DE LA RECHERCHE À L'INDUSTRIE



Exploration of the energy landscape with ABINIT : String Method, NEB, Free Energy

Grégory GENESTE Marc TORRENT CEA, DAM, DIF, F-91297 Arpajon, France 21-25 January 2019



www.cea.fr





# **1 – Introduction**

- 2 Minimum Energy Paths (MEPs)
  - 2.a The String Method (SM)
  - 2.b The Nudged Elastic Band (NEB)
- 3 Examples : physical systems
  - 3.a Hopping of a defect in a solid
  - 3.b Hopping of a small polaron
- 4 <u>Thermal effects : free energy landscape</u>
- 5 Conclusion





Proton transfer between two O atoms of a O-ZrO2(111) Surface

(String Method)

DE LA RECHERCHE À L'INDUSTRI

#### **1 - Introduction**

#### Yesterday, you have learnt how to perform **STRUCTURAL OPTIMIZATIONS** with ABINIT = how to obtain (*local*) *minima* of the *energy landscape* in configuration space.

What happens inbetween ?

There are specific physical problems in which the energy landscape between the minima is important and plays a role.

Example : <u>Transition between two local minima</u> of the energy landscape According to **Transition State Theory (TST)**, the transition **rate**, if the mechanism if **THERMALLY ACTIVATED** (thermal overbarrier motion), is controlled by an ENERGY BARRIER

$$k = k_0 e^{-E_a/k_B T}$$

DE LA RECHERCHE À L'INDUSTRI

#### **1 - Introduction**

TST : activation energy ~ free energy barrier => approximated by a static (« T=0K ») barrier ΔE

 $\Delta E$  can be obtained by <u>computing the MEP</u>  $\Delta E = E(saddle point) - E(Min)$ 

Prefactor ? Harmonic Transition State Theory : Classical framework:  $\int_{1}^{3N-3} v_i^{Min} k_0 = \frac{i}{3N-4} \int_{1}^{i} v_i^{Saddle}$ « attempt frequency » Phonon frequencies in the stable (initial) configuration of the 3N-3 modes (acoustic modes excluded)

Phonon frequencies in the Saddle point configuration of the 3N-4 modes (acoustic modes + imaginary mode excluded)

See e.g. Sundell, Björketun, Wahnstrom, PRB 76, 094301 (2007)

1 - Introduction

Quantum corrections :

$$\Delta E^{qm} = E(saddle) - E(min) + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i}^{3N-4} h v_{i}^{Saddle} - \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i}^{3N-3} h v_{i}^{Min}$$

$$k_{0}^{qm} = \frac{k_{B}T}{h} \frac{\prod_{i}^{3N-3} [1 - e^{-hv_{i}^{Saddle}/k_{B}T}]}{\prod_{i}^{3N-4} [1 - e^{-hv_{i}^{Min}/k_{B}T}]}$$

Thermal overbarrier regime but quantization of vibration modes taken into account.

See e.g. Sundell, Björketun, Wahnstrom, PRB 76, 094301 (2007)



High-temperature limit (
$$k_B T >> hv_i$$
) :  
 $k_0^{qm} \rightarrow k_0$ 

Low-temperature limit ( $k_B T \ll hv_i$ ) :

$$k_0^{qm} \rightarrow \frac{k_B T}{h} \qquad \qquad k \rightarrow \frac{k_B T}{h} e^{-\Delta E^{qm}/k_B T}$$

<u>NB1</u>: the regime remains thermal overbarrier (no tunneling)

<u>NB2</u>: at very low temperature, one might have a quantum tunneling regime (requires specific modeling ! e.g. Flynn-Stoneham formula) Ex : diffusion of H atoms in metals (e.g. in Nb or Ta below ~ 200 K)

See e.g. Sundell, Björketun, Wahnstrom, PRB 76, 094301 (2007)





## 1 – Introduction

# 2 – Minimum Energy Paths (MEPs)

- 2.a The String Method (SM)
- 2.b The Nudged Elastic Band (NEB)
- 3 Examples : physical systems
  - 3.a Hopping of a defect in a solid
  - 3.b Hopping of a small polaron
- 4 <u>Thermal effects : free energy landscape</u>
- 5 Conclusion



Path between two local minima (stable or metastable configurations) in configuration space, that involves the smallest possible energy barrier.

There are **two main algorithms** allowing computation of MEPs : <u>String Method</u> (SM) & <u>Nudged Elastic Band</u> (NEB)

Computing a MEP requires to sample the path between the two minima => the path is **discretized**: it is approximated by **a finite number of intermediate configurations** 

Needs replicas of the system => performed using keyword **imgmov** 

String Method : imgmov 2

NEB : imgmov 5

Number of replicas (intermediate configurations) along the path : nimage Maximal number of steps for SM/NEB : ntimimage Tolerance criterion for convergence : tolimg (energy difference with previous step, per image) String Method & NEB :

Path computed between two local minima =

Two optimized configurations (that have been obtained before,

e.g. by a structural optimization !) => xred\_1img & xred\_lastimg

Allows determination of energy barriers

(fundamental to evaluate rate of thermally-activated mechanisms)

## Other keywords :

dynimage(nimage): 0 if fixed image, 1 if evolving
=> 0 for first and last image, 1 for intermediate images
Parallelization over images : npimage (recommended = nimage)

Precise optionnally fxcartfactor: « time step » string\_algo : 1 by default, Simplified String Method, 2 (energy-weighted arc length) neb\_algo : 0, 1 (NEB + improved tangent, default), 2 : CI-NEB

The MEP should be CONVERGED with the number of images





- 1 Introduction
- 2 Minimum Energy Paths (MEPs)
  - 2.a The String Method (SM)
  - 2.b The Nudged Elastic Band (NEB)
- 3 Examples : physical systems
  - 3.a Hopping of a defect in a solid
  - 3.b Hopping of a small polaron
- 4 <u>Thermal effects : free energy landscape</u>
- 5 Conclusion



SM : Iterative procedure in which each iteration consists of two steps:

## **Step 1: evolution**

Positions are modified following the forces:

For image (s):  $x_{i,\alpha}^{(s)}(n+1) = x_{i,\alpha}^{(s)}(n) + fxcartfactor \times f_{i,\alpha}^{(s)}(n)$ 

with 
$$f_{i,\alpha}^{(s)}(n) = -\frac{\partial E_{tot}^{(s)}(n)}{\partial x_{i\alpha}^{(s)}}$$

(present implementation = steepest-descent)

# **Step 2: reparametrization** The images are equally redistributed along the string





#### Example (2D):







#### Example (2D):







#### Example (2D):



charge 1.0 # Charge of the simulation cell

#### 2.a The String Method

# Example (the one of the Tutorial) : Hopping of a proton between a H2O and a NH3 molecules, supposed at fixed (arbitrary) distance.

#Cell and atoms **#String Method** acell 10.0 5.0 5.0 Angstrom xangst 0.00000000E+00 0.00000000E+00 0.0000000E+00 # Number of atoms -3.7593832509E-01 -2.8581911534E-01 8.7109635973E-01 natom 8 ntypat 3 typat 1 3 3 2 3 3 3 3 # Type of atoms (H2O + NH3 + H) -3.8439081179E-01 8.6764073738E-01 -2.8530130333E-01 # Z of atoms znucl 8.0 7.0 1.0 4.000000000E+00 0.000000000E+00 0.00000000E+00 natfix 2 iatfix 1 4 # Keep O and N atoms fixed 4.3461703447E+00 -9.9808458269E-02 -9.5466143436E-01 4.3190273240E+00 -7.8675247603E-01 5.6699786920E-01 #parallelization 4.3411410402E+00 8.7383785043E-01 4.0224838603E-01 #paral kgb 1 npimage 10 npband 10 npfft 2 bandpp 1 1.0280313162E+00 2.2598784215E-02 1.5561763093E-02 #options for printing xangst\_lastimg 0.00000000E+00 0.00000000E+00 0.0000000E+00 prtwf 0 # Option for WF printing -3.0400286349E-01 -1.9039526061E-01 9.0873550186E-01 # Option for density printing -3.2251946581E-01 9.0284480687E-01 -1.8824324581E-01 prtden 0 # Option for eigvalues printing prteig 0 4.000000000E+00 0.000000000E+00 0.00000000E+00 4.4876385468E+00 -1.4925704575E-01 -8.9716581956E-01 #ground state 4.2142401901E+00 -7.8694929117E-01 6.3097154506E-01 ecut 20 pawecutdg 40 4.3498225718E+00 8.7106686509E-01 4.2709343135E-01 # Stopping criterion of SCF cycle toldff 5.0d-7 2.9570301511E+00 5.5992672027E-02 -1.3560839453E-01 nstep 50 nband 10 # Number of bands to compute nimage 12 # Number of images along the string **#**Occupations scheme **#String Method** occopt 1 imgmov 2 # Scheme for k-points generation ntimimage 100 # Max. number of relaxation steps of the string kptopt 0 tolimg 0.0001 # Tol. criterion (will stop when average energy of cells < tolimg) nkpt 1 kpt 0.0 0.0 0.0 # Explicit k-point (gamma point) dynimage 0 10\*1 0 # Keep first and last images fixed #XC fxcartfactor 1.0 # Time step for evolution step of string metho ixc -001009 # Select LDA XC functional (LDA PZ from LibXC) # Printing volume (0=full, 1=intermediate, 2=minimal) prtvolimg 0 # No symmetry nsym 1



If no particular assumption about symmetries along the MEP : => set nsym 1

Keywords to atomic positions : First image : **xred\_1img** or simply **xred** Last image : **xred\_lastimg** of **xred\_9image** (if nimage=9)

xred can be replaced by xangst or xcart

You can specify intermediate points

SM performed under FIXED lattice vectors ! (no relaxation fo the cell along the MEP, the cell is fixed ; It is the same for all the images)



<u>First step of SM</u> : ABINIT interpolates linearly between the images specified in the input file

#### Fixed images :

The first and last images are fixed (do not evolve) and must correspond to optimized configurations previously obtained. By default :

```
dynimage 0 1 1 .... 1 1 0
```

#### string\_algo

1 : default, Simplified String Method,

2 : « energy-weighted arc length », must give a finer distribution of the images near the saddle point

Symmetric path : it's better using an odd number of images !



Strong point :

#### string\_algo = 1

Images equidistant along the MEP => the index of the image is proportional to the distance along the MEP

=> index of the image = ideal reaction coordinate !

Rq : this si also the case for the NEB using **neb\_algo** 1

There is is physical information not only at the saddle point ! (see below polaron and proton transfers)

NB : in somes favorable cases, you need not compute the MEP to have the Barrier ! i.e. if you can constrain the saddle point, e.g. with symmetries ! (structural opt with symmetry constraints can give you directly the saddle point)

Unfortunately, this is rarely the case...



- 1 Introduction
- 2 <u>Minimum Energy Paths (MEPs)</u>
  - 2.a The String Method (SM)
  - 2.b The Nudged Elastic Band (NEB)
- 3 Examples : physical systems
  - 3.a Hopping of a defect in a solid
  - 3.b Hopping of a small polaron
- 4 <u>Thermal effects : free energy landscape</u>
- 5 Conclusion



#### 2.b The Nudged Elastic Band (NEB)

#### **Nudged Elastic Band method** (NEB):

- construct **nimage** images intermediate between the initial and the final configuration (*previously optimized*)



**neb\_algo** 1 : the spring constant is the same for all images and ensures equal spacing of the images along the MEP.

Keywords for NEB : imgmov 5

neb\_algo 0 :original method
 1 : NEB + improved tangent\* (default value)
(improved calculation of tangent direction, modifies the spring force
acting on the images)

2 : CI-NEB : Climbing-image NEB (algo seems to be broken...)

neb\_spring : minimal and maximal values of the spring constant connecting images for the NEB method. For neb\_algo 1, it is constant, for neb\_algo 2 it can vary.

Related to CI-NEB :

**cineb\_start** : 1st iteration at which the CI-NEB begins (default=7) (several iterations of standard NEB first performed to find the highest-energy image)

\* G. Henkelman and H. Jónsson, "Improved tangent estimate in the nudged elastic band method for finding minimum PAGE 22 energy paths and saddle points", The Journal of chemical physics 113, 9978–9985 (2000).

#### Principle of the CI-NEB :

The highest-energy image is forced to come at the saddle point by inverting the // component of the physical force on it. To identify this image, a number of iterations (cineb\_start) of standard NEB is first performed. No spring force on this highest-energy image. Spring constants are variable.





- 1 Introduction
- 2 Minimum Energy Paths (MEPs)
  - 2.a The String Method (SM)
  - 2.b The Nudged Elastic Band (NEB)
- 3 Examples : physical systems
  - 3.a Hopping of a defect in a solid
  - 3.b Hopping of a small polaron
- 4 <u>Thermal effects : free energy landscape</u>
- 5 Conclusion

# 3.a Hopping of a defect in a solid

Hoppings and reorientations of protons in Gd:BaCeO<sub>3</sub>



J. Hermet, M. Torrent, F. Bottin, G. Dezanneau, G. Geneste, PRB 87, 104303 (2013)



#### Proton transfer on the O-ZrO2(111) surface



**nimage** 11 (9 evolving)

motions of the two oxygens

Proton transfer made possible by « cooperative » motion of the two oxygens



- 1 Introduction
- 2 Minimum Energy Paths (MEPs)
  - 2.a The String Method (SM)
  - 2.b The Nudged Elastic Band (NEB)
- 3 Examples : physical systems
  - 3.a Hopping of a defect in a solid
  - 3.b Hopping of a small polaron
- 4 <u>Thermal effects : free energy landscape</u>
- 5 Conclusion



When an electron or a hole is released in the lattice of an insulator (e.g. by a point defect), it may localize on a single atom, instead of staying in a Bloch like delocalized band state = small polaron.

=> the crystal around is distorted (polarized), which in return creates a potential favorable to the localization of the electron( or hole) = SELF-TRAPPING

Energy of the relaxed polaronic configuration minus energy of the configuration with perfet crystal and delocalized electron/hole = **self-trapping energy** The small polaron is stable if the self-trapping energy is negative.

Ex : oxygen-type hole polaron in  $BaSnO_3$ 

(DFT+U with U on oxygen p)



# 3.b Hopping of a small polaron

Small polarons may diffuse in the lattice, by hopping from an atom onto another ; their hopping rate is usually **thermally activated**.

$$r = r_0 e^{-E_a/k_B T}$$

=> Hopping requires to overcome an energy barrier ; which one ?

It is not the electron/hole that overcomes an energy barrier (the electron gas is supposed to stay in its ground state, thus no thermal agitation for the electron gas) => tunneling ?

Self-trapped configuration : tunneling impossible !

Resonant tunneling possible in specific configurations in which the levels on either side of the electronic barrier are in coincidence = coincidence configurations (CC).

These configurations have energy ~ Ec and occur by the thermal fluctuations of the lattice atoms  $r \sim r_0 e^{-E_c/k_B T}$ 





# 3.b Hopping of a small polaron

Case of the oxygen-type hole polaron in BaSnO3





Warning :

- DFT calculation assumes the polaron in its ground state all along the path
- this may not be the case in reality
- because the tunneling transfer in the CC can be long (if electronic coupling is weak)

0.15

0.05

Energy (eV) 0.10 Energy along the path

oincidence configuration

8 9

6 7 8 Image index 10 11 12 13

**3.b Hopping of a small polaron** 

If the polaron has the time to adjust to the lattice configuration (i.e. adiabatic approximation OK along the MEP)  $r \sim r_0 e^{-E_c/k_B T}$ => adiabatic transfer

Controlled by lattice vibrations

If the polaron has the NOT time to adjust to the lattice configuration

(i.e. adiabatic approximation not valid anymore near the CC)

=> non-adiabatic transfer :

- the polaron may not have the time to cross, and remains on the starting site
- many occurrences of the CC are necessary before transfer occurs
- at CC, the polaron is not in an (adiabatic) eigenstate
- prefactor controlled by tunneling of the hole at CC (usually << that of lattice vibrations)

Requires to know the electronic coupling at CC (not provided by NEB) = [E(1st excited state) - E(GS)]/2 at CC



- 1 Introduction
- 2 Minimum Energy Paths (MEPs)
  - 2.a The String Method (SM)
  - 2.b The Nudged Elastic Band (NEB)
- 3 Examples : physical systems
  - 3.a Hopping of a defect in a solid
  - 3.b Hopping of a small polaron

4 – <u>Thermal effects : free energy landscape</u>

5 – Conclusion

MEPs (String Method, NEB) provide a « static » barrier.

This static barrier is free of thermal and/or quantum effects.

=> TST normally involves a « free energy » barrier in the expression of the **transition rate** :





How to obtain this free energy barrier ?

Remember that the free energy as a function a reaction coordinate  $\xi$  is related to the density of probability of this reaction coordinate  $\xi$ , as

$$F(\xi) - F(\xi_0) = -k_B T \ln \frac{P(\xi)}{P(\xi_0)}$$

With  $P(\xi)$  the density of probability of  $\xi$  at thermodynamic equilibrium :

$$P(\xi) \propto C \int \dots \int_{\{x_{i\alpha}\}} \delta(\xi(\{x_{i\alpha}\}) - \xi) e^{-V(\{x_{i\alpha}\})/k_B T} dX$$

**1st possibility** : make very long MD runs, at various temperatures, and count the events ! Then plot the log of the rate as a function of 1/T : The slope should be minus the activation energy !

#### 4 – Thermal effects : free energy landscape



Chemists have treated and solved this problem since a long time ! **« Blue-Moon » ensemble :** Method to simulate the **occurrence of RARE events** within Molecular Dynamics (MD)

- simulate each step of the event by **« forcing » \xi to take a chosen value :** 

=> MD under (holonomic) constraint of FIXED ξ

Method of Lagrange multipliers

 $d \varepsilon$ 

- Obtain for each value of  $\xi$  the derivative of the free energy « mean force » on the constraint :  $\underline{dF}$ 

- recover the (free) energy profile by (thermodynamic) integration :

$$\Delta F = F(\xi) - F(\xi_0) = \int_{\xi_0}^{\xi} \frac{dF}{d\xi}(\xi') d\xi'$$

Sprik, Cicotti, J. Chem. Phys. 109, 7737, (1998)

#### DE LA RECHERCHE À L'INDUSTRI

## 4 – Thermal effects : free energy landscape

 $\frac{dF}{d\xi} = \frac{\langle Z^{-1/2}(-\lambda + k_B T G) \rangle_{\xi}}{\langle Z^{-1/2} \rangle_{\xi}}$ 

General case :  $\xi({x_{i\alpha}})$ 

with :



Time average under fixed ξ (constrained MD) = « blue-moon » ensemble average

$$F(\xi_2) - F(\xi_1) = \int_{\xi_1}^{\xi_2} \frac{dF}{d\xi}(\xi') d\xi'$$

Sprik, Cicotti, J. Chem. Phys. 109, 7737, (1998)

Implementation in ABINIT of the LINEAR constraint i.e. linear combination between atomic positions

$$\xi(\{x_{i\alpha}\}) = \sum_{i\alpha} a_{i\alpha} x_{i\alpha}$$

1) Lagrangian with constraints

Real coefficients

$$L = [T(\{\dot{x}_{i\alpha}\}) - V(\{x_{i\alpha}\})] - \lambda [\sum_{i\alpha} a_{i\alpha} x_{i\alpha} - \xi]$$

2) Apply Euler-Lagrange equations :

$$m_i \frac{d^2 x_{i\alpha}}{dt^2} = f_{i\alpha} - \lambda a_{i\alpha}$$

 $u_{i} = \sum_{i \alpha} u_{i} = \sum_{i \alpha} u_{i} = \frac{\sum_{i \alpha} a_{i} \frac{f_{i} \alpha(t)}{m_{i}}}{\lambda(t)}$ 3) Derivative of the free energy:  $\frac{dF}{d\xi} = -\langle \lambda \rangle_{\xi} = -\frac{\sum_{i \alpha} \frac{a_{i} \alpha}{m_{i}} \langle f_{i} \alpha \rangle_{\xi}}{\sum_{i \alpha} \frac{a_{i}^{2} \alpha}{m_{i}}}$ 

- **Physically acceptable** linear constraints satisfy :  $\sum_{i\alpha} a_{i\alpha} = 0$
- However, even if  $\sum_{i\alpha} a_{i\alpha} \neq 0$ , a supplemental constraint

has been added to ensure that center of mass does not move.

- Value of the constraint  $\xi$  : **FIXED** by **INITIAL** set of positions.

#### - Initialization of the velocities :

The initial velocities must be modified to ensure that the constraint is obeyed, i.e.

$$\sum_{i\alpha} a_{i\alpha} \frac{dx_{i\alpha}}{dt} = 0$$

- Implemented in the routine pimd\_apply\_constraint (m\_pimd.F90).
- PIMD : the constraint is applied on the centroid.

# Cei

# - The constraint is STRICTLY obeyed all along the MD trajectory (at EACH step, NOT on average)

## Ex :

- *Reaction coordinate* = -36.5852098477
- Reaction coordinate = -36.5852098477
- the Center of mass is also strictly FIXED

#### Center of mass:

4.6876358799	6.5991695708	4.6808066009
Center of mass:		
4.6876358799	6.5991695708	4.6808066009
Center of mass:		
4.6876358799	6.5991695708	4.6808066009

#### DE LA RECHERCHE À L'INDUSTRI

# Cez

#### 4 – Thermal effects : free energy landscape



Example :

BaCeO<sub>3</sub> : orthorhombic perovskite *Pnma* space group

Excellent protonic conductor

Inter-octahedral transfer of H<sup>+</sup>

Cell = 20 atoms Reaction coordinate :  $(O_1H)_y - (O_2H)_y$ =  $y(H)-y(O_1) - [y(O_2) - y(H)]$ 

*PIMD*, T=200 K P=32 beads

#### Example of input file of constrained PIMD

		# atoms	
# PARALLELIZATION	# CONSTRAINTS	znucl 58 8 56 1	
# => 864 procs	pimd_constraint 1	ntypat 4	
paral kgb 1	nconeq 1	natom 21	
nnknt 9	natcon 3	typat	
nphand 3	iatcon 5 20 1 #ox1 ox2 hydrogen	431223223311122222222	
nofft 1	wtatcon		
nnimage 32	0.0 -1.0 0.0 0.0 -1.0 0.0 0.0 2.0 0.0	# cell and atomic positions	
npinage 52		acell 11 941471 16 813056 11 913748	
	# ground state		
	nband 111	xred	
irondom 2	occont 3	0.279 <b>0.216</b>	0.723 #yH to be varied
	tsmear 0.001	2.5108646807E-02 2.500000000E-01	-8.0469316958E-03
restartxt -1	nowovin 1	-1.3877787808E-17 -9.7144514655E-1	7 5.000000000E-01
imgmov 9 # langevin PIMD		4.8011508619E-01 2.500000000E-01	7.9658009587E-02
ntimimage 10000		2.7974388262E-01 <b>4.3160947462E-02</b>	2.7.2102708776E-01 #ox1
nimage 32	ecut 18.0	9.7489135319E-01 7.5000000000E-07	1.0080469317E+00
mdtemp 400 200	pawecutdg 25.0	5.1988491381E-01 7.5000000000000000 7.2025611738E 01 0.5683005254E 01	9.2034199041E-01
vis 5d-05	kptopt 1	5 2510864681E-01 2 500000000E-01	5.0804693170E-01
dvnimage 32*1	ngkpt 3 2 3	4 7489135319E-01 7 500000000E-01	4 9195306830E-01
nsvm 1	nstep 100	5.000000000E-01 5.000000000E-01	-6.9388939039E-17
nitransform 0	toldff 1.0d-05	-1.3877787808E-17 5.000000000E-0 <sup>4</sup>	5.000000000E-01
1/10 16 138 1 # ce o ba h	prtden 0	5.000000000E-01 -9.7144514655E-17	7 -6.9388939039E-17
	prtwf 0	9.8011508619E-01 2.500000000E-01	4.2034199041E-01
	provide	1.9884913809E-02 7.500000000E-01	5.7965800959E-01
dtion 10	abarra 1.0	7.7974388262E-01 4.5683905254E-01	7.7897291224E-01
	charge 1.0	7.2025611738E-01 5.4316094746E-01	2.7897291224E-01
		2.2025611/38E-01 9.5683905254E-01	2.2102/08//6E-01
		2.2023011730E-01 5.4310094740E-01	2.2102700770E-01
		7 7074388262E 01 4 3160047462E 0	7.2102700770E-01 #0X2





# Thanks for your attention !