

Ab-initio Synthesis of Amino acids

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Under the Guidance of
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Miller-Urey experiment

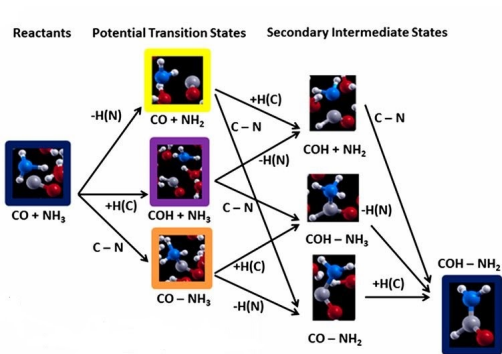


Figure 1: Metadynamic based analysis of the formation of formamide (Saitta and Saija (2014))

- ▶ Prebiotic earth - CH_4 , NH_3 , H_2O , and H_2
- ▶ Track formation of Amino acids
- ▶ Important intermediates!
- ▶ Strecker's amino acid synthesis

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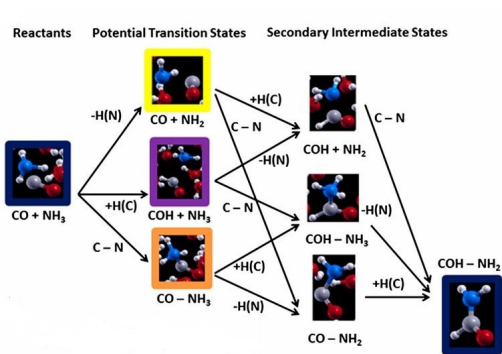
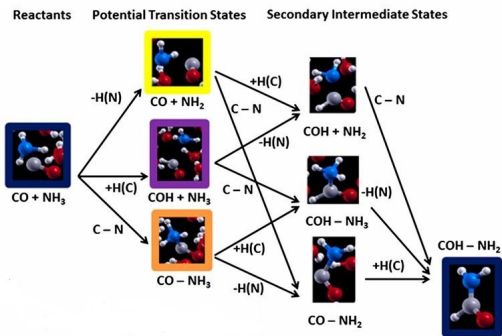


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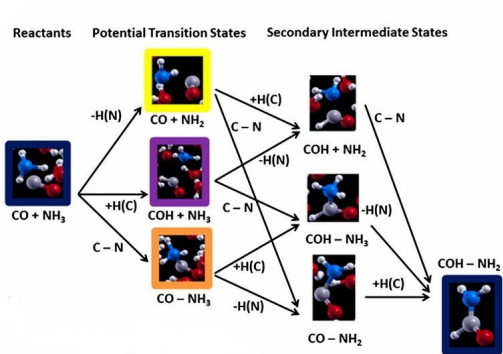


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Thermodynamic data collection

- ▶ **Reaction Mechanism Generator (RMG)**
- ▶ Segregated in the form of libraries
- ▶ NASA and Group Additivity formats
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Initial Network Setup - Representation

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class Atom()
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Attributes:

- ▶ `_name`
- ▶ `_number`
- ▶ `_element`
- ▶ `_valency`

Member functions:

- ▶ `__init__()`
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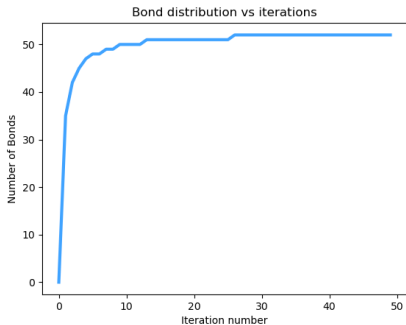


Figure 3: Maximum number of bonds that can be formed across iterations

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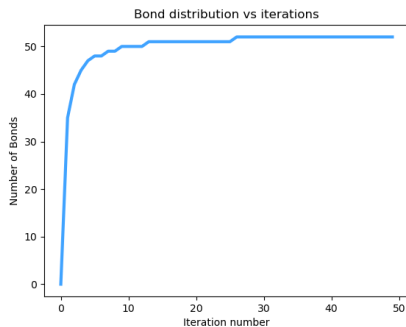


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Ensuring electrical neutrality

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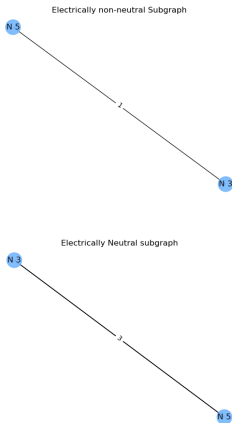


Figure 4: Neighboring atom doesn't have satisfied valency

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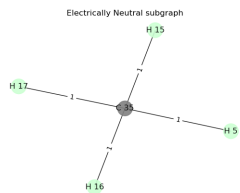
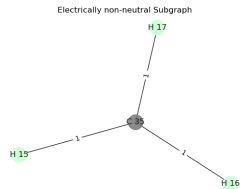
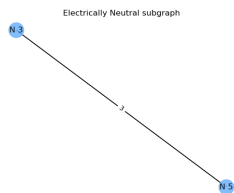
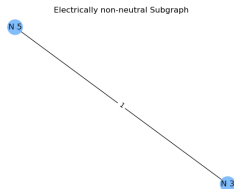


Figure 4: Neighboring atom doesn't have satisfied valency

Figure 5: All neighboring atom have satisfied valency

Simulated Annealing

- ▶ Minimize sum total Gibbs free energy of network
- ▶ Probability p :

$$p = \exp\left(\frac{-(\Delta G_{tot,current}^{\circ} - \Delta G_{tot,best}^{\circ})}{T}\right)$$
$$T = (0.995)^{iteration} T_{initial}$$

- ▶ Enhanced sampling: `rearrange_connected_components`
 - `random.uniform(0.0, 1.0) < 0.1`: Complete reshuffling
 - `0.1 < random.uniform(0.0, 1.0) < 0.6`: Two reshufflings
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Reaction simulation

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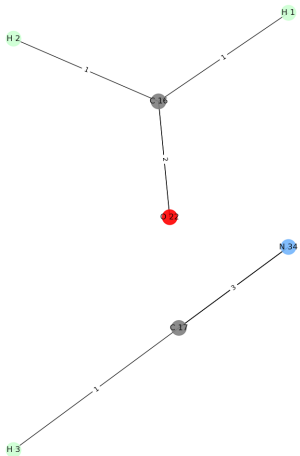


Figure 6: Reactants: Formaldehyde and Hydrogen Cyanide

Strecker Reaction

Compounds were scanned for

- ▶ Aldehydes
- ▶ Ketones
- ▶ Amines

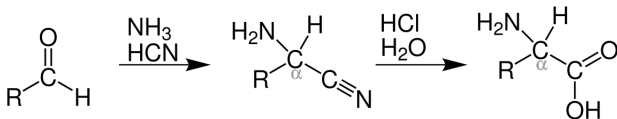


Figure 8: Strecker amino acid synthesis

Glycine synthesis

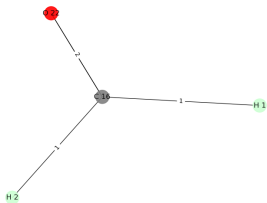


Figure 9: Initial reactant - Formaldehyde

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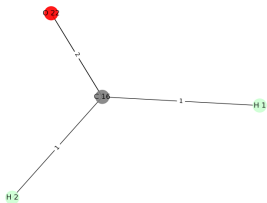


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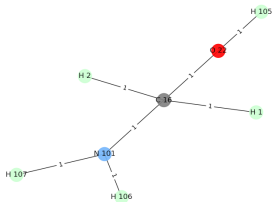


Figure 10: Addition of ammonia - Aminomethanol

Alanine synthesis

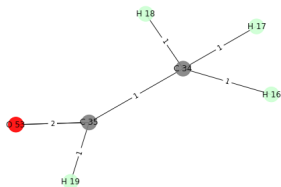


Figure 13: Initial reactant - Acetaldehyde

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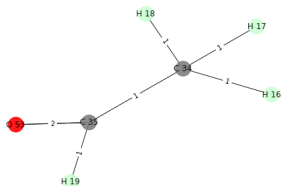


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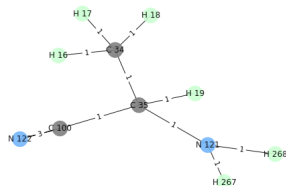


Figure 15: Addition of HCN : 2-Aminopropanenitrile

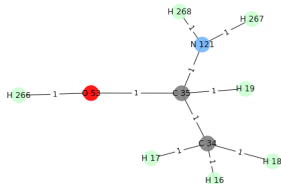


Figure 14: Addition of ammonia - Ethylamine

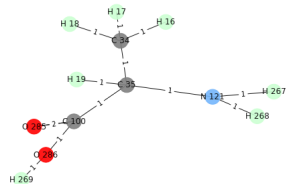


Figure 16: Acid hydrolysis - Alanine

Results

- ▶ Key intermediates:
 - Glycine: Formaldehyde, Aminoacetonitrile and Hydrogen Cyanide
 - Alanine: Acetaldehyde, Ethylamine and Hydrogen Cyanide
- ▶ Gibbs free energy across reaction coordinates

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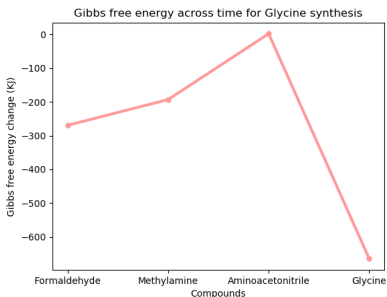


Figure 17: Gibbs free energy across reaction coordinates for Glycine synthesis

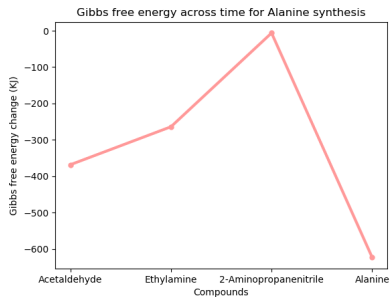


Figure 18: Gibbs free energy across reaction coordinates for Alanine synthesis

Challenges

- ▶ Electrically charged compounds
 - Unavailability of Gibbs free energy data
 - We overcame by introducing function - `get_neutral_compound()`
- ▶ Computationally expensive
 - Reduced number of simulations of Lewis Acid-Base reaction.

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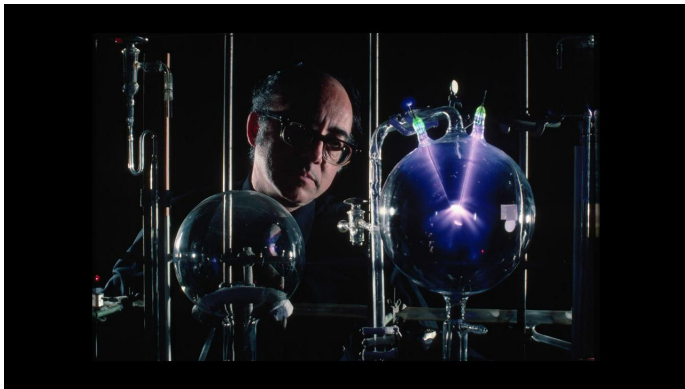


Figure 19: Stanley L. Miller overlooking a spark discharge apparatus 1994. (©Roger Ressmeyer/CORBIS)