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ABSTRACT

The vibronic coupling constants of the cyclopentadienyl radical have been calculated with G_0W_0 , HF, and density functional theory (DFT) with various exchange-correlation functionals such as PBE, PBE0, LC- ω PBE, and the non-empirically tuned LC- ω PBE*. The vibronic coupling constants for HF and DFT were derived using the gradients of the eigenvalues of the degenerate HOMOs of the closed-shell cyclopentadienyl anion, while the gradients of the corresponding quasiparticle energy levels were used in the case of G_0W_0 . The differences between the linear vibronic constants obtained using HF and DFT were found to be small and reduced further when the G_0W_0 correction is applied to HF and DFT. Finally, the linear vibronic coupling constants calculated with G_0W_0 were found to agree well with the values obtained using high level wave function methods in the literature, which suggests that G_0W_0 can be a useful tool toward the study of vibronic coupling.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The adiabatic potential energy surface¹ (APES) is an important concept in the study of various problems of interest in chemistry. For example, a static study of reaction mechanisms would involve mapping out the APES of the system to determine the possible pathways between the reactants and products.^{2–4} A thorough comparison of the saddle points found on the APES would then allow one to propose a likely mechanism for the reaction of interest. Other than that, studies of the protein folding process in biological systems require a precise knowledge of the energies of the system with respect to its conformational space.^{5–7}

It is, thus, of great interest to be able to determine the APES of a chemical system accurately. Ideally, the basis of “accuracy” in the context of a computational result should be its performance with regard to the experiment.⁸ However, as an auxiliary concept in theoretical chemistry, the APES has no experimental counterpart that is directly measurable. Instead, the gradient and curvature of the APES have to be related to spectroscopic observables to ascertain the accuracy of the computed APES. In particular, the derivatives

of the APES along the normal modes of a molecule are equivalent to the vibronic coupling or the coupling between a molecule’s electronic and vibrational motions.^{9–11} Hence, the aim of this work is to examine the use of computation toward the calculation of vibronic coupling constants.

Computationally, vibronic coupling constants have been derived using density functional theory (DFT),^{12–21} Hartree–Fock (HF),^{22,23} and post-HF methods such as complete active space self-consistent field (CASSCF),^{20,24–32} equation-of-motion ionization potential coupled-cluster singles and doubles (EOMIP-CCSD),^{33–35} or multireference configuration interaction (MRCI).^{36–38} Nevertheless, there exist some challenges with the use of these computational methods.

First, it is a well-known fact that HF does not account for electron correlation, i.e., individual electrons do not “see” another individual electron within the HF method.³⁹ Because of that, the so-called HF orbital energies (strictly, the eigenvalues of the one-electron Fock operator) are overstabilized due to the neglect of inter-electronic repulsion. As a result, Koopmans’ theorem,⁴⁰ which states that the magnitude of the energy of the highest occupied

molecular orbital (HOMO) should be equal to the ionization potential of the molecule, usually does not hold. As the calculation of vibronic coupling constants can be directly related to the computed orbital energies (see Sec. II A below), this, in turn, implies that the use of HF orbital energies to calculate vibronic coupling constants might be problematic.

Next, starting with a HF wave function, post-HF methods attempt to alleviate the lack of electron correlation in HF by adding more terms to give a more complete treatment of electron–electron repulsion. For instance, the electronic wave function is treated using multiple Slater determinants in multireference methods such as CASSCF, instead of a single determinant in HF.^{39,41,42} This is often necessary for systems such as diradicals or metal complexes, where HF is insufficient.^{43–45} However, the computational cost of such methods is usually significantly higher; the cost of the CASSCF scales exponentially with the system size.^{41,42} As such, the usage of post-HF methods is often limited to small and medium sized molecules.

Because of the limitations of these wave function methods, DFT is often the computational tool of choice for larger molecules. One major issue with DFT lies with the use of approximate exchange–correlation functionals within the Kohn–Sham formalism of DFT. More specifically, these approximate exchange–correlation functionals are developed by parameterizing against some theoretical constraints⁴⁶ and/or experimental data.^{47–49} As a result, there is often a strong dependence of the computed properties on the choice of the exchange–correlation functional used, where functionals usually perform well against systems similar to those used in its parameterization, but not necessarily for systems with a different chemical motif.^{50–52} The issue with DFT is, thus, its reliability: the quality of the results obtained for the system and property of interest using a particular exchange–correlation functional cannot be known *a priori*, and each individual functional has to be tested rigorously before it can be used with some confidence.

On the other hand, there has been a growing interest in the use of Green's function-based approaches in recent years. Many observables of interest are related to the expectation value of a one-particle operator, which can be expressed in terms of the one-particle Green's function in turn.^{53–55} Thus, explicit knowledge of the one-particle Green's function would in principle allow these observables to be computed exactly. However, the one-particle Green's function for a real system has to be obtained by solving the Dyson equation relating the interacting and non-interacting systems, which includes a self-energy term containing all electron correlation effects. Similar to the problem of the exchange–correlation functional in DFT, the exact self-energy term is unknown and has to be treated approximately.

Hedin's approach to this problem was to expand the self-energy in terms of the one-particle Green's function G and a screened Coulomb interaction W .⁵⁶ In contrast to the approximate exchange–correlation functionals in DFT, there is a clear physical meaning in the expansion of the self-energy in this approach, and it allows the treatment of electron correlation to be systematically improved upon by increasing the number of terms in the expansion of the self-energy. This is followed by the GW approximation, which neglects the vertex correction and considers only the first term in the expansion of the self-energy.⁵⁶ Making a rough comparison to the HF method, the Coulomb potential in HF is dependent upon a static dielectric constant, while the screened Coulomb potential in GW

allows the polarization of the electron cloud in the system with respect to an individual electron to be accounted for.

In practice, carrying out a fully self-consistent GW approximation is still computationally demanding, and the G_0W_0 method is frequently used instead. In G_0W_0 , G and W are calculated using the eigenvalues and orbitals obtained from a mean-field (HF or DFT) calculation and the GW quasiparticle energies computed by applying a single correction to the initial set of eigenvalues.^{57,58} Despite this simplification, the G_0W_0 approach has shown some promise toward overcoming some of the aforementioned issues with the current computational approaches. As mentioned, the use of HF orbital energies to calculate the ionization potential of a molecule usually results in an overestimation of the actual value, while for DFT, a “pure” exchange–correlation functional without any HF exchange results in an underestimation instead.^{59,60} These systematic errors have been shown to be reduced upon applying the G_0W_0 correction,^{61–67} which supports the use of the G_0W_0 approximation to improve upon HF or DFT calculations.

It is, thus, of interest to examine the applicability of the G_0W_0 method toward the calculation of vibronic coupling constants. The number of studies using G_0W_0 to describe vibronic coupling is still relatively limited.^{68–73} In particular, the vibronic coupling constants of the C_{60} anion have been calculated using the G_0W_0 correction to the local density approximation (LDA), and the computed results are shown to agree well with those derived from the experiment.^{18,19,68} To the best of our knowledge, this is the only molecular system that has been examined to compare the vibronic coupling constants derived with G_0W_0 and experiment, so far. Hence, there is still a need to examine the use of G_0W_0 toward describing vibronic coupling, and we will, thus, apply G_0W_0 and DFT to calculate the vibronic coupling constants of the cyclopentadienyl radical in this work.

The cyclopentadienyl radical has been subject to a large number of experimental and theoretical studies in the context of the Jahn–Teller (JT) effect,^{9,15,17,22,29–32,34,74–84} some of which are discussed here. Applegate *et al.* used both high level wave function methods (CASSCF/6-31G*) and dispersed fluorescence spectroscopy to determine the vibronic coupling constants of the cyclopentadienyl radical.³⁰ Sato *et al.* used generalized restricted HF theory and CASSCF to compute vibronic coupling constants as the matrix elements of the electronic operator of a vibronic Hamiltonian.²² Andjelković and co-workers used DFT to compute the JT stabilization energy of the cyclopentadienyl radical.^{15,17} Ichino *et al.* measured the photoelectron spectrum of the cyclopentadienyl anion and used EOMIP-CCSD calculations to construct a model JT potential for the cyclopentadienyl radical.³⁴ Finally, Sharma *et al.* presented a theoretical and computational framework to calculate the rotational parameters for molecules subject to a JT distortion, including the cyclopentadienyl radical.⁷⁵

The abundance of previous studies looking at the cyclopentadienyl radical, thus, makes it an excellent test case to check the applicability of the G_0W_0 approximation for the calculation of vibronic coupling constants. In addition, as the G_0W_0 quasiparticle energies have been shown to be significantly affected by the exchange–correlation functional used as the starting point,^{61,62,65} we will also examine the effect of the exchange–correlation functional on the calculated vibronic coupling constants, as well as the result of applying the G_0W_0 correction on top of the DFT results.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. The protocol used to derive the vibronic coupling constants of the cyclopentadienyl radical and a brief overview of the G_0W_0 approximation is given in Sec. II. Computational details are then given in Sec. III, followed by the results and discussion in Sec. IV and concluding remarks in Sec. V.

II. THEORY

A. Vibronic coupling

We follow the protocol used by Sato and co-workers.²² The Hamiltonian H_{mol} for a molecular system can be expressed as

$$H_{mol}(\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{R}) = T_n(\mathbf{R}) + T_e(\mathbf{r}) + U(\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{R}), \quad (1)$$

where $\mathbf{R}$ and $\mathbf{r}$ represent the nuclear and electronic coordinates of the molecule, respectively, T_n and T_e are the nuclear and electronic kinetic energy operators, respectively, and the $U(\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{R})$ potential term is given as a sum of electrostatic electron–electron, electron–nuclear, and nuclear–nuclear interactions,

$$U(\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{R}) = U_{ee}(\mathbf{r}) + U_{ne}(\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{R}) + U_{nn}(\mathbf{R}). \quad (2)$$

The electronic Hamiltonian H_e for the molecule is then

$$H_e(\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{R}) = T_e(\mathbf{r}) + U(\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{R}). \quad (3)$$

Within the adiabatic approximation, the electronic wave function $\varphi_m(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R})$ is the solution to the electronic Hamiltonian H_e ,

$$\hat{H}_e \varphi_m(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R}) = E_m(\mathbf{R}) \varphi_m(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R}), \quad (4)$$

where $E_m(\mathbf{R})$ is the potential energy surface associated with the electronic state m . The electronic Hamiltonian can then be written in terms of the electronic Hamiltonian about a set of reference nuclear coordinates $\mathbf{R}_0$ as

$$\begin{aligned} H_e(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R}) &= T_e(\mathbf{r}) + U(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R}) \\ &= T_e(\mathbf{r}) + U(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R}_0) + (U(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R}) - U(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R}_0)) \\ &= H_e(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R}_0) + \Delta U(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R}). \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

The difference between the distorted and reference nuclear coordinates for a small change in the molecular geometry can be expressed as a Taylor series in the basis of mass-weighted normal coordinates Q_i about $\mathbf{R}_0$.⁸⁵ The $\Delta U(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R})$ term can then be written as

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta U &= \sum_i \left(\frac{\partial U}{\partial Q_i} \right)_{\mathbf{R}_0} Q_i + \frac{1}{2!} \sum_i \sum_j \left(\frac{\partial^2 U}{\partial Q_i \partial Q_j} \right)_{\mathbf{R}_0} Q_i Q_j + \dots \\ &= \sum_i V_i^{(1)} Q_i + \frac{1}{2!} \sum_i \sum_j V_{ij}^{(2)} Q_i Q_j + \dots, \end{aligned} \quad (6)$$

where $i, j = 1, 2, \dots, 3N - 6$ refers to the vibrational normal modes of the molecule ($3N - 5$ in the case of a linear molecule), and $V_{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n}^{(n)}$ is the n th order vibronic coupling constant,

$$V_{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n}^{(n)} = \left(\frac{\partial^n U}{\partial Q_{i_1} \partial Q_{i_2} \dots \partial Q_{i_n}} \right)_{\mathbf{R}_0}. \quad (7)$$

Note that only terms that are dependent on the nuclear coordinates, $U_{ne}(\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{R})$ and $U_{nn}(\mathbf{R})$, appear in $V_{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n}^{(n)}$.

Equation (6), thus, describes the coupling between the electronic and vibrational motions of a molecule. In the theory of vibronic coupling, the crude adiabatic approximation is used instead of the Born–Oppenheimer or Born–Huang adiabatic approximations;¹¹ i.e., the change in the electronic energy of the molecule as it is deformed from its reference structure is accounted for by the potential ΔU term, while the electronic wave functions at $\mathbf{R}_0$, $\varphi_m(\mathbf{r}; \mathbf{R}_0)$, are used as the basis of the electronic operators in the vibronic Hamiltonian.

To calculate $V_{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n}^{(n)}$, we can write Eq. (6) explicitly as a sum of one-electron operators and a nuclear–nuclear repulsion term, which corresponds to the derivatives of U_{ne} and U_{nn} , respectively. For example, the first-order vibronic coupling operator with respect to a normal mode Q_i can be written as

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{V}_i^{(1)} &= - \sum_a \sum_\alpha \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial Q_i} \left(\frac{Z_\alpha e^2}{|\mathbf{r}_a - \mathbf{R}_\alpha|} \right) \right]_{\mathbf{R}_0} + \frac{\partial U_{nn}}{\partial Q_i} \\ &= \sum_a \hat{v}_i^{(1)} + \frac{\partial U_{nn}}{\partial Q_i}, \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

with the one-electron operator

$$\hat{v}_i^{(1)} = - \sum_\alpha \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial Q_i} \left(\frac{Z_\alpha e^2}{|\mathbf{r}_a - \mathbf{R}_\alpha|} \right) \right]_{\mathbf{R}_0}. \quad (9)$$

The indices a and α run over the electrons and nuclei, respectively, Z_α refers to the charge of nucleus α , and e is the electronic charge. Finally, note that the nuclear repulsion term will be zero except for normal modes with the totally symmetric representation.

We now consider the system of interest in this work, the cyclopentadienyl radical, C_5H_5 . The equilibrium geometry of the cyclopentadienyl anion, which has D_{5h} symmetry, is used as the reference structure $\mathbf{R}_0$ (Fig. 1). The cyclopentadienyl radical with D_{5h} symmetry has a degenerate electronic state ${}^2E_1''$ in its ground state and will undergo a JT distortion to lower its symmetry to the C_{2v} point group.⁸⁴ We will denote the two degenerate electronic states as $|E_1''\theta\rangle$ and $|E_1''\epsilon\rangle$, which decompose into the b_1 and a_2 states, respectively, when the molecular symmetry is lowered from D_{5h} to the C_{2v} point group.⁸⁶

The selection rules to determine which vibrational normal modes are JT active can be obtained from the symmetric product of

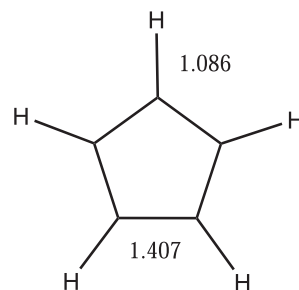


FIG. 1. PBE0/cc-pVTZ optimized structure of the cyclopentadienyl anion.

the irreducible representations of the degenerate electronic states⁸⁷ as

$$E_1'' \otimes E_1'' = A_1' \oplus E_2'. \quad (10)$$

As such, only normal modes with a_1' or e_2' symmetry have a non-zero linear vibronic coupling constant, i.e., are linearly JT active. There are a total of ten such normal modes for the cyclopentadienyl radical: two a_1' normal modes and four pairs of e_2' degenerate normal modes.

The first-order vibronic coupling matrix for the e_2' normal modes can be written as

$$\mathbf{V}_i^{(1)} = \begin{pmatrix} \langle E_1'' \theta | \hat{V}_i^{(1)} | E_1'' \theta \rangle \langle E_1'' \theta | \hat{V}_i^{(1)} | E_1'' \epsilon \rangle \\ \langle E_1'' \epsilon | \hat{V}_i^{(1)} | E_1'' \theta \rangle \langle E_1'' \epsilon | \hat{V}_i^{(1)} | E_1'' \epsilon \rangle \end{pmatrix}. \quad (11)$$

Here, a bold $\mathbf{V}$ is used to refer to the matrix representation of $\hat{V}_i^{(1)}$ in the space spanned by the two degenerate electronic states $|E_1'' \theta\rangle$ and $|E_1'' \epsilon\rangle$.

Under the Wigner–Eckart theorem,⁸⁵ the vibronic coupling matrix for the i th pair of e_2' degenerate vibrational modes $[e_2'(i_\theta)$ and $e_2'(i_\epsilon)]$ can be reduced as

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{V}_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} &= \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \langle E_1'' | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \rangle \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & 0 \\ 0 & -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \langle E_1'' | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \rangle \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \end{aligned} \quad (12)$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{V}_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} &= \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \langle E_1'' | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \rangle \begin{pmatrix} 0 & \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} & 0 \end{pmatrix} \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \langle E_1'' | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \rangle \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \end{aligned} \quad (13)$$

where $\langle E_1'' | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \rangle$ is the reduced matrix element. The vibronic coupling constant $V_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)}$ for this pair of degenerate modes is then

$$\begin{aligned} V_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} &= \frac{1}{2} \langle E_1'' | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \rangle \\ &= \langle E_1'' \theta | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i_\theta)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \theta \rangle \\ &= -\langle E_1'' \epsilon | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i_\theta)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \epsilon \rangle \\ &= \langle E_1'' \theta | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i_\epsilon)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \epsilon \rangle \\ &= \langle E_1'' \epsilon | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i_\epsilon)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \theta \rangle. \end{aligned} \quad (14)$$

If the electronic wave function of the cyclopentadienyl radical is treated as a single Slater determinant, Eq. (8) then allows the relevant elements of the vibronic coupling matrix to be calculated as the sum of the integrals of the one-electron operators $\hat{v}_i^{(1)}$ over all occupied spatial orbitals m or the orbital vibronic coupling integrals,

$$\begin{aligned} V_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} &= \langle E_1'' \theta | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i_\theta)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \theta \rangle \\ &= \sum_m n_m \langle \psi_m | \hat{v}_{e_2'(i_\theta)}^{(1)} | \psi_m \rangle. \end{aligned} \quad (15)$$

Here, n_m is the occupation number of spatial orbital ψ_m in the Slater determinant $|E_1'' \theta\rangle$. By considering the symmetric product of the irreducible representations of the spatial orbitals, this sum can be reduced to the orbitals with E_1' and E_1'' symmetry. Finally, because of the symmetry of the matrix elements in Eq. (12), the orbital vibronic coupling integrals for a degenerate pair of doubly occupied orbitals cancel each other out and do not contribute to the overall sum in Eq. (15). As a result, the vibronic coupling constants can, thus, be reduced to the orbital vibronic coupling constants of the doubly occupied frontier orbital, e.g., ψ_ϵ in $|E_1'' \theta\rangle$,

$$\begin{aligned} V_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} &= \langle E_1'' \theta | \hat{V}_{e_2'(i_\theta)}^{(1)} | E_1'' \theta \rangle \\ &= \sum_m n_m \langle \psi_m | \hat{v}_{e_2'(i_\theta)}^{(1)} | \psi_m \rangle \\ &= \sum_{m \in E_1' \oplus E_1''} n_m \langle \psi_m | \hat{v}_{e_2'(i_\theta)}^{(1)} | \psi_m \rangle \\ &= \langle \psi_\epsilon | \hat{v}_{e_2'(i_\theta)}^{(1)} | \psi_\epsilon \rangle. \end{aligned} \quad (16)$$

Computationally, the electronic degeneracy in the neutral radical implies the necessity of using methods that account for multireference effects as well as dynamic electron correlation. Indeed, the use of single-determinant computational methods has been shown to result in symmetry-breaking in the computed electronic states of the open-shell cyclopentadienyl radical and vibronic coupling matrices with the wrong symmetry in turn.²² Therefore, instead of the cyclopentadienyl radical, we will calculate the orbital vibronic coupling constants of the two degenerate HOMOs for the cyclopentadienyl anion to derive the vibronic coupling constants of the cyclopentadienyl radical in this work.

Here, the orbitals of interest are the degenerate HOMOs of the cyclopentadienyl radical/anion (Fig. 3). These are the π -orbitals of a highly symmetric D_{5h} system and are energetically far from the other occupied orbitals in the system. As such, we expect that they should remain largely unchanged with respect to the addition or removal of an electron. Thus, as the orbitals for the radical and anion are largely similar to one another, the use of the orbitals obtained with calculations on the closed-shell anion should not affect the computed vibronic coupling constants significantly. In addition, unlike the neutral radical, the cyclopentadienyl anion is a closed-shell system, which allows us to avoid the problem of symmetry-breaking in DFT.⁸⁸

Summarizing this section, the vibronic coupling constant $V_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)}$ has, thus, been derived to be

$$V_{e_2'(i)}^{(1)} = \langle \psi_\epsilon | \hat{v}_{e_2'(i_\theta)}^{(1)} | \psi_\epsilon \rangle, \quad (17)$$

where the orbital vibronic coupling constant $\langle \psi_\theta | \hat{v}_{e_2'(i_\theta)}^{(1)} | \psi_\theta \rangle$ is calculated as the gradient of the Kohn–Sham orbital or G_0W_0 quasiparticle energies for the closed-shell cyclopentadienyl anion.

B. G_0W_0 approximation

A brief overview of the G_0W_0 method is presented here.^{55,63,89} The Green's function for a system of non-interacting electrons treated with a single Slater determinant can be written as

$$G_{\text{non-int}}(r_1, r_2, \omega) = \sum_i \frac{\psi_i(r_1)\psi_i(r_2)}{\omega - \varepsilon_i - i\eta} + \sum_a \frac{\psi_a(r_1)\psi_a(r_2)}{\omega - \varepsilon_a + i\eta}, \quad (18)$$

where ε and ψ are the one-electron eigenvalues and eigenstates, respectively, ω is the frequency with respect to a Fourier transformation of the time difference $t_1 - t_2$, the indices i and a refer to the occupied and unoccupied orbitals, respectively, and η is a positive infinitesimal. Using the simplified notation $\mathbf{1} = (r_1, t_1)$, the Green's function for an interacting system can be written with the Dyson equation,

$$G(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) = G_{\text{non-int}}(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) + \int d(\mathbf{3}, \mathbf{4}) G_{\text{non-int}}(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{3}) \Sigma(\mathbf{3}, \mathbf{4}) G(\mathbf{4}, \mathbf{2}). \quad (19)$$

The Σ term contains all inter-electronic effects and is known as the self-energy term. Similar to the challenge of determining the exact exchange-correlation functional in DFT, the problem is then to find a suitable approximation for the self-energy.

Hedin's approach was to expand the self-energy perturbatively in terms of a screened Coulomb interaction W ,⁵⁶ with the first-order term given by

$$\Sigma(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) = i \int d(\mathbf{3}, \mathbf{4}) G(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{3}^+) W(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{4}) \Gamma(\mathbf{3}, \mathbf{2}, \mathbf{4}), \quad (20)$$

where W is the screened Coulomb interaction,

$$W(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) = V(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) + \int d(\mathbf{3}, \mathbf{4}) V(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{3}) P(\mathbf{3}, \mathbf{4}) W(\mathbf{4}, \mathbf{2}), \quad (21)$$

and Γ is the vertex function,

$$\Gamma(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}, \mathbf{3}) = \delta(\mathbf{1} - \mathbf{2}) \delta(\mathbf{2} - \mathbf{3}) + \int d(\mathbf{4}, \mathbf{5}, \mathbf{6}, \mathbf{7}) \frac{\delta \Sigma(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2})}{\delta G(\mathbf{4}, \mathbf{5})} G(\mathbf{4}, \mathbf{6}) \Gamma(\mathbf{7}, \mathbf{5}) \Gamma(\mathbf{6}, \mathbf{7}, \mathbf{3}). \quad (22)$$

W is calculated using the bare Coulomb interaction $V(r_1, r_2) = e^2/|r_1 - r_2|$ and a polarization term P ,

$$P(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) = -i \int d(\mathbf{3}, \mathbf{4}) G(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{3}) G(\mathbf{4}, \mathbf{1}^+) \Gamma(\mathbf{3}, \mathbf{2}, \mathbf{4}). \quad (23)$$

Equations (19)–(23) are known as the Hedin equations⁵⁶ and have to be solved self-consistently.

Next, the GW approximation assumes the second term of the vertex function in Eq. (22) to be zero, which allows Eqs. (20) and (23) to be simplified to

$$\Sigma(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) = iG(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}^+) W(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}^+) \quad (24)$$

and

$$P(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) = -iG(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) G(\mathbf{2}, \mathbf{1}^+). \quad (25)$$

Within the random phase approximation, the density response function for a non-interacting system, χ_0 , is taken to be P directly and can be calculated using Eqs. (18) and (25). The dielectric function ϵ is then

$$\begin{aligned} \epsilon(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) &= \delta(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) - \int d(\mathbf{3}) V(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{3}) \chi_0(\mathbf{3}, \mathbf{2}) \\ &= \delta(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) - \int d(\mathbf{3}) V(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{3}) P(\mathbf{3}, \mathbf{2}). \end{aligned} \quad (26)$$

W can then be obtained as

$$W(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{2}) = \int d(\mathbf{3}) \epsilon^{-1}(\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{3}) V(\mathbf{3}, \mathbf{2}). \quad (27)$$

In practice, a GW calculation would start with a mean-field calculation and uses the converged orbitals and eigenvalues to compute the Green's function for the non-interacting system [Eq. (18)]; i.e., the non-interacting system is treated with a mean-field calculation. From that starting point, it is then possible in principle to solve the coupled integral equations (19) and (24)–(27) self-consistently to obtain the GW self-energy of the system, albeit the process of doing so remains very computationally challenging.

The G_0W_0 approach is then a further simplification to the GW approximation and only computes the GW self-energy once. This is usually denoted as $G_0W_0@XCF$, where XCF is the starting point of the G_0W_0 calculation, e.g., $G_0W_0@PBE0$ for a calculation using the PBE0 functional as a starting point.

The molecular property of interest, the quasiparticle energies in this case, can then be calculated using the self-energy by applying first-order perturbation theory with respect to the eigenvalues of the mean-field calculation, ε_i ,

$$\varepsilon_i^{QP} = \varepsilon_i + \langle \psi_i | \Sigma(\varepsilon_i^{QP}) - V_{XC} | \psi_i \rangle. \quad (28)$$

Here, V_{XC} is the exchange-correlation potential used in the mean-field calculation, and the quasiparticle wave function is assumed to be equal to the HF or DFT wave function ψ_i . Equation (28) can be either be solved iteratively or linearized to give

$$\varepsilon_i^{QP} = \varepsilon_i + Z_i \langle \psi_i | \Sigma(\varepsilon_i) - V_{XC} | \psi_i \rangle, \quad (29)$$

where Σ is assumed to be approximately linear about the quasiparticle energy ε_i^{QP} , and the renormalization factor Z_i is given as

$$Z_i = \left(1 - \left(\frac{\delta \Sigma(\omega)}{\delta \omega} \right)_{\omega=\varepsilon_i} \right)^{-1}. \quad (30)$$

III. COMPUTATIONAL DETAILS

As mentioned in Sec. II A, all calculations in this work were spin restricted calculations on the closed-shell cyclopentadienyl anion. The optimized D_{5h} geometry (Fig. 1, C–C: 1.407 Å, C–H: 1.086 Å) and vibrational normal modes (Table I and Fig. 2) of the parent

TABLE I. Harmonic vibrational frequencies (cm^{-1}) of the cyclopentadienyl anion normal modes ν_i at the PBE0/cc-pVTZ level of theory.

i	Symmetry	Frequency	i	Symmetry	Frequency
1	a'_1	1167.9	8	e''_1	613.9
2		3188.7	9	e'_2	844.3
3	a'_2	1269.2	10		1060.8
4	a''_2	660.9	11		1410.0
5	e'_1	1023.0	12		3138.5
6		1477.6	13	e''_2	628.4
7		3164.4	14		771.7

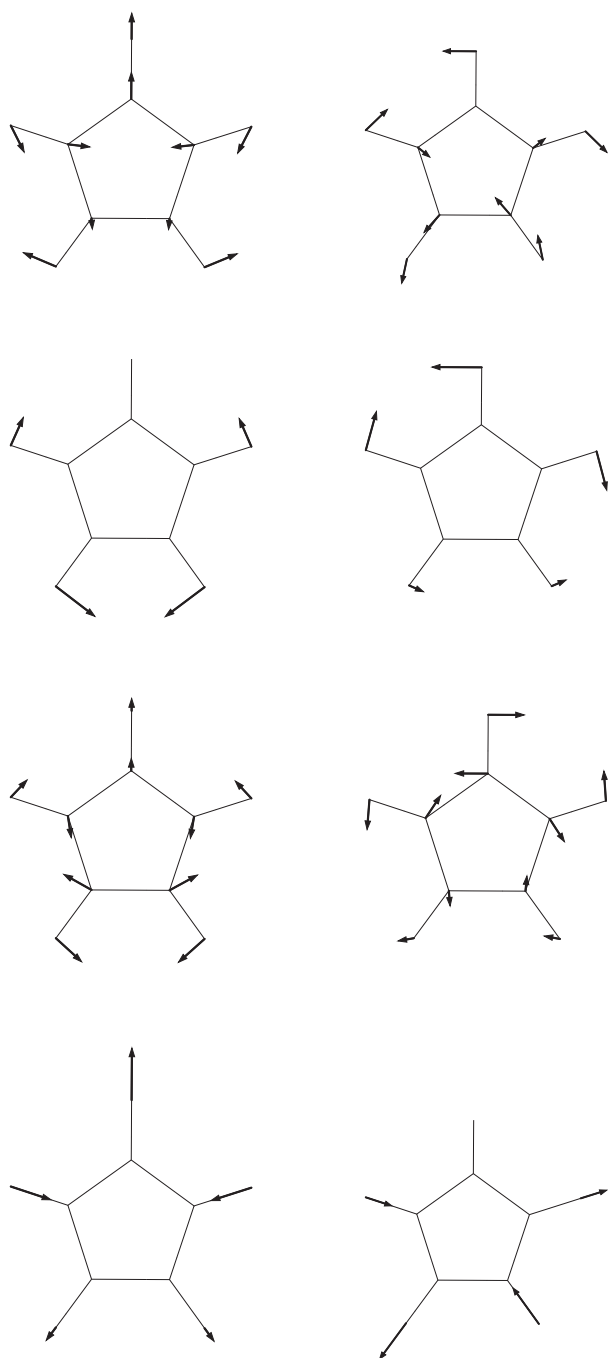


FIG. 2. e'_2 normal modes of the cyclopentadienyl anion within PBE0/cc-pVTZ. Under the subduction $D_{5h} \rightarrow C_{2v}$, the e'_2 representation is reduced to $a_1 \oplus b_2$. $e'_2(\theta)$ and $e'_2(\epsilon)$ then correspond to a_1 and b_2 , respectively.

cyclopentadienyl anion system were first obtained at the PBE0/cc-pVTZ^{90,91} level of theory using Gaussian16.⁹²

CP2K6.1^{93,94} was then used to obtain the energies of the degenerate HOMOs of the cyclopentadienyl anion (Fig. 3) as the parent system is distorted with respect to each e'_2 normal mode individually,

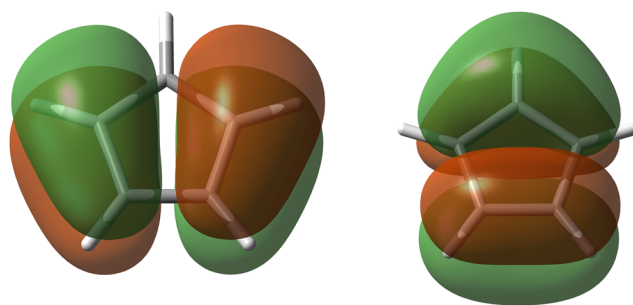


FIG. 3. Degenerate HOMOs of the cyclopentadienyl anion. ψ_θ and ψ_ϵ correspond to the singly occupied HOMOs in the $|E'_1(\theta)\rangle$ and $|E'_1(\epsilon)\rangle$ electronic states of the cyclopentadienyl radical, respectively.

and the results fit to a polynomial (Fig. 4 and [supplementary material S1 A](#)). A similar fitting procedure was also used with the total energy of the parent system to obtain the frequencies of each e'_2 normal mode for the exchange-correlation functionals tested in this work other than PBE0. The effect of using the optimized geometries and vibrational normal modes obtained within PBE⁴⁶ to determine the vibronic coupling constants was also tested and found to be minimal ([supplementary material S1 B](#)).

The PBE, PBE0, LC- ω PBE,⁹⁵ and LC- ω PBE* functionals, as well as HF,³⁹ were used to calculate the orbital vibronic coupling constants with the cc-pVTZ basis set, where the LC- ω PBE* functional refers to the ionization potential (IP)-tuned LC- ω PBE functional.

In a range-separated functional, the exact exchange can be decomposed into separate short and long range components using the error function (erf),

$$\frac{1}{r_{12}} = \frac{1 - [\alpha + \beta \text{erf}(\gamma r_{12})]}{r_{12}} + \frac{\alpha + \beta \text{erf}(\gamma r_{12})}{r_{12}}, \quad (31)$$

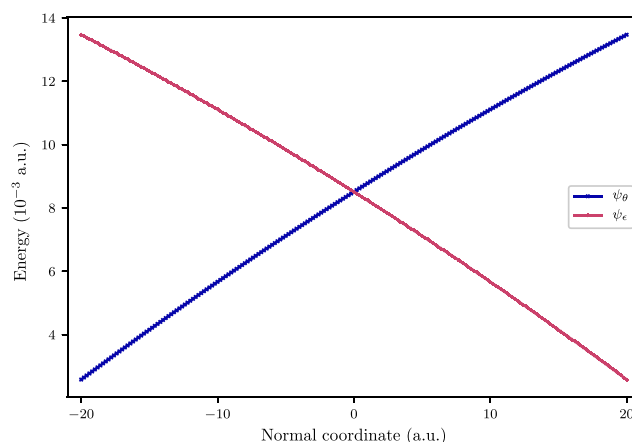


FIG. 4. PBE0 orbital energies of ψ_θ and ψ_ϵ with respect to the distortion along $\nu_{10}(\theta)$. The full set of *ab initio* results are given in the [supplementary material, S1 E](#).

where r_{12} is the inter-electronic distance, α is the fraction of exact exchange present in the short range, which increases to $\alpha + \beta$ in the long range, and γ then determines the partitioning between the short and long range regions. The parameters α , β , and γ are then usually determined by parameterization against some experimental data and set as fixed constants defining a functional.^{96–98}

Alternatively, it has been suggested that these range-separation parameters could be determined non-empirically for each individual molecule instead such that the resulting calculation with the functional obeys a particular theorem or physical condition.^{99–102} For example, in what is known as IP-tuning,^{101–103} Koopmans' theorem is used as the basis to derive the range-separation parameters such that the energy of the HOMO of a molecule matches its ionization potential (IP) calculated as the energy difference between the N and $N - 1$ electron systems, where N is the total number of electrons in the molecule.

Gallandi and co-workers carried out a series of works looking at the effect of using IP-tuned functionals on G_0W_0 and concluded that the tuning procedure leads to an improvement in the performance of DFT and G_0W_0 with respect to the computation of vertical IPs and electron affinities.^{61,104,105} As a result, we also tested the use of the IP-tuned LC- ω PBE* functional to calculate vibronic coupling constants. Further details about the IP-tuning process in this work are given in the [supplementary material](#), S1 C.

Finally, the G_0W_0 correction was applied on top of these functionals and the gradients of the quasiparticle energies corresponding to the energies of the degenerate HOMOs used to calculate the orbital vibronic coupling constants. The RI-cc-pVTZ basis set¹⁰⁶ was used in the resolution of identity approach to the random phase approximation in the G_0W_0 calculations.¹⁰⁷ All basis sets were taken from the basis set exchange.¹⁰⁸ Additional details regarding the CP2K parameters used to ensure the numerical convergence of our results are given in the [supplementary material](#), S1 D.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Ionization potential of the cyclopentadienyl anion

We start our discussion of the results by looking at the IP of the cyclopentadienyl anion calculated using the DFT orbital energies and G_0W_0 quasiparticle energies (Table II). A number of studies^{62,63,65,107,110} have found a strong dependence of the G_0W_0 quasiparticle energies on the basis set; hence, we also calculated the IPs using the cc-pVDZ and cc-pVQZ basis sets.⁹¹ Our findings regarding the basis set effect are largely in agreement with the

findings of these earlier studies. The cc-pVDZ basis set is clearly insufficient for the calculation of ionization energies, with differences of about 0.4 eV to the largest cc-pVQZ basis set for HF and DFT, while the respective differences for G_0W_0 are even higher at about 0.8 eV. The differences between the G_0W_0 IPs calculated with the cc-pVTZ and cc-pVQZ basis sets were found to be a lot smaller in comparison, with differences for the HF and DFT values lying slightly above 0.1 eV on average and about 0.2 eV for the corresponding G_0W_0 differences.

We will, thus, use the results obtained using the largest cc-pVQZ basis set for the rest of this part of the discussion. The experimental IP of the cyclopentadienyl anion has been measured to be 1.808 eV using photoelectron spectroscopy,³⁴ which agrees well with the computational value of 1.785/1.816 eV at the CCSDT/CBS level of theory.¹⁰⁹ In this work, although the accuracy of the IPs computed using DFT and HF was found to vary extensively, with the exception of G_0W_0 @HF, the results after applying the G_0W_0 correction were found to lie within 0.2 eV of the literature values. We, thus, conclude that the IPs calculated within G_0W_0 were found to be in good agreement with the literature.

The utility of the G_0W_0 correction to DFT can be further seen from the G_0W_0 @PBE and G_0W_0 @PBE0 results. The PBE and PBE0 functionals were found to give physically inaccurate negative values for the IP (PBE: -1.066 eV, PBE0: -0.100 eV), which can be explained by the inability of these functionals to properly account for the self-interaction or delocalization error in DFT.^{111–114} The application of the G_0W_0 correction to PBE and PBE0 then gives rise to a substantial improvement in the computed values, with positive IPs calculated for both the G_0W_0 @PBE (1.631 eV) and G_0W_0 @PBE0 (1.817 eV) values, and an excellent agreement between the G_0W_0 @PBE0 result and the literature values on top of that.

The overestimation of the IP calculated with LC- ω PBE is also reduced from 2.412 eV to 1.975 eV with the use of G_0W_0 , but the G_0W_0 @HF result is worsened compared to its initial value. We note that the initial HF value was found to match the literature value closely, which suggests that there could be some error cancellation between the lack of electron correlation and the use of an incomplete basis set. The application of the G_0W_0 correction then improves upon the treatment of electron correlation, which results in the reduction of this error cancellation and, thus, a more inaccurate IP for G_0W_0 @HF as compared to the initial HF result.

A final point to note is the superior accuracy of the IP computed using the LC- ω PBE* functional compared to the original LC- ω PBE functional. The IP calculated within LC- ω PBE (2.412 eV) severely overestimates the literature value, but the accuracy of the IP

TABLE II. Negative G_0W_0 quasiparticle energies (eV) of ψ_θ . The negative orbital energies of the method used as the input for the G_0W_0 calculations are given in parentheses. Experiment: 1.808 ± 0.006 ,³⁴ CCSDT/CBS: 1.785/1.816 for the two separate JT distorted geometries.¹⁰⁹

	G_0W_0 @HF	G_0W_0 @PBE	G_0W_0 @PBE0	G_0W_0 @LC- ω PBE	G_0W_0 @LC- ω PBE*
cc-pVDZ	1.441(1.515)	0.788(-1.561)	0.998(-0.517)	1.152(2.068)	1.128(1.472)
cc-pVTZ	1.951(1.714)	1.391(-1.219)	1.573(-0.232)	1.729(2.310)	1.721(1.754)
cc-pVQZ	2.200(1.825)	1.631(-1.066)	1.817(-0.100)	1.975(2.412)	1.976(1.874)

is considerably improved upon IP-tuning in LC- ω PBE* (1.874 eV), which is in excellent agreement with the literature. The superior performance of cc-pVTZ over cc-pVQZ for the IP-tuned LC- ω PBE* functional can be explained by the difference between the basis sets used in the tuning of the range-separation parameter (cc-pVTZ) and the calculation of the IPs.

On the whole, we can conclude that the use of the G_0W_0 correction does, indeed, return more accurate IPs compared to the initial HF or DFT calculations. As discussed in Sec. II A, the computed orbital or quasiparticle energies are linked to the calculation of vibronic coupling constants. In Subsection IV B, we then examine if this improvement in the computed IPs computed using the orbitals of the cyclopentadienyl anion results in a corresponding improvement in the derived vibronic coupling constants of the cyclopentadienyl radical.

B. Linear vibronic coupling constants

First, although the G_0W_0 quasiparticle energies were observed to be strongly dependent on the basis set (Sec. IV A), the basis set effect on the calculation of the linear vibronic coupling constants was found to be significantly weaker in comparison

([supplementary material S2 A](#)). This can be rationalized by considering the method of determining the linear vibronic coupling constants, which is reliant on the gradients of the orbital or quasiparticle energies instead of their absolute values. As the energy gradients are determined numerically with respect to the distortion of the parent cyclopentadienyl anion, there is likely to be some cancellation in the basis set errors, thus reducing the dependence of the calculated vibronic coupling constants on the basis set. We, thus, used the cc-pVTZ basis set for the rest of this work.

The present results for the computed linear vibronic coupling constants are given in [Tables III](#) and [V](#). We first note that our results satisfy the Wigner–Eckart theorem, with the magnitudes of the linear coupling constants calculated using the $e'_2(\theta)$ or $e'_2(\epsilon)$ normal modes and the gradients of the energies of ψ_θ and ψ_ϵ effectively equal throughout ([supplementary material, S2 B](#)). As per earlier work,^{22,30,34,74} the vibronic coupling constants of ν_{12} (C–H stretching) were found to be a lot smaller than the other three e'_2 normal modes and should not contribute significantly to the JT distortion in the cyclopentadienyl radical. Our discussion of the vibronic coupling constants obtained using the different exchange–correlation functionals and G_0W_0 will, thus, focus on the other three e'_2 normal modes: ν_9 , ν_{10} , and ν_{11} .

TABLE III. Linear vibronic coupling constants of the $e'_2(\theta)$ normal modes calculated using the gradients of the G_0W_0 quasiparticle energies for ψ_θ : (orbital) vibronic coupling constant $V^{(1)}$ (10^{-4} a.u.) and dimensionless vibronic coupling constant $g^{(1)} = V^{(1)}/\sqrt{\hbar\omega^3}$, and the JT stabilization energy $E_{JT}^{(1)} = (1/2)(V^{(1)}/\omega)^2$ (cm^{-1}). ω (cm^{-1}) is the second order derivative of the total HF/DFT energies of the cyclopentadienyl anion along the PBE0/cc-pVTZ vibrational eigenmodes, which are taken to be the harmonic frequencies within the respective methods. The corresponding values obtained with the mean-field DFT/HF method used as the input to the G_0W_0 calculations are given in parentheses, while the results obtained using ψ_ϵ is given in the [supplementary material, S2 B](#).

Mode		G_0W_0 @HF	G_0W_0 @PBE	G_0W_0 @PBE0	G_0W_0 @LC- ω PBE	G_0W_0 @LC- ω PBE*	Expt. ^a	CASSCF ^b	CASSCF ^c	EOMIP-CCSD ^d
ν_9	ω	915	816	844	854	835	872[830]	817	914	834
	$V^{(1)}$	1.75(1.90)	1.59(1.62)	1.65(1.68)	1.69(1.61)	1.67(1.56)	1.54[1.68]	1.76	2.12	1.42
	$g^{(1)}$	0.651(0.705)	0.701(0.715)	0.691(0.702)	0.695(0.661)	0.710(0.666)	0.66[0.72]	0.77	0.79	0.60
	$E_{JT}^{(1)}$	194(227)	201(208)	202(208)	206(187)	211(185)	166[216]	245	285	153
ν_{10}	ω	1146	1030	1061	1066	1044	1041[1058]	1061	1144	1063
	$V^{(1)}$	2.98(3.14)	2.64(2.53)	2.77(2.72)	2.92(2.94)	2.87(2.76)	3.49[2.41]	3.29	4.89	2.94
	$g^{(1)}$	0.791(0.834)	0.823(0.786)	0.825(0.810)	0.862(0.870)	0.874(0.842)	1.07[0.72]	0.98	1.30	0.87
	$E_{JT}^{(1)}$	358(398)	349(318)	361(348)	396(404)	398(370)	594[275]	509	977	404
ν_{11}	ω	1446	1395	1410	1422	1413	1320[1410]	1415	1497	1434
	$V^{(1)}$	6.68(7.34)	5.51(5.04)	5.89(5.69)	6.32(6.61)	6.15(5.97)	3.96[6.01]	7.25	5.97	6.31
	$g^{(1)}$	1.25(1.37)	1.09(0.994)	1.14(1.10)	1.21(1.27)	1.19(1.16)	0.85[1.17]	1.40	1.06	1.20
	$E_{JT}^{(1)}$	1128(1362)	825(690)	921(860)	1044(1141)	1002(944)	477[959]	1387	841	1025
ν_{12}	ω	3239	3189	3139	3235	3214		3040	3263	3169
	$V^{(1)}$	−0.136(0.043)	0.329(0.260)	0.289(0.200)	0.270(0.058)	0.297(0.117)			1.45	0.24
	$g^{(1)}$	−0.008(0.002)	0.019(0.015)	0.017(0.012)	0.015(0.003)	0.017(0.007)			0.08	0.01
	$E_{JT}^{(1)}$	<1(<1)	<1(<1)	<1(<1)	<1(<1)	<1(<1)		<1	10	<1

^aReference 74. The values obtained using an alternative fit to the measured spectra are given in brackets (see the text).

^bScaled CAS(5, 5) results. Method I in Ref. 30. Frequencies were calculated within generalized restricted HF in this work and scaled by 0.89.

^cScaled CAS(5, 8) results in Ref. 22. Frequencies ω were calculated within restricted HF in this work.

^dReference 34, effectively identical to the EOMIP-CCSD values in Ref. 75.

In contrast to the computed IP of the cyclopentadienyl anion discussed earlier in Sec. IV A, the effect of the exchange-correlation functional was found to be small, with the magnitude of the vibronic coupling constants of the individual normal modes roughly following the order: PBE < PBE0, LC- ω PBE* < LC- ω PBE < HF. Thus, unlike the IPs discussed in Subsection IV A, there does not appear to be any clear benefit in the use of an IP-tuned functional for the linear vibronic coupling constant. The HF values of $V^{(1)}$ and ω were clearly larger than those calculated with DFT, but the corresponding difference between the values for $g^{(1)}$ and $E^{(1)}$ is slightly reduced by the larger HF values of $V^{(1)}$ and ω canceling each other out. This follows the observed weakening of the basis set effect earlier, which again suggests that the protocol used to derive the vibronic coupling constants in this work appears to be relatively independent of the exact computational method used.

We then examine the linear vibronic coupling constants calculated with G_0W_0 . G_0W_0 is the first-order perturbative correction to a HF or DFT calculation, and the inclusion of additional correction terms should eventually converge the results toward a self-consistent GW value (Sec. II B). Thus, although our G_0W_0 results show a similar dependence on the starting point as that observed in earlier studies,^{61,62,65} the difference between the G_0W_0 results is smaller compared to that of the DFT and HF values. As can be seen in Table IV, the standard deviation in the G_0W_0 computed values of $V^{(1)}$ is about half the standard deviation for the HF and DFT results. This clearly shows a benefit in the use of G_0W_0 : the dependence on the choice of exchange-correlation functional is reduced.

Next, we compare the linear vibronic coupling constants derived in this work to the literature (Table III). The computational and experimental data for ν_9 in the literature are generally in agreement with each other, with Sato's CASSCF calculations giving slightly higher values. Our DFT and G_0W_0 results for ν_9 also agree well with the literature, while the higher HF values were alleviated by the G_0W_0 correction.

However, there is some uncertainty in the literature regarding the relative strengths of the vibronic coupling in ν_{10} and ν_{11} . The fitting of the dispersed fluorescence spectra measured by Applegate *et al.*⁷⁴ gave a larger vibronic coupling constant for ν_{10} than ν_{11} , which disagrees with their own CASSCF calculations.³⁰ The EOMIP-CCSD results of Ichino *et al.*³⁴ agree with the CASSCF results of Applegate *et al.*, while the observed trend by Sato *et al.*²² follows the experimental result more closely.

To resolve this, we note that there has been some ambiguity regarding the assignments of the vibronic peaks in the dispersed fluorescence spectra.⁷⁴ An alternative fit to the measured spectra “had

a slightly worse RMS (root-mean-square) error of 6.3 cm^{-1} , but is in better agreement with the constants derived from *ab initio* calculations.”⁷⁴ The values for the vibronic coupling constants of ν_9 remain mostly unchanged if the alternate fit is used, while the corresponding values for ν_{10} and ν_{11} decrease and increase, respectively (Table III). In addition, the photoelectron spectrum of the cyclopentadienyl anion was simulated using the vibronic coupling constants calculated within EOMIP-CCSD and was found to reproduce the experimentally measured photoelectron spectrum well.³⁴ On the other hand, the use of the vibronic coupling constants obtained with the original fit of the dispersed fluorescence spectra to carry out a similar simulation “worsens the quality of the simulation significantly.” Indeed, a recent paper by Tran *et al.* showed that a low RMS error in the fitting of a spectrum is not necessarily correlated with a small error in the values of the vibronic coupling constants obtained from the fit³³ and further emphasizes the uncertainty in the vibronic assignment of the dispersed fluorescence spectra.

Because of these issues with the experimental result, we do not compare our results for ν_{10} and ν_{11} to those of the experiment and will use the computational values as a benchmark instead. On the whole, the HF and DFT results were found to agree quite well with the computational values in the literature, with none of the methods tested found to outperform the others substantially. The PBE, PBE0, and LC- ω PBE* functionals underestimate the reference CASSCF and EOMIP-CCSD values, while the results for HF and LC- ω PBE are mixed, depending on which vibronic constant is being compared. These trends for the individual functionals and HF are balanced out upon applying the G_0W_0 correction, and we note that there is an excellent agreement between our G_0W_0 results and the EOMIP-CCSD calculations of Ichino *et al.*

In the EOMIP-CCSD method, the electronic state of the (open-shell) system is described by determinants with one less electron than the reference state, which is typically chosen to be a closed-shell system.¹¹⁵ This allows for a balanced treatment of the determinants representing the electronic configurations of the $N - 1$ electron system, where N is the number of electrons in the reference state.¹¹⁶ As a result, EOMIP-CCSD “can handle multireference effects while dynamic electron correlation is also taken into account,”^{35,117} making it a suitable computational method to study the neutral cyclopentadienyl radical directly.

In contrast, because we used the orbitals of the cyclopentadienyl anion to study the JT effect of the neutral cyclopentadienyl radical, it would not be necessary to consider the problem of static electron correlation in our work. The G_0W_0 approximation was then used to improve upon the treatment of dynamic electron correlation. Comparing the computational costs of the two methods, EOMIP-CCSD and G_0W_0 scale on the order of $\mathcal{O}(N^6)$ and $\mathcal{O}(N^4)$, respectively.^{107,115} Hence, despite the difference between the two approaches, the fact that the G_0W_0 results in this work were found to be of EOMIP-CCSD quality is definitely noteworthy and supports the usage of G_0W_0 in the derivation of vibronic coupling constants.

We then examine the total JT stabilization energies for the last part of the discussion regarding the linear vibronic coupling constants (Table V). There are two approaches used to obtain the total stabilization energies in the literature. The first approach, which is used in this work, fits *ab initio* data to a model vibronic Hamiltonian to extract the vibronic coupling constants for each

TABLE IV. Comparison of the standard deviation in the linear vibronic coupling constant $V^{(1)}$ (10^{-4} a.u.) calculated using the mean-field HF/DFT methods, and G_0W_0 .

	Mean-field methods	G_0W_0
ν_9	0.132	0.059
ν_{10}	0.235	0.132
ν_{11}	0.881	0.442

TABLE V. Linear JT stabilization energies $E_{JT}^{(1)}$ (cm^{-1}) calculated within G_0W_0 . The values for the mean-field method used as an input in the G_0W_0 calculations are given in parentheses.

Method	$E_{total}^{(1)}$
G_0W_0 @HF/cc-pVTZ	1680(1988)
G_0W_0 @PBE/cc-pVTZ	1374(1217)
G_0W_0 @PBE0/cc-pVTZ	1484(1417)
G_0W_0 @LC- ω PBE/cc-pVTZ	1647(1732)
G_0W_0 @LC- ω PBE*/cc-pVTZ	1612(1499)
Model potential ^a	
EOMIP-CCSD/DZP ³⁴	1510
EOMIP-CCSD/ANO0 ⁷⁵	1600
CASSCF/6-31G* ³⁰	1463
Energy difference ^b	
CCSDT/CBS ¹⁰⁹	1370
CCSD(T)/6-311+G* ⁷⁸	1600
CASSCF/6-31G* ³⁰	2147
CASSCF/cc-pVDZ ³²	2134
CASSCF/6-31G(d, p) ²²	2103
LDA/TZP ¹⁵	1245
BP86/TZP ¹⁵	1302
PW91/TZP ¹⁵	1295
BLYP/TZP ¹⁵	1303
OPBE/TZP ¹⁵	1300
B3LYP/TZP ¹⁵	1686
Expt. ⁷⁴	1237[1600] ^c

^aSum of the stabilization energies over all linear JT active normal modes.^bDifference in the energies of the cyclopentadienyl radical at the D_{5h} and C_{2v} geometries.^cIn brackets: stabilization energy from an alternate fit of the dispersed fluorescence spectra (see the text).

JT active normal mode, before summing up the individual stabilization energies for each normal mode to obtain the total stabilization energy. The second approach compares the difference in the energies of the cyclopentadienyl radical at the D_{5h} and C_{2v} optimized geometries.

A point to note is that some vibronic coupling studies use a combination of the two methods to derive the vibronic coupling constants. Vibronic coupling constants are initially obtained by fitting *ab initio* results to a model Hamiltonian, before being scaled such that the calculated energies match the stabilization energies computed in the second approach.^{22,30} This is a possible explanation to the difference in the observed trends between the computational results of Sato *et al.* and the present work.

The stabilization energies obtained using the first method generally agree well with each other as well as the experimental value obtained using the alternate fit of the dispersed fluorescence spectra. On the other hand, the stabilization energies calculated using the second method were found to vary widely. The CCSDT and

CCSD(T) stabilization energies (1370 cm^{-1} and 1600 cm^{-1} , respectively) are lower than the CASSCF values, which are all greater than 2100 cm^{-1} . The DFT stabilization energies of Andjelković *et al.*¹⁵ are in better agreement with the lower CCSDT and CCSD(T) values and exhibit a clear dependence on the amount of HF exchange in the functional used, matching the trend observed in our own DFT results. On the whole, the stabilization energies calculated using the CASSCF with the second method appear to be an overestimation. We suggest that this could be due to dynamic correlation, which is not accounted for in the CASSCF method,^{41,42} but is accounted for in the CCSDT and CCSD(T) methods.^{118–120}

As mentioned above, the DFT and HF stabilization energies calculated in this work are largely dependent on the amount of HF exchange present and follow the order: PBE < PBE0 < LC- ω PBE < LC- ω PBE* < HF. The difference between the total stabilization energies calculated using the various computational methods comes mostly from v_{11} , while the differences for v_9 and v_{10} are much smaller. A comparison of the LC- ω PBE to LC- ω PBE* results suggests that there is a slight improvement in the calculated stabilization energies upon IP-tuning. Similar to the other vibronic coupling constants, the spread of the calculated DFT and HF values is reduced upon applying the G_0W_0 correction. The total stabilization energies for HF and LC- ω PBE are decreased, while the values for the other functionals are increased. The resultant G_0W_0 stabilization energies are again in good agreement with the EOMIP-CCSD values and exemplify the potential of the G_0W_0 method.

Hence, to sum up the discussion of the linear vibronic coupling constants, the choice of the exchange-correlation functional was not found to affect the derived vibronic coupling constants of each normal mode significantly. Regardless of the starting point, the use of the G_0W_0 correction was found to improve upon the HF and DFT results and yielded results of EOMIP-CCSD quality.

Finally, despite the good agreement between our results for the linear vibronic coupling constants and those in the literature, some studies have shown that the inclusion of higher order vibronic terms in the model Hamiltonian can affect the values of the fitted vibronic coupling constants.^{33,37} Other than their effect on the fitting of linear vibronic coupling constants, the inclusion of higher order vibronic coupling terms in the vibronic model potential of a system also affects its APES directly.^{20,27,33,36–38} As a result, we extend our vibronic Hamiltonian to go beyond the consideration of only linear vibronic coupling and examine the use of a higher order Hamiltonian to fit our *ab initio* data in Subsection IV C.

C. Higher order vibronic coupling terms

The details of the derivation and fitting of the higher order vibronic Hamiltonians are given in the Appendix, and the results are given in Table VI and the supplementary material, S2 C. Since we only consider symmetrized combinations of the e'_2 normal modes in this work, the quadratic vibronic Hamiltonian in this subsection is equivalent to the linear JT model discussed in Sec. IV B. As per Sec. IV B, we do not include v_{12} in the discussion because it does not make a significant contribution to the JT distortion in the cyclopentadienyl radical.

We will illustrate our findings for the higher order vibronic coupling terms by considering the results obtained using PBE0 (Table VI). There is a general consensus in the literature that

TABLE VI. Higher order vibronic coupling constants derived using PBE0. $V_y^{(i)}$ refers to the i th order vibronic coupling constant with respect to the symmetry representation y , ρ_{min} refers to the molecular structure at which the energy of the system is at a minimum with respect to the distortion along the e'_2 normal mode, and $E_{JT}^{(i)}$ refers to the JT stabilization energy, where i is the order of the model Hamiltonian used. All values are in a.u. except for the stabilization energies, which are given in cm^{-1} .

Mode	Order	$V_{e'_2}^{(1)} \times 10^{-4}$	$V_{a'_1}^{(2)} \times 10^{-5}$	$V_{e'_2}^{(3)} \times 10^{-9}$	$V_{e'_2}^{(4)} \times 10^{-10}$	$V_{a'_1}^{(4)} \times 10^{-9}$	$\rho_{min.}$	$E_{JT}^{(i)a}$
$\nu_9(\theta)$	2	1.6756	2.0953				11.309	207.94
	3	1.6753	2.0953	1.4622			11.310	207.90
	4	1.6753	2.0950	1.4622	0.3349	1.6215	11.304	207.96
$\nu_9(\epsilon)$	2	1.6763	2.0953				11.314	208.11
	3	1.6760	2.0953	1.4430			11.315	208.08
	4	1.6760	2.0950	1.4430		1.6175	11.309	208.14
$\nu_{10}(\theta)$	2	2.7214	3.3298				11.558	345.18
	3	2.7205	3.3298	4.6618			11.561	345.08
	4	2.7205	3.3040	4.6618	0.0355	17.8736	11.514	345.69
$\nu_{10}(\epsilon)$	2	2.7221	3.3298				11.561	345.35
	3	2.7212	3.3298	4.5872			11.564	345.24
	4	2.7212	3.3040	4.5872		17.8856	11.516	345.86
$\nu_{11}(\theta)$	2	5.6879	5.8738				13.695	854.79
	3	5.6898	5.8738	−9.1704			13.689	854.92
	4	5.6898	5.8398	−9.1704	15.7283	23.5324	13.589	854.20
$\nu_{11}(\epsilon)$	2	5.6874	5.8738				13.693	854.63
	3	5.6892	5.8738	−9.0769			13.688	854.76
	4	5.6892	5.8398	−9.0769		23.5420	13.598	854.39

^aThe value of $E_{JT}^{(2)}$ differs slightly from that of $E_{JT}^{(1)}$ in Table III because the PBE0 analytical frequencies were used in the calculation of $E_{JT}^{(1)}$ earlier, while the fitted second order derivative of the SCF energies was used to compute $E_{JT}^{(2)}$ here in order to compare the differences between the higher order vibronic Hamiltonians.

there is no pseudorotation barrier in the cyclopentadienyl radical.^{29–32,34,77,82,83,109} The only exception is a pseudorotation barrier height of about 300 cm^{-1} predicted within configuration interaction singles and doubles (CISD),^{29,77} which has been “attributed to an artificial effect caused by the CISD computation.”⁷⁷

Our results agree well with the reported trend in the general literature. It can be seen from Table IX in the Appendix that only the fourth order $V_{e'_2}^{(4)}$ term gives rise to a pseudorotation barrier in the cyclopentadienyl radical. However, the magnitudes of the contribution to the JT stabilization energy by the fourth order vibronic coupling constants at ρ_{min} were all found to be $<1 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ for each of the e'_2 normal modes ν_9 , ν_{10} , and ν_{11} . As such, we find that there is effectively no pseudorotation barrier in the cyclopentadienyl radical.

In addition, the same analysis of the third order vibronic coupling term revealed a similar insignificance in terms of its contribution to the JT stabilization energy. As can be seen from Fig. 5, we find that the APESs determined using the second, third, and fourth order model vibronic Hamiltonians are essentially identical in the case of the cyclopentadienyl radical.

The same trends were observed for HF and the other exchange-correlation functionals, as well as G_0W_0 (supplementary material, S2 C). It is, thus, clear that any JT distortion originating from the e'_2 normal modes will be largely dominated by the linear vibronic coupling term, $V_{e'_2}^{(1)}$, which has been discussed in Sec. IV B. Hence, we do not find it meaningful to examine the differences between the

higher order vibronic coupling terms derived using HF, the various DFT functionals, and G_0W_0 .

Finally, we examine the effect of using a higher order vibronic Hamiltonian on the derived vibronic coupling constants.

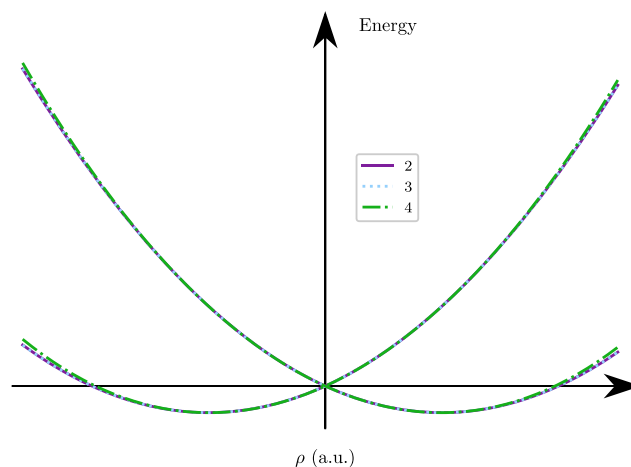


FIG. 5. APESs of the cyclopentadienyl radical calculated using a quadratic, cubic, and quartic vibronic Hamiltonians. The vibronic coupling constants were determined using PBE0 (Table VI).

TABLE VII. RMS error (10^{-8} a.u.) of the fit to the PBE0 orbital energy corresponding to the $E_1''(\theta)$ electronic state.

Mode	Order of vibronic model		
	Quadratic	Cubic	Quartic
$\nu_9(\theta)$	14.79	0.88	0.83
$\nu_9(\epsilon)$	14.70	1.87	1.66
$\nu_{10}(\theta)$	47.94	12.58	1.69
$\nu_{10}(\epsilon)$	48.56	12.51	0.84
$\nu_{11}(\theta)$	98.30	32.29	1.74
$\nu_{11}(\epsilon)$	91.26	3.70	1.25

As expected, the RMS of the fitting error to the orbital energies decreases with respect to the order of the vibronic Hamiltonian used to fit the *ab initio* data (Table VII). However, we note that the RMS errors of the smallest second order model are already about two to three orders of magnitude smaller than the derived linear vibronic coupling constants, which implies that the quality of the quadratic fit is already excellent. As such, the linear vibronic coupling constant was found to remain virtually unchanged going from the quadratic to the quartic model Hamiltonian (Table VI). Considering that the JT distortion in the cyclopentadienyl radical is essentially due to linear vibronic coupling only, it is, thus, not surprising that the effect of using a higher order vibronic model was not found to affect the derived vibronic coupling constants significantly.

To conclude the discussion of using a higher order vibronic Hamiltonian, we agree with the conclusions in Tran *et al.*'s work: a low RMS error of the fitted model does not necessarily correlate with the quality of the derived vibronic coupling constants.³³ However, because the higher order vibronic coupling of the e_2' normal modes is very weak compared to the linear vibronic coupling terms, the effect of including higher order e_2' terms in the model vibronic Hamiltonian cannot be clearly observed in this case. Hence, we did not observe any change in the values of the linear vibronic coupling constants upon the use of a higher order vibronic Hamiltonian to fit *ab initio* calculations. As such, we find it sufficient to include only the first-order terms of the linear JT active e_2' normal modes to describe the JT distortion and, by extension, the APES of the cyclopentadienyl radical.

Finally, we did not include normal modes that are not linearly JT active, such as the e_1' normal modes in the cyclopentadienyl radical, within our model of vibronic coupling. The higher order vibronic coupling terms of some of these normal modes are symmetry-allowed, which suggests they could contribute to the JT distortion in the cyclopentadienyl radical. Hence, possible future work to examine the effect of higher order vibronic coupling terms could be to consider normal modes that are not linearly JT active, such as the e_1' normal modes in the cyclopentadienyl radical, in the vibronic model of the system of interest as well.

V. CONCLUSION

The use of HF, DFT with various exchange-correlation functionals, and G_0W_0 to derive the vibronic coupling constants of the

cyclopentadienyl radical has been investigated in this work. Toward that end, the IP of the cyclopentadienyl anion was first calculated, and a notable improvement to the HF and DFT values upon applying the G_0W_0 correction was found.

Next, the linear vibronic coupling constants were calculated from the gradients of the degenerate HOMOs of the cyclopentadienyl anion for HF and DFT, with the gradients of the corresponding quasiparticle energies used for G_0W_0 . However, unlike the results for the IP, the choice of the specific computational method (HF or the various DFT functionals) was not found to have a significant effect on the obtained linear vibronic coupling constants. Applying the G_0W_0 correction then further reduces the differences between the linear vibronic coupling constants derived using the various computational methods and was found to yield values that agree well with EOMIP-CCSD values from the literature.

Finally, the vibronic coupling model was expanded to include higher order vibronic coupling terms up to the fourth order. The higher order vibronic coupling constants in the cyclopentadienyl radical were found to be negligible in comparison to the linear vibronic coupling constants. Consequently, our results show that there is effectively no pseudorotation barrier in the cyclopentadienyl radical, in good agreement with what has been observed in the literature.

In summary, we have shown that the JT effect on the cyclopentadienyl radical can be well understood by considering only the linear vibronic coupling terms, which can be derived accurately with the use of G_0W_0 . As such, we can, thus, conclude that computational approaches that rely on Hedin's approximations, such as the G_0W_0 method examined in this work, have the potential to be an excellent tool toward studying vibronic coupling and, thus, the APES of molecular systems.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

See the [supplementary material](#) for additional details regarding the factors affecting the fitting process, the numerical convergence of our computational results, and the IP-tuning procedure used to obtain the range-separation parameter of the LC- ω PBE* functional. The derived vibronic coupling constants and plots of the orbital and quasiparticle energies obtained with the various exchange-correlation functionals and G_0W_0 are also included.

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APPENDIX: HIGHER ORDER VIBRONIC COUPLING TERMS

The details of the extension of the vibronic Hamiltonian to include cubic and quartic terms are given here. The results from

the same set of *ab initio* calculations were used in the derivation of the linear and higher order vibronic coupling constants. As such, we only consider the higher order vibronic coupling of the e'_2 normal modes here and ignore the inter-mode coupling across different degenerate e'_2 normal modes.

The symmetric product of the e'_2 representation up to the fourth order is given in Table VIII. As per Eq. (10), only the terms with a'_1 and e'_2 symmetry will be JT active. The contribution of each e'_2 normal mode to ΔU in Eq. (6) can then be grouped into symmetrized combinations of the e'_2 normal coordinates, Q_θ and Q_ϵ , up to the fourth order as

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta U(Q_\theta, Q_\epsilon) = & V_{e'_2(\theta)}^{(1)} Q_\theta + V_{e'_2(\epsilon)}^{(1)} Q_\epsilon + \frac{V_{a'_1}^{(2)}}{2!} \left[\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} (Q_\theta^2 + Q_\epsilon^2) \right] \\ & + \frac{V_{e'_2(\theta)}^{(3)}}{3!} \left[\frac{1}{2} (Q_\theta^3 + Q_\theta Q_\epsilon^2) \right] + \frac{V_{e'_2(\epsilon)}^{(3)}}{3!} \left[\frac{1}{2} (Q_\epsilon^3 + Q_\epsilon Q_\theta^2) \right] \\ & + \frac{V_{e'_2(\theta)}^{(4)}}{4!} \left[\frac{1}{2\sqrt{2}} (Q_\theta^4 - 6Q_\theta^2 Q_\epsilon^2 + Q_\epsilon^4) \right] \\ & + \frac{V_{e'_2(\epsilon)}^{(4)}}{4!} \left[\frac{-4}{2\sqrt{2}} (Q_\theta^3 Q_\epsilon - Q_\theta Q_\epsilon^3) \right] \\ & + \frac{V_{a'_1}^{(4)}}{4!} \left[\frac{1}{2\sqrt{2}} (Q_\theta^4 + 2Q_\theta^2 Q_\epsilon^2 + Q_\epsilon^4) \right], \end{aligned} \quad (\text{A1})$$

where $V_y^{(i)}$ is the i th order vibronic coupling term of the symmetrized combination of Q_θ and Q_ϵ with the representation $\gamma = a'_1$ or e'_2 . We note that the third order e'_2 term can be derived from two possible products: $e'_2 \in e'_1 \otimes e'_2$ or $e'_2 \in a'_1 \otimes e'_2$. However, as the symmetrized combinations of the two possible products are identical: $(Q_\theta^3 + Q_\theta Q_\epsilon^2)$ and $(Q_\epsilon^3 + Q_\epsilon Q_\theta^2)$, the two terms can be combined for simplicity. The same was done for the fourth order a'_1 ($\in e'_1 \otimes e'_1$ or $\in a'_1 \otimes a'_1$) term.

Similar to the analysis of the linear JT active modes in Sec. II A, the Wigner–Eckart theorem is then applied to simplify the vibronic coupling matrices, i.e.,

$$V_{e'_2}^{(i)} = V_{e'_2(\theta)}^{(i)} = V_{e'_2(\epsilon)}^{(i)} \quad (\text{A2})$$

for $i = 1, 3$, and 4 . The matrix representation of the vibronic Hamiltonian up to the fourth order is then

TABLE VIII. Symmetric products of the e'_2 representation up to the fourth order.

Order	Product
1	e'_2
2	$e'_2 \otimes e'_2 = a'_1 \oplus e'_1$
3	$e'_2 \otimes e'_2 \otimes e'_2 = e'_1 \oplus e'_2$
4	$e'_2 \otimes e'_2 \otimes e'_2 \otimes e'_2 = a'_1 \oplus e'_1 \oplus e'_2$

$$\begin{aligned} H_{vib.} = & \sigma_{e'_2(\theta)} \left[V_{e'_2}^{(1)} Q_\theta + \frac{V_{e'_2}^{(3)}}{3!} \frac{1}{2} (Q_\theta^3 + Q_\theta Q_\epsilon^2) \right. \\ & \left. + \frac{V_{e'_2}^{(4)}}{4!} \frac{1}{2\sqrt{2}} (Q_\theta^4 - 6Q_\theta^2 Q_\epsilon^2 + Q_\epsilon^4) \right] \\ & + \sigma_{e'_2(\epsilon)} \left[V_{e'_2}^{(1)} Q_\epsilon + \frac{V_{e'_2}^{(3)}}{3!} \frac{1}{2} (Q_\epsilon^3 + Q_\epsilon Q_\theta^2) \right. \\ & \left. + \frac{V_{e'_2}^{(4)}}{4!} \frac{1}{2\sqrt{2}} (Q_\theta^3 Q_\epsilon - Q_\theta Q_\epsilon^3) \right] \\ & + I \left[\frac{V_{a'_1}^{(2)}}{2!} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} (Q_\theta^2 + Q_\epsilon^2) + \frac{V_{a'_1}^{(4)}}{4!} \frac{1}{2\sqrt{2}} (Q_\theta^4 + 2Q_\theta^2 Q_\epsilon^2 + Q_\epsilon^4) \right] \end{aligned} \quad (\text{A3})$$

using the matrices

$$\sigma_{e'_2(\theta)} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \sigma_{e'_2(\epsilon)} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad I = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Diagonalizing the Hamiltonian (A3) with polar coordinates $Q_\theta = \rho \cos \phi$ and $Q_\epsilon = \rho \sin \phi$ then gives the expression for the fourth order APES ($E_\mp^{(4)}$) as

$$\begin{aligned} E_\mp^{(4)}(\rho, \phi) = & \frac{V_{a'_1}^{(2)}}{2!} \frac{\rho^2}{\sqrt{2}} + \frac{V_{a'_1}^{(4)}}{4!} \frac{\rho^4}{2\sqrt{2}} \\ & \mp \left[\left(V_{e'_2}^{(1)} \rho \right)^2 + \frac{V_{e'_2}^{(1)} V_{e'_2}^{(3)}}{3!} \rho^4 + \frac{V_{e'_2}^{(1)} V_{e'_2}^{(4)}}{4!} \frac{\rho^5 \cos 5\phi}{\sqrt{2}} \right. \\ & + \left(\frac{V_{e'_2}^{(3)}}{3!} \frac{\rho^3}{2} \right)^2 + \frac{V_{e'_2}^{(3)} V_{e'_2}^{(4)}}{3!} \frac{\rho^7 \cos 5\phi}{4! 2\sqrt{2}} \\ & \left. + \left(\frac{V_{e'_2}^{(4)}}{4!} \frac{\rho^4}{2\sqrt{2}} \right)^2 \right]^{1/2}. \end{aligned} \quad (\text{A4})$$

Expanding the expression for the APES in Eq. (A4) as a series in ρ then gives

$$\begin{aligned} E_\mp^{(i)}(\rho, \phi) = & \mp V_{e'_2}^{(1)} \rho + \frac{V_{a'_1}^{(2)}}{2!} \frac{\rho^2}{\sqrt{2}} \mp \frac{V_{e'_2}^{(3)}}{3!} \frac{\rho^3}{2} \mp \frac{V_{e'_2}^{(4)}}{4!} \frac{\rho^4 \cos 5\phi}{2\sqrt{2}} \\ & + \frac{V_{a'_1}^{(4)}}{4!} \frac{\rho^4}{2\sqrt{2}} + \dots \end{aligned} \quad (\text{A5})$$

Similar expressions for the APES can be derived using second and third order vibronic Hamiltonians and are given in Table IX.

It can be seen that the APES only exhibits a dependence on ϕ upon the inclusion of the fourth order vibronic coupling term, which translates to a five-fold degeneracy in the APES with respect to ϕ . It is, thus, necessary to include the fourth order vibronic coupling term in order to explain the difference between the energies of the cyclopentadienyl radical with respect to the distortion along Q_θ

TABLE IX. Derived expressions of the APES in terms of the polar coordinates ρ and ϕ . The expressions for the second and third order models are exact, while the expression for the fourth order here is obtained by truncating Eq. (A5).

i	$E_{\mp}^{(i)}$
2	$\mp V_{e_2'}^{(1)} \rho + \frac{V_{a_1'}^{(2)}}{2!} \frac{\rho^2}{\sqrt{2}}$
3	$\mp V_{e_2'}^{(1)} \rho + \frac{V_{a_1'}^{(2)}}{2!} \frac{\rho^2}{\sqrt{2}} \mp \frac{V_{e_2'}^{(3)}}{3!} \frac{\rho^3}{2}$
4	$\mp V_{e_2'}^{(1)} \rho + \frac{V_{a_1'}^{(2)}}{2!} \frac{\rho^2}{\sqrt{2}} \mp \frac{V_{e_2'}^{(3)}}{3!} \frac{\rho^3}{2} \mp \frac{V_{e_2'}^{(4)}}{4!} \frac{\rho^4 \cos 5\phi}{2\sqrt{2}} + \frac{V_{a_1'}^{(4)}}{4!} \frac{\rho^4}{2\sqrt{2}}$

and Q_e . The pseudorotation barrier is then simply two times of this energy difference.

The vibronic coupling constants $V_{e_2'}^{(1)}$ and $V_{e_2'}^{(3)}$ can be obtained using the orbital vibronic coupling constants of the frontier orbitals directly (see Sec. II A). However, because of the totally symmetric fourth order $V_{a_1'}^{(4)}$ term, the fourth order $V_{e_2'}^{(4)}$ term has to be derived as the difference of the fourth order orbital vibronic coupling constants of ψ_θ and ψ_e with respect to Q_θ . The constants with a_1' symmetry have to be obtained using the total energy of the system. However, as there have been some issues with regard to the reliability of the GW total energies of molecular systems,^{89,121,122} we restrict the derivation of the a_1' vibronic coupling constants to the DFT and HF methods only.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that support the findings of this study are available within this article and its [supplementary material](#).

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