

Vladimir Lorman and the Physics of Unconventional Systems



Andrea Parmeggiani
L2C & DIMNP

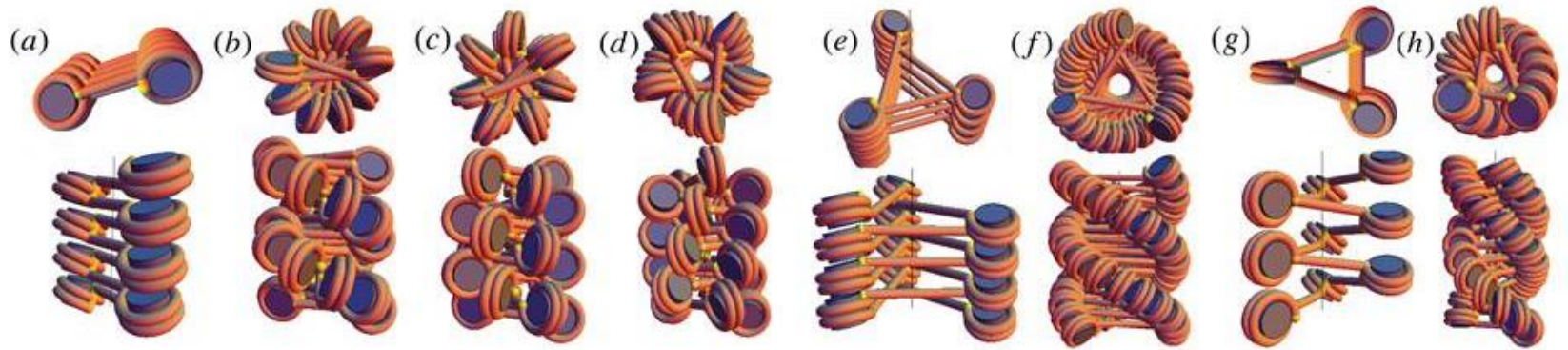
Vladimir Lorman and the Physics of Unconventional Systems



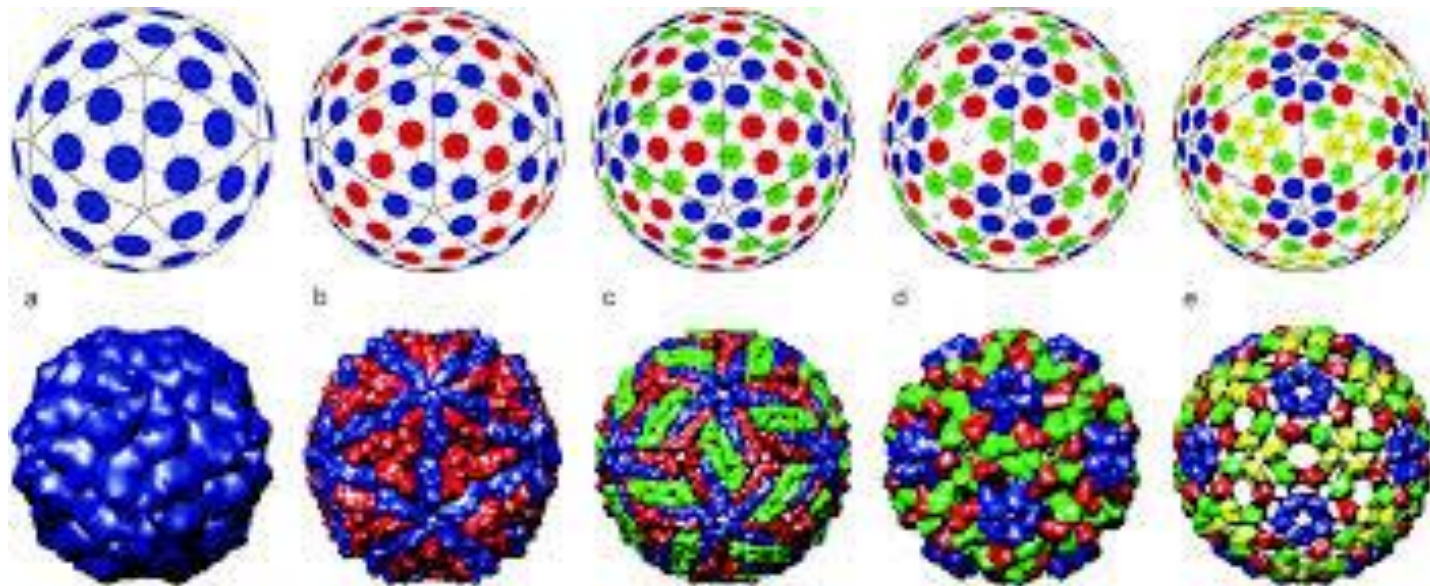
UNIVERSITÉ
DE MONTPELLIER

Workshop on Physical Virology - ICTP – 17-21/07/17

The beauty of order and symmetries of the physical world

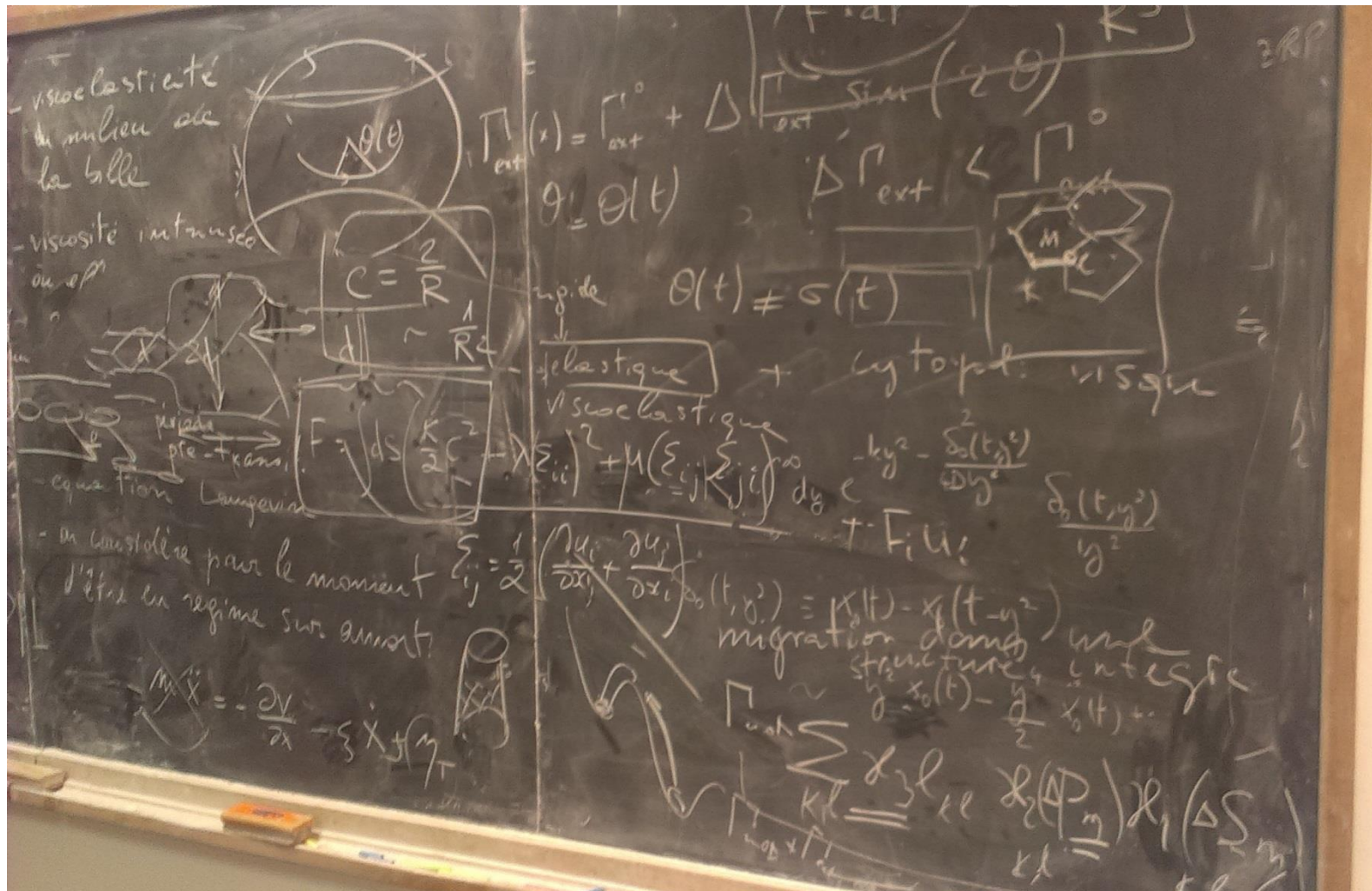


Garces, Podgornik, Lorman, PRL 2015



Rochal, Konevtsova, Myasnikova, Lorman, Nanoscale 2016

Last blackboard of discussions on the physics of developmental biology processes





Primosten 2009

Vladimir Lorman's scientific life facts (only few of them)

Vladimir Lorman's scientific life facts (only few of them)

- **Studies and Diplomas:**

- 1981: Diploma (summa cum laude) in Theoretical Physics of Condensed Matter at the Rostov University on the Don (Russia)
- 1988: Thesis of Doctorate of State in Theoretical Physics of Condensed Matter, University of Rostov on Don (Russia) and A.M. Prokhorov General Physics Institute, Academy of Sciences of Russia (Moscow)



Vladimir Lorman's scientific life facts (only few of them)

- **Career:**

- 1982-1990: "Junior" researcher, then "senior" researcher at the Institute of Physics of Rostov on Don University
- 1990-1992: Post-doctoral researcher at the University of Picardie
- 1992-1999: Lecturer at the University of Picardie
- 1999-2004: Associate Professor at the University Montpellier II
- 2004-2010: Full Professor at the University Montpellier II
- 2010-2016: Professor of "Exceptional Class" at the University Montpellier



Vladimir Lorman's scientific life facts

(only few of them)

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- 2010-2016: Professor of "Exceptional Class" at the University Montpellier

- **Responsibilities:**

- Responsible of the interdisciplinary axis Physics-Biology of the Institute of Physics of Montpellier
- Member of the GPS (governance committee) of the Laboratory of Excellence «NUMEV»
- Responsible for the Physics Education and teaching of the University Montpellier II (2001-2010)
- Responsible of the Physics Master of the University Montpellier II
- Deputy Director of the Charles Coulomb Laboratory, UMR 5221 CNRS - UM;
- Director of the Department of Theoretical Physics at the Charles Coulomb Laboratory, UMR 5221 CNRS - UM.

A possible historical reconstruction
from “facts told-lived” and thoughts

A possible historical reconstruction from “facts told-lived” and thoughts

- **Studies and Diplomas:**
 - 1997: French Habilitation to be PhD Supervisor, University of Picardy, Amiens.
President of the Jury: Jacques Prost (ESPCI)



A possible historical reconstruction from “facts told-lived” and thoughts

- To understand Vladimir's contribution and scientific pathway: some key indicators
 - 1992-1997 assistant professor in University of Picardie (Amiens) intense work on the theory liquid crystals (Vladimir's contribution is known by J. Prost)
 - 1996 birth of Physico-Chimie Curie Lab, Curie Institute (Dir. J. Prost ← F. Brochard and P.G. De Gennes)
 - 1997: Habilitation to be PhD thesis supervisor and finally Principal Investigator
 - 1998: “Physics at the Scale of the Cell” Summer School in Cargese (by B. Fourcade, J. Prost)



A possible historical reconstruction from “facts told-lived” and thoughts

- To understand Vladimir’s contribution and scientific pathway: some key indicators
 - 1999: Professor in theoretical physics at Montpellier
 - Early 2000s: start to build the interdisciplinary axis with biology (in Montpellier the physicists to biologists ratio is less then 1/20!) ← A. Neveu, string theorist (owner of the previous blackboard)



<http://www.ilp-france.com/wp-content/uploads/Activites-culturelles.jpg>



Not a big fast food,
but monument of yin-yang in Japanese
in front of the UM Triolet campus!

Scientific pathways: from the 80s to 2017

- The period of 80s-90s
- The 90s
- The new century!
- 2007-2017
- In the meanwhile up to 2017

Scientific Pathways: 80s and 90s

- **80s-90s:** theory of phase transitions and crystallization to study condensed matter of metals and alloys, magnetism, use of symmetries to develop Landau's theory of phase transitions in strong relations with the geometric approach to singularities, bifurcations, and catastrophes theory (see V. Arnold)
(he learned to find the answer from first principles before making the computation)

Singularities, bifurcations, and catastrophes

V.I. Arnol'd

M. V. Lomonosov. Moscow State University

Usp. Fiz. Nauk **141**, 569–590 (December 1983)

The theories of smooth-mapping singularities and dynamical-system bifurcations are reviewed. Mention is made of the applications to optics (caustic and wave-front metamorphoses) and to theories of short-wave asymptotics, the origin of large-scale structure in the universe, and loss of equilibrium and self-oscillation stability ("catastrophe theory").

PACS numbers: 02.30. — f, 03.40.Kf

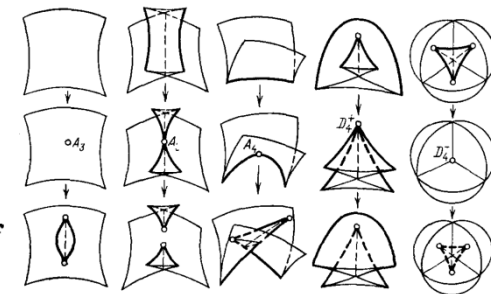


FIG. 6. The metamorphoses of generic wave fronts.

Scientific Pathways: 80s and 90s

- **80s-90s:** theory of phase transitions and crystallization to study condensed matter of metals and alloys, magnetism, use of symmetries to develop Landau's theory of phase transitions in strong relations with the geometric approach to singularities, bifurcations, and catastrophes theory (see V. Arnold)
(he learned to find the answer from first principles before making the computation)

Methods of the theory of singularities in the phenomenology of phase transitions

E. I. Kut'in, V. L. Lorman, and S. V. Pavlov

State Pedagogical Institute, Rostov-on-Don, Scientific-Research Institute of Physics at the State University, Rostov-on-Don, and M. V. Lomonosov State University, Moscow

(Submitted May 3, 1990; resubmitted after revision October 18, 1990)

Usp. Fiz. Nauk **161**, 109–147 (June 1991)

A review is presented on the methods of the theory of singularities applied to the Landau phenomenological theory of phase transitions. Constructive algorithms are presented that eliminate arbitrariness in the choice of the Landau potential and make it possible to exclude from consideration models with nonphysical results. The methods of singularity theory are illustrated by application to several real thermodynamic systems.

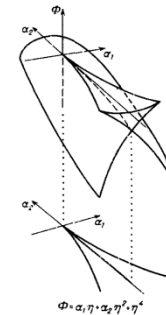
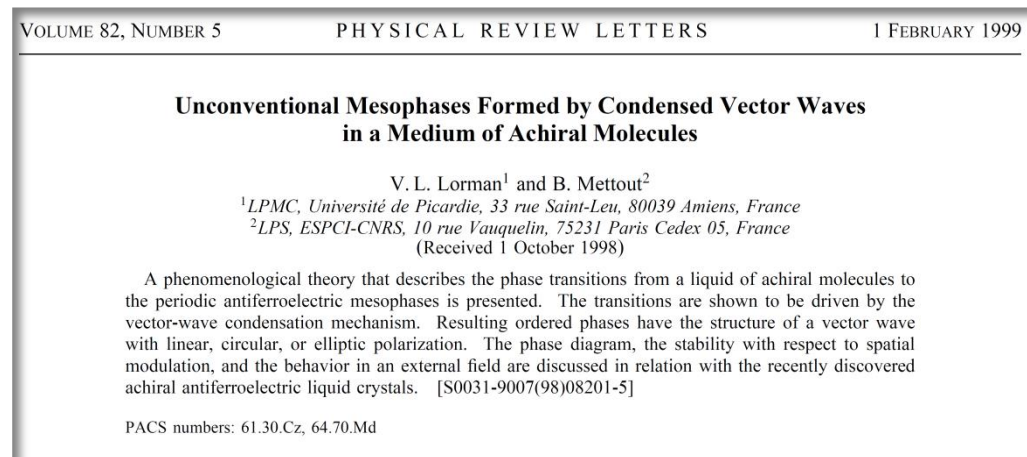
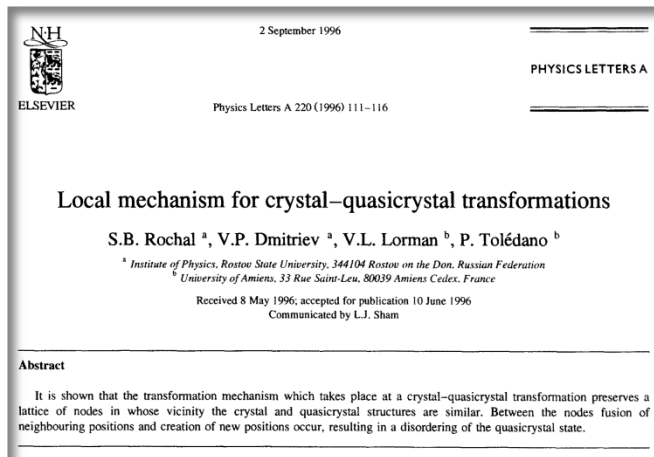


FIG. 6. Relation between the phase diagram and the bifurcation diagram of a singularity. An example of a thermodynamic potential in the neighborhood of a critical point of the liquid-vapor type.

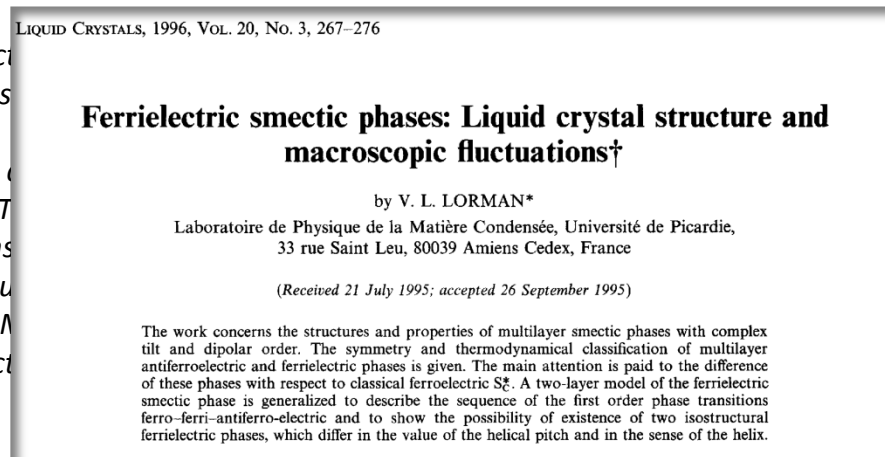
Scientific Pathways: the 90s

- **90s:** theory of liquid crystals and quasicrystals: modeling the structure and phase transitions of smectics ferroelectric liquid crystals and anti-ferroelectrics of achiral components



- *Theory of reorientational transitions in ferrielectric smectic phases*
- *Minimal model of the phonon-phason dynamics in the AIPdMn alloy*
- *Dielectric permittivity of antiferroelectric liquid crystals*
- *A comparative Raman study of ferroelectric PbTiO₃ and antiferroelectric BaTiO₃*
- *Unconventional mesophases formed by condensed vector waves in a medium of achiral molecules*
- *Antiferroelectric and ferrielectric structures induced by external fields in smectic liquid crystals*
- *Phase transitions in (Ba 0.7 Sr 0.3) TiO₃ / (001) N*
- *Ferrielectric smectic phases: Liquid crystal structure and macroscopic fluctuations†*

A lot of work with experimentalists!



Internal friction in the i-

Scientific Pathways: new century!

- **Early 2000 and after: “on the roads of Watson, Crick and Caspar-Klug”**
 - DNA crystalline phases + nucleosomes (see F. Livolant experiments): new DNA mesophases, models of chromatin fibers (nucleosomes)
 - Impact of physical constraints in genome structure and dynamics (physical genomics)

VOLUME 87, NUMBER 21

PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS

19 NOVEMBER 2001

Positional, Reorientational, and Bond Orientational Order in DNA Mesophases

V. Lorman,¹ R. Podgornik,^{2,3,4} and B. Žekš^{5,3}

¹Laboratoire de Physique Mathématique et Théorique, Université Montpellier II, F-34095 Montpellier, France

²Department of Physics, Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, University of Ljubljana, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

³Department of Theoretical Physics, J. Stefan Institute, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

⁴LPSB/NICHD, Building 12A Room 2041, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland 20892-5626

⁵Institute of Biophysics, Medical Faculty, University of Ljubljana, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

(Received 6 June 2001; published 1 November 2001)

We investigate the orientational order of transverse polarization vectors of long, stiff polymer molecules and their coupling to bond orientational and positional order in high density mesophases. Homogeneous ordering of transverse polarization vector promotes distortions in the hexatic phase, whereas inhomogeneous ordering precipitates crystallization of the 2D sections with different orientations of the transverse polarization vector on each molecule in the unit cell. We propose possible scenarios for going from the hexatic phase, through the distorted hexatic phase, to the crystalline phase with an orthorhombic unit cell observed experimentally for the case of DNA.

PRL 114, 238102 (2015)

PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS

week ending
12 JUNE 2015

Antipolar and Anticlinic Mesophase Order in Chromatin Induced by Nucleosome Polarity and Chirality Correlations

R. Garcés,¹ R. Podgornik,^{2,3} and V. Lorman¹

¹Laboratoire Charles Coulomb, UMR 5221 CNRS-Université Montpellier 2, F-34095 Montpellier, France

²Department of Theoretical Physics, J. Stefan Institute, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

³Department of Physics, Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, University of Ljubljana, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

(Received 17 October 2014; published 9 June 2015)

Contrary to the usual “rigid supermolecular assembly” paradigm of chromatin structure, we propose to analyze its eventual ordered state in terms of symmetry properties of individual nucleosomes that give rise to mesophase order parameters, like in many other soft-matter systems. Basing our approach on the Landau-de Gennes phenomenology, we describe the mesoscale order in chromatin by antipolar and anticlinic correlations of chiral individual nucleosomes. This approach leads to a unifying physical picture of a whole series of soft locally ordered states with different apparent structures, including the recently observed *heteromorphic chromatin*, stemming from the antipolar arrangement of nucleosomes complemented by their chiral twisting. Properties of these states under an external force field can reconcile apparently contradictory results of single-molecule experiments.

DOI: 10.1103/PhysRevLett.114.238102

PACS numbers: 87.16.Sr, 64.70.mf, 87.16.A-

PHYSICAL REVIEW E 75, 030901(R) (2007)

Screwlike order, macroscopic chirality, and elastic distortions in high-density DNA mesophases

F. Manna,¹ V. Lorman,¹ R. Podgornik,^{2,3,4} and B. Žekš^{3,5}

¹Laboratoire de Physique Mathématique et Théorique, Université Montpellier II, F-34095 Montpellier, France

²Department of Physics, Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, University of Ljubljana, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

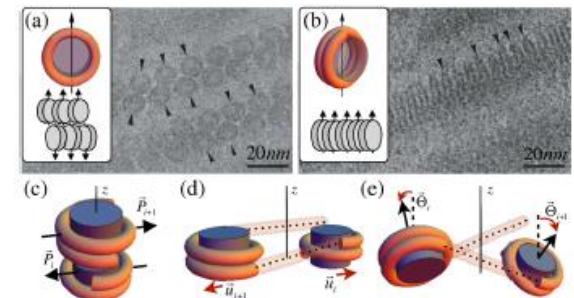
³Department of Theoretical Physics, J. Stefan Institute, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

⁴LPSB/NICHD, Building 12A, Room 2041, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland 20892-5626, USA

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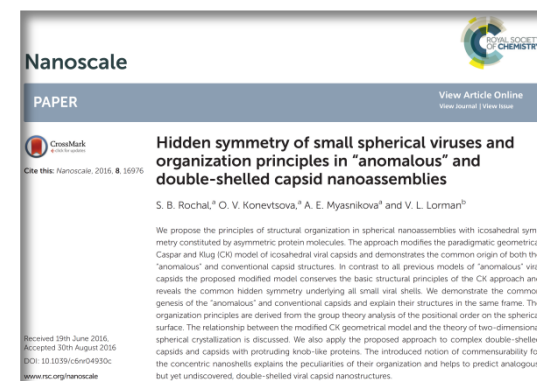
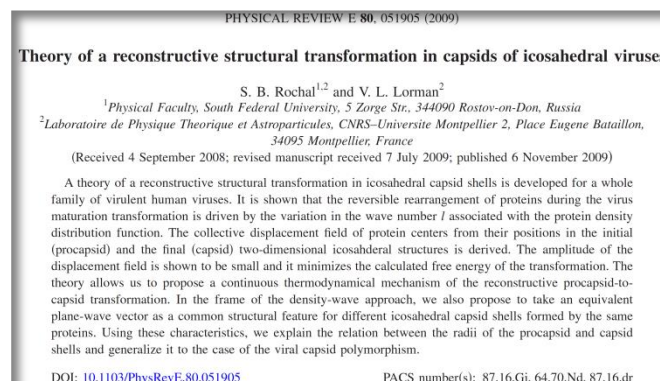
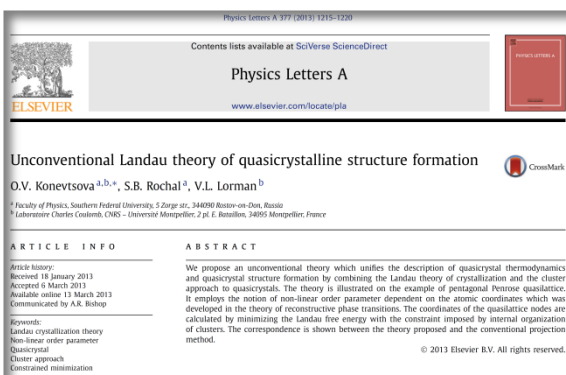
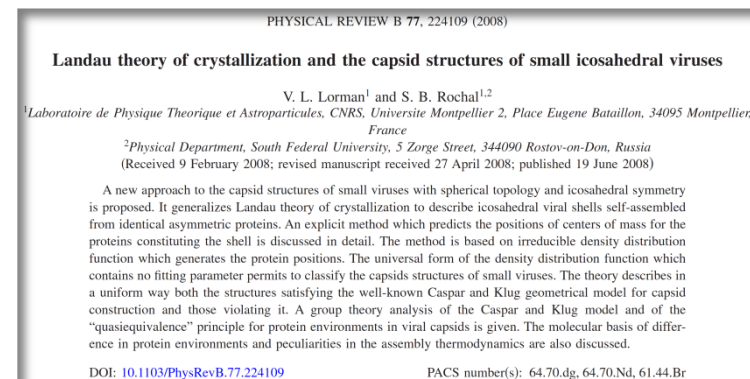
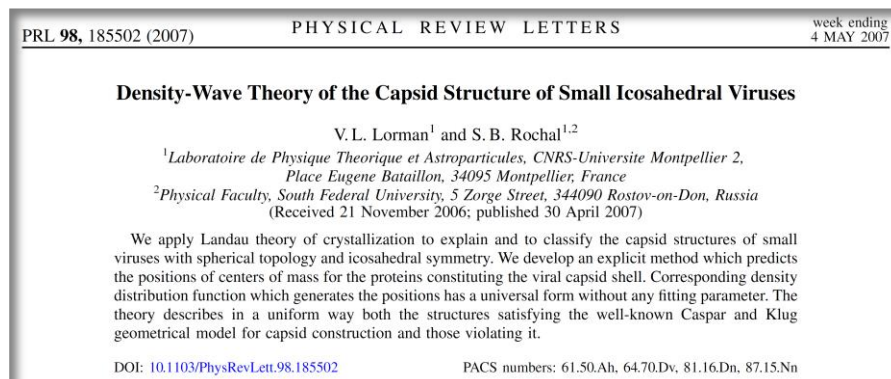
(Received 29 August 2006; published 16 March 2007)

We investigate a new screwlike liquid-crystalline ordering in solutions of helical biopolymers and its influence on the state of individual molecules. In the resulting mesophase translational and rotational motions of molecules are coupled in screw fluctuations. We show that in contrast to the case of conventional chiral liquid crystals the elastic distortion does not twist the screw order but leads to overwinding of individual helical molecules. This explains the peculiarities of high-density DNA mesophases.



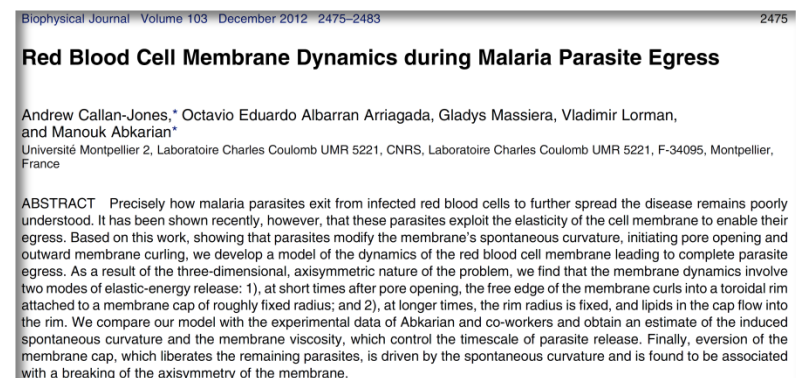
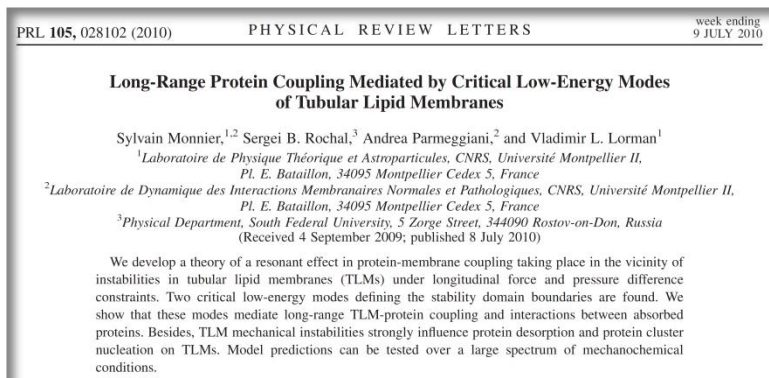
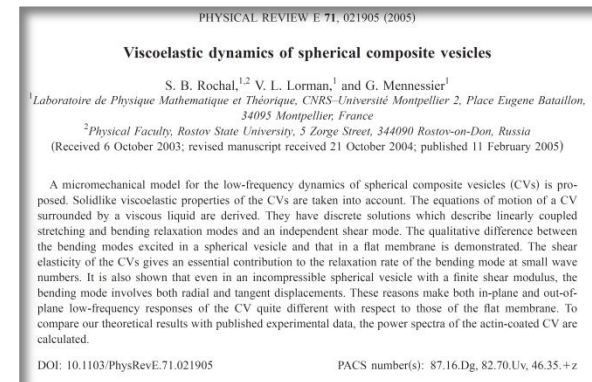
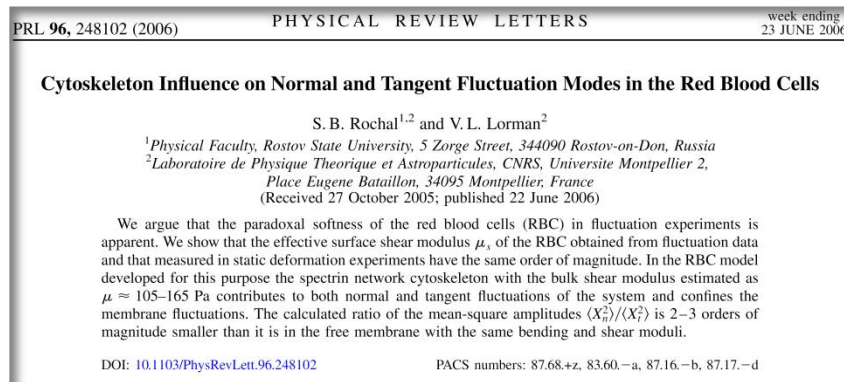
Scientific Pathways: 2007-2017

- From 2007 up to now: “on the roads of Watson, Crick and Caspar-Klug”
 - Viral capsid assemblies → Landau theory for capsid crystallization + Caspar-Klug generalization + relation with quasicrystals



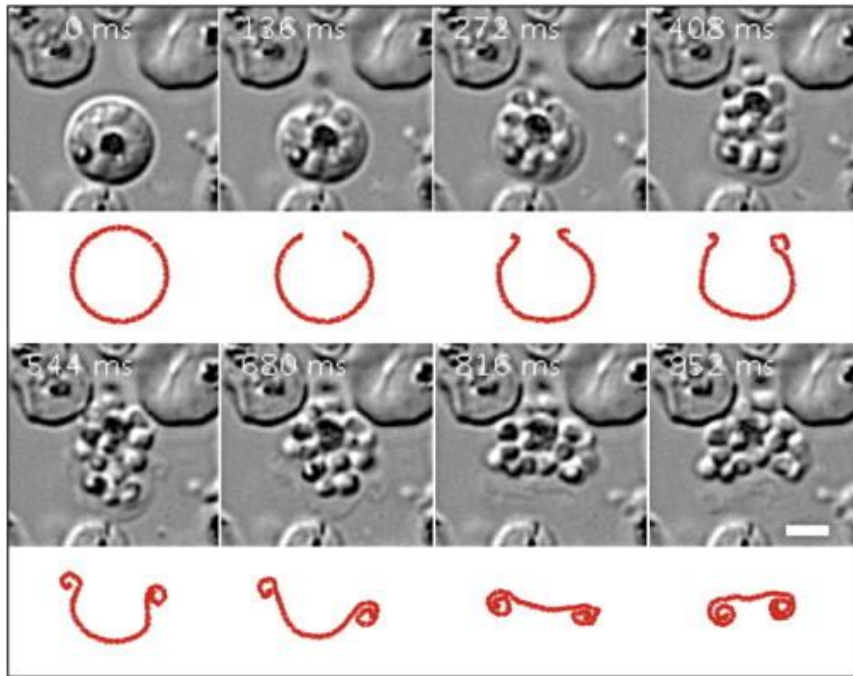
Scientific Pathways: in the meanwhile up to now

- In the meanwhile - up to now: modeling structured membranes and protein-membrane interactions
 - Mechanics of membranes as thin solid shells (lipid membrane + cytoskeleton) → strong interest for red blood cells + tubular membrane under “unconventional” conditions, protein membrane interactions

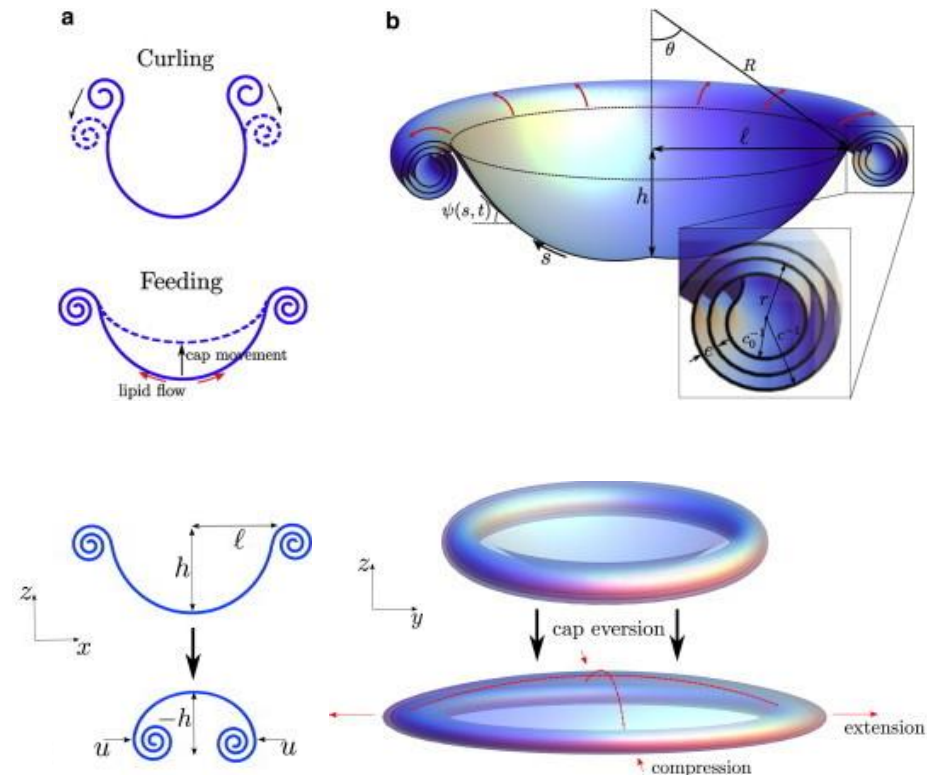


Scientific Pathways: in the meanwhile up to now

- In the meanwhile - up to now: modeling structured membranes and protein-membrane interactions
 - Mechanical instabilities of malaria parasites egress from red blood cells



Pore nucleation followed by curling and buckling instabilities



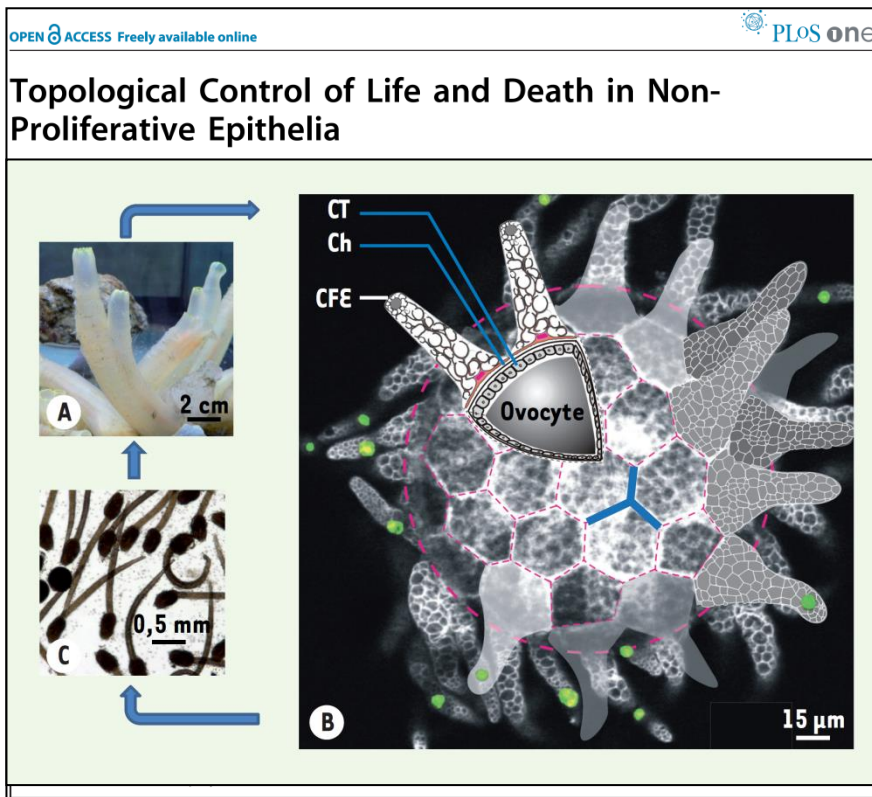
Scientific Pathways: in the meanwhile up to now

- In the meanwhile - up to now: tissue mechanics in developmental biology
 - Opening to soft tissues ordering, structure and function (Apoptotic control in *Ciona Intestinalis* and EHT in *Zebrafish*): implications for cancer research.
Are mechanical constraints controlling organism molecular genetics?
(D'Arcy Thompson's hypothesis)

"A theory of apoptotic controllers"

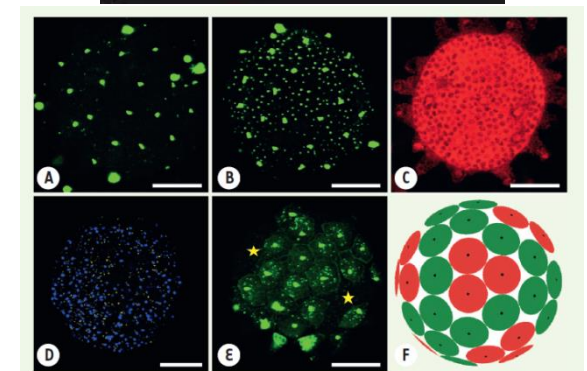
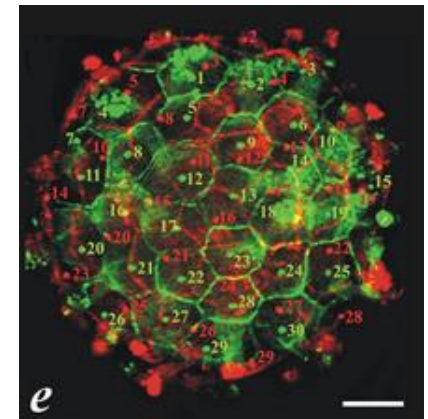
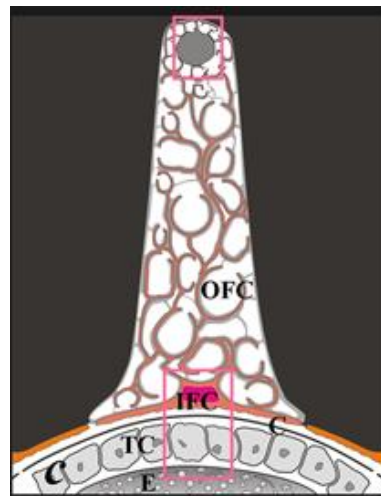
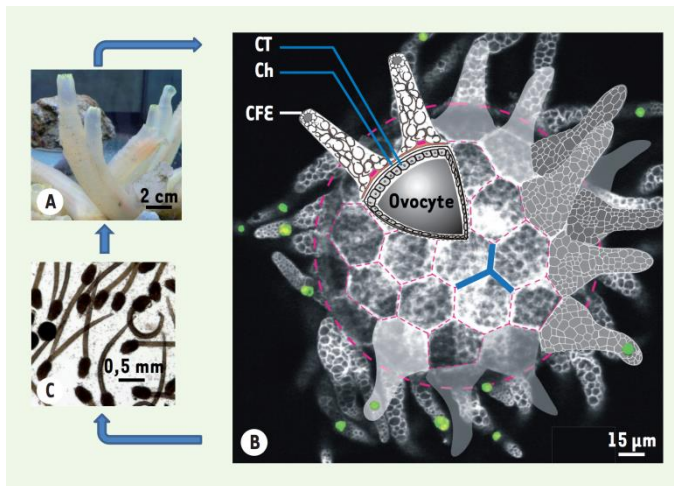
To note:

- *Ciona Intestinalis*: example of descendent evolution: from tadpole to digesting tube!
- tissue icosahedral symmetry (to maximize volume)
- about 60 floater cells form the egg
- soft interactions vs rigid interaction in viruses
- position is not casual, but mechanical constraints
- position plays a fundamental role in apoptotic signaling pathway



Scientific Pathways: in the meanwhile up to now

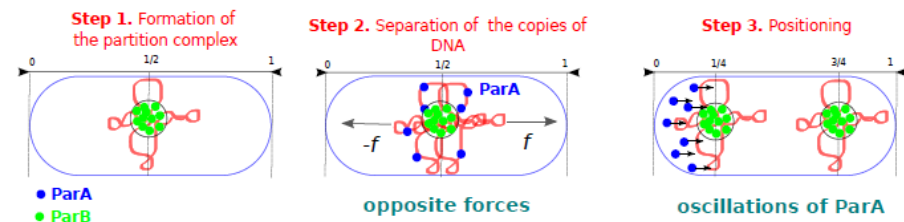
- In the meanwhile - up to now: tissue mechanics in developmental biology
 - Opening to soft tissues ordering, structure and function (Apoptotic control in *Ciona Intestinalis* and EHT in *Zebrafish*):
Are mechanical constraints controlling organism molecular genetics?
 (D'Arcy Thompson's hypothesis)
 - Floater's position cells are not randomly distributed, but are optimized depending on a soft short range cell-to-cell interactions
 - Their apoptosis controls inner cells apoptosis and organism egress: **"Theory of apoptotic controllers"?**



Scientific Pathways: in the meanwhile up to now

- **In the meanwhile - up to now:**

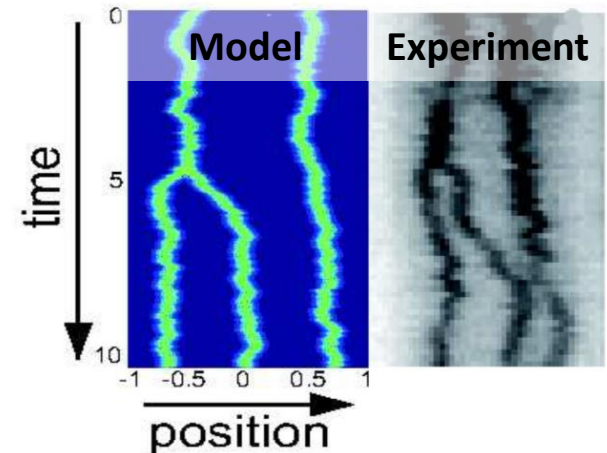
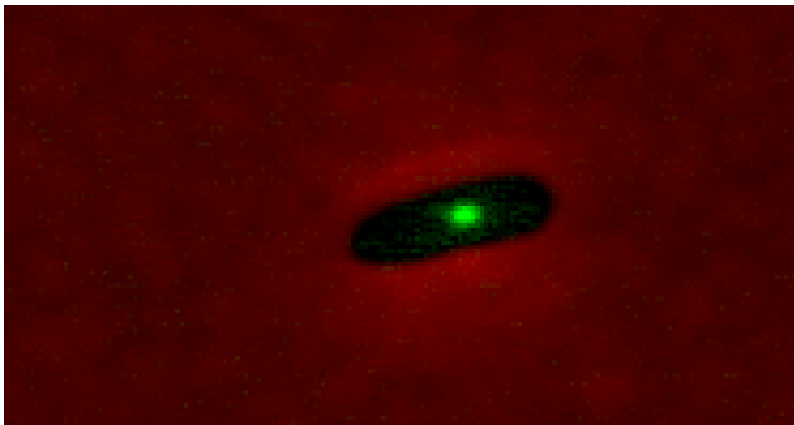
- Dynamical instabilities and symmetry breaking in DNA active segregation systems of bacteria: the stochastic control of DNA segregation and positioning in bacteria
- Physical genomics and bioinformatics
- Physical virology and genomic virology



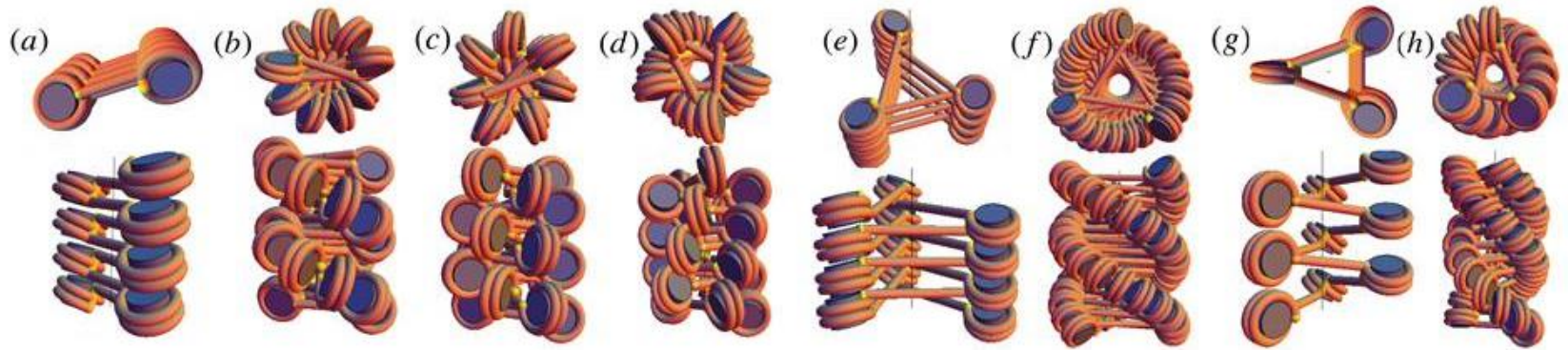
Surfing on Protein Waves: Proteophoresis as a Mechanism for Bacterial Genome Partitioning

J.-C. Walter, J. Dorignac, V. Lorman, J. Rech, J.-Y. Bouet, M. Nollmann, J. Palmeri, A. Parmeggiani, and F. Geniet
Phys. Rev. Lett. **119**, 028101 – Published 13 July 2017

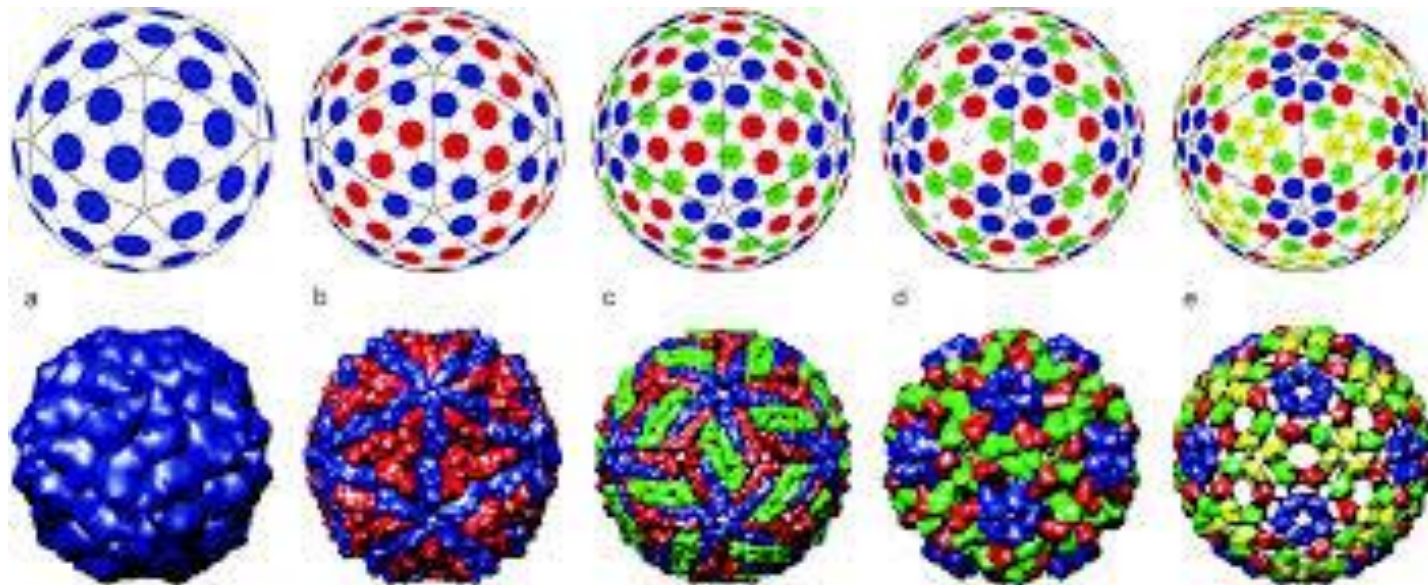
3 components:
a) 2 proteins (ParA & ParB)
b) specific binding sites (*parS*)



The beauty of order and symmetries of the physical world



Garces, Podgornik, Lorman, PRL 2015



Rochal, Konevtsova, Myasnikova, Lorman, Nanoscale 2016

Vladimir's in the Scientific Community



A friend who taught us to love the beauty of physics and nature by the kindness of his personality, but also by the firmness in the science he knew perfectly.

(From a colleague of the Engineering and Robotics Department)