site were calculated. These values, which range from 302 to 317 m/sec, are similar to scores of values determined for acoustic-gravity waves generated by nuclear explosions at different test sites and detected at globally distributed recorders (1). They also match the theoretical computations for such propagation (2). On the basis of signal appearance and appropriate group velocities (or arrival times), we concluded that signals shown in Fig. 1, a to e, were generated by the eruption of Mount St. Helens.

From pressure amplitudes and periods it is possible to compute the probable explosive energy or yield of the eruption, but not the total energy of the entire event. We used separate theoretical and empirical procedures for this purpose.

1) Posey and Pierce (3) developed the following approximate theoretical relationship among energy, pressure perturbation amplitude, and period for an explosion in the atmosphere:

$E = 13 P[R \sin (r/R)]^{1/2} H_s (cT)^{3/2}$

where E is energy (ergs), P is the first peak-to-trough pressure change (microbars), R is the radius of the earth (centimeters), r is the great circle distance from source to receiver, H_s is the scale height of the atmosphere (taken as 8 km), c is the speed of sound, and T is the wave period (seconds) for the first full wave. From the microbarograph data in Table 1 we computed the yields in megatons (MT) shown in the last column. The average yield is 35 MT.

2) Figure 2a is a plot of pressure amplitude against distance, where the square root of the latter is used because the cylindrical spreading of the gravity waves causes amplitude to decrease as $1/\sqrt{r}$. A straight line has been fitted to the points. Figure 2b is an earlier graph (4) of pressure against yield for a number of tests in Novaya Zemlya that were recorded by several instruments in our array of four stations around Palisades, New York. Using the distance from Novaya Zemlya to Palisades (6600 km) in Fig. 2a, we obtain the pressure amplitude for Mount St. Helens for that distance. The resulting value of 190 µbar corresponds to a yield of 35 MT in Fig. 2b, which matches the theoretical calculation above.

3) In another empirical analysis, we used wave period as a tool to estimate yield. In addition to the periods from microbarographs in Table 1, we used values from long-period vertical seismographs at widely distributed locations. Seismic drum records have much higher time resolution than most microbarographs, so that period measurements SCIENCE, VOL. 213, 31 JULY 1981

with good accuracy are obtainable [see, for example, the record from De Bilt in the Netherlands (5)]. The data from the seismographs are also given in Table 1. Like the microbarograph signals, the seismograph data yield normal group velocities between source and receivers. Figure 2c shows the period of the first full wave plotted against distance and indicates the dispersion effect described earlier. Only records from stations at least 1000 km from Mount St. Helens were used, to ensure that the lead gravity wave was fully established. Figure 2d shows the period plotted against cube root of yield, where the periods are based on waves from tests at Novaya Zemlya that were recorded on the Palisades array. It is known that wave period varies as the cube root of yield. Only two points in which we have confidence in the yield are plotted, together with zero. Using 6600 km for the distance from Novaya Zemlya, we obtain an equivalent period of 365 seconds from Fig. 2c. This equivalent period corresponds to a yield of 30 MT (from Fig. 2d) for the Mount St. Helens explosion, in good agreement with the theoretical and empirical estimates given above.

On the basis of the best available evidence, we conclude that the explosive yield of the main Mount St. Helens eruption on 18 May 1980 at 1532 GMT was roughly 35 MT (1.48 \times 10²⁴ ergs).

Note added in proof: Records from Hawaii and Japan, the only stations with records available to the west of the source, indicate a somewhat lower yield (about 25 MT).

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Rapid Massive Assembly of Tight Junction Strands

Abstract. Incubation at 37°C of excised rat prostate tissue results in massive proliferative assembly of new tight junction strands along the entire length of the lateral plasma membranes of the columnar epithelial cells. The new tight junction elements are assembled within 5 minutes and have an average length six times that of those present in the apical tight junction band. Massive assembly occurs in the presence of protein synthesis inhibitors (cycloheximide) or of metabolic uncouplers (dinitrophenol). Thus, proliferative assembly of tight junction strands involves molecular reorganization from a pool of preexisting, probably membrane-associated, components. The fascia occludens and some examples of experimentally induced tight junction proliferation may reflect the massive emergence of tight junction strands when tissue is subjected to diverse stressful conditions.

The tight junction (occluding junction, zonula occludens) is a specialized intercellular contact between adjacent epithelial cells that assures the physical separation of luminal and intercellular spaces. Current views of tight junction structure derive from the morphological analysis of thin section (1) and freeze-fracture (2)preparations as seen by electron microscopy. In these studies, the tight junction is described as a network of anastomosing strands visible on the protoplasmic fracture face (3), with corresponding furrows observed on the exoplasmic face. As in many other epithelial cells, the strands are predominantly oriented parallel to the edge that separates luminal from lateral regions of the plasma membrane. They generally number less than 15 and may also exist in other regions of the plasma membrane, for example, in places where the polarity of the cells is less marked.

The chemical nature and the supramolecular organization of the tight junction components are virtually unknown, and their biogenesis and assembly are poorly understood. Evidence from freeze-fracture studies indicates that a single or double filament may be the main structural element of this junction (2). Studies of its mode of assembly have been hindered by the lack of a system in which the formation of the junction might be induced and be amenable to experimental manipulation. We now describe experiments with excised prostate tissue in which we show that massive proliferative assembly of tight junction strands can occur within 3 to 5 minutes, even in the presence of cycloheximide (a protein synthesis inhibitor) or dinitrophenol (a metabolic uncoupler).

For our experiments we used prostate tissues excised from adult male Sprague-Dawley rats that were lightly anesthetized with ether. Each of the experiments was performed at least three times with samples taken from different animals. The tissues were incubated for 0, 3, 5, 15, 30, and 60 minutes in 0.1Mcacodylate buffer, pH 7.4, at 4°C, 37°C,

and room temperature. Each specimen was then fixed by immersion in 3 percent glutaraldehyde in 0.1M cacodylate buffer, pH 7.4, at the temperature of incubation for 3 hours. To rule out the toxic effect of arsenic (from cacodylate), as well as toxicity that might result from incubation and fixation in the absence of Ca^{2+} , Mg^{2+} , K^+ , and $C1^-$, we incubated and fixed excised tissues in Tyrode's solution (4). Tissues were also incubated and fixed in saline or in 310 mosM sodium phosphate buffer, pH 7.4. To test the importance of protein synthesis, we incubated the tissues in cycloheximide (100 or 200 μ g/ml) in 0.1M cacodylate buffer, pH 7.4, for 10 minutes at 4°C, then for 5 minutes at 37°C. To test the effect of uncoupling of oxidative phosphorylation, we incubated the tissues in

0.005*M* 2,4-dinitrophenol in 0.1*M* cacodylate buffer, *p*H 7.4, for 10 minutes at 4°C, then for 5 minutes at 37°C. After fixation, the specimens were rinsed in 0.1*M* cacodylate buffer, *p*H 7.4, impregnated in 30 percent glycerol in 0.1*M* cacodylate buffer, *p*H 7.4, placed on gold specimen carriers, frozen in partially solidified Freon 22, freeze-fractured at -110°C, and shadowed at 45° with a platinum-carbon electron gun. The replicas were cleaned, mounted on Formvarcoated grids, and observed at 80 kV with an electron microscope.

The lateral plasma membrane of the prismatic columnar epithelial cell generally has five to seven faces (5). When tissues are fixed at 4°C or at room temperature immediately after excision, the membranes are flat, displaying few inter-



Figs. 1 to 5. Proliferation of tight junction strands on the lateral membranes of rat ventral prostate columnar epithelial cells. Fig. 1. Control. Fig. 2. After incubation for 3 minutes at 37° C. Fig. 3. After incubation for 5 minutes at 37° C. Fig. 4. After incubation in the presence of cycloheximide for 10 minutes at 4° C, then for 5 minutes at 37° C. Fig. 5 After incubation in the presence of dinitrophenol for 10 minutes at 37° C. Figs. 1 and 5 show aspects of the top region of the lateral plasma membrane, adjacent to the apical tight junction band; Figs. 2 to 4 show aspects from the mid-region. Scale bar, $0.2 \,\mu$ m.

digitations; and the tight junction, which generally consists of 7 to 15 anastomosed strands, is confined to a narrow (0.5 to1.0 μ m) band contiguous with the apical plasma membrane (Fig. 1). If the excised tissues are fixed at 37°C immediately upon excision, loose strands of the tight junction are observed over approximately one-tenth of the fractured lateral plasma membranes.

After 3 minutes at 37°C (Fig. 2) tight junction strands are frequent in about 50 percent of the fractured lateral membranes, and after 5 minutes at 37°C (Fig. 3) about 90 percent of the fractured lateral membranes show numerous tight junction strands loosely distributed over the entire length of the cell. Identical results were observed in specimens incubated and fixed in cacodylate and phosphate buffers, in Tyrode's solution, or in saline. Massive proliferation was also observed in specimens incubated at 37°C for 10 minutes and fixed with glutaraldehyde in Tyrode's solution that had been equilibrated and continuously bubbled with mixtures of 95 percent O_2 and 5 percent CO₂, 40 percent O₂ and 60 percent CO₂, or 100 percent CO₂. The frequency of new tight junction strands varies within the lateral membrane. In general, the new strands represented independent structures, but some are continuous with those of the apical band (Fig. 5). After 5 minutes and up to 60 minutes of incubation at 37°C, the amount of new tight junction elements is not perceptibly increased. Massive, generalized proliferation is also observed in cells from tissues excised 5 to 10 minutes postmortem. Incubation at 4°C for up to 60 minutes does not result in proliferation of tight junction elements. At room temperature, some loose strands appear after 15 minutes of incubation (not illustrated).

Although the density of the proliferated tight junction strands appears to be low, clearly lower than the density at the apical tight junction band, the strands are spread over the entire area of the fractured lateral membrane. Morphometric analysis (6) of micrographs of freeze-fractured lateral plasma membrane after incubation for 5 minutes at 37°C indicates that the average total length of newly formed tight junction strands represents six times (and, in extreme cases, up to 12 times) the length of those present on the apical tight junction band.

Our results cannot be explained without invoking de novo assembly of tight junction strands. Assembly might be achieved either by migration and reorganization of preexisting membrane (and, 31 JULY 1981

possibly, cytoplasmic) components or by the incorporation of newly synthesized molecules. The latter alternative appears less likely because of the very short time required (3 to 5 minutes). Experimental confirmation is derived from the observation of intense proliferation of tight junction strands in specimens which, after mincing at 4°C, are incubated in cycloheximide (Fig. 4). Other experiments showed that massive proliferation of tight junction strands occurs in specimens incubated with dinitrophenol (Fig. 5), an indication that the process of assembly does not require the continued operation of oxidative phosphorylation.

Massive assembly of tight junction elements can proceed in the presence of a protein synthesis inhibitor or of a metabolic uncoupler and is observed within a few minutes of the onset of stressful alterations of the cellular environment. In consequence, structural assembly of the tight junction must be carried out from a pool of preexisting components, which probably are, at least in part, elements of the lateral plasma membrane. The contribution of components from presumptive cytoplasmic pools appears to be minor but cannot be assessed. Even in extreme instances of tight junction proliferation, the freeze-fracture morphology of the nondifferentiated regions of the lateral plasma membrane is not altered, and the density of membrane particles appears to be unchanged. Discussion of the possible mechanisms of assembly of tight junction elements is hindered by the absence of plausible structural models for this junction. Migration of membrane components to the loci of junction formation may or may not coexist with alterations of the physical-chemical milieu at those sites; such alterations may be crucial to the process. While massive assembly of tight junctions is taking place, intermediate assembly stages (7) are never observed. This suggests that assembly occurs at only a few sites, probably at the tips of the tight junction strands. We believe that membrane lipids have a major role in the structural definition of the tight junction (8)

Our experiments cannot identify the underlying biophysical or biochemical alteration of the cellular environment that is responsible for proliferation of tight junction strands. These might include effects within the membrane itself, as well as interactions of tight junction components with cytoplasmic elements; the latter might play a role in the propagation and configuration of the junctional strands. Lowering the intracellular pHand, in consequence, disturbing the

binding patterns of other ions, in particular Ca^{2+} (9), may be involved in many or all of our preparations (in particular those incubated in an atmosphere containing 60 percent or more CO₂). Massive proliferation of tight junction strands is observed even in tissues incubated and fixed with glutaraldehyde in Tyrode's solutions equilibrated with 95 percent O₂ and 5 percent CO₂ or with 100 percent CO₂. It therefore appears unlikely that anoxia or lowering the intercellular pH, or both, in themselves constitute necessary conditions for triggering the assembly process. The use of excised epithelial tissues as experimental models should allow kinetic analysis of the de novo assembly of tight junctions.

Multiple tight junction strands along the lateral plasma membranes of epithelial cells were reported as the fascia occludens [that is, they were taken to represent a genuine cellular structure (10, [11] or as instances of experimentally induced proliferation (12). These may reflect the massive emergence of tight junction strands that occurs when the tissue is subjected to diverse stressful conditions.

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Diketopiperazine Formation During Investigations of Amino Acid Racemization in Dipeptides

Abstract. The formation of diketopiperazines from the dipeptides isoleucylglycine and glycylisoleucine was investigated at $132^{\circ}C$ over the pH range ~ 2 to 10. At pH $6.2, \sim 50$ percent of the original dipeptides were converted to the diketopiperazines during the heating experiments. Hydrolysis of the diketopiperazines can yield either the original dipetide or an inverted dipeptide product. The isoleucine in the diketopiperazines was the most highly epimerized component in the system. Previous racemization and epimerization studies with dipeptides have not taken into account the formation of diketopiperazines and, as a result, the conclusions about the mechanism and geochemical implications of amino acid racemization in dipeptides will require revision.

Investigations of the kinetics of racemization of dipeptides have been suggested to provide new insights into the mechanism of amino acid racemization in peptides and in calcareous fossils. On the basis of the studies of epimerization of isoleucine in several di- and tripeptides at $\sim pH$ 6 and 152°C Kriausakul and Mitterer (1) reported that NH_2 -terminal isoleucine epimerizes faster than

Table 1. Diketopiperazine formation, dipeptide inversion, and epimerization in glycylisoleucine and isoleucylglycine at 131°C in the pH range ~ 2 to 10. Under the experimental conditions, the extent of hydrolysis of the dipeptides to free amino acids was less than 5 percent in all cases. Abbreviations: allo/iso, alloisoleucine/isoleucine; diketo, 3-isobutyl-2,5-piperazinedione.

<i>р</i> Н at 131°С*	Heating time (hours)	Original dipeptide allo/iso	Inver- sion (%)†	Inverted dipeptide allo/iso	Di- keto (%)†	Di- keto allo/iso	Total allo/ iso‡
	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		Glycy	lisoleucine			
2.11	72	0.10	71	0			
3.42	72	0.12	62	0	80	< 0.05	~ 0.08
4.85	72	0.15	63	0	77	~ 0.08	~ 0.05
5.55	72	0.16	49	0.06	48	0.21	0.14(0.15)
6.36	24	0.09	49	0.26			
6.36	48	0.19	76	0.59	58	0.79	0.59(0.66)
7.79	24	0.04	60	1.3			
7.79	48	0.07	74	1.4	11	1.23	0.81(0.81)
8.66	24	0.02	13	1.4			
8.66	48	0.03	30	1.4	0.01	1.4	0.30(0.25)
9.56	24	0.02	7	1.4			
			Isoleı	icylglycine			
2.11	12	0.01	48	0.03			
3.42	12	0.02	34	0.32	28	~ 0	< 0.05
4.85	12	0.02	4	0.64			
5.55	8	0.02	14	1.0	36	< 0.05	< 0.05
6.36	12	0.15	17	0.22	61	0.28	0.28(0.23)
7.79	8	0.36	4	0.15			
7.79	12	0.58	6	0.14	18	1.0	0.73(0.69)
8.66	12	0.16	3	0.20	12	1.4	0.29(0.24)
9.56	8	0.11	3	. §			

*The *p*H values of the buffers at 131°C were extrapolated with the use of the equations given by Bates (12). *Percent inversion is tabulated relative to the total amount of dipeptide recovered from the heated samples [inverted/(original + inverted)] excluding the diketopiperazine fraction. The percent diketo is tabulated relative to the total amount of dipeptide and diketopiperazine recovered from the heated sample [diketo/(diketo + original + inverted)]. *The allo/iso values given in parentheses were calculated from the allo/iso ratios determined for the dipeptide and diketopiperazine fractions and the relative abundances of each component analyzed. \$No inverted product was detected.

dipeptides at pH 7.6 and 122°C. Their results indicate that in general COOHterminal amino acids racemize faster than NH₂-terminal amino acids. De Sol and Smith explained these results by invoking inductive effects, by neighboring group stabilization of the carbanion intermediate, and by steric effects on the solvation of the carbanion. We felt that the mechanistic conclu-

COOH-terminal isoleucine. Smith and de Sol (2) studied the racemization of 37

sions or geochemical implications of these dipeptide results were premature because of the necessity of first investigating pH effects on amino acid racemization rates in various dipeptides. These studies are important in order to deduce which ionic species of the dipeptide is undergoing racemization at a particular pH and temperature. For example, elevated temperature experiments (3) with free amino acids buffered at various pHvalues indicate that at pH 7.6 there is a mixture of ionic species racemizing and that these various ionic species have greatly differing racemization rates. In order to demonstrate which factors control the relative racemization rates of free amino acids, it was necessary to determine and compare the rates for a particular ionic species; comparisons using the observed racemization rates at a particular pH give misleading conclusions (3).

Besides the dipeptide ionic species problem, there is also the complication that dipeptides may cyclize to form diketopiperazines. Hydrolysis of the diketopiperazine may either regenerate the original dipeptide or create an inverted dipeptide. It is well known that dipeptide esters and amides easily cyclize to diketopiperazines. At 25°C the rate of cyclization competes favorably with ester or amide hydrolysis (4). Brewerton et al. (5) observed extensive sequence inversion in some dipeptides in 2M HCl at 84° to 114°C. Long et al. (6) observed that divalent metal ions catalyzed cyclization of glycylglycine at pH 3.8 to 6.0 at 91° to 114°C. These investigations demonstrate the quantitative importance of diketopiperazine formation and dipeptide sequence inversion relative to peptide bond hydrolysis. Furthermore, amino acid residues in diketopiperazines are rapidly racemized at room temperature in dilute alkali (7).

In order to investigate the effects that pH has on the racemization of dipeptides and the possible formation of diketopiperazines we have conducted heating experiments with glycylisoleucine and isoleucylglycine in various buffered solutions ranging from $pH \sim 2$ to 10 (ionic