

# Triplet-excited dye molecules (eosine and methylene blue) quenching by H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> in aqueous solutions

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## Abstract

The quenching of the triplet-excited dyes eosine and methylene blue (MB) by H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> has been studied by laser and steady-state photolysis. The quenching rate constant of the eosine triplet is  $k_q = 2.4 \pm 0.3 \times 10^5$  (M s)<sup>-1</sup> and rate constant of MB quenching with H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> was found to be  $k_q = 6.5 \pm 0.5 \times 10^5$  (M s)<sup>-1</sup>. The decolorization of both dyes is accelerated upon H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> addition under steady-state photolysis and the redox reaction mechanism is suggested. The quantum yield for ion-radicals formation obtained were: for eosine  $0.01 \pm 0.005$  and  $0.03 \pm 0.01$  for MB. This latter observation provides the evidence for stability of these dyes under light irradiation in the presence of H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>. © 1998 Elsevier Science S.A. All rights reserved.

**Keywords:** Eosine; Methylene Blue; Dye decolorization; Dye oxidation; Hydrogen peroxide; Yield radical-formation

## 1. Introduction

Oxidative and reductive redox reactions and bleaching of xanthene and thiazine dyes have been the object of recent research [1–3]. Eosine have been studied by flash photolysis [4–10] and by steady-state irradiation [11]. Flash photolysis studies of eosine have shown that the triplet state oxidizes phenol [12], *p*-cresol, tyrosine and tryptophan [13], *p*-phenylenediamine [14], aniline, resorcinol, *p*-sulfanilic acid,  $\beta$ -naphthol, and *p*-bromophenol [15]. The bleaching of the eosine and formation of the leuco form has been reported. Electron acceptor like methylviologen oxidizes eosine to the radical-cation [16].

The photochemical properties of the methylene blue (MB) have been widely studied [17–22], and the kinetics of the triplet states of MB have been reported [19]. MB has also been used to measure the lifetime of singlet oxygen in solution [19]. The photoreduction of MB by EDTA has also been reported in detail [20]. The reduced form of MB-semimethylene blue radical has been reported via reduction of triplet MB [23] with diphenylamine in water [14]. Recently, the MB triplet was shown to undergo photo-oxidation by quinones [24]. The photochemistry of MB with biological systems has been investigated. The photodynamic effect with purine nucleotides and amino acids [18] has also been reported.

It is known that in the presence of oxygen, the bleaching of dye molecules occurs with the formation of several oxidative intermediates like: <sup>1</sup>O<sub>2</sub>, D<sup>+</sup>, and O<sub>2</sub><sup>-</sup>, H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> is also formed during dye bleaching in the presence of O<sub>2</sub>. The H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> generated in solution seems to attain a steady-state concentration during dye-sensitized auto-oxidation [2]. Photochemical mineralization of the dye proceeds easily via photo-Fenton reactions [25].

But little is known about the reactions of the excited states of eosine and MB with H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>. The quenching of the triplet-excited states of the fluorescein dyes by H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> was reported by flash photolysis at pH = 9.2 [26]. In the present work, the reactions of excited dyes eosine and MB molecules with H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> were examined by laser photolysis in anaerobic conditions. The main goal of this work was to study the quenching of the triplet-excited dye molecules of eosine and MB by H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> in solution at neutral pH.

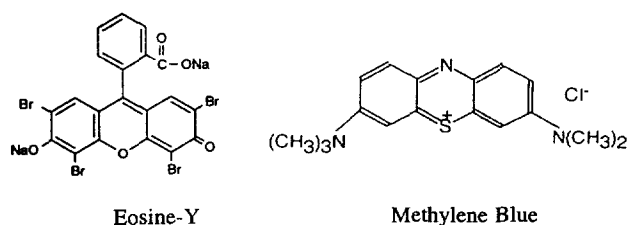
## 2. Experimental

Laser photolysis experiments were done by using the second harmonic of Nd<sup>3+</sup>-YAG Q-switch laser. The excitation wavelength of the laser pulse was  $\lambda = 532$  nm with pulse energy of 5 mJ and the pulse duration of 12 ns. Xe-arc lamp was used for a detection. The data acquisition was carried out by a CAMAC-PC system with the time resolution of 100 ns. The transients were obtained as the average of 60 scans. The

dye solution was circulated during experiments to avoid photodegradation of the dye due to the applied illumination.

Steady-state experiments used Xe-lamp (100 W). This light was cut by optical filters to excite the dye at maximum of the absorption band. The spectral width of filters was 20 nm. Ferrioxalate actinometry was used for measuring the light flux. The absorption spectra of the solution were measured by a Specord spectrophotometer.

The eosine-Y (eosine from now on) or methylene blue solutions were handled prior to photochemical irradiation in tridistilled water, without buffer addition. The oxygen was removed from the solution by three times frozen–melting cycle. Experiments were performed in a 1-cm vacuum silica cell at room temperature.



### 3. Results and discussion

#### 3.1. Laser photolysis results and steady-state photolysis of eosine and MB

Fig. 1 shows the transient absorption spectra under laser photolysis for eosine (Fig. 1a) and for eosine in the presence of  $H_2O_2$  (Fig. 1b). Insets in Fig. 1a,b show the absorption transient at  $\lambda = 990$  nm and the bleaching transient observed at  $\lambda = 480$  nm. In Fig. 1b, an acceleration of the transient decay takes place between  $\lambda$  values of 390 to 1000 nm due to the added  $H_2O_2$ . The bleaching transient recovered back almost to zero level after addition of  $H_2O_2$ . Lifetimes of transients decay have been obtained by a one-exponential approximation. The dependence of the reciprocal lifetime  $k$  vs.  $H_2O_2$  as a function of concentration for transients of bleaching at  $\lambda = 480$  nm and absorption at  $\lambda = 990$  nm is shown in the Fig. 2. This dependence is seen to be linear. As seen in Fig. 2, the lifetimes for both transients at  $\lambda = 480$  nm and at  $\lambda = 990$  nm are the same in experimental error. The quenching rate constant is determined from the slope in Fig. 2. It is  $k_{\text{eosine}} = (2.34 \pm 0.08) \times 10^5 \text{ (M s)}^{-1}$ .

Fig. 3 shows that  $H_2O_2$  addition accelerates the rate of the eosine decolorization under steady-state illumination. This rate increases as the  $H_2O_2$  concentration was increased. In dark experiments, the color remains in the presence of  $H_2O_2$ . This indicates that photochemical processes are responsible for the observed eosine decolorization.

Fig. 4 shows the transient absorption spectra for MB. The inset to Fig. 4 shows two transients: (a) the absorption transient at  $\lambda = 820$  nm and the bleaching transient at  $\lambda = 620$  nm. The lifetime of the absorption transient at the 820 nm is 65  $\mu\text{s}$ . This value is in good agreement with the literature value

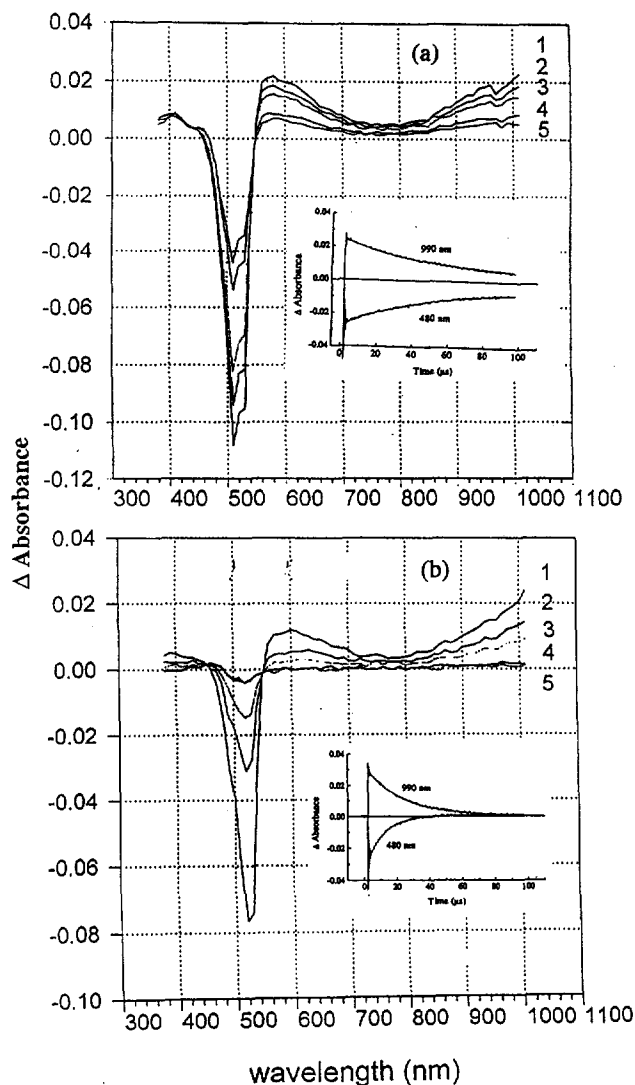


Fig. 1. Differential absorption spectra of eosine =  $2 \times 10^{-5}$  M. Excitation at  $\lambda = 523$  nm. (a)  $[H_2O_2] = 0$  M, time delay (1) 0  $\mu\text{s}$ ; (2) 18  $\mu\text{s}$ ; (3) 40  $\mu\text{s}$ ; (4) 70  $\mu\text{s}$ ; (5) 100  $\mu\text{s}$ ; (b)  $[H_2O_2] = 0.2$  M, time delay (1) 0  $\mu\text{s}$ ; (2) 20  $\mu\text{s}$ ; (3) 30  $\mu\text{s}$ ; (4) 50  $\mu\text{s}$ ; (5) 60  $\mu\text{s}$ .

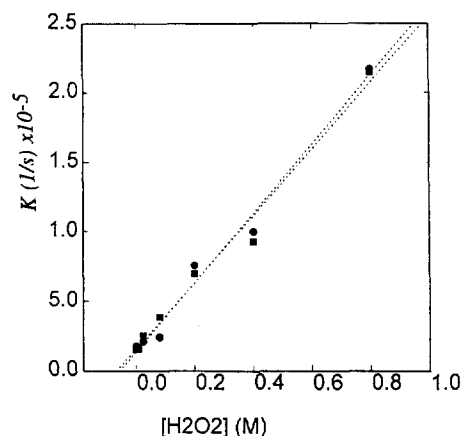


Fig. 2. Dependence of the reciprocal lifetime of transients at  $\lambda_{\text{probe}} = 480$  nm (bleaching, squares) and  $\lambda_{\text{probe}} = 990$  nm (absorption, circles) vs.  $H_2O_2$  concentration for  $[\text{eosine}] = 2 \times 10^{-5}$  M.

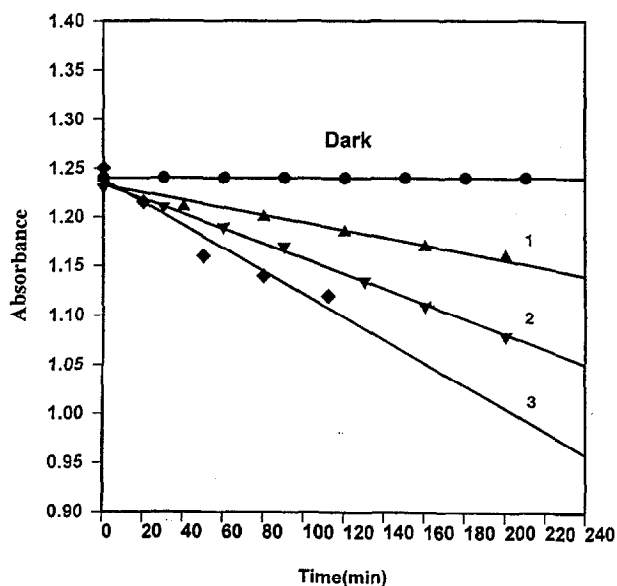


Fig. 3. Kinetics of the eosine bleaching under steady-state illumination at  $\lambda = 530$  nm at different  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2]$  concentrations: (1)  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] = 0.04$  M; (2)  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] = 0.08$  M; (3)  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] = 0.16$  M.  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] = 0.4$  is used in dark control experiment.

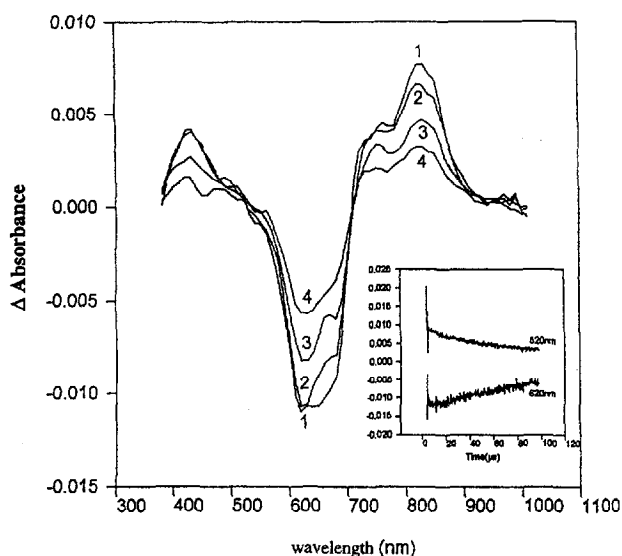


Fig. 4. Differential absorption spectra of MB  $0.86 \times 10^{-5}$  M without  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ . Times delay: (1)  $0 \mu\text{s}$ ; (2)  $10 \mu\text{s}$ ; (3)  $40 \mu\text{s}$ ; (4)  $85 \mu\text{s}$ . Inset shows the kinetics of bleaching ( $\lambda = 620$  nm) and absorption ( $\lambda = 820$  nm) of the transient spectra.

reported for the triplet lifetime of  $70\text{--}90 \mu\text{s}$  [27]. Fig. 5 shows the transient absorption spectra for MB in the presence of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ . The inset shows the transients at the same  $\lambda$ 's as in the inset in Fig. 4. From Figs. 4 and 5, it is readily seen that the quenching of the MB transients species takes place in solution by  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ . In the presence of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ , the MB bleaching signal recovers to the zero level in Fig. 5. This means that  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  effectively promotes the recovery of excited MB to the ground state.

Fig. 6 presents the reciprocal lifetimes of the transients decay at two wavelengths:  $\lambda = 820$  nm and  $\lambda = 620$  nm as a function of the concentration of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  added in solution. A

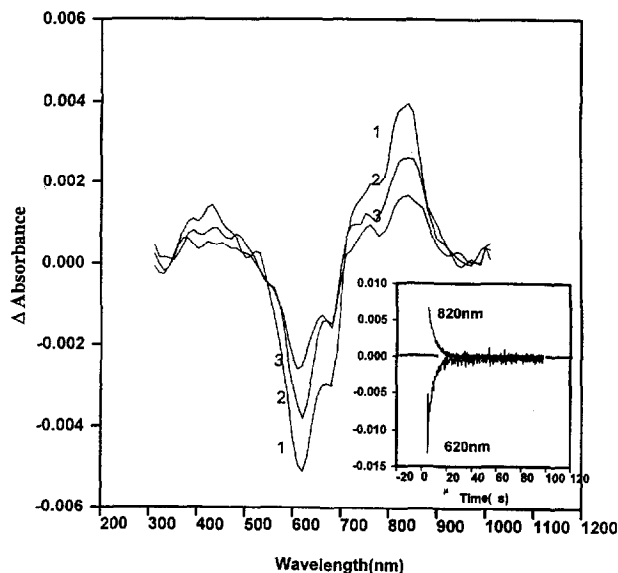


Fig. 5. Differential absorption spectra of MB  $0.86 \times 10^{-5}$  M without  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] = 0.08$  M. Times delay: (1)  $0 \mu\text{s}$ ; (2)  $2 \mu\text{s}$ ; (3)  $4 \mu\text{s}$ . Inset shows the kinetics of bleaching ( $\lambda = 620$  nm) and absorption ( $\lambda = 820$  nm) of the transient spectra.

linear dependence between these two variables is observed. The measured lifetime for the bleaching at  $\lambda = 620$  nm corresponds to the absorption trace observed at  $\lambda = 820$  nm. From the slope of the dependence presented in Fig. 6, the quenching constant of excited MB by  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  was found to be  $k_{\text{MB}} = 6.9 \pm 0.6 \times 10^5 (\text{M s})^{-1}$ .

Fig. 7 shows the effect of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  on the decolorization rate of MB. This indicates that at higher  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  concentrations, the decay of the MB in solution is more pronounced. The initial color is conserved when this run was carried out in the dark.

### 3.2. Eosine: acid–base equilibria and assignment of the nature of the excited states quenched by $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$

The acid–base equilibrium of eosine molecules in ground and triplet-excited state have been reported with  $\text{p}K_{\text{gs}} = 4.3$  and  $\text{p}K_{\text{T}} < 4$  [28]. Therefore, eosin exists in the deprotonated form in both the ground and triplet state ( $\text{pH} = 6$ ). Triplet–triplet (T–T) absorption predominates in eosine above  $550$  nm and up to  $700$  nm [1,6–11]. An additional band is observed in Fig. 1 from  $800$  to  $1000$  nm. This band is attributed to T–T absorption because the observed decay proceeds with the same rate as observed for the band of  $550\text{--}700$  nm. The lifetime of the transient at  $\lambda = 990$  nm was  $51 \pm 2 \mu\text{s}$ , the lifetime of the transient at  $\lambda = 600$  nm was  $50 \pm 2 \mu\text{s}$  and the bleaching transient at  $\lambda = 480$  nm was  $48 \pm 2 \mu\text{s}$ . The quenching of the triplet-excited state of eosine can be determined from either the bleaching band at  $480\text{--}570$  nm or from the absorption transients at  $580\text{--}750$  nm and  $800\text{--}1000$  nm. Absorption of ion–radicals of eosine below  $480$  nm have been reported in the literature with (a) a maximum band for the eosine semi-reduced radical at  $\lambda = 405$  nm [1,6–11] and (b) a maximum for the eosine semi-oxidized radical at  $\lambda = 460$  nm [11]. At  $\lambda < 480$  nm, the absorption of triplet states and

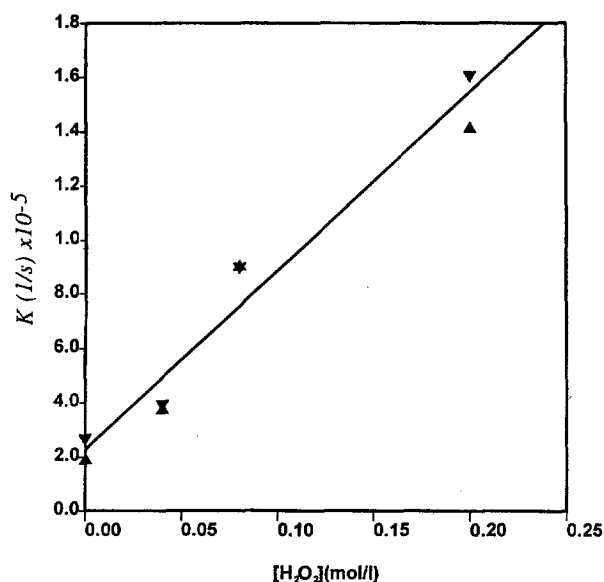


Fig. 6. Dependence of the reciprocal lifetime of transients at  $\lambda_{\text{probe}} = 650$  nm (bleaching, inverted triangles) and  $\lambda_{\text{probe}} = 50$  nm (absorption, normal triangles) vs.  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  concentration for  $[\text{MB}] = 0.86 \times 10^{-5}$  M.

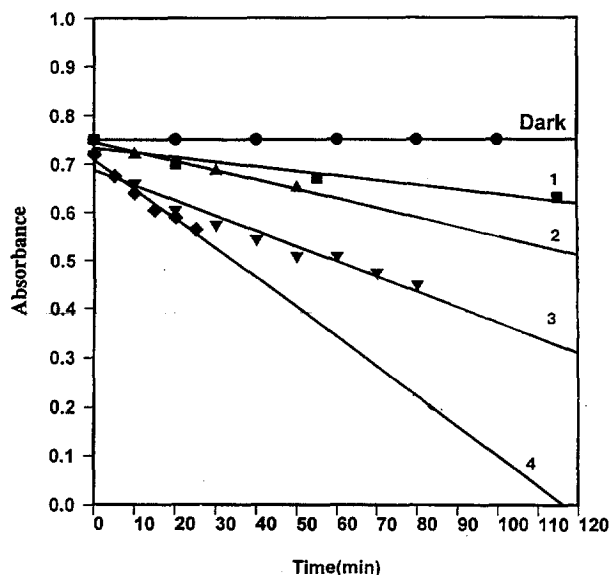


Fig. 7. Kinetics of the MB bleaching under steady-state illumination at  $\lambda = 650$  nm at different  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2]$  concentrations: (1)  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] = 0.002$  M; (2)  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] = 0.004$  M; (3)  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] = 0.04$  M; (4)  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] = 0.4$  M. The  $[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] = 0.4$  M is used in dark control experiment.

radicals has been reported to overlap [1,6–11], whereas in the region at  $\lambda > 480$  nm, it was possible to follow the signals of the triplet quenching by  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ .

Fig. 1 indicates that in the case of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  addition, a decay is observed for the transients between 390 nm to 1000 nm, even in the domain below 480 nm, where ion radical absorption band exists. The bands were seen in this figure to decay with the same rate. This means that only one species is decaying in solution. Therefore, the quenching constant  $k_{\text{eosine}} = (2.34 \pm 0.08) \times 10^5$  (M s)<sup>-1</sup> found for eosine originates from the quenching of the eosine triplet-excited state. No

meaningful long-lived transients were observed in the presence of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  below 480 nm, the region of ion-radical absorption. The disappearance for (a) the bleaching band and (b) the absorption of the transient spectra in Fig. 1b indicated that no meaningful amount of products were formed between  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  and the triplet-excited state of eosine.

### 3.3. Methylene Blue (MB) acid–base equilibria and assignment of the nature of the excited states quenched by $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$

The acid–base equilibria existing in the MB ground state have been reported as:  $\text{p}K(\text{MBH}_2^{2+} \leftrightarrow \text{MBH}^+ + \text{H}^+) < 1$  and  $\text{p}K(\text{MBH}^+ \leftrightarrow \text{MB} + \text{H}^+) > 11$ . In the present work, the form of MB present in solution is  $\text{MBH}^+$ , since this study has been carried out at pH=6. For the triplet MB:  $\text{p}K_{\text{T}}(^3\text{MBH}_2^{2+} \leftrightarrow ^3\text{MBH}_2^+ + \text{H}^+) \sim 7$  [29,30]. Therefore, protonation in the triplet-excited state can occur at pH=6. The  $\text{p}K_{\text{a}}$  of the semi-methylene blue  $\text{MBH}_2^{2+}$  has been reported as 1.9 [22]. In the present experiments, semi-reduced radical MB exists in the deprotonated form  $\text{MBH}^+$ .

The literature has reported an absorption of MB with T–T peaks at 415 nm and 820 nm [18,31,32]. The semi-reduced radical  $\text{MBH}_2^{2+}$  [31,32] is reported with an absorption at 420 nm. The semi-reduced radical  $\text{MBH}^+$  has two maxima at 410 nm with  $\epsilon_{410} = 9800$  (M cm)<sup>-1</sup> and at 880 nm with  $\epsilon_{880} = 33000$  (M cm)<sup>-1</sup> [22]. The semi-oxidized radical  $\text{MB}^{\cdot+}$  was detected at 520 nm [32]. Despite the significant overlap of the T–T absorption band with the ion-radical absorption, it is possible to identify the MB species quenched by  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  and decide whether it is a triplet or an ion-radical. The bleaching transient at  $\lambda = 620$  without  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  shown in the inset of Fig. 4 has a non-exponential form suggesting the excited triplet of MB partially being converted into radical-ions. In the presence of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ , the decay kinetics is exponential. In the inset to Fig. 5, the transient absorption at  $\lambda = 820$  nm has the same form as the bleaching at  $\lambda = 620$  nm. The similarity of the transient for absorption and bleaching indicates that during the quenching of the MB triplet by  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ , the last process was in competition with concentration quenching reactions of the MB triplet. Fig. 5 shows that the excited triplet and the bleaching transient of MB recovered to the ground state. As in the case of eosine, there was no indication on the formation of the long-lived intermediates during MB quenching by  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ . Moreover, the radicals of eosine and MB dyes have been reported to have a low absorption in the spectral domain of the dye absorption in the ground state [22]. Therefore, if these radicals are formed they should be seen along the bleaching transients. This indicates a low yield of ion-radicals due to the triplet dye quenching by  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ . On the other hand, if radicals are formed due to the triplet state quenching of MB or eosine, their yield would not exceed 3–5%. This is in the accuracy range of the bleaching amplitude measurements.

Since the radical yield is low, it is impossible to follow in detail the reaction of the ion-radical with  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  by laser photolysis.

### 3.4. The mechanism of triplet-excited state of eosine and MB quenching by H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>

The observed quenching cannot be ascribed to energy transfer from the eosine T (1.84 eV) or MB (1.36 eV) to H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> (2.07 eV). The quenching may proceed, therefore, via a redox quenching mechanism. The free energy for the electron transfer reactions from the triplet excited state of a dye molecule is known as

$$\Delta G_a = E_{1/2}(D/D^{+\bullet}) - E_{1/2}(\text{OH}^\bullet/\text{H}_2\text{O}_2) - E(D^{\text{T}1}) \quad (1)$$

$$\Delta G_b = E_{1/2}(\text{H}_2\text{O}_2/\text{HO}_2^\bullet) - E_{1/2}(D^-/D^{+\bullet}) - E(D^{\text{T}1}) \quad (2)$$

The redox potentials for H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> and dye are seen below in Table 1.

The experiment was carried out at pH = 6

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta G_a(\text{eosine}) &= 0.89 - (-0.106) - 1.84 - 0.059 \times 6 \quad (\text{pH}=6) \\ &= -1.2 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta G_b(\text{eosine}) &= 0.95 - (-1.09) - 1.84 - 0.059 \times 2 \\ &\quad (2 \text{ protons}) \times 6 \quad (\text{pH}=6) = -0.51 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta G_b(\text{MB}) &= 0.95 - (-0.23) - 1.36 - 0.059 \times 2 \quad (2 \text{ protons}) \\ &\quad \times 6 \quad (\text{pH}=6) = -0.89 \end{aligned}$$

Scheme 1 can be considered as the general scheme in excited dye (eosine or MB) quenching by H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>. The reaction of the triplet quenching by H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> shows three possible channels: (a) the electron transfer from the excited dye molecule to the quencher with the formation of the dye radical cation and OH, (b) the electron transfer from the quencher to the dye molecule with the formation of the dye radical anion and HO<sub>2</sub><sup>•</sup> radical and finally (c) the quenching of the triplet-excited state of the dye by H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> without the formation of products. Reaction (c) can be considered as the excited charge transfer (exciplex) state between dyes with H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> relaxing subsequently to the ground state.

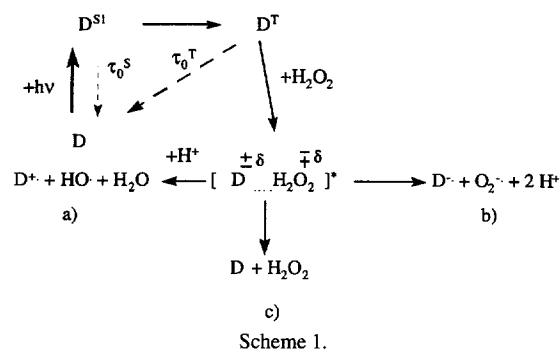
The yield of radicals in reaction (Scheme 1) can be estimated from the measurements of the rate of dye decolorization during steady-state experiments. An increase in the rate

Table 1

	$E_{1/2^-}$ (D/D <sup>+</sup> ) eV	$E_{1/2^-}$ (D <sup>-</sup> /D) eV	$E^-$ (D <sup>T1</sup> ) eV	$E_{1/2^-}$ (OH/H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> ) eV	$E_{1/2^-}$ (H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> /HO <sub>2</sub> ) eV
Eosine	0.89	-1.09	1.84	-	-
MB	-	-0.23	1.36	-	-
H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	-	-	-	-0.106*	0.95**

\*A redox potential is for H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>  $\xrightarrow{-e^-}$  O<sub>2</sub><sup>-•</sup> + 2H<sup>+</sup> at pH=0; a reaction D<sup>T</sup> + H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> → [D<sup>-δ</sup>...H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+δ</sup>] → D<sup>-•</sup> + O<sub>2</sub><sup>-•</sup> + 2H<sup>+</sup> is considered.

\*\*A redox potential is for H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>  $\xrightarrow{+e^-, +H^+}$  HO<sup>•</sup> + H<sub>2</sub>O at pH=0; a reaction D<sup>T</sup> + H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> → [D<sup>+δ</sup>...H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>-δ</sup>]  $\xrightarrow{+H^+}$  D<sup>++</sup> + HO<sup>•</sup> + H<sub>2</sub>O is considered (Courtesy of Atlas of Electrochemical Equilibria in Aqueous Solutions by Marcel Pourbaix National Association of Corrosion Engineers, Houston, Texas, USA, Brussel, 1974).



of the decolorization with increasing H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> was experimentally observed. Assuming the free radical reaction mechanism, it is possible to estimate the radical yield due to the triplet dye quenching by H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> in the following way. The rate of the dye decolorization during the initial degradation:

$$\frac{d[D]}{dt} = -k_r \cdot [D^{\text{T}1}] \cdot [\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] = \quad (3)$$

$$= - \frac{k_r \cdot \phi \cdot I}{(k_r + k_q) \cdot [\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] + 1/\tau_0^{\text{T}}} \cdot [\text{H}_2\text{O}_2]$$

$$[D^{\text{T}1}] = - \frac{\phi \cdot I}{(k_r + k_q) \cdot [\text{H}_2\text{O}_2] + 1/\tau_0^{\text{T}}} \quad (4)$$

D<sup>T1</sup> is the stationary concentration of the excited dye molecules during steady-state photolysis; k<sub>r</sub> corresponds to the reaction (a) or (b); k<sub>q</sub> corresponds to the reaction (c); τ<sub>0</sub><sup>T</sup> is the lifetime of the excited dye without H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>; φ—quantum yield of the triplet formation; I—absorbed photon flux.

Eq. (5) predicts the linear dependence of reciprocal decolorization rate on the reciprocal H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> concentration

$$\frac{1}{\text{Q.Y.}} = \frac{I_0}{d[D]/dt} = \frac{(k_r + k_q)}{k_r \cdot \phi} + \frac{1}{\tau_0^{\text{T}} \cdot k_r \cdot \phi} \cdot \frac{1}{[\text{H}_2\text{O}_2]} \quad (5)$$

Fig. 8a (MB) and Fig. 8b (eosine) show a linear dependence of the reciprocal rate of the dye's disappearance vs. H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> concentration plotted according to Eq. (5). The rates of dye decolorization were obtained from the data shown in Fig. 3 for eosine and Fig. 7 for MB. In Fig. 8a,b a linear dependence is observed. The intercept A and slope B is for MB (A = 45 ± 15; B = 0.37 ± 0.05 M); eosine (A = 184 ± 90; B = 84 ± 7 M). According to the (5) intercept A equals (k<sub>r</sub> + k<sub>q</sub>)/(k<sub>r</sub>). Taking the known values for the intersystem crossing of 0.68 (eosine) and 0.54 (MB) the yield of the radical formation k<sub>r</sub>/(k<sub>q</sub> + k<sub>r</sub>) can be estimated from steady-state measurements to be 0.01 ± 0.005 for eosine and 0.033 ± 0.01 for MB. These values show that the bleaching transients in the laser photolysis to the zero level is in agreement with low yields for the reaction product. According to this consideration, the values of radical yield are the upper limit of the radical yield due to the triplet quenching by H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, because OH<sup>•</sup> radicals should react with the dye molecules effectively increasing the observed yield. The k<sub>r</sub> + k<sub>q</sub> is equal to the value of the quenching rate constant obtained by laser

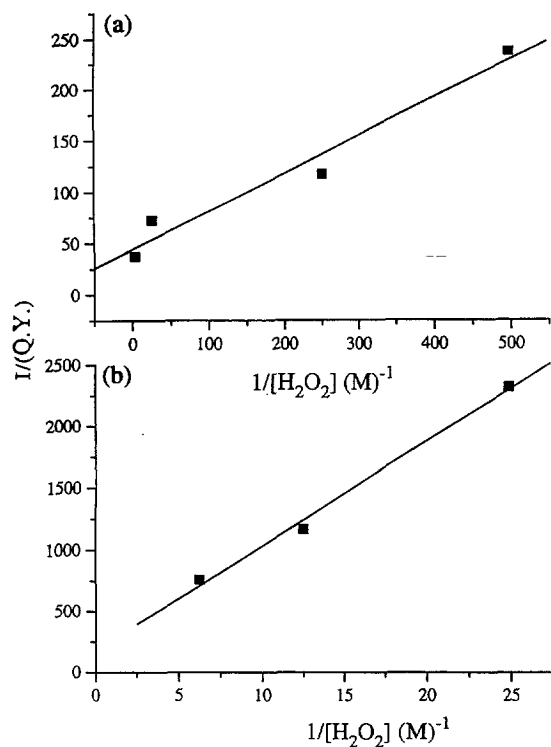


Fig. 8. Dependence of the reciprocal bleaching rate of the dye vs. reciprocal  $H_2O_2$  concentration in steady-state illumination: (a) MB, (b) eosine.

photolysis experiments. These values are  $2.4 \pm 0.3 \times 10^5 (M s)^{-1}$  for eosine and  $6.5 \pm 0.5 \times 10^5 (M s)^{-1}$  for MB. According to Eq. (5), the ratio of the intercept to slope  $A/B$  is  $\tau_0^T(k_r + k_q)$ . The last relation allows to estimate the dye triplet quenching constant ( $k_r + k_q$ ) from steady-state experiments. This value is found to be  $3 \times 10^5 (M s)^{-1}$  for eosine, and  $2 \times 10^6 (M s)^{-1}$  for MB. Steady-state experiments for MB give the rate constant value three times more than laser photolysis. Taking the simplified kinetics of steady-state decolorization, these rate constants from the steady-state and laser photolysis experiments are in fairly good agreement. Reaction (c) is the main channel for eosine and MB quenching. A mechanism involving an exciplex could be suggested. The quenching of the dye triplets by  $H_2O_2$  cannot compete with the quenching by  $O_2$  dissolved in the solution. At the very high  $H_2O_2$  (1 M) the triplet lifetime should be about 4  $\mu s$  for the eosine and 1.5  $\mu s$  for the MB. These lifetimes are significantly longer than the triplet lifetime in air-saturated aqueous solution, which was observed to be less than 1  $\mu s$ , because the quenching constant for the triplet state is close to the diffusion-controlled value [3].

#### 4. Conclusion

The triplet state of the eosine and MB dyes are quenched by  $H_2O_2$  with rate constants equal to  $2.4 \pm 0.3 \times 10^5 (M s)^{-1}$  and  $6.5 \pm 0.5 \times 10^5 (M s)^{-1}$  respectively. Decolorization of both dyes under steady-state illumination was observed in the presence of  $H_2O_2$ . The dependence of the decolorization rates vs.  $H_2O_2$  concentration agrees with the observed

quenching of the triplet states of the dyes by  $H_2O_2$ . The estimation of the free energy of reaction shows that (a) photoinduced electron transfer from the eosine triplet-excited to  $H_2O_2$  with formation of  $OH^\cdot$  radical and (b) that the oxidation of  $H_2O_2$  by MB triplet state is possible with the formation  $HO_2^\cdot$  radicals in thermodynamically allowed. The yield of radicals formation is estimated to be ( $\sim 3\%$  reactions) in agreement with previously reported observations obtained by steady-state and laser photolysis experiments.

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