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Constraints on the radical cation center of cytochrome c peroxidase for electron transfer from cytochrome c

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Abstract

The tryptophan 191 cation radical of cytochrome c peroxidase (CcP) compound I (Cpd I) mediates long-range electron transfer (ET) to cytochrome c (Cc). Here we test the effects of chemical substitution at the 191 position. CcP W191Y forms a stable tyrosyl radical on reaction with peroxide and produces spectral properties similar to that of Cpd I but has low reactivity toward reduced Cc. CcP W191G(or F) variants also have low activity, as do redox ligands that bind within the W191G cavity. Crystal structures of complexes between Cc and CcP W191X (X = Y, F, G), as well as W191G with four bound ligands, reveal similar 1:1 association modes and heme pocket conformations. The ligands display structural disorder in the pocket and do not hydrogen bond to Asp235, as does Trp191. Well-ordered Tyr191 directs its hydroxyl group toward the porphyrin ring, with no basic residue in range of interaction. CcP W191X (X = Y, F, G) variants substituted with zinc-porphyrin (ZnP) undergo photoinduced ET with Cc(III). Their slow charge recombination kinetics that results from loss of the radical center allow resolution of difference spectra for the charge-separated state (ZnP⁺, Cc(II)). The change from a phenyl moiety at position 191 in W191F to a water-filled cavity in W191G produces much smaller effects on ET rates than the change from Trp to Phe. Low net reactivity of W191Y toward Cc(II) either derives from the inability of ZnP⁺ or the Fe-CcP ferryl to oxidize Tyr or from a low potential of the resulting neutral Tyr radical.

Graphical Abstract

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Coordinates and Diffraction Data: Deposited in the Protein Data Bank under Accession Codes: 5CIF (W191F), 5CIH (W191Y), 5CIG (W191G), 5CIE (W191G-aniline), 5CID (W191G-toluidine), 5CIB (W191G-24dma), 5CIC (W191G-3abt).

Keywords

Electron tunneling; electron hopping; tryptophan radical; tyrosine radical; x-ray crystallography; structure; metalloprotein; reduction potential; EPR spectroscopy; transient absorption spectroscopy; multi-channel analyzer; intermediate. Zinc-porphyrin; heme protein; ligand binding; chemical complementarity

INTRODUCTION

The electron transfer (ET) partners cytochrome c peroxidase (CcP) and cytochrome c (Cc) provide an important model system for understanding inter-protein ET, protein-protein interactions and heme-oxygen chemistry.^{1–6} The catalytic mechanism of CcP:Cc proceeds as follows: peroxide reacts with the Fe(III) heme of CcP to form compound I (Cpd I), which consists of a Fe(IV) iron oxo species (Fe(IV)=O) and a radical cation localized on neighboring Trp191 ($W^{\bullet+}$). Two Fe(II) Cc proteins sequentially reduce CcP Cpd I back to Fe(III) and water. In the first step, $W^{\bullet+}$ is directly reduced by Cc(II). In the second step, the remaining Fe(IV)=O center reoxidizes Trp191, which is subsequently reduced by Cc(II)^{7–10} (Scheme 1). Thus, $W^{\bullet+}$ is the key electron acceptor for oxidation of Cc(II). Hoffman and colleagues developed CcP:Cc as a model ET system by incorporating Zn-porphyrin (ZnP) into either CcP or Cc in place of heme.^{2, 11–16} The photo-excited ZnP triplet state injects an electron across the molecular interface to reduce the Cc Fe(III) heme. ZnP^+ and Cc(II) then recombine to regenerate the ground state. Similar to the native reaction, back ET between ZnP^+ and Cc(II) is greatly accelerated by Trp191, which acts as a hole-hopping site by localizing the cation radical closer to the Cc Fe(II) heme^{3, 17–19} (Figure 1). Little of the charged separated state builds up in $ZnCcP:Cc$ because the rate constant for back ET (k_{eb}) is much greater than the rate constant for forward ET (k_e). However, the W191F substitution slows ET by at least two orders of magnitude and allows resolution of a ZnP^+ Cc(II) intermediate.^{17, 20} In fact, charge recombination in W191F is slow enough to compete with complex dissociation, which produces a second kinetic phase at long times.²⁰ Recent theoretical studies support the involvement of Trp191 oxidation in $ZnCcP:Cc$ reaction kinetics.^{3, 19} Importantly, the back reaction of the $ZnP/W^{\bullet+}$ center with Fe(II)Cc involves

similar donor-acceptor states, redox potentials and coupling pathways as the natural ET reaction between Cpd I and Fe(II)Cc³.

Conformational processes and dynamic docking of the CcP:Cc complex have also garnered much interest.^{5, 9, 21–30} Photo-induced ET reactions in crystals confirm that the crystal association mode has ET kinetics similar those observed in solution.^{18, 31, 32} Nonetheless, conformational dynamics within the ZnCcP:Cc complex likely generate ET competent states both in solution and in crystals.^{5, 18, 31, 33, 34} Altered binding interactions between CcP and Cc cause changes in ET kinetics that can be explained by accounting for Trp191 radical formation, electron coupling between donor and acceptor sites, redox potentials and reorganization energies.³

Electron-hole hopping through aromatic residues is an important process in many redox systems such as photosystem II, ribonucleotide reductase (RR), photolyase enzymes and cryptochromes.^{35–41} Protein ET rate constants are exponentially dependent on the distance of separation between electron donor (D) and acceptor (A) sites.⁴² Thus, if the acceptor can oxidize an intervening residue (the “hole”), one long ET step can be broken into two shorter “hops”.^{37, 43–45} Introduction of appropriately placed Trp and Tyr residues in modified blue copper proteins^{44–46} and model systems^{36, 47} demonstrate the ability of aromatic residues to accelerate long-range ET. Incorporation of non-natural variants of Tyr into RR has also probed the effects of redox potential on multistep tunneling reactions.⁴⁰ ZnCcP:Cc provides another system to explore residue oxidation in ET with the potential advantage of widening the reactivity of the hole-hopping site beyond Tyr and Trp residues. In particular, Goodin and colleagues have demonstrated that the Trp191Gly variant (W191G) produces a cavity in CcP within which heterocyclic cationic compounds will bind.^{48–51} One such compound, 2-aminothiazole acts as a reductant of the peroxide-oxidized heme.⁵⁰ Replacement of a segment of the CcP polypeptide with a surrogate peptide allows for substitution of Trp191 with benzimidazole.⁵² Despite being a good structural mimic for the native residues, the surrogate peptide renders CcP inactive because the benzimidazole moiety cannot form a stable radical on reaction with peroxide.⁵² Herein, we extend this general approach of CcP

cavity complementation to examine the ability of residue substitutions and exogenous compounds to support peroxidase activity and hole-hopping in ZnCcP:Cc. Structure determinations of the modified CcP:Cc complexes provide constraints for the interpretation of reactivity. We find that despite wild-type (WT)-like conformations and suitable redox potentials of various exogenous surrogates, only the native Trp191 residue supports peroxidase activity with Cc and rapid back ET in the ZnCcP system. Surprisingly, a Tyr191 variant also appears to form a Cpd I-like state, but does not oxidize Cc in the natural reaction or accelerate the photo-induced recombination process.

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

Mutagenesis

Cytochrome c peroxidase (CcP) was subcloned into the ppSUMO vector⁵³, a pET28 derivative vector that introduces a His-tagged version of the SUMO protein to the N-terminus of CcP (obtained with thanks from Dr. Holger Sondermann; Dept. of Molecular Medicine, Cornell University). After a silent mutation (QuikChange, Agilent Technologies) was introduced to remove a natural BamHI site in CcP, the CcP gene was PCR amplified and inserted between the BamHI and XhoI restriction sites of ppSUMO. Two N-terminal Met-Ile residues were added to generate the “MI” version of CcP²⁴. Point mutations were introduced with QuikChange (Agilent Technologies).

Protein Purification

Cytochrome c was expressed and purified as described⁵⁴. *E. coli* BL21 (DE3) cells were transformed with the Cc gene in a PBTR-1 vector and expressed overnight at 37 °C in lysogeny broth (LB) with 125 µg/mL ampicillin and 50 µg/mL δ-aminolevulinic acid to increase heme production. The PBTR1 vector⁵⁴ contains the *trc* promoter which is constitutively active and does not require induction. Cells were harvested by centrifugation at 8000 RPM, and pellets were resuspended in 50 mM sodium phosphate, pH 8.0. The resuspended pellets were either frozen for storage or lysed by sonication. Lysate was spun at 22,000 RPM for one hour to remove insoluble cell detritus and the supernatant was loaded directly onto a HiPrep CMFF cation-exchange column (GE Healthcare Life Sciences) using an ÄKTA FPLC (Amersham Pharmacia). The column was equilibrated and washed with 50 mM sodium phosphate pH 8, and Cc was eluted by a five-column volume gradient of a high salt buffer (50 mM sodium phosphate, pH 8, 500 mM NaCl). All red-colored fractions were collected and concentrated using Millipore Amicon Ultra centrifugal concentrators (10 kDa cutoff) and then loaded onto a Superdex 75 size-exclusion column (50 mM sodium phosphate, pH 8, and 500 mM). Red-colored fractions were concentrated, flash frozen, and stored at –80 °C.

Cytochrome c peroxidase was expressed in BL21 (DE3) cells and grown at 37 °C in LB with 50 µg/mL kanamycin. Upon reaching an OD₆₀₀ of 0.8 – 1.2, cells were induced with 100 µM IPTG and overexpressed at 24 °C for ~20 hrs. Cells were harvested by centrifugation at 8000 RPM, and the pellets were resuspended in lysis buffer (50 mM HEPES, pH 7.0, 150 mM NaCl and 5 mM imidazole). Cells were lysed by sonication. Insoluble cell detritus was separated out by centrifugation at 22,000 RPM for one hour. CcP was purified by a Ni-NTA

column (Qiagen). To cleave the SUMO tag, the ULP-1 protease was added to the elution and incubated at 4 °C overnight. The eluent was then dialyzed into 100 mM potassium phosphate (KPi), pH 6, buffer and flowed over the Ni-NTA resin to separate the cleaved tag from the protein. CcP was loaded onto a HiPrep Q anion-exchange column (GE Healthcare Life Sciences) using an AKTA FPLC. A 10 column-volume gradient of 100 mM KPi against 500 mM KPi (pH 6.0) was used to separate the heme-containing CcP (FeCcP) from the apo-CcP. The apo-CcP was collected for zinc-protoporphyrin IX (ZnP) incorporation. FeCcP was concentrated and stored at -80 °C for enzymatic assays. To improve the yield of heme incorporation SUMO-cleaved CcP in 100 mM KPi (pH 6) was gently stirred with 1 molar equivalent of hemin (stock was dissolved in 0.1 M NaOH) at 4 °C overnight. The reaction was neutralized with 1 molar equivalent of 0.1 M acetic acid afterwards and centrifuged to remove precipitation. The solution was run through an equilibrated Superdex 75 SEC followed by anion exchange chromatography to separate the iron-containing protein from the apoprotein.⁵⁵

For ZnP incorporation, the apo-CcP concentration was determined using the absorbance at 280 nm and the molar absorptivity coefficient $\epsilon_{280} = 55 \text{ mM}^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-1}$ ⁵⁶. A fivefold excess of ZnP and carbonyl-diimidazole (1:1 molar ratio) was mixed with apo-CcP in THF or DMF for 2 hours. Solvent was removed by rotovap and the activated ZnP resuspended in 500 μL of DMF. The ZnP solution was added to the apo-CcP and allowed to stir in the dark for 5 days at 4 °C. The solution was then centrifuged to remove protein and unbound ZnP that had precipitated. The sample was loaded onto the Superdex 75 size-exclusion column in 100 mM KPi pH 6.0 to increase purity and to remove non-specifically bound ZnP. The colored fractions were concentrated and loaded onto the HiPrep Q column to separate the apo-protein from the ZnP-incorporated protein (ZnCcP) using the protocol described previously to separate apo-CcP from FeCcP. ZnP incorporation was evaluated by comparing the UV-vis absorbance of the protein peak at 280 nm and the ZnCcP Soret peak at 432 nm ($\epsilon_{432} = 196 \text{ mM}^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-1}$)^{13, 57}. Fractions with a ratio of $A_{432}/A_{280} > 2$ were concentrated, flash frozen, and stored at -80 °C for crystallization and spectroscopy. Yields of ZnCcP were 80–90% of the initial apo-protein.

Crystallography

Prior to crystallization, Fe(III)CcP and Cc were combined in a 1-to-1 molar ratio at a final concentration of 1 mM each. The protein mixture was buffer exchanged into H₂O to reduce ionic strength and thereby increase CcP/Cc binding. Initial crystal hits were obtained using the Phoenix robot (Art Robbins Instruments). Larger crystals were grown by vapor diffusion in either sitting or hanging drop trays against a reservoir containing 15 – 25% polyethylene glycol 3350, 175 mM NaCl, 5 mM n-octyl- β -D-glucoside, and 100 mM sodium acetate, pH 4.6 – 5.6. In some cases, streak seeding was used to increase size and crystal quality.

Structure Determination

Diffraction data was collected at the Cornell High Energy Synchrotron Source (CHESS) at beamlines A1 and F2 on an ADSC Quantum 210 CCD. A mixture of 4 parts reservoir and 1 part ethylene glycol was used as a cryoprotectant for crystals. In soaking experiments with W191G CcP crystals, the protocol described by Goodin *et al.*⁵⁸ was followed. Briefly,

potential small-molecule ligands were dissolved in 50% ethanol to make a 100 mM stock solution, with the exception of indole, which was dissolved in 100% ethanol. The crystals were soaked in a drop of well solution with a final concentration of 30 mM ligand for 30 s prior to soaking with cryoprotectant. Longer ligand soaks proved detrimental to diffraction. All data was indexed and scaled with HKL2000⁵⁹. All structures were phased using molecular replacement in PHENIX.⁶⁰ Structures of W191G CcP were refined using CNS⁶¹ and all other structures were refined with the PHENIX suite.⁶⁰ Building and adjustments were made with COOT⁶². Translation/Libration/Screw (TLS) parameters were applied in PHENIX to model Cc anisotropic disorder in the lattice.

Saturation Kinetics

The steady-state assay for CcP peroxidase activity was carried out as previously described⁶³. Stock solutions of Cc were reduced on ice in the glovebox by incubating with 10 mM DTT for one hour. DTT was then removed by buffer exchange into 100 mM KPi pH 6.0, either by PD-10 desalting columns or ten rounds of concentration and dilution using Millipore Amicon Ultra centrifugal filters (10 kDa cutoff). Samples containing 2 nM peroxidase, 100 mM KPi pH 6.0, and 0 – 75 μ M Cc were then prepared anaerobically to a volume of 1800 μ L in gastight cuvettes (StarnaCell). Samples were placed in a Hewlett Packard 8909A peltier sample cooler kept at 24° C and stirred at 500 RPM. Spectra were recorded with an Agilent 8453 Spectrophotometer. Samples were blanked prior to data acquisition to monitor the change in absorbance over time. The reaction was initiated by addition of hydrogen peroxide to a final concentration of 170 μ M. Oxidation of Cc was monitored at 550 nm and 540 nm and a constant baseline was set by normalizing to absorbance at 750 nm. The kinetics were monitored for 60 s, with data collected every 0.5 s. The initial range of data where the reaction progress is linear was chosen to represent the steady-state progress of the reaction, where Cc concentration greatly exceeded enzyme concentration. A linear fit was applied to this range and the slope was taken as the reaction velocity (v_0) for that concentration. For every concentration of Cc, three samples were measured.

For measuring the effect of potential ligands on CcP activity, stock solutions of the ligands were prepared in 50% ethanol, or 100% ethanol in the case of indole. Samples were prepared as above, with a Cc concentration of 30 μ M, a ligand concentration of 2 mM and final ethanol concentration of < 10 mM. To determine the Michaelis-Menten constants $V_{\max}$ and K_M , the average v_0 was plotted versus concentration and fit to the equation

$$v = \frac{V_{\max} [Cc]}{K_M + [Cc]}$$
 in Mathematica.⁶⁴ Steady state parameters of W191G with ligands were compared to those of W191F with ligands to identify effects not attributable to cavity binding.

Cpd I Spectroscopic Characterization

For UV/Vis spectroscopy, 30 μ M CcP was prepared in 100 mM KPi, pH 6.0, and hydrogen peroxide was added to a final concentration of 1 mM. Stock solutions were diluted in 100 mM KPi, pH 6.0 to between 1–4 μ M for recording optical spectra on an Agilent 8453 Spectrophotometer. For continuous wave EPR spectroscopy, CcP was prepared at ~0.5 mM to obtain stronger signals. Prior to data collection, samples were diluted into a buffer of 100

mM KPi, pH 6.0, 2 mM hydrogen peroxide, and 30% glycerol. Samples were loaded into EPR tubes, flash frozen minutes after addition of hydrogen peroxide, and measured with a Bruker EleXSys II spectrometer at 9 GHz with 1.5 Gauss modulation amplitude, 100 kHz modulation frequency and 25 – 30 dB microwave attenuation.

The L-tyrosine EPR standard was prepared as described⁶⁵. L-tyrosine was dissolved in a sodium borate buffer, pH 10, degassed via three freeze-thaw cycles and flame sealed in a quartz EPR tube. While frozen in liquid nitrogen in a finger dewar, the sample was irradiated by a 600 W mercury lamp for 3 – 4 minutes in order to generate the free tyrosyl radical.

CcP Turnover experiments

Following the method used for W191F⁶⁶, Cc(II) was reduced with dithionite and buffer exchanged into 100 mM KPi pH 6. With continuous stirring at 25 °C, 4 μ M H₂O₂ was added to 2 μ M CcP and 30 μ M reduced Cc in 100 mM KPi, pH 6, bringing the total volume up to 1800 μ L. Spectral changes were monitored at 550 nm, 540 nm, and 434 nm over 15 min with a single baseline set at 800 nm. The change in Cc(II) concentration was determined spectrally by monitoring $A_{550\text{nm}} - A_{540\text{nm}}$ and applying an extinction coefficient of 19.2 $\text{mM}^{-1} \text{cm}^{-1}$. Traces were fitted to a monoexponential equation using MATLAB (The MathWorks, Inc., Natick, Massachusetts)

$$y = a(1 - \exp(-k_{\text{obs}}(x - t_0))) + y_0$$

The offset t_0 for the early phase was determined by an immediate drop in $\text{Abs}_{550\text{nm}} - \text{Abs}_{540\text{nm}}$ after addition of peroxide. For the slow phase, the offset was established at the maximum of $\text{Abs}_{434\text{nm}}$. Traces were truncated from the onset of the early phase to the onset of the slow phase in order to obtain k_{obs} for the early phase. The k_{obs} for the latter phase were determined from data truncated from the onset of the slow phase to 40 sec later. To determine the minimum amount of peroxide required for CcP ferryl generation 8 μ M of CcP in 100 mM KPi, pH 6 was titrated with 8 – 24 μ M H₂O₂ and the reaction monitored at 434 nm. Once formed, the CcP ferryl was stable for at least 2 hours on ice. H₂O₂ concentration was determined by titration with permanganate. Stock peroxide was diluted ten-fold and 1 mL was combined with approximately 30 mL water and 10 mL of 3 M sulfuric acid. With stirring, a 0.025 M solution of KMnO₄ was added by buret until the midpoint was observed. Concentration of H₂O₂ was calculated from the volume dispensed. For multiple turnover experiments, Cc(II) was reduced with dithionite and buffer exchanged into 100 mM KPi pH 6. With continuous stirring at 25 °C, 5–10 μ M H₂O₂ was added to 1 μ M CcP and 30 μ M reduced Cc in 100 mM KPi, pH 6, bringing the total volume up to 1800 μ L. Initial rate values were determined by fitting the data to a monoexponential decay and then taking the first derivative at time $t = 0$. For examination by cwEPR, reduced Cc and W191Y CcP were combined in a 15: 1 ratio, respectively, with the final concentration of CcP at ~0.2 mM in a buffer of 100 mM KPi, pH 6, 25% glycerol. H₂O₂ was added to a final concentration of ~0.4 mM and the solution was rapidly mixed by stirring or vortexing. At 30 sec and 60 sec, ~70 μ L of sample was transferred to a X-band EPR tube and flash frozen in liquid nitrogen. Data were collected as described earlier in the methods.

Transient Absorption Spectroscopy

All preparations of spectroscopic samples were carried out under anaerobic conditions to avoid quenching of $^3\text{ZnCcP}$ by oxygen. ZnCcP was diluted into 10 mM or 100 mM KPi, pH 7.0 to a concentration of 100 – 200 μM and combined with Fe(III)Cc in a 1:2 molar ratio. 4 μL drops were placed on siliconized glass coverslips (Hampton) and were glued to glass slides using a ring of epoxy to form a gas-tight seal, with an average path-length of ~ 0.5 mm. Samples were placed in the path of a probe light, provided by a 75-W Xe-arc lamp. Excitation light was provided either by a Opolette Nd:YAG laser tuned to 560 nm with approximately 2 mJ of power per 8 ns pulse, or a Continuum Surelight Nd:YAG laser providing light at 532 nm at approximately 5 mJ of power per 4 ns pulse. Fluorescent efficiency at various excitation wavelengths was measured by tracking the light emitted at 600 nm. Samples were preferentially excited in the Q-bands at 560 nm, although there was also sufficient cross-section at 532 nm for sample excitation. The two excitation energies produced identical kinetics, with both lasers firing at 20 Hz. Exposure by excitation light was controlled by a Hamamatsu A6538 Optical Laser shutter, and the absorbance of the probe light was measured with a Hamamatsu Photonic Multichannel Analyzer (PMA). Unless otherwise specified, spectra collected by the PMA were acquired from a 1 – 50 μs exposure time and averaged 20 – 200 times, depending on the strength of the signal.

The laser Q-switch firing acted as the master trigger, with a Digital Delay Generator DG355 (Stanford Research Systems) controlling timing between the other elements. Detection of scattered laser light set t_0 (time = 0 s). Subsequent time points were then sampled randomly with an entire UV/Vis spectrum collected for each exposure. The time delay points were acquired in a random order to mitigate the effects of any photobleaching during data collection. To record a given time point, $N_{\text{reference}}$ spectra were collected at the specified delay time (relative to t_0), where N is the number of spectra being averaged. Next, the laser shutter opens and N_{excited} spectra were collected at the same delay. Difference spectra were calculated as $\Delta A = -\log\left(\frac{I_{\text{excited}}}{I_{\text{reference}}}\right)$, accumulated and averaged over N .

To process the data, data vectors across the wavelength range were reordered in time and subjected to global analysis by Glotaran.⁶⁷ Data below 375 nm were discarded because little light at those wavelengths was transmitted through the optics to the PMA, and data above 750 nm were discarded for lack of spectral features. A baseline correction at the triplet state isosbestic point of 546 nm was applied.¹⁷ Single-valued decomposition (SVD) of the multi-wavelength data was carried out to reconstruct the minimum number of spectroscopic (difference) states sufficient to describe the kinetic progress. In general, sequential reaction kinetics were assumed and as such, single or double exponential terms were used to connect the spectroscopic states in time.

RESULTS

In the following experiments, CcP Trp191 was substituted with Phe⁶⁸, Gly⁴⁸ and Tyr. For the W191G variant, a series of small molecules were also introduced into the cavity created by removal of the 191 side chain. In all cases, crystal structures of the CcP:Cc complexes were determined to aid interpretation of reactivity data. We then examined the peroxidase

activity of the variants, their ability to form Cpd I and their photoinduced ET reactions in the context of ZnCcP:Cc.

Structures of W191(Y, F, G) CcP

The structures of W191(Y, F, G) CcP in complex with Fe(III)Cc were determined at resolutions that ranged from 2.0 – 2.4 Å (Table 1). For each of the variants, both CcP and Cc retained nearly identical conformations to those seen in the WT complex (Figure 2). In the absence of Cc, the W191G substitution causes enhanced flexibility in the 190 – 195 loop.⁶⁹ Because this loop resides at the binding interface with Cc, there was concern that increased flexibility would impact the formation of the crystal complex. Nonetheless, W191G binds Cc in the expected position. The two copies of the CcP:Cc complex in the asymmetric unit are very similar to each other in structure (designated as chains A and C for CcP; chains B and D for Cc). Several of the Cc moieties were not well ordered in the complex structures. As observed previously¹⁸, the interfaces between CcP and Cc are generally well defined, but electron density weakens at the periphery of the complexes, largely due to Cc conformational variability within the lattice. This disorder is difficult to model well and somewhat degrades the refinement statistics relative to those expected for an average structure of similar resolution (Table 1).

In the CcP:Cc complexes, the altered side chains of W191F and W191Y occupy nearly the same position as W191 in the WT (Figure 2B), with the phenol group of W191Y and the phenyl group of W191F aligning with the imidazole of His175, which coordinates the heme and hydrogen bonds to Asp235.⁷⁰ There is no polar moiety in hydrogen bonding range of the Tyr191 hydroxyl group (Figure 2B). (The Thr180 side chain is within 3.3 Å of the Tyr191 hydroxyl group, but the hydroxyl group hydrogen bonds with the backbone of Gly189). Instead, the Tyr191 hydroxyl proton may be stabilized by the π -electrons of the heme itself. In the W191G Cc complex, difference electron density confirms the presence of ordered water molecules in the cavity created by the loss of the W191 indole. However, the water positions differ somewhat from those of uncomplexed CcP,^{48, 49} and vary between Chain A and Chain C in these structures. No ordered water molecules were detected near the side chains of Tyr191 or Phe191 in the respective structures.

Complementation of the W191G Pocket with Small Molecules

To promote ligand binding in the W191G cavity, crystals were soaked with 30 mM concentrations of several redox-active compounds (Figure 3). These compounds were selected with consideration of their structural similarity to aniline or indoline, which are ligands demonstrated to bind the pocket and have solution redox potentials similar to Trp.^{71, 72} Although the affinities of these compounds for W191G have not been measured, we reasoned that they would be in a similar range of those found for aniline and indoline (30 μ M and 160 μ M for CcP W191G, respectively⁵⁸). Of the compounds tested, four bound to W191G as evidenced by the presence of significant difference electron density in the cavity made vacant by the W191G substitution ($> 2.0 \sigma$ in a $F_o - F_c$ electron density difference map; Figure 4). Although the difference densities are changed relative to that seen in the water-filled cavity of W191G, they are ambiguous in each case; hence the compounds may bind with multiple configurations (Figure 4). Despite demonstrated affinity of indoline for the

cavity, we did not observe any electron density for this compound in the crystal structures. Perhaps Cc association prevents movement of the 190 – 195 loop that is required for this larger ligand to access the pocket.^{52, 69} A barrier to access may have also prevented binding of indole and tryptophan, which were also not detected in the crystallization experiments. Co-crystallization of the complex with these ligands was also unsuccessful. Indole binding was possibly limited by its low solubility in the crystallization solutions.

Saturation Kinetics

WT CcP displayed the expected high peroxidase activity and typical Michaelis-Menten behavior ($V_{\max}/E_0 = 1600 \pm 100 \text{ sec}^{-1}$; $K_m = 30 \pm 7 \text{ }\mu\text{M}$; 100 mM KPi) with respect to Cc concentration at 100 mM KPi, where complicating factors from second-site binding are negligible.^{20, 73} (We note that the K_m value for WT is ~5x higher than those of previous studies^{63, 73, 74}, perhaps due to the different buffer conditions used here). As expected,^{48, 66, 68} W191F and W191G had little detectable peroxidase activity, above that of Cc oxidation by hydrogen peroxide alone. The steady state rate of Cc(II) oxidation by W191F has previously been shown to be at least 10^3 fold less than that by WT and linear for only a few seconds⁶⁶. We found similar behavior for both W191F and W191G, with the lack of linearity making rates difficult to determine. Under our conditions, W191Y also appeared largely inactive. $V_{\max}/E_0$ was only $40 \pm 20 \text{ s}^{-1}$, but also showed a peroxide dependence (see below).

To determine if the small molecule compounds that bound in the W191G CcP cavity can rescue peroxidase activity, the rate of Cc oxidation was measured for W191G and compared to the value of W191F under the same conditions. As both W191G and W191F are inactive and Phe191 blocks the cavity, any peroxidase activity of W191G above that seen for W191F should reflect ligand binding. At ligand concentrations of at least an order of magnitude above the measured K_D values (2 mM⁵⁸), no detectable peroxidase activity of W191G was observed in the presence of any of the compounds listed in Fig. 3. These results corroborate previous studies on W191G complementation.⁴⁸

Species Formed on Reaction with Peroxide

CcP compound I formation is evidenced in the UV/Vis absorbance spectrum of WT and W191Y CcP by a shift in the Soret peak from 409 nm to 420 nm and appearance of Q-bands characteristic of the oxo-ferryl species (Figure 5).⁷⁵ W191F also produces a similar Soret peak shift, from 409 nm to 420 nm, but the Q-bands are less well-defined^{50, 68} (Figure 5A). W191G displays the most unique spectrum with a 414 nm Soret peak for the ferric state. Although previous studies of the W191G reaction with peroxide found pronounced ferryl formation as indicated by a well-defined 414 nm Soret peak and Q-bands at 530 and 560 nm,^{48, 50} we find only a modest shift in the W191G Soret band to 417 nm with similarly small changes in the Q-bands (Figure 5A). The reason for this difference is unknown, but could reflect the heme incorporation process during protein expression.

We also tested for the ability of WT, W191Y, and W191F to produce a CW EPR spectra characteristic of aromatic residue oxidation (Figure 5B). As previously reported for W191G in CcP⁵⁰ and related peroxidases,⁷⁶ we observe a small amount of organic radical forms

upon reaction with peroxide ($\sim 1/10$ of the WT signal, Figure 5B), presumably due to the minor oxidation of aromatic residues remote from the active center.^{50, 77–79} In contrast, W191Y produces a strong EPR signal characteristic of a neutral Tyr radical^{80, 81} with an amplitude similar to that seen with WT (Figure 5B). Thus, despite its inability to oxidize Cc(II), W191Y forms a Cpd I-like species containing an oxo-ferryl and a tyrosine radical. Features of the W191Y radical species correspond well with those of free tyrosyl radicals generated from UV photolysis (Figure 5B).

Oxidation of Cc(II) by W191Y Cpd I

To further investigate the inactivity of W191Y in the steady state oxidation of Cc(II), we examined the oxidation of W191Y Cpd I by Cc(II) under pseudo first order conditions and compared the results to those for W191F⁶⁶. W191F does not form a radical species at position 191 upon reaction with peroxide and exhibits only very slow turnover under steady state conditions⁶⁶. Titration of W191Y with hydrogen peroxide indicated that ~ 2 equivalents of H_2O_2 were necessary to fully form Cpd I, which was then stable for at least 5 min on ice (It is unclear why 2 equivalents of H_2O_2 are needed for the initial formation of Cpd I; under multiple turnovers by W191Y, one peroxide oxidizes 2 Cc(II) molecules – see below). Following the same procedure as used previously for W191F⁶⁶, 30 μM Cc(II) was mixed with 2 μM CcP and 4 μM of H_2O_2 was added to initiate the reaction, which was then monitored at 550 nm (Cc(II)), 540 nm (an isosbestic point for Cc oxidation) and 434 nm (Fe(IV)=O). During the initial build-up of the Fe(IV)=O species at 434 nm, there was an early phase of Cc(II) oxidation with $k_1 = 0.17 \pm 0.03 \text{ s}^{-1}$. Following the maximum absorbance at 434nm [Fe(IV)=O peak], the oxidation of Cc(II) was monophasic (Figure 6A) giving a rate constant of $k_2 = 0.08 \pm 0.03 \text{ s}^{-1}$. This behavior and value is similar to that for Cc(II) oxidation by the W191F ferryl-species under analogous conditions, which also shows a slow phase of Fe(IV)=O oxidation with $k_2 = 0.14 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ⁶⁶. Furthermore, the spectral changes at 550 nm indicate that for W191Y ~ 1 equivalent of Cc(II) ($2.5 \pm 0.5 \mu M$) is oxidized by W191Y Cpd I on this time scale. An equivalent of Cc(II) was also oxidized during the build-up of Cpd I in the initial phase of the reaction.

We then examined multiple turnovers of Cc(II) oxidation by reacting W191Y (1 μM) with a 10 fold excess of peroxide (10 μM , respectively) and 30 μM Cc(II) (Figure 6B). The resulting reactions produced 2 equivalents of oxidized Cc ($22 \pm 1 \mu M$) and proceeded with a turnover number (V/E_0) of $0.29 \pm 0.03 \text{ s}^{-1}$ which is greater than the rate constant for the analogous single turnover condition ($0.08 \pm 0.3 \text{ s}^{-1}$). Notably, the ferryl species (434 nm) increases in amount as Cc(II) diminishes and then decays slowly when the peroxide is extinguished, concomitant with a small amount of Cc(II) oxidation. This behavior is somewhat different to that seen with W191F, where the CcP ferryl species remains constant until peroxide is depleted⁶⁶. For W191F, it was suggested that the ferryl species reacts directly with peroxide to oxidize Cc(II), perhaps through the formation of additional protein-based radicals.

With W191Y, the ferryl appears to increase at 434 nm as the oxidation of Cc(II) slows, suggesting that in the early phase peroxide (and Cc(II)) react with an intermediate that precedes the ferryl in the reaction sequence. Furthermore, the multiple turnover rate (0.29 s^{-1}) is considerably faster than the single turnover rate (0.08 s^{-1}) and thus, with excess peroxide present, the reaction is not rate-limited by oxidation of Cc(II) by Fe(IV)=O . The reaction rate did show a peroxide concentration dependence, but the relationship was complex and not proportional. Although this behavior requires further investigation it is clear that the W191Y Cc(II) turnover rate is 10^3 – 10^4 times slower than of WT CcP^{82–84} due to altered reactivity of the Tyr radical.

Considering that W191Y does form a Tyr radical (Figure 5B) there are two possibilities for the reactivity of W191Y Cpd I. In the first case, $\text{Y}^\bullet$ reacts quickly to oxidize one equivalent of Cc(II), but the remaining ferryl cannot reoxidize Y191 (as per eqn (3)). The second oxidation then involves reaction of the ferryl or some other intermediate with peroxide, which is fast compared to oxidation of Cc(II) by Fe(IV)=O (eqn 5). In the second case, the $\text{Y}^\bullet$ potential is too low to oxidize Cc(II) at rates that greatly exceed oxidation by Fe(IV)=O or reaction of an intermediate state with peroxide. For the first case, if the $\text{Y}^\bullet$ were especially stable, it may be observable during the single turnover experiment by EPR spectroscopy. However, no $\text{Y}^\bullet$ was observed in the presence of Cc(II) during decay of the ferryl species (20–30 sec after reaction with peroxide). Thus, the $\text{Y}^\bullet$ species has reacted prior to the reduction of Fe(IV)=O . Further investigation of $\text{Y}^\bullet$ reactivity remains to be determined by methods with better time resolution.

Photoinduced ET of ZnCcP:Cc W191 Variants

We invoked the ZnCcP:Cc system to evaluate the ability of CcP position 191 to facilitate long-range ET^{2, 11–16} (Figure 1). Zinc protoporphyrin IX (ZnP) provides a reactive, long-lived triplet state ($^3\text{ZnCcP}$) when excited with 532 – 560 nm light. In isolation, $^3\text{ZnCcP}$ will decay back to the ground state with rate constant $k_D \sim 100 \text{ s}^{-1}$,^{14, 16, 32, 57} whereas in complex with oxidized Cc, $^3\text{ZnCcP}$ (Fe(III)Cc) is additionally quenched by heme-to-heme ET to Cc Fe(III) with rate constant k_e . The total quenching rate constant ($k_p = k_D + k_e$) is $\sim 260 \text{ s}^{-1}$ for the 1:1 complex with yeast Cc, depending somewhat on ionic strength, temperature and pH^{12, 14, 15, 17, 20, 57}. The resulting charge-separated state containing the ZnP cation radical (ZnP^+) and reduced Fe(II)Cc then recombines in an ET process (k_{eb}) that involves oxidation of W191 to an indole cation radical (W^{*+} ; Figure 1). On the time scale of ET with Cc, the radical equilibrates extremely rapidly between ZnP and W191 or may be considered delocalized between the two centers.³ In the WT system, k_{eb} greatly exceeds k_e , and as a result, the charge-separated intermediate forms in vanishingly small amounts. To characterize ET reactivity of the ZnCcP:Cc complex, we employed a multichannel analyzer that allowed time-resolution of complete difference spectra for the ZnCcP:Cc complex following photoexcitation. Global analysis of the data sets defined reactive states and their kinetic parameters. A typical difference spectrum for $^3\text{ZnCcP}$ in the absence of Cc is characterized by a broad, positive peak at 475 nm and two negative Q-bands at 555 nm and 592 nm⁸⁵ (Figure 7). A strong negative peak at 432 nm also appears, consistent with triplet excited state spectra of isolated Zn-porphyrins.⁸⁶ The 432 nm, 555 nm, and 592 nm features

correspond to absorption maxima in the visible spectrum of ZnCcP (Figure 7), and their diminished intensity reflects changes in electronic state upon triplet formation.

All spectral features of $^3\text{ZnCcP}$ alone decay with a rate constant of $k_D = 114 \pm 4 \text{ s}^{-1}$ (Table 2). To study ET quenching of $^3\text{ZnCcP}$ by Fe(III)Cc we used both 100 mM KPi ionic strength conditions that favor the 1:1 complex and limit secondary binding of an additional Fe(III)Cc and 10 mM KPi conditions that stabilize the complex against dissociation but permit some secondary site binding^{20, 57}. Although, both cases potentially bring complications, we find that changes in ionic strength do not greatly alter the kinetic parameters (Table 2). In 100 mM KPi conditions, addition of Fe(III)Cc in twofold excess increases the rate constant for triplet state decay to $k_P = (k_D + k_e) = 230 \pm 12 \text{ s}^{-1}$ (Table 2 and Figure 7). The increased quenching primarily results from ET to Fe(III)Cc^{14, 15, 32} ($k_e = k_P - k_D = 116 \text{ s}^{-1}$), which is consistent with there being little change in rate constant ($< 10 \text{ s}^{-1}$) when reduced Fe(II)Cc is added. For WT ZnCcP:Cc, the k_{eb} indeed exceeds k_e and thus an intermediate state could not be resolved (for individual acquisition times as low as 1 μsec). Consequently, the system was best modeled with a single difference spectra corresponding to the formation and decay of $^3\text{ZnCcP}$. The kinetic parameters (Table 2) are in line with those determined from single wavelength measurements in other studies.^{14, 15, 32, 57}

In contrast to WT ZnCcP:Cc, W191F shows slower back ET^{17, 20} (Table 2). Here we resolve difference spectra for the charge-separated state ($\text{ZnP}^+/\text{W}^{\bullet+}:\text{Cc}(\text{II})$). Alone, W191F CcP produces difference spectra identical to WT CcP, and decays uniformly at the same rate. However, in the presence of Fe(III)Cc, an additional spectral species is detected (Figure 8). At $\sim 10 \text{ ms}$, positive features begin to appear at 416 nm, 550 nm, and 625 – 690 nm. These absorption peaks increase while the ^3ZnP signal diminishes, and then subsequently decay back to zero (Figure 8). Global analysis of the data reveals two distinct Evolution Associated Difference Spectra, or EADS⁸⁷ (Figure 8), whose time-dependent linear combination effectively models the series of spectra.⁸⁷ EADS1 is identical to the triplet state difference spectrum and fully describes the spectral features at $t = 0 \text{ ms}$ (Figure 7). EADS2 replaces EADS1 and is visible between 10 – 40 ms (Figure 8). EADS2 contains components characteristic of Fe(II)Cc (Soret peak at 416 nm and Q-bands at 522 and 550 nm) and a $\text{ZnP}^+ \pi$ -cation radical (625 – 690 nm) (Figure 8) and thus represents the charge-separated state. Global analysis predicts that the Fe(II)Cc and ZnP^+ features rise and fall with the same kinetics. Thus, forward ET between $^3\text{ZnCcP}(\text{W191F})$ and Fe(III)Cc produces ZnP^+ and Cc(II), which then recombine charge on a slower time scale (Table 2). To investigate the involvement of an additional intermediate, the data were modeled with three or more rate constants. However, any additional EADS was always degenerate to the first two and produced no new species of unique spectral qualities or time evolution. Previous studies of W191F (performed at 10 mM KPi) find a second slower kinetic phase for loss of $\text{ZnP}^+:\text{Cc}(\text{II})$ that results from dissociation of the complex.^{17, 20} The overall timescale in our experiments (40 ms) is probably too short to characterize such dissociation well, and thus k_{eb} for intraprotein ET in the associated complex may be slightly underestimated due to this unaccounted contribution. Complex dissociation at ionic strength $> 30 \text{ mM}$ is rapid²⁷ and could influence the apparent k_{eb} , especially considering that the $\sim 10\%$ yield of ET products in these experiments leaves a majority of competing unreacted proteins.^{20, 27} We thus also investigated the reaction at lower ionic strength (10 mM KPi) where the W191F complex is

known to be stable in the msec time range.²⁰ There was little change in the apparent rate constants between 100 and 10 mM KPi conditions (Table 2), with both the 10 mM and 100 mM apparent k_{eb} values (40–70 s⁻¹) matching well with previously reported values of 40–74 s⁻¹ 17, 20.

The ET behavior of ZnCcP W191G is similar to that of W191F (Table 2). ZnP⁺:Cc(II) builds up and decays with similar kinetics (Figure 8); both k_{e} and k_{eb} are smaller than for WT but comparable to those for W191F. Thus, substitution of an aromatic group for a water-filled cavity at position 191 has only a modest effect on the apparent forward and reverse ET processes; however, weaker binding between CcP and Cc for the W191G cavity mutant may increase dissociation kinetics, which could then contribute to the slightly lower observed k_{eb} .

Tyr at position 191 does not reductively quench ³ZnP because the ³ZnP excited state decay rate is unaffected in the absence of Cc. Like W191F and W191G, Cc(III) produces a modest increase in the ³ZnP decay rate (Table 2) indicating quenching by ET to Cc(III). Global analysis of the transient spectra in the presence of Cc(III) reveals two major EADS, similar to that observed with W191F and W191G, with similar absorbance increases in the 625 nm range of EADS2 (Figure 8). Consequently, there is no rate acceleration for the back ET reaction in W191Y, which reacts similarly to W191F(G) (Table 2). Like W191F, high (100 mM KPi) and low (10 mM KPi) ionic strength conditions give very similar k_{e} and k_{eb} values (Table 2). Unfortunately, we were unable to study how the substituted anilines affect photo-induced ET with ZnCcP W191G because the ligands quenched ³ZnP independent of binding to the W191G cavity.

DISCUSSION

Trp191 oxidation is a key feature of the CcP peroxidase mechanism and also of the ZnCcP photo-induced ET reactions. Here we report that Tyr, a similar redox active residue at site 191 cannot support these activities, nor can a set of redox active small molecules bound in the W191G cavity. The inability of Tyr to rescue these reactions is despite the fact that it forms a stable radical adjacent to the heme on reaction with peroxide. The influence exerted by Trp or Tyr oxidation on back ET depends on the structural and electrochemical properties of donor, acceptor and hopping center. Indeed, the positioning and reduction potential of a hole-hopping site must fall within certain ranges to enhance long-range ET rates.^{37, 45, 88} When Cc(III) oxidizes ³ZnP, the resulting radical distributes between ZnP⁺ and W^{•+}, with an equilibrium weighting (K_{ex}) that depends on the difference in reduction potentials (E°).

$$K_{\text{ex}} = \frac{k_f^{\text{ex}}}{k_r^{\text{ex}}} = \frac{[\text{ZnP}^0\text{W}^{\bullet+}]}{[\text{ZnP}^+\text{W}^o]} = e^{-F\Delta E^{\circ}/RT} \quad (6)$$

ET to ZnP⁺ from Cc(II) could conceivably take place with and without involvement of the 191 site:

If the electron exchange reaction between ZnP^{+} and W is much faster than the back electron transfer reactions (i.e. $k_f^{ex}, k_p^{ex} \gg k_{eb}^1, k_{eb}^2$) and the rate of ET to $\text{W}^{\bullet+}$ exceeds that to ZnP^{+} ($k_{eb}^1 \gg k_{eb}^2$), the observed back ET rate constant (k_{obs}) will be the rate constant for transfer to $\text{W}^{\bullet+}$ weighted by the equilibrium constant for hole exchange between ZnP^{+} and $\text{W}^{\bullet+}$ (eqn (7)).

$$k_{obs} = k_{eb}^1 K_{ex} \quad (7)$$

Known parameters justify the assumption of eqn(7). ET from $\text{Cc}(\text{II})$ to $\text{W}^{\bullet+}$ is much faster ($k_{eb}^1 = 2 \times 10^6 \text{ s}^{-1}$)⁸ than ET to ZnP^{+} directly ($k_{eb}^2 \sim 10^1 - 10^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$, Table 2).¹⁷ Thus, k_{eb}^2 sets a lower limit for any involvement of W191 to enhance ET from $\text{Cc}(\text{II})$. If the equilibrium constant for hole exchange, $K_{ex} < 10^{-4}$ (i.e. $E^{\circ} > 240 \text{ mV}$, eqn(6)), there will be little advantage to hole hopping through the 191 site. For solution and crystalline complexes of ZnCcP with $\text{Cc}(\text{III})$, $k_{obs} \sim 4000 \text{ s}^{-1}$,^{12, 18, 89} and thus eqn(2) implies that $120 \text{ mV} < E^{\circ} < 180 \text{ mV}$. This difference in potential is consistent with measurements on the isolated moieties: $E^{\circ}(\text{ZnP}^{\circ}/\text{ZnP}^{+}) = 1.2 \text{ V}$ ¹⁵; whereas $E^{\circ}(\text{W}^{\circ}/\text{W}^{\bullet+}) = 1.1 - 1.4 \text{ V}$.^{45, 81, 90, 91} It is worth noting that the actual reduction potentials of $\text{W191}^{\bullet+}$ and ZnP^{+} in CcP are likely less than these values. $\text{W}^{\bullet+}$ potentials usually exceed 1 V ^{45, 81, 90, 91} and most peroxidase Cpd II ($\text{Fe}(\text{IV})=\text{O}$) potentials are $> 0.9 \text{ V}$ ^{92, 93}, yet in WT $\text{CcP}:\text{Cc}$, the two-electron couple $E^{\circ}(\text{W}^{\bullet+}\text{Fe}(\text{IV})/\text{W}^{\circ}\text{Fe}(\text{III})) = \frac{1}{2} [E^{\circ}(\text{W}^{\bullet+}/\text{W}^{\circ}) + E^{\circ}(\text{Fe}(\text{IV})/\text{Fe}(\text{III}))] = 0.740 \text{ V}$.^{94, 95} Thus, the protein environment may substantially lower the reduction potentials of the 191 side chain and the porphyrin moiety.^{96, 97} Importantly, a lowered potential for $\text{W}^{\bullet+}$ is still consistent with a very small population of the charge-separated intermediate in the WT $\text{ZnCcP}:\text{Cc}$ system. Provided that the reduction potential of the hopping site remains over $\sim 200 \text{ mV}$ higher than that of the donor $\text{Cc}(\text{II})$ ($E^{\circ}(\text{Cc}) = 290 \text{ mV}$ ^{98, 99}; i.e. $G = -200 \text{ mV}$), the

standard Marcus equation⁴² ($k \sim k_{eb}(\text{W}^{\bullet+}) \exp[-(\lambda + \Delta G)^2 / 4\lambda kT]$) predicts that the back ET rate to a 191 radical will remain $\sim 100\times$ higher than the forward rate of $\text{Cc}(\text{III})$ reduction ($\sim 10^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$; Table 2). (This estimate is based on a reorganization energy (λ) of $\sim 0.7 \text{ V}$ for $\text{ZnCcP}:\text{Cc}$ back ET³ and $k_{eb}(\text{W}^{\bullet+}) = 2 \times 10^6 \text{ s}^{-1}$ for ET to $\text{W191}^{\bullet+}$ that is close to activationless⁸).

With the crystal structure of the W191Y complex ruling out any substantial structural perturbations caused by the substitution, the inability of Tyr191 to accelerate back ET like Trp may derive from one of the two considerations mentioned perviously. First, although, $E^{\circ}(\text{Y}^{\bullet+}/\text{Y}^{\circ})$ will likely be comparable to $E^{\circ}(\text{W}^{\bullet+}/\text{W}^{\circ})$,^{43, 90, 91, 100–102} even a redox potential increase of $50\text{--}100 \text{ mV}$ over that of Trp would decrease k_{eb}^1 to the range of k_{eb}^2 . Unlike Trp191, which hydrogen bonds to Asp235, there is no hydrogen-bond acceptor for the Tyr hydroxyl and thus the Tyr redox potential may not be suitably reduced by the protein

environment. In this case, during reaction of Fe(III) CcP with peroxide, Cpd I may react rapidly at $Y^\bullet$ or $Y^{\bullet+}$ to oxidize one equivalent of Cc(II), but then the remaining ferryl species has insufficient potential to re-generate the Tyr radical. Oxidation of Cc(II) by the ferryl or another intermediate species would be slow relative to the reaction of this intermediate with peroxide itself. In the case of ZnCcP, $ZnP^{\bullet+}$ would also be too low in potential to produce any appreciable amount of $Y^\bullet$. In the second case, the potential of neutral $Y^\bullet$ could be too low to oxidize Cc(II) at appreciable rates. The low pKa of $Y^{\bullet+}$ (~ -2)^{43, 101} favors deprotonation to the neutral radical $Y^\bullet$. The $W^{\bullet+}$ pKa is considerably higher than this at $3.2 - 4.5$,¹⁰³ and furthermore, the CcP heme pocket is known to stabilize the $W^{\bullet+}$ cation¹⁰⁴ by favorable electrostatics^{96, 105} and hydrogen-bonding with the Asp235 carboxylate nitrogen.^{96, 106} In support of this scenario, during several turnovers the ferryl species does not build-up until peroxide and Cc(II) are depleted (Fig. 6B), which suggests that direct reaction of peroxide with the ferryl is not rate-limiting (eqn 5). However, the situation is complex and involves reaction of peroxide with something other than the ferric enzyme because the multiple turnover rate constant is faster than the single turnover rate constant. At this stage we view the first scenario as more likely because reduction of $Y^\bullet$ in single turnover experiments precedes that of the ferryl, and $Y^\bullet$ is not stable in the presence of Cc(II), albeit on relatively long timescales. Experiments with faster time resolution will help resolve this issue. The inability of the W191(F, Y) ferryl species to oxidize Cc(II) at rates comparable to WT CcP I supports the assertion that for WT ET proceeds primarily to the $W191^{\bullet+}$ center after it has been re-formed by reduction of Fe(IV)=O (Scheme I).

The aniline derivatives do not rescue peroxidase activity of the W191G CcP variant, even though they bind in the cavity and have potentials that should be in range of Trp. Furthermore, the pKas of the resulting aniline cation radicals are likely higher than those of Trp and Tyr (by $2 - 3$ pKa units^{71, 103}), hence, deprotonation of the radical cations does not explain their inactivity. The inability of the ligands to hydrogen bond with the Asp235 carboxylate may prevent the protein from sufficiently lowering their reduction potentials. This said, the bound ligands have a potential range of ~ 0.3 V (Figure 3), and thus at least some of them should be susceptible to oxidation by $ZnP^{\bullet+}$. Thus, the more likely explanation for their inactivity stems from disorder and/or weak binding in the pocket. In particular, reorientation of the ligands in the W191G cavity, as evidenced by their heterogeneous binding configurations in the crystals, may limit interactions conducive to oxidation or destabilize any resulting radicals by promoting side reactions. Moreover, the lack of covalent attachment to the protein may short circuit hopping as the ligands exchange to solvent on the overall ET timescales. Similar results were found with the CcP Asp235Asn substitution, which destabilizes the conformation of W191 and produces Cc turnover rates similar to those of W191F^{107–109}.

The near equivalence of the WT, W191Y and W191F structures in complex with Cc lends strong support to the involvement of Trp oxidation in the charge recombination reaction. Interestingly, complete loss of the side chain in W191G produces kinetics similar to that of W191F. Even if complex dissociation is enhanced in W191G (at 100 mM KPi) the apparent k_{eb} values are not much less than those for W191F under conditions where the complex is stable (10 mM KPi). Thus, when hopping is inoperative, the ET rates are largely insensitive to large changes in the structure intervening the donor and acceptor sites. Calculations

suggest that although many different bonding networks contribute to electron tunneling between the porphyrin centers, those that involve Trp oxidation are the most effective at accelerating long-range ET^{3, 19}. The W191F to W191G comparison supports the view that such effects are indeed large compared to those resulting from even quite substantial structural perturbations.

We conclude that a functional ET hopping site must not only meet requirements of potential and proton transfer, but also maintain a degree of structural stability that can be best accomplished by covalent attachment or tight binding to the protein. Moreover, there is a narrow redox potential range over which hopping will be effective at accelerating ET rates and thus, stringent conditions must be met for multistep ET pathways to accelerate net charge transfer in proteins.

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Abbreviations

Cc	cytochrome c, Cc
CcP	cytochrome c peroxidase
Cpd I	compound I
Cpd II	compound II
EADS	evolution associated difference spectrum
EPR	electron paramagnetic resonance
ET	electron transfer
Tris	2-Amino-2-hydroxymethyl-propane-1,3-diol
W^{•+}	Tryptophan radical cation
Y[•]	Tyrosine radical
WT	wild-type protein sequence
ZnP	zinc-porphyrin

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FIGURE 1.

Photoinduced ET by ZnCcP:Cc. (A) The triplet state of zinc-porphyrin (ZnP) bound to CcP (^3ZnP) is produced by an 8 ns pulse of 532 – 560 nm light. $^3\text{ZnP CcP}$ will then either decay back to the ground state (rate constant k_D in the absence of Cc) or reduce Fe(III)Cc to Fe(II)Cc (rate constant k_e) to produce a porphyrin radical cation (ZnP^{*+}). The cation radical rapidly equilibrates between ZnP^{*+} and a nearby aromatic sidechain at position 191. The charge-separated state will then recombine with rate constant k_{eb} . Dissociation and reassociation of the charged-separated complex is not included in the scheme. (B) Residue 191 intervenes the CcP ZnP and Cc heme in the protein complex.

FIGURE 2. Structures of CcP W191X Variants with Cc

(A) Overlay of the CcP:Cc W191X structures with the WT complex show a high degree of similarity (WT, PDB Code: 1U74 in white, W191Y in pink, W191F in blue, and W191G in yellow). One of the two unique complexes in the asymmetric unit is shown. (B) Superposition of residue 191 in the respective crystal structures shows that the aromatic side chains all hold approximately the same position in each variant, with each side chain oriented in the plane of coordinating His175. In WT CcP, Trp191 hydrogen bonds with Asp235. The side chains of Tyr191 and Phe191 have no polar contacts. The peptide backbone of Gly191 has the same conformation as does Trp191 in WT.

FIGURE 3. Compounds targeted at the W191G cavity

Compounds tested for binding W191G cavity and their respective reduction potentials (tryptophan¹¹⁰, aniline¹¹¹, indole¹¹¹, aniline derivatives⁹⁰)

FIGURE 4. Ligands bound in the W191G CcP cavity

The WT CcP:Cc structure compared to W191G CcP:Cc soaked with (B) nothing, (C) aniline, (D) 3-aminobenzorufuoride, (E) 2,4 dimethylaniline, and (F) o-toluidine. Omit map difference electron density is shown at $2.2 - 2.5\sigma$ for both unique complexes in the asymmetric unit (chains A and C).

FIGURE 5. Compound I formation in CcP by UV/Vis

(A) UV/Vis spectra of CcP before (blue) and after (red) introduction of hydrogen peroxide. WT, W191F, W191Y show the typical Soret shift from 409 to 420 nm, and Q-bands indicative of Cpd I formation. W191G shows a shift from 414 to 417 nm, with broad Q-bands that move towards those seen in WT. (B) Peroxide induced radicals in CcP. (Left) CW-EPR spectra of CcP variants with peroxide. Both WT and W191Y radical signals are much larger than those seen in W191G or W191F (not shown). A small amount of organic radical is likely formed elsewhere in W191G. Spectra recorded at X-band (9 GHz) with 1 G modulation amplitude, 100 kHz modulation frequency and 25 – 30 dB modulation amplitude. Data were collected at 5K, 12 K, and 50K for each variant; WT is shown at 5 K, W191Y at 12 K, and W191G is at 50 K. Temperature has no appreciable effect on the relative amplitudes of the signals. The origin of the broad feature for W191Y at 3235 G is unknown but gives different saturation behavior and is thus distinct from the main radical signal. (Right) Neutral tyrosyl radicals were generated by UV photolysis and collected at ~100 K. Sample exhibits similar line shape features as in W191Y. Spectra are shown for two conditions of microwave attenuation.

FIGURE 6. Oxidation of Cc(II) by W191Y

(A) Single turnover of CcP W191Y Cpd I with excess Cc(II). Reaction was initiated by mixing 4 μM of H_2O_2 with 2 μM of CcP W191Y and 30 μM Cc(II). After an initial phase in which Fe(IV)=O builds-up at 434 nm, CcP oxidizes one equivalent of Cc(II) with rate constant $k_2 = 0.08 \pm 0.03 \text{ s}^{-1}$. Normalized absorbances are shown for $A_{434\text{nm}}$, $A_{550\text{nm}}$ and $A_{550\text{nm}}-A_{540\text{nm}}$. (B) Multiple turnovers of Cc(II) oxidation by CcP W191Y. Reaction was initiated by mixing 10 μM H_2O_2 with 2 μM CcP and 30 μM Cc(II). Absorbance traces are shown at 434 nm (Fe(IV)=O) and $A_{550\text{nm}}-A_{540\text{nm}}$ (Cc(II)). In the initial phase $22 \pm 2 \mu\text{M}$ Cc(II) is consumed where the amount of Fe(IV)=O increases, until the peroxide is depleted, at which point Fe(IV)=O is slowly reduced to Fe(III) by the remaining Cc(II). The rate of the early phase is peroxide dependent and exceeds that of Fe(IV)=O reduction in a single turnover.

FIGURE 7. Time-dependent difference spectra for photoexcited ZnCcP WT with and without Cc (A) Difference spectra for $^3\text{ZnCcP}$ decay shown as a heat map. Red, orange and yellow coloring reflect positive changes in absorption, whereas blue and green reflect negative changes, respectively. The difference spectrum is strongest at time t=0 ms and decays over 40 ms to a flat line. Initial time points are spaced 50 μs apart, and the time interval between successive spectra increases over the course of the measurement. The exposure time for each spectrum is 50 μs . (B) The excited state decay of WT CcP with Fe(III)Cc added. The $^3\text{ZnCcP}$ excitation is much shorter lived with Cc. (C) The difference spectrum of the excited state of ZnCcP at time t=0. Data are shown in blue, with the component state extracted from the global fit shown in red. (D) The time dependence of absorbance at 475 nm for ZnCcP with and without Cc; fit for the decay rate of the principal state in (C) is superimposed. Data shown for 100 mM KPi conditions.

FIGURE 8. Detection of a charge-separated state in W191F(G) ZnCcP:Cc

(A) Time plots of the difference spectra at various wavelengths for W191F, W191G, and W191Y; 475 nm reflects ^3ZnP , 550 nm Cc(II) and 690 nm ZnP^+ . (B) Progress curves for the two principal states (^3ZnP and $\text{ZnP}^+;\text{Cc(II)}$) defined by single valued decomposition and global analysis of the data. ^3ZnP is shown in blue, with the charge-separated state shown in red (C) Difference state spectra at time $t=10$ ms superimposed with the fits of the associated EADS1 for $^3\text{ZnCcP}$. Recorded changes in absorbance are in blue with fits shown in red. (D) Difference state spectra at time $t=18$ ms superimposed with the fits of EADS2 for the additional charge-separated intermediate in W191F, G and Y. New peaks at 416 and 550 nm (arrows) correspond to Fe(II)Cc (spectra of Fe(II)Cc below), and the broad peak at ~ 680 nm (arrow) is characteristic of ZnP^+ . Data shown for 100 mM KPi conditions.

Scheme 1.

Peroxidase Activity of CcP and Cc

Table 1

Diffraction Data Collection and Structure Refinement Statistics

Data Collection		W191F	W191Y	W191G	W191G + Aniline	W191G + o- Toluidine	W191G + 24dma	W191G + 3abt
Space group	P 2 ₁	P 2 ₁	P 2 ₁	P 2 ₁	P 2 ₁	P 2 ₁	P 2 ₁	P 2 ₁
a, b, c (Å)	44.8, 113.8, 88.2, 105.3	45.5, 110.2, 88.2, 104.3	45.4, 117.1, 88.9, 105.1	45.4, 110.3, 87.9, 105.5	45.4, 111.9, 87.9, 104.3	45.4, 107.5, 87.2, 104.5	45.3, 117.5, 88.5, 104.4	45.3, 117.5, 88.5, 104.4
β	51828	21533	52508	27854	20376	15317	51366	51366
Unique reflections	2.01/	2.4/	2.06/	2.5/	2.76/	3.0/	2.10/	2.10/
Resolution (Å)	2.03 – 2.01	2.44 – 2.40	2.13 – 2.06	2.54 – 2.5	2.59 – 2.76	3.05 – 3.00	2.14 – 2.10	2.14 – 2.10
* Last shell (Å)	92.2/90.7	80.7/51.1	96.1/98.3	95.9/98.0	93.5/65.7	95.9/85.0	98.7/90.0	98.7/90.0
Completeness (%)	14.9/3.8	8.4/2.0	9.2/2.7	7.3/2.0	17.1/3.2	17.2/3.4	14.2/4.7	14.2/4.7
I/σ	0.222/0.488	0.135/0.670	0.121/0.46	0.158/0.537	0.092/0.388	0.123/0.512	0.096/0.402	0.096/0.402
[†] R _{merge}								
Refinement								
^{††} R _{work} (%)	21.5/23.4	22.3/28.9	28.1/33.8	25.0/31.1	21.4/26.9	23.5/27.8	19.2/24.8	19.2/24.8
^{††} R _{free} (%)	26.7/37.6	30.9/43.9	29.7/34.6	29.4/43.5	26.8/34.8	31.3/37.8	22.8/29.1	22.8/29.1
No. atoms	7052	6560	6912	6657	6613	6606	7076	7076
No. water molecules	534	40	324	55	9	0	496	496
Mean B value (Å ²)	33.6	70.5	43.3	66.4	70.2	60.1	45.2	45.2
B value (waters)	35.9	55.4	44.3	52.0	54.4	NA	45.7	45.7
B value (ligand)	NA	NA	NA	59.9	76.3	57.5	46.3	46.3
RMSD bonds (Å)	0.004	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.003	0.005	0.005
RMSD angles (°)	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.9	0.9
φ/ψ stats (%)								
Most favored	97.6	94.5	96.8	96.1	95.7	94.0	98.6	98.6
Outliers	0.13	0.25	0.25	0.0	0.38	0.31	0.25	0.25
PDB Code	5CIF	5CIH	5CIG	5CIE	5CID	5CIB	5CIC	5CIC

* Highest resolution range for compiling statistics follows slash.

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$$R_{merge} = \frac{\sum_i \sum_j |I_j - \langle I_j \rangle|}{\sum_i \sum_j \langle I_j \rangle}$$
 where I_j = the intensity of the j th observation of reflection i and $\langle I_j \rangle$ = the average intensity of reflection i .
$$R_{work/free} = \frac{\sum_i |F_{obs} - F_{calc}|}{\sum_i |F_{obs}|}$$

Table 2

ZnCeP:Cc Photoinduced Electron Transfer Rate Constants

	k_p (s ⁻¹) ¹	k_D (s ⁻¹) ²	k_e (s ⁻¹) ³	k_{eb} (s ⁻¹) ⁴	KPi Buffer
WT	230 ± 10	114 ± 4	116 ± 13	ND ⁵	100 mM
W191F	160 ± 7	102 ± 5	60 ± 10	40 ± 5	100 mM
W191F	170 ± 20	108 ± 2	60 ± 20	70 ± 10	10 mM
W191Y	200 ± 10	100 ± 2	100 ± 12	50 ± 20	100 mM
W191Y	180 ± 10	100 ± 2	80 ± 30	50 ± 10	10 mM
W191G	186 ± 10	113 ± 6	70 ± 10	16 ± 5	100 mM

¹ k_p = ³ZnP decay constant in presence of Cc(III);

² k_D = ³ZnP decay constant in absence of Cc(III);

³ k_e = $k_p - k_D$ = forward ET rate constant;

⁴ k_{eb} = apparent back recombination ET rate constant. Note that in 100 mM conditions where complex dissociation may compete with back ET, k_{eb} may not be strictly first order.

⁵ Not Determined.