>; Fe, Cu)**  
$$\text{O}_2 + 2\text{e}^- + 2\text{H}^+ \rightarrow \text{H}_2\text{O}_2 \text{ (focus on Cu enzyme Galactose Oxidase)}$$
- **Oxidases (4-electron reduction to H<sub>2</sub>O; heme-Fe, Cu)**  
$$\text{O}_2 + 4\text{e}^- + 4\text{H}^+ \rightarrow 2 \text{H}_2\text{O} \text{ (focus on Cu enzyme Ascorbic Acid Oxidase and Fe,Cu enzyme Cytochrome } c \text{ Oxidase)}$$

# O<sub>2</sub> activation by Metallo-Oxygenases

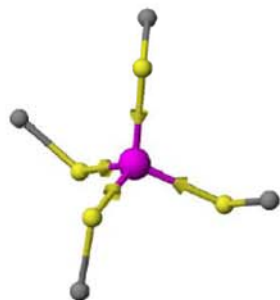
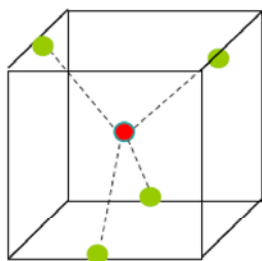
Mechanisms involve the formation of an initial O<sub>2</sub> adduct (**superoxo**), conversion to a metal–peroxide (**peroxo**), and subsequent O–O bond cleavage to yield a high-valent oxidant (**oxo**). Oxygen atoms involved are shown in red. M, metal; P, porphyrin.

L. Que Jr, W.B. Tolman (2008) NATURE, 455, 333-340



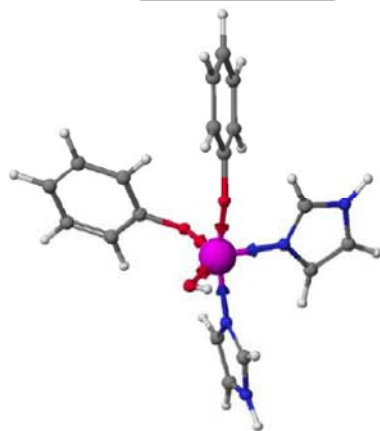
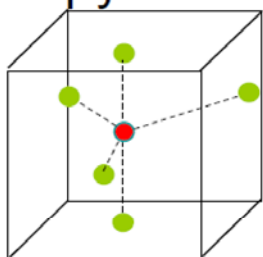
# Geometry is important: Iron Proteins

Tetrahedron



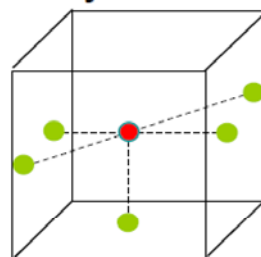
Rubredoxin

Trigonal Bipyramide



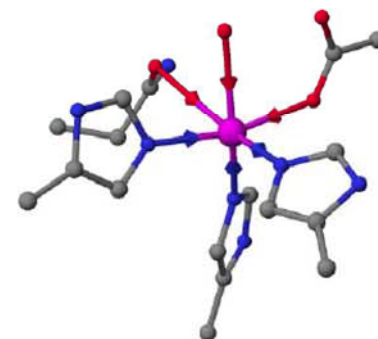
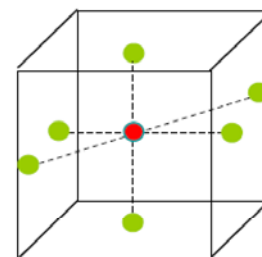
3,4-Protocatechoate  
Dioxygenase

Tetragonal  
Pyramide



Tyrosine  
Hydroxylase

Octahedron

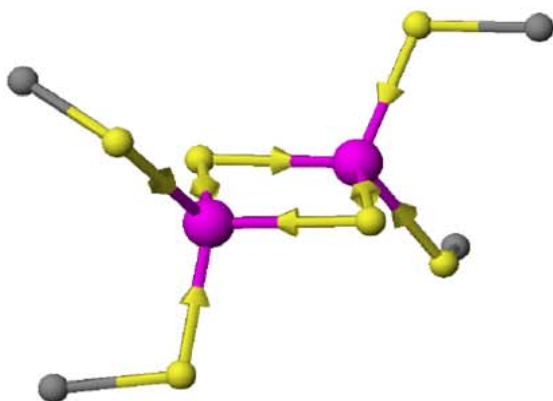


Lipxygenase



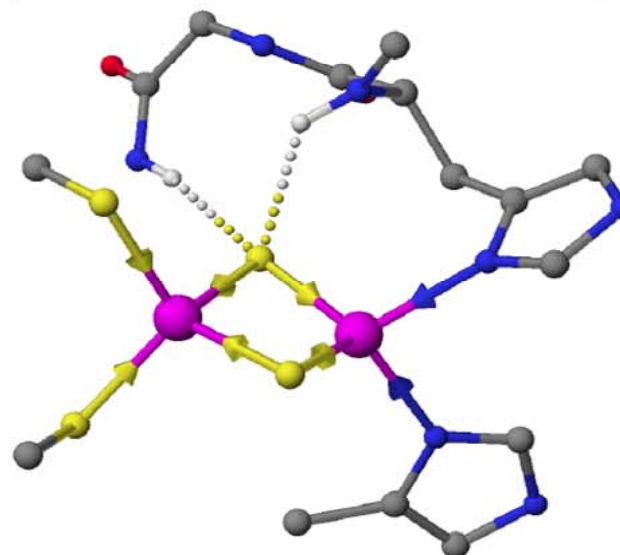
# Modulation of Redox potentials (H bridges)

## 2Fe-2S Ferredoxin



$E^0' \sim -400 \text{ mV}$

## 2Fe-2S Rieske



$E^0' \sim +280 \text{ mV}$

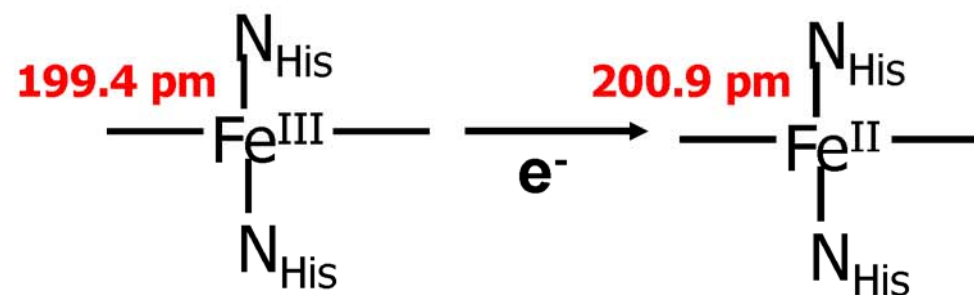
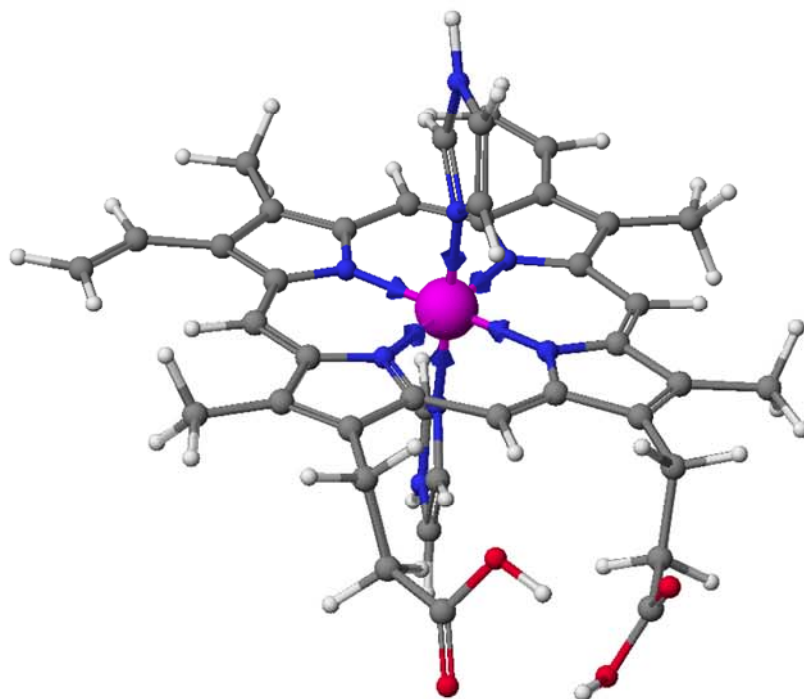
(+150 mV without H bridges)

- (a) Stephens, P.J.; Jollie, D.R.; Warshel, A. (1996) *Chem. Rev.*, 96, 2491
- (b) Link, T.A. (1999) *Adv. Inorg. Chem.*, 47, 83



# Low (zero) Reorganization Energy

## Low-Spin Heme center

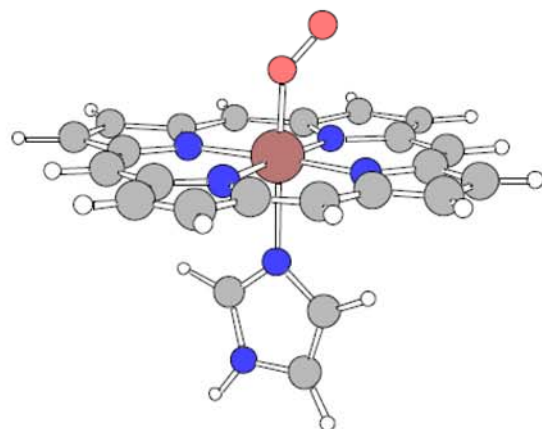


**Reorganization Energy**

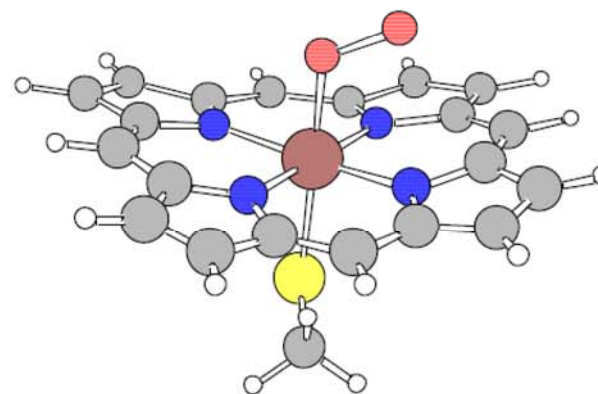
**in Cytochromes  $\leq 4\text{-}5$  kcal/mol**

# Trans-Effect - Tuning reactivity

A ligand X *trans* to a second ligand Y can influence the stability of the M-Y bond. With X being a strong Lewis base, the M-Y bond will be weakened



**Myoglobin**  
Axial Histidine  
O<sub>2</sub> Transport

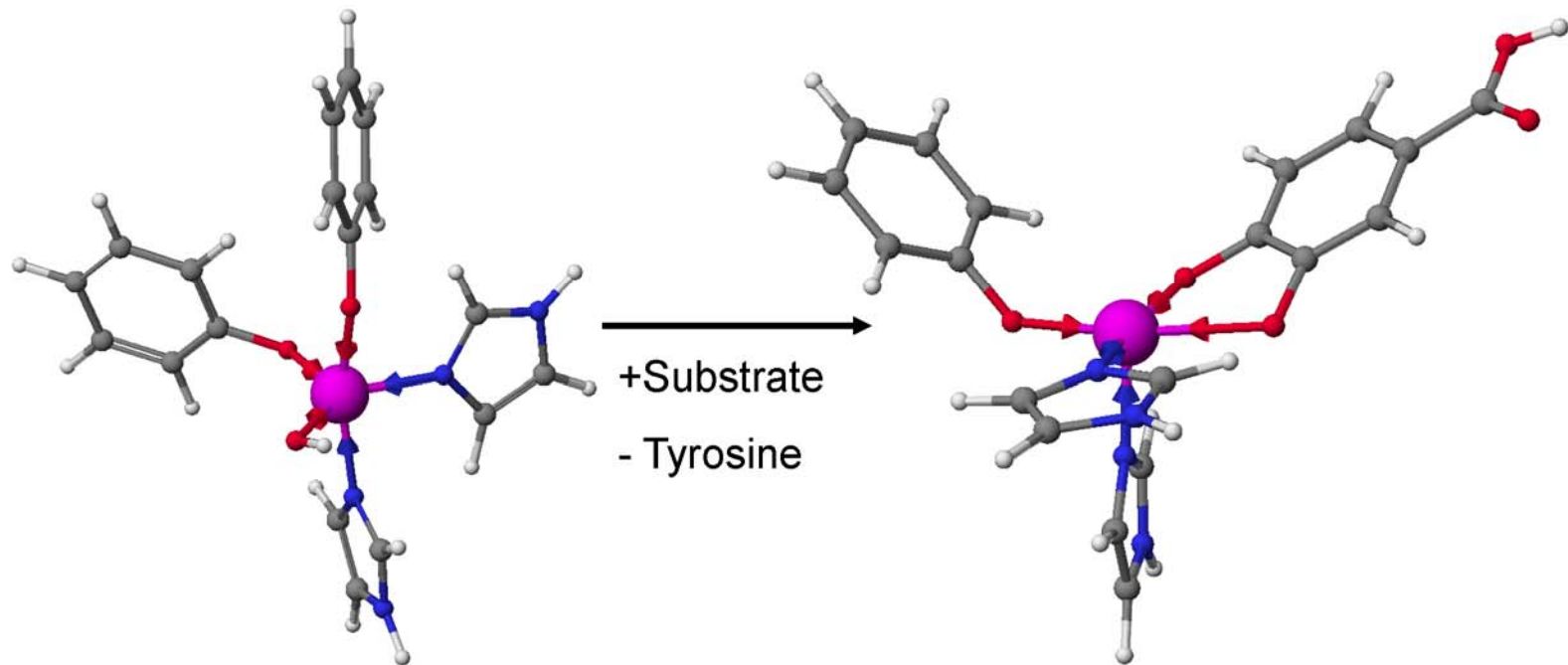


**Cytochrome P450**  
Axial Cysteine  
O<sub>2</sub> Activation



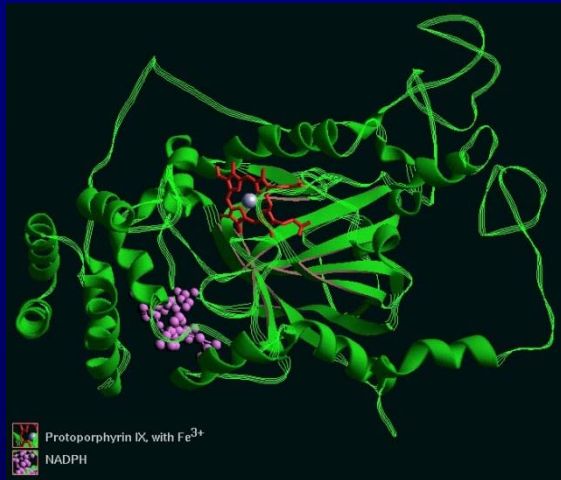
# Opening of Substrate Binding Sites in Enzyme

## 3,4 Protocatechuate Dioxygenase

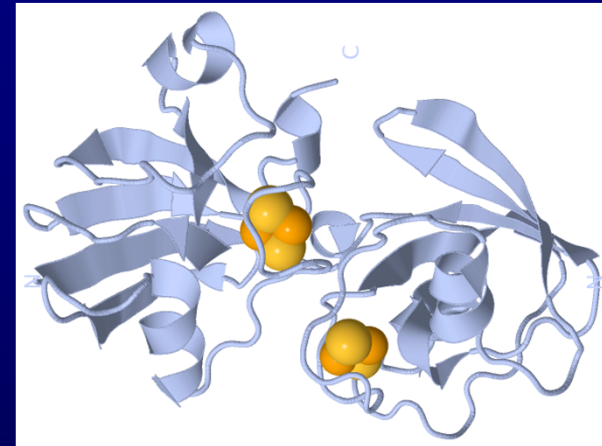


# Examples of plant enzymes with iron in the active centre

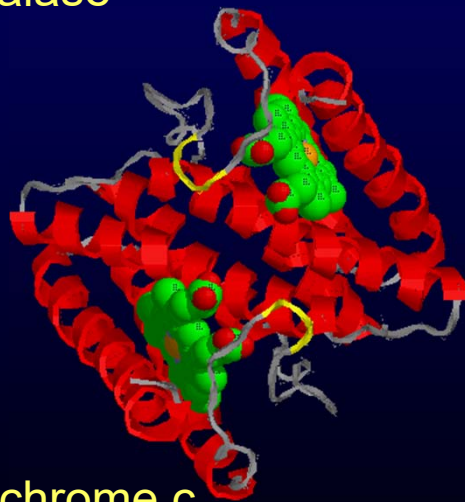
*Details on biochemistry & spectroscopy: lecture on iron+copper proteins!*



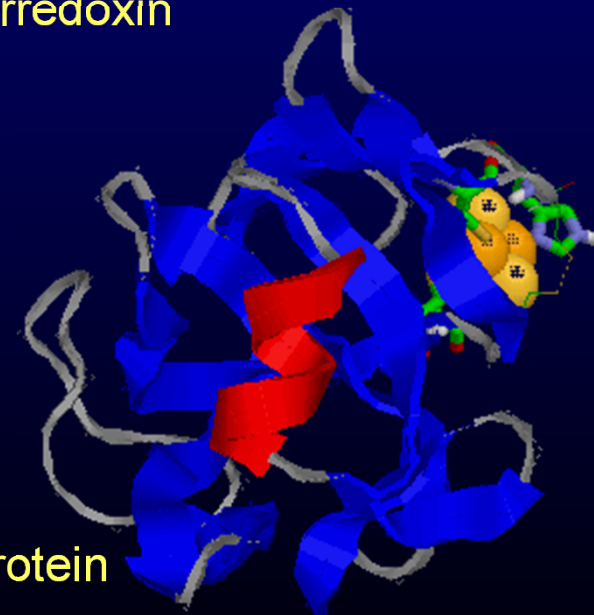
Catalase



Ferredoxin



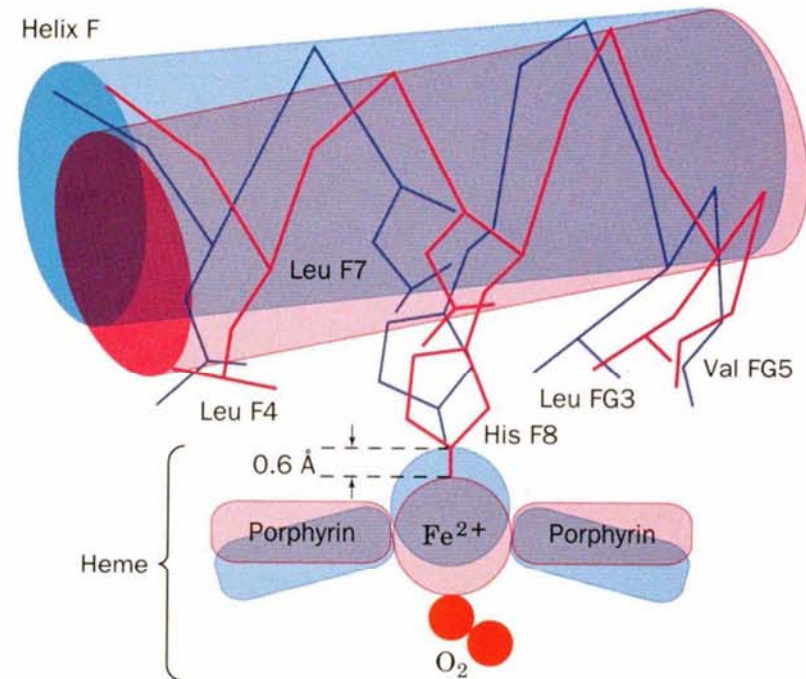
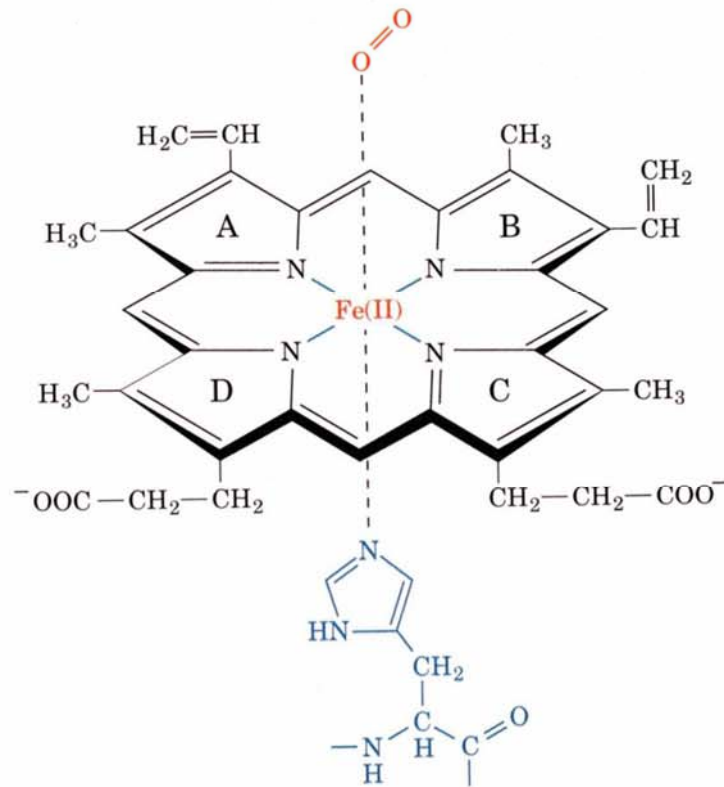
Cytochrome c



Rieske protein

# Reversible O<sub>2</sub> Binding

## Myoglobin and Hemoglobin



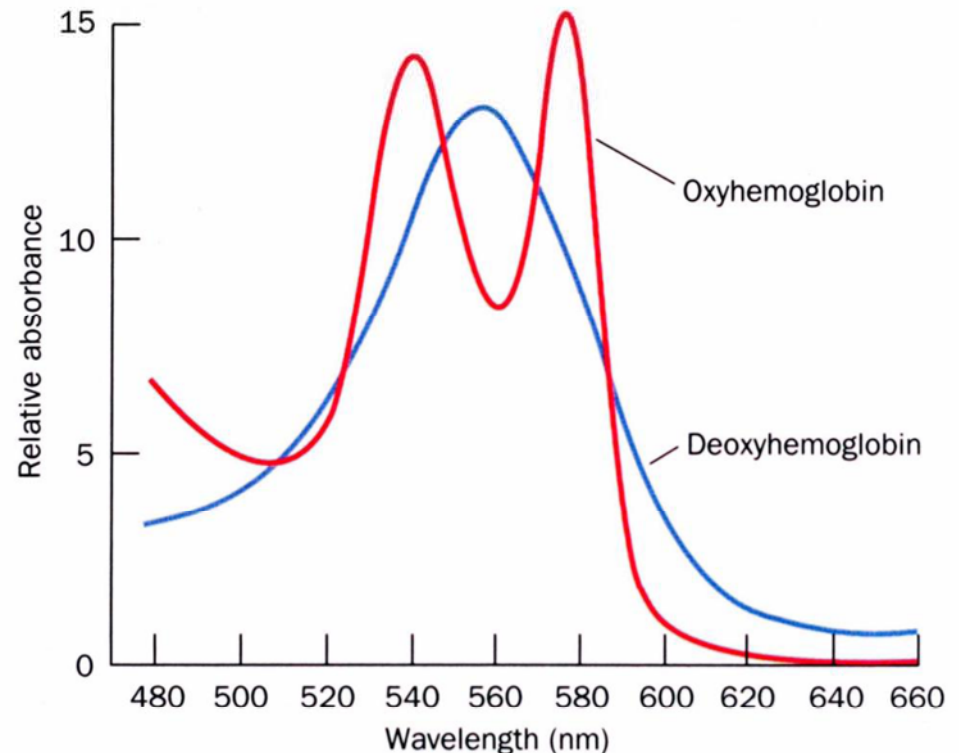
The iron must be in the Fe(II) (ferrous oxidation) state.

**Binding of O<sub>2</sub> rearranges the electronic distribution and alters the d orbital energy.**

**This causes a difference in the absorption spectra.**

**Bluish for deoxy Hb, Redish for Oxy Hb**

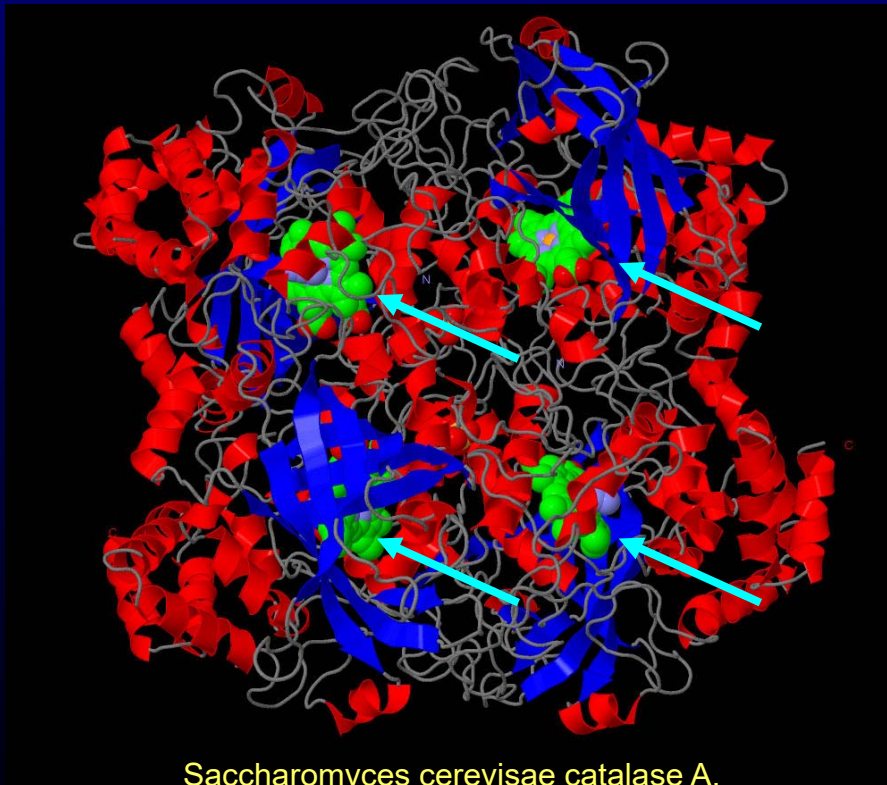
**Measuring the absorption at 578 nm allows an easy method to determine the percent of O<sub>2</sub> bound to hemoglobin.**



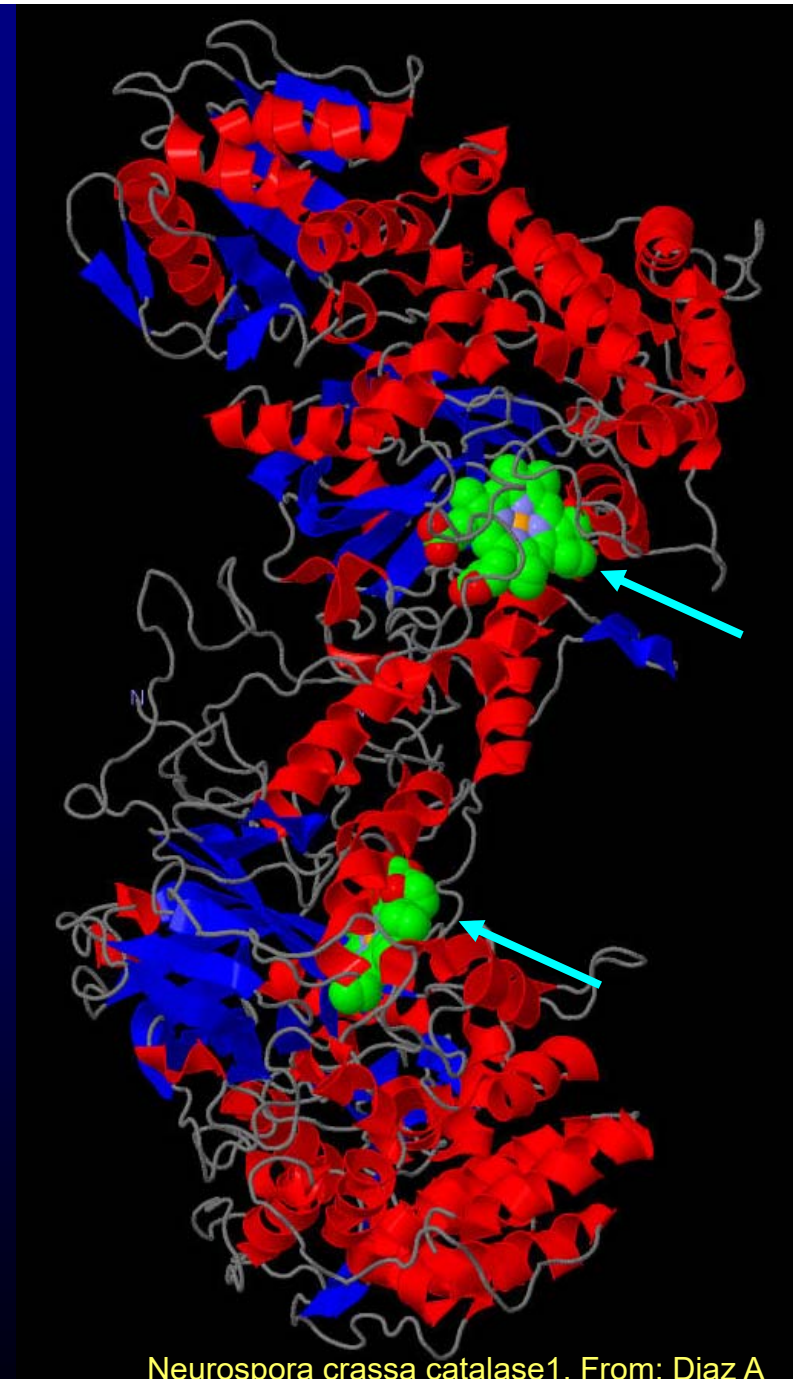


# Catalases, some of the most important heme-iron enzymes: (a) function and structure

- Detoxify hydrogen peroxide ( $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ )
- Various forms found in all kinds of aerobic organisms from bacteria to plants and animals
- Iron always present as heme-iron



*Saccharomyces cerevisiae* catalase A,  
From: Maté JM et al, 1999, J Mol Biol 268, 135-49

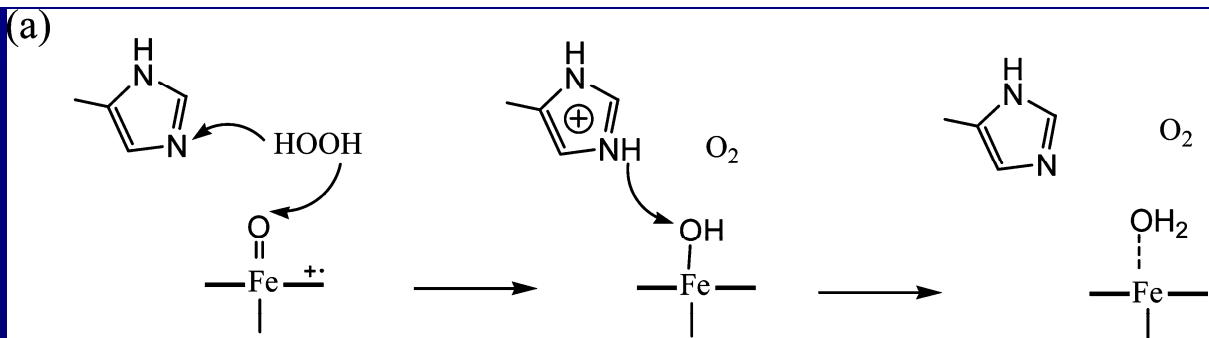


*Neurospora crassa* catalase1, From: Diaz A  
et al, 2004, J Mol Biol 342, 971-85

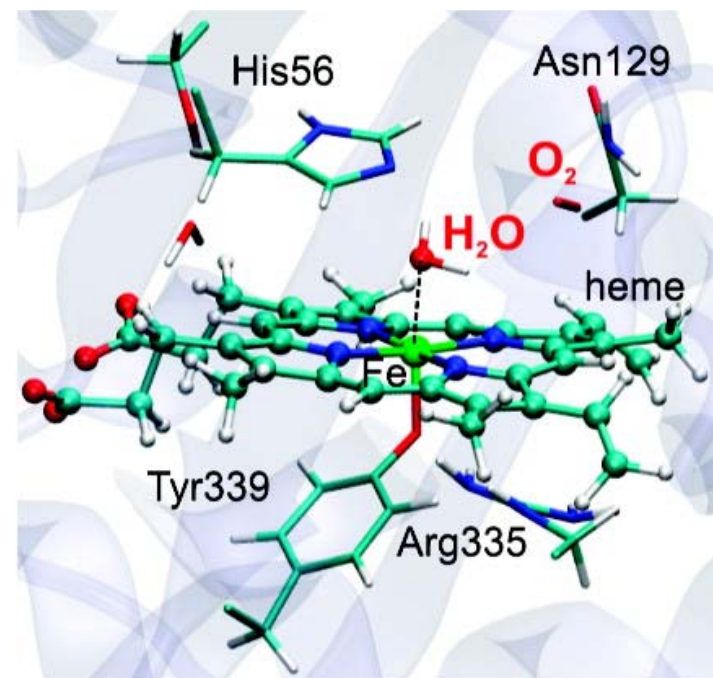
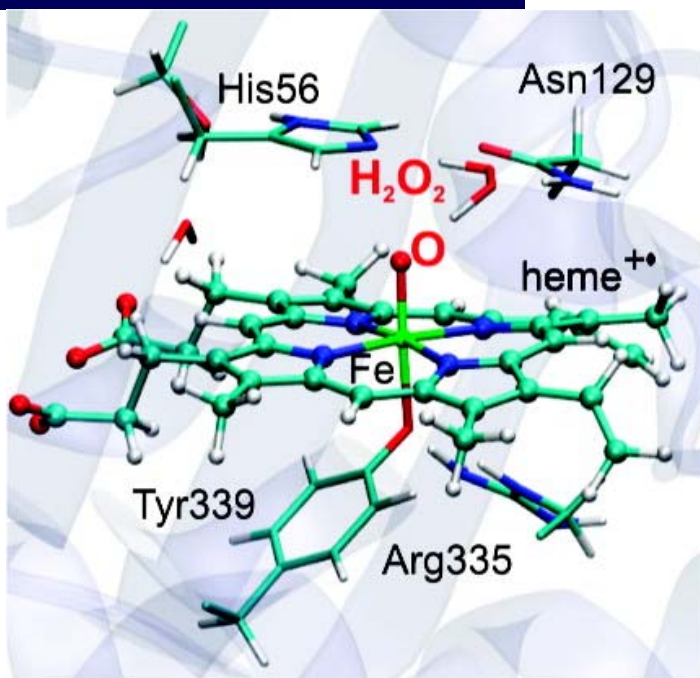
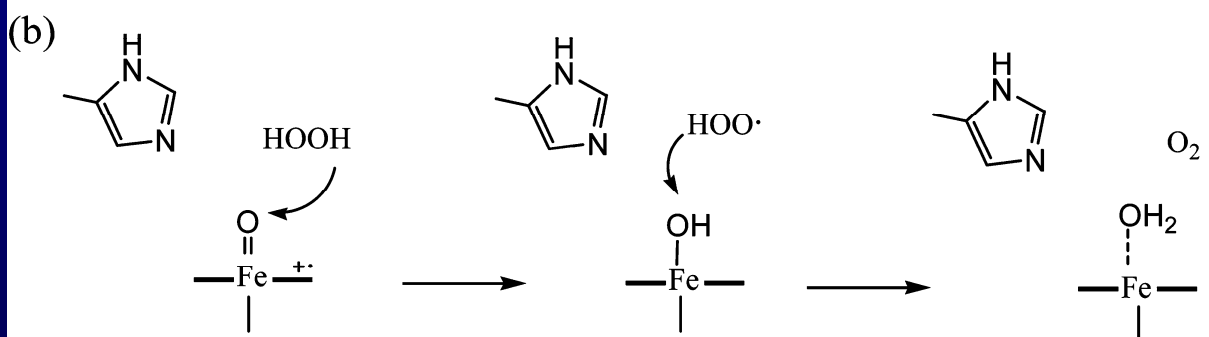
# Catalases, heme-iron enzymes

## (b) catalysis

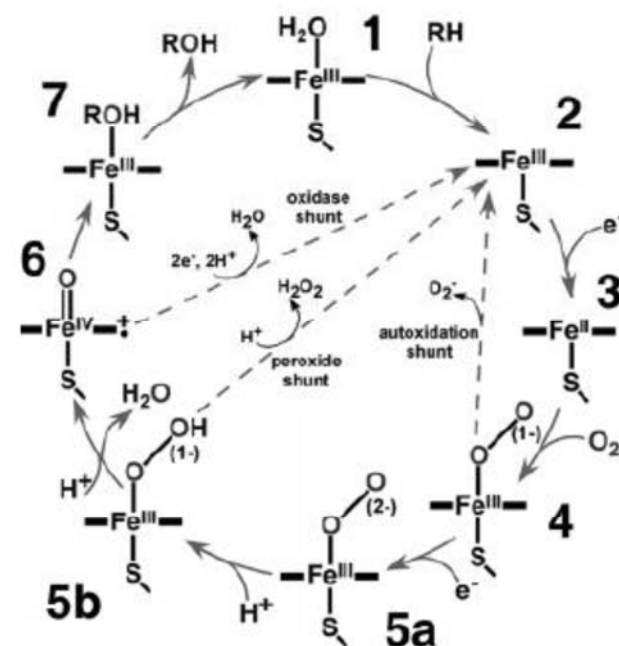
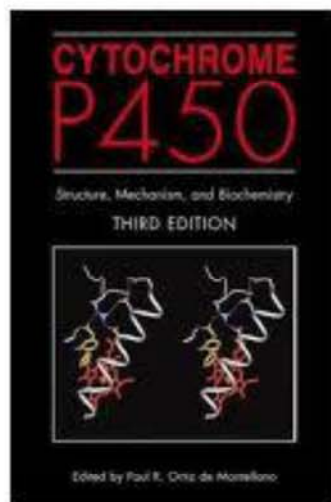
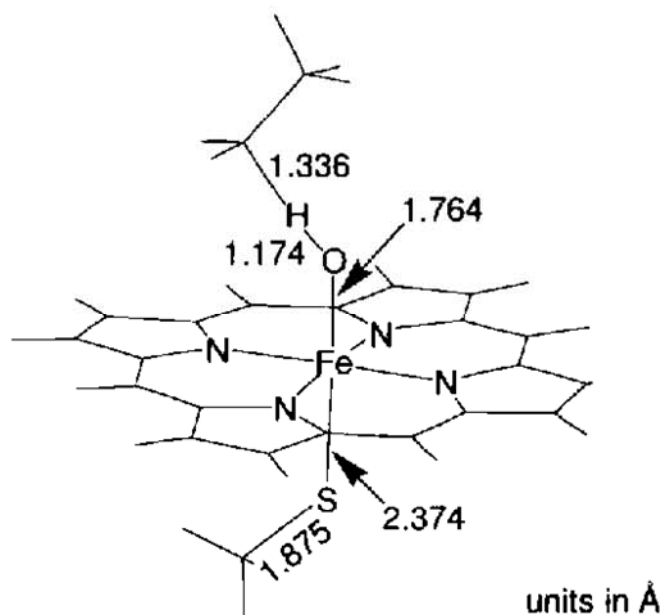
From: Alfonso-Prieto M et al., 2009,  
J. Am. Chem. Soc. 131, 11751-61.



alternative pathways: a) His-mediated mechanism, b) direct mechanism



# Cytochrome P450



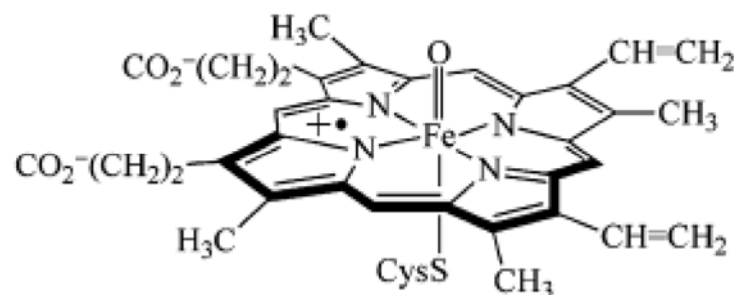
Ortiz de Montellano Chem. Rev. (2010) 110, 932–948; Denisov, Makris, Sligar, Schlichting, Chem. Rev. (2005) 105, 2253–2277

# Typical Reactions of Cytochrome P450 (O-Transfer)

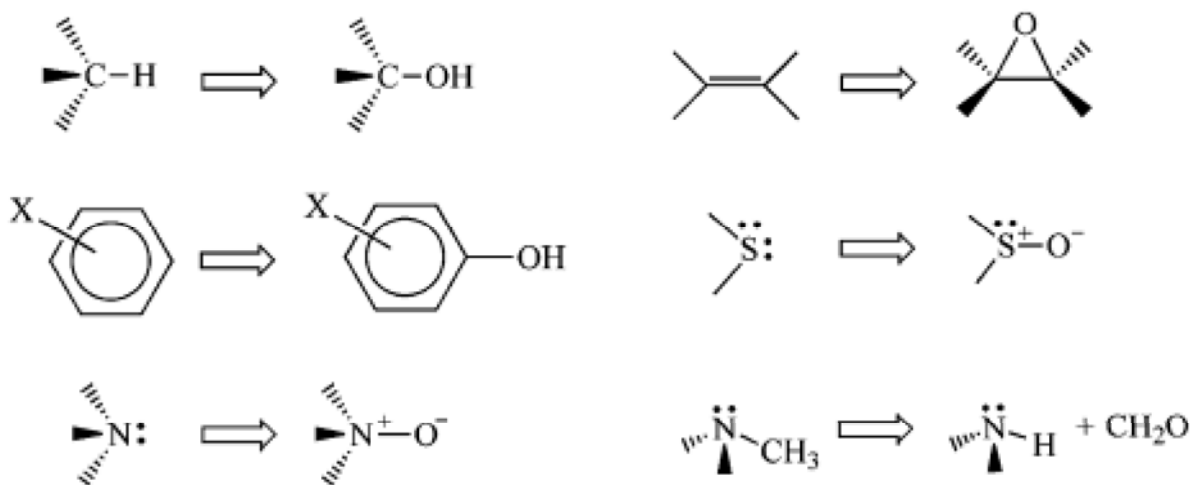
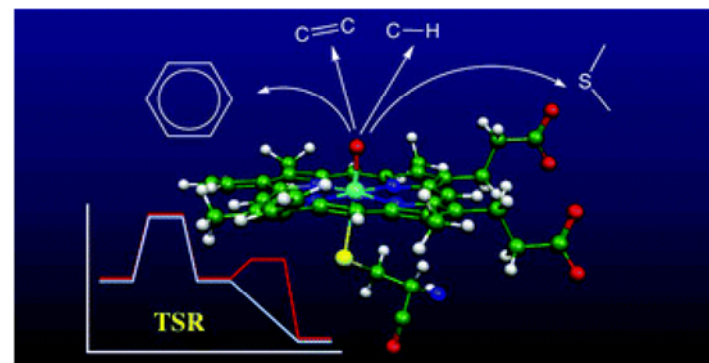
S. SHAIK et al. (2010) Acc. Chem. Res., 43, 1154-1165

J. Rittle, M. T. Green (2010), SCIENCE 330, 933-936

SCHEME 1



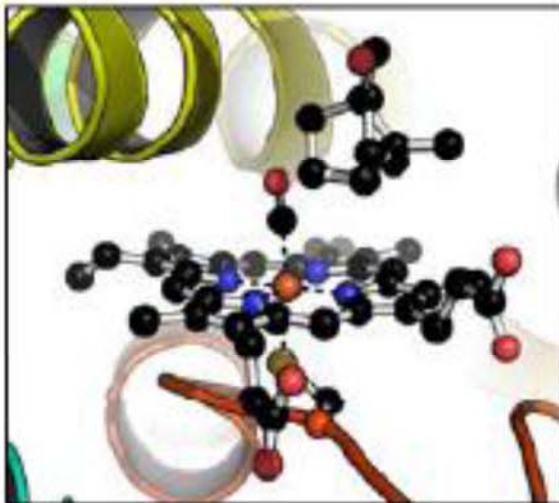
P450 Cpd I





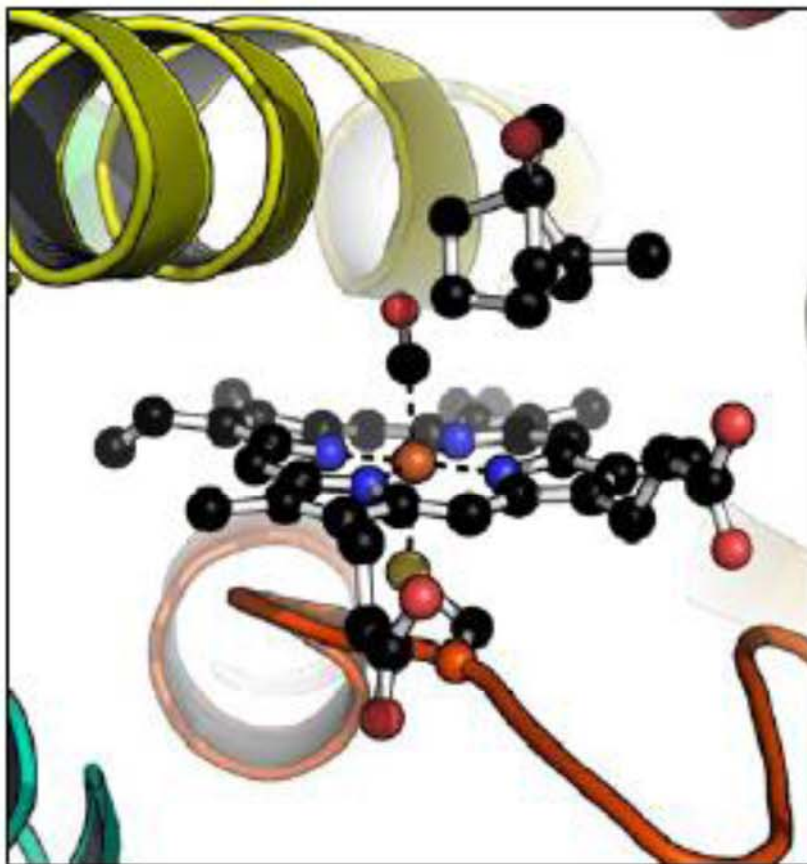
# Cytochrome P450 – important enzyme for detoxification of organic compounds

- Single *b*-type heme group
- Cys thiolate as proximal axial ligand
- Triangular prism
- No domain structure, but a more  $\alpha$ -helical half and a half containing  $\beta$ -strands.
- High degree of structural conservation within the family.



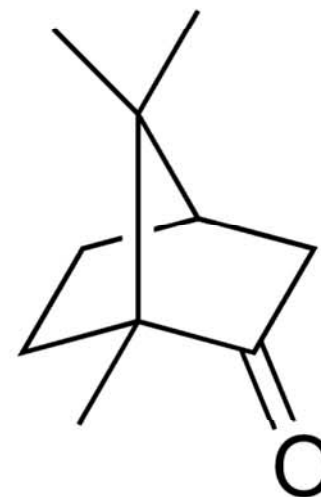
Cytochrome P450cam; PDB-ID 1CPP  
Poulos et al. (1987) *J. Mol. Biol.* 195: 687-700.

# Camphor substrate complex of Cytochrome P450



Multiple substrate complexes of P450s were readily obtained, but no intermediates of the reaction cycle.

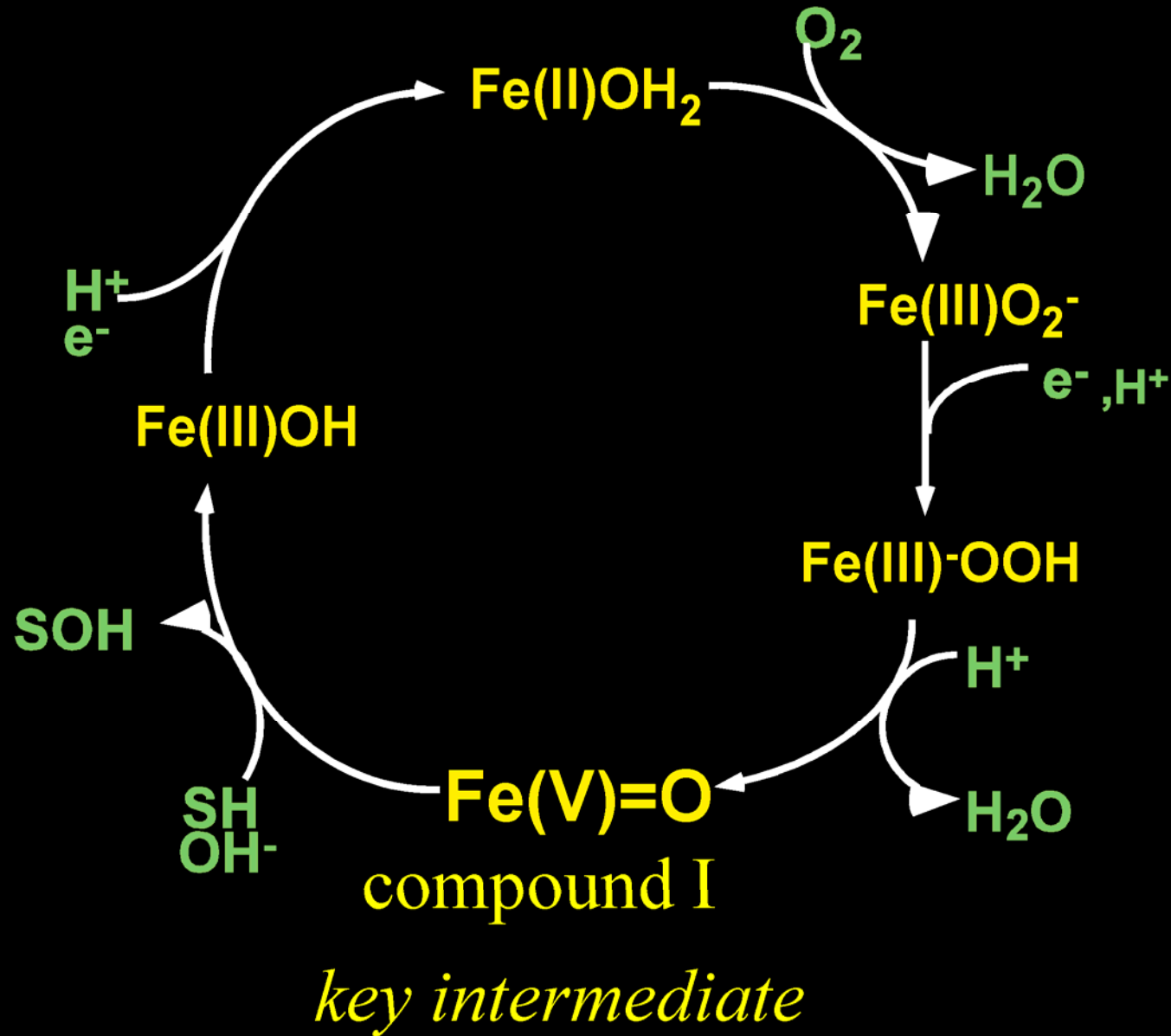
In the P450cam substrate complex, CO binds to heme, presumably analogous to  $O_2$ .



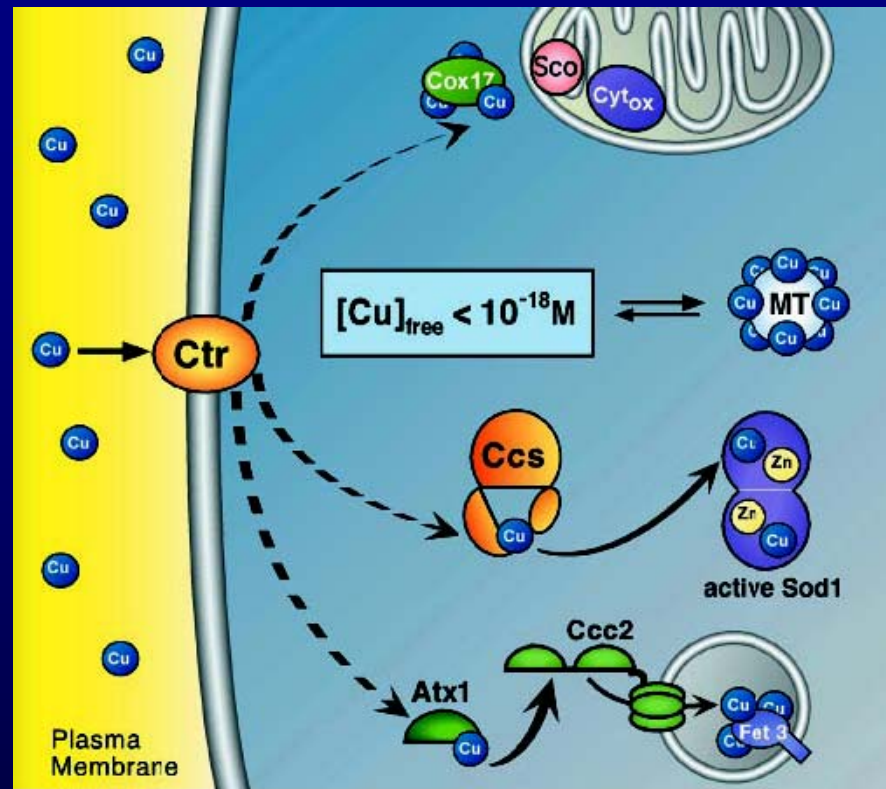
Cytochrome P450cam; PDB-ID 3CPP  
Raag & Poulos (1989) *Biochemistry* 28: 7586-7592.



# Cytochrome P450 Reaction Cycle



# Copper delivery inside cellular compartments



From: O'Halloran TV, Culotta VC, 2000, JBC275, 25057-60

- confusing large number of names for homologous proteins in different organisms
- REALITY: just 3 really different (non-homologous) Cu-chaperones are well known, some more proteins are postulated to be Cu-chaperones

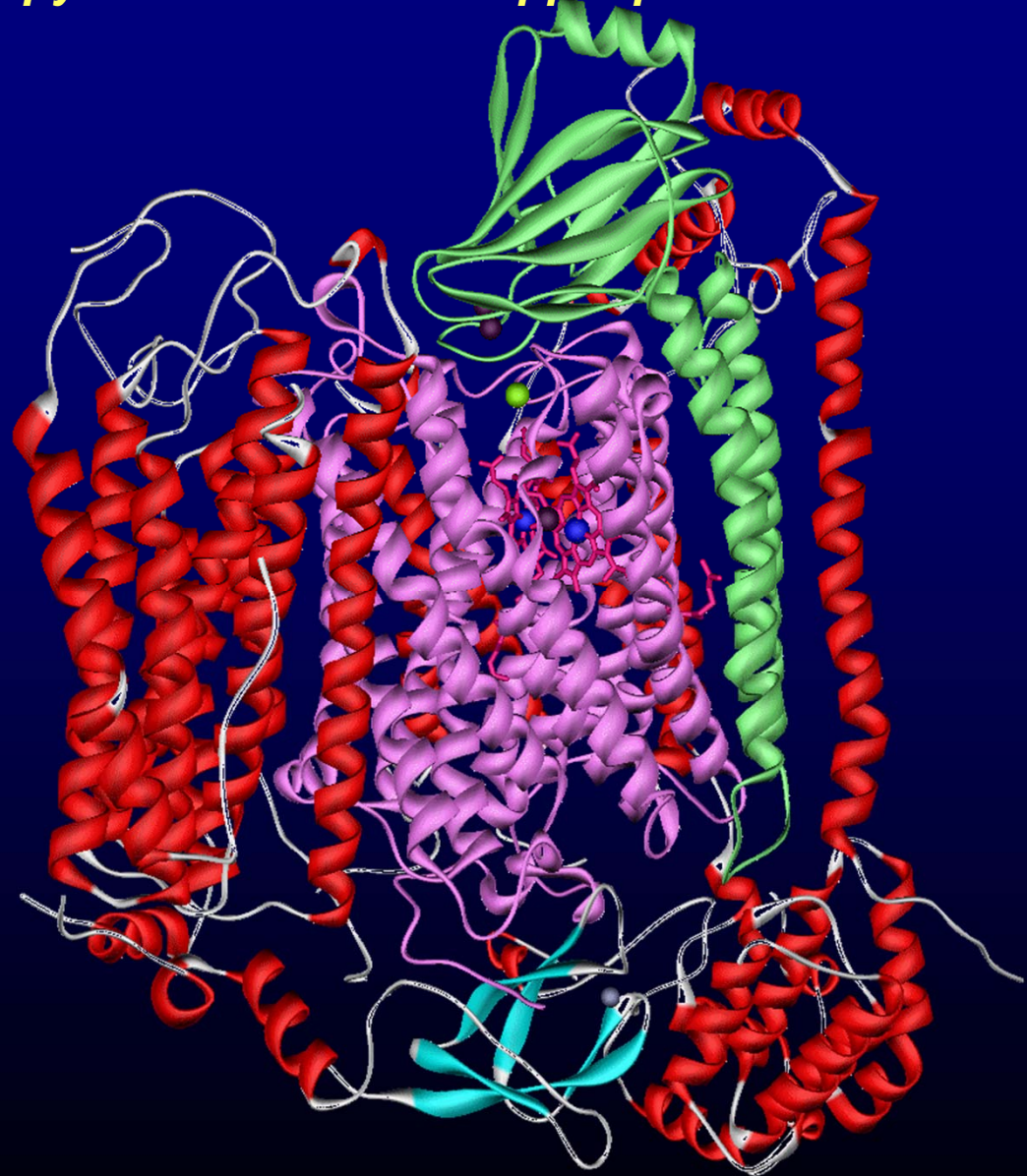
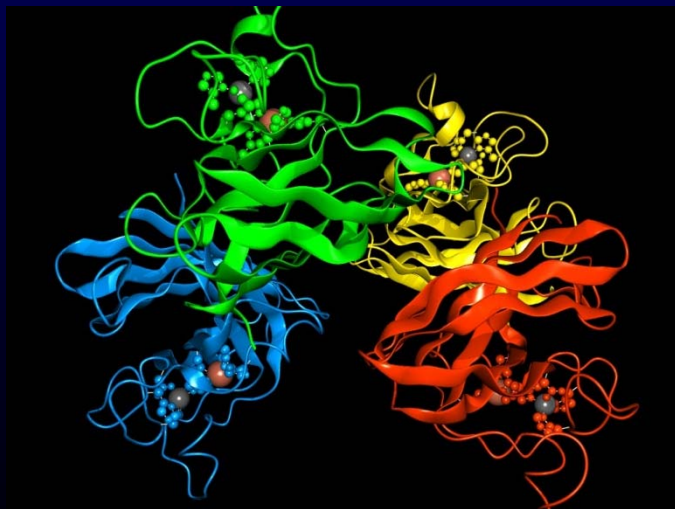
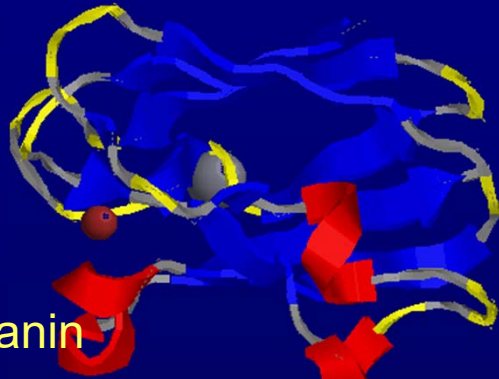
# Selected enzymes with copper in the active centre

*Details on biochemistry & spectroscopy: lecture on iron+copper proteins!*

- Plastocyanin

- Cytochrome c oxidase 3 Cu (binuclear site and mononuclear site)

- SOD = Superoxide dismutase



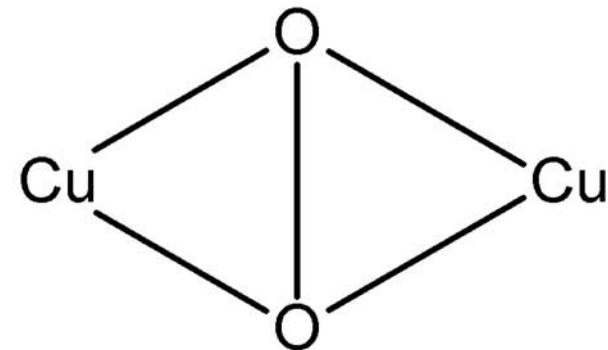
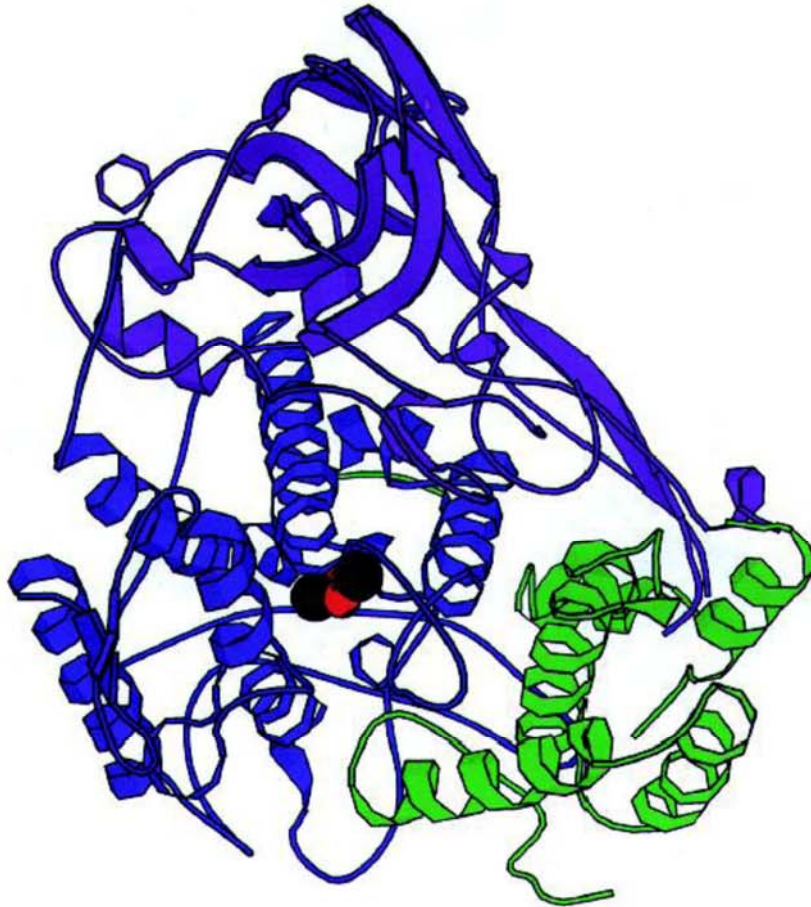
## Classically, copper proteins are divided into three classes

- (1) The mononuclear blue copper proteins characterized by an extremely strong absorption band at ~600 nm, caused by a ligand–metal charge transfer between the sulphur of a cysteine residue and the copper. Most famous example: plastocyanin
- (2) The mononuclear non-blue copper proteins.
- (3) Proteins with a coupled binuclear copper centre.

More recently, further specialised types of copper centres have been found



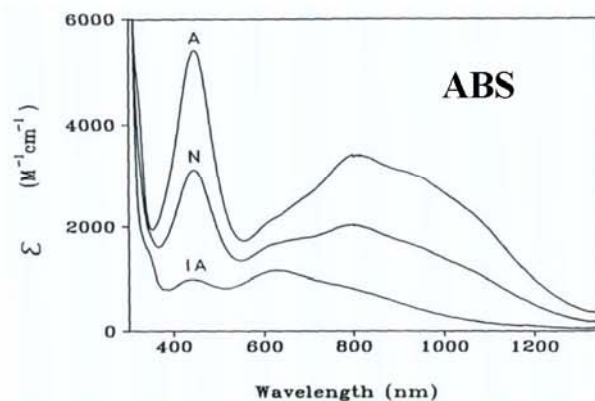
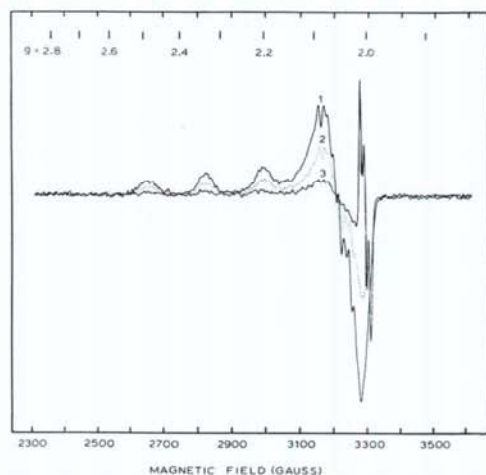
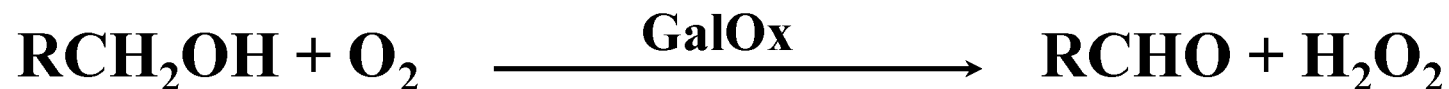
# Hemocyanin (reversible O<sub>2</sub> binding)



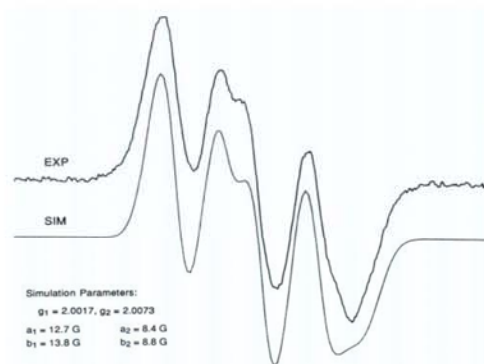
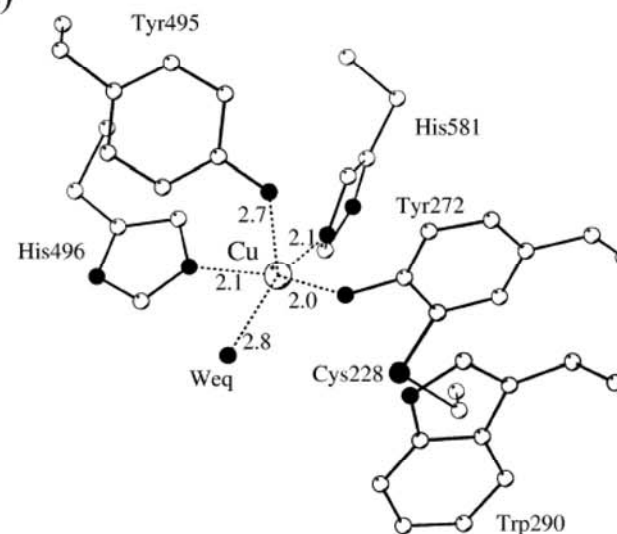
Oxygenated Cu site, see Que, Tolman, NATURE (2008) 455, 333; oxygenated form has a blue colour,  $\mu\text{-}\eta^2\text{:}\eta^2\text{-peroxo}$  binding mode

K Magnus, *Limulus polyphemus* (atlantic horseshoe crab) Hemocyanin, PDB 1OXY, Handbook of Metalloproteins (2001)

# Galactose Oxidase, a Cu-Ligand Radical Enzyme



(a)

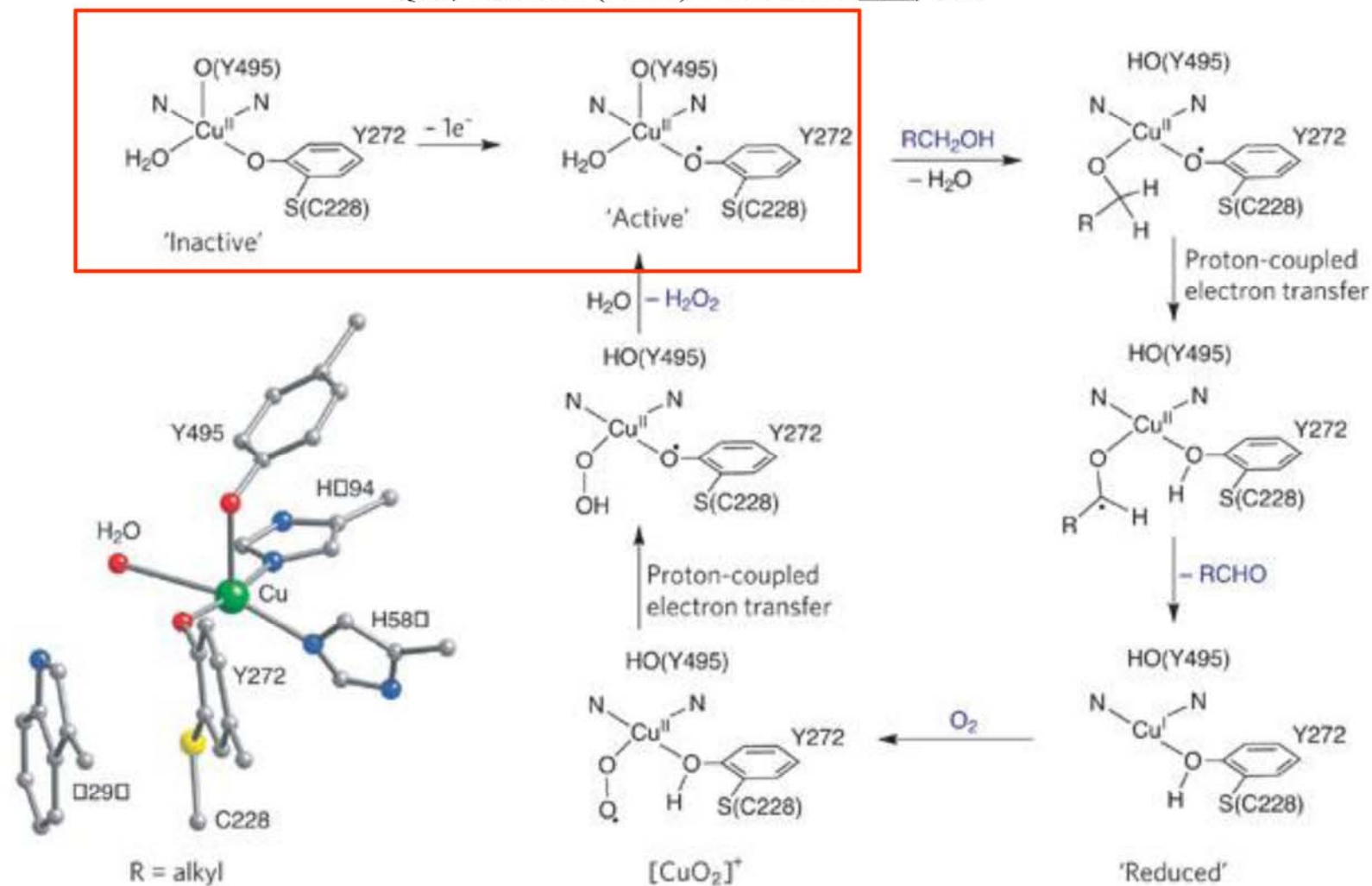


**2 different EPR signals (metal-centered and ligand centered) observed during reaction cycle**



# Galactose Oxidase - Mechanism

Que, Tolman (2008) NATURE 455, 333

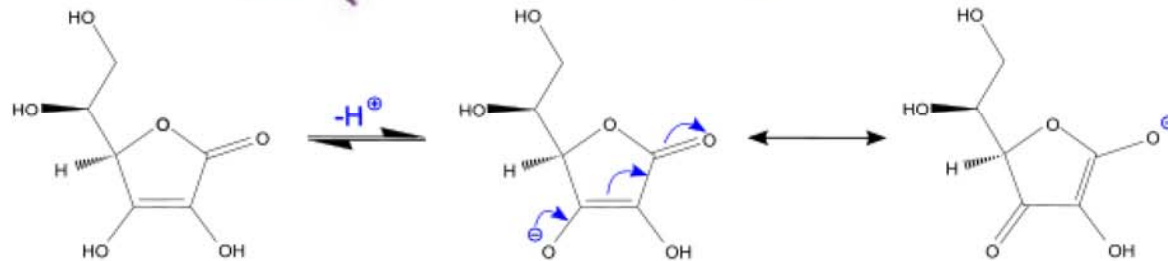
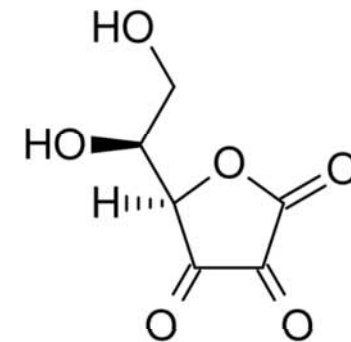
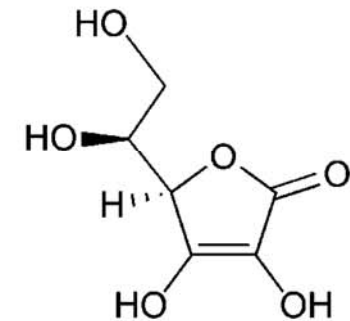


# Ascorbic acid oxidase (AOX)

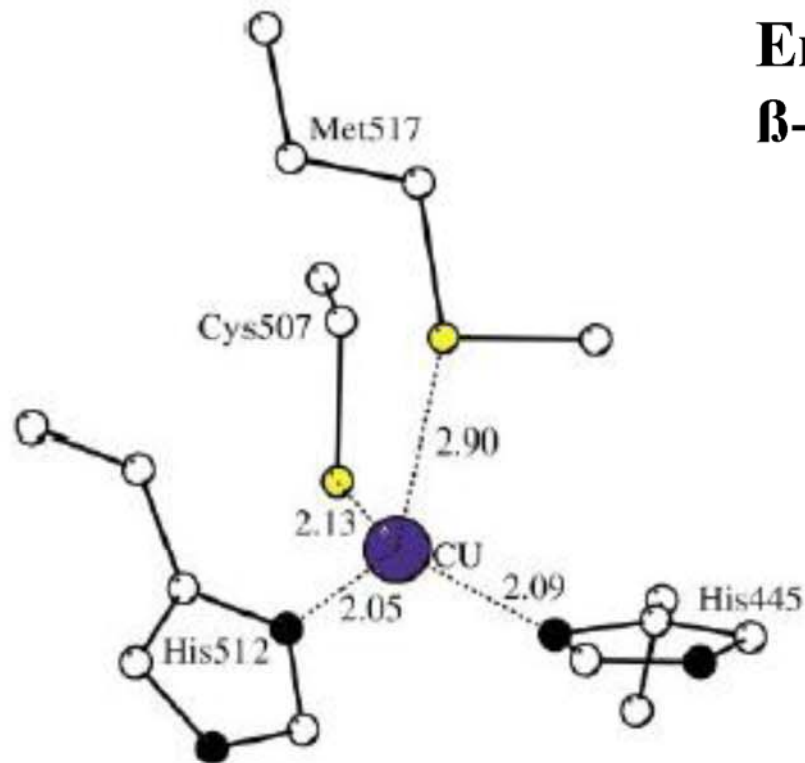
Multi-Copper oxidase (8Cu/homodimer) PDB code 1AOZ



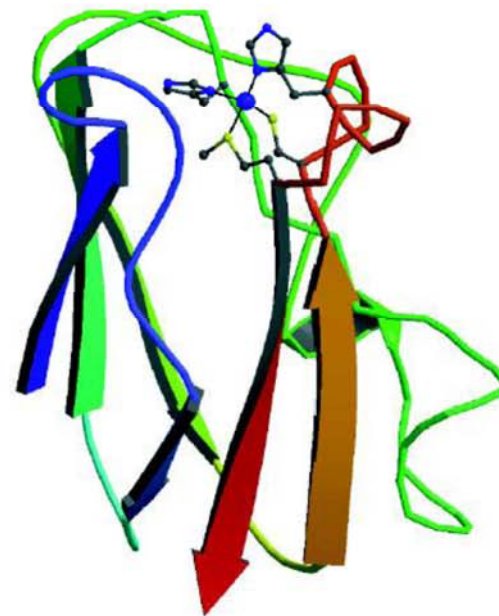
(5*R*)-[(1*S*)-1,2-dihydroxyethyl]-3,4-dihydroxyfuran-2(5*H*)-one



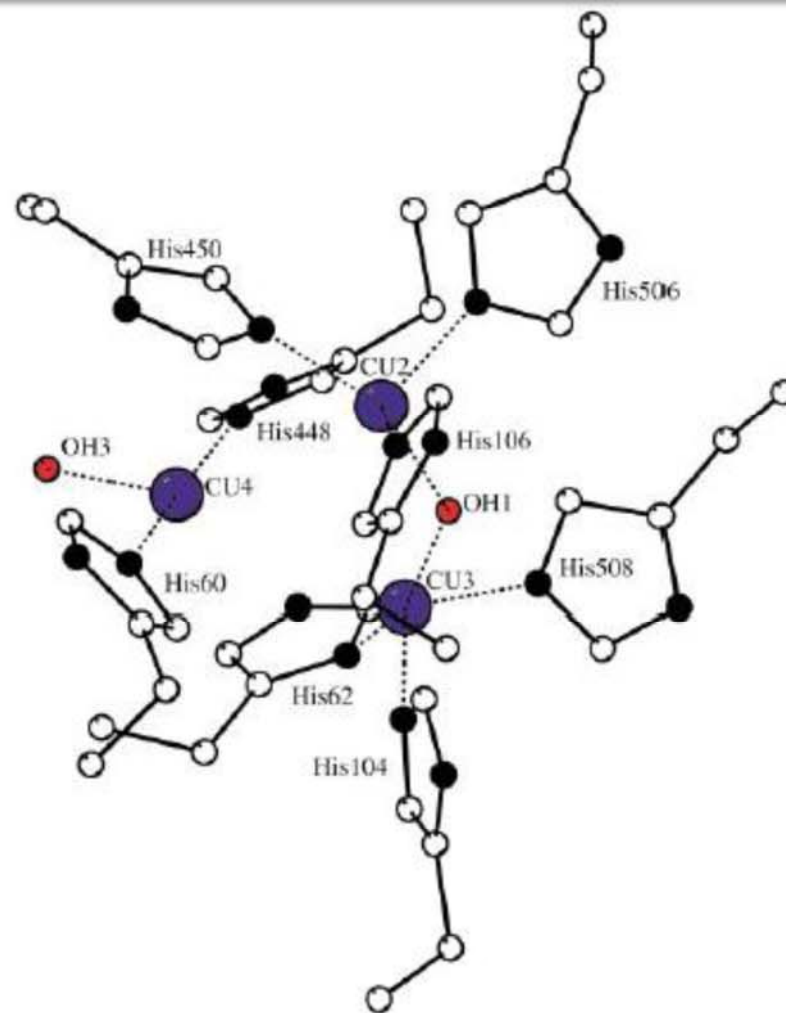
# Type 1 electron transfer center of AOX: blue copper protein with high similarity to plastocyanin!



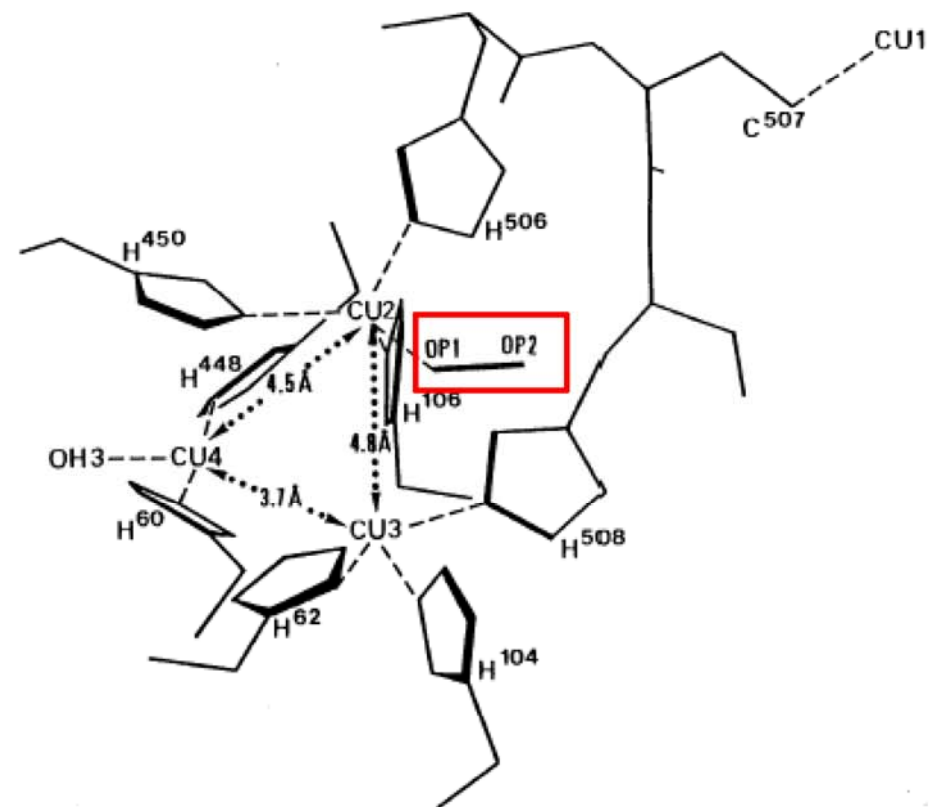
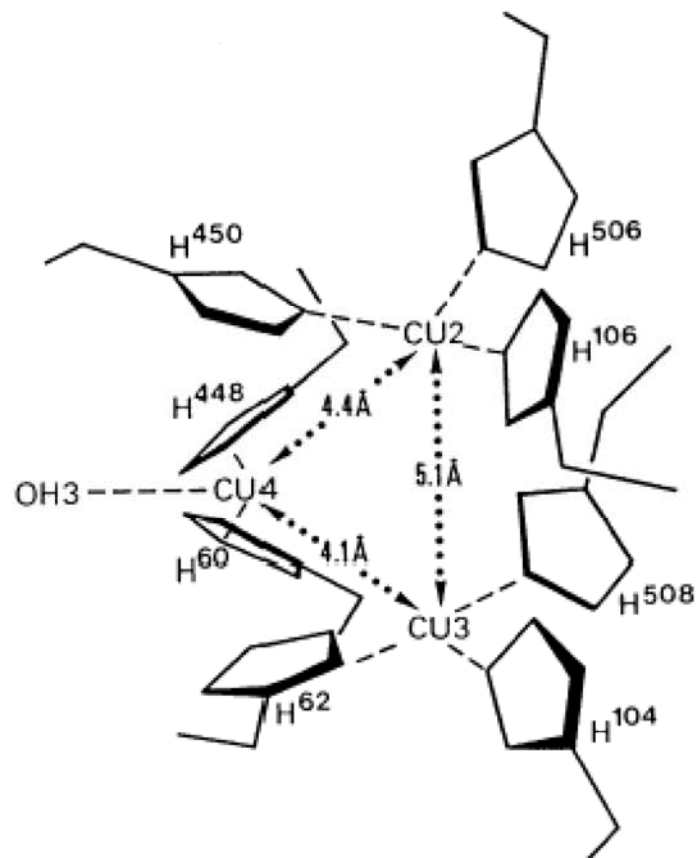
Entrance point for electrons  
 $\beta$ -barrel structural module



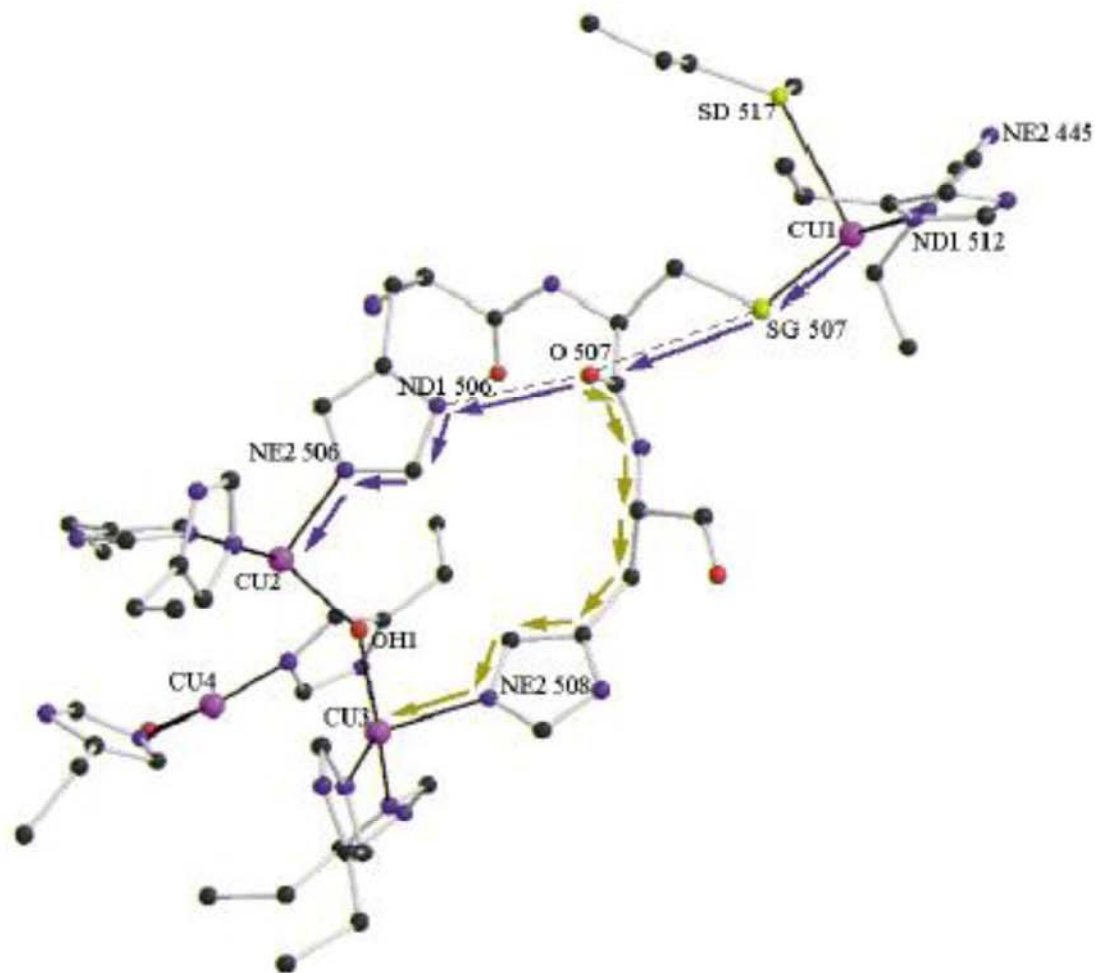
## Dioxygen reduction site of AOX: unique trinuclear copper centre



# Dioxygen reduction site of AOX: unique trinuclear copper centre - substrate binding



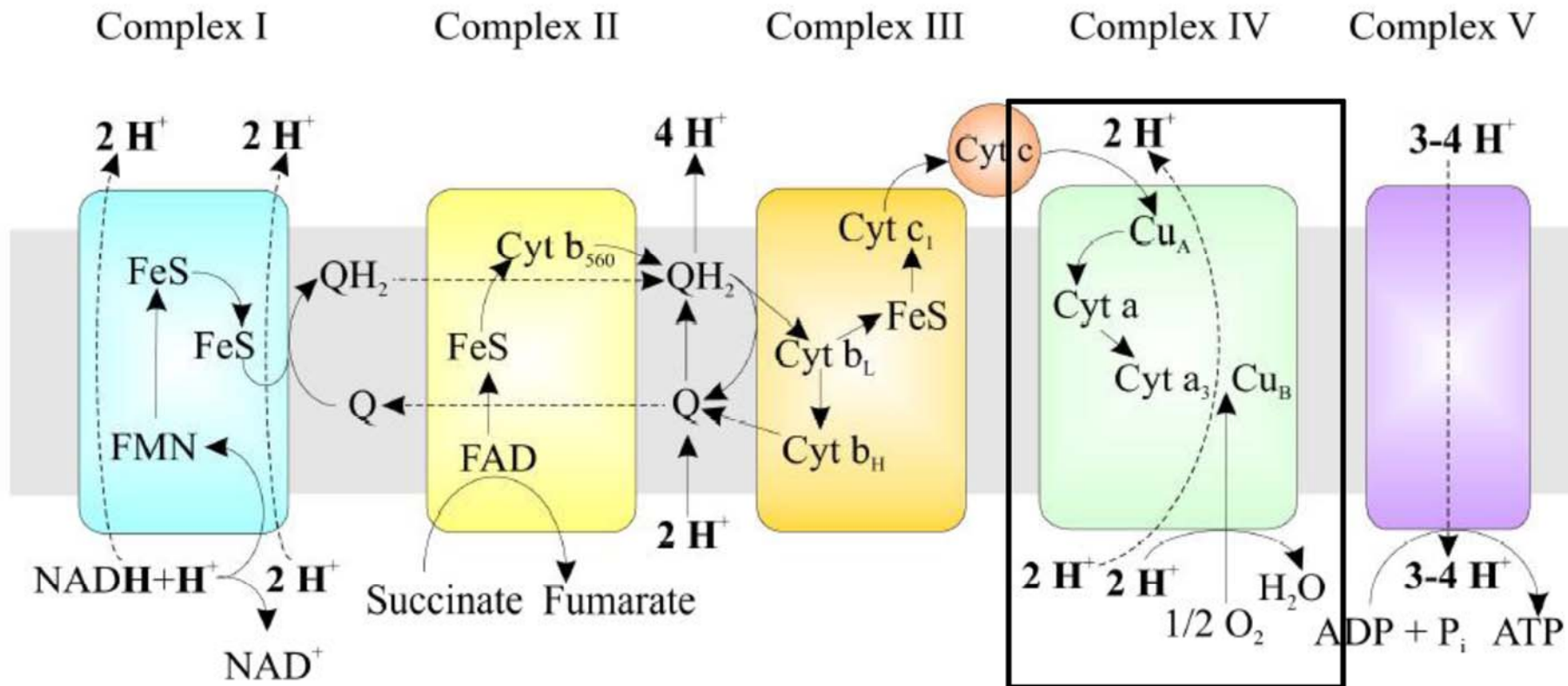
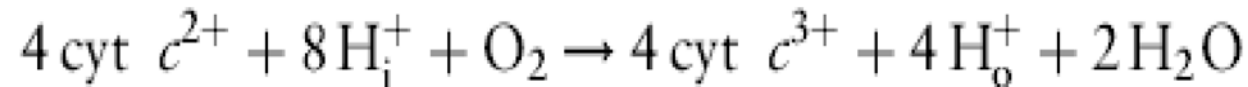
# Ascorbic acid oxidase (AOX): electron transport pathways





# Combining the best of Fe and Cu: Cytochrome c oxidase (COX), a redox-driven proton pump in the respiratory chain

Kaila, Verkhovsky, Wikstroem, Chemical Reviews (2010) 110, 7062–7081



*based on a lecture slide of Peter Kroneck*

## COX: reaction scheme, alternative substrates, active centres

S. Yoshikawa, K. Muramoto, K. Shinzawa-Itoh Annu. Rev. Biophys. (2011) 40, 205–23  
Tomoya Hino, et al. SCIENCE (2010) 330, 1666-1670

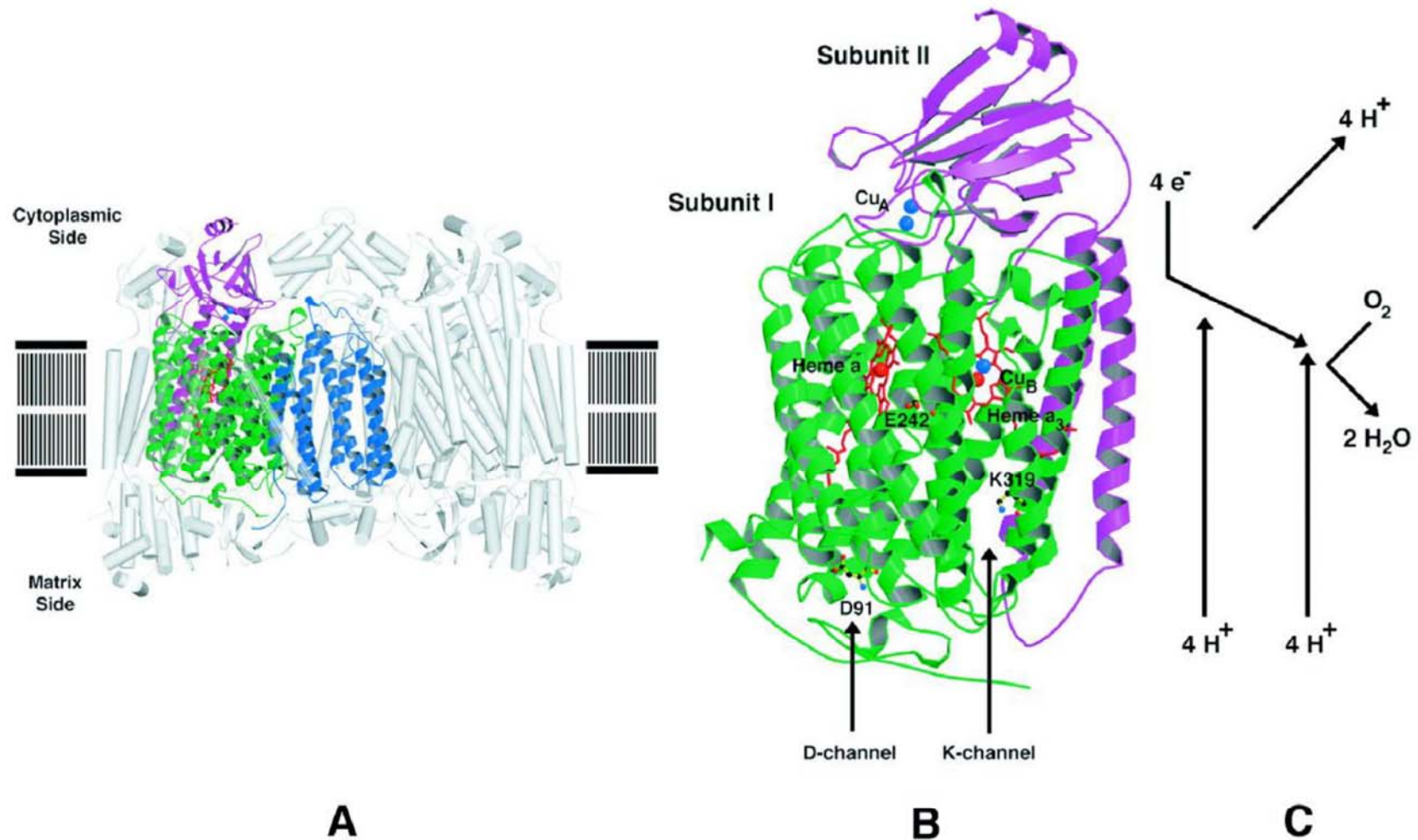


metals (CuA, Fe-heme, Mg, Zn)

$e^-$  transfer (redox; tyrosyl radical ?),  $\text{H}^+$  transfer (pump)

metal centers: CuA  $\rightarrow$  ET; Fe-CuB  $\rightarrow$   $\text{O}_2$  reduction

# COX: structure and reaction scheme



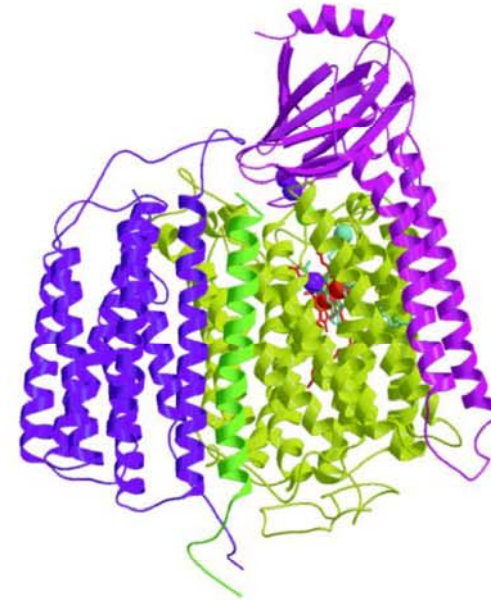
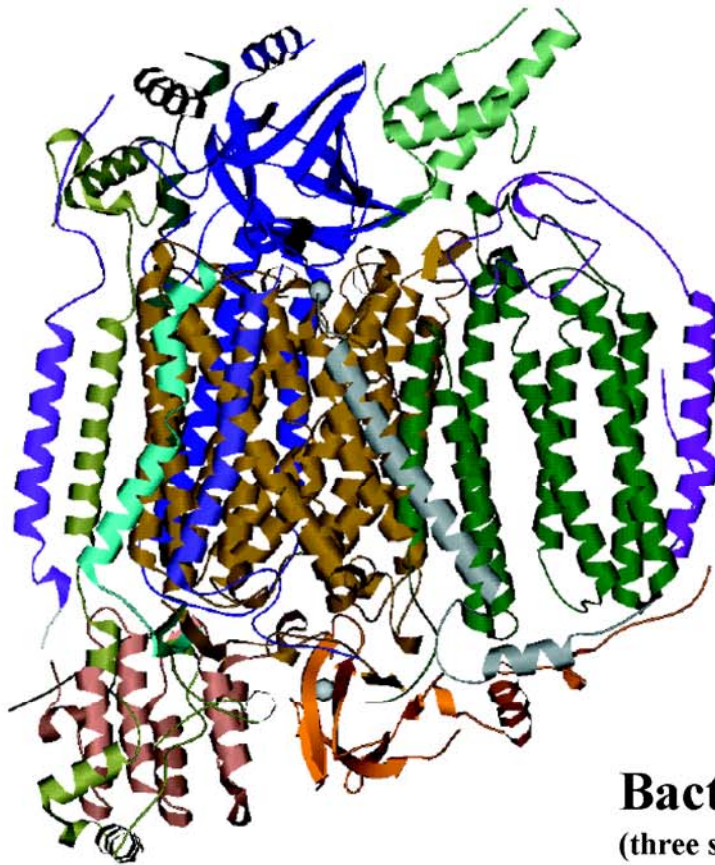
M Saraste Science (1999) 283,1488-1493

*based on a lecture slide of Peter Kroneck*

# COX: structure with organism-specific variations

(representation of the monomer from bovine heart/13 subunits)

Tsukihara et al., SCIENCE 1995, 269, 1069; Yoshikawa et al., SCIENCE 1998, 280, 1723



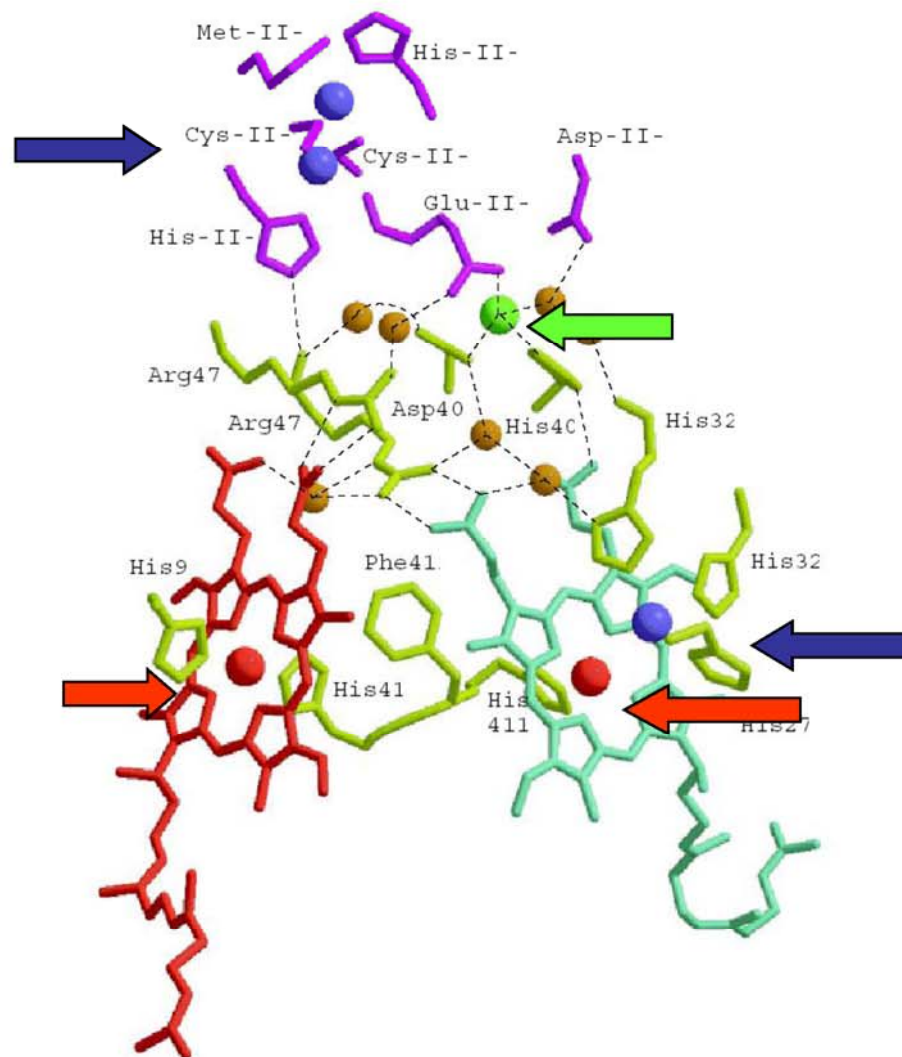
**Bacterial COX from *Pseudomonas denitrificans***

(three subunits; Iwata et al., NATURE, 1995, 376, 660)



# Metal Centers in bacterial COX

Cu Fe Mg



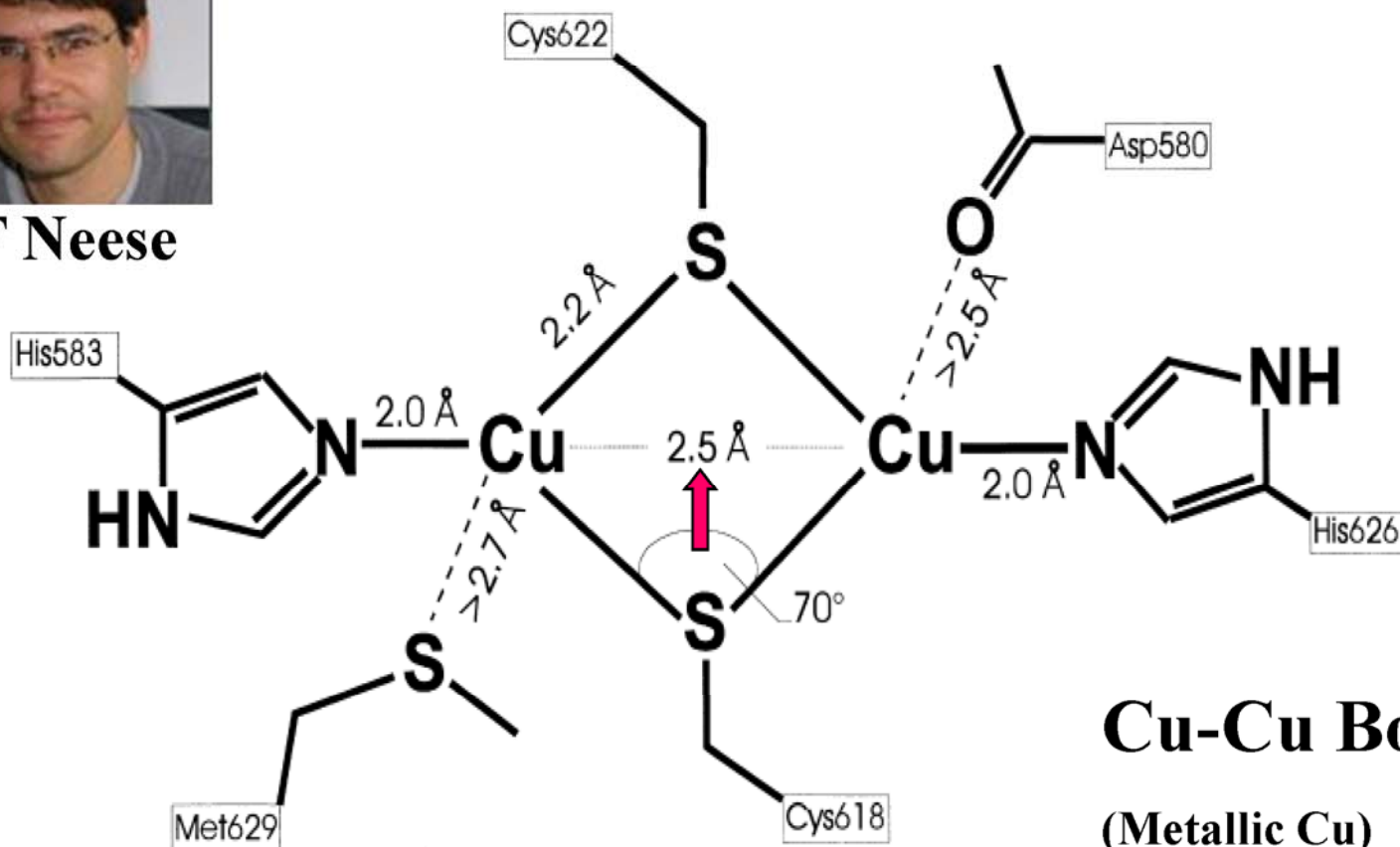
*based on a lecture slide of Peter Kroneck*

# The CuA site of COX: a mixed-valence $\text{Cu}_2\text{S}_2$ rhomb

formal oxidation state:  $\text{Cu}^{1.5+}$ , in reality 1 unpaired delocalised  $e^-$  per 2 Cu



**F Neese**



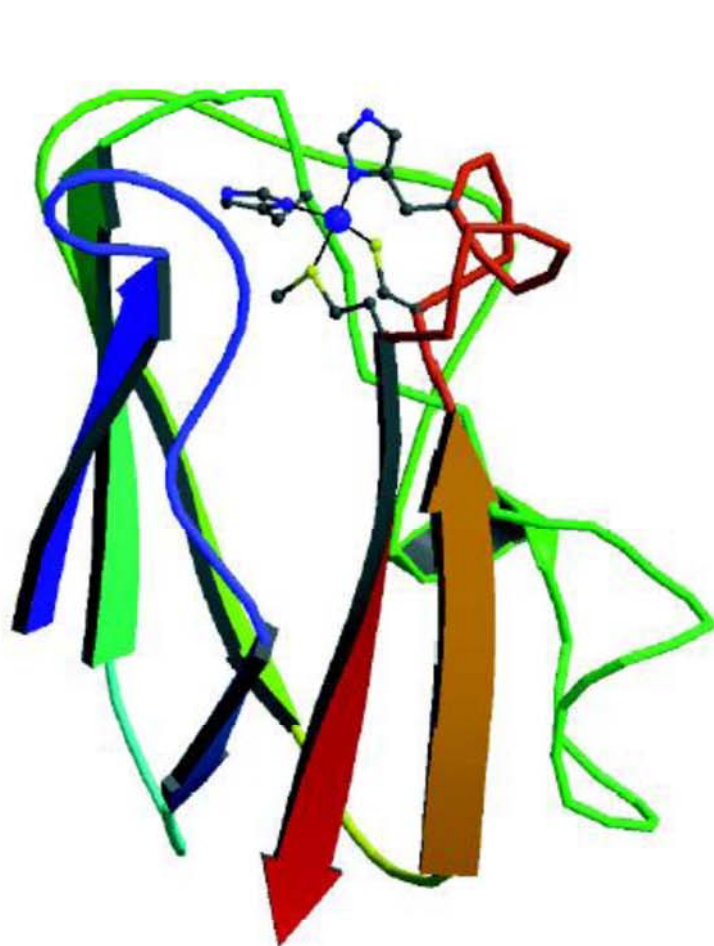
**Cu-Cu Bond ?**  
(Metallic Cu)



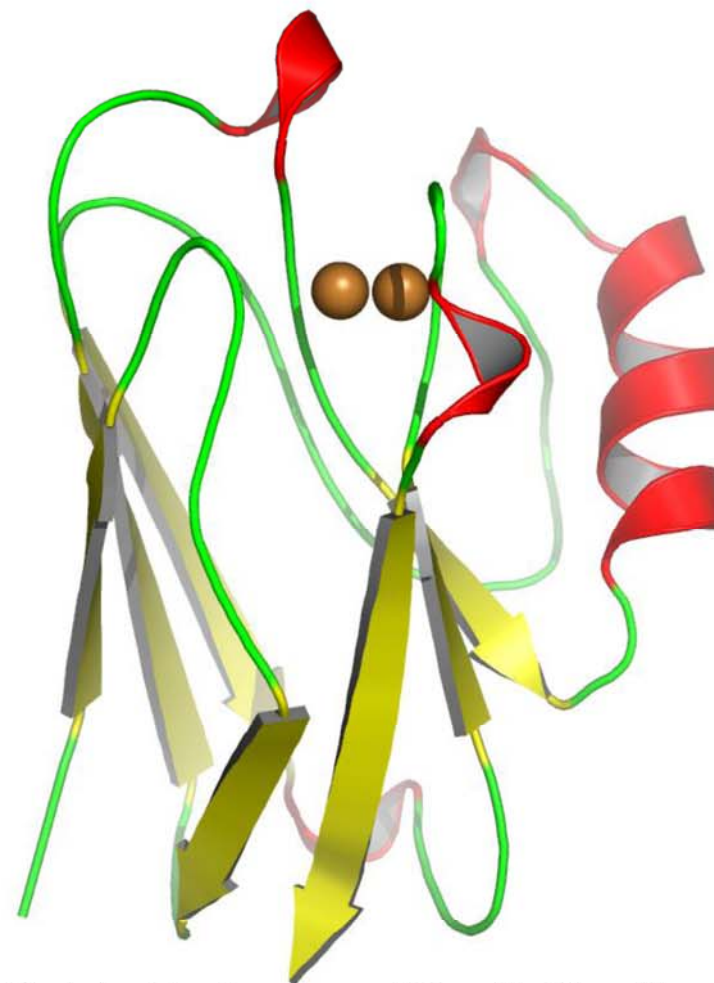
# Evolution and Bioengineering through Loop directed Mutagenesis

## From a Blue Mononuclear Cu to a Purple Dinuclear CuA

MG Savelieff, Y Lu, J Biol Inorg Chem, 15, 967-976 (2010)



Plastocyanin/Photosynthesis



Nitrous Oxide Reductase/Denitrification  
Cytochrome c Oxidase/Respiration

**All slides of my lectures can be downloaded  
from my workgroup homepage**

Biology Centre CAS → Institute of Plant Molecular Biology → Departments  
→ Department of Plant Biophysics and Biochemistry,  
*or directly*

**[http://webserver.umbr.cas.cz/~kupper/AG\\_Kuepper\\_Homepage.html](http://webserver.umbr.cas.cz/~kupper/AG_Kuepper_Homepage.html)**