

# Liquid Crystal Phase Transitions in Suspensions of Mineral Colloids: New Life from Old Roots

Henk Lekkerkerker  
28 March 2012

# Menu

- Tuesday 1 May 1990: A visit with serious consequences
- Clay and Liquid Crystals: The disappointment
- Gibbsite : Less is more
- Clay 2.0 Liquid Crystals : New hope
- Some final comments

# Menu

- **Tuesday 1 May 1990:A visit with serious consequences**
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Van 't Hoff Laboratorium voor  
Fysische en Colloidchemie  
Universiteit Utrecht

ONDERZOEKSJAAR COLLEGE FYSISCH EN COLLOIDCHEMIE

Onderdeel: Wisselwerkingen tussen colloïdale deeltjes

Prof. H. N. W. Lekkerkerker

$$C = \frac{\alpha^A(\mu^B)^2 + \alpha^B(\mu^A)^2}{(4\pi\epsilon_0)^2} \quad \text{inductie-effect} \quad (2.28)$$

$$C = \frac{3}{2} \frac{E^A E^B}{E^A + E^B} \cdot \frac{\alpha^A \alpha^B}{(4\pi\epsilon_0)^2} \quad \text{dispersie interactie} \quad (2.29)$$

Met behulp van deze formules kan men de verschillende bijdragen aan de lange afstandsinteractie berekenen. Zonder preciese berekeningen uit te voeren kunnen we toch al wel een schatting maken van de grootte orde van de verschillende bijdragen uitgaande van de volgende grootte ordes voor dipool moment, polariseerbaarheid en excitatie-energie.

$$|\mu| \sim 0.1 \text{ e}\sigma$$

$$\frac{\alpha}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \sim 0.1 \text{ }\sigma^3$$

$$E \sim 0.1 \frac{e^2}{4\pi\epsilon_0 a_0}$$

waar  $\sigma$  de diameter van het atoom of molecuul is ( $\sigma \approx 3 \times 10^{-10} \text{ m}$ ),  $a_0 = \frac{e_0 h^2}{4\pi m e^2} = 0.53 \times 10^{-10}$  is de Bohr-straal (constante van Planck:  $h = 6.62 \times 10^{-34} \text{ Js}$ ; massa van het elektron:  $m = 0.91 \times 10^{-30} \text{ kg}$ ) en  $\frac{e^2}{4\pi\epsilon_0} = 2.3 \times 10^{-28} \text{ Jm}$ . Gebruik makend van deze uitdrukkingen vinden we

$$C_{\text{excitatie}} = \frac{(0.1)^4 \sigma^4}{kT} \left( \frac{e^2}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \right)^2 \sim 10^{-77} \text{ Jm}^6$$

$$C_{\text{inductie}} = (0.1)^3 \sigma^3 \frac{e^2}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \sim 10^{-78} \text{ Jm}^6$$

$$C_{\text{dispensie}} = (0.1)^3 \frac{\sigma^6}{a_0} \frac{e^2}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \sim 10^{-77} \text{ Jm}^6$$

waar we gebruikt hebben  $kT = 4 \times 10^{-21} \text{ J}$ , bij  $T = 298 \text{ K}$ .

Dit betekent dat, zoals London (1936) liet zien dat de steeds aanwezige dispersie interactie in het algemeen de belangrijkste bijdrage levert aan de interactie energie. We illustreren dit aan de hand van de volgende tabel die we ontfen aan Maitland et al. (1981) p. 21.

Tabel 1

Molecule	$10^{20} \mu / \text{Cm}$	$10^{20} \alpha / (4\pi\epsilon_0)^{-1} / \text{m}^3$	- Coefficient of $r^{-6} / 10^{-78} \text{ Jm}^6$		
			Electronic	Induction	Dispersion
Ar	0	1.63	0	0	50
Xe	0	4.0	0	0	209
CO	0.4	1.95	0.003	0.06	97
HCl	3.4	2.63	17	6	150
NH <sub>3</sub>	4.7	2.26	64	9	133
H <sub>2</sub> O	6.13	1.48	184	10	61

## Referenties

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August 1988

# DRILLING AND PUMPING JOURNAL

## DRILLING FLUID PHYSICS

EDMUND FORDHAM  
GEOFFREY MAITLAND  
GERRY MEETEN  
JOHN SHERWOOD

SCHLUMBERGER CAMBRIDGE RESEARCH



GEOFFREY MAITLAND IS HEAD OF THE ROCK AND FLUID PHYSICS DEPARTMENT AT SCR. HE IS A GRADUATE OF OXFORD UNIVERSITY, WHERE HE OBTAINED HIS DPhil IN PHYSICAL CHEMISTRY. GEOFF WAS A SENIOR LECTURER IN CHEMICAL ENGINEERING AT IMPERIAL COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, FROM 1974 UNTIL HE JOINED SCHLUMBERGER CAMBRIDGE RESEARCH IN 1986.

### INTRODUCTION

The drilling, completion and treatment operations for oil and gas wells all use a range of specialised fluids, which are usually multicomponent dispersions and/or polymeric solutions. Each of these complex fluids is required to fulfil many roles, including pressure control in the wellbore, transport of material to or from specific downhole locations and protection of the formation against any harmful modification by the fluid itself. Because of this multifunctional nature, the design of the ideal fluid for any particular job becomes a complex optimisation exercise. It requires a specification in terms of *fluid function* to be converted to one involving a *fluid recipe*. The key links in this process are the physical properties of the fluid.

Schlumberger

SCHLUMBERGER CAMBRIDGE RESEARCH



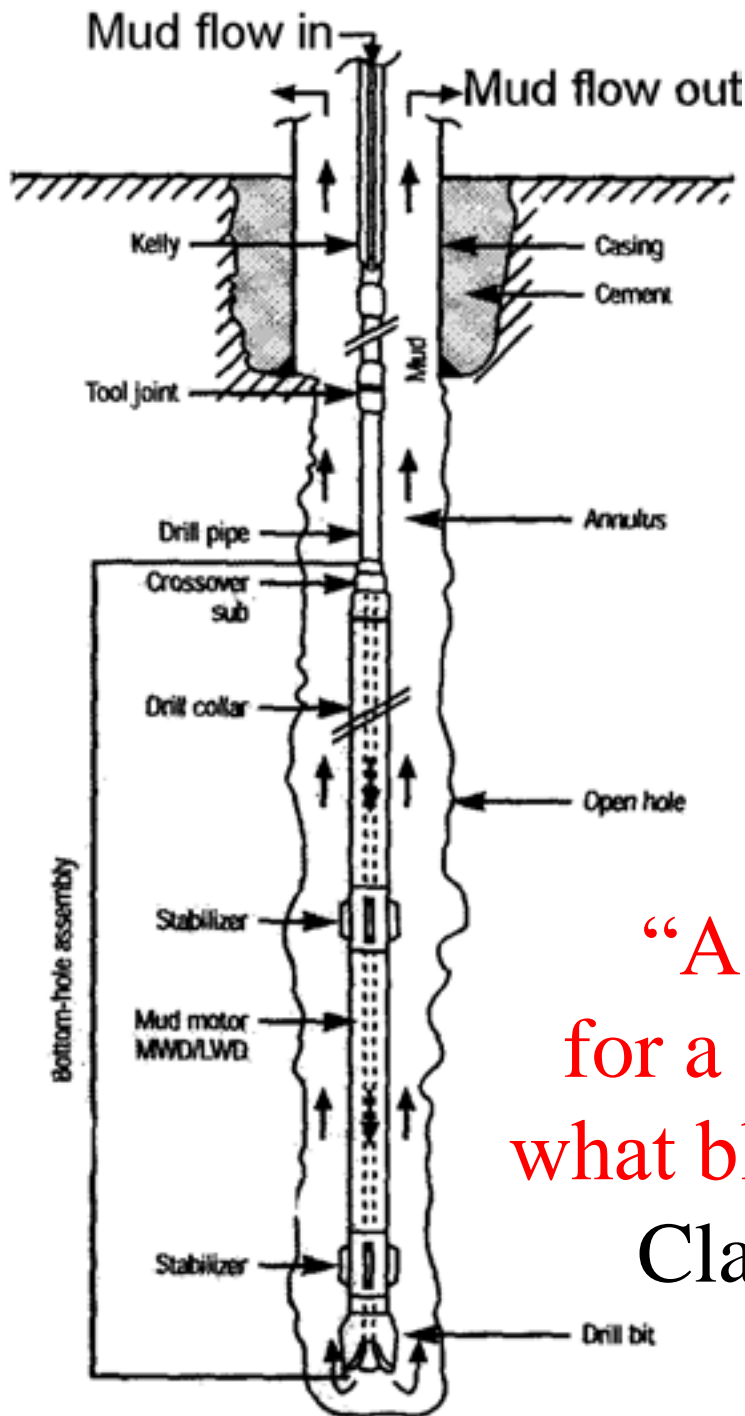


From **Fluid Function** to **Fluid Recipe** to .....



SCHLUMBERGER CAMBRIDGE RESEARCH  
Dr. Geoffrey Maitland  
**FLUID STYLIST**





**A succesful drilling fluid must**

*Carry the drilled cuttings  
to the surface*

*Suspend the drilled cuttings  
when the circulation is stopped*

*Form a thin filtercake (“mudcake”)  
which seals the formations  
penetrated by the bit*

**“A drilling mud is  
for a drilling operation  
what blood is to the body”**

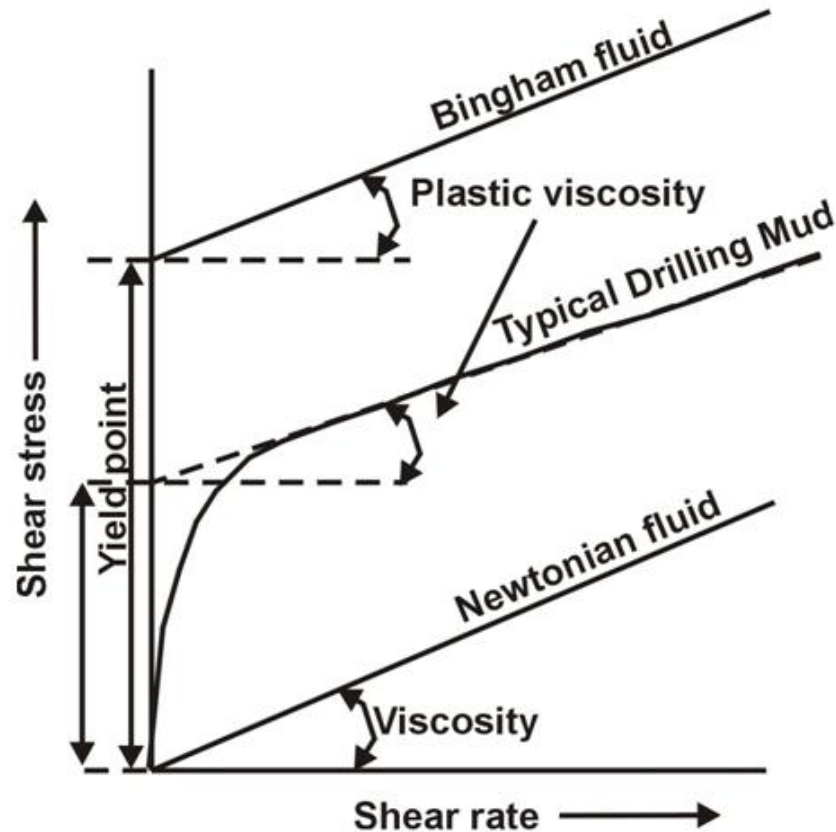
**Claude Vercaemer**

**Schlumberger**



# Desired properties Drilling fluid

- Low plastic viscosity
- High yield point

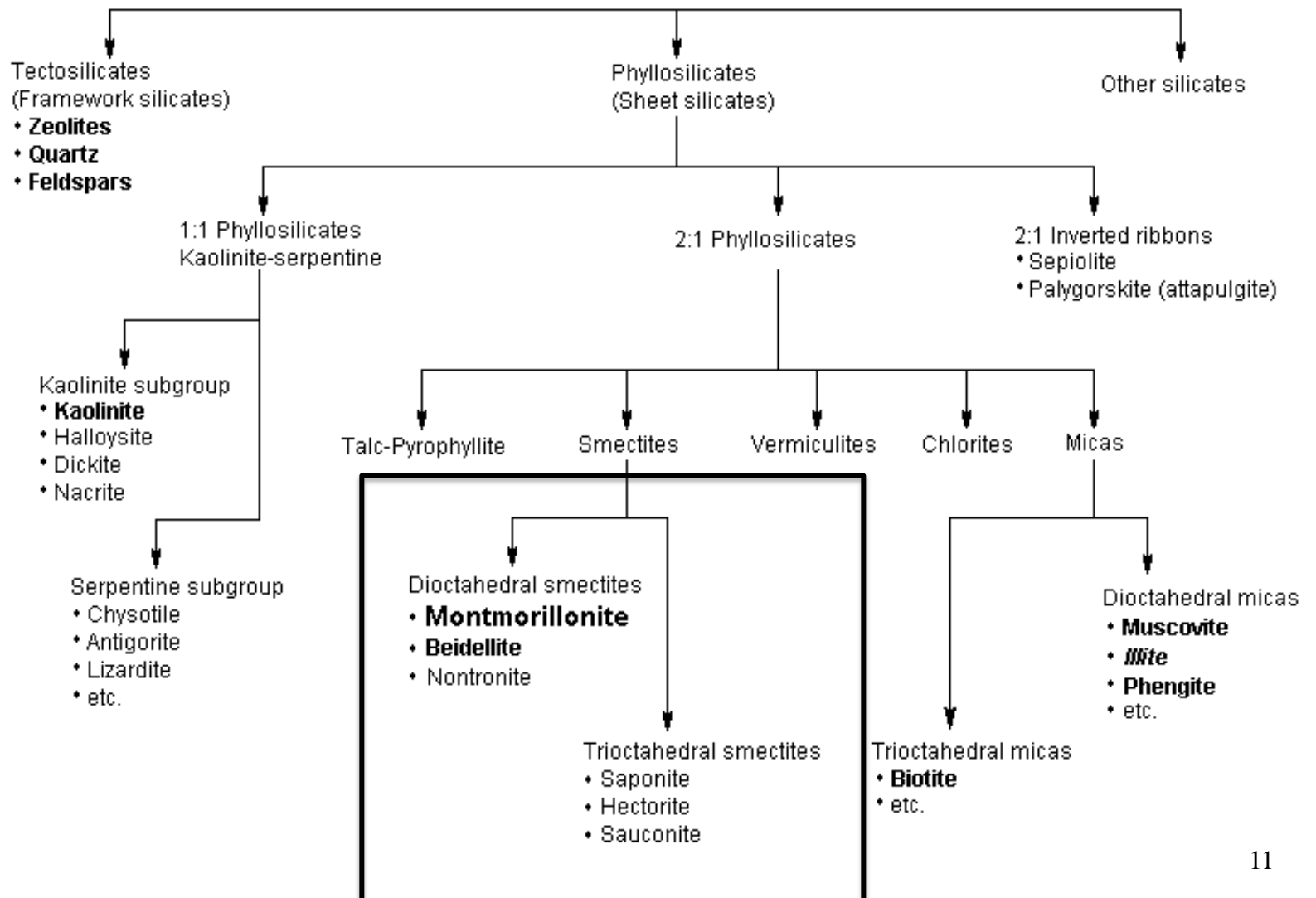


# Clays gel

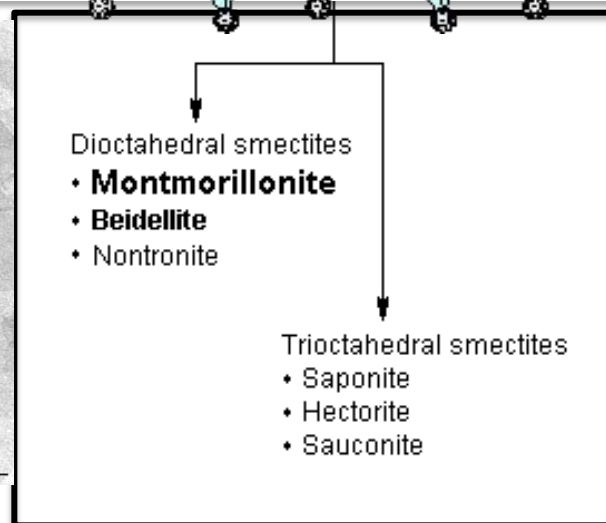
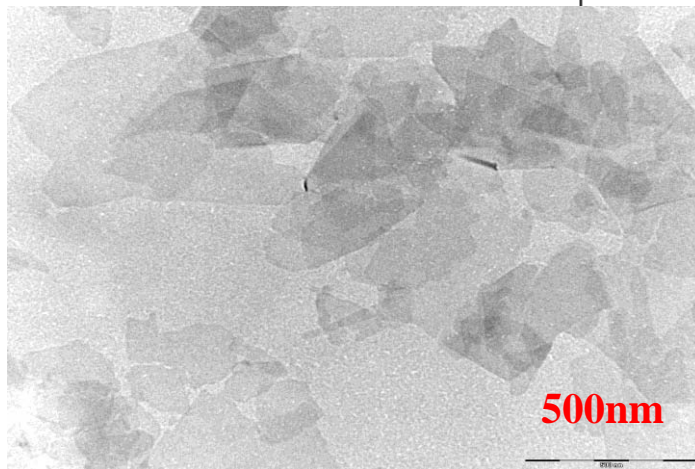
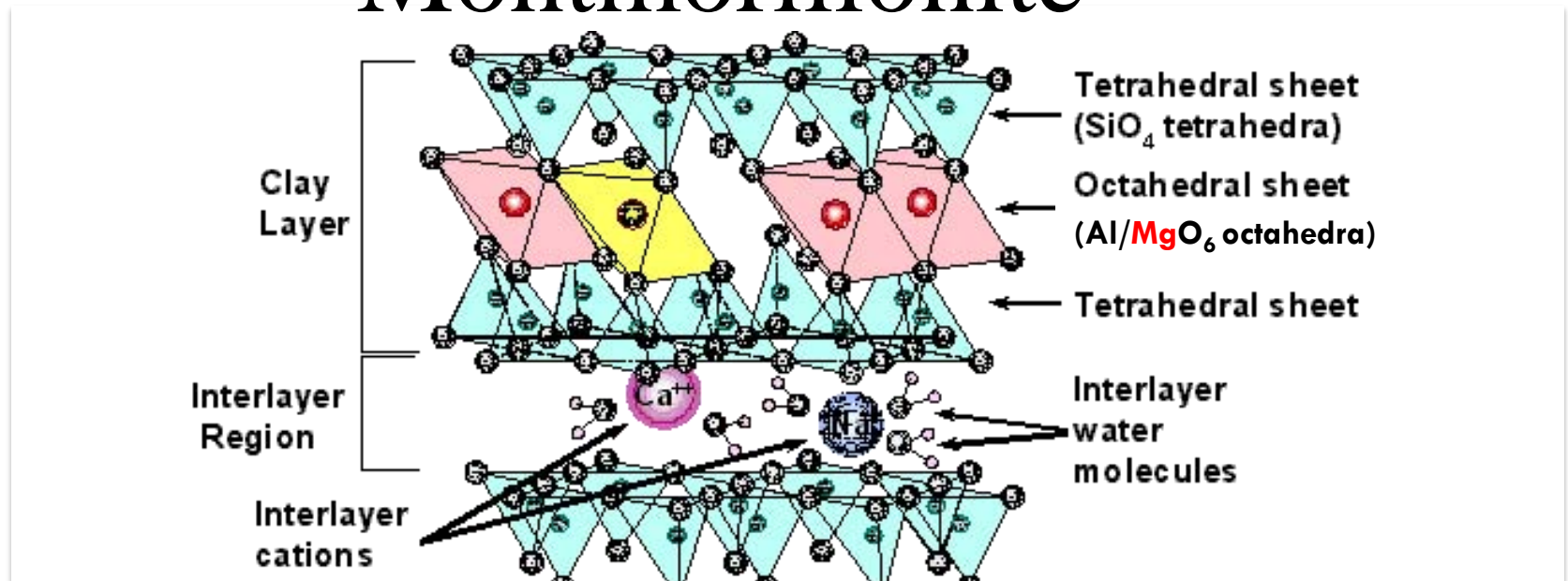


Already at 2-3wt%

# Smectite clays

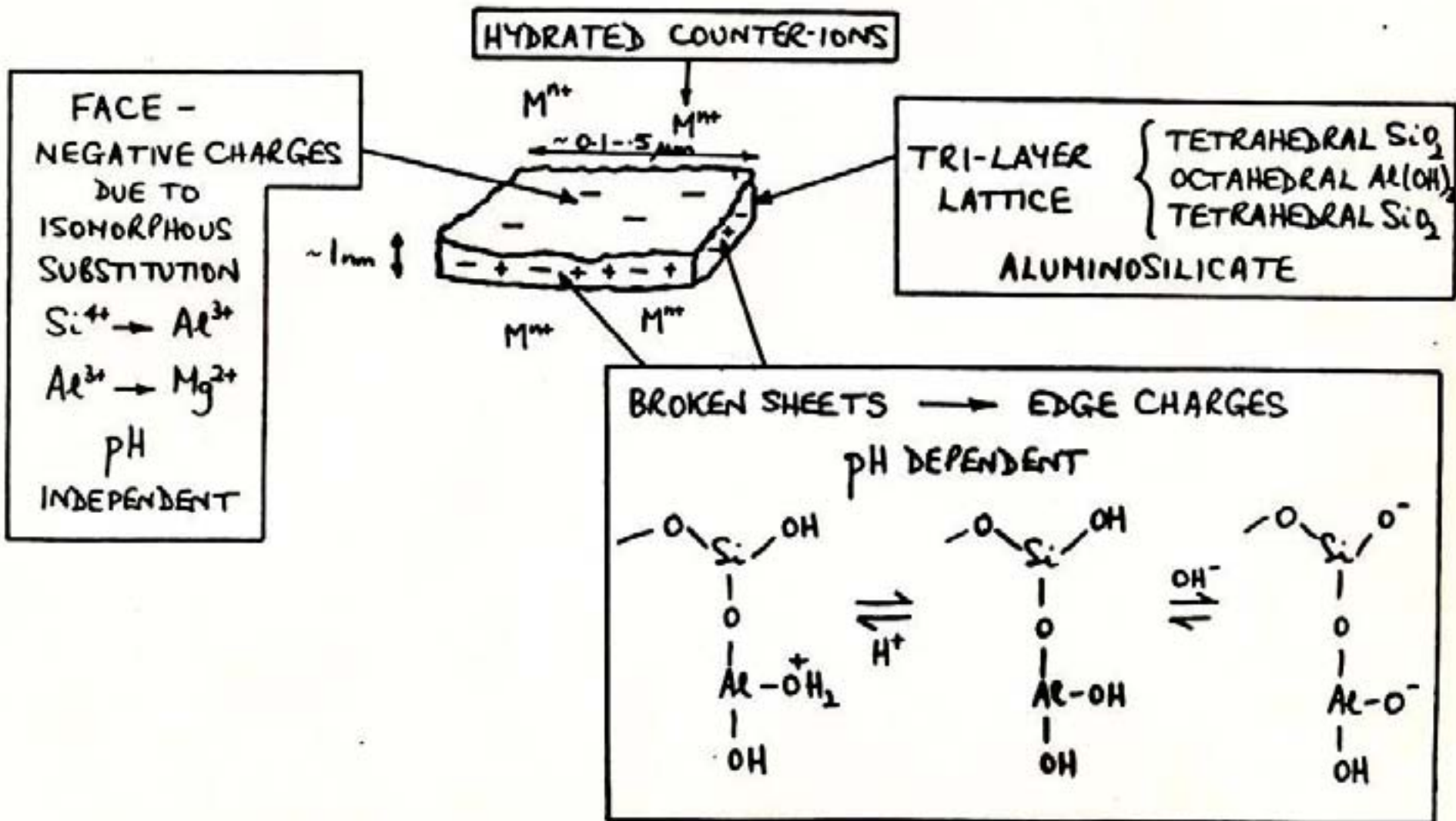


# Montmorillonite

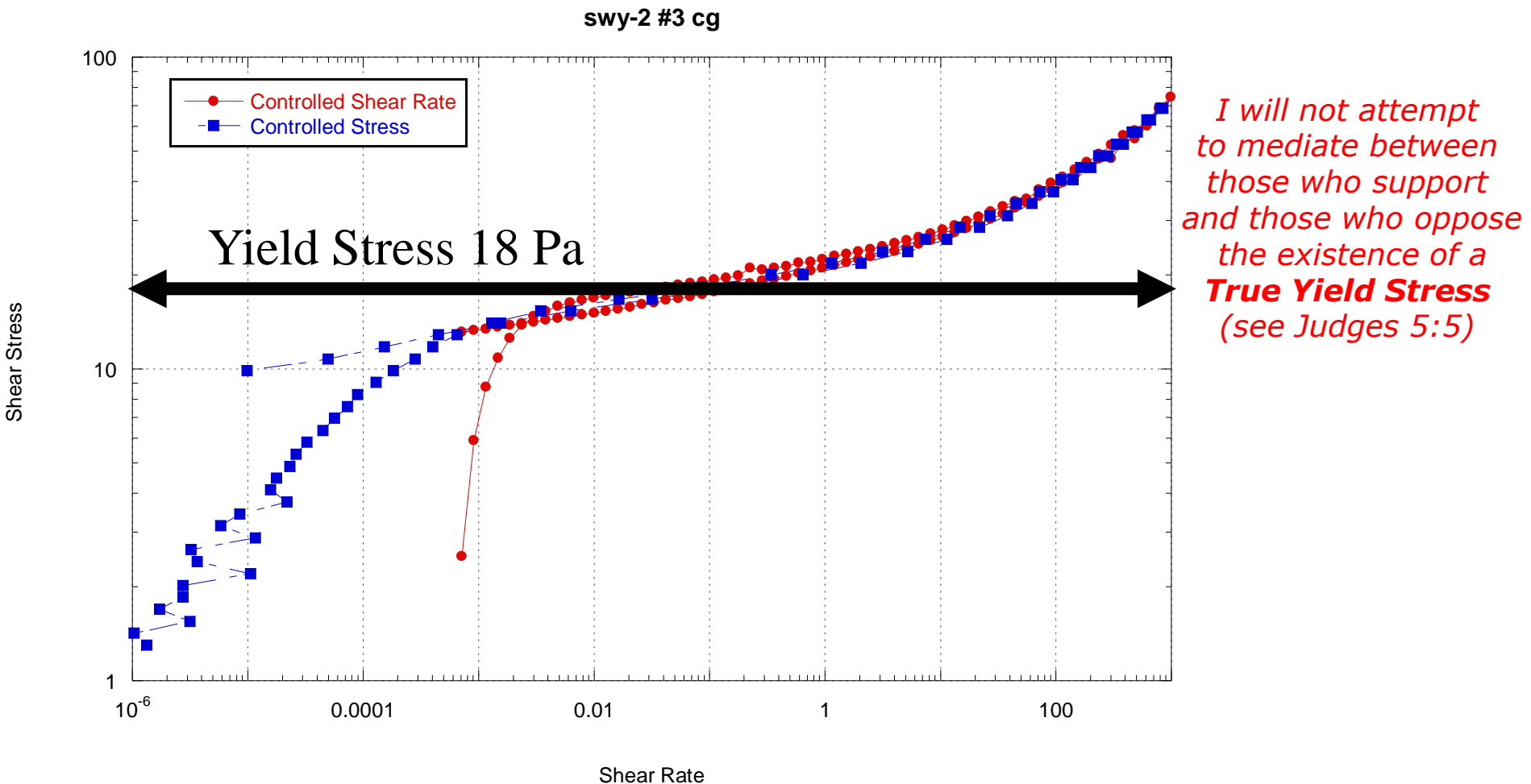




# Montmorillonite Clay Platelets – Bentonite (Geoff Maitland)



# SWy-2 3.2% Viscometry (Louise Bailey)



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# **Colloidal Liquid Crystals** : A very brief history



# Colloidal Liquid Crystals : A very brief history

1925  
V2O5

Über freiwillige Strukturbildung in Solen.  
(Eine neue Art anisotrop flüssiger Medien.)  
Von H. ZOCHER.

**(Ernst Werner) Hans Zocher**

(27.04.1893 Bad Liebenstein/Thüringen -

16.10.1969 Rio de Janeiro)

Kolloidwissenschaftler, Taktosole

Pionier der Flüssigkristalldisplays (LCD)

(Nebst der Vorschrift zur Herstellung eines  $V_2O_5$ -Taktosols)



# Colloidal Liquid Crystals : A very brief history

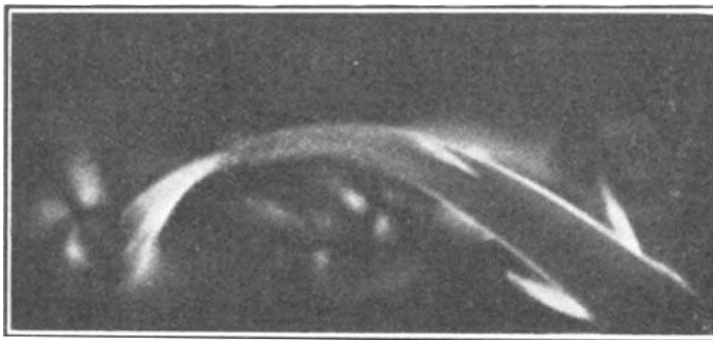
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(Nebst der Vorschrift zur Herstellung eines  $V_2O_5$ -Taktosols)



1936  
TMV



Wake of goldfish in TMV solution  
Bawden *et al* / Nature 138 (1936) 1051



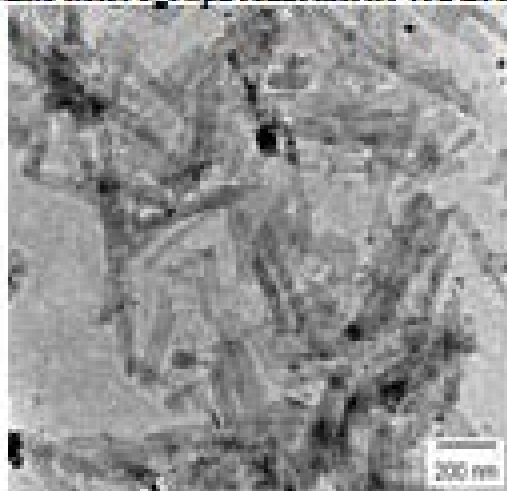
1938

Hectorite

# Role of certain forces in colloids

Irving Langmuir, J.Chem.Phys.(1938)

TEM Micrograph Annemieke ten Brinke

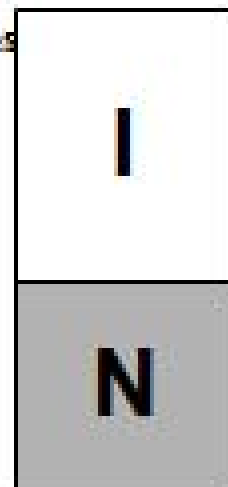


Lath-like particles

$L=288\text{ nm}$

$W=43\text{ nm}$

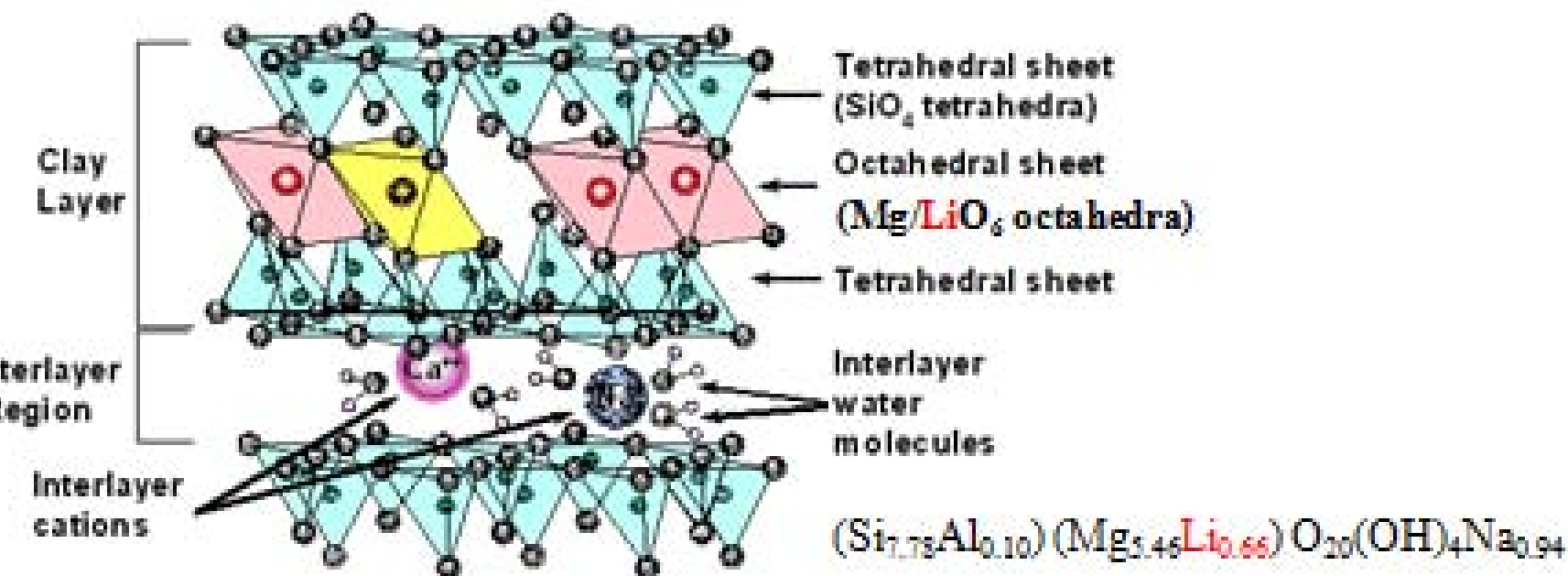
$T=6\text{ nm (AFM)}$



**I-N phase transition  
in Hectorite**

phase separated between  
2.0 and 2.2 wt% into  
Isotropic and Nematic

**Hectorite**



# Role of certain forces in colloids

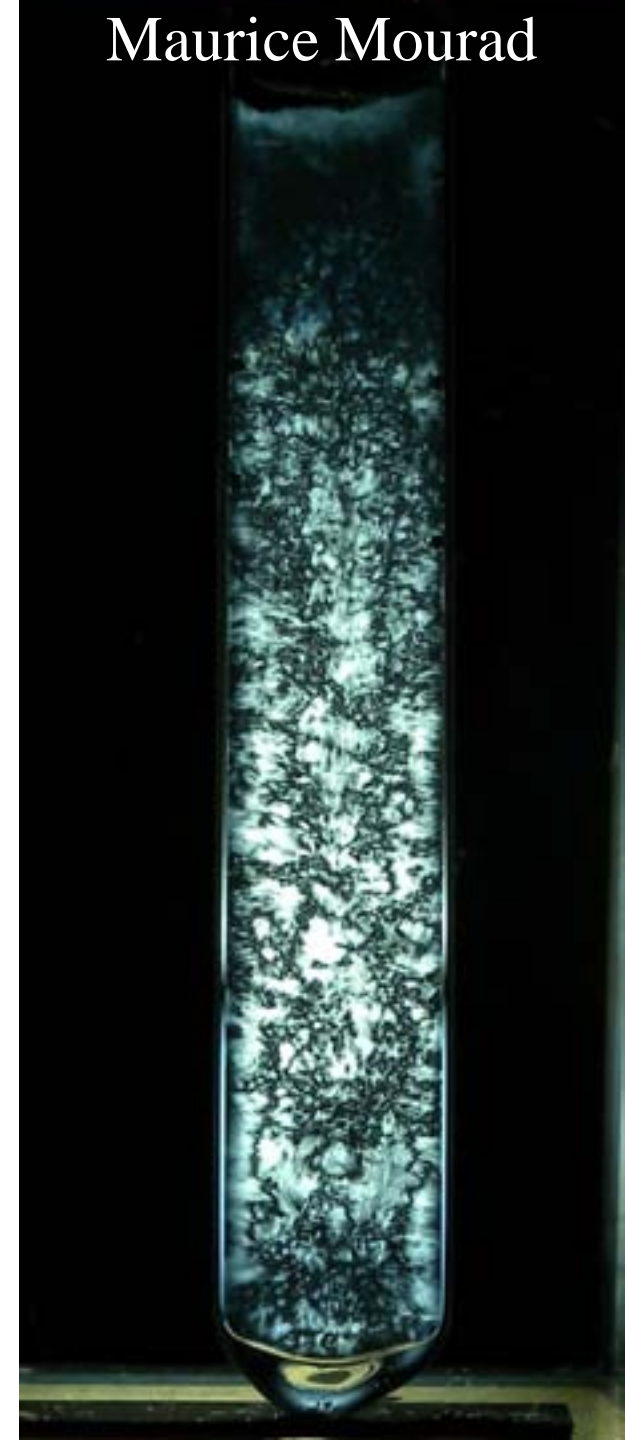
Irving Langmuir , J.Chem.Phys. (1938)



- “It has often been thought that the property of separation into two phases one of which is isotropic and the other permanently birefringent, is characteristic only of sols having rod-like particles. *The optical properties of the hectorite sols, however, prove that the particles are flat plates or disks*”



- Experiment by Langmuir could not be repeated
- Birefringent Gel but no I-N phase separation!



# Montmorillonite: Same Story

## Birefringent Gel but No I - N Phase Separation



Bentonite suspension (4.3wt%)  
between cross polarizers

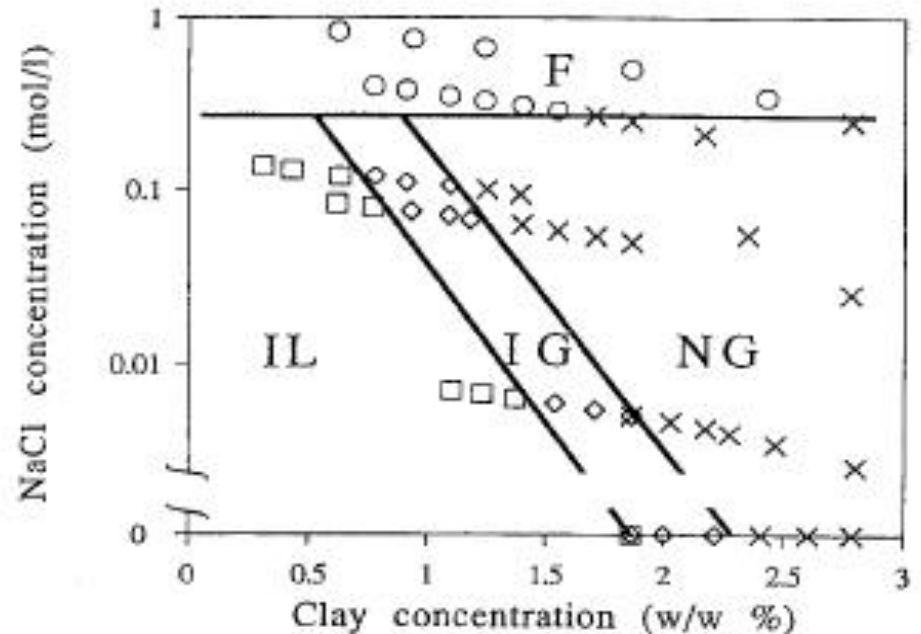


Figure 5. Phase diagram of the bentonite suspensions versus clay and NaCl concentrations. (○, F) Flocculated samples; (□, IL) isotropic liquid samples; (◇, IG) isotropic gel samples; (×, NG) nematic gels.

Gabriel, Sanchez, Davidson 1996

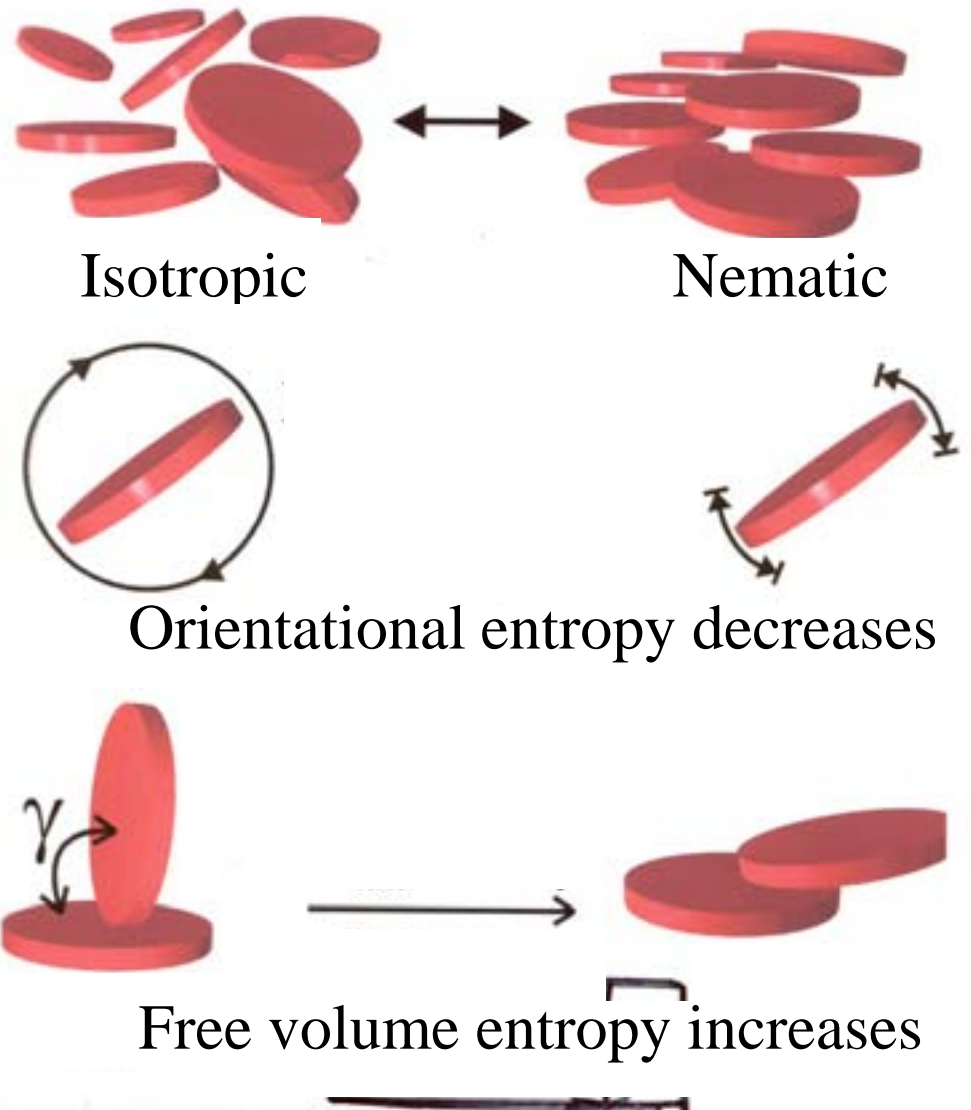
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# Disk Shape Drives I-N Transition



Lars Onsager,  
*Phys.Rev.*62,558(1942)

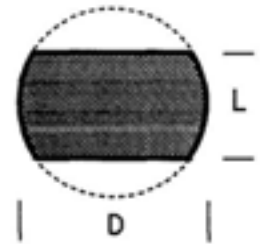
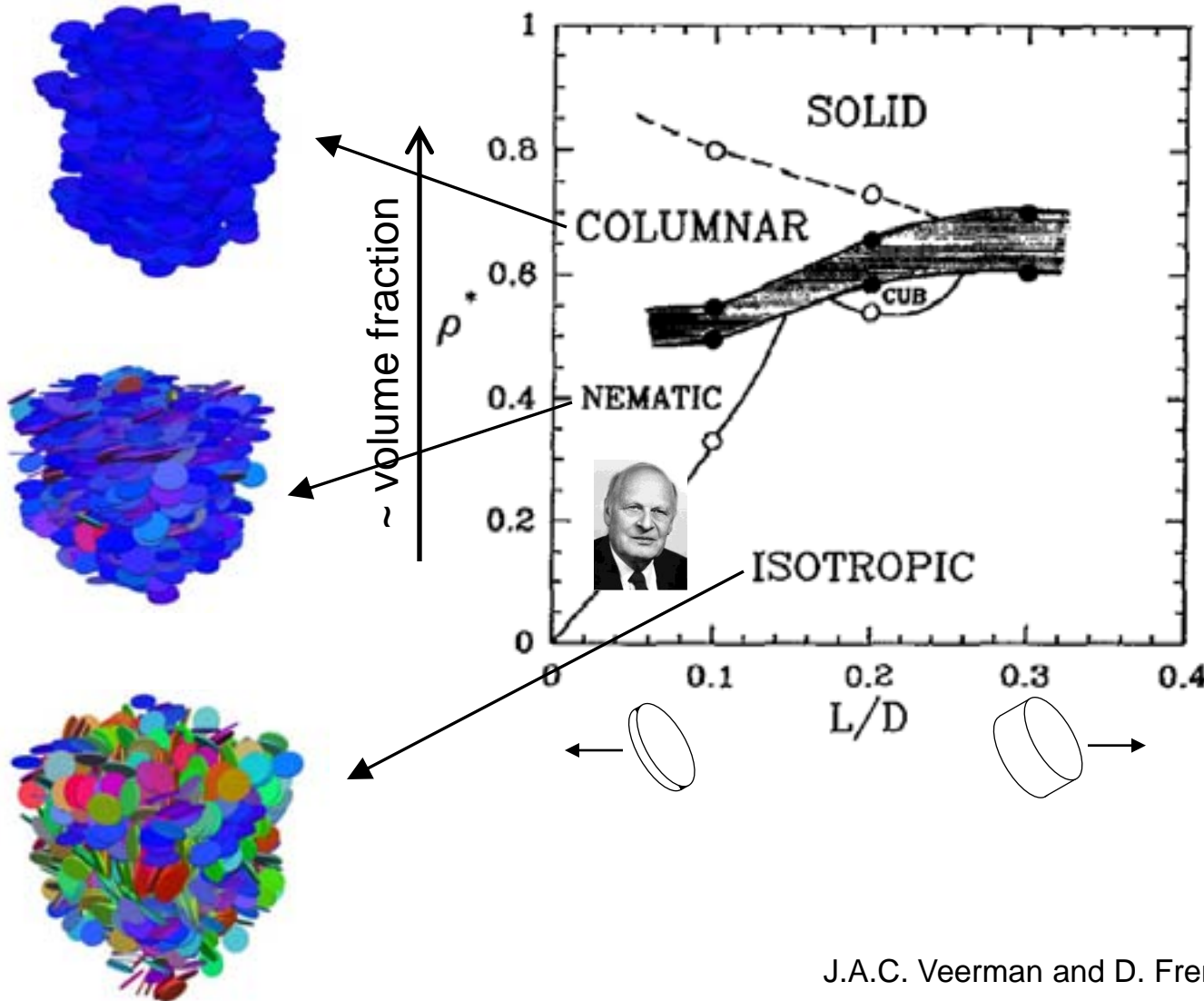






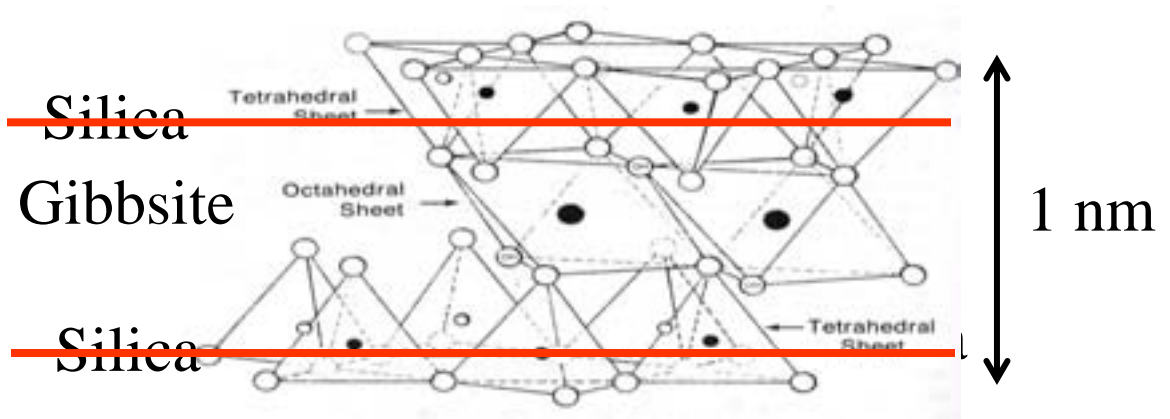
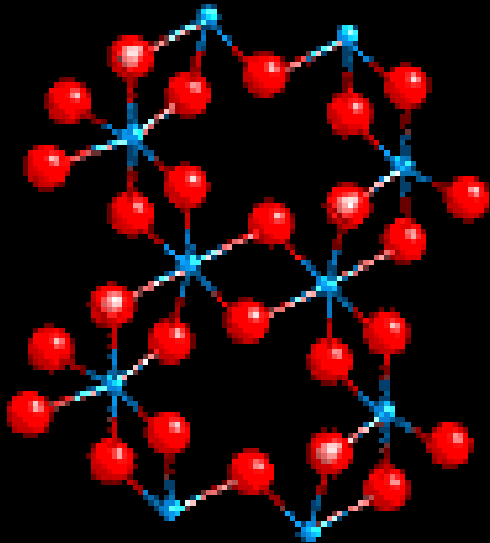
# Phase diagram hard disks

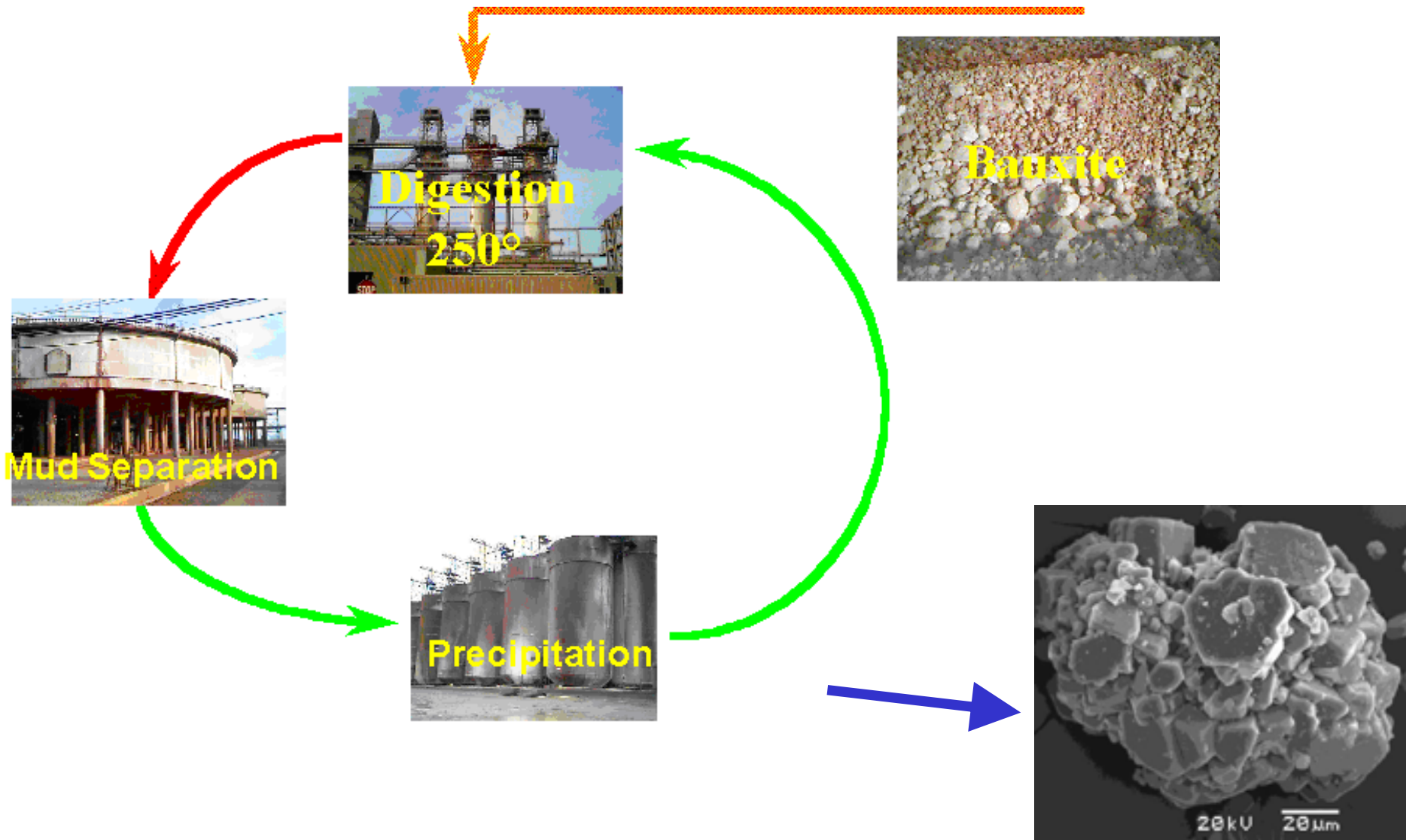
from Monte Carlo simulation



cut sphere

$$\rho^* = \frac{\phi}{\phi_{CP}}$$





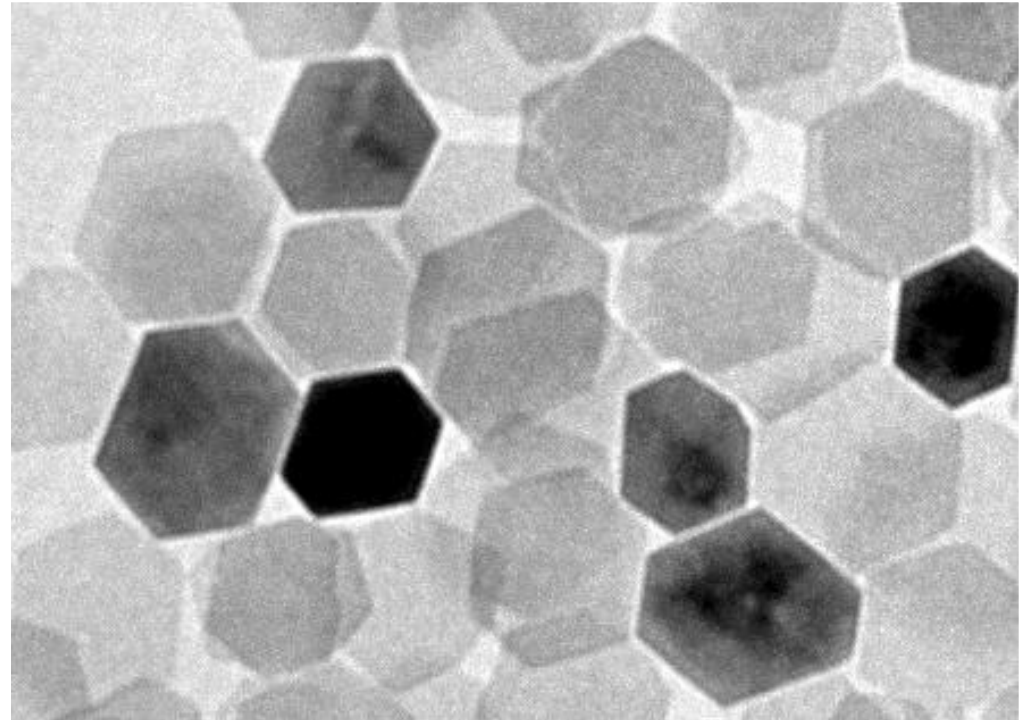
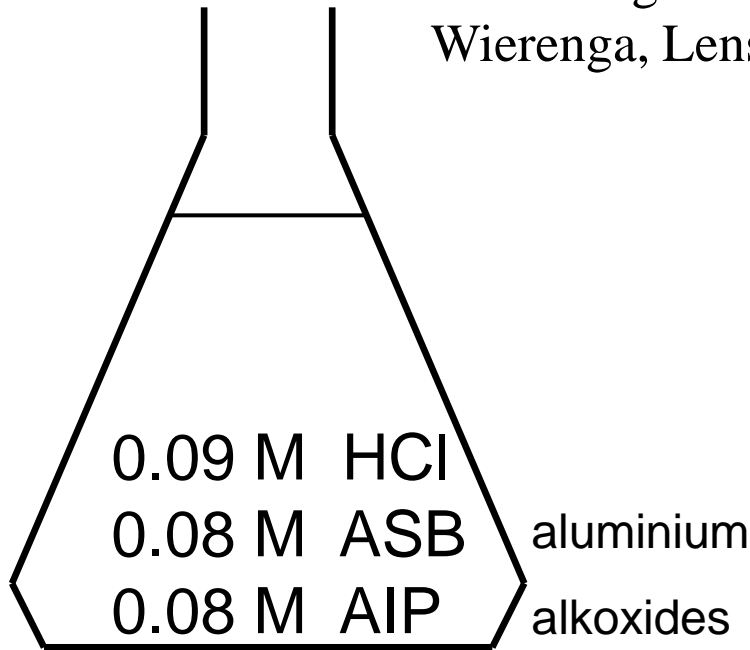
**Gibbsite Production**  
50,000,000 tons/year!

Gibbsite crystals  
1 – 100 μm

# Van't Hoff Colloidal Gibbsite

Buining et al. J. Am. Ceram. Soc. 1991

Wierenga, Lenstra, Philipse Coll. Surf. 1998



- **10 days of stirring**
- **3 days at 85°C**
- **10 days of dialysis**

diameter: tunable from 100-500 nm  
thickness: 10-50 nm  
polydispersity 10-20%  
0.0005 tons/year

## Praise from the Press for Van't Hoff Gibbsite

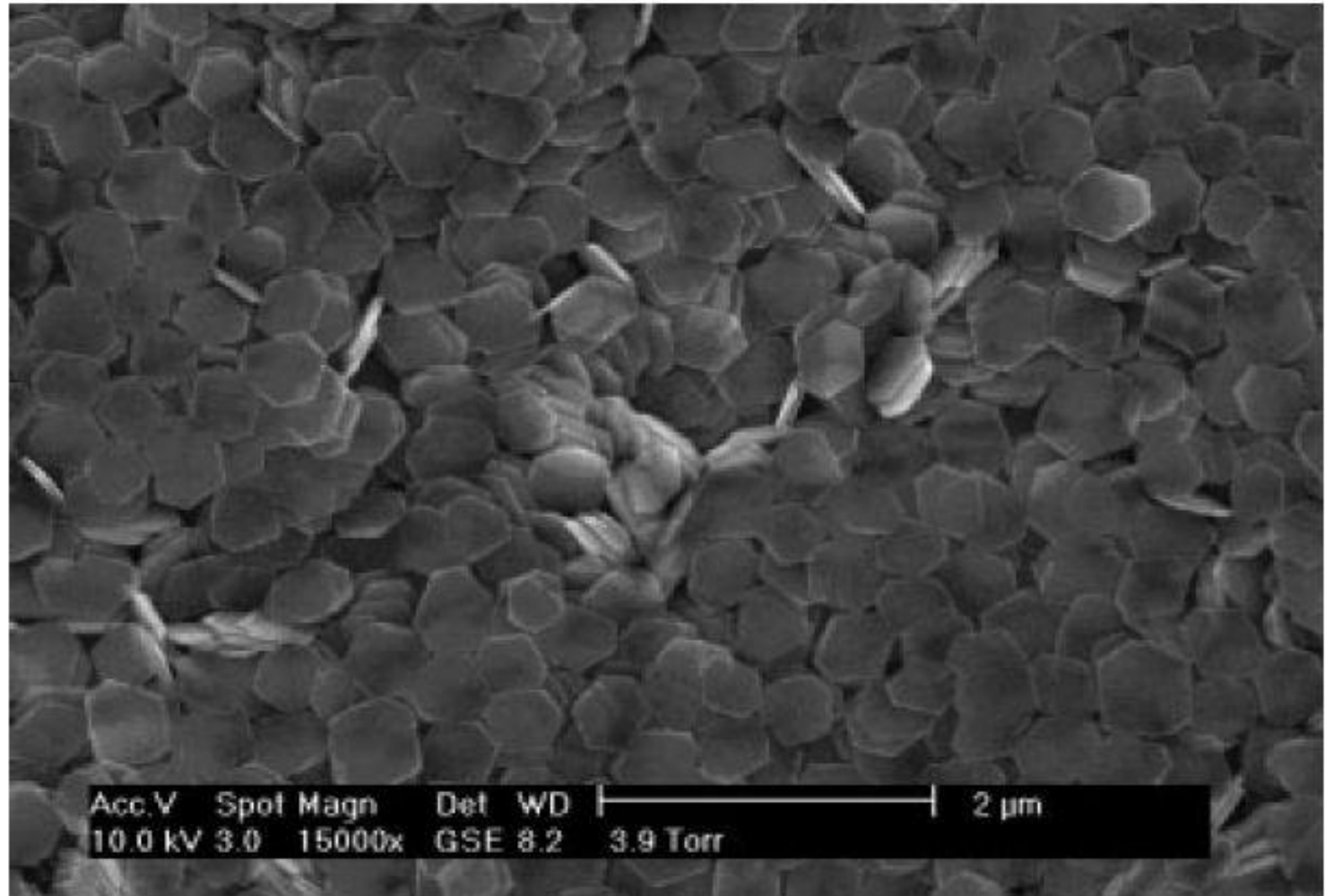


Fig 2. Gibbsite sample imaged after *in situ* drying in the ESEM. The larger, thicker individual plates are easily resolved making this an ideal candidate for further ESEM study.

Heather Houghton&Athene Donald 2008

# Gibbsite suspensions

Ionic strength  
(M NaCl)

$10^{-1}$

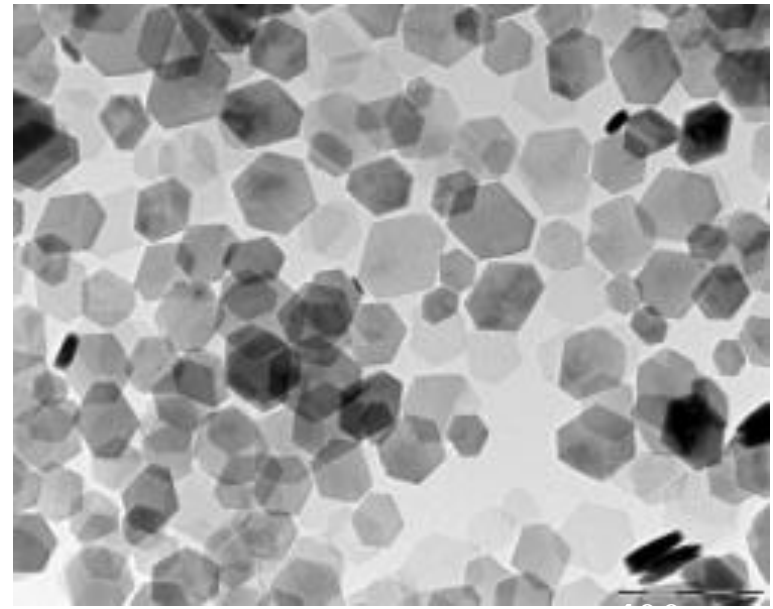
$10^{-2}$

$10^{-3}$

$10^{-4}$

100 200 300 400 500

particle  
concentration (g/L)



-**D. van der Beek and H.N.W. Lekkerkerker**, Langmuir 20 (2004) 8582-8586

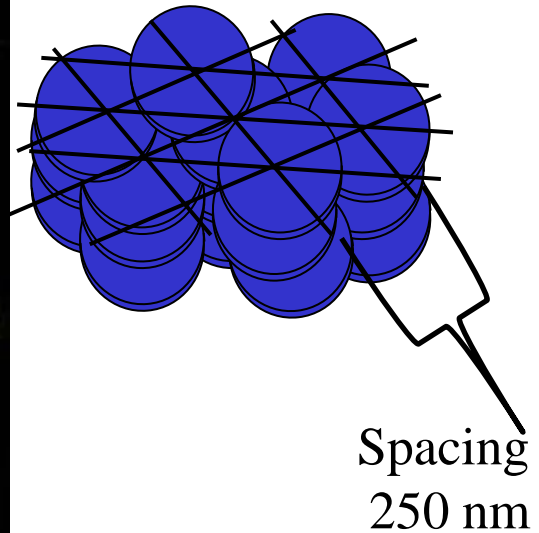
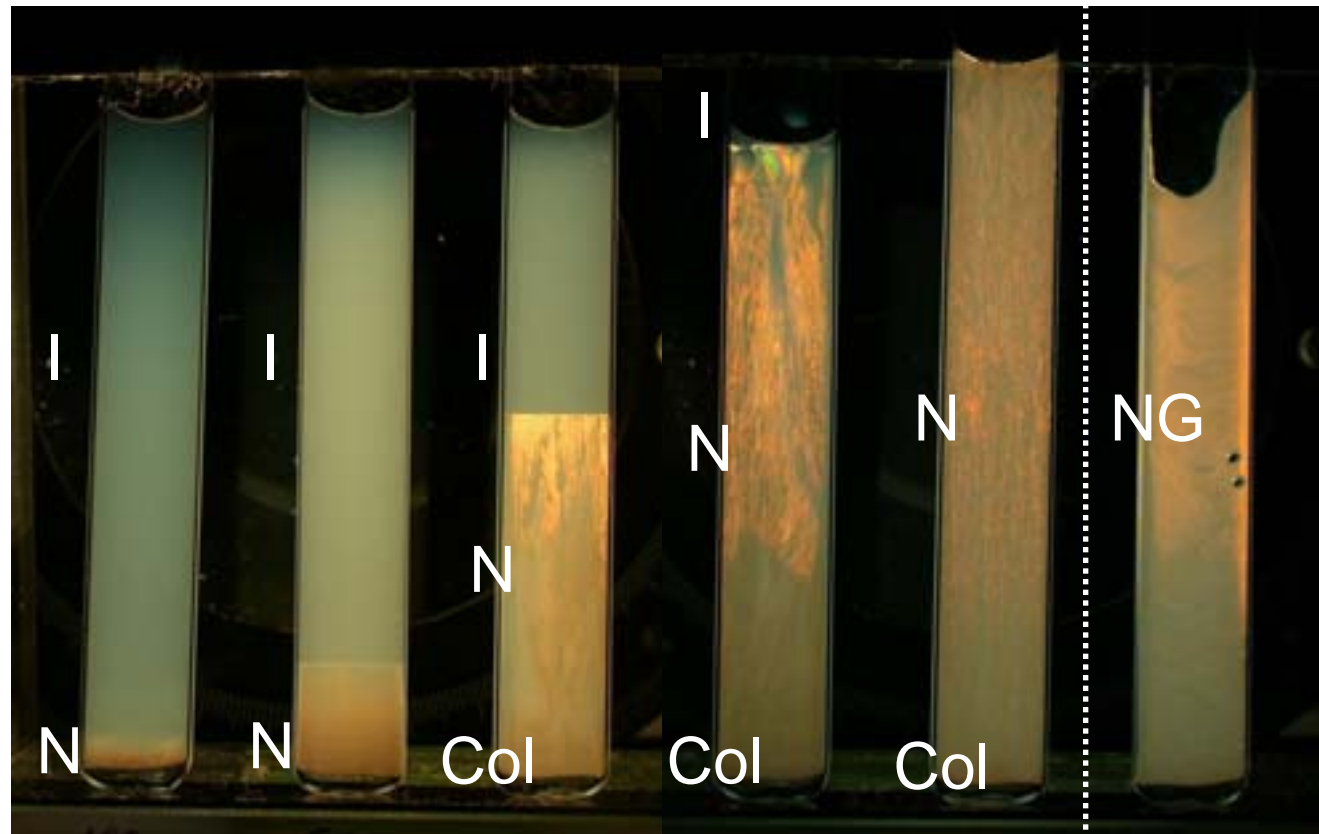
-**J.E.G.J. Wijnhoven, D.D. van 't Zand, D. van der Beek and H.N.W. Lekkerkerker**,  
Langmuir 21 (2005) 10422-10427

-**M. C. D. Mourad, J. E. G. J. Wijnhoven, D. D. Van 't Zand, D. van der Beek and H. N. W. Lekkerkerker**,  
Phil. Trans. R. Soc. A 364 (2006) 2807-2816



# 2 Months after Homogenization

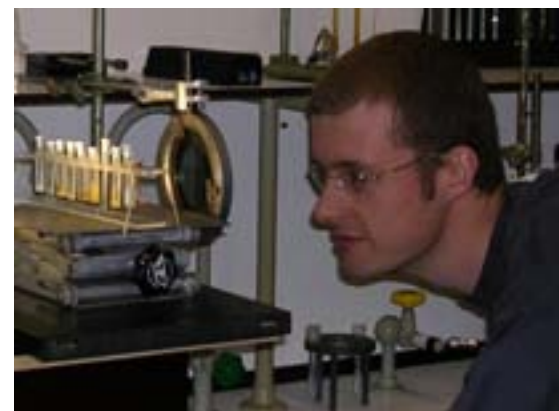
$10^{-4}$  M NaCl



100 200 250 300 350 400 g/L  
I = Isotropic N = Nematic Col = Columnar NG = Nematic Gel

Crossed Polarizers

hexagonal lattice with  
spacing  $d \sim 250$  nm gives  
rise to Bragg reflections  
in the visible light



D. van der Beek & HNWL, *Langmuir* (2004)

....to big science



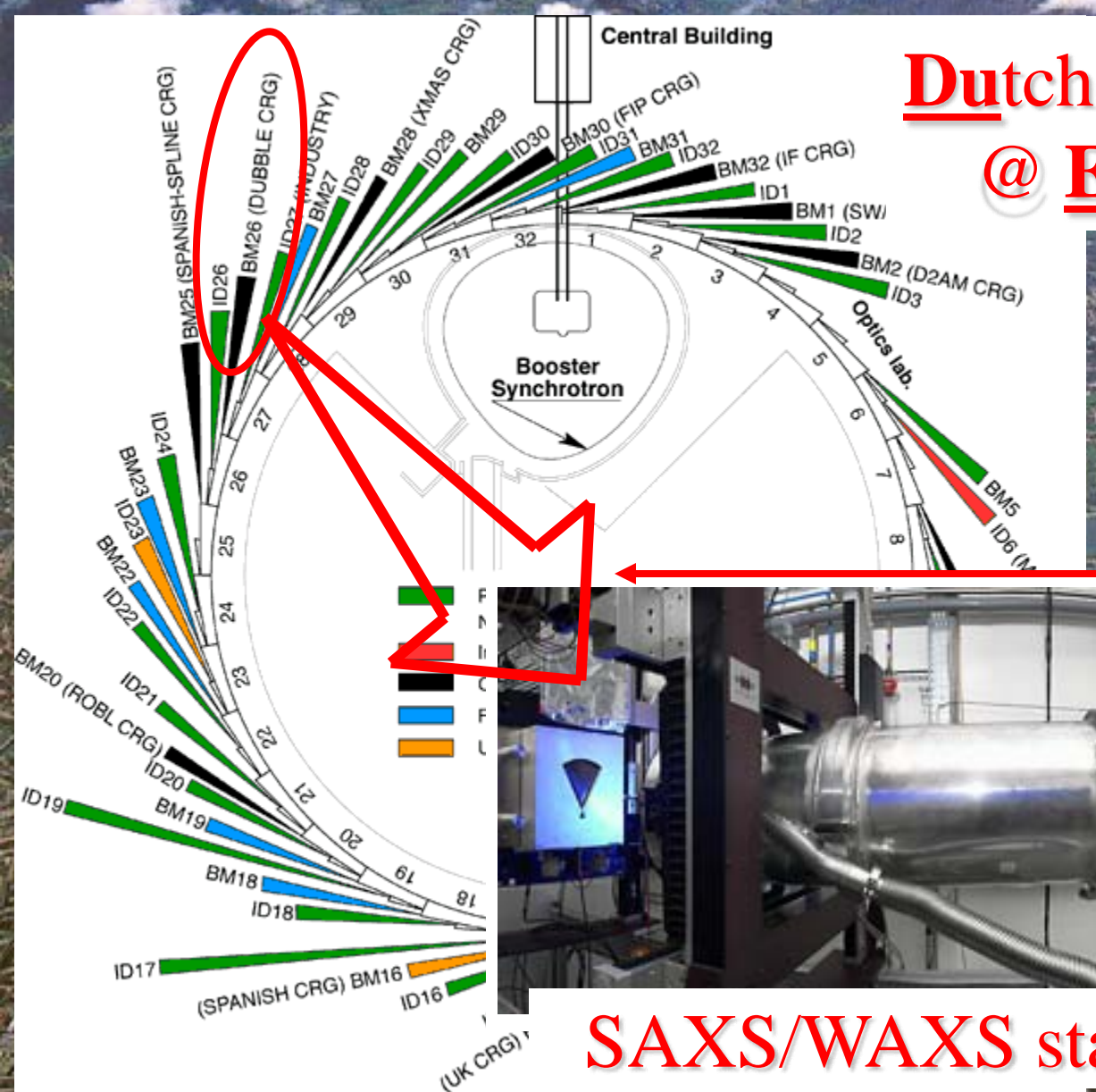
270 m!

European Synchrotron Radiation Facility, Grenoble



# European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF)

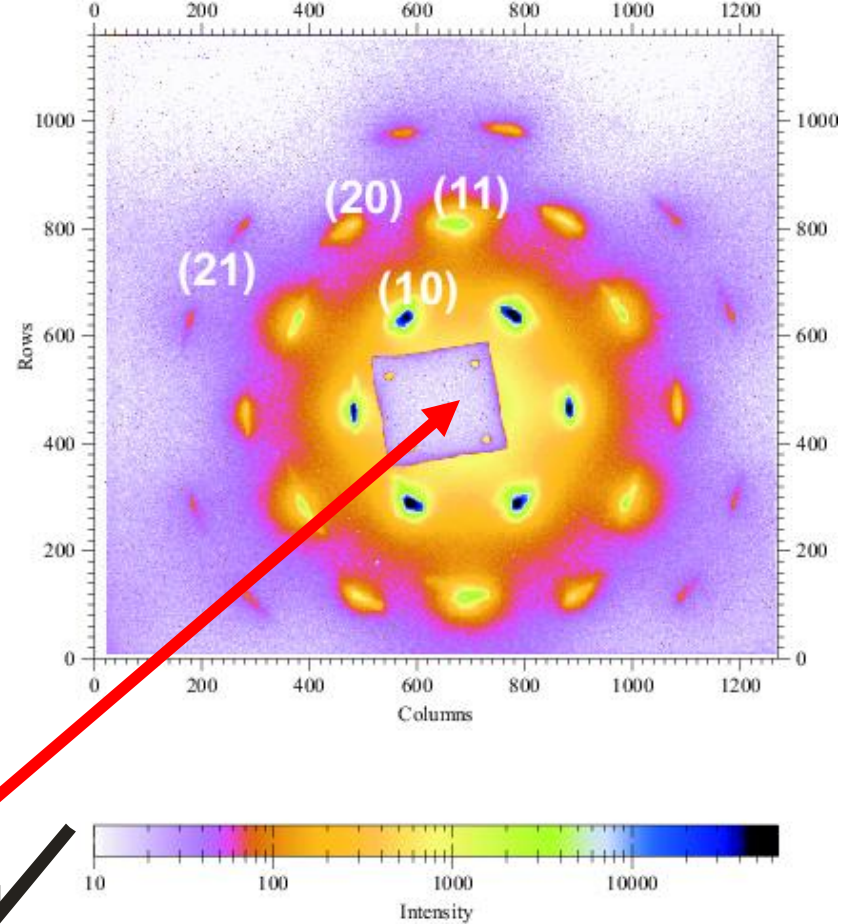
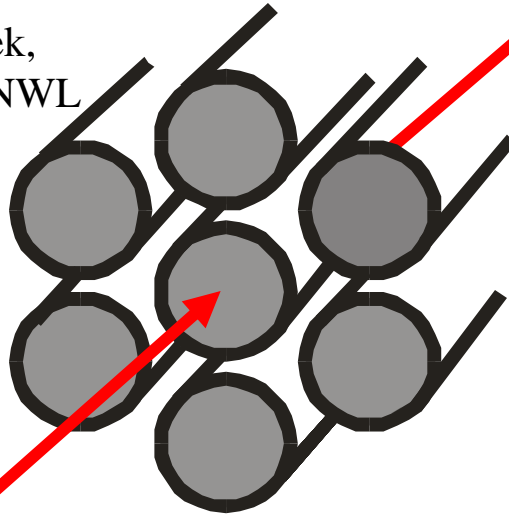
## Dutch-Belgian BeamLine @ ESRF (DUBBLE)



**SAXS/WAXS station of DUBBLE**

# Columnar crystal: Hexagonal arrangement of columns

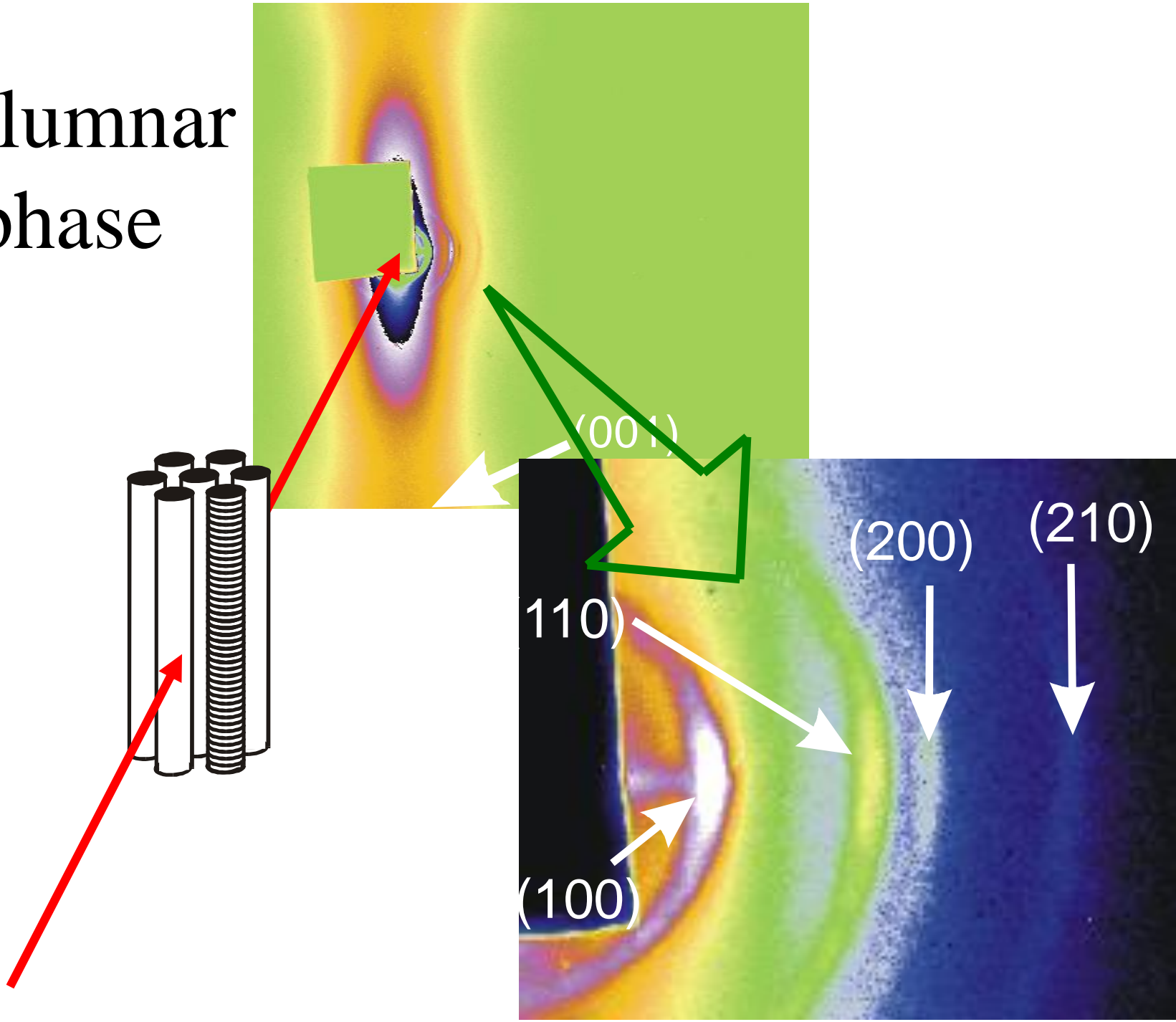
Petukhov, van der Beek,  
Oversteegen, Vroege, HNWL



***DUBBLE @ ESRF***



Columnar  
phase

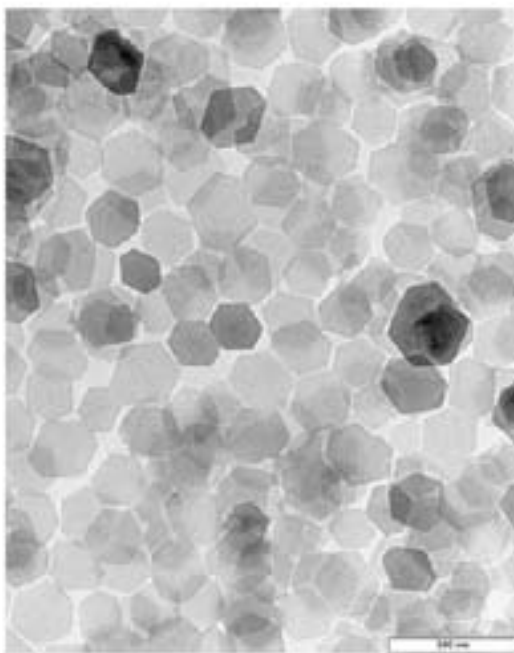


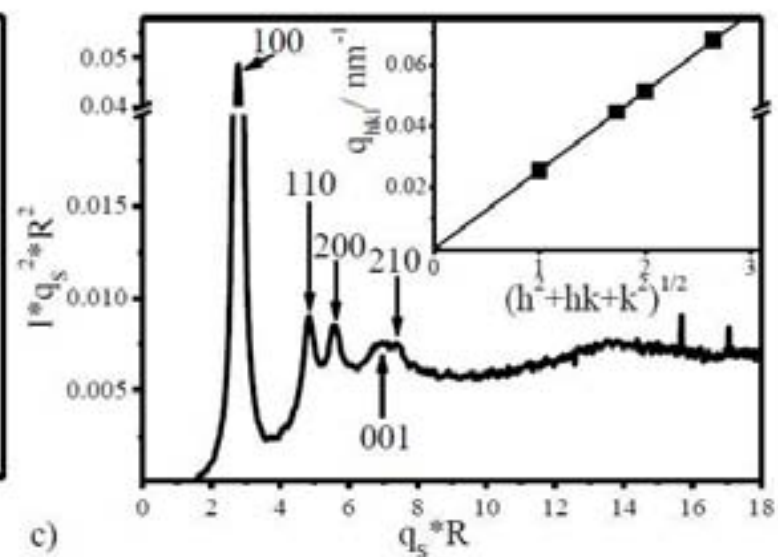
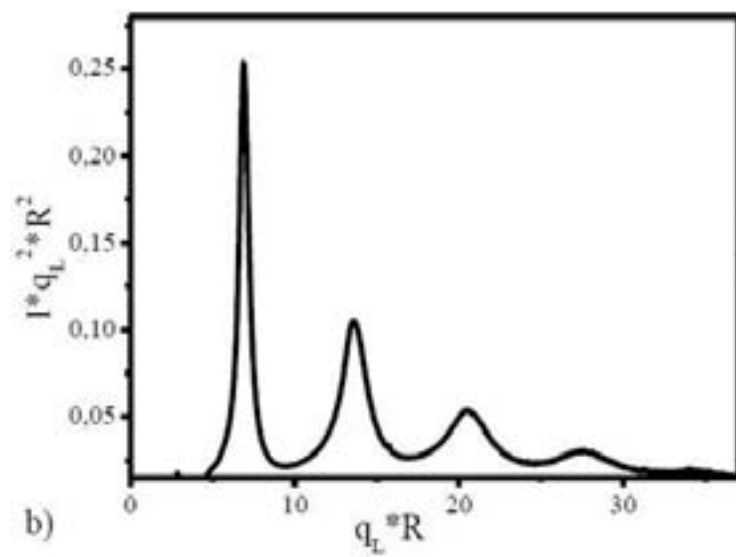
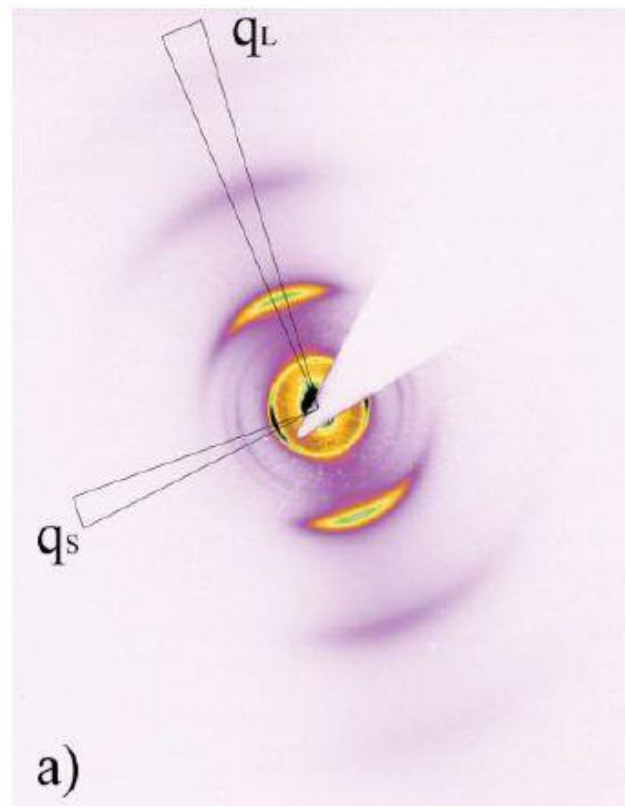


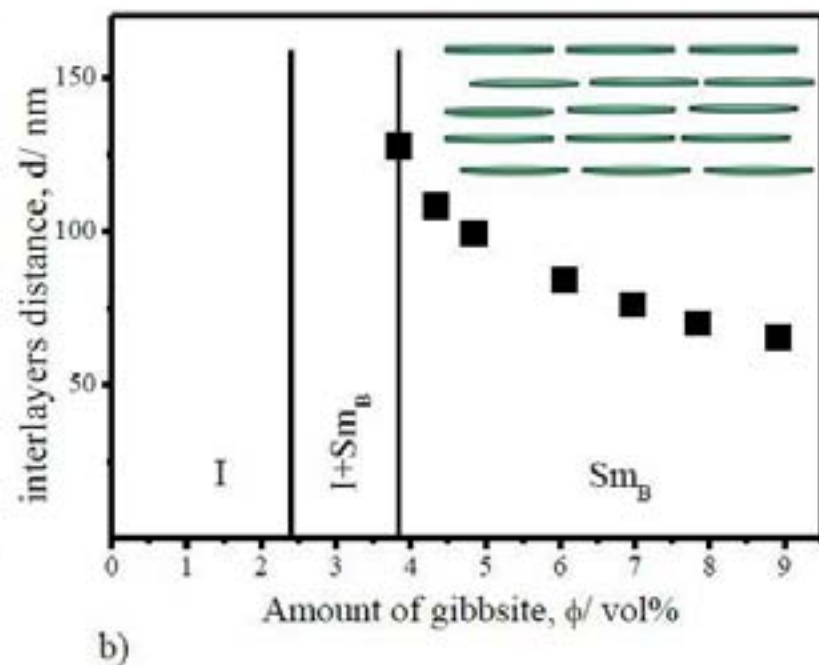
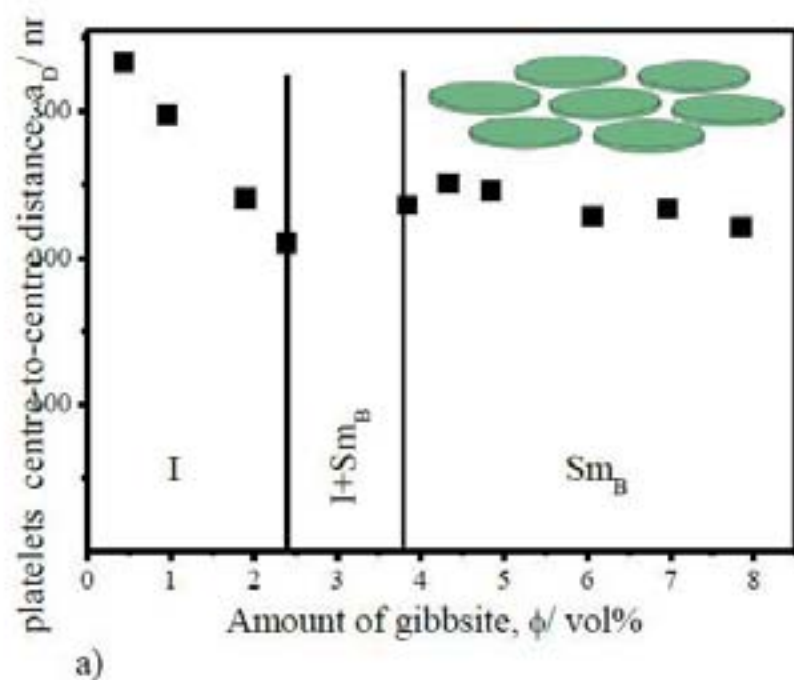
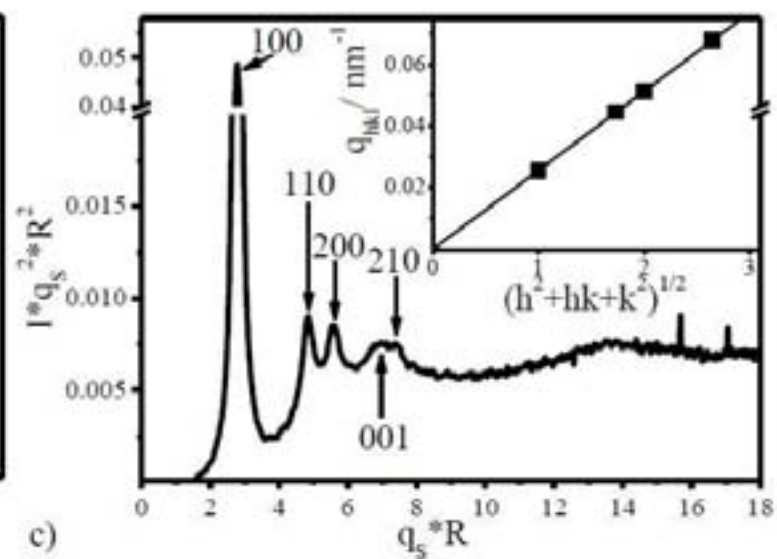
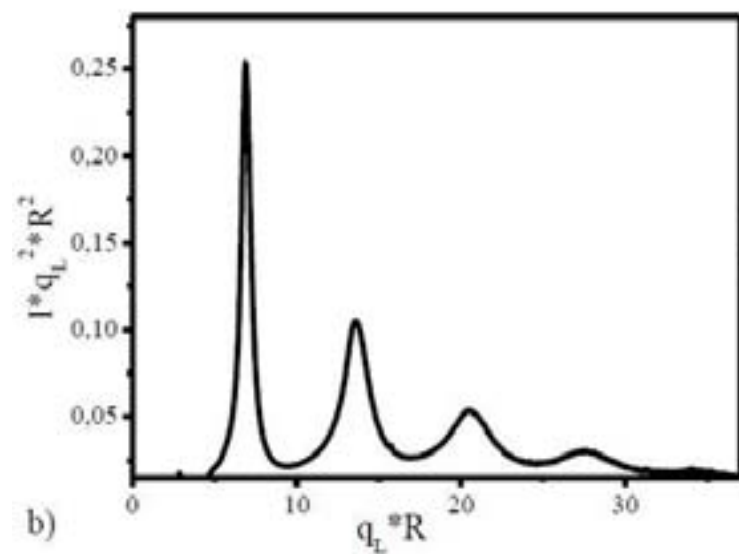
***Latest News (JACS 2012)***  
***Dzina Kleshchanok from Utrecht discovers***  
***the elusive colloidal Smectic B phase***  
***in a suspension of Gibbsite in DMSO***

Table 1. Characteristic sizes of gibbsite platelets as determined from TEM and AFM.

	$\langle D \rangle$ / nm	$\sigma_D$ / nm	$PDI_D$ / %	$\langle L \rangle$ / nm	$\sigma_L$ / nm	$PDI_L$ / %
Gibbsite	218.4	34.5	15.8	7.9	2.0	24.8



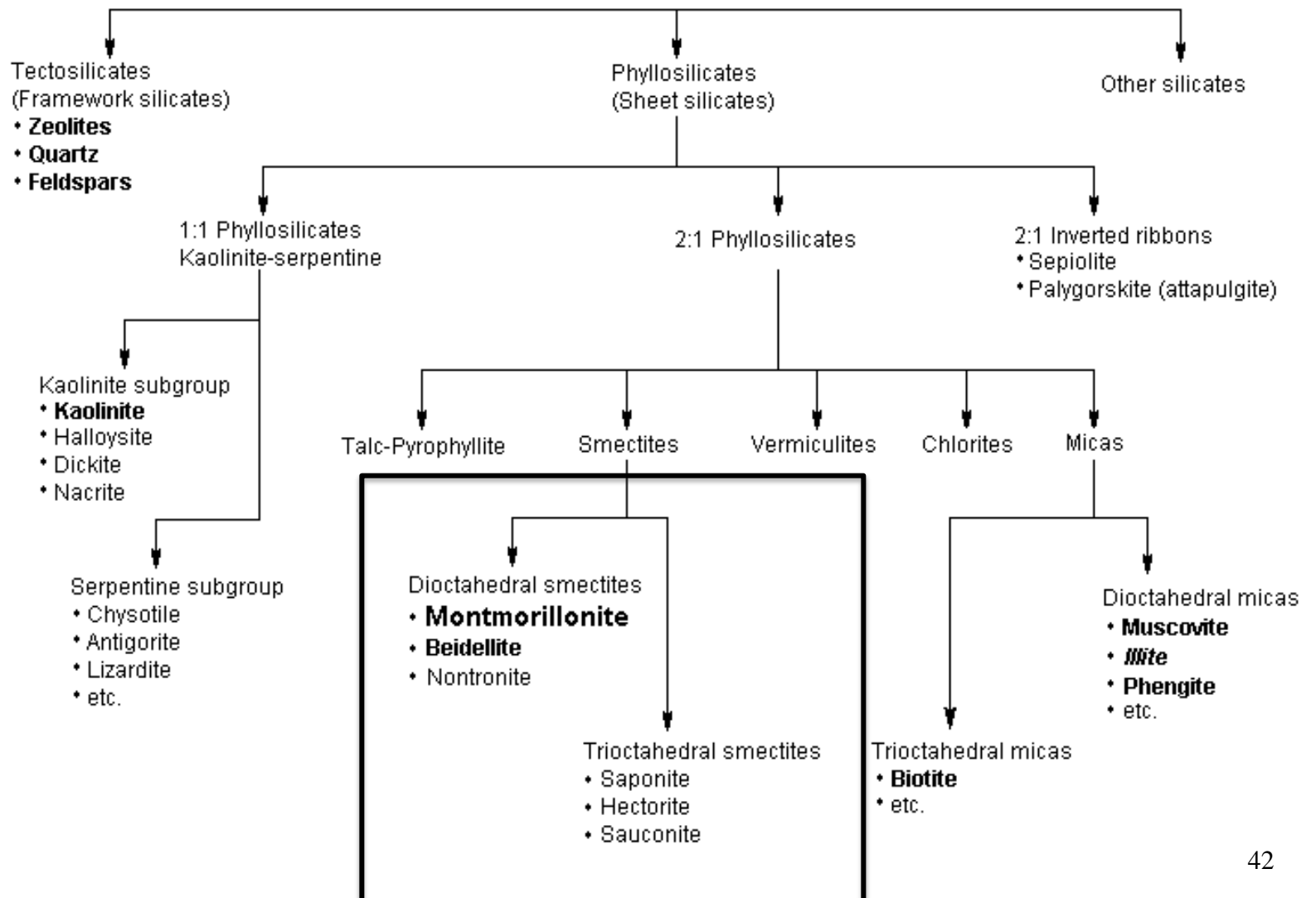




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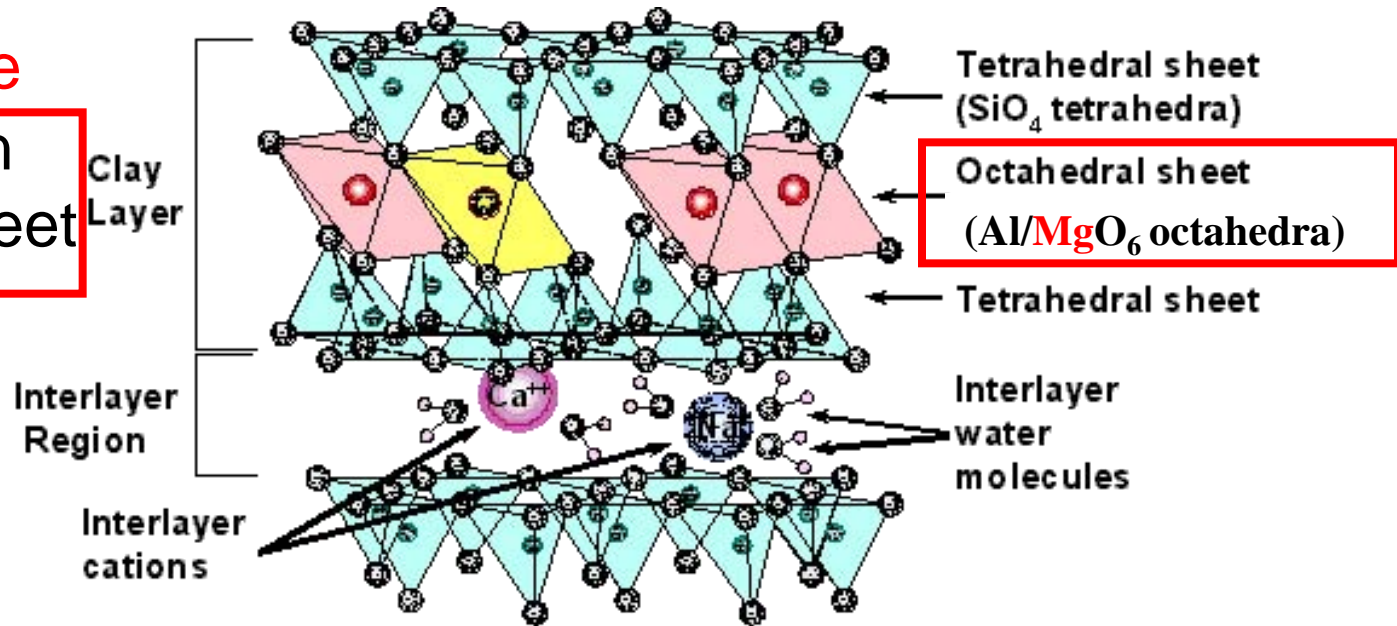
# Smectite clays



# What is the difference between **Montmorillonite** and **Beidellite**?

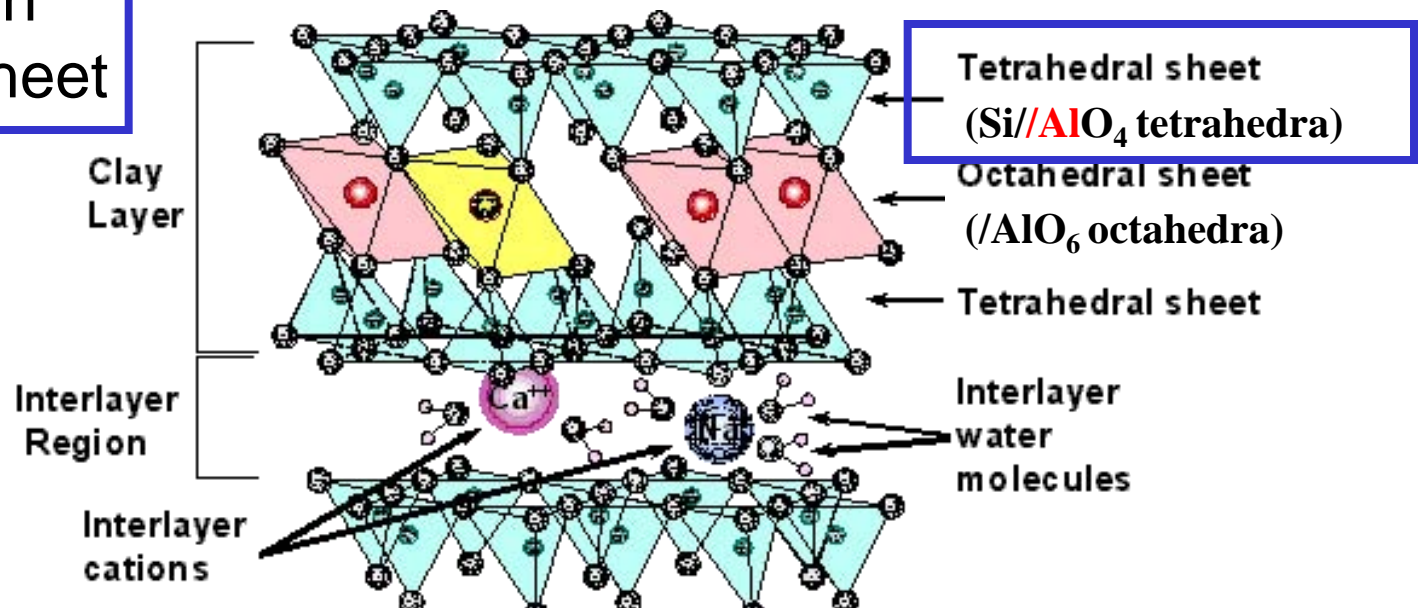
## Montmorillonite

Substitutions in  
Octahedral Sheet

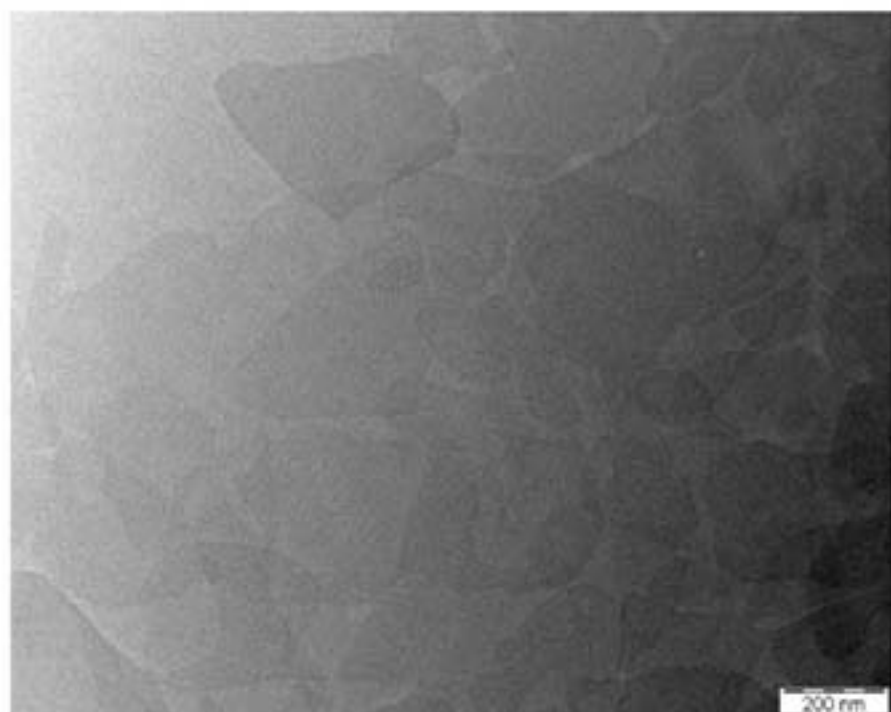


## Beidellite

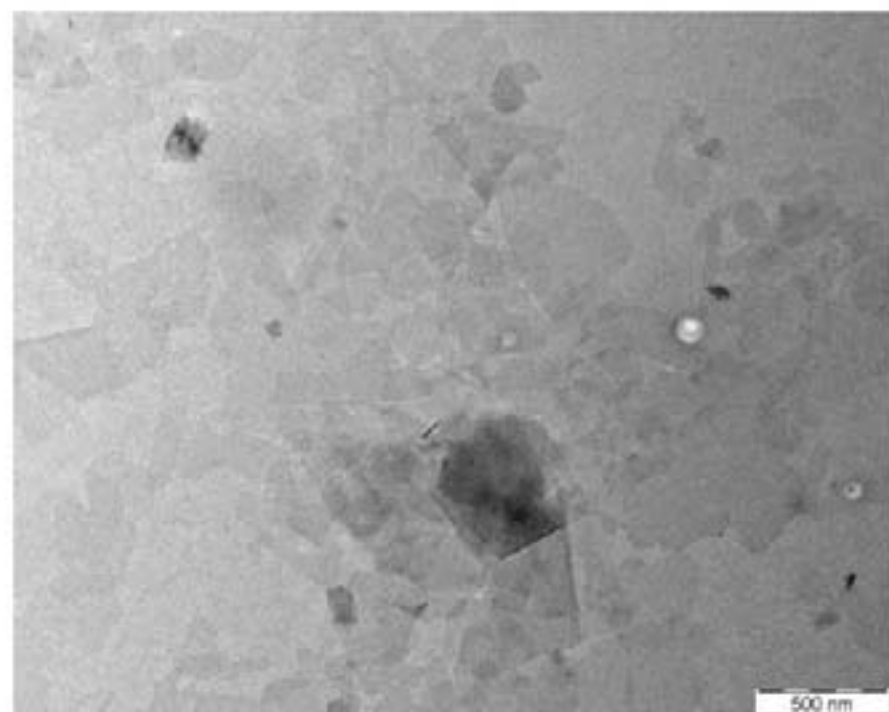
Substitutions in  
Tetrahedral Sheet







(a) TEM-micrograph of Beidellite (size c)

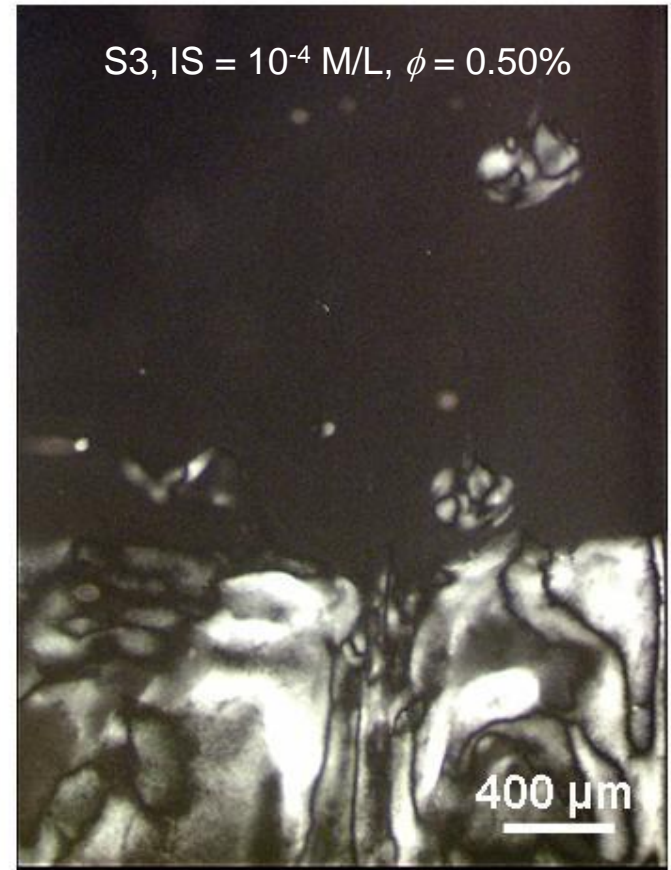


(b) TEM-micrograph of Montmorillonite

Figure 3.2: TEM micrographs of Montmorillonite and Beidellite

# Mesophases in beidellite suspensions

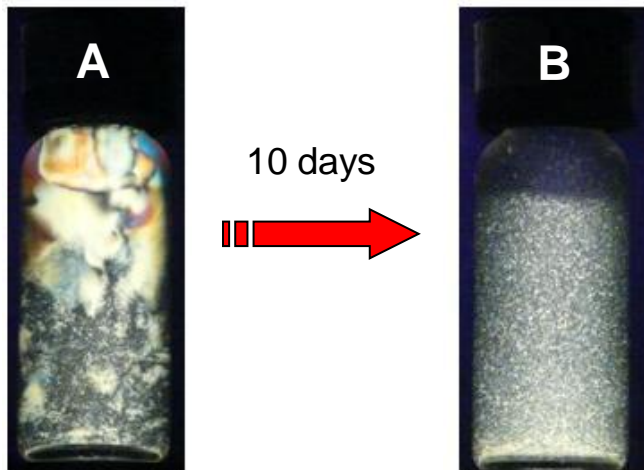
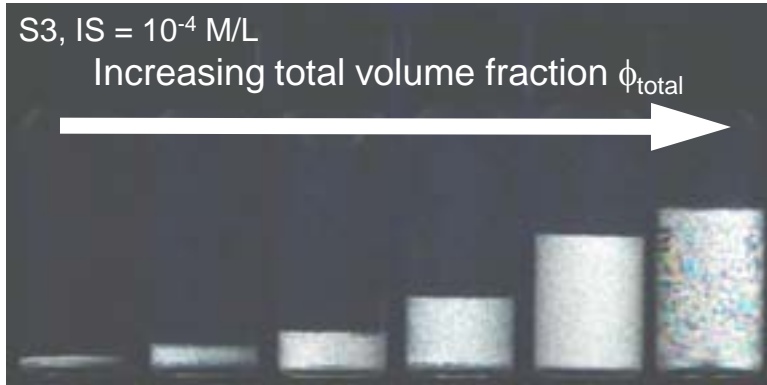
## ■ Microscopical observations



**Tactoids nucleation following by phase separation process**

# Mesophases in beidellite suspensions

## ■ Macroscopical observations



S3, IS =  $10^{-5}$  M/L,  $\phi = 0.47\%$



- formation of nematic droplets
- increase of  $\phi_N$  with  $\phi_{\text{total}}$

⇒ **First I/N phase transition**



(a) Volume fractions of Beidellite are a)  $\phi_{\text{clay}} = 0.33\%$ ; b)  $\phi_{\text{clay}} = 0.35\%$ ; c)  $\phi_{\text{clay}} = 0.37\%$ ; and d)  $\phi_s = 0.39\%$



(b) Volume fractions of Beidellite are a)  $\phi_{\text{clay}} = 0.41\%$ ; b)  $\phi_{\text{clay}} = 0.42\%$ ; c)  $\phi_{\text{clay}} = 0.44\%$ ; and d)  $\phi_s = 0.46\%$ .



(c) Volume fractions of Beidellite are a)  $\phi_{\text{clay}} = 0.47\%$ ; b)  $\phi_{\text{clay}} = 0.48\%$ ; c)  $\phi_{\text{clay}} = 0.50\%$ ; and d)  $\phi_s = 0.51\%$

Figure 6.3: Beidellite (size c) suspensions one month after preparation, observed between crossed polarisers

# Menu

- Tuesday 1 May 1990:A visit with serious consequences
- Clay and Liquid Crystals:The disappointment
- Gibbsite :Less is more
- Clay 2.0 Liquid Crystals :New hope
- **Some final comments**

1 Clays mysterious and sometimes beautiful

2 Much more to be discovered !

Progress will be slow because  
clays are nasty and will only reveal  
their secrets to those who take them serious



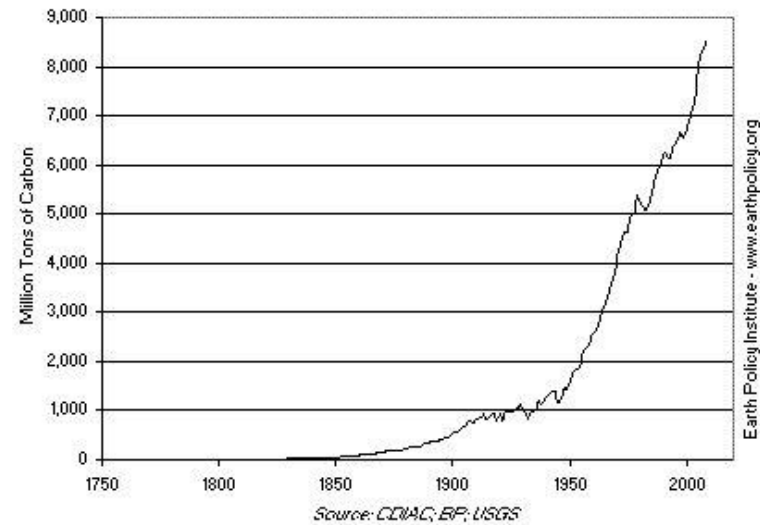




Professor **Geoff Maitland** was cited for his distinguished research measuring and simulating polymeric fluid flows, in recognition of the benefits that this has brought to the oilfield and general drilling industry. He joined Imperial in September 2005 after 20 years working with Schlumberger in the oil and gas sector.

As Professor of Energy Engineering, he is looking at ways to mitigate the environmental impact of fossil fuels and manage the transition to alternative energies. He is also looking at ways to exploit unconventional sources of hydrocarbons and to recover existing hydrocarbons more efficiently.

Global Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Fossil Fuel  
Burning, 1751-2009



# proof of global warming





2006    2012    2022    2032    2042    2062    2112





**Thank you for your attention**