

# Biomineralization

Pupa Gilbert

Departments of Physics (100%),  
Chemistry (0%), Materials  
Science (0%), Geoscience (0%)

UW-Madison

Radcliffe Institute for Advanced  
Study, Harvard University



<http://www.lovethispic.com/image/14196/colorful-seashells>

work supported by

NSF-DMR-BMAT

DOE-BES-Geosciences

US-Israel BSF

Radcliffe Institute, Harvard





pngimg.com Copyright © 2013 - 2017



<http://paulmerriman.com/facing-fears/>



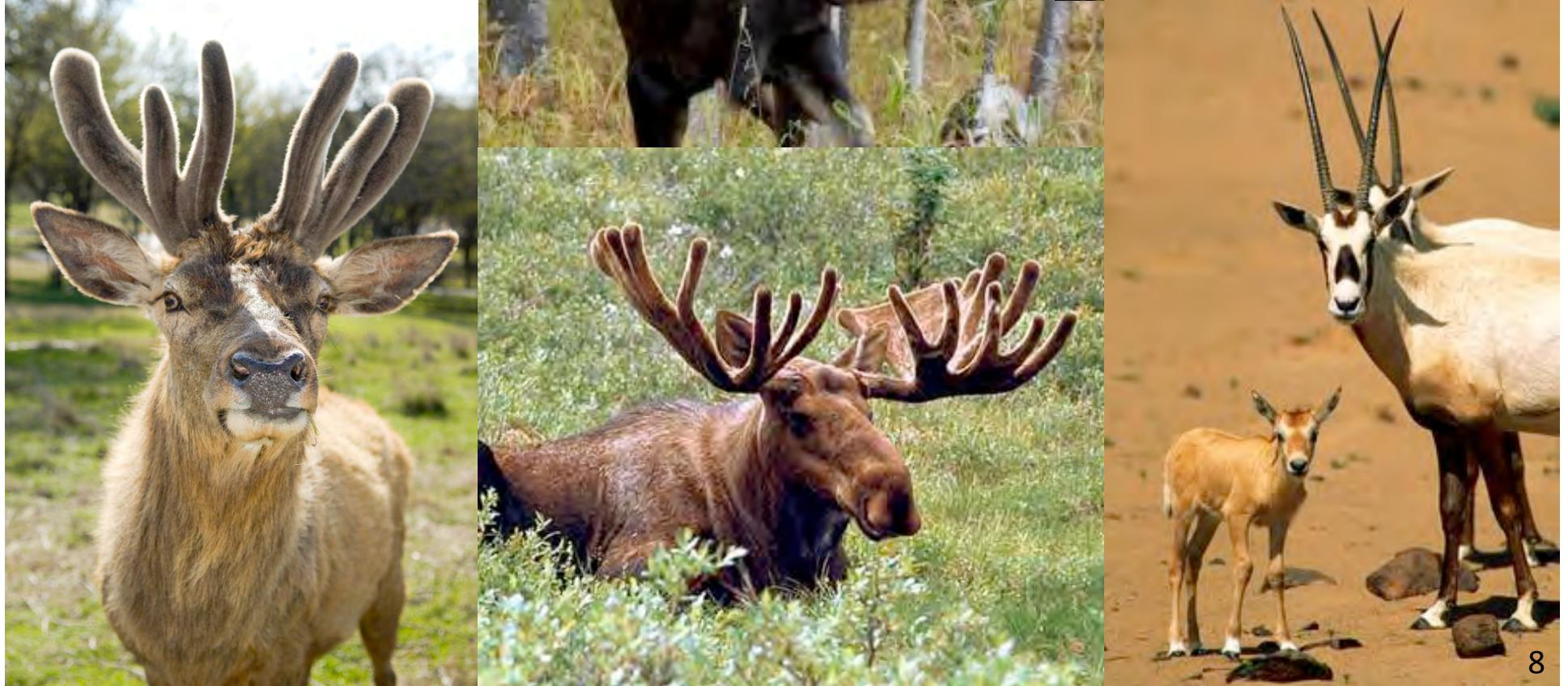




Turtle

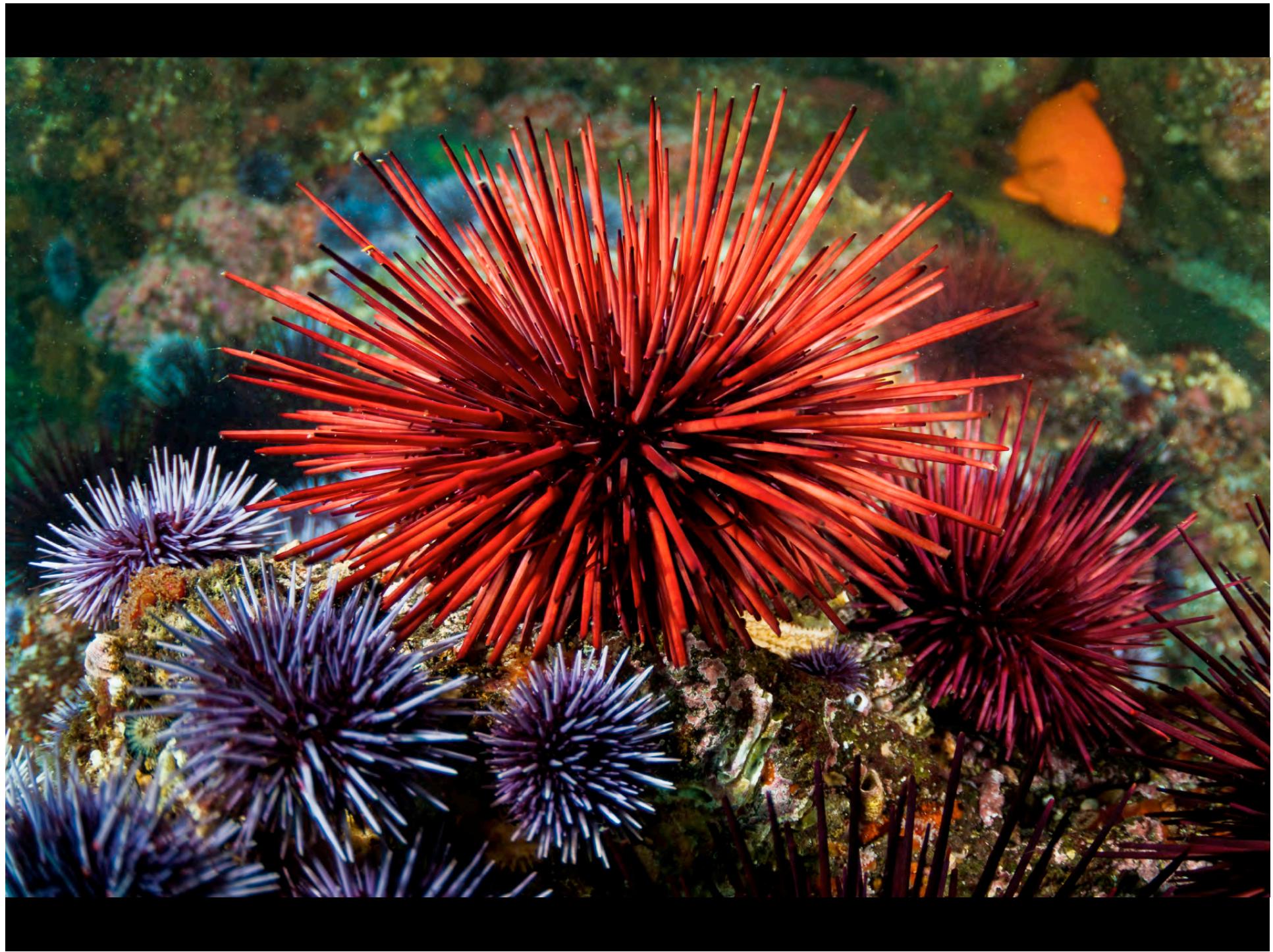


Tortoise









sea urchin spine diffracts like a single crystal of calcite



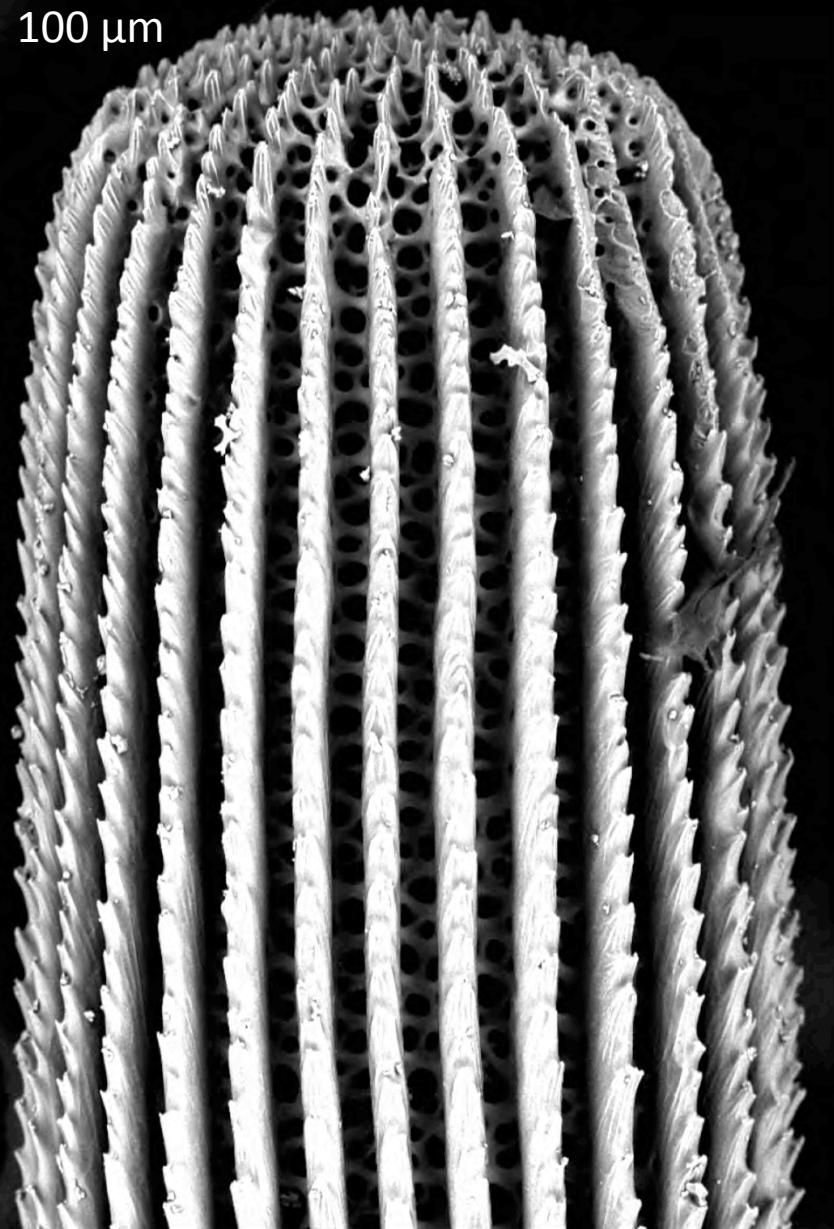
Yang et al. Nanoscale 2011

calcite single crystal

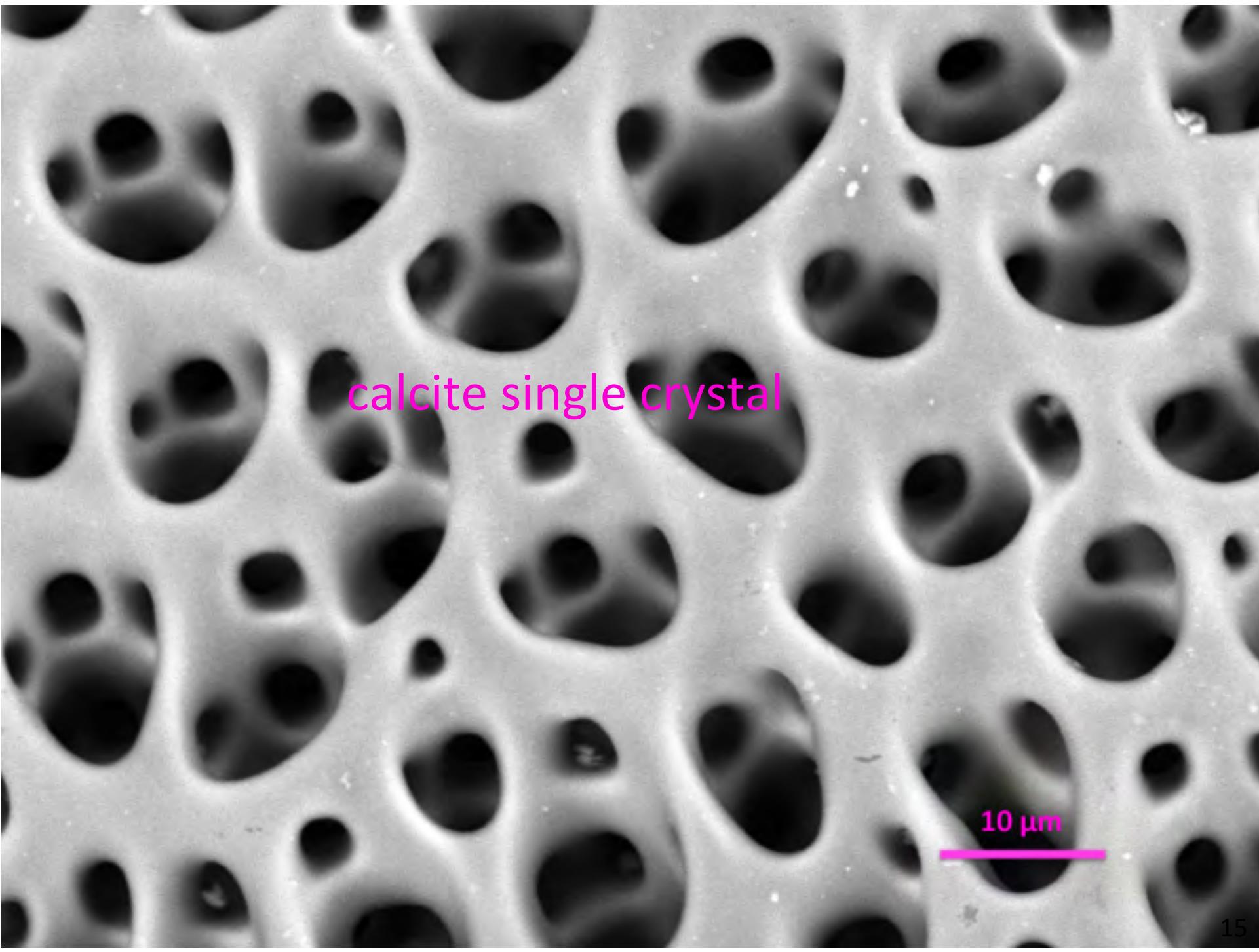


sea urchin spine diffracts like a single crystal of calcite

100  $\mu\text{m}$



Yang et al. Nanoscale 2011



calcite single crystal

10  $\mu\text{m}$











# biominerals

**biomineralization = formation mechanisms**

# biomineralization

- why is it important?
- because it is a wide spread natural phenomenon
- useful for sleuthing into deep time (500,000 Myrs)
- mechanisms can be applied
  - large crystals for solar energy
  - amorphous drugs
  - 3D printing
  - bone implants
  - ...

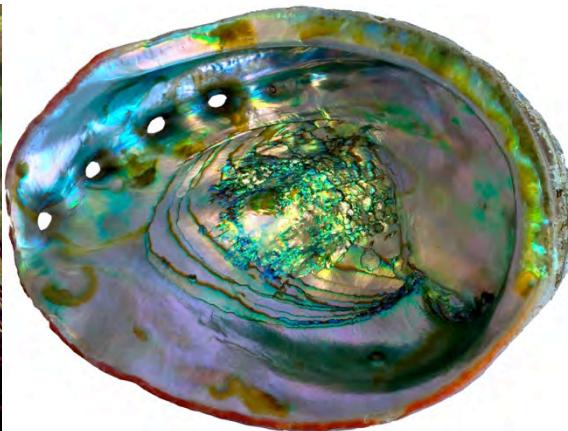
## biomineralization mechanisms

- crystals grow by particle attachment (Science 2015)

amorphous particles (~100 nm) in fresh, forming biominerals



PNAS 2012



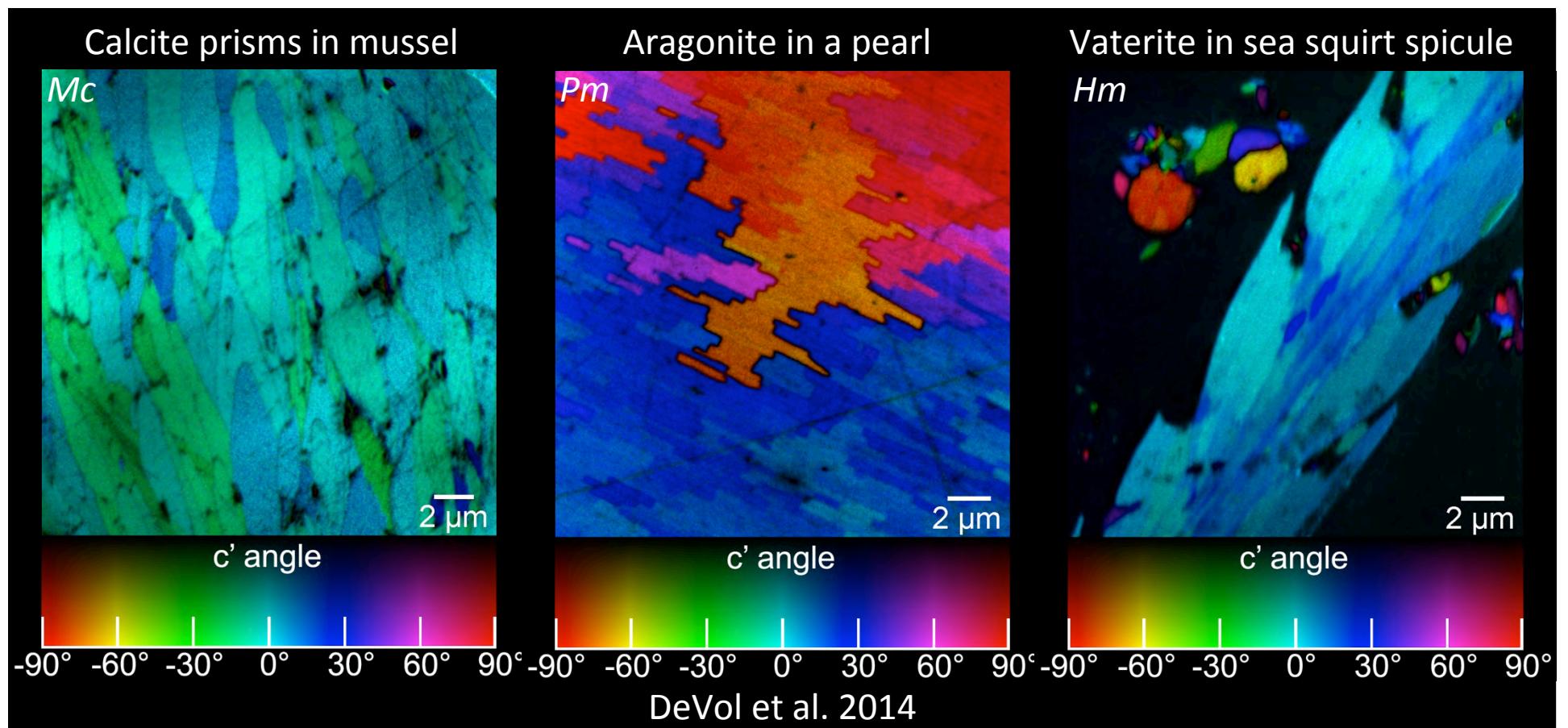
JACS 2015



*Science* 2017  
under review

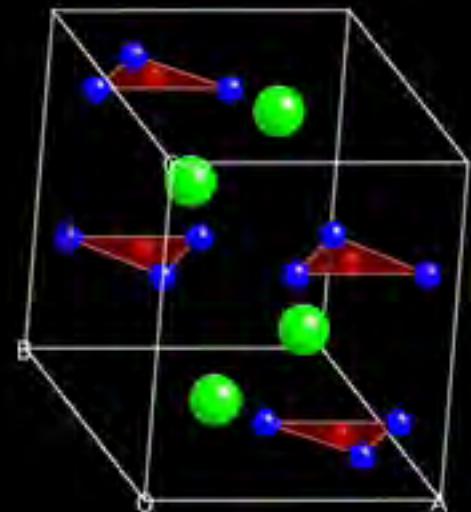
# biomineralization mechanisms

- crystals grow by particle attachment
- orientation of crystals changes as the biomineral grows



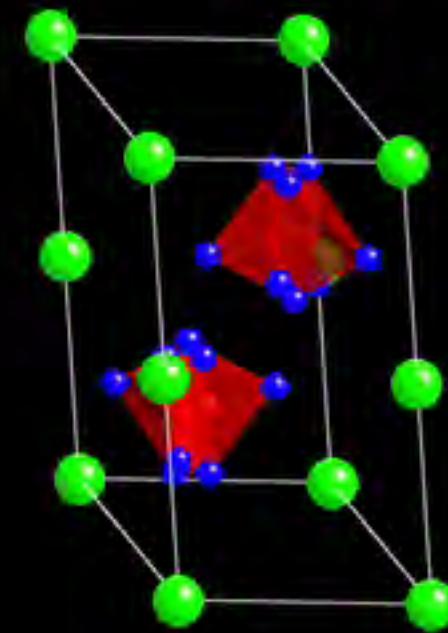
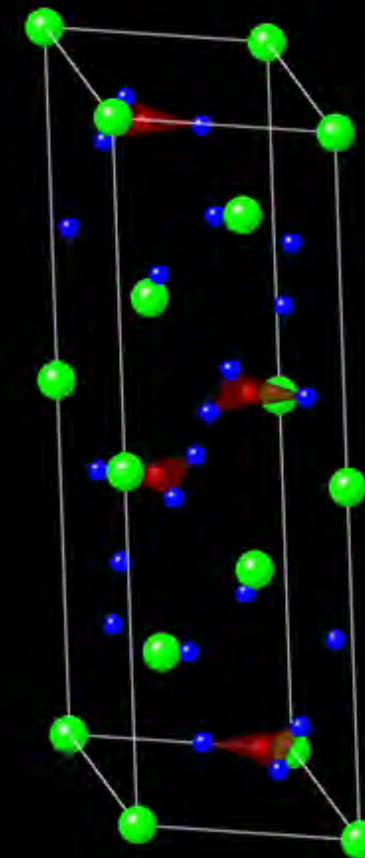
Ca  
C  
O

aragonite unit cell

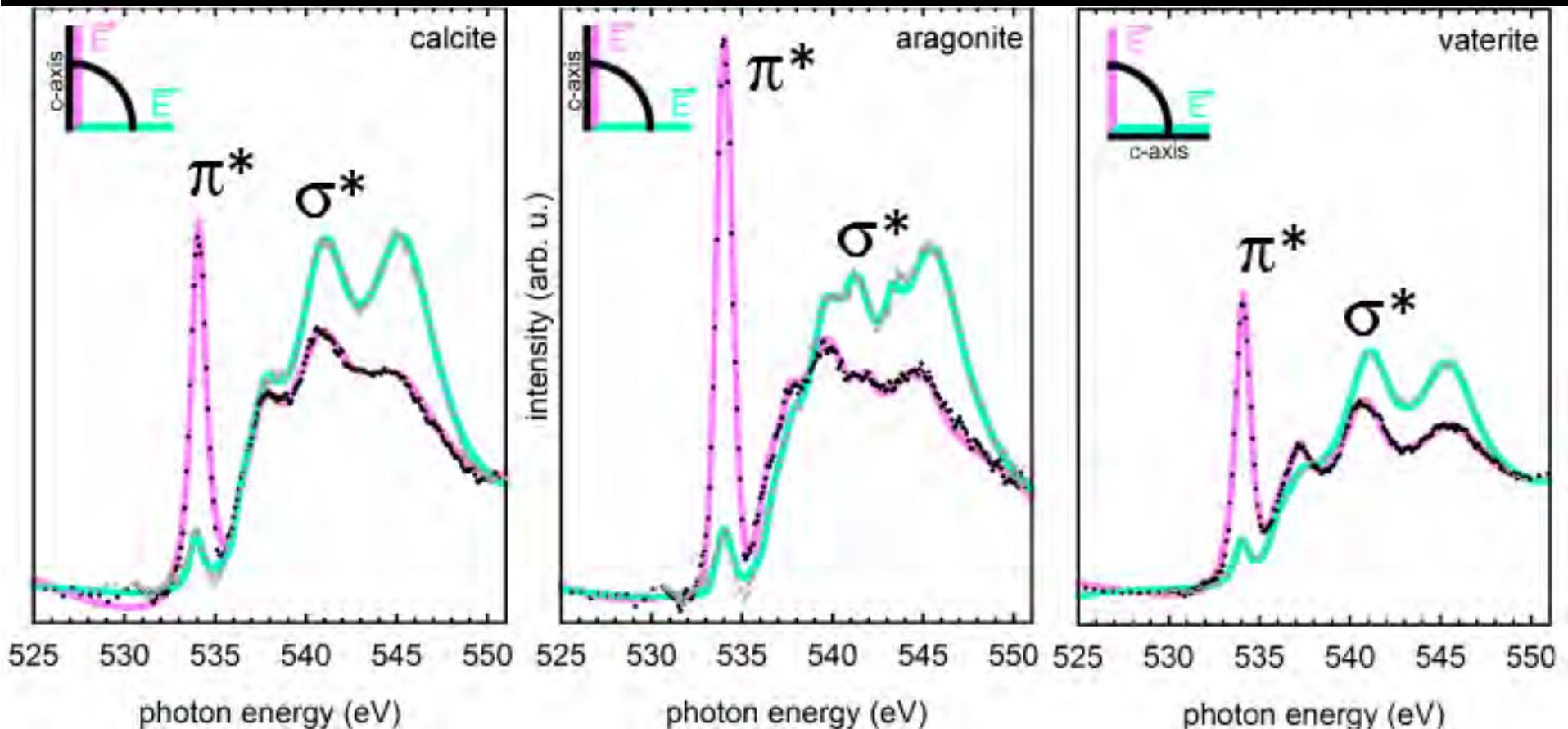


calcite unit cell

vaterite unit cell



# x-ray linear dichroism in O K-edge XAS spectra



Rebecca Metzler et al., PRL 2007

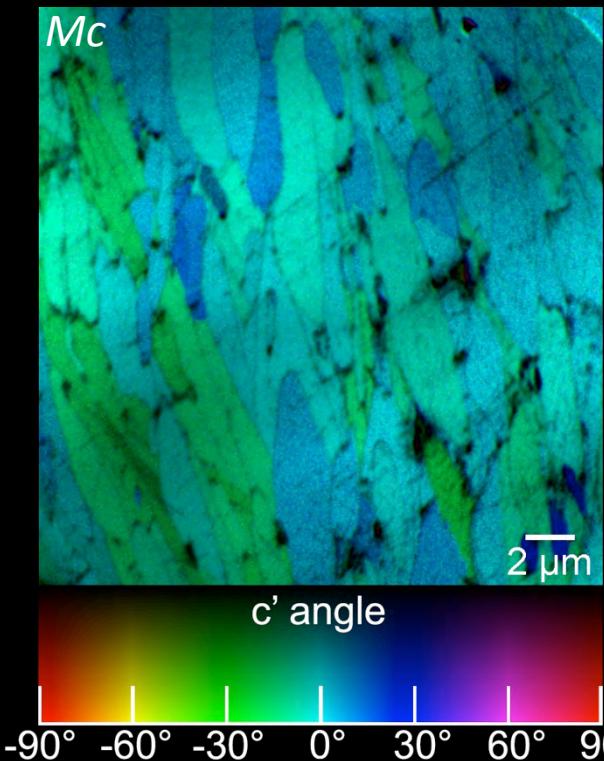
.....  
DeVol et al. 2014

# PIC-mapping

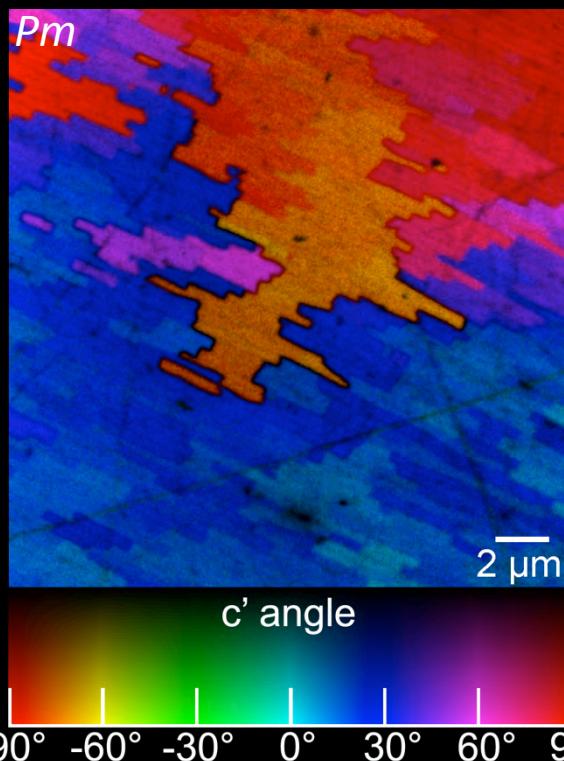
Polarization-dependent Imaging Contrast-mapping

**color = c-axis orientation in 3D**

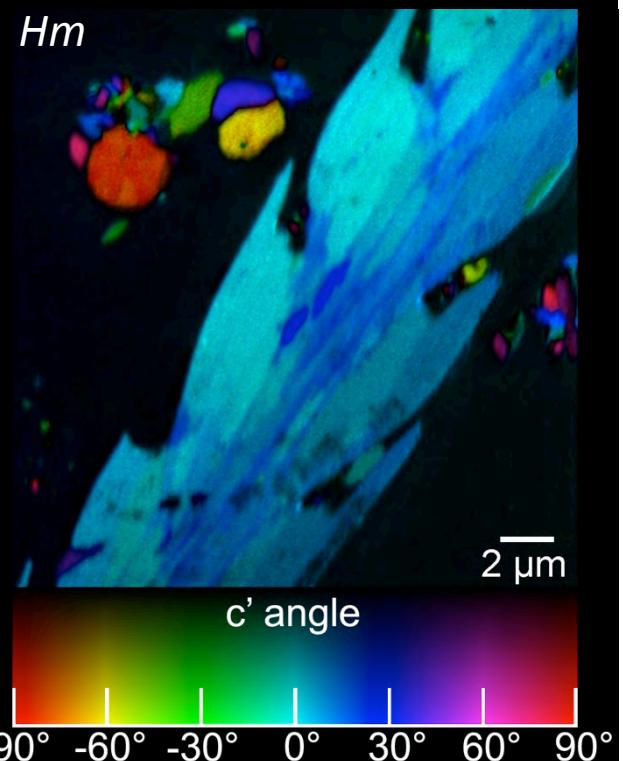
Calcite prisms in mussel



Aragonite in a pearl



Vaterite in sea squirt spicule



Rebecca Metzler et al., PRL 2007

.....

DeVol et al. 2014



nacre  
(mother-of-pearl)

- lines the inside of many mollusk shells
- is widely studied because of its mechanical properties
- is iridescent

*Hr*

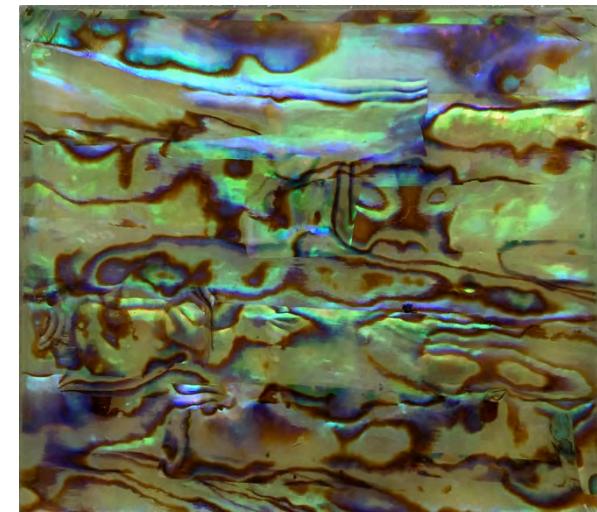
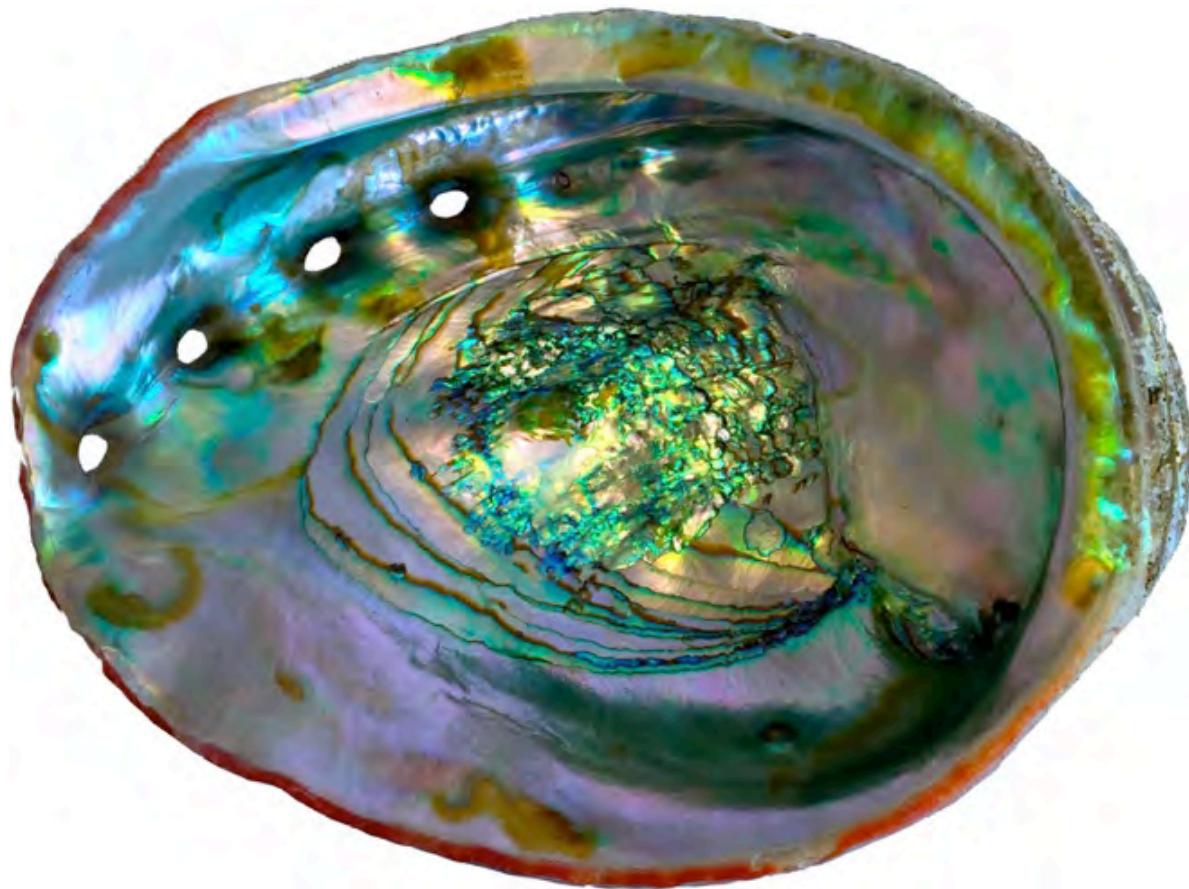
SEM of nacre

2  $\mu\text{m}$

Hrf4-5-042



iridescence  
or thin-layer interference

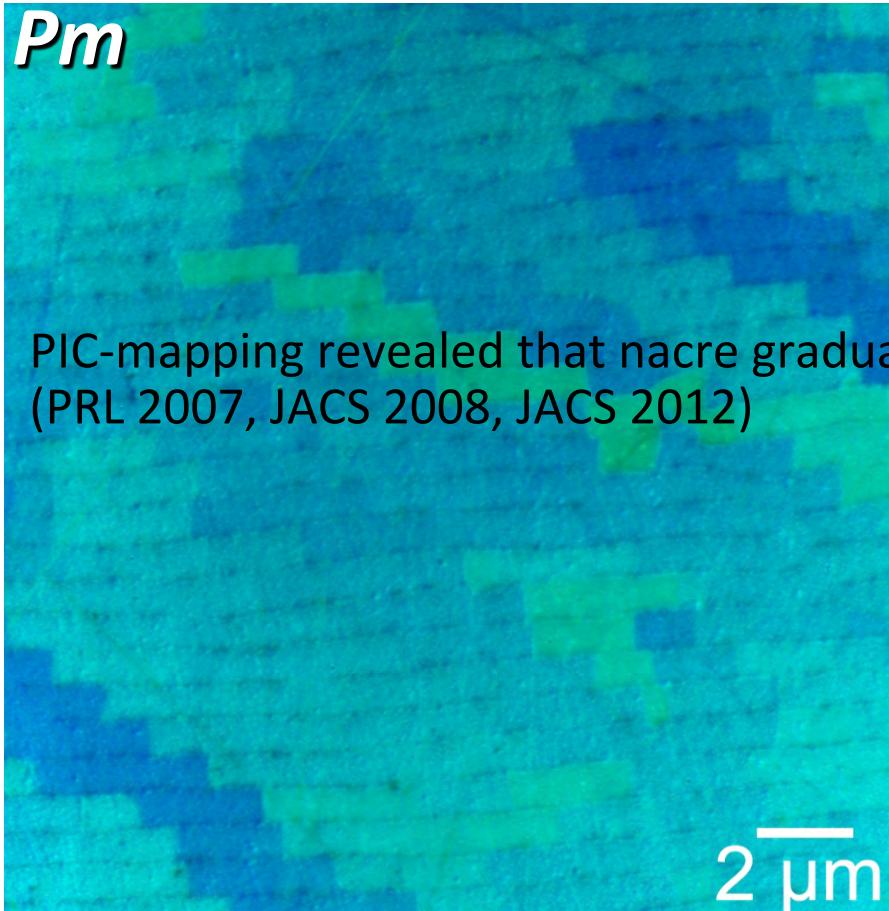


# PIC-maps of nacre

(PIC=Polarization-dependent Imaging Contrast)

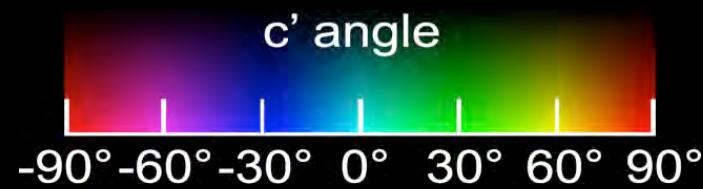
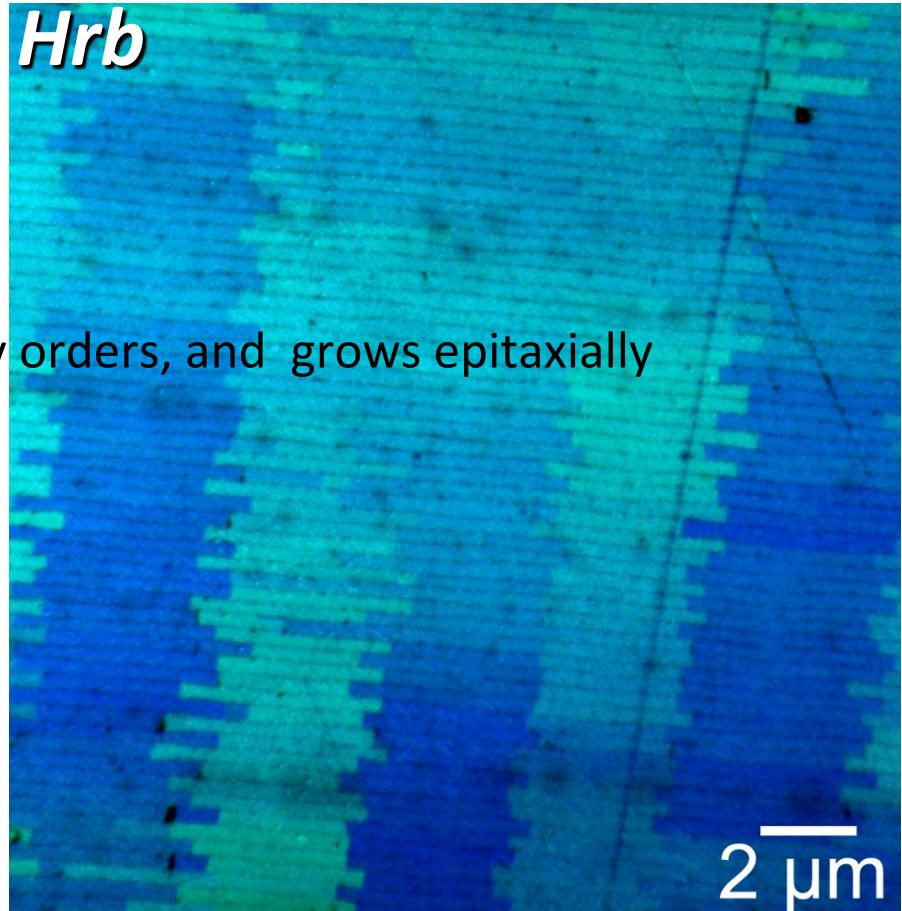
sheet nacre (bivalves)

*Pm*



PIC-mapping revealed that nacre gradually orders, and grows epitaxially  
(PRL 2007, JACS 2008, JACS 2012)

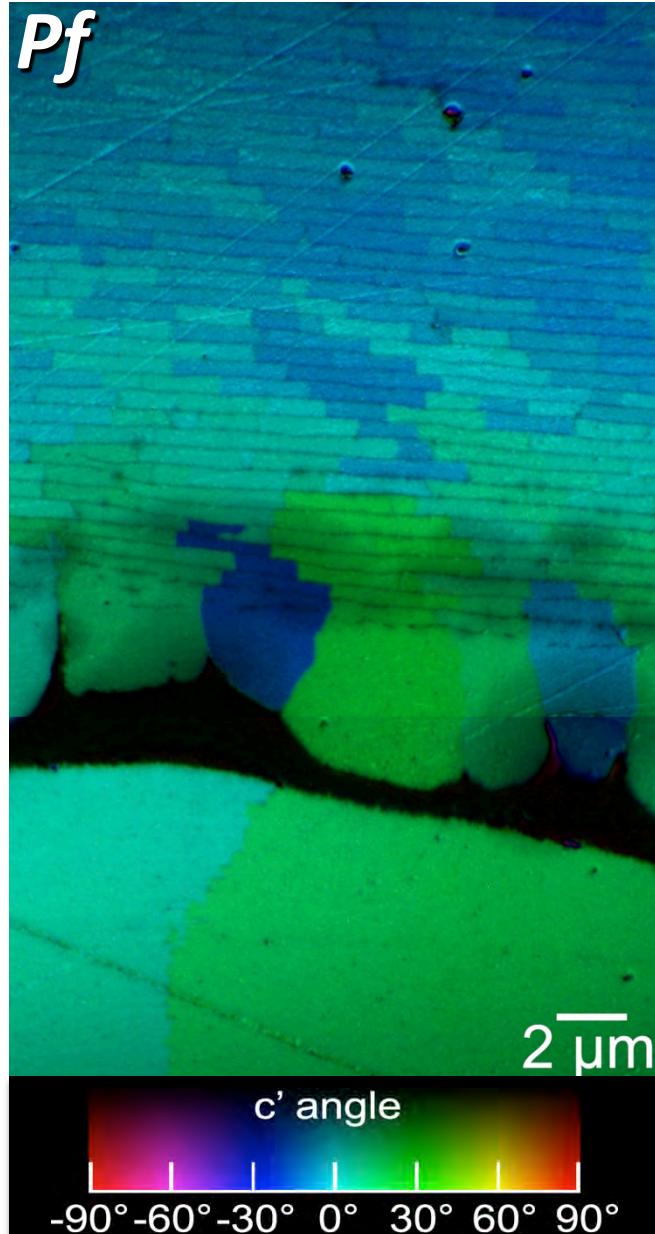
*Hrb*



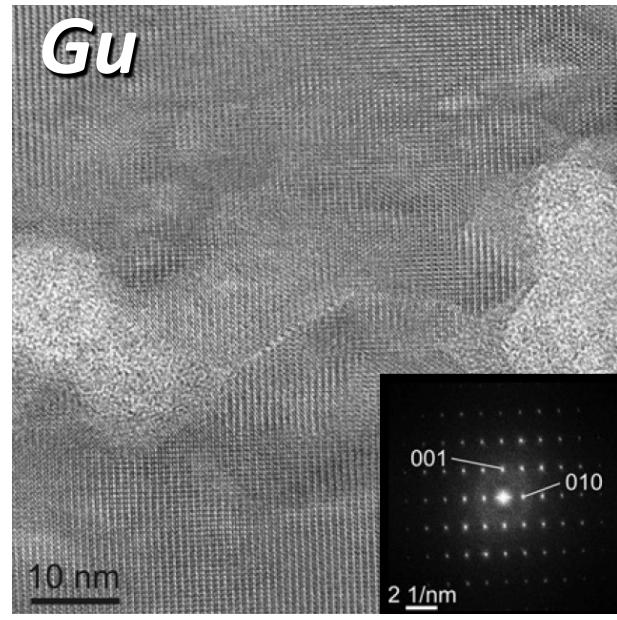
IC Olson et al. 2013

nacre gradually orders, and grows epitaxially

PIC-map (Polarization-dependent Imaging Contrast)



TEM



Checa et al. JSB 2011

Gilbert et al. JACS 2008  
Olson et al. JSB 2013



what controls tablet thickness  
in nacre?

*Atrina rigida* shell, Florida

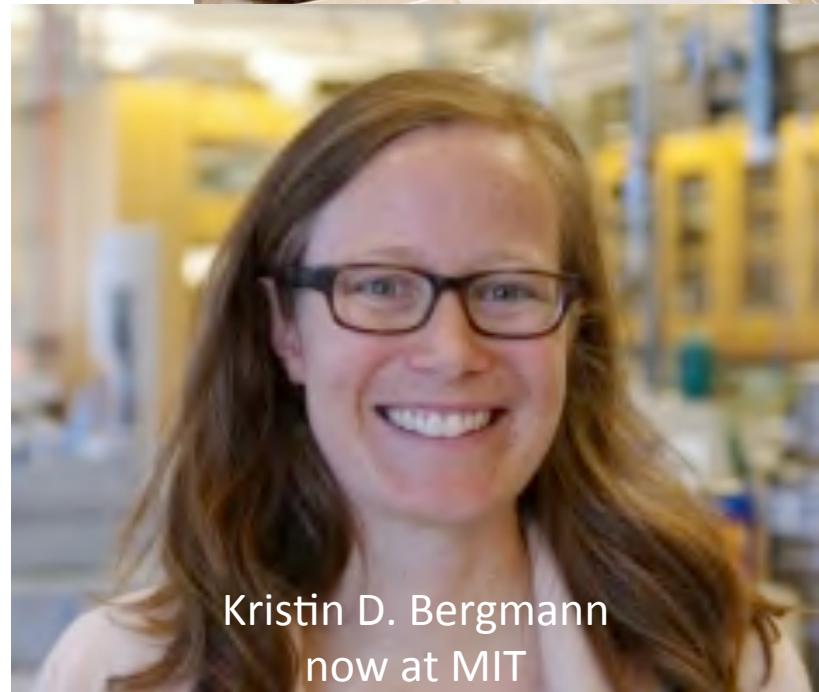
question at Harvard 2014-15:  
does nacre TT record environmental temperature?



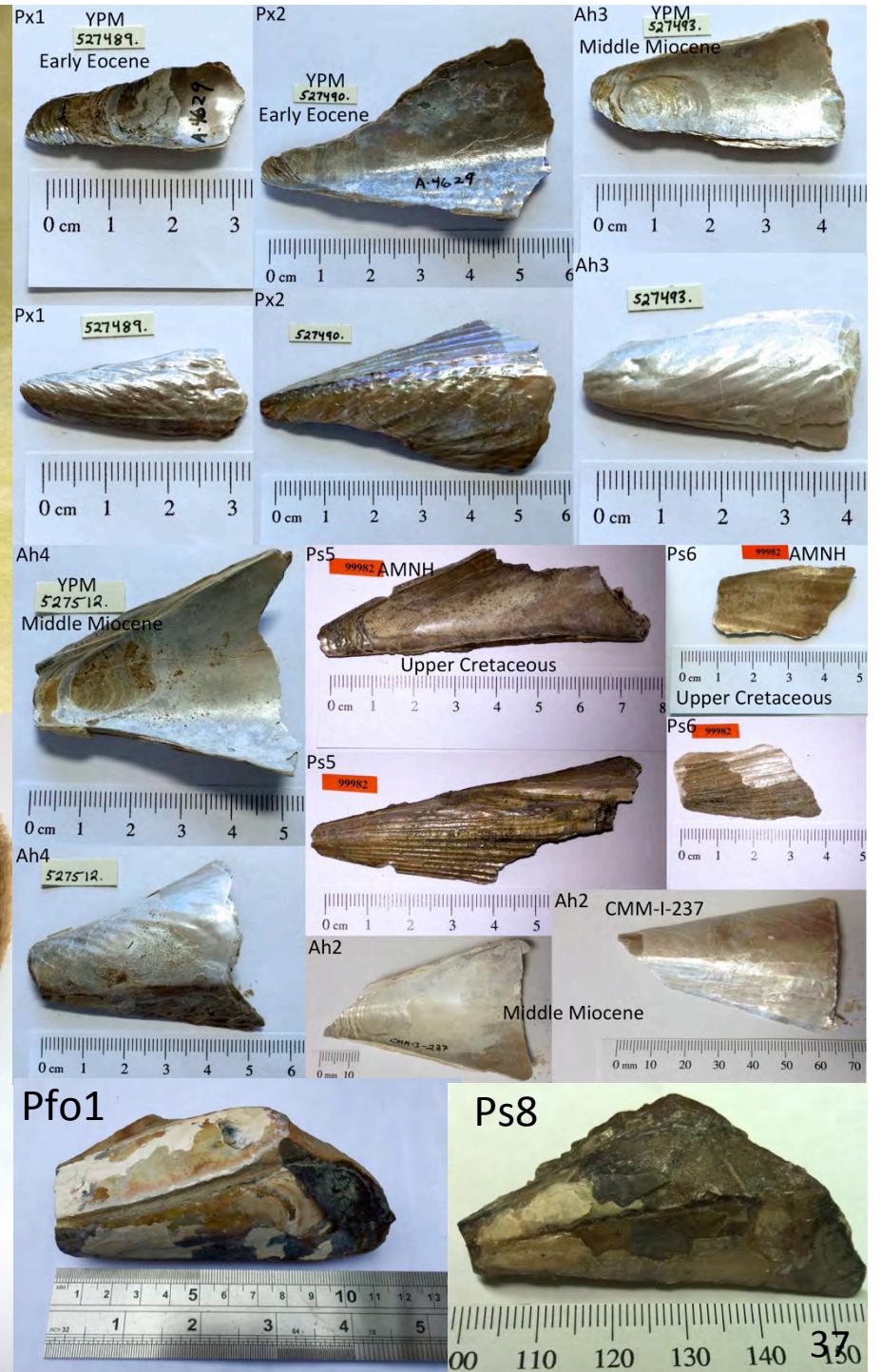
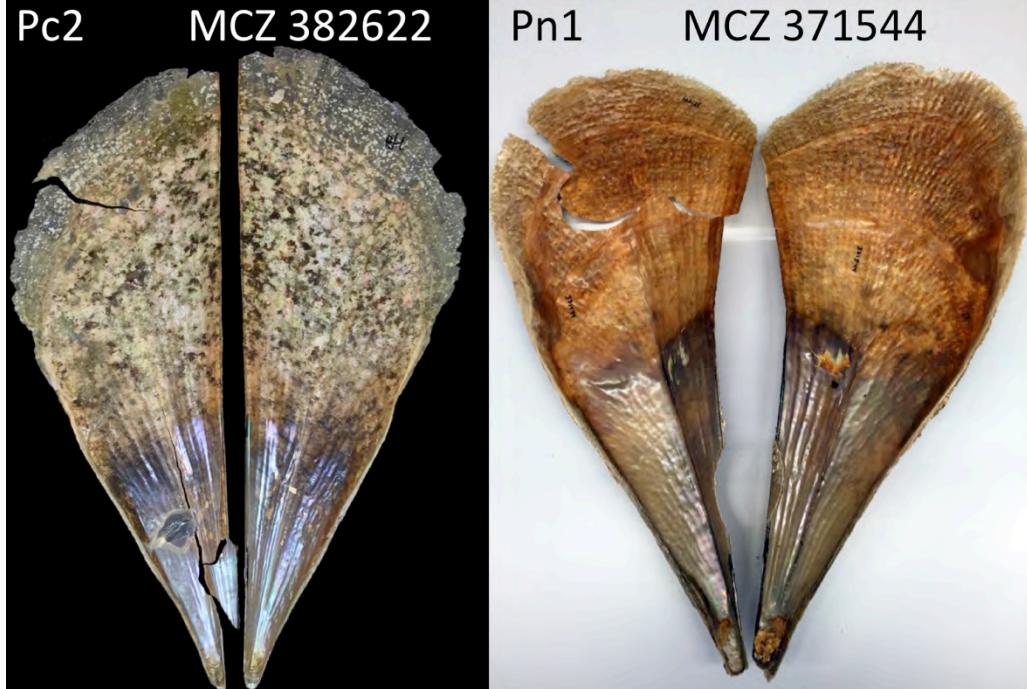
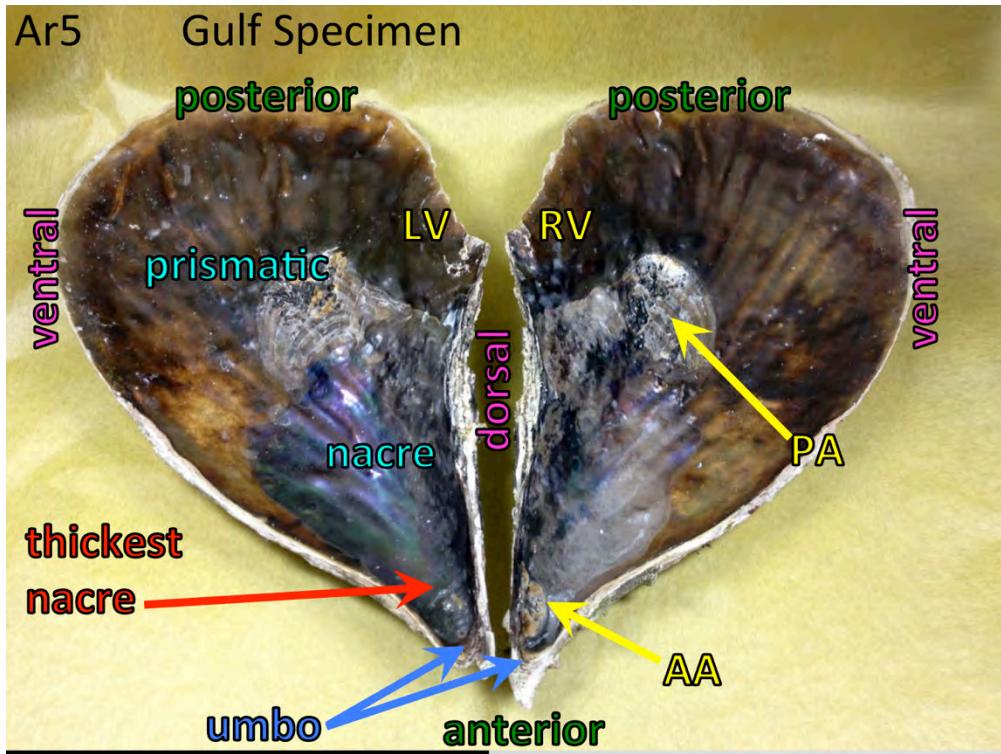
Andrew H. Knoll

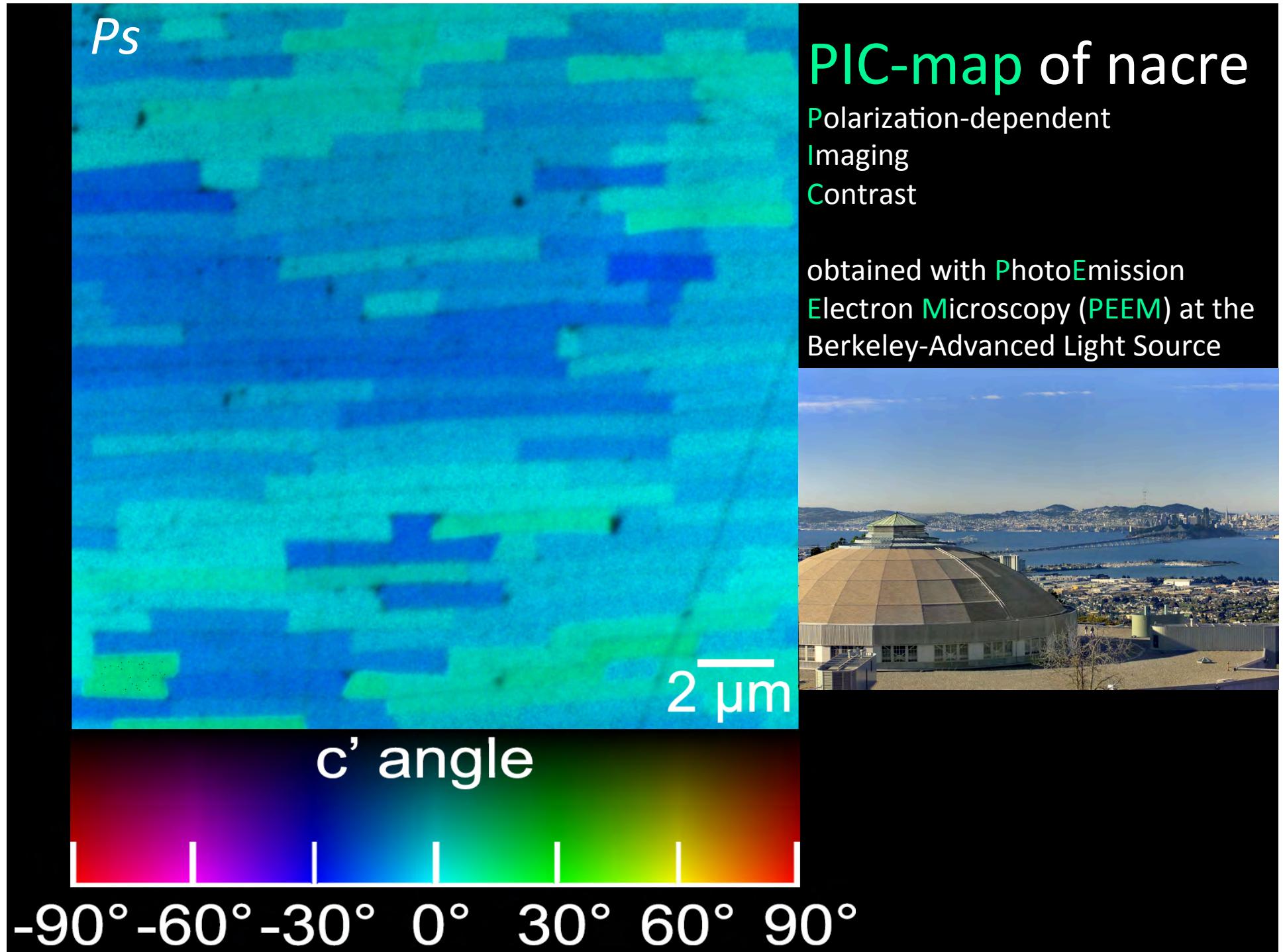


Corinne E. Myers  
now at NM

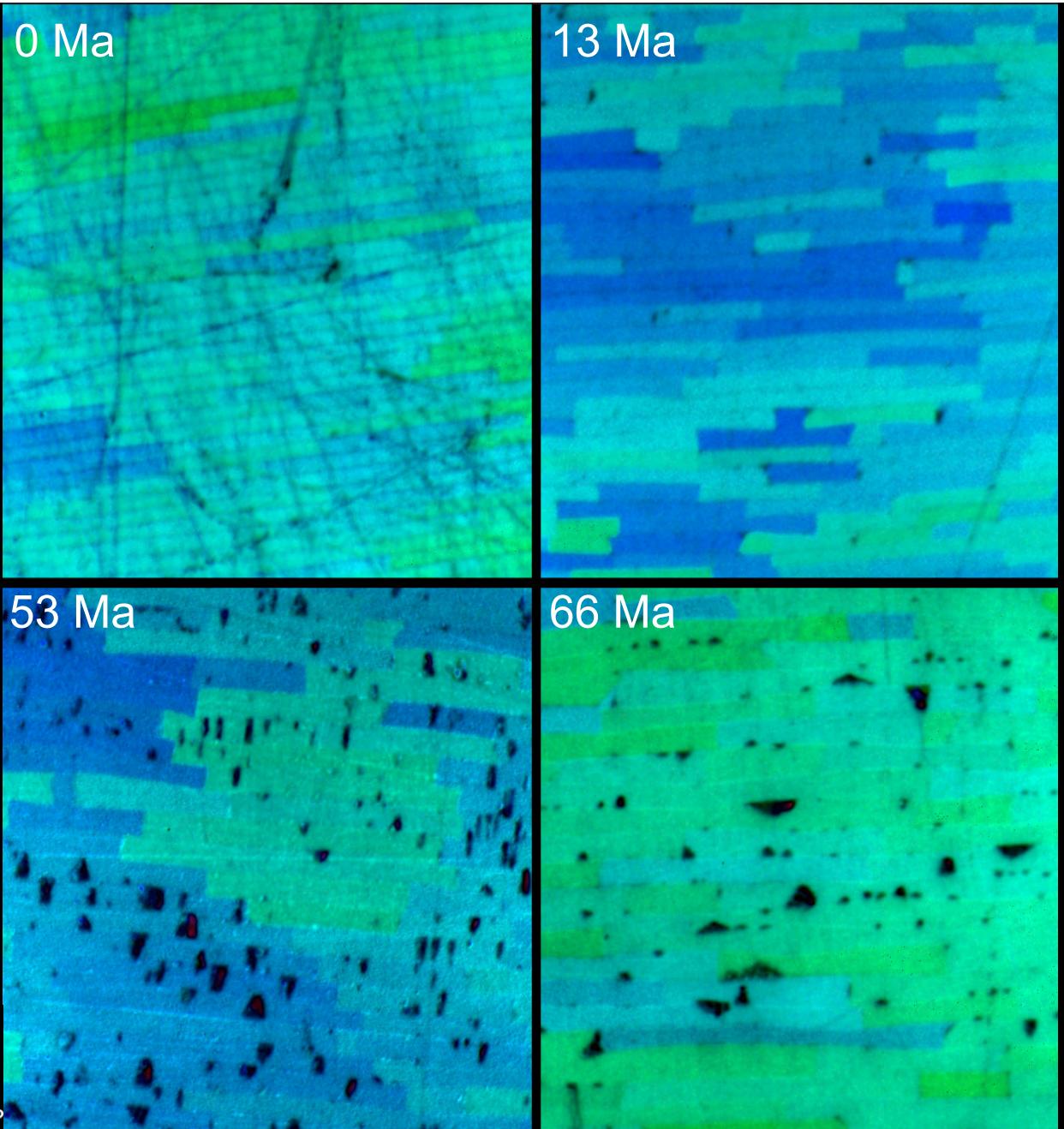


Kristin D. Bergmann  
now at MIT





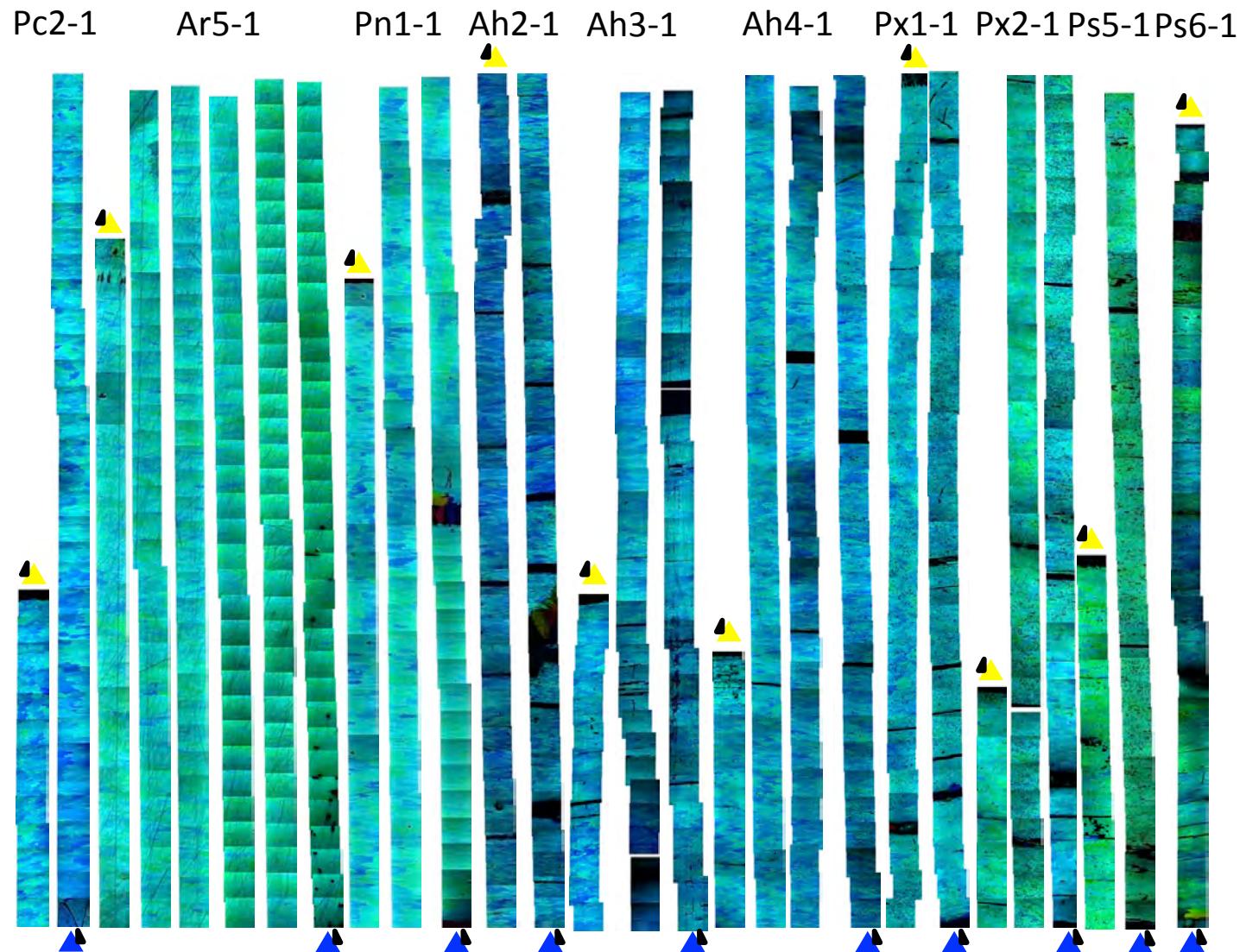
# test of fossil preservation



PIC-maps  
(PIC=Polarization-dependent Imaging Contrast)

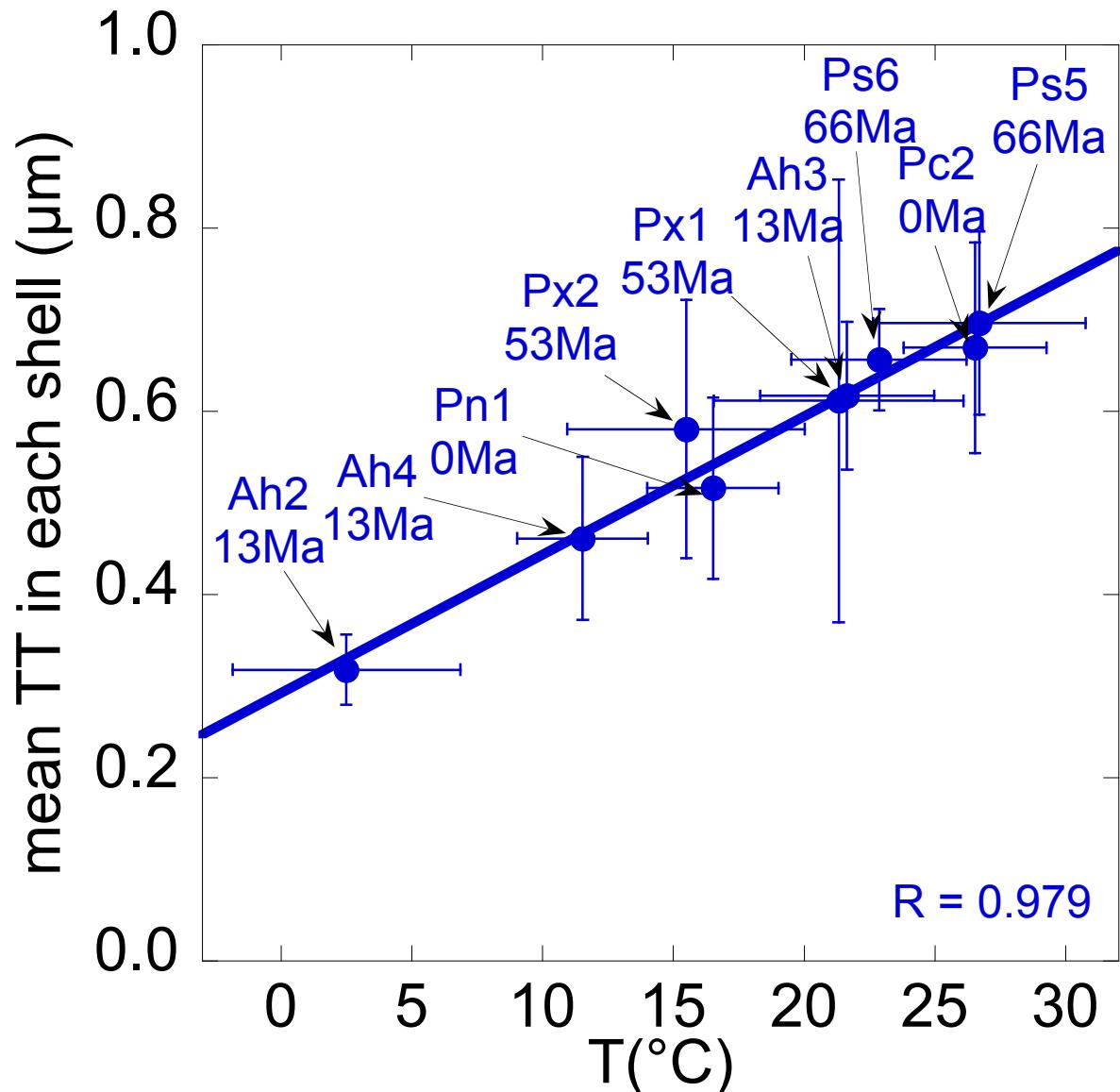
3 Recent + 7 Fossil shells

822 PIC-maps, partly overlapping to ensure continuity in position/time.



▲ = interior of shell, recent   ▲ = exterior of shell, old

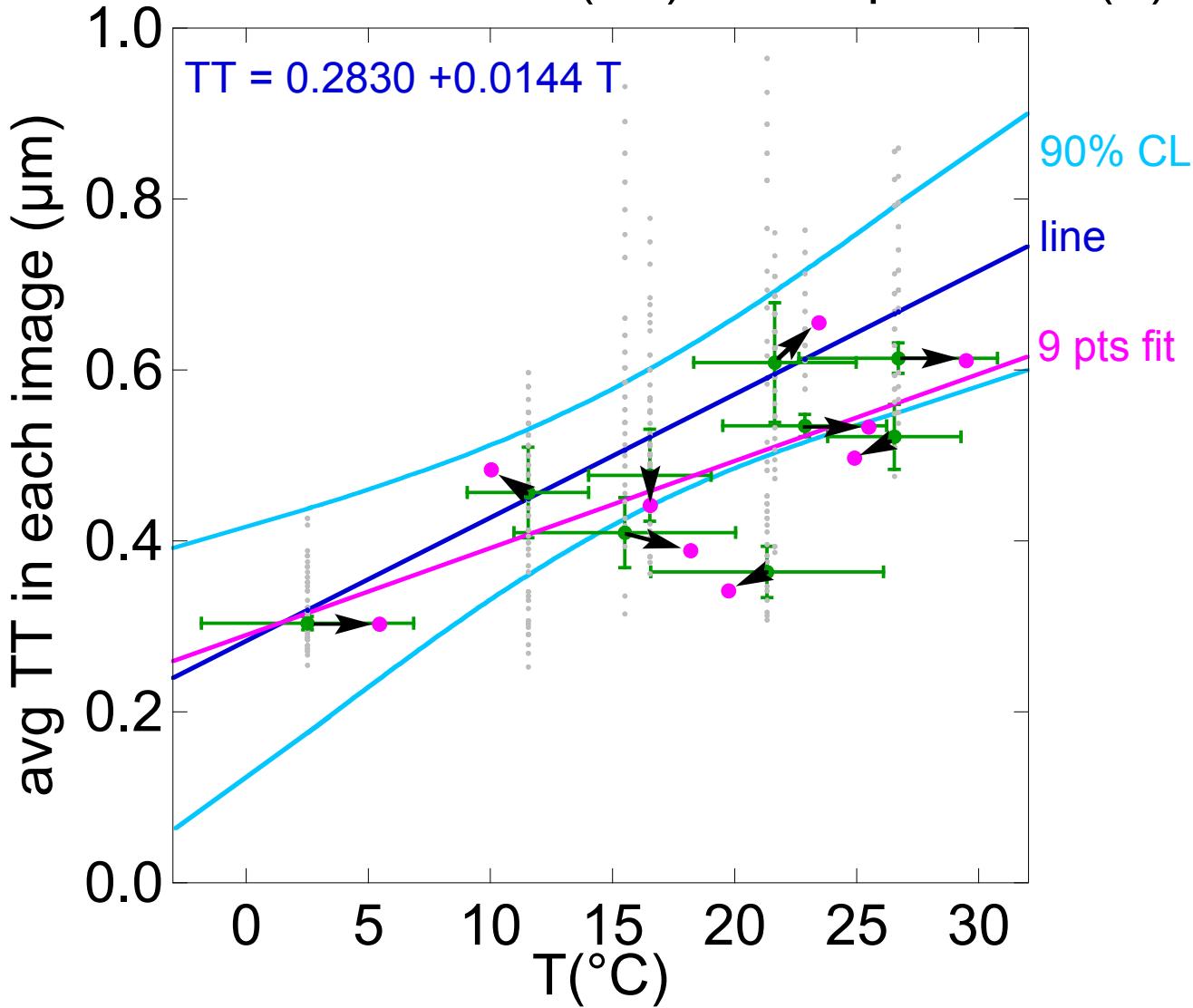
# nacre tablet thickness (TT) vs temperature (T)



linear fit, with error  
bars NOT taken into  
account

PUPA Gilbert, KD Bergmann, CE Myers, MA Marcus, RT DeVol, C-Y Sun, AZ Blonsky, J Zhao, EA Karan, E Tamre, N Tamura, AJ Giuffre, S Lemer, G Giribet, JM Eiler, AH Knoll. Nacre tablet thickness records formation temperature in modern and fossil shells. EPSL 2017.

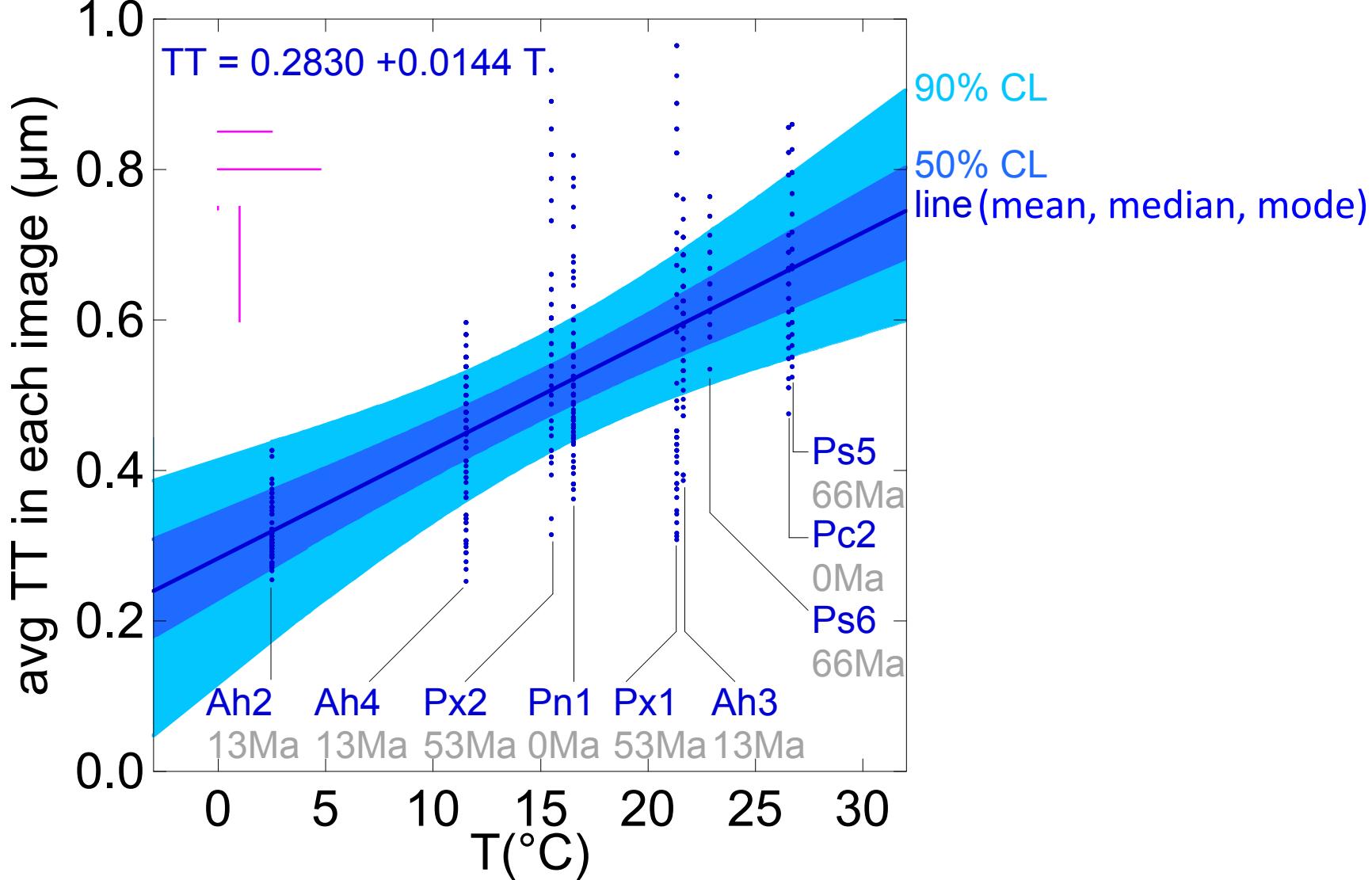
# nacre tablet thickness (TT) vs temperature (T)



bootstrapping:  
fit 9 pts (1 per shell) displaced  
within the errors,  
repeat  $10^5$  times.

PUPA Gilbert, KD Bergmann, CE Myers, MA Marcus, RT DeVol, C-Y Sun, AZ Blonsky, J Zhao, EA Karan, E Tamre, N Tamura, AJ Giuffre, S Lemer, G Giribet, JM Eiler, AH Knoll. Nacre tablet thickness records formation temperature in modern and fossil shells. EPSL 2017.

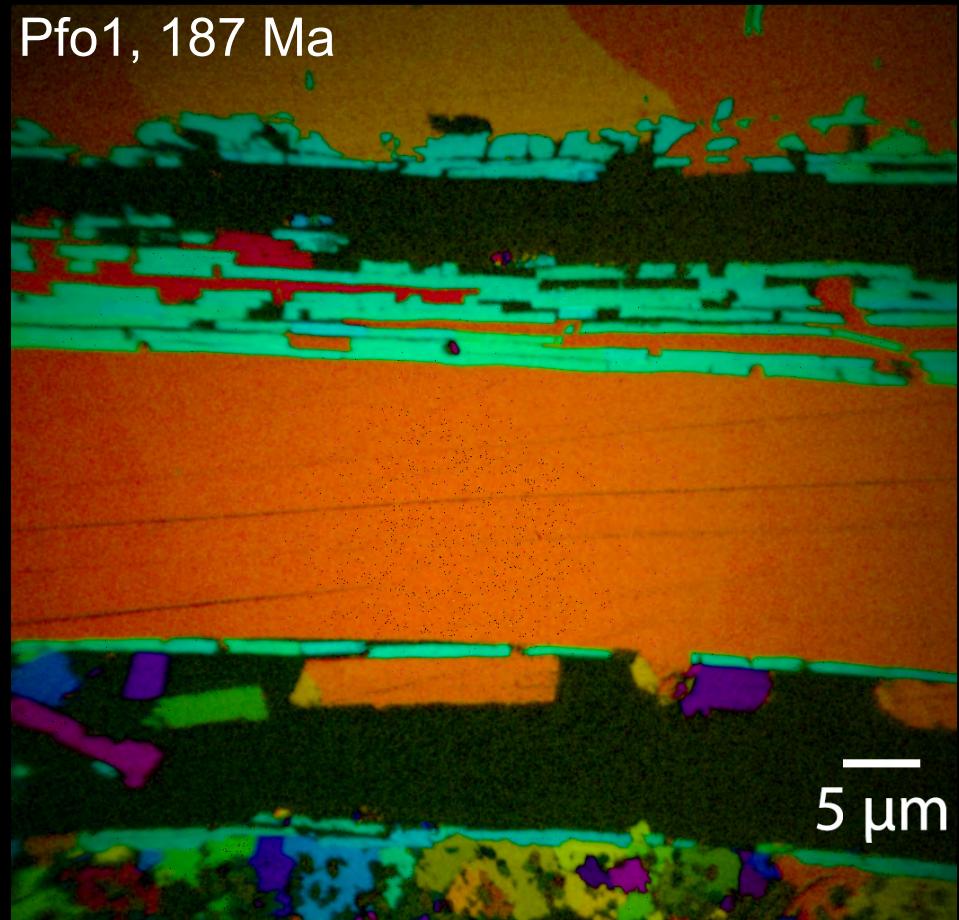
# nacre tablet thickness (TT) vs temperature (T)



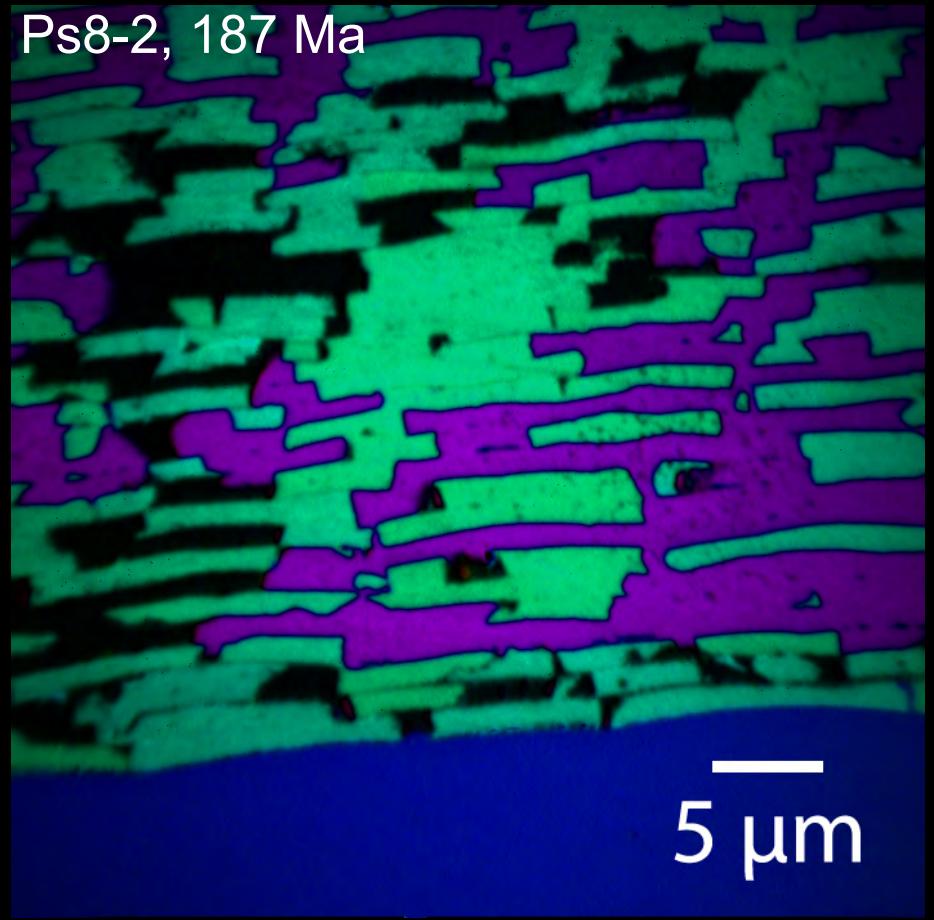
PUPA Gilbert, KD Bergmann, CE Myers, MA Marcus, RT DeVol, C-Y Sun, AZ Blonsky, J Zhao, EA Karan, E Tamre, N Tamura, AJ Giuffre, S Lemer, G Giribet, JM Eiler, AH Knoll. Nacre tablet thickness records formation temperature in modern and fossil shells. EPSL 2017.

using the nacre TT proxy for Jurassic *Pinna* with extensive diagenesis  
not accessible to elemental or isotopic analysis

Pfo1, 187 Ma



Ps8-2, 187 Ma

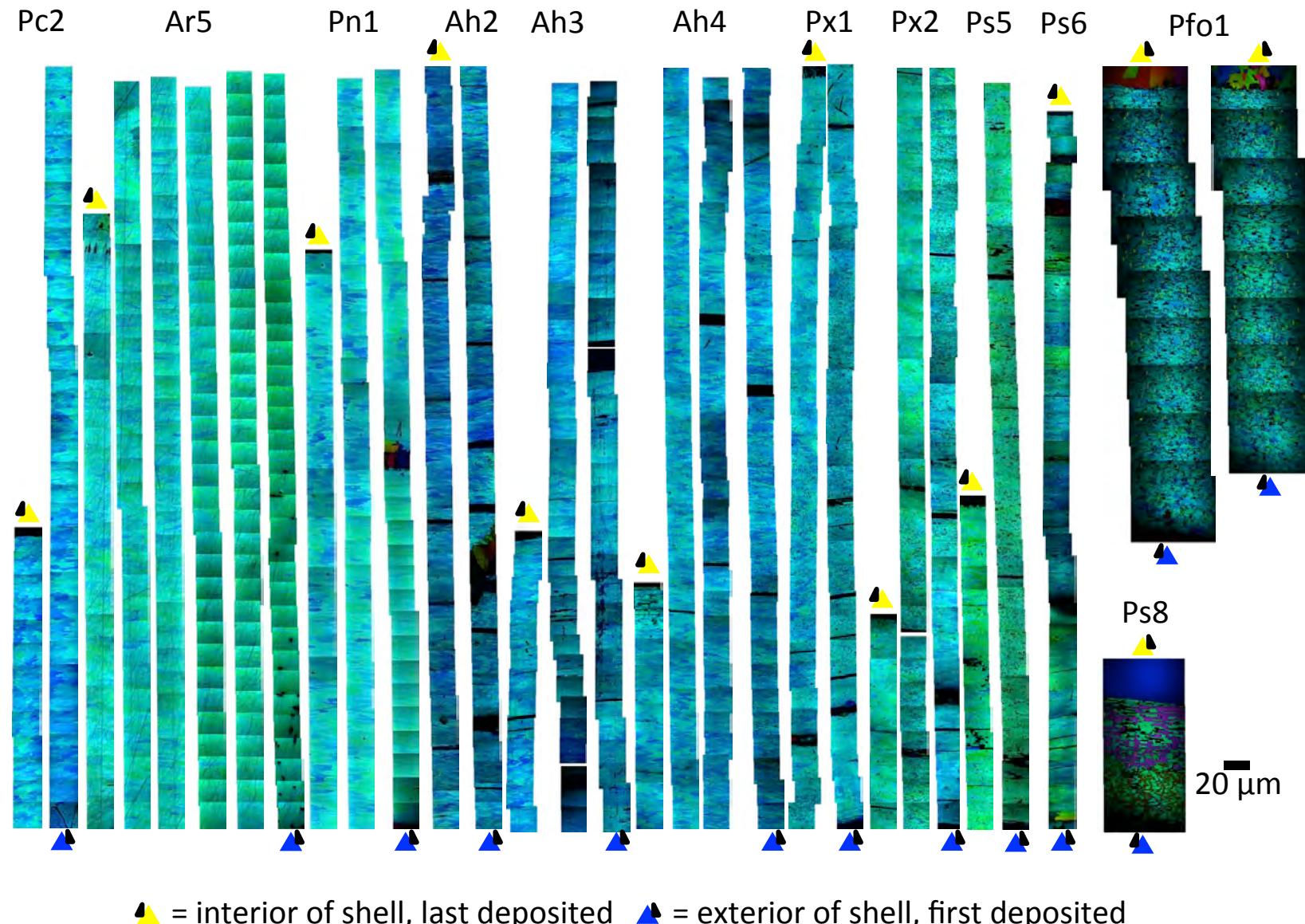


PIC-maps

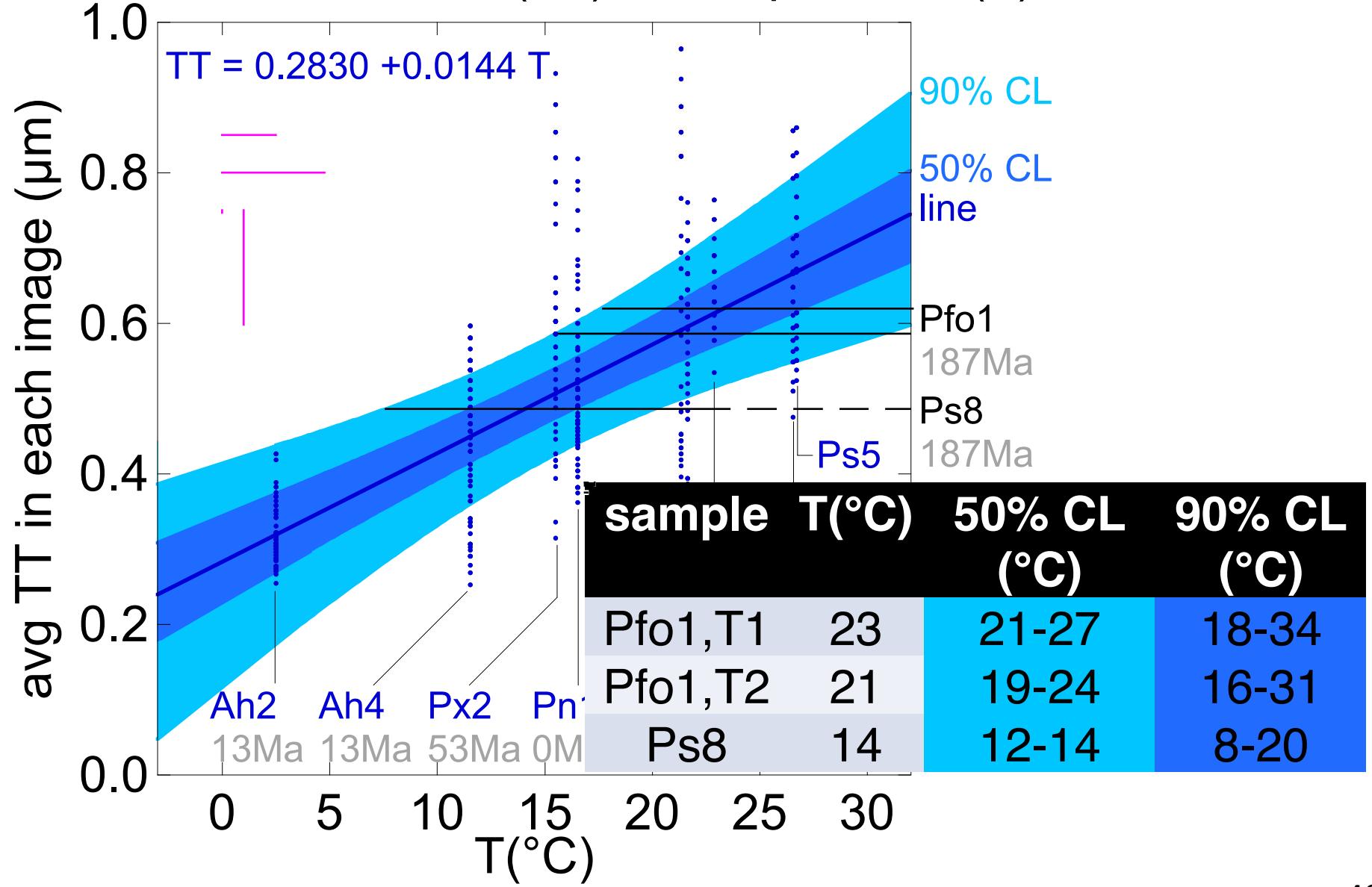
(PIC=Polarization-dependent Imaging Contrast)

3 Recent + 9 Fossil shells

842 PIC-maps, partly overlapping to ensure continuity in position/time.



measuring Jurassic T from TT:  
nacre tablet thickness (TT) vs temperature (T)



# conclusions

- biominerals, few formation mechanisms
- PIC-mapping
- TT vs. T correlation provides the first physical-structure proxy
- environment drives structure:  
metabolism – kinetics – thermodynamics  
biology – chemistry – physics

# thanks to my group



Cayla Stifler  
UW-Physics



Chang-Yu Sun  
UW-Materials Science



Dr. Anthony J. Giuffre  
UW-Physics



Annie Whisson  
UW-Materials Science



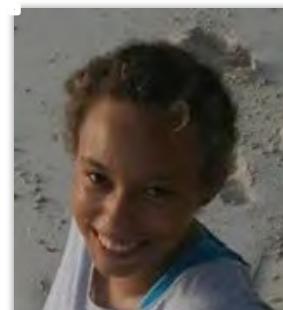
Matt J. Frazier  
UW-Physics



Rebecca A. Metzler  
Associate Professor  
Colgate U



Audra L. Amasino  
graduate student  
MIT



Elizabeth Karan  
Harvard College OEB



Jessica Zhao  
Harvard College  
Appl Math

# many thanks to excellent collaborators



Andrew H. Knoll



Kristin Bergmann  
Harvard U



Corinne E. Myers



Lia Addadi  
Weizmann, Israel



Steve Weiner



Yael Politi  
Weizmann, now at MPI



Fred Wilt  
UC-Berkeley



Boaz Pokroy  
Technion, Israel



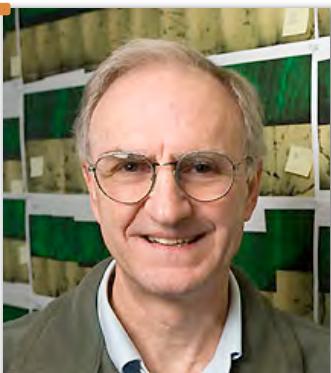
Susan N. Coppersmith  
UW-Madison



Gonzalo Giribet  
OEB-Harvard



Sarah Lemer  
OEB-Harvard



John W. Valley  
UW-Madison



Satish C. B. Myneni  
Princeton



Nobumichi Tamura  
Berkeley-ALS



Matthew A. Marcus  
Berkeley-ALS



Alex Navrotsky  
UC-Davis



Michele Parrinello  
ETH 49



thank you for your attention

work supported by  
DOE: BES-Geosciences  
NSF: DMR-BMAT  
US-Israel BSF  
Radcliffe IAS