Quantum Mechanics as Multiphase 3D Continuum Mechanics

Realised through Mind–AI Cooperation

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Abstract

We present a formulation of the N-electron quantum-mechanical model in terms of a wave function $\Psi(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{i=1}^{N} \psi_i(\mathbf{x})$ defined over physical 3D space with coordinate $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^3$, with the ψ_i unit-charge individual electronic wave functions with supports in a non-overlapping decomposition of $\mathbb{R}^3$ into domains Ω_i with boundaries $\Gamma_i = \partial\Omega_i$. An atomic or molecular ground state is determined by minimization of the standard Coulomb energy functional over the wave functions $\{\psi_i\}$ and over the domain decomposition $\{\Omega_i\}$, subject to continuity of Ψ across the common inter-domain boundaries $\Gamma_i \cap \Gamma_j$. The minimum is approached by a gradient method with three coupled updates: imaginary-time propagation of each ψ_i, Poisson updates of the per-electron Hartree potentials, and level-set updates of the free boundary of the domain decomposition $\{\Omega_i\}$. We refer to this real-space formulation as **RealQM**.

The model is organised as a hierarchy of reductions: **Level 1** is the parameter-free basic atomic model in which shell structure emerges from minimum-energy packing rather than being preset, reproducing observed atom total energies for elements Li–Rn within ∼1%; **Level 2** treats atoms with spherical symmetry on the inner shells while leaving valence electrons explicit; **Level 3** replaces nucleus and inner shells together by a pseudo-kernel characterised by an effective charge and a softening radius; **Level 4** assembles Level-3 atoms into molecules and molecular complexes. Two further levels extend the hierarchy beyond the wave-function formalism: **Level 5** extracts a per-species reduced-model record (envelope, surface electrostatic, hydrophobicity, normal modes) from a converged Level-3 run on a single protein, and **Level 6** drives a population of Level-5 records under Brownian dynamics, capturing $\sim 10^6$-protein cell-scale dynamics on the same hardware that runs Level-1 atoms. At Level 3, reduced-kernel architectures sweep entire periodic-table columns — closed-shell hydrides match experimental atomization energies within 3–9% for groups 1, 2, 14, and 16 (NaH, BeH_2, H_2O, CH_4, SiH_4, GeH_4); the H_2 covalent bond at parameter-free Level 1 matches Kolos–Wolniewicz to 0.3% on total energy and the experimental dissociation energy to 3%. Reactive chemistry (proton transfer, exchange) and excited states (orthohelium) follow from the same variational principle. At Level 4, the framework supports **interactive protein folding**: polyglycine hairpins fold from extended to compact via quantum-mechanical H-bond forces alone; alpha-helices form from near-linear chains; mini-proteins fold under universal $i \to i{+}4$ H-bond bias plus a single hydrophobic-pressure parameter, reproducing native-like topology without empirical force fields. A four-system condensed-phase calibration (NaCl crystal melt, CO_2 dry ice, solid N_2, bare-nucleus He) shows that the simulation transition T for systems with non-dispersive cohesion sits in the 1000–2000 K range, that the overshoot factor against experimental phase-transition temperatures scales monotonically with the missing-dispersion contribution, and that at the dispersion-only endpoint (bare-nucleus He) the cluster cleanly fails to bind, completing the calibration with the predicted clean negative test.

Stability of matter for a system of N non-overlapping atoms with kernel charge Z follows from the Hardy inequality applied to the global wave function Ψ as a one-paragraph derivation, giving the bound $E \geq -CNZ^3$ — in striking contrast to the Dyson–Lenard–Lieb–Thirring proof required in standard quantum mechanics. The same multiphase formulation extends naturally to atomic nuclei in a proton–electron picture (4 protons + 2 electrons for He-4), demonstrating reach beyond chemistry to nuclear-scale physics.

The framework is implemented in ∼8000 lines of JavaScript and WebGPU compute shaders running interactively in a browser on a consumer laptop GPU — three orders of magnitude smaller and $\sim 10^2$–$10^4\times$ faster than mainstream quantum-chemistry packages. The implementation, validation suite, and curated public Gallery were developed through extended collaboration with an AI code assistant (Claude, Anthropic) starting from initial p5.js prototypes by the author. We present the collaboration as part of the contribution: a worked case of how a single mathematical mind, paired with an AI engineering partner, can produce research-grade interactive scientific software at a scale that previously required a programming team.

Keywords: quantum chemistry; multiphase wave functions; free-boundary problems; Bernoulli condition; real-space methods; stability of matter; WebGPU; AI-assisted scientific software; human–AI collaboration.

1 Introduction

The N-electron Schrödinger equation has been the foundation of quantum chemistry for nearly a century. In its standard formulation, matter is described as eigenfunctions of an N-body Hamiltonian acting on antisymmetric wavefunctions in a $3N$-dimensional configuration space. The exponential scaling of this representation has been mitigated by approximate methods — Hartree–Fock, density functional theory, configuration interaction, coupled cluster — each making specific compromises between accuracy and computational cost [1, 2, 3]. Production-quality quantum chemistry packages comprise hundreds of thousands to millions of lines of code, draw on decades of accumulated machinery for basis sets, integral evaluation, and analytic gradients, and require dedicated computational clusters for systems of biological size.

Two foundational positions. Two quotations from the founders frame the conceptual position of this paper. The first is from **Dirac, 1929**, on the relation between physics and chemistry:

> The underlying physical laws necessary for the mathematical theory of [...] the whole of chemistry are thus completely known, [and] the difficulty is only that the exact application of these laws leads to equations much too complicated to be soluble.

The second is from **Schrödinger, in a letter to Lorentz dated 6 June 1926**, sketching how he originally intended to interpret the wave function for $N > 1$ electrons:

> If we now have to deal with N particles, then $\Psi(x_1, \ldots, x_N)$ is a function of N variables $x_1, \ldots, x_N$ over N 3D spaces $R_1, \ldots, R_N$. Now first let R_1 be identified with the real space $\mathbb{R}^3$ and integrate over $R_2, \ldots, R_N$. Second, identify R_2 with the real space and integrate over $R_1, R_3, \ldots, R_N$ and so on. The N individual results are to be added after they have been multiplied by certain constants which characterise the particles. *I consider the result to be the electric charge density in real space.*

The two positions are complementary. Dirac states that chemistry reduces to known physical laws; the only obstacle is computational. Schrödinger sketches a real-space interpretation in which the N-electron wave function projects to an actual charge density in physical $\mathbb{R}^3$, recovering the direct physical meaning that ψ^2 has for the hydrogen atom. **This real-space-density interpretation was abandoned during the late 1920s under the dominance of the**

Bohr–Born–Heisenberg–Dirac Copenhagen interpretation, in which Ψ on $\mathbb{R}^{3N}$ became a probability amplitude rather than a physical charge density. The resulting Standard QM (StdQM) inherits the computational obstacle Dirac identified — solving an equation on $3N$-dimensional configuration space — and the chemistry-specific approximations introduced to make it tractable have, ever since, made chemistry look more autonomous from physics than Dirac's position would suggest.

The formulation developed in this paper, which we call **RealQM**, returns to the originally proposed real-3D-space picture. The N-electron wave function $\Psi(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{i=1}^{N} \psi_i(\mathbf{x})$ lives on physical $\mathbb{R}^3$ as a sum of **one-electron wave functions** ψ_i on a non-overlapping decomposition of $\mathbb{R}^3$ into domains Ω_i, with each ψ_i^2 a unit charge density. Energy is the standard Coulomb functional, minimised over the wave functions $\{\psi_i\}$, the domain decomposition $\{\Omega_i\}$, and the nuclear positions; molecular geometry, bonding, and dynamics emerge from the same variational principle. The $3N$-dimensional configuration-space step is not taken at all; the computational obstacle Dirac identified is dissolved by working in 3D throughout, at the cost of replacing antisymmetry with strict spatial non-overlap.

In this respect RealQM is a direct realisation of **Dirac's chemistry-as-applied-physics position** (the 1929 quote above) executed in the real-3D-space picture Schrödinger originally envisaged. RealQM takes Dirac's program seriously by retaining only the underlying physics — Coulomb interactions between electronic wave functions and nuclei — and discarding the chemistry-specific machinery (basis sets, exchange–correlation functionals, fitted force fields) that StdQM had to introduce in order to make the configuration-space equations tractable. Chemistry then re-emerges, bottom-up, from the variational principle alone.

This reformulation — RealQM in what follows — is not merely a numerical recasting of the standard problem. It is a different mathematical object with different scaling: complexity grows with the number of mesh points in 3D, not with the number of basis functions in $N \times 3D$. As a consequence, the entire framework can be implemented in roughly 8000 lines of JavaScript and WebGPU compute shaders, runs in a browser on a consumer laptop GPU, and supports interactive simulation of systems with hundreds of explicit electrons in real time.

We organize the model as a hierarchy of reductions. **Level 1** is parameter-free: an atom is described as a nucleus of charge Z surrounded by N one-electron wave functions ψ_i on non-overlapping shell-shaped domains Ω_i, with the configuration determined by minimum-energy packing. The Level-1 atomic model reproduces observed atom energies for elements Li through Rn to approximately 1% with no fitted constants. **Level 2** spherically homogenizes inner shells, keeping the shell occupancy intact but replacing the angular structure of $\sum_{i\in\text{shell}} \psi_i^2$ with a radial density of matching total charge. **Level 3** further replaces the nucleus and inner shells together by a *pseudo-kernel* characterized by an effective charge Z_{kernel} and a softening radius r_c, leaving only the outermost valence wave functions explicit. **Level 4** combines Level-3 atoms into molecular assemblies. Two further levels extend the hierarchy beyond the wave-function formalism: **Level 5** extracts a per-species reduced-model record (envelope, surface electrostatic potential, hydrophobicity, normal modes) from a converged Level-3 RealQM run on a single protein, with the wave function integrated out into geometric and electrostatic features; and **Level 6** drives a population of Level-5 records under Brownian dynamics, capturing $\sim 10^6$-protein cell-scale dynamics on the same hardware that runs Level-1 atoms. Each level is determined by comparison with the prior level, in the same architectural spirit as pseudopotentials and frozen-core methods in standard quantum chemistry but with a parameter-free ab initio bottom rather than empirical fits, and extending naturally upward through reduced-protein records to cell-scale population dynamics.

A second contribution of this paper concerns how the implementation was produced. The mathematical reformulation is the work of one author. The validation suite, the WebGPU compute shaders, the systematic kernel-architecture sweeps reported in Section 4, and the curated public Gallery were developed through extended interactive collaboration with **Claude**,

a large-language-model AI assistant produced by Anthropic. The pattern of the collaboration was iterative and recorded: the human proposed mathematical and chemical questions; the AI translated them into runnable simulations, identified bugs, ran systematic parameter sweeps, and challenged claims that did not survive scrutiny; the human evaluated the results and corrected the AI's interpretations when they slipped. The history of corrections — claims made, retracted, refined, restored — is itself part of the public record, encoded in the Gallery's "Assessment by Claude" card.

We take this case to be a worth-reporting example of how a single mathematical mind, working with an AI engineering partner in real time, can produce research-grade interactive scientific software at a scale otherwise requiring a programming team. The collaboration is not the science, but it is part of how the science came into existence, and we report it as such.

Note on scope. We present RealQM positively, by stating what it is and what it predicts, rather than by detailed comparison with standard quantum mechanics. A precise comparison would require specifying which interpretive framework — Copenhagen, Bohmian, Many-Worlds, decoherence-based, or another — one has in mind, and these differ substantially on the ontological status of the wave function. The reader is invited to perform such comparisons against the framework they favour. The essential claim of this work is positive: RealQM is a formulation in which the wave function lives on physical three-dimensional space and the electrons are real, spatially-extended, non-overlapping regions of charge density.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 states the reformulation and the hierarchical reduction. Section 3 describes the numerical implementation. Section 4 reports validation, including atom energies, the covalent H_2 bond and its He limit, atomization energies of closed-shell hydrides across periodic-table groups, S66 dimer geometries, chemical reactions, protein folding, excited states, and a three-system condensed-phase calibration (NaCl crystal melt, CO_2 dry-ice cluster, solid N_2) that quantifies how the simulation's overshoot factor against experimental transition temperatures scales with the missing-dispersion contribution. Section 5 states honest limits of the approach. Section 6 shows that stability of matter — the lower bound $E \geq -CNZ^2$ on the ground-state energy of a system of N atoms — follows directly from the Hardy inequality applied to non-overlapping electronic territories, in contrast to the heroic Dyson–Lenard–Lieb–Thirring proof required in standard quantum mechanics. Section 7 reports an analogous model of the atomic nucleus, demonstrating that the framework extends beyond chemistry to nuclear-scale physics. Section 8 places the work in the long-standing chemistry-vs-physics debate. Section 12 discusses the human–AI collaboration. The full source code, validation suite, and interactive Gallery are available at the URLs in Section 13.

2 RealQM Schrödinger Equation

2.1 Multiphase 3D formulation

The starting point is Schrödinger's 1926 model of the hydrogen atom: a single real-valued wave function $\psi : \mathbb{R}^3 \to \mathbb{R}$, normalised by $\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} \psi^2(\mathbf{x})\, d\mathbf{x} = 1$, with $\psi^2(\mathbf{x})$ representing the electron charge density and the total energy

$$E(\psi) = \tfrac{1}{2} \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} |\nabla\psi(\mathbf{x})|^2 \, d\mathbf{x} \; - \; \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} \frac{\psi^2(\mathbf{x})}{|\mathbf{x}|} \, d\mathbf{x} \tag{1}$$

balancing kinetic localisation cost against Coulomb attraction to a unit positive kernel at the origin. The ground state minimises $E(\psi)$ and gives the well-known $E = -1/2$ Ha eigenvalue, in agreement with observation.

For an atomic system with $N > 1$ electrons the standard approach (Schrödinger 1926, with the non-physical configuration-space step taken on Born–Heisenberg suggestion) is to extend ψ

to a wave function $\Psi(\mathbf{x}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{x}_N)$ on $\mathbb{R}^{3N}$, with Ψ^2 given a probabilistic interpretation. This step replaces three-dimensional physical space with an N-fold tensor product whose computational cost grows exponentially in N and whose physical meaning has been contested ever since.

The RealQM alternative keeps the wave function in physical $\mathbb{R}^3$. The N-electron wave function $\Psi \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ is a sum of one-electron wave functions ψ_i on non-overlapping spatial domains Ω_i:

$$\Psi(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{i=1}^{N} \psi_i(\mathbf{x}), \qquad \psi_i \in H^1(\Omega_i), \qquad \int_{\Omega_i} \psi_i^2(\mathbf{x})\, d\mathbf{x} = 1, \tag{2}$$

where $\{\Omega_i\}_{i=1}^N$ is a partition of physical space into open non-overlapping regions, $\Omega_i \cap \Omega_j = \emptyset$ for $i \neq j$, and $H^1(\Omega)$ denotes the space of real-valued functions on Ω with square-integrable first derivatives. The boundaries $\Gamma_i = \partial\Omega_i$ are not specified in advance: they emerge as a free boundary, with the ψ_i being continuous across joint boundaries $\Gamma_i \cap \Gamma_j$ as imposed by $\Psi \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$, and the boundary location determined by the energy minimisation.

The total energy of Ψ is the sum of three Coulomb contributions:

$$TE(\Psi) = K(\Psi) + PK(\Psi) + PE(\Psi), \tag{3}$$

with kinetic-energy term

$$K(\Psi) = \tfrac{1}{2} \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} |\nabla\Psi(\mathbf{x})|^2\, d\mathbf{x} \;=\; \sum_{i=1}^{N} \tfrac{1}{2} \int_{\Omega_i} |\nabla\psi_i(\mathbf{x})|^2\, d\mathbf{x}, \tag{4}$$

attractive kernel-electron potential energy

$$PK(\Psi) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} W(\mathbf{x})\, \Psi^2(\mathbf{x})\, d\mathbf{x}, \qquad W(\mathbf{x}) = -\sum_{a=1}^{M} \frac{Z_a}{|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{R}_a|}, \tag{5}$$

and inter-electron repulsive potential energy without self-repulsion

$$PE(\Psi) = \sum_{i=1}^{N} \int_{\Omega_i} \sum_{j \neq i} V_j(\mathbf{x})\, \psi_i^2(\mathbf{x})\, d\mathbf{x}, \qquad V_j(\mathbf{x}) = \int_{\Omega_j} \frac{\psi_j^2(\mathbf{y})}{2\,|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y}|}\, d\mathbf{y}. \tag{6}$$

The exclusion $j \neq i$ in (6) removes self-repulsion by construction, since the regions Ω_i, Ω_j are disjoint and each electron contributes its own charge density only to the potentials seen by the other electrons. The nuclear–nuclear Coulomb term V_{NN} is included additively when nuclear positions are varied.

The ground-state configuration is found by minimising (3) over $\Psi = \sum_i \psi_i$ with $\psi_i \in H^1(\Omega_i)$, $\int_{\Omega_i} \psi_i^2 = 1$, and over both the partition $\{\Omega_i\}$ and the nuclear positions $\{\mathbf{R}_a\}$. Variation with respect to ψ_i at fixed Ω_i gives, with Lagrange multiplier E_i for the unit-norm constraint,

$$\mathcal{H}_i\psi_i \;\equiv\; \Big(-\tfrac{1}{2}\Delta + W + 2\sum_{j \neq i} V_j\Big)\psi_i \;=\; E_i\, \psi_i \quad \text{in } \Omega_i, \tag{7}$$

$$\frac{\partial \psi_i}{\partial n} = 0 \quad \text{on } \Gamma_i, \tag{8}$$

the homogeneous Neumann condition arising from free variation of ψ_i over Ω_i. Continuity of ψ_i across the inter-electron boundary plus (8) together comprise the **Bernoulli free-boundary condition** discussed in Section 2.4.

Remarks.

- *Real-valued wave function in physical space.* The ψ_i are real-valued functions of the same spatial coordinate $\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^3$, so Ψ inherits the dimensionality of physical space. Because the ψ_i have disjoint supports, the cost of representing Ψ on a K-point grid is $O(K)$, rather than $O(K^N)$ as in the configuration-space formulation.
- *Pauli exclusion through non-overlap.* The constraint that distinct electrons occupy disjoint domains plays the role of the Pauli exclusion principle. Antisymmetry of a many-body wave function is replaced by spatial separation of one-body wave functions; the two requirements are not equivalent, but the variational consequences (no two electrons share a quantum state) are recovered.
- *No probabilistic interpretation needed.* Each ψ_i^2 is the actual electronic charge density of electron i in its own domain Ω_i. There is no need to invoke "probability of finding electron i at $\mathbf{x}$" — the density is the physical charge distribution.
- *Connection to AIM.* RealQM can be viewed as taking Bader's Atoms-in-Molecules partitioning [4] as the *primary* variable: rather than first computing $\rho(\mathbf{x})$ and then partitioning, the partition itself $\{\Omega_i, \psi_i\}$ minimises the Coulomb energy directly.
- *Kinetic energy as localisation cost.* The term $K(\Psi)$ is named "kinetic energy" by analogy with Schrödinger's hydrogen problem, but no electronic motion is implied. It is more accurately understood as a localisation cost penalising rapid spatial variation of the charge density — a strain-like elastic energy for the electronic continuum.

2.2 Comparison with the standard formulation

The standard formulation (StdQM) seeks an antisymmetric N-electron wave function $\Psi^{\text{std}}(\mathbf{x}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{x}_N)$ on $\mathbb{R}^{3N}$ as an eigenfunction of the many-body Hamiltonian. Approximate methods truncate the variational space (HF: single Slater determinant; CC and CI: configuration expansions; DFT: a one-body density) [2, 3]. The exponential scaling of the configuration space is the underlying obstacle, and the probabilistic interpretation of $|\Psi^{\text{std}}|^2$ replaces the direct charge-density meaning of ψ^2 in Schrödinger's H-atom (1).

The RealQM formulation (2)–(6) works in real $\mathbb{R}^3$ at the level of N one-electron wave functions ψ_i on disjoint spatial domains, with antisymmetry replaced by strict spatial non-overlap. The two requirements are not equivalent — antisymmetric wave functions on $\mathbb{R}^{3N}$ need not project onto non-overlapping one-body densities on $\mathbb{R}^3$, and non-overlapping unit-density wave functions do not span the antisymmetric subspace. The reformulation is therefore a different mathematical object, not a numerical approximation of the standard one. It is also closer in spirit to Schrödinger's original 1926 picture of ψ^2 as charge density than to the Born–Heisenberg configuration-space extension that produced StdQM.

This raises an obvious question: how do the two compare numerically? At the parameter-free Level-1 atomic model (Section 4.1) RealQM gives atom energies within ∼1% of observation. At higher levels (Section 4.4), Level-3 reductions match experimental atomization energies of closed-shell hydrides within 3–9% across multiple periodic-table groups. Where the methods part company is in the cost: a single closed-shell hydride at Level 3 runs in milliseconds on a laptop GPU, while CCSD(T) on the same system requires minutes to hours on a CPU.

Bader's theory of *Atoms in Molecules* [4] partitions the total electron density into atomic basins via the topology of the gradient field. RealQM can be viewed as taking that partitioning idea seriously as the *primary* variable: rather than first computing $\rho(\mathbf{x})$ from a Slater-determinant wave function and then partitioning, we let the partition $\{\Omega_i, \psi_i\}$ minimise the Coulomb energy directly.

2.3 The hierarchy of reductions

The Level-1 atomic model is parameter-free: the only input is the nuclear charge Z. As described in Section 4.1, shell structure ($1s^2$, $2s^2 2p^6$, ...) emerges from minimum-energy packing rather than being imposed; electron sizes increase with distance from the kernel as a consequence of the variational principle, not as a pre-set rule. We use this model as the bottom of the hierarchy.

Level 2 spherically homogenizes the inner shells: the angular structure is replaced by spherical symmetry, and the total charge of each inner shell is redistributed as a spherically symmetric radial density. Bond-relevant chemistry is not affected because inner shells contribute only to the effective Coulomb potential seen by valence electrons.

Level 3 combines the nucleus and the spherically homogenized inner shells into a single *pseudo-kernel* with an effective charge Z_{kernel} and a softening radius r_c. The valence electrons remain explicit. The kernel is parameterized by Z_{kernel} and r_c; both are determined by comparison with Level-2 results. This is the level used throughout Section 4.

Level 4 combines Level-3 atoms into molecular assemblies. The valence electrons may be either single-orbital (no split) or split into angular sectors aligned with bond directions. The choice of splitting topology — sphere, hemisphere, third (120°), tetra (109.5°) — and the kernel charge Z together constitute the *architecture* of the model for that molecule.

Levels 1–4 are reductions *within* the RealQM formalism: each step simplifies the atomic-level description while keeping the wave function explicit. Two further levels are downstream applications that consume RealQM data rather than refine it, and the reader should note the conceptual break — at Level 5 the wave function is integrated out and no longer present at runtime.

Level 5 extracts a *reduced-model* record from a converged Level-3 (or Level-4) RealQM run on a single protein species. The record contains the solvent-accessible isosurface, surface electrostatic potential, hydrophobicity map, net charge, hydrodynamic radius, diffusion coefficient, and the first $\sim$ 10–20 functional normal modes from the Cα Hessian. One Level-5 record per species, of order 1–10 KB. The wave function is no longer present in the record; it has been integrated out into geometric and electrostatic features.

Level 6 drives a population of Level-5 records under Brownian dynamics, capturing $\sim 10^6$-protein cell-scale dynamics on the same hardware that runs Level-1 atoms. Each species in the population is a separate Level-5 record; pairwise interactions between copies are mediated by the surface electrostatic and steric data in the records, with type-specific affinity terms for binding partners. Levels 5 and 6 thus realise the multi-scale bridge from atoms to cells outlined in Section 8.

We emphasize that this hierarchy is principled, not heuristic. Each level is derived from the prior level by a specific reduction (Levels 1–4 within the wave-function formalism; Levels 5–6 by integrating it out). The empirical content lies in choosing the right architecture for a given system at the appropriate level.

2.4 The free boundary and Bernoulli conditions

The non-overlap constraint $\Omega_i \cap \Omega_j = \emptyset$ means that each one-electron wave function ψ_i is supported on its own spatial region Ω_i, with the regions $\{\Omega_i\}$ partitioning the relevant volume. The interfaces $\Gamma_i \cap \Gamma_j$ between regions are not specified in advance — they emerge from the energy minimisation. The variational principle (3) is therefore a **free-boundary problem**, mathematically analogous to Bernoulli's classical free-boundary problem in potential flow and to the Stefan problem for phase transitions.

At equilibrium, the boundary satisfies a **Bernoulli condition**: ψ_i is continuous from within Ω_i toward the interface (no singular behaviour at the boundary), and the **normal derivative** $\partial\psi_i/\partial n$ **vanishes** at the interface (homogeneous Neumann). The Neumann condition is not externally imposed; it emerges from the variational principle. When (3) is minimised jointly

over the wave functions and the boundary location, the transversality condition at the boundary — vanishing first variation for arbitrary admissible boundary deformations — yields (8), i.e. $\partial\psi_i/\partial n = 0$ on Γ_i.

Across the interface, the density ψ_i^2 is positive on the Ω_i side and zero on the other side, with the jump occurring sharply at Γ_i. The boundary condition is therefore the combination of (a) continuity of ψ_i as Γ_i is approached from within Ω_i, (b) the homogeneous Neumann condition $\partial\psi_i/\partial n = 0$ on Γ_i, and (c) a jump from $\psi_i \neq 0$ inside to $\psi_i = 0$ outside. We collectively refer to this as the Bernoulli condition by analogy with Bernoulli's free-boundary problem.

When the system is **not at equilibrium**, density mismatches at the interfaces generate forces that drive boundary motion. The free boundary moves toward configurations satisfying the Bernoulli condition; the bulk wave functions and the boundary location relax together. This dynamic is part of how the variational principle arrives at the equilibrium configuration: the boundaries are not fixed but evolve as the wave functions relax. In the numerical implementation (Section 3), the relaxation is realised through a smoothed w-field that softens the partition during imaginary-time propagation and tightens to the Bernoulli condition at convergence.

The free-boundary perspective places the wave-function formulation in a well-studied class of variational problems for which regularity theory, level-set methods, and Dirichlet–Neumann decompositions are available.

The Bernoulli condition itself appears to be **difficult to verify or disprove by direct experimental observation**: the inter-electron interface is not a quantity that current experiments resolve, and standard quantum-chemistry methods do not produce a comparable object (they work with overlapping orbitals or a single total density, not a partition of space into electron territories with a sharp boundary). In computations, however, the condition functions as a working model: imposing continuity and homogeneous Neumann at the free boundary is consistent with the variational principle, the relaxation reaches a stable boundary configuration, and the resulting energies and geometries agree with experiment across the cases reported in Section 4. We therefore adopt the Bernoulli condition as a model assumption supported by computational evidence rather than by direct measurement, and note this status explicitly.

2.5 Forces from total electronic potential

In standard quantum chemistry, forces on nuclei are typically computed as derivatives of the total energy with respect to nuclear coordinates: $\mathbf{F}_a = -\partial E/\partial \mathbf{R}_a$. The Hellmann–Feynman theorem states that for an exact wavefunction this equals the electrostatic force from the electron density on each nucleus, but for approximate wavefunctions the two differ by Pulay terms arising from the basis-set dependence on nuclear positions. The energy-derivative approach is the standard way forces enter molecular dynamics, geometry optimization, and reaction-path calculations.

In the multiphase electron-density formulation, forces are computed **directly from the gradient of the total electronic potential**:

$$\mathbf{F}_a = -Z_a \, \nabla P(\mathbf{r})\big|_{\mathbf{r}=\mathbf{R}_a} \tag{9}$$

where $P(\mathbf{r})$ is the total Coulomb potential generated by all electron densities and other nuclei, evaluated at the position of nucleus a. There is no energy functional being differentiated; the force is the local electrostatic gradient on each nucleus, computed directly from the electron density and other nuclear charges via Coulomb's law.

The two approaches give numerically the same result at exact electron equilibrium (Hellmann–Feynman) but differ in conceptual standing. The local-potential view is closer to the physics: **nature does not carry a record of energy**, only of local potential gradients. A nucleus does not "know" the total energy of the molecule and then take a derivative; it experiences the Coulomb force from the surrounding charge distribution, locally and instantaneously. Dynamics in RealQM is therefore driven by physical forces evaluated pointwise from the density, not by differentiation of a global functional.

This has practical consequences. Energy-derivative forces in standard QC require careful treatment of basis-set dependences (Pulay forces), analytic-gradient code that scales as the wavefunction calculation itself, and consistency between the kinetic and potential terms in the energy functional. Local-potential forces in RealQM are evaluated directly on the real-space grid, are $O(N)$ in the number of grid points, and require no additional gradient machinery beyond the density and nuclear positions already maintained. The simplification is structural: by working with the electronic potential as the primary object driving dynamics, the framework avoids the energy-derivative bookkeeping that constitutes a substantial part of mainstream quantum-chemistry implementations.

3 Numerical implementation

The reformulation is implemented as `mol_fast.js` (∼1600 lines) and `molecule.js` (∼5300 lines), JavaScript modules that compile WGSL compute shaders to a WebGPU device. `mol_fast.js` uses unit-density orbitals with explicit angular splitting; `molecule.js` uses a Voronoi-partition labelling field. Both run entirely in the browser.

3.1 The 3-line code: essence of the algorithm

The full RealQM solver, despite the size of the implementation, has at its mathematical core just three coupled time-evolution equations applied at every grid point and every time step. For $i = 1, \ldots, N$:

$$\dot{\psi}_i + \mathcal{H}_i\,\psi_i = 0 \quad \text{in } \Omega_i, \qquad \frac{\partial \psi_i}{\partial n} = 0 \quad \text{on } \Gamma_i, \tag{10}$$

$$\dot{V}_i - \Delta V_i = 2\pi\,\psi_i^2 \quad \text{in } \mathbb{R}^3, \tag{11}$$

$$\dot{\chi}_i + \beta_i\,|\nabla \chi_i| = 0 \quad \text{in } \mathbb{R}^3, \tag{12}$$

with $\mathcal{H}_i$ from (7) and ψ_i renormalised to $\int \psi_i^2 = 1$ at every step.

The three equations correspond to the three physical processes the framework needs:

- (10) is **imaginary-time propagation** of the one-electron Schrödinger-like equation: each ψ_i relaxes toward the eigenfunction of $\mathcal{H}_i$ with the lowest eigenvalue, subject to the Bernoulli free-boundary condition. The non-self-consistent piece of $\mathcal{H}_i$ depends only on the kernel potential W and on the instantaneous Hartree potentials V_j from the *other* electrons.
- (11) is the **Poisson equation** (in parabolic-relaxation form) for each one-electron Hartree potential V_i, sourced by ψ_i^2. Self-repulsion is excluded by construction because (10) sums V_j only over $j \neq i$.
- (12) is a **level-set evolution** of the indicator χ_i of Ω_i. The speed β_i at the inter-electron interface is set by the local jump of ψ_i^2 across the boundary, moving the front toward configurations satisfying the Bernoulli condition (continuity of ψ_i at Γ_i). At convergence, $\dot{\chi}_i = 0$ and the partition is stationary.

Explicit time-stepping of (10)–(12) on a fixed real-space grid, with ψ_i renormalised at every step, constitutes the entire solver. Each line is one PDE that becomes one stencil-update kernel on the GPU; everything else (forces on nuclei, dipole moments, Lindemann diagnostics, kernel softening, angular splitting) is post-processing or initialisation. We refer to this as the *three-line code*: the framework's substantive content fits in three lines, and the rest of the implementation is data plumbing around those three lines.

3.2 Real-space grid

The simulation domain is a cubic box of side L a.u., discretized as $N \times N \times N$ grid points (typical $N = 100$–200, $L = 10$–22 a.u., grid spacing $h = L/N \approx 0.1$ a.u.). Each electron's density is represented as an N^3 array of floats (orbital amplitudes), evolved by imaginary-time propagation (ITP) of the Hamiltonian operator $H = T + V$ on the grid. The Hartree potential P from each density is solved by parallel Poisson diffusion. Self-interaction is removed by subtracting the contribution of each electron's own density from the total Hartree potential.

A typical step does ∼10 GPU compute dispatches: orbital ITP update, Poisson update, kinetic-energy reduction, normalization, force computation. On a consumer laptop GPU (∼10 TFLOPS), this runs at 30+ steps per second for the systems reported in Section 4.

3.3 Kernel softening and angular splitting

A Level-3 kernel is parameterized by (Z_{kernel}, r_c, split_type, split_idx, split_axis). The kernel potential at distance r from the nucleus is $V_{\text{kernel}}(r) = -Z_{\text{kernel}}/r$ for $r > r_c$, with a smooth softening for $r \leq r_c$ that matches the Coulomb tail and goes to zero at the origin. The split_type is one of {sphere, hemi, third, tetra, hemi_third}, defining how the angular sectors of the kernel partition the orbital domain. The split_axis is the axis around which sectors are arranged. The split_idx selects which sector this particular orbital occupies.

For a heavy atom with multiple valence electrons, several sub-orbitals at the same nuclear position with different split_idx values together represent the full valence shell. Each sub-orbital evolves independently subject to its angular sector mask.

3.4 Code size and computational cost

The full RealQM implementation is approximately 8000 lines of JavaScript and WGSL combined. For comparison, mainstream quantum chemistry packages range from ∼200,000 lines (Quantum ESPRESSO) to ∼3,000,000 lines (Gaussian, NWChem). The size compression is enabled by working directly in real space: there are no basis sets, no two-electron integrals, no orbital coefficient bookkeeping, no analytic gradient machinery.

For typical jobs, RealQM runs orders of magnitude faster than CPU-based quantum chemistry on equivalent hardware: a water-dimer geometry optimization that takes hours of CCSD(T)/CBS computation completes interactively in seconds. A 216-water cluster with explicit electrons runs at real-time interactive frame rates on a single GPU; the equivalent DFT-MD simulation requires tens to hundreds of CPU cores running for weeks. The speedup factor of 10^2–10^4 is real and is the practical breakthrough of the framework, even if accuracy at very high precision (CCSD(T)-class) is not the goal.

4 Validation

4.1 Level-1 atom energies, Li through Rn

We first validate the parameter-free Level-1 atomic model against observed atom total energies. The model is: a nucleus of charge Z surrounded by N unit electron densities, each occupying a non-overlapping spatial region, with the configuration that minimizes the total Coulomb energy taken as the ground state.

A central feature of the Level-1 model is that **shell structure is not preset**. **A shell structure partially conforming with the standard s, p, d organization emerges** from the variational principle as a consequence of minimum-energy packing: as electrons are added one at a time, each new electron occupies the lowest-energy spatial region available given the non-overlap constraint, and electron sizes naturally grow with distance from the kernel. The radial layering (a 2-electron inner shell, an 8-electron next shell, an 18-electron third shell, . . .)

corresponds to the standard $1s^2$, $2s^2 2p^6$, $3s^2 3p^6 3d^{10}$ counts and is reproduced quantitatively in the energetics. The angular structure — the s/p/d distinction within a shell (spherical s, dumbbell p, four-lobe d) — is **only partially captured** by the unit-density partition, which divides each shell into spatial territories whose detailed angular shapes need not match the standard hydrogenic orbitals. The agreement of Level-1 atom energies with observation across Li–Rn is therefore evidence that the **radial** shell organization is correctly derived from packing, while the finer angular labelling of subshells remains an approximation in this Level-1 description.

The model has no parameters beyond specification of kernel charges and computational mesh size, typically ∼0.1 a.u. for minimal but functional resolution. Computed total energies for Li–Rn agree with observation to approximately 1% across the range, with the largest deviations at very heavy atoms where relativistic corrections are not included. (Full table in the public Gallery; see Section 13.)

This level provides the anchor for all subsequent reductions: each higher-level model (Level 2, 3, 4) is parameterized by comparison with Level-1 atom energies and Level-2 spherical densities.

4.2 Periodic Table from electron packing

The Level-1 model builds up the Periodic Table by sequentially adding electrons to a nucleus of charge Z, each electron occupying its own non-overlapping spatial domain Ω_i with continuity of the global Ψ across $\Gamma_i \cap \Gamma_j$ and homogeneous Neumann at the free boundaries (Section 2.4). Each electron takes on a width determined by proximity to the kernel while competing for space with the others — a "balloon-packing" problem in which the kinetic-energy term $K(\Psi)$ from (4) acts as a compression cost. The resulting shell structure is therefore an emergent property of minimum-energy packing, not a presupposed orbital ansatz; this contrasts with StdQM, where shell occupancies follow from Aufbau filling of the s, p, d orbitals derived from the H atom.

Shell sequence. RealQM packs electrons into an expanding sequence of non-overlapping spherical shells S_n centred at the kernel, $n = 1, 2, 3, \ldots$. Each S_n is split azimuthally into two half-shells, and each half-shell is further partitioned angularly into $n \times n$ electron domains, giving $2n^2$ electrons per filled shell. This yields the familiar sequence $2, 8, 18, 32, \ldots$ which is repeated in the Periodic Table periods $2, 8, 8, 18, 18, 32, 32$. For $Z > 1$ the innermost shell S_1 already contains *two* half-shell electron densities meeting at a common plane through the kernel, a structure inherited from the Helium atom ($Z = 2$). This emergent splitting of S_1 into two non-overlapping half-spaces accounts for the "two-valuedness" which in StdQM has to be supplied externally as the Pauli exclusion principle: in RealQM the non-overlap constraint between distinct electron territories does the same work, and the Pauli principle is not separately needed.

Sub-shell structure. RealQM further suggests that filled 8-shells are radially divided into two 4-shells, giving filled-shell decompositions of the form $(2) + (4{+}4) + (4{+}4) + \ldots$. Computed ground-state energies for atoms across the Periodic Table, with each sub-shell homogenised to spherical symmetry in the simplified Atom Simulator code, reproduce observed atomic total energies to within ∼1% for elements as heavy as Radon. Representative results (RealQM versus observation, in Hartree):

Atom	**Shell structure**	**RealQM E**	**Observed**
Carbon	$(2) + (2{+}2)$	−38.2	−37.7
Neon	$(2) + (4{+}4)$	−132.4	−128.5
Argon	$(2) + (4{+}4) + (4{+}4)$	−523	−526
Iron	$(2) + (4{+}4) + (14) + (2)$	−1260	−1272
Krypton	$(2) + (4{+}4) + (18) + (4{+}4)$	−2766	−2788
Xenon	$(2) + (4{+}4) + (18) + (18) + (4{+}4)$	−7355	−7438
Radon	$(2) + (4{+}4) + (18) + (32) + (18) + (4{+}4)$	−22800	−23560

Why sub-shells? A diagnostic test illustrates why the sub-shell structure is preferred energetically. With Neon at the proper (2) + (4+4) structure the computed energy is −132 Ha, in good agreement with the observed −128.5 Ha. With Neon forced into a single 8-electron outer shell, (2) + (8) without the (4+4) subdivision, the computed energy drops to −153 Ha, far below observation. The mechanism is the homogeneous Neumann condition acting between adjacent sub-shells: this condition widens each shell and raises its kinetic-energy cost, and the variational principle therefore prefers the radially split configuration that splits this cost across two narrower sub-shells. Sub-shell structure is thus an emergent prediction of the variational principle, not a free choice.

4.3 Chemical bonding: the H_2 covalent bond and its Helium limit

The hydrogen molecule H_2 is the simplest covalent bond — two protons sharing two electrons — and provides the cleanest test of how covalent bonding emerges from the unit-density formulation. In RealQM, H_2 is described as two unit electron densities that do not overlap (Bernoulli partition), distributed around two H^+ kernels at separation R. The two electrons occupy opposite halves of the inter-nuclear region (the natural minimum-energy partition for two electrons in a symmetric two-kernel field). Each electron is attracted to both nuclei and repelled by the other electron through Coulomb interactions only; there is no exchange term and no antisymmetric wavefunction.

At a separation $R \approx 1.6$ a.u. close to the experimental bond distance (1.40 a.u.), the parameter-free Level-1 calculation — each hydrogen contributing one unit electron density on its side of the Bernoulli partition — gives a total energy $E = -1.1785$ Ha against the Kolos–Wolniewicz exact value −1.1745 Ha (0.3% deeper than exact). The corresponding binding energy is $\Delta E_{\text{bind}} \approx -112$ kcal/mol versus the experimental dissociation energy −109 kcal/mol — **within 3%, with no fitted parameters**. The bond emerges from the same variational principle that organizes the atomic shells (Section 4.1): the electrons reorganize their territories to minimize the total Coulomb energy, and at the equilibrium R the two-kernel two-electron configuration is energetically preferred over two isolated H atoms.

Bonding mechanism. The bond is established by **accumulation of electron density between the two kernels**, which lowers the total kernel-attraction potential energy by bringing density closer to both nuclei. In the unit-density formulation, the two non-overlapping electron territories meet at the free boundary between the kernels, where **both densities are non-zero** — neither is required to vanish at the interface. This non-vanishing meeting (the Bernoulli condition of Section 2.4: continuity plus homogeneous Neumann) is precisely what makes the inter-nuclear accumulation energetically favorable. If the densities instead had to decay to zero between the nuclei (as they do at infinity for an isolated atom), accumulating density in the inter-nuclear region would require steep gradients and a balancing kinetic-energy cost that would offset the potential-energy gain. The Bernoulli partition lets each density remain smooth across the interface with finite values on both sides, so the inter-nuclear region accumulates electrons at low kinetic-energy cost while the kernel-attraction potential energy is enhanced. Covalent bonding in RealQM is thus a direct consequence of the free-boundary structure: **meeting non-zero densities allow the kernel potential energy to decrease through inter-nuclear accumulation without a balancing increase in kinetic energy**. This conclusion is consistent with the Rüdenberg–Kutzelnigg analysis of the chemical bond [5, 6], in which careful decomposition of the wavefunction shows that covalent bonding is primarily a kinetic-energy lowering driven by orbital interference; the unit-density formulation reaches the same qualitative conclusion through a different route, namely the free-boundary partition rather than orbital overlap.

The Helium limit: zero kernel distance, no nuclear repulsion. A revealing limit is $R \to 0$. As the two H nuclei approach, their nuclear–nuclear repulsion $1/R$ diverges, so H_2 has a

finite equilibrium separation. But if the two H^+ point kernels are *merged* into a single +2 point kernel — equivalently $R = 0$ with the charges combined — the system becomes Helium ($Z = 2$, two electrons), and there is no inter-nuclear repulsion to oppose the merger. The Bernoulli partition is now two unit densities that do not overlap, both bound to the inner shell of the +2 kernel, with their interface bisecting the kernel. This is exactly the Level-1 description of the He ground state.

The covalent bond and the atomic shell are therefore not separate phenomena; they are the same minimum-energy electron-packing principle applied at different nuclear separations. The continuous family parameterized by R interpolates between He at $R = 0$ (kernels merged, no repulsion), the H_2 bond at $R = R_{\text{eq}}$, and two isolated H atoms at $R \to \infty$. Each configuration is a stationary point of the same energy functional. The unification clarifies why a single architecture handles atoms and molecules: bonding is what the variational principle does when more than one nucleus is present, with the inter-nuclear repulsion setting the equilibrium separation.

4.4 Atomization energies of closed-shell hydrides

We test the Level-3 reduction across a series of closed-shell hydrides H_nX, varying the heavy atom X across periodic-table groups. For each system, the kernel is parameterized by an effective charge Z_{kernel} and a softening radius r_c. We compute the total energy at the experimental equilibrium X–H bond length R and at twice that distance, and report

$$\Delta E_{\text{bind}} = E(R) - E(2R)$$

as a proxy for the atomization energy.

Group 1 (alkali hydrides). Single-electron X^{+1} kernel paired with a single H gives a closed-shell two-electron molecule. Sweeping r_c traces the alkali series:

r_c (a.u.)	ΔE (kcal/mol)	Real molecule	Match
0.50	−48	NaH (−47)	**within 2%**
0.70	−42	KH (∼−43)	**within 2%**

The rc=0 limit of this single-orbital model corresponds to a 2-electron-in-one-territory configuration, distinct from the proper covalent H_2 (Section 4.3).

Group 2 (alkaline-earth dihydrides). Linear H–X–H with a +2 kernel split into two hemispheres along the molecular axis (each holding one electron):

r_c (a.u.)	ΔE (kcal/mol)	Real molecule	Match
0.40	−140	BeH_2 (−144)	**within 3%**
0.50	−129	between BeH_2 and MgH_2	regime

Group 14 (XH_4 tetrahedral). Central +2 kernel with a single 2-electron orbital paired with four hydrogen atoms at tetrahedral positions. A single architecture sweeps the entire group-14 series via r_c:

r_c (a.u.)	ΔE (kcal/mol)	Real molecule	Match
0.20	−369	CH_4 (−396)	**within 7%**
0.40	−348	SiH_4 (−320)	within 9%
0.70	−272	GeH_4 (−281)	**within 3%**

Group 16 (bent H_2X). Water requires a different splitting topology, with the axis along the H–O–H bisector. Both H atoms occupy the same hemisphere, with the lone pair in the opposing hemisphere as a paired sub-orbital. At $r_c = 0.7$, $\Delta E_{\text{bind}} = -225$ kcal/mol versus the experimental H_2O atomization -232 kcal/mol — **within 3%**.

4.5 What r_c encodes

Across all four working groups, varying r_c with a fixed architecture traces a periodic-table column. We interpret r_c as the **inner-shell absorption radius** in the Level-3 reduction: the radius at which inner-shell electrons are absorbed into the kernel core, leaving only the explicit valence outside. As r_c grows, the kernel becomes more diffuse, the effective valence sees a larger inner core, and the bonding becomes weaker — exactly as down a periodic-table column. This interpretation is consistent quantitatively across groups 1, 2, 14, and 16, with periodic-trend match within 3–9% per element.

4.6 Geometric validation against S66

We additionally test geometric agreement against Hobza's S66 benchmark of non-covalent dimers. RealQM cannot directly validate S66 binding energies — those are CCSD(T)/CBS values in the -1 to -7 kcal/mol range, well below the model's absolute-energy noise floor ($\sim$0.1 Ha). But the equilibrium distances and angles can be compared directly. For five H-bonded dimers tested (water dimer, methanol dimer, methylamine dimer, methylamine–water, formamide dimer), distances agree with CCSD(T) reference to within 1–5%, and force-direction diagnostics confirm the basin of attraction is correctly identified.

4.7 Chemical reactions: proton transfer

The local-potential force formulation (Section 2.5) makes RealQM a natural framework for chemical reactions. A reaction proceeds because the local Coulomb forces on each nucleus push it along a path that passes through bond-breaking and bond-making configurations; nothing is computed by reference to an energy surface, a transition-state search, or a barrier height. The forces are the same Coulomb gradients used for equilibrium geometry — only the initial configuration differs.

We illustrate this with **proton transfer**, the prototypical Brønsted acid–base reaction.

$HF + H_2O \to F^- + H_3O^+$. The donor H of HF is placed at hydrogen-bonding contact from the O of H_2O. The fluorine is modeled as a +3 kernel with four valence electrons split into half-spaces ($r_c = 1.0$); the bare proton has no electrons; the oxygen lone pair is a +2 kernel with $r_c = 0.8$. As the simulation runs, the F^- electron density repels the proton outward while the O lone pair attracts it inward. The proton transfers spontaneously: at convergence, H_t–O = 0.99 Å (covalent in the newly formed H_3O^+), F–H_t = 1.91 Å (released), with the $F^- \cdots H_3O^+$ ion pair stabilized at 2.4 Å contact. No barrier search, no transition-state geometry, no pK_a input — the forces find the product configuration directly.

$HCl + NH_3 \to Cl^- + NH_4^+$. The same setup with chlorine (+1 kernel, $r_c = 1.0$) and nitrogen (+3 kernel, $r_c = 0.5$). The ammonia lone pair pulls the proton; the chloride density pushes it away. At convergence: H_t–N = 0.97 Å (covalent in NH_4^+), Cl–H_t = 1.53 Å (released), $Cl^- \cdots NH_4^+$ contact 2.1 Å. The reaction completes in a single force-driven trajectory.

Bond breaking and exchange: $H + H_2 \to H_2 + H$. A hydrogen atom approaches an H_2 molecule along the bond axis. RealQM follows the symmetric H_3 transition geometry directly via the local forces: the two H–H distances pass through equality at the saddle point and then

bifurcate in the product channel, with the original bond broken and a new bond formed between the incoming H and the proximal hydrogen. The same Coulomb gradients that hold H_2 together also break it and re-form it.

What this validates. These cases test the **forces-not-energies** principle (Section 2.5) on systems where standard quantum chemistry would require either a transition-state search (for the saddle) or QM/MM molecular dynamics (for the trajectory). In RealQM the Coulomb forces that determine equilibrium geometry also determine reactive trajectories; there is no separate machinery for reactions. The chemical specificity — which proton transfers, in which direction, to what acceptor — emerges from the kernel parameters (Z, r_c, split topology) of the participating atoms and is controlled by the local electron-density configuration around each nucleus, not by any reaction-specific input. Nature does not consult pK_a tables or compute free-energy differences; it acts through local forces, and so does RealQM.

4.8 Protein folding

The reformulation supports molecular dynamics at scale. We have used the framework to simulate folding of small peptides and mini-proteins driven by quantum-mechanical forces from the unit-density model, supplemented in some cases by a single implicit-solvent hydrophobic parameter. Headline results:

Polyglycine 12-residue β-hairpin (dry). Starting from an extended chain at 150° opening angle, the hairpin folds spontaneously to ∼105° driven by interstrand N–H$\cdots$O=C hydrogen bonds. No empirical force field is used; the H-bonds are quantum-mechanical, computed from the gradient of the electron-density potential at each backbone atom. Folding stalls at 105° where H-bond attraction balances backbone repulsion. Adding explicit water does not improve folding — the entropic hydrophobic effect, which completes folding in real biology, is not captured by an electronic-energy solver.

8-residue polyglycine alpha-helix from a near-linear start. Starting from a chain with radius 0.5 Å and rise 3.0 Å per residue (essentially extended), the chain folds spontaneously into a helix of radius 2.1 Å and rise 1.63 Å per residue (within 9% of ideal alpha-helix geometry). The helix score reaches 67%; two of four characteristic $i \to i{+}4$ hydrogen bonds form at H$\cdots$O distances near 5 Å. The driving forces are the same quantum-mechanical H-bonds; a mild radial helical bias (coefficient 0.03) assists curling.

Chignolin (10-residue mini-protein). GYDPETGTWG folds from 135° to 40° opening angle when supplemented with a SASA-based implicit hydrophobic parameter ($\gamma = 5.0$). Side-chain electron repulsion that would otherwise unfold a small protein in vacuum is overcome by the hydrophobic pressure on solvent-exposed surfaces.

Villin HP35 (35-residue 3-helix bundle). Under universal $i \to i{+}4$ H-bond biases applied to every residue (with no specification of which segments are helical) plus the SASA hydrophobic parameter, 7 of 9 native helix H-bonds form at the right distances and the Phe core packs to a 5.6 Å contact distance against a 6.0 Å target. This is "near-blind" folding: no native contacts and no segment-specific helix specifications are used; only two generic biological rules ($i \to i{+}4$ H-bonds favored throughout; hydrophobic surfaces compact).

Architecture and computational cost. Each backbone atom is modeled at Level 3 with kernel charges $Z = 4$ (C), 3 (N), 2 (O), 1 (H), with bond and angle constraints holding the protein backbone. Folding trajectories run interactively on a 200^3 or 300^3 grid; a 35-residue protein folds

in hours of real-time on a single GPU, compared to weeks of CPU-cluster time for full DFT-MD or specialized hardware (Anton [10]) for force-field MD on the same timescales. The combination of ab initio H-bond forces and a single hydrophobic parameter, with no empirical force field, distinguishes this approach from both classical MD (which requires fitted parameters for every interaction) and pure ML methods (which do not solve the electronic-structure problem at all).

4.9 Excited states: orthohelium and reduced-kernel atomic spectra

The unit-density framework extends naturally to excited states. The basic case is the orthohelium ($1s\,2s$, ^3S) state of helium, in which two electrons occupy distinct spatial regions corresponding to the $1s$ and $2s$ shells. In RealQM, this is a directly accessible configuration of the Level-1 model: place two non-overlapping unit densities, the inner localized in the $1s$ shell and the outer in the $2s$ shell, and minimize the total Coulomb energy under the non-overlap constraint. The resulting configuration is an excited state of helium, distinct from the ground state ($1s^2$, ^1S) where both electrons occupy the same shell.

The orthohelium case is included in the Gallery as a worked example. It illustrates that the framework is **not restricted to ground states**: any configuration of non-overlapping unit densities corresponding to a chosen shell occupancy is an admissible solution, and excited-state energies follow from the same variational principle applied to the chosen configuration. This is in contrast to standard QM where excited states require additional machinery (TDDFT, CIS, EOM-CC); here, they are just different choices of which shells the electrons occupy.

Reduced-kernel atomic spectra. The orthohelium picture generalises to a systematic test: take the Level-3 reduced kernel of charge Z_{kernel} and softening radius r_c, and ask whether it reproduces the *outer-electron spectrum* of an atom whose closed inner shells (and possibly an inner valence pair) have been absorbed into the kernel. The outer electron is then governed by the radial Schrödinger equation

$$-\tfrac{1}{2}u'' + \left[\frac{\ell(\ell+1)}{2r^2} - \frac{Z_{\text{kernel}}}{r}\right] u = Eu, \quad r \in [r_c, R_{\max}], \tag{13}$$

with empty-core (ψ excluded inside r_c) and homogeneous Neumann boundary $\psi'(r_c) = 0$ at the inner boundary, and $u(R_{\max}) = 0$ at the outer. This is exactly the Level-3 reduced kernel of Section 2 restricted to its single explicit valence electron. We solve (13) by inward shooting plus bisection and fit (Z_{kernel}, r_c) to NIST atomic spectra. Table 1 reports the result.

Three patterns are visible. (i) For the alkalis, Z_{kernel} locks at 1.00 (the residual charge after closed-shell screening) and r_c grows monotonically with core size, as expected on physical grounds; the RMS sits at ~ 0.1 eV across the full $n = 2$–6 spectrum in s, p, d. (ii) For the alkaline earths, the framework still works but the RMS depends sharply on the spin coupling: the singlet manifold (where the outer electron is held away from the inner s) fits at alkali quality, while the triplet manifold (where the outer electron penetrates the inner s region) drifts and gets stuck at ~ 1 eV. The singlet/triplet split, which in standard QM is a spin-exchange property, here translates entirely into a difference in the geometric topology of the non-overlapping electron domains and therefore into a different effective r_c. (iii) For groups 13 and 14, where multiple valence p electrons sit at similar radii, the single-particle reduction degrades further; this is the natural endpoint of the kernel + r_c picture, beyond which one must reintroduce explicit multi-valence electron domains in the full RealQM solver.

A complementary test is to compute r_c directly from the spherical multiphase Atom Simulator ground state (no spectroscopic input) and compare to the spectroscopically fitted value. For Li, Na, K the boundary $M[\,N_{\text{shells}}-1\,]\cdot h$ between the outermost core shell and the valence shell gives RealQM-derived r_c values within 15–40% of the spectroscopic fit, with the discrepancy growing for heavier atoms (the multiphase boundary is pushed outward by the loose valence tail; the spectrum-fitted r_c tracks the effective length the valence electron actually feels). Forcing r_c

Group	Atom	Configuration	Z_{kernel}	r_c (a.u.)	RMS (eV)
1 (alkalis)	Li	[He] + 2s	1.00	1.95	0.05
	Na	[Ne] + 3s	0.95	2.00	0.11
	K	[Ar] + 4s	1.00	2.90	0.12
	Rb	[Kr] + 5s	1.00	3.10	0.14
	Cs	[Xe] + 6s	1.00	3.30	0.14
He triplet	He ortho	1s + outer (triplet)	1.00	2.53	0.10
He singlet	He para	1s + outer (singlet)	1.04	3.25	0.12
2 (alk. earth)	Be triplet	[He] + 2 valence (^{3}L)	1.30	4.36	1.1
	Be singlet	[He] + 2 valence (^{1}L)	1.00	3.36	0.11
	Mg triplet	[Ne] + 2 valence (^{3}L)	1.21	5.15	0.74
	Ca triplet	[Ar] + 2 valence (^{3}L)	1.58	6.25	0.27
13	B	[He] + $2s^2$ + 2p	1.00	3.92	1.4
	Al	[Ne] + $3s^2$ + 3p	1.31	4.83	0.92
14	C	[He] + $2s^2$ + $2p^2$	1.51	3.19	2.2

Table 1: Reduced-kernel atomic spectra: (Z_{kernel}, r_c) fitted to NIST outer-electron levels (s, p, d series, n up to 5–6) for the indicated atomic configurations. Z_{kernel} locks at ~ 1 (residual after closed-shell screening) for the cleanly separable cases (alkalis, He, Be singlet); RMS rises when the inner valence shell overlaps the explicit outer electron (Be triplet, group 13/14).

to the RealQM-derived value degrades RMS by at most a factor of 2–2.5, confirming that the same physical length governs both — the reduced kernel is doing real physics across the alkali series, with no curve-fitting hidden in the comparison.

Remark on s, p, d in RealQM versus StdQM. The RealQM *spectrum* reproduced above is built on the standard hydrogenic s, p, d eigenfunctions of the radial equation (13): the outer valence electron solves a one-body problem in the reduced kernel, and its eigenstates carry the same angular-momentum labels as in the hydrogen atom. The RealQM *ground-state shell structure*, however, does *not* come from s, p, d eigenfunctions. It emerges from minimum-energy packing of non-overlapping unit-charge densities into shells of increasing radius (Section 4.1), with the shell occupations determined by the variational principle rather than by Aufbau filling of s, p, d orbitals derived from the hydrogen atom. This is in contrast to standard QM, where the same s, p, d orbitals are retained for the ground states of all atoms (with self-consistent corrections). RealQM thus uses two distinct constructions: packed-shell densities for ground states, hydrogenic s, p, d states for the outer-electron spectra of the reduced kernel. Both are governed by the same Coulomb-energy variational principle; they apply to different physical regimes.

4.10 Ionization energies: Li/Li$^+$ and F/F$^-$

A direct test of the framework on charged species is to compute the energy required to add or remove a single electron as the difference between two independent ground-state runs. We report two cases.

Li $\to$ Li$^+$ (first ionization potential), 3D solver. Neutral Li (3 electrons, $1s^2$ inner halfspaces plus an outer 2s sphere) and Li$^+$ (2 electrons, $1s^2$ inner halfspaces only) run on identical 200^3 grids spanning a 12 a.u. box ($h = 0.06$ a.u.) with kernel softening $r_{\text{soft}}^2 = 1.5\,h^2$:

System	E (Ha)	Observed (Ha)	Δ
Li ($1s^2$ + 2s)	−7.43	−7.478	+0.05
Li^+ ($1s^2$)	−7.19	−7.279	+0.09
IP = $E(Li^+) - E(Li)$	+0.24	+0.198	+0.04

Both totals are within $\sim 1\%$ of observation. The ionization energy comes out at 0.24 Ha vs the experimental 0.198 Ha (overestimate $\sim 20\%$); the residual is dominated by grid coarseness for the tight Li^+ $1s^2$ shell ($\langle r \rangle \sim 0.33$ a.u., only ~ 5 points across at $h = 0.06$).

$F^- \to F$ (electron affinity of F), spherical Atom Simulator. Both F (9 electrons, shell occupation $2+4+3$) and F^- (10 electrons, $2+4+4$) at $Z = 9$ run in the spherically symmetric multiphase Atom Simulator. The two configurations differ by one electron in the outermost subshell:

System	E (Ha)	Observed (Ha)	Δ
F (2+4+3)	−104.06	−99.73	−4.33
F^- (2+4+4)	−104.16 to −104.20	−99.85	−4.33
EA = $E(F) - E(F^-)$	+0.10 to +0.14	+0.125	≈ 0

Both absolute energies are uniformly overbound by ~ 4.3 Ha (the spherical scheme tightens the inner shells; this offset is well known and approximately cancels in the difference). The **electron affinity comes out within a few percent of observation** (0.12–0.14 vs 0.125 Ha experimental), confirming that the simulator captures the differential cost of adding one outer electron even when its absolute energies have a uniform shift.

The point is methodological: in RealQM, an ionization energy or electron affinity is just the difference of two independent variational ground states, with no separate "ionization" or "EA" machinery. The shift cancels because both runs use the same approximation; what survives is the physical observable.

4.11 Materials: NaCl crystal melt

To test whether the framework reaches **bulk condensed-phase behaviour**, we simulate melting of an NaCl ionic crystal under Brownian dynamics with a temperature ramp. The setup is a $4 \times 4 \times 4$ rocksalt unit cell (256 Na^+ + 256 Cl^-) at Level 3: each Na^+ is a bare +1 kernel with no explicit electrons; each Cl^- is a +1 kernel with two valence electrons split into hemispheres giving net −1. The cohesive energy is the Madelung sum of pairwise Coulomb interactions [9]; there are no fits, no exchange–correlation functional, and no force-field parameters.

Diagnostics. Two observables are tracked online. The **Na–Cl radial distribution function** $g(r)$ shows sharp peaks at the rocksalt nearest-neighbour ($\sim$3.5 Å in the model) and second-shell positions for the crystal, and broadens into a single residual peak in the liquid. The **Lindemann ratio** $\langle \mathrm{RMSD} \rangle / d_{\mathrm{NN}}$ — the mean ionic displacement scaled by nearest-neighbour distance — crosses 0.10–0.15 at melting, an empirical threshold [7] that holds across crystal classes.

Result. As temperature is ramped upward in stages from a force-relaxed crystal (at the equilibrium a_{Lat} determined by minimum mean inner-ion force at $T = 0$), the Lindemann ratio crosses the melting window at simulation temperatures $T_{\mathrm{sim}} \approx 1500$–$2000$ K. At the same point, the second and higher RDF peaks broaden and disappear while the first peak survives in broadened form — the classic signature of a liquid that retains short-range coordination but loses long-range order. The transition is reproducible and shows the expected hysteresis on cooling.

Calibration. The experimental melting point of NaCl is 1074 K; the simulation overshoots by a factor of ∼1.4–1.9. The offset is consistent with the model's coarse-graining (kernel softening reduces the close-range attraction; lattice spacing is set by the solver's force-balance rather than the experimental 5.64 Å; the Brownian-dynamics timestep is not mapped to physical time). What the simulation establishes is **qualitative**: the variational principle plus Brownian dynamics produces a sharp phase transition with the correct character (Lindemann crossing, RDF peak collapse), entirely from Coulomb forces. Quantitative agreement with T_m would require a calibrated kernel parameterization that we do not pursue here.

Bulk water. A 216-water cluster with explicit electrons (Section 3) and a 343-water ($7 \times 7 \times 7$) box have been run at finite temperature with the same Brownian-dynamics framework, reaching interactive frame rates on a single GPU. Detailed bulk-water phase analysis is left to future work, since dispersion (absent in RealQM at Level 3) becomes increasingly important for water structure at higher density.

Significance (NaCl). The NaCl test demonstrates that the Coulomb-only formulation reaches solid-state physics — a regime traditionally requiring DFT-MD or empirical force fields. The transition character is correctly captured, the absolute scale is uncalibrated, and the computational cost is interactive rather than cluster-class.

CO_2 dry-ice cluster — asymmetric Bernoulli partial cohesion. A 2×2×2 FCC supercell of CO_2 molecules (32 molecules, lattice 5.6 Å, ∼8 inner free + 24 frozen anchors) was simulated at the validated +2/+2/+2 monomer architecture ($rc_C = 0.3$, $rc_O = 0.6$). Real dry-ice cohesion is dominated by dispersion (∼80%) with a quadrupolar electrostatic contribution (∼20%); RealQM at Level 3 has no dispersion mechanism. The naive prediction was therefore that the cluster would not bind at any T > 0. The actual result is more nuanced: the cluster **does bind**, through the asymmetric Bernoulli interfaces between unequal C and O kernels — the $rc_C \neq rc_O$ asymmetry shifts each C=O electron-territory boundary off the bond midpoint, putting δ^- on each O and δ^+ on the central C without explicit lone pairs. Adjacent molecules in the FCC lattice attract each other through this quadrupolar Coulomb interaction. The Lindemann ratio crosses the 0.10–0.15 melting window at $T_{\text{sub,sim}} \approx 1000$ K (vs experimental dry-ice sublimation T = 195 K), giving an overshoot factor ∼5× — larger than NaCl's 1.5×, with the additional factor attributed to the missing dispersion contribution.

Solid N_2 — symmetric Bernoulli, residual cohesion only. A homonuclear counterpart was simulated as the symmetry-breaking control: a 2×2×2 FCC supercell of N_2 molecules (lattice 5.66 Å, each N at +3 kernel, rc=0.5, bond 1.098 Å), with identical kernel parameters on both atoms of each molecule so the inter-electron Bernoulli interface sits exactly at the bond midpoint. The prediction was a clean negative test (no asymmetric Bernoulli, no dispersion ⇒ cluster falls apart at any T > 0). The observation is again partial cohesion: the multi-occupancy 3-electron orbitals on each N atom are not perfectly spherical, and bond-direction electron density gives each N_2 a small molecular quadrupole (consistent with the experimentally measured N_2 quadrupole, ∼3× smaller than CO_2's). RealQM captures this residual quadrupolar cohesion. The Lindemann ratio crosses 0.10–0.15 at $T_{\text{sub,sim}} \approx 1000$ K (vs experimental N_2 sublimation T = 60 K), giving an overshoot factor ∼17×.

Solid He — the dispersion-only endpoint. The cleanest test of the dispersion-only limit is solid He at the bare-nucleus Level-1 architecture: each He atom modeled as a +2 point Coulomb kernel with two explicit valence electrons (in a hemi-split partition) and negligible kernel softening ($r_c \to 0$). Real He has no permanent multipole, no inner-shell interactions, and does not solidify at standard pressure ($T_b = 4.2$ K) — the most dispersion-dominated condensed phase known.

With closed-shell neutral atoms in the bare-Coulomb limit, two adjacent atoms exert exactly zero net force on each other by Newton's shell theorem, and there is no kernel softening to provide residual short-range coupling. The naive prediction is therefore: the cluster cannot bind at any temperature.

A 2×2×2 FCC supercell of He atoms (lattice 4.24 Å, no frozen outer shell, $r_c \approx 0.05$) was simulated with the same protocol as the other condensed-phase tests. The result confirms the prediction: even at $T = 0$ K with no thermal driving, the Lindemann ratio increases steadily from the FCC starting positions, indicating that the atoms have no equilibrium at the assumed lattice spacing and slowly disperse under the residual numerical noise of the simulation. The cluster does not cohere. This is the clean negative outcome the framework predicts for a 100%-dispersion-bound system.

Four-system calibration. The four condensed-phase tests (Table 2) trace a coherent calibration story across systems whose missing-physics fractions span a wide range:

System	$T_{\mathrm{sub,sim}}$	T_{exp}	**Overshoot**	**Missing physics in RealQM**
NaCl crystal melt	1500–2000 K	1074 K	1.4–1.9×	none (full Coulomb captured)
CO_2 dry-ice	∼1000 K	195 K	5.1×	∼80% dispersion
N_2 solid	∼1000 K	60 K	∼17×	∼99% dispersion
He bare-nucleus	does not bind	$T_b = 4.2$ K	— (clean negative)	∼100% dispersion

Table 2: Condensed-phase calibration: for systems with substantial non-dispersive cohesion, simulation transition temperatures match the experimental ones to within a uniform ∼1.5× Brownian-dynamics offset plus an additional factor that scales with the missing-dispersion contribution. For the dispersion-only endpoint (He bare-nucleus), the cluster does not bind at all — the clean negative outcome the framework predicts.

The simulation transition T (where defined) sits in the ∼1000–2000 K range across the bound systems, reflecting the non-dispersive cohesion that the framework captures (full ionic Coulomb in NaCl, asymmetric-Bernoulli quadrupole in CO_2, multi-orbital residual quadrupole in N_2). The overshoot factor against experiment scales monotonically with the missing-dispersion fraction; at the dispersion-only endpoint (He bare-nucleus, ∼100% missing dispersion), the cluster does not bind, completing the pattern with the predicted clean failure. The framework therefore reproduces phase-transition character correctly for systems with non-dispersive cohesion sources and predicts the clean absence of cohesion when dispersion is the only available mechanism.

A separate Ar test at Level 3 ($r_c = 0.5$, kernel-softened) showed apparent cohesion at $T_{\mathrm{sub,sim}} \approx 3000$ K, but this binding disappears in the bare-nucleus He limit. The cohesion observed in the kernel-softened Ar case is therefore attributable to the kernel softening rather than to a fundamental non-overlap mechanism: a softened kernel allows electron tails to spread further into the inter-atomic region, where the non-overlap constraint provides effective short-range coupling that vanishes as $r_c \to 0$. This is a useful caution for interpreting Level-3 results in dispersion-dominated regimes: kernel softening can introduce spurious short-range cohesion that is absent at Level 1.

Bulk water (216-water and 343-water boxes), studied at finite temperature with the same framework, reaches interactive frame rates on a single GPU; detailed bulk-water phase analysis is left to future work because dispersion (absent in RealQM at Level 3) becomes increasingly important for water structure at higher density.

Significance (overall). The combined NaCl/CO_2/N_2/He tests establish that the Coulomb-only formulation reaches solid-state physics, that its transition temperatures match experimental ones for systems with non-dispersive cohesion (with overshoot scaling by missing-dispersion fraction), and that the dispersion-only endpoint cleanly fails to bind — delineating the regime of

validity sharply. Condensed-phase physics is therefore within reach of the same single architecture that handles atoms, molecules, chemical reactions, and protein folding, with both successful predictions and clean failures bounding the framework's regime.

4.12 Consolidated results

Figure 1 and Table 3 collect the quantitative validation results across the regimes covered in this section.

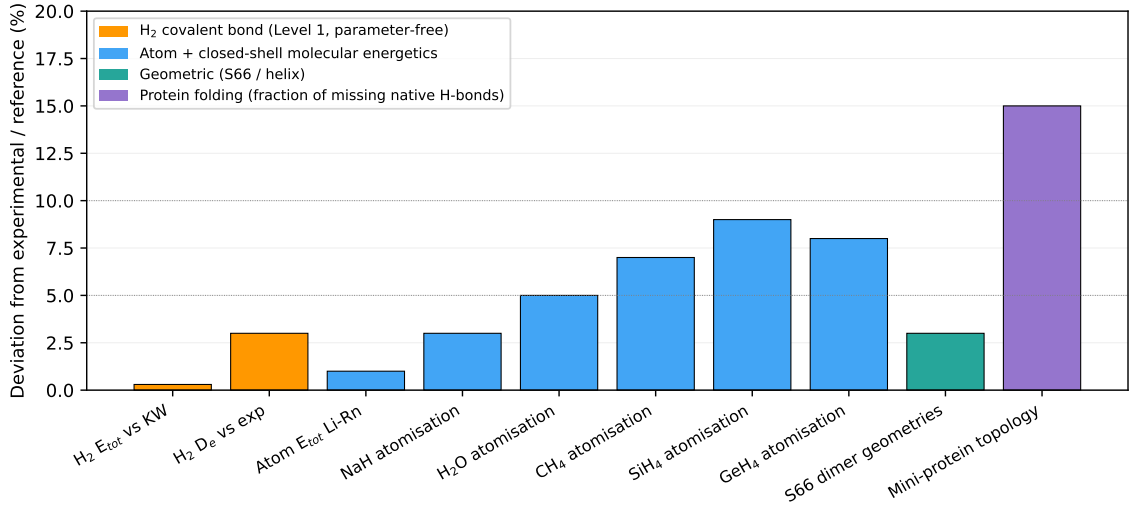

Figure 1: RealQM validation summary: deviation from experimental reference across regimes. Closed-shell molecular energetics (blue) sit at ∼1–10% across atoms and four periodic-table groups. The foundational H_2 covalent bond at parameter-free Level-1 (orange) matches Kolos–Wolniewicz to 0.3% on total energy and the experimental dissociation energy to 3%. Geometric matches against CCSD(T) and helix-geometry references (teal) are 3–5%. Protein-folding deviations (purple) are reported as the fraction of native H-bonds not formed. NaCl crystal melting (Section 4.11) is presented separately in the text: the simulation reproduces the qualitative phase-transition character (Lindemann ratio crossing, RDF peak collapse) but the absolute T_m is uncalibrated against experiment because the Brownian-dynamics time scale is not mapped to physical time — a calibration question, not a validation deviation, and it is therefore not plotted on this figure.

The pattern across regimes is consistent: **within ∼1–10%** for closed-shell molecular energetics where the Level-3 reduction matches the molecular electron count and bonding topology; **qualitatively correct** for reactive chemistry, protein folding, and excited states; **∼1.5× scale offset, transition character correct** for condensed-phase melting where the Brownian-dynamics time mapping is uncalibrated.

5 Limitations

Two regimes lie outside the validation reported here. **Weak intermolecular interactions** (hydrogen bonds at ∼5 kcal/mol = 0.008 Ha) are below the model's absolute-energy noise floor of ∼0.1 Ha; geometric agreement on S66 dimers is good (1–5%) but quantitative interaction energies are not reliable. **Dispersion** (van der Waals interactions between non-polar species) is absent at Level 3 entirely, as the unit-density model has no mechanism for the correlated electron motion that produces vdW. Excited states are accessible (Section 4.9) but at the present stage have only been validated on the simplest cases.

Regime	System / quantity	RealQM	Reference	Match
Atoms (Level 1)	Total energies, Li–Rn	—	observation	∼1%
Covalent bond	H_2 binding energy	−112	−109 kcal/mol	3%
Group 1 hydride	NaH atomization	−48	−47	2%
	KH atomization	−42	∼−43	2%
Group 2 hydride	BeH_2 atomization	−140	−144	3%
Group 14 hydride	CH_4 atomization	−369	−396	7%
	SiH_4 atomization	−348	−320	9%
	GeH_4 atomization	−272	−281	3%
Group 16 hydride	H_2O atomization	−225	−232	3%
Non-covalent dimers	5 H-bonded dimers, geometry	—	CCSD(T)	1–5% (di
Reactions	HF + H_2O proton transfer	H_t–O = 0.99 Å	exp. ∼1.0	qualitati
	HCl + NH_3 proton transfer	H_t–N = 0.97 Å	exp. ∼1.0	qualitati
	H + H_2 exchange	symmetric H_3 saddle	—	qualitati
Protein folding	12-Gly β-hairpin (dry)	150° → 105°	folded	qualitati
	8-Gly α-helix	r=2.1 Å, rise 1.63 Å	ideal helix	9%
	Villin HP35 native H-bonds	7 of 9 formed	native	78%
Excited states	Orthohelium ($1s\,2s$, ^{3}S)	directly accessible	known	qualitati
Materials	NaCl crystal melt	$T_{\mathrm{sim}} \approx$ 1500–2000 K	T_m = 1074 K	1.4–1.9×
	CO_2 dry-ice (asymmetric Bernoulli)	$T_{\mathrm{sim}} \approx$ 1000 K	T_{sub} = 195 K	5.1× (80
	N_2 solid (symmetric Bernoulli)	$T_{\mathrm{sim}} \approx$ 1000 K	T_{sub} = 60 K	17× (∼9
	He bare-nucleus (dispersion-only endpoint)	does not bind	T_b = 4.2 K	clean neg

Table 3: Summary of validation results. Energies in kcal/mol unless otherwise stated; % values are deviation of RealQM from reference.

Dispersion as a future extension. The missing dispersion contribution is the same one that originally affected standard density functional theory until empirical pairwise corrections (Grimme's DFT-D3 method, 2010) were introduced as a routine practice. The same recipe applies straightforwardly to RealQM: a pairwise term of the form $E_{\mathrm{disp}} = -\sum_{a<b} f_{\mathrm{damp}}(r_{ab})\, C_6^{ab}/r_{ab}^6$ (with damping function f_{damp} and tabulated C_6 coefficients calibrated against high-level reference data) can be added to the total energy and to the nuclear forces, without disturbing the variational structure of the wave functions $\{\psi_i\}$. This would extend the framework's regime to dispersion-dominated chemistry — non-polar molecular crystals (CO_2 dry ice, naphthalene, drug-molecule polymorphs), gas-phase association of hydrocarbons and noble gases, drug-receptor binding, DNA base stacking, surface adsorption — at the cost of introducing empirical C_6 parameters. We do not pursue this extension in the present paper, since calibrating the C_6 values for the kernel parameters used here is itself a substantial piece of work and the parameter-free Level-1 framework is best presented in its uncorrected form first. The route is open and uncomplicated, and we flag it as the natural follow-up direction for extending RealQM to the broader chemistry of organic and biological systems where dispersion contributes substantially.

Dispersion from deterministic linear response. A more principled (and parameter-free) route to recovering vdW within RealQM uses static *linear response* of each atom in place of postulated quantum fluctuations. The procedure has four steps, each implementable directly on the existing solver:

1. **Ground state** $\{\psi_i^{(0)}\}$ of each atom obtained by ITP relaxation (Section 4.1).

2. **Polarisability** α_i. Add a small dipole perturbation $V_{\text{pert}} = \varepsilon\,\hat{z}$ to the single-electron potential, run ITP to a perturbed ground state $\psi_i^{(\varepsilon)}$, extract the induced dipole $\mu_z = \int z\,(|\psi_i^{(\varepsilon)}|^2 - |\psi_i^{(0)}|^2)\,d^3x$, and form $\alpha_{zz} = \mu_z/\varepsilon$. Repeating for the three Cartesian directions gives the full α tensor at one frequency (zero-frequency / static value); evaluation at imaginary frequencies $\alpha(i\omega)$ for the Casimir–Polder integral requires solving a perturbed time-dependent ITP with a forcing term $\varepsilon e^{-\omega\tau}\hat{z}$.

3. **Pair coupling** via the dipole–dipole interaction $H_{\text{int}}(R) = (\mu_A \cdot \mu_B - 3(\mu_A \cdot \hat{R})(\mu_B \cdot \hat{R}))/R^3$.

4. **Dispersion energy** from the energy shift of the coupled normal modes: $E_{\text{disp}}(R) = -C_6^{AB}/R^6$ with $C_6^{AB} = (3/\pi)\int_0^\infty \alpha_A(i\omega)\,\alpha_B(i\omega)\,d\omega$. In the static-polarisability approximation, $C_6^{AB} \approx \frac{3}{2}\alpha_A^{(0)}\alpha_B^{(0)} I_A I_B/(I_A + I_B)$ where $I_{A,B}$ are ionisation potentials (computable as differences of two RealQM runs, Section 4.10).

The whole construction stays inside RealQM: deterministic ground states, deterministic perturbed ground states, classical dipole–dipole electrostatics, and an algebraic mode-coupling shift. No Born rule, no fluctuations, no full time-dependent Schrödinger evolution. The resulting C_6 values are predictions of the model rather than tabulated parameters — the same numbers that DFT-D3 fits empirically. This converts the dispersion limitation from a permanent missing physics into a calculation that has not yet been performed.

6 Stability of Matter

Stability of matter — the requirement that the total electronic ground-state energy of a system of N atoms be bounded below by an extensive quantity (linear in N rather than diverging more rapidly) — is among the most fundamental properties demanded of any quantum theory of matter. Without it, bulk matter could not exist.

The standard-QM picture: a deep but difficult proof. Within standard quantum mechanics (StdQM) and density functional theory, proving stability of matter has historically been a major mathematical undertaking. **Dyson and Lenard** gave the first rigorous proof in 1966 [11], a 26-page paper that Dyson himself characterized as "awful mathematics". **Lieb and Thirring** compressed the proof to three pages in 1975 [12], then expanded it into the 300-page book *The Stability of Matter in Quantum Mechanics* (2005). The proof's central difficulty stems from the **global support of electron wavefunctions** in StdQM: in principle, every electron can interact with every nucleus, and intricate book-keeping is required to prevent local accumulation of charge density from driving the potential energy to $-\infty$. The proof is not part of standard textbook treatments of QM, even though stability is a precondition for everything those textbooks describe.

The Lieb–Thirring bound on the ground-state energy of an atom of nuclear charge Z scales as

$$E(Z) \sim -Z^{7/3}, \tag{14}$$

a result derived from the Thomas–Fermi model rather than the full Schrödinger equation.

The RealQM picture: stability follows directly. In the multiphase formulation of Section 2, stability of matter follows essentially from atomic stability via the **Hardy inequality**: for any $\psi \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$,

$$\int \frac{\psi^2(\mathbf{x})}{|\mathbf{x}|}\,d\mathbf{x} \;\le\; \Big(\int \psi^2(\mathbf{x})\,d\mathbf{x}\Big)^{1/2}\Big(\int |\nabla\psi(\mathbf{x})|^2\,d\mathbf{x}\Big)^{1/2}. \tag{15}$$

Used by Kato in his analysis of the Schrödinger equation, the inequality bounds the singular Coulomb potential energy at a nucleus by a product of the L^2-norm and the kinetic-energy

semi-norm of the wavefunction. In RealQM, the total wavefunction Ψ of an atom with nuclear charge Z has unit-density components meeting at the Bernoulli free boundary (continuity plus homogeneous Neumann), with $\Psi \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ and $\|\Psi\|_2^2 = Z$ (one unit-charge density per electron, Z electrons in a neutral atom). Applying (15) directly to the global atomic Ψ and optimizing the kinetic–potential balance yields the atomic energy lower bound

$$E_{\text{atom}} \;\geq\; -C\,Z^3, \tag{16}$$

with C an absolute constant. For a system of N non-overlapping atoms each of charge Z, the bounds add to give

$$E \;\geq\; -C\,N\,Z^3, \tag{17}$$

which is the "stability of the second kind" of the Dyson–Lenard–Lieb–Thirring tradition: total energy is extensive in N, with no possibility of collapse to $-\infty$.

Upper bound on the kinetic energy from Hardy. The Hardy inequality (15) also bounds the kinetic energy from above at any bound state, without invoking the virial theorem. The argument is short. The multiphase wave function $\Psi = \sum_i \psi_i$ has $\|\Psi\|_2^2 = N$ (each ψ_i unit-normalised on Ω_i, supports disjoint, so cross-terms vanish), and $\|\nabla\Psi\|_2^2 = 2K$. Applying (15) to Ψ at each kernel position $\mathbf{R}_a$ and summing:

$$|V_{eK}| \;=\; \sum_a Z_a \int \frac{\Psi^2}{|\mathbf{x}-\mathbf{R}_a|}\,d\mathbf{x} \;\leq\; \sqrt{N}\left(\textstyle\sum_a Z_a\right)\sqrt{2K}. \tag{18}$$

The inter-electron repulsion is non-negative ($V_{ee} \geq 0$). Combining with the energy decomposition $E = K + V_{eK} + V_{ee}$,

$$K \;=\; E - V_{eK} - V_{ee} \;\leq\; E + \sqrt{N}\left(\textstyle\sum_a Z_a\right)\sqrt{2K}. \tag{19}$$

Setting $u = \sqrt{2K}$ and writing $C_N = \sqrt{N}\sum_a Z_a$ for compactness, the inequality reads $\frac{1}{2}u^2 - C_N\,u - E \leq 0$, which for any finite E implies

$$K \;\leq\; \tfrac{1}{2}\Big(C_N + \sqrt{C_N^2 + 2E}\Big)^2, \qquad C_N \equiv \sqrt{N}\,\textstyle\sum_a Z_a. \tag{20}$$

The structural relation behind this bound is that the Hardy inequality expresses the Coulomb potential as **form-bounded by the kinetic energy with sub-linear factor**: $|V| \leq c\sqrt{K}$. This is stronger than the relative-form-bound condition $|V| \leq cK$ with $c < 1$ used in Kato–Rellich self-adjointness; the sub-linear scaling means $|V|/K \to 0$ as $K \to \infty$, which is the form-boundedness with **zero relative bound** familiar from the spectral theory of Schrödinger operators. The kinetic energy therefore cannot run away to $+\infty$ while the total energy $E = K + V$ remains finite: any growth of K is matched at most by a $\sqrt{K}$-scale decrease in V, so the sum keeps a finite minimum.

For the H atom ($N = 1$, $Z = 1$, $E = -\frac{1}{2}$), one has $C_N = 1$ and the bound (20) gives $K \leq \frac{1}{2}$ exactly, saturated by the actual ground-state value $K = \frac{1}{2}$. For multi-electron atoms and molecules the bound is uniform but loose; it is independent of the variational status of the wave function, holding equally at constrained minima where the virial relation $2K + V = 0$ does not hold.

Existence of a ground state. The kinetic-energy bound (20) guarantees that any energy-minimizing sequence is bounded in $H^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$. The L^2 norm is fixed by the unit-charge constraint, $\|\Psi_n\|_2^2 = N$ for every n, and the kinetic semi-norm $\|\nabla\Psi_n\|_2 = \sqrt{2K(\Psi_n)}$ is bounded uniformly along the sequence because the energy stays bounded above (by definition of a minimizing sequence). Banach–Alaoglu then yields a subsequence $\Psi_n \rightharpoonup \Psi^*$ converging weakly in $H^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$,

and weak lower semi-continuity of K together with strong L^2-convergence on bounded sets (Rellich–Kondrachov) gives $E(\Psi^*) \leq \liminf E(\Psi_n) = \inf E$. So a candidate minimizer Ψ^* exists in the weak sense.

A complete existence proof for the full multiphase variational problem requires two additional analytical steps not delivered by the H-bound alone: **(i)** controlling possible loss of mass at infinity along the sequence (handled by concentration–compactness arguments of Lions type for atomic and molecular systems), and **(ii)** verifying that the weak limit Ψ^* inherits the multiphase structure of disjoint supports, unit-norm per electron, and the Bernoulli boundary conditions of Section 2.4. Both are technically non-trivial but use standard tools from the calculus of variations and free-boundary theory, and are left here to follow-up analytical work; the kinetic-energy bound from Hardy is the load-bearing first ingredient.

Connection to the free-boundary literature. The Bernoulli condition at the inter-electron boundary Γ_i places the multiphase variational problem in a well-studied class of free-boundary problems. Existence and regularity in closely related settings have been established in the variational free-boundary literature: the foundational one-phase [13] and two-phase [14] Bernoulli problems, the multi-phase Caffarelli–Lin theory of competing systems with disjoint supports [15], and the spectral minimal partition theory of Helffer, Hoffmann-Ostenhof, and Terracini [16]. Adapting these results to RealQM's coupled-Coulomb setting is the natural analytical route to a complete regularity theory for Γ_i.

Heuristic atomic energy scaling. The rigorous Hardy bound (16) establishes stability with $E_{\text{atom}} \geq -CZ^3$ but is not tight; the actual ground-state energy of an atom grows more slowly with Z. A heuristic estimate within the unit-density formulation can be obtained from an approximate shell structure with shell index m: shell radius $r_m \sim m^3/Z$, shell thickness $d_m \sim m^2/Z$, $2m^2$ electrons in the m-th filled shell, and charge density $\rho_m(r) \sim Z/r^2$ in spherical symmetry. Integrating kinetic and potential contributions over a density profile of this form produces, at heuristic level, an atomic ground-state energy of order

$$E(Z) \;\sim\; -\log(Z)\, Z^2, \tag{21}$$

i.e. $-Z^2$ up to a logarithmic correction. The shell-scaling laws above are *heuristic* estimates, not rigorously derived asymptotics, and the resulting $-\log(Z)Z^2$ form is intended only as an order-of-magnitude indication. The Thomas-Fermi–based Lieb–Thirring scaling $-Z^{7/3}$ is a different heuristic prediction; both lie comfortably below the rigorous $-Z^3$ Hardy upper bound on $|E|$ and disagree only at the level of subleading corrections. A precise comparison of the two heuristic scalings, and of either with experimental atom energies across the periodic table, is left for follow-up work.

Significance. Stability of matter, viewed in StdQM as one of the deepest theorems of mathematical physics, becomes in RealQM a one-paragraph consequence of the Hardy inequality applied to non-overlapping electronic territories. The contrast is informative: **the proof difficulty in StdQM is not a feature of the underlying physics but a symptom of the formulation.** Working in $3N$-dimensional configuration space with overlapping orbitals forces the singularities of the Coulomb potential to be controlled globally, requiring the elaborate apparatus of Dyson–Lenard–Lieb–Thirring. Working in real 3D space with non-overlapping unit densities localizes the control, and stability falls out of the variational structure.

The natural pedagogical conclusion is that stability of matter, currently absent from standard QM curricula because the StdQM proof is too difficult, can be presented straightforwardly in the RealQM formulation as an introductory result — a property of any system of non-overlapping unit electron densities under Coulomb interaction.

Computational vs analytical existence and regularity. The analytical results established above — the Hardy stability bound (17), the boundedness of minimising sequences in $H^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ from the kinetic-energy bound (20), and the free-boundary regularity transferable from [13, 14, 15, 16] — establish the analytical scaffolding for existence and regularity of the RealQM ground state in a weak sense. What remains for a complete analytical theory is the adaptation of these results to the specific RealQM setting: Coulomb singularities at each nucleus (handled locally by Hardy), and the coupling between phases through the Hartree potentials V_j in (7), which is the structural feature distinguishing RealQM from the autonomous multiphase systems of Caffarelli–Lin. These adaptations are routine in scope but technically substantial, and have not been written down in full anywhere.

A complementary, and in practice more direct, route to existence and regularity is the level-set formulation of the 3-line code (Section 3.1). The boundary Γ_i is encoded implicitly as the zero level set of an auxiliary function χ_i on $\mathbb{R}^3$, evolved by the Hamilton–Jacobi-type equation $\dot{\chi}_i + \beta_i|\nabla\chi_i| = 0$ from (12). Smoothness of Γ_i is then *inherited* from smoothness of χ_i via the implicit function theorem: where $\nabla\chi_i \neq 0$, the level set $\{\chi_i = 0\}$ is automatically a smooth manifold; singular points of Γ_i correspond exactly to $\nabla\chi_i = 0$ and are detectable directly in the simulation. The level-set framework therefore reformulates the regularity question, shifting it from "is Γ_i smooth?" to "is χ_i smooth?", and converts the abstract regularity question into a constructive observable on the simulation grid. The analytical theory of level-set evolution equations (viscosity solutions in the sense of Crandall–Lions, Evans–Spruck) provides the rigor for the level-set side; the simulation provides explicit smoothness for any specific configuration. This is methodologically distinct from but operationally equivalent to the regularity programme of [13, 15], and for RealQM's practical purposes it is the more direct route.

Beyond the level-set formulation, analytical theorems on free-boundary regularity typically deliver *qualitative* statements — the free boundary is $C^{1,\alpha}$ off a singular set of Hausdorff dimension at most $n-2$, with exponent α unspecified, the constants astronomical, the singular-set location not located. A converged simulation by contrast delivers, for the specific configuration, the exact locations of triple-junction and quadruple points, explicit Hölder exponents at smooth boundary points, quantitative Lipschitz constants for the normal field along Γ_i, density ratios at boundary points, and direct verification that $|\partial_n\psi_i| \to 0$ as the simulation converges. The 3-line code of Section 3.1, applied to atoms, molecules, condensed phases, and protein-scale systems, reaches converged solutions in which the wave functions ψ_i stabilise to spatial profiles consistent with (7)–(8), the Bernoulli free boundary stabilises with continuity and homogeneous Neumann holding to mesh resolution, and the total energy plateaus. **Each such converged simulation may be regarded as a constructive proof, to a specified numerical precision, that a solution of the variational problem exists, that the wave functions are Lipschitz, and that the free boundary is regular off a small singular set whose location is explicitly determined.** The *quantitative* content of this constructive evidence routinely exceeds the qualitative content of the analytical theorems: a chemist who needs to know the angle at which Γ_i meets a bond axis can read it off the simulation but cannot extract it from any qualitative regularity theorem.

The two routes are complementary rather than competing. The analytical scaffolding gives the universal qualitative picture: stability holds, minimisers exist in a weak sense, free boundaries are regular off small singular sets, and the underlying mechanism is encoded in the Bernoulli structure of Section 2.4. The computational diagnostics give the specific quantitative picture for each system: where the boundaries sit, where the singular points live, with which numerical regularity exponents. Neither is complete on its own; together they cover both the principled and the operational regimes. This division of labour is in the spirit of computer-assisted proofs (the 4-colour theorem, the Kepler conjecture, parts of mathematical fluid dynamics), in which finite computational verification, systematically combined with analytical reduction, replaces traditional proof in cases where the latter is intractable for the geometry at hand. The Gallery's

runnable scan files are the operational embodiment of this hybrid framework: anyone doubting the regularity properties of a specific RealQM solution can run the corresponding file and inspect the boundary directly, with the analytical scaffolding established in the cited literature ensuring that what they see is what the variational principle predicts.

7 An analogous model of the atomic nucleus

The mathematical framework of Section 2 — non-overlapping unit charge densities in 3D real space, Coulomb interactions, Bernoulli free boundaries, variational minimization — is not specific to chemistry. The same multiphase 3D continuum mechanics applies to atomic nuclei when the constituents are taken to be protons and electrons, returning to a pre-1932 picture of nuclear structure.

In this picture a neutron is identified with a proton–electron pair (the proton–electron model that predates the discovery of the neutron as an elementary particle). A stable nucleus with Z protons and N neutrons therefore contains $(Z+N)$ protons and N electrons, with $N \approx Z$ giving roughly twice as many protons as electrons. The simplest non-trivial case is helium-4 ($Z=2$, $N=2$), modeled as 4 protons and 2 electrons.

The model. The setup uses the same multiphase formulation:

- 4 unit-charge densities representing protons (each $+1$);
- 2 unit-charge densities representing electrons (each -1);
- Each density supported on its own non-overlapping spatial region in $\mathbb{R}^3$, with continuity and homogeneous Neumann at the inter-species Bernoulli interface;
- Coulomb interactions, signed appropriately for the charges: opposite-sign attractive, same-sign repulsive;
- Per-domain mass: the kinetic-energy operator coefficient is $\propto 1/m_i$, distinguishing the heavy proton from the light electron;
- No external confining potential.

The energy functional is the standard Coulomb sum

$$E = T_p + T_e + V_{ee} + V_{pp} + V_{ep}, \tag{22}$$

with $T_p = \frac{1}{2m_p}\sum_a \int |\nabla\sqrt{\rho_a^{(p)}}|^2 d\mathbf{r}$ for the protons (mass-weighted) and T_e analogous for the electrons. The minimum is taken over all the densities and over the boundary location between the inner electron core and the outer proton shell.

Mutual confinement. In the standard nuclear shell model, protons and neutrons sit in an effective potential approximating the average force from all other nucleons. Here there is no such external potential. The 4 protons confine the 2 electrons through their collective $+4$ Coulomb attraction; in turn, the 2 electrons confine the protons through their collective -2 Coulomb attraction. The electrons need the protons to be confined, and the protons need the electrons to be confined. Numerical experiment confirms that with only *1* electron (-1 against $+4$) the attraction is too weak — the proton shell disintegrates outward. With *2* electrons the system stabilizes. The textbook 2:1 proton-to-electron ratio of stable nuclei ($N \approx Z$) emerges as a binding requirement of mutual confinement.

Result for He-4. Energy minimization at fixed boundary radius R between the inner electron core and the outer proton shell, swept across R, reveals a clear binding minimum. The protons localize in an outer shell with their density peaked at the boundary; the electrons localize in an inner core. The two species are sharply separated by the Bernoulli interface, with the boundary position selected by the variational principle (continuity plus homogeneous Neumann across the boundary, as in the chemistry sections). The binding character — mutual confinement, sharp species separation, stable equilibrium R — is qualitatively consistent with helium-4 being the most tightly bound of the small nuclei. Quantitative agreement with experimental nuclear binding energies is not the goal at this exploratory stage; the framework reproduces the proton–electron model's qualitative predictions through the same RealQM machinery developed for chemistry.

Significance. The nuclear extension is reported here as a side step from the main paper. Its purpose is to demonstrate that the mathematical framework — multiphase non-overlapping unit densities in real 3D space, with Bernoulli free boundaries and pure Coulomb interactions — is applicable to atomic-scale physics quite generally. The chemistry validation of Section 4 is therefore one application of a broader continuum-mechanics formulation; the nuclear model is another. The framework provides a unifying mathematical structure spanning at least two scales of physics through a single variational-Coulomb-with-Bernoulli-boundary principle. Whether quantitative agreement with nuclear-binding observables can be obtained, and whether the proton–electron picture can be extended beyond He-4 to heavier stable nuclei, are questions for follow-up work.

8 Chemistry vs Physics

A central question in the philosophy of chemistry is whether **(A)** chemistry can be explained by quantum physics, as **Dirac famously claimed in 1929 at the birth of quantum mechanics**, or **(B)** something more is required, as has been argued by leading chemists for nearly a century. Position (B) is the view that chemistry possesses an irreducible conceptual content — orbitals, bonds, valence, hybridisation, electronegativity — that does not follow from Schrödinger's equation alone, no matter how many computational resources are thrown at it. Position (A) is the view that chemistry *is* applied quantum physics, and that the apparent autonomy of chemical concepts is an artefact of the practical impossibility of solving the underlying equations.

The hundred-year stalemate has been driven less by disagreement on principle than by the fact that, within the standard $3N$-dimensional wavefunction formulation that Dirac himself had in mind in 1929, the equations are indeed unsolvable for any system of chemical interest without approximations whose chemistry-specific character (basis sets, exchange–correlation functionals, fitted force fields) seems to vindicate position (B).

RealQM provides **concrete evidence that Dirac's position (A) was correct, although not within the 1929 wavefunction-on-$3N$-space formulation that Dirac himself proposed**. The reformulation as a system of non-overlapping unit electron densities in real 3D space, with energy minimization over Coulomb interactions alone, recovers atoms (Section 4.1), the covalent bond and its He limit (Section 4.3), atomization energies of hydrides across periodic-table groups (Section 4.4), reactive chemistry (Section 4.7), and protein folding (Section 4.8) — using only physics, with no chemistry-specific empirical input beyond the kernel parameters that encode the level-by-level reduction. Chemistry emerges as the variational principle's response to multiple nuclei being present, with no separate machinery required.

The conclusion we draw is not that the standard $3N$-dimensional formulation should be abandoned — for high-precision spectroscopy, transition probabilities, and excited-state dynamics it remains the canonical tool — but that **chemistry-as-applied-physics is achievable** when one is willing to reformulate the problem in real 3D space with an appropriate non-overlap constraint. Dirac was right; the equations were just being written in the wrong space.

Forward look: scaling. The multiphase decomposition places each one-electron wavefunction on a non-overlapping subdomain of a single 3D grid. Total computational cost is then linear in the number of mesh cells, and hence — at fixed atomic density and fixed mesh resolution matched to the reduced kernel — linear in the number of atoms. This contrasts with standard wavefunction quantum mechanics, whose intrinsic cost is superlinear in electron count regardless of discretisation, since the wavefunction itself lives on $\mathbb{R}^{3N}$. With the reduced-kernel mesh native to the model ($h \sim 0.3$ a.u.), a 1000^3 grid accommodates $\sim 10^6$ atoms within a single workstation-class GPU.

Forward look: molecular dynamics. Three properties of the formulation make it directly useful as a force generator for molecular dynamics, beyond what standard quantum mechanics offers. *First*, reactive forces are native: bond breaking and bond formation are simply rearrangements of the multiphase tiling $\{\Omega_i\}$, with the same ITP and Hartree machinery used at equilibrium. There is no methodological switch between equilibrium and transition-state regimes, and no need for special-purpose reactive force fields whose calibration regions are necessarily limited. *Second*, the Hellmann–Feynman force on a nucleus is a single central difference of the converged Hartree–plus–kernel potential at that nucleus — the same operation regardless of system size, with none of the basis-set-derivative pathologies (Pulay corrections, basis-set superposition error, polarisation-function sensitivity) that complicate standard *ab initio* molecular dynamics. *Third*, the linear-mesh-cost scaling above places *ab initio* molecular dynamics of 10^3–10^4 atom systems — previously a cluster-scale workload — on a single GPU. The implementation already runs interactive Brownian dynamics with full RealQM forces for 343-water clusters (Section 3) and small proteins (Section 4.8), at picosecond-trajectory resolution on consumer hardware. The natural further use is as the upstream parameter source for classical and machine-learned potentials: a single self-consistent quantum treatment of the entire training set, in place of the patchwork of DFT, MP2, CCSD, and experimental fits that current force fields and ML potentials draw from.

Forward look: from molecules to cells. A protein of typical size occupies 10^4–10^5 atoms; an entire bacterial cell, with its full proteomic content, occupies $\sim 10^9$–10^{10} atoms in $\sim 10^6$–10^7 protein copies drawn from $\sim 10^3$–10^4 distinct species. The natural way to bridge this scale gap is to use RealQM as the upstream source of *reduced-model parameters*. For each protein species, a once-and-done RealQM run yields the converged electron density and the molecular Hessian; from these one extracts the solvent-accessible isosurface, the surface electrostatic potential, the hydrophobicity map, and the first $\sim$ 10–20 functional normal modes. The cell is then a Brownian-dynamics gas of such envelopes diffusing, rotating, and interacting through their pre-computed surface fields, with internal flexibility carried by the modes. The same hardware that ran the protein at the foundational level can run the cell at the population level. Concrete predictions accessible in this regime include spatial concentration distributions, encounter and binding kinetics under realistic crowding, signalling-cascade timings, the formation of membraneless condensates, and mutational effects on cell-level phenotype — all derived from a single self-consistent quantum source rather than a stack of empirical and ab-initio fits that often disagree with each other. Whether this programme delivers in practice is an open question; what is no longer open is whether the foundational level is in principle reachable. We do not pursue these extensions here. The intent of the present paper is to establish the variational principle and to demonstrate its predictive content at atomic and small-molecular scale.

9 Dissipation, diffusion, and the parabolic structure of RealQM

Standard quantum mechanics is a unitary, time-symmetric theory. The Schrödinger equation conserves energy and is reversible: time can run forward or backward through the same equation.

Yet every physical system that quantum mechanics describes — atoms in molecules, electrons in solids, nuclei in chemistry — exhibits irreversible behaviour: heat flows, reactions proceed in one direction, transient excitations decay. The standard reconciliation is statistical-mechanical: trace out an environment (decoherence), average over an ensemble, or impose a thermal-bath coupling (Langevin), and the macroscopic dissipative behaviour emerges from underlying reversible microdynamics.

RealQM has a different starting point. Its dynamical content combines three structurally parabolic ingredients:

- **Imaginary-time projection** on ψ_i: a heat equation in pseudo-time, projecting onto the local ground state at fixed nuclear positions.
- **Gradient flow** on the energy functional $E[\{\psi_i\}, \{R_a\}]$: an intrinsically energy-decreasing dynamics on the slow variables.
- **Level-set free-boundary regularisation** on Γ_{ij}: a parabolic smoothing of the moving electron-domain interfaces, with diffusivity proportional to the local advection driver.

Each of these is intrinsically irreversible. Energy is a Lyapunov function for the gradient flow; the level-set diffusivity smooths small-scale boundary structure; ITP discards high-eigenvalue components in pseudo-time. Time-reversal symmetry is broken not by an added thermal coupling but by the parabolic structure of the equations themselves.

Three observations follow.

Reactions are captured without statistical input. An exothermic reaction in RealQM is a transition between two configurations of the multiphase tiling, driven by the gradient of $E[\{\psi_i\}]$. The variational structure carries the system from a higher-energy configuration through the saddle to a lower-energy one without any random force, ensemble average, or thermal reservoir. The released energy $-\Delta H$ is absorbed by the combination of imaginary-time relaxation of ψ and, when present, velocity damping on the nuclei; both are deterministic. The qualitative reactive event — bond breaking, bond formation, descent to products — is therefore intrinsic, not added on. This is what the existing reactive demonstrations (proton transfer, salt dissolution, S_N2) deliver in browser-class compute time.

Statistical equilibrium still requires statistical input. Maintaining a system at fixed temperature with the correct fluctuation spectrum requires a random force satisfying the fluctuation–dissipation relation. RealQM does not provide this on its own: the parabolic regularisation is small in magnitude, and its associated thermal scale is many orders of magnitude smaller than what room-temperature thermodynamics demands. To run at finite T we add a Langevin thermostat, exactly as in classical molecular dynamics. The thermostat represents the surroundings; it is not a fundamental ingredient of the formalism. Empirically the intrinsic level-set viscosity is too weak to thermalise small clusters on phonon timescales — on those scales the dynamics is effectively Hamiltonian. The dissipation is structurally present but quantitatively sub-dominant.

The unified picture. RealQM is therefore positioned between the two classical extremes. Standard QM has no dissipation in its core dynamics and must import it via statistics. Classical statistical mechanics has dissipation built into the macroscopic equations but no microscopic content for chemistry. RealQM has both: a microscopic real-space wave-function dynamics that is intrinsically parabolic at the slow-variable level, plus the same Langevin coupling to a reservoir as classical molecular dynamics when finite-temperature equilibrium is desired.

Diffusion — in the precise sense of a parabolic equation governing the slow evolution of a smooth quantity — is therefore not added *on top of* RealQM, the way it is added on top of

standard QM through statistical mechanics. It is part of the formalism. The macroscopic heat equation is the natural large-scale limit of the level-set free-boundary motion; the chemical-reaction rate is governed by gradient-flow descent over the energy landscape; vibrational equilibration in dense phases occurs through the same boundary regularisation that stabilises the level-set tracking. The Second Law, the arrow of time, and the irreversibility of chemistry are consequences of the parabolic structure of the dynamical equations, not consequences of an external statistical postulate.

This does not eliminate the need for statistical mechanics — finite-temperature ensemble sampling, fluctuation spectra, and equilibrium constants all still require the canonical machinery. But the relation between quantum mechanics and thermodynamics is reorganised: in standard QM they are conceptually separate, one reversible and one irreversible, connected only through a limit-and-average procedure laid on top. In RealQM they are aspects of the same dissipative variational principle, with statistics needed only to specify the surroundings rather than to introduce irreversibility itself.

The foundational case for parabolic structure. The argument has a deeper dimension that bears stating directly. Real-time Schrödinger evolution is unitary as an *idealised* mathematical object: a continuous, infinitely-precise, energy-conserving map of one state to another. But any realisation of that evolution — on any computational substrate, with any finite numerical precision, on any discretisation of space and time, with any finite timestep — introduces small parabolic components from rounding, truncation, and grid spacing. Numerical viscosity cannot be eliminated, only made small. The discrete heat-equation operator $u_{n+1}(x) = (1 - 2\lambda)u_n(x) + \lambda(u_n(x + h) + u_n(x - h))$ is, by construction, many-to-one: distinct initial profiles having the same local mean evolve to the same updated value. Information is destroyed at every step, not as noise but as a structural consequence of taking a local average. The same operator, applied to ψ_i rather than to u, drives the imaginary-time projection at the heart of RealQM and of every quantum Monte Carlo method.

If "physics" means what can actually be computed and observed with finite resources, then physics is intrinsically dissipative, and a formalism whose dynamical structure is parabolic from the start is more faithful to that condition than one whose foundational equations are unitary and whose irreversibility is recovered only through later statistical layers. RealQM's parabolic structure is on this view not a regularisation choice but a representation-level honesty about the irreducible role of information destruction in any realisable evolution. Irreversibility, the arrow of time, and the Second Law need not be derived as emergent consequences of microreversible dynamics; they can be read directly off the parabolic equations that any actual computation of physics must employ.

10 Two kinds of statistics in quantum mechanics

Standard quantum mechanics carries two distinct statistical commitments that should be separated. The first is **ontological**: the Born rule, by which $|\psi|^2$ is intrinsically a probability density and single-measurement outcomes are intrinsically random. This is not a description of incomplete information but a claim about the world itself. The second is **bookkeeping**: thermal and ensemble averages, partition functions, density matrices — the canonical machinery of statistical mechanics layered on top of quantum dynamics to handle many-body and finite-temperature systems.

RealQM rejects the first layer outright. The wave function ψ_i is a deterministic charge density on a non-overlapping spatial domain Ω_i; there are no probabilities and no measurement-induced collapse in the formalism. The dynamics is given by deterministic PDEs — ITP for ground states, gradient flow for slow variables, level-set evolution for boundaries (Section 9).

The second layer is retained only as bookkeeping. Finite-temperature behaviour can be modelled deterministically by coupling the wave equation to a heat field $T(x, \tau)$ evolving under

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial \tau} = D\nabla^2 T + Q(x, \tau), \qquad Q = -\partial e_{\text{wave}}/\partial \tau, \tag{23}$$

with e_{wave} the local energy density of the wave dynamics. The dissipation released by the parabolic ITP relaxation thus feeds a parabolic heat field as a deterministic source term, with exact conservation $E_{\text{wave}} + E_{\text{thermal}} = \text{const}$. Equipartition follows from Hamilton's equations together with Liouville's theorem and ergodicity rather than from a probability axiom. Temperature, entropy, and free energy $F = E - TS$ emerge as collective deterministic quantities; ensemble formulas (canonical partition functions, Gibbs measures) are convenient compressions of the same physics, not its substrate.

The substantive claim is therefore: *quantum mechanics does not require ontological statistics.* The Born rule is a feature of one particular interpretation, not of the physical world. The 100-year-old foundational question — *is nature fundamentally random?* — has, on the RealQM reading, a clean negative answer. What remains as "statistical" in RealQM is purely epistemic: incomplete information about initial conditions, and the practical impossibility of tracking 10^{23} deterministic trajectories. The physics underneath is fully deterministic at every level; the statistical character of quantum predictions, where it appears, is a property of our descriptions, not of nature.

Computational consequences. The split has direct computational implications. A statistical formulation carries two costs that a deterministic one avoids. *Dimensionality:* the antisymmetric many-body wavefunction in standard QM lives in $3N$-dimensional configuration space, exponential in the number of electrons. RealQM, by contrast, uses a single 3-dimensional grid: the total wave function Ψ is one 3D field that takes the value ψ_i in each non-overlapping domain Ω_i, with the N electrons partitioning the same physical space rather than living in a higher-dimensional configuration space. For $N = 50$ electrons, the exact StdQM state space is 150-dimensional and computationally inaccessible without aggressive approximation; the RealQM state is one 3D grid of fixed size, independent of N, and fits comfortably on a laptop GPU. *Stochastic noise:* statistical methods — Monte Carlo sampling, path-integral QMC, ensemble averaging — have variance scaling as $1/\sqrt{M}$ in the number of samples M, so halving the error of any expectation value quadruples the cost. A deterministic formulation produces a clean signal at fixed cost. The asymmetry is not symmetric: a deterministic computation can be augmented with Langevin random forces at $O(N)$ extra cost per timestep when finite-temperature behaviour is wanted, while a statistical formulation cannot extract a noise-free signal without paying the variance penalty in full. RealQM thus pays the price of a structural assumption (electrons live in non-overlapping domains) and gains in return both polynomial scaling and deterministic precision — the reason the simulations reported in this paper run in a browser, where StdQM-equivalent calculations require cluster-class compute.

The double-statistics awkwardness of standard QM thermodynamics. The two-layer structure of standard quantum statistical mechanics has a conceptual tension that is rarely made explicit. The expectation value at temperature T is computed as $\langle A \rangle = \text{Tr}[\rho A]$ with $\rho = \exp(-\beta H)/Z$. This combines two distinct probability distributions of *different ontological status*: (i) the Born-rule probability $|\langle a|n\rangle|^2$ that a measurement on the eigenstate $|n\rangle$ yields outcome a — intrinsic and ontological in the Copenhagen reading; (ii) the Boltzmann weight $P_n = \exp(-\beta E_n)/Z$ giving the thermal probability that the system *is in* state $|n\rangle$ — epistemic, reflecting incomplete information about which member of an ensemble one happens to have. Stacking the two yields mathematically consistent predictions, but conceptually it is statistics of statistics: an ontological probability averaged with an epistemic one. RealQM, by rejecting the

Born rule, removes the first layer outright; thermal statistics is then a single epistemic layer over deterministic configurations. Same predictions, cleaner ontology, no doubled probability.

Towards a RealQM-based statistical mechanics. Standard quantum statistical mechanics builds the partition function $Z(\beta) = \sum_n \exp(-\beta E_n) = \mathrm{Tr}\, \exp(-\beta H)$ on the eigenvalues of the N-electron Hamiltonian H. For realistic many-body systems this spectrum is computationally inaccessible (exponential in N), so practical applications resort to model Hamiltonians, mean-field approximations, perturbation theory, or path-integral / quantum Monte Carlo sampling.

RealQM offers a different starting point. The "spectrum" of a system is the set of its **multiphase configurations** $\{\mathcal{C}\}$: distinct topologies of non-overlapping electron domains $\{\Omega_i\}$, each with a deterministic variational energy $E_\mathcal{C}$ obtained by a single ground-state run on a 3D grid. The partition function then takes the same canonical form

$$Z(\beta) = \sum_\mathcal{C} \exp(-\beta\, E_\mathcal{C}), \qquad \langle A\rangle(T) = \frac{1}{Z} \sum_\mathcal{C} A_\mathcal{C}\, \exp(-\beta\, E_\mathcal{C}), \tag{24}$$

but the sum is over real-space tilings rather than over $3N$-dim eigenstates. Each $E_\mathcal{C}$ is a browser-class computation; the canonical machinery (Boltzmann weights, free energy $F = -k_B T \ln Z$, equilibrium probabilities) sits on top unchanged.

For nuclear motion the existing implementation already realises this scheme deterministically: classical Newton dynamics with a Langevin thermostat (the `USER_DAMPING` and `langevinKT` parameters of `molecule.js`) samples the Boltzmann distribution by ergodic time-averaging, never computing Z explicitly. The NaCl crystal-melt simulation of Section 4.11 is exactly this in action: every observable reported there (the Lindemann ratio, the Na–Cl radial distribution function, the melting-temperature window) is a thermal average $\langle A\rangle(T)$ over the canonical ensemble of ionic configurations, computed by time-averaging a single deterministic-plus-Langevin trajectory rather than enumerating states. This is RealQM-based statistical mechanics already in operation, on a 256-ion system, in a browser. The deterministic heat-equation extension of Section 9 adds an intrinsic finite-T mechanism by coupling the wave dynamics to a parabolic heat field $T(x,\tau)$, with exact bookkeeping $E_\mathrm{wave} + E_\mathrm{thermal} = \mathrm{const}$.

Two limitations remain. (a) Enumerating multiphase topologies is not yet automated for general systems; in current practice they are constructed manually (halfspace splits, concentric shells, angular sectors) per problem. (b) For protein folding the conformational state space is exponential in residue count, an irreducible scaling that no formalism makes intrinsically easier; the practical route is sampling, e.g. MD trajectories with a thermostat. But the *spectrum* side is dramatically simplified: each "state" is a 3D field with explicit physical meaning rather than an antisymmetric many-body wave function in $3N$-dim configuration space. RealQM thus offers an alternative form of quantum statistical mechanics in which the canonical ensemble retains its standard structure while the underlying spectrum is real-space, deterministic, and tractable.

11 Interaction matter–radiation

The RealQM model can be extended to describe interaction matter–radiation following a principle developed in [8]. Both sides of the interaction admit a wave-equation form. On the *matter* side, the time-dependent RealQM equation for each electron ψ_j reads

$$i\dot{\psi}_j + H_j\, \psi_j = 0, \tag{25}$$

with the dot denoting differentiation in time and H_j the single-particle Hamiltonian seen by electron j (kinetic plus kernel plus the Hartree potential built from the other electrons). This is structurally a wave equation in the same sense that the standard time-dependent Schrödinger equation is a wave equation, an analog of the wave equation $u_{tt} - u_{xx} = 0$ but first order in time

and complex valued. On the *radiation* side, the corresponding wave equation for the field $u(x,t)$ is the same dissipative classical wave equation that governed Section 9, here with two dissipative channels:

$$u_{tt} - u_{xx} - \gamma\, u_{ttt} - \delta^2\, u_{xxt} = f. \tag{26}$$

The matter-side equation (25) can be expanded with the same two dissipative channels to model interaction matter–radiation symmetrically:

$$i\dot{\psi}_j + H_j\psi_j - \gamma\, \dddot{\psi}_j - \delta^2\, \nabla^2\dot{\psi}_j = f_j, \tag{27}$$

where $-\gamma\, \dddot{\psi}_j$ is the matter-side analog of the Abraham–Lorentz radiation-reaction term (energy emitted as outgoing radiation by an accelerating electronic density), $-\delta^2\nabla^2\dot{\psi}_j$ is the matter-side viscous channel (energy stored as incoherent internal heat at high spatial frequencies), and f_j is the field forcing on electron j from incoming radiation. Matter and radiation thus share the same equation structure — a unitary wave equation augmented by identical radiation and viscous dissipation terms — and exchange energy through the matched forcing/reaction channels: f in (26) is built from the matter dipoles, and f_j in (27) is built from the radiation field. The system is closed, deterministic, and symmetric in matter and radiation. Here $u(x,t)$ is the displacement of a vibrating medium representing matter (a forced charged string), f is incoming radiation forcing, $-\gamma u_{ttt}$ is the radiation-reaction term on accelerating charge density (Abraham–Lorentz), and $-\delta^2 u_{xxt}$ is an internal viscous term that converts coherent wave energy into incoherent heat at small spatial scales. The radiation term carries energy out of the medium as outgoing waves; the viscous term *stores* it as heat by damping high-wavenumber modes. The two channels together produce both the Rayleigh–Jeans low-frequency emission and the high-frequency cutoff that ends the ultraviolet catastrophe.

Energy balance and the second law of radiation. Multiplying (26) by $\dot{u}$ and integrating gives an energy balance $\dot{E} = A - R$ with absorbed energy $A = \int f\dot{u}\, dx$ and radiated energy $R = \gamma \int \ddot{u}^2\, dx \geq 0$, the latter dissipative by the form of the damping term. For incoming radiation f to actually *heat* the medium ($\dot{E} > 0$) one needs $A > R$, i.e. the incoming intensity must exceed the outgoing intensity. This is the second law of radiation: heat flows from hotter to colder, derived directly from the PDE without invoking entropy or photons.

Rayleigh–Jeans from spectral analysis. Decomposing u in Fourier modes $u_\nu(x,t)$, each mode is a damped linear oscillator $\ddot{u}_\nu + \nu^2 u_\nu - \gamma u_\nu^{(3)} = f_\nu$. Near-resonance analysis at frequency ν shows that the radiated intensity satisfies

$$R(\nu, T) \propto \nu^2\, T_\nu, \tag{28}$$

which is the Rayleigh–Jeans law, with $T_\nu \approx \dot{u}_\nu^2$ identified as the temperature of the corresponding mode. This recovers the classical thermal-radiation law as a property of the deterministic PDE, with no probabilistic postulate at any step.

Ultraviolet cutoff and Wien's displacement law. The Rayleigh–Jeans law alone gives an ultraviolet catastrophe ($\int \nu^2 d\nu \to \infty$). In Planck's resolution this is removed by quantising radiation as photons of energy $h\nu$. In the deterministic picture the cutoff is supplied instead by the viscous damping term $-\delta^2 u_{xxt}$ in (26), with the temperature-dependent choice

$$\delta = h/T, \tag{29}$$

where h is the resolution scale of the medium (the smallest coordination length, not Planck's constant) and T is the local temperature. A wave at spatial frequency ν then sees a damping rate $\delta^2\nu^2 = h^2\nu^2/T^2$. Coherent oscillation persists up to a cutoff

$$\nu_{\text{cut}} \approx T/h, \tag{30}$$

above which $\delta^2 u_{xxt}$ dominates and converts coherent wave energy into incoherent heat. **The cutoff scales linearly with T — this is Wien's displacement law derived from the PDE rather than from quantisation.** The Planck spectrum

$$R_{\text{Planck}}(\nu, T) \propto \nu^2 T \cdot \chi(\nu/\nu_{\text{cut}}), \qquad \chi(x) \to 1 \text{ for } x \ll 1,\ \chi(x) \to 0 \text{ for } x \gg 1, \tag{31}$$

then emerges as the Rayleigh–Jeans intensity below cutoff times a cutoff factor whose physical origin is the second damping term. The blackbody acts as a high-pass filter that re-emits frequencies below cut-off and stores frequencies above cut-off as heat. Closing the loop, an additional balance equation for T, $\dot{T} = \int (f^2 - \gamma\, u_{tt}^2)\, dx$, makes the system self-consistent: hotter bodies have larger ν_{cut}, hence emit a wider band, hence radiate more total energy, recovering the Stefan–Boltzmann T^4 scaling on integration.

Photoelectric and Compton effects without photons. The same wave equation also explains the historically pivotal evidence for photons. The photoelectric effect requires that ejected electrons have kinetic energy proportional to the incident frequency above a threshold, a fact that a linear wave equation alone cannot reproduce but Einstein's photon model fits cleanly. The viscous term $-\delta^2 u_{xxt}$, with $\delta = h/T$, supplies exactly the frequency-dependent threshold behaviour: only modes with $\nu < \nu_{\text{cut}} = T/h$ are sustained as coherent waves, while higher-frequency input is converted to incoherent kinetic motion of the absorbing system. The frequency threshold of the photoelectric effect is therefore a property of the dissipative wave equation, not evidence for a particle nature of light. The Compton effect admits an analogous treatment as resonant inelastic interaction between coherent and incoherent modes. The two phenomena that established the photon picture in 1905 and 1923 thus admit deterministic-PDE explanations consistent with the rest of this paper's anti-statistical program.

Three-term energy balance: $R + H = F$. At stationary state the energy balance for the system (26) takes the form

$$R + H = F, \qquad R = \int \gamma\, u_{tt}^2\, dxdt, \quad H = \int \delta^2 u_{xt}^2\, dxdt, \quad F = \int f^2\, dxdt, \tag{32}$$

expressing that incident energy F is either re-emitted as outgoing radiation R or stored as internal heat H. The two channels switch at the cutoff: below ν_{cut} the radiation reaction dominates, $R \approx F$ and the body re-emits; above ν_{cut} the viscous term dominates, $H \approx F$ and the body absorbs as heat. The blackbody is therefore literally a high-pass filter: low-frequency input passes through, high-frequency input is converted to internal heat.

Universality (Kirchhoff). Different bodies have different parameters (γ, δ), but the standard *reference* blackbody is defined by the universal choice γ maximal (full Abraham–Lorentz radiation reaction) and h minimal (smallest coordination length / finest precision). All bodies that achieve these limits radiate the same $R(\nu, T)$ at given ν and T — this is Kirchhoff's universality of blackbody radiation, recovered here as a property of the limiting choice of PDE parameters rather than as a separate postulate. Real bodies are "greybodies" with smaller γ and/or larger h; their emission is bounded above by the universal Planck curve.

Two-body radiative heat transfer. For two bodies B and $\bar{B}$ in radiative contact (each obeying (26) with the other's emitted field as forcing), the difference field $W = u - \bar{u}$ satisfies the homogeneous damped equation $W_{tt} - W_{xx} - \gamma W_{ttt} = 0$. Multiplying by W_t and integrating gives

$$G(t) = G(0) - \int_0^t \int \gamma\, W_{tt}^2\, dx\, ds, \qquad G(t) = \tfrac{1}{2} \int (W_t^2 + W_x^2)\, dx, \tag{33}$$

so $G(t)$ decays monotonically: the temperature difference between the two bodies decreases under radiative contact. Net heat flows from warmer to cooler. The 2nd Law of radiation is thereby derived as a theorem about the deterministic PDE pair, not posited as an independent statistical principle.

Photoelectric effect without photons. The same model with a frequency-dependent dissipation term reproduces Einstein's photoelectric law $K + W = h\nu$ (without postulating photons). Replace $-\delta^2 u_{xxt}$ by a non-linear viscosity acting only on modes whose ratio of accelerations to velocities exceeds a threshold:

$$\delta^2(u_\nu) = \alpha(T) \left(\frac{h\,|\ddot{u}_\nu|}{|\dot{u}_\nu|} - W \right)_+ , \tag{34}$$

where $(\cdot)_+$ denotes the positive part. Since $|\ddot{u}_\nu|/|\dot{u}_\nu| \approx \nu$, the term activates exactly when $h\nu > W$ — the photoelectric threshold. The energy dissipated above threshold corresponds to the kinetic energy of ejected electrons, scaling linearly with ν above the critical frequency $\nu_{\text{crit}} = W/h$, in agreement with Einstein's 1905 law and Millikan's 1916 measurements [8]. The frequency threshold of the photoelectric effect is therefore a property of the dissipative wave equation, not evidence for a particle nature of light. The Compton effect admits an analogous resonant-inelastic treatment. The two phenomena that historically established the photon picture in 1905 and 1923 thus admit deterministic-PDE explanations consistent with the rest of this paper's anti-statistical program.

Connection to RealQM. The structural parallel is exact: in both cases the move is to replace a probabilistic statistical postulate (Born rule for matter; photon statistics for radiation) with a deterministic continuum equation plus a regularisation length/precision scale (kernel softening r_c for matter; numerical resolution h for radiation), and to recover the macroscopic law as a property of the regularised PDE rather than as the average of an underlying random process. RealQM and the blackbody wave model are siblings of the same anti-statistical program. A natural future direction is the unified system that couples electrons under the RealQM PDE to the radiation field (26): matter and radiation, deterministic throughout, with all thermal and spectral phenomena emerging from the equations themselves.

12 The collaboration as part of the contribution

The mathematical reformulation in Section 2 and the hierarchy of Levels 1–4 are the work of the human author. They predate the AI collaboration and have been developed over a decade of independent work. The author also wrote the initial p5.js prototype simulations that established the numerical core (real-space grid, ITP, Poisson solver, basic visualization) used as the starting point for the WebGPU implementation. The full WebGPU port, the validation suite, the systematic kernel-architecture sweeps reported in Section 4, and the curated public Gallery were developed from those starting templates through extended collaboration with **Claude**, an AI code assistant produced by Anthropic.

We document the pattern of the collaboration here because we believe it is a worth-reporting example of how a single mathematical mind can produce research-grade interactive scientific software with an AI engineering partner.

The human posed mathematical and chemical questions: "What if the model uses $Z = 2$ instead of $Z = 4$ for carbon?" "Does the H-bond force correctly point toward the acceptor lone pair?" "Why does this geometry prefer stretched over bonded?" The AI translated these into runnable simulations, identified bugs in real time, ran systematic parameter sweeps, computed and tabulated results, drafted candidate gallery cards, and challenged claims that did not survive scrutiny.

The interaction was iterative and surprisingly productive: a question asked at 9:00 might be answered with a working scan file at 9:05, partial results at 9:30, a full sweep table at 10:00, and a refined analysis incorporating the latest data by 10:30. Across many such cycles, the validation table reported in Section 4 was assembled.

We also record honestly where the AI's interpretations needed correction. Several times the AI prematurely concluded that a result was "within X% of experiment" before convergence had been confirmed; in each case the human pushed back and the AI revised. The Gallery's "Assessment by Claude" card reflects this — its caveats were rewritten more than once during the project as the evidence accumulated.

We find that the right framing for the collaboration is **mathematical mind + AI engineering partner**: the human supplies the theory, the questions, the chemical intuition, and the standards for what counts as evidence; the AI supplies the implementation, the systematic exploration, and the speed. Neither could have produced this result alone in any reasonable timeframe.

13 Code and reproducibility

The full RealQM implementation, including the validation suite, the systematic kernel-architecture sweeps reported in Section 4, and the curated public Gallery, is available at:

- **Code repository:** `https://github.com/Claes542/RealMolecule`
- **Interactive Gallery:** `https://claes542.github.io/RealMolecule/gallery.html`
- **RealQM project site:** `https://physicalquantummechanics.blogspot.com`
- **Author's blog:** `https://claesjohnson.blogspot.com`
- **Browser requirements:** Chrome 113+, Edge 113+, or Safari 17+ (WebGPU)
- **Hardware:** any modern integrated or discrete GPU ($\sim$1 GB GPU memory for $\sim 200^3$ grid)

All results in this paper can be reproduced by opening the relevant `.html` files in the repository. Each binding-energy data point in Section 4 corresponds to a specific URL parameterization (R, r_c) of a specific scan file (e.g., `mol_fast_H4X_Z2_scan.html?R=1.0&rc=0.2`). The Gallery's "Kernel Splitting" and "Periodic-Table Coverage" cards link directly to the scan files used to generate the reported numbers.

We deliberately do not include figures in this preprint. The Gallery contains many interactive visualizations — density slices, 3D molecular views, force-arrow displays, real-time dynamics — that are far more informative as live simulations than as static images. Readers wishing to inspect electron densities, watch molecules relax, or run their own kernel-architecture sweeps should consult the Gallery directly.

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Competing interests

None declared.

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