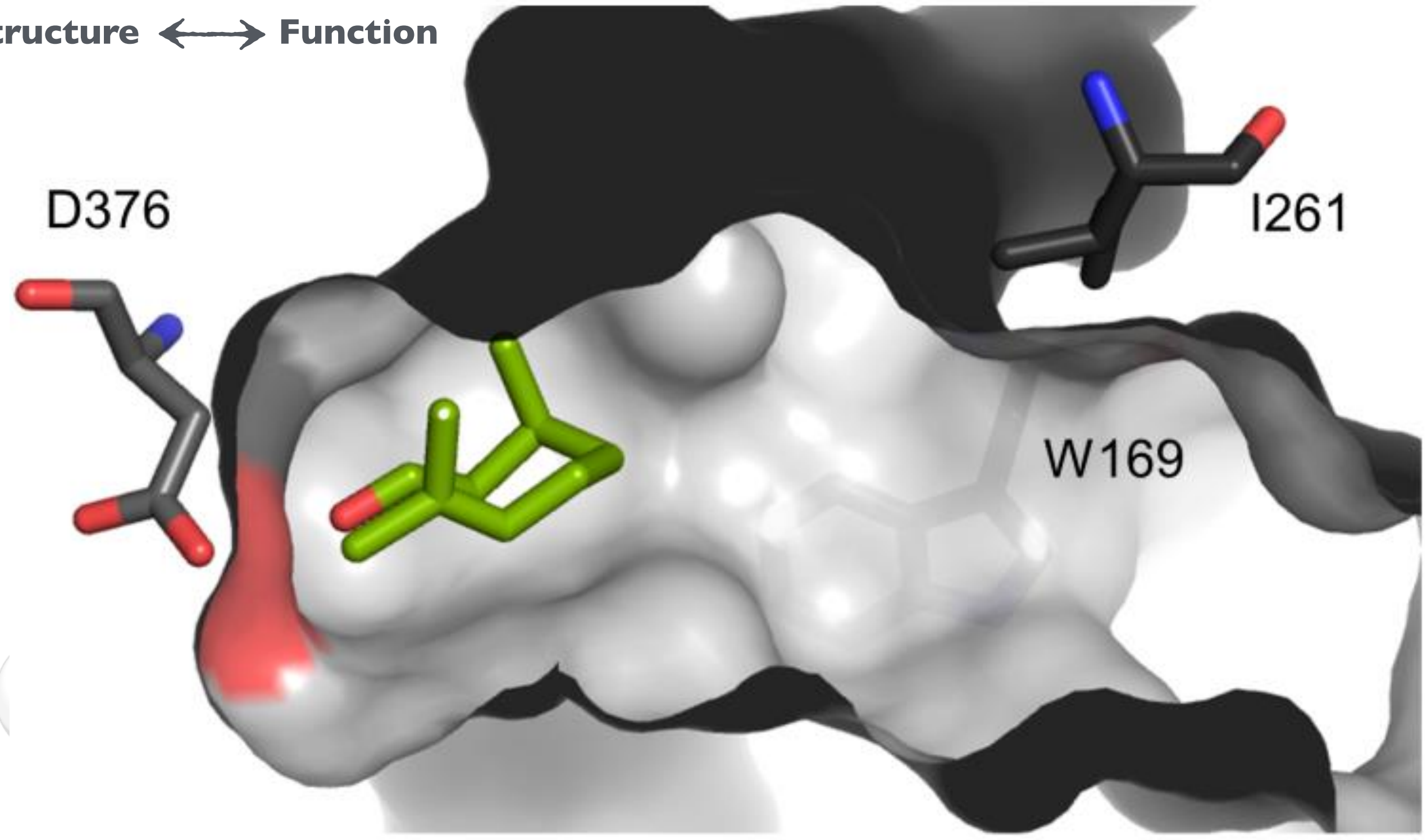


# **Molecular structure elucidation and beyond with microwave rotational spectroscopy**

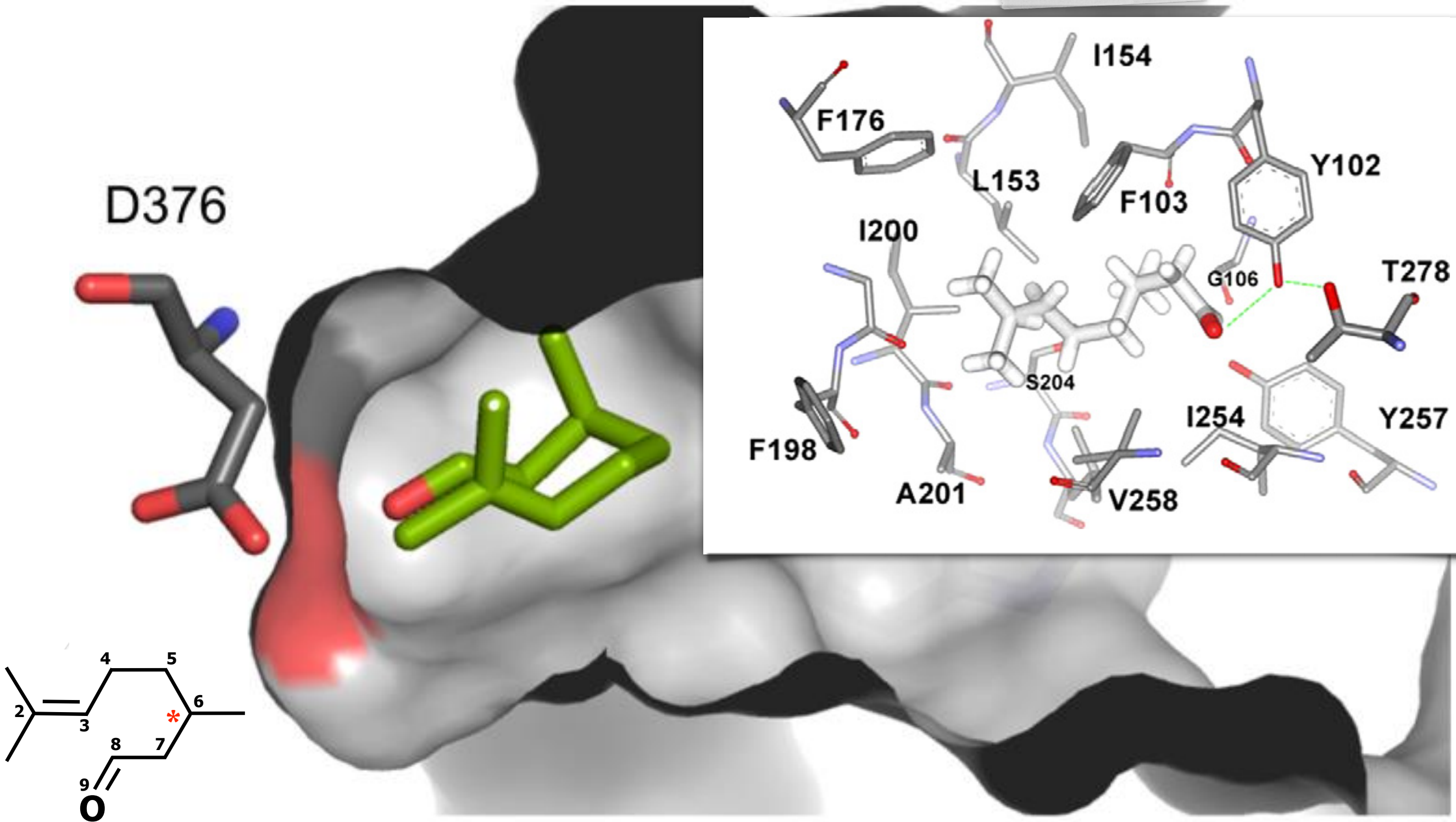
**Sérgio R. Domingos | Center for Physics of the University of Coimbra | Portugal**

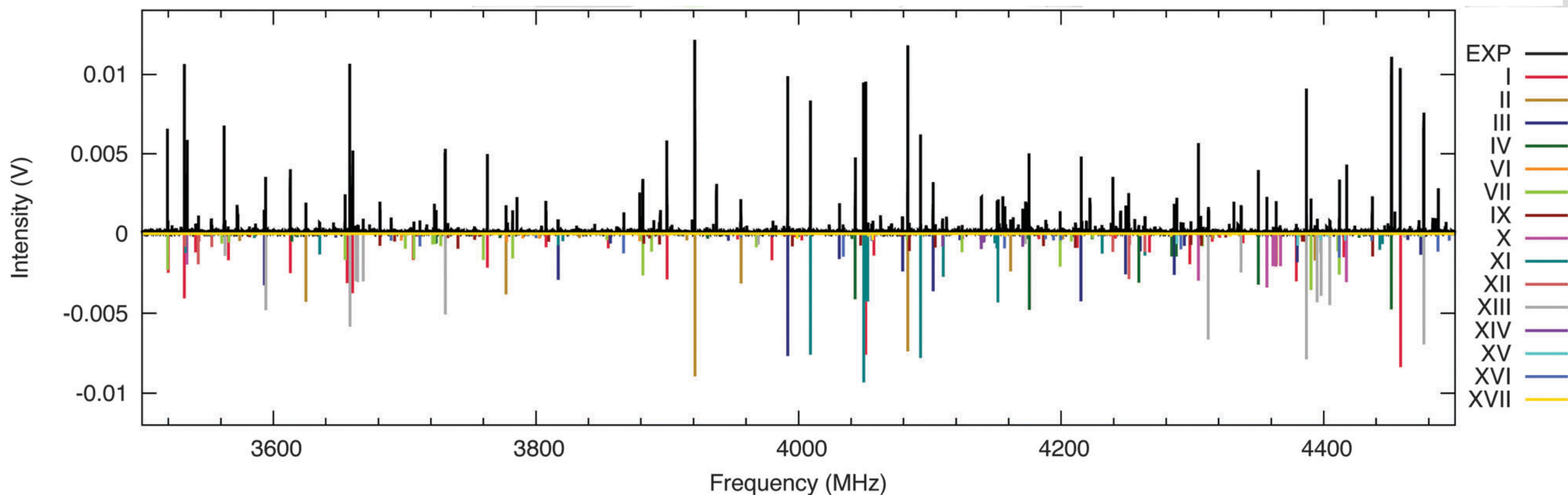
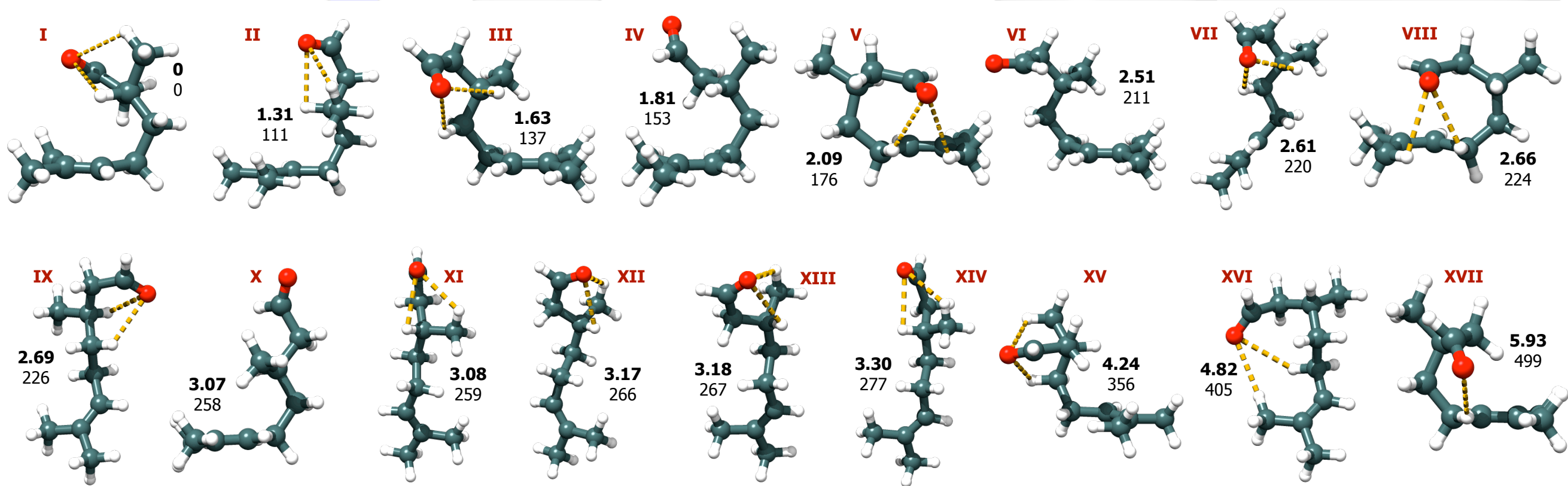
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Structure ↔ Function

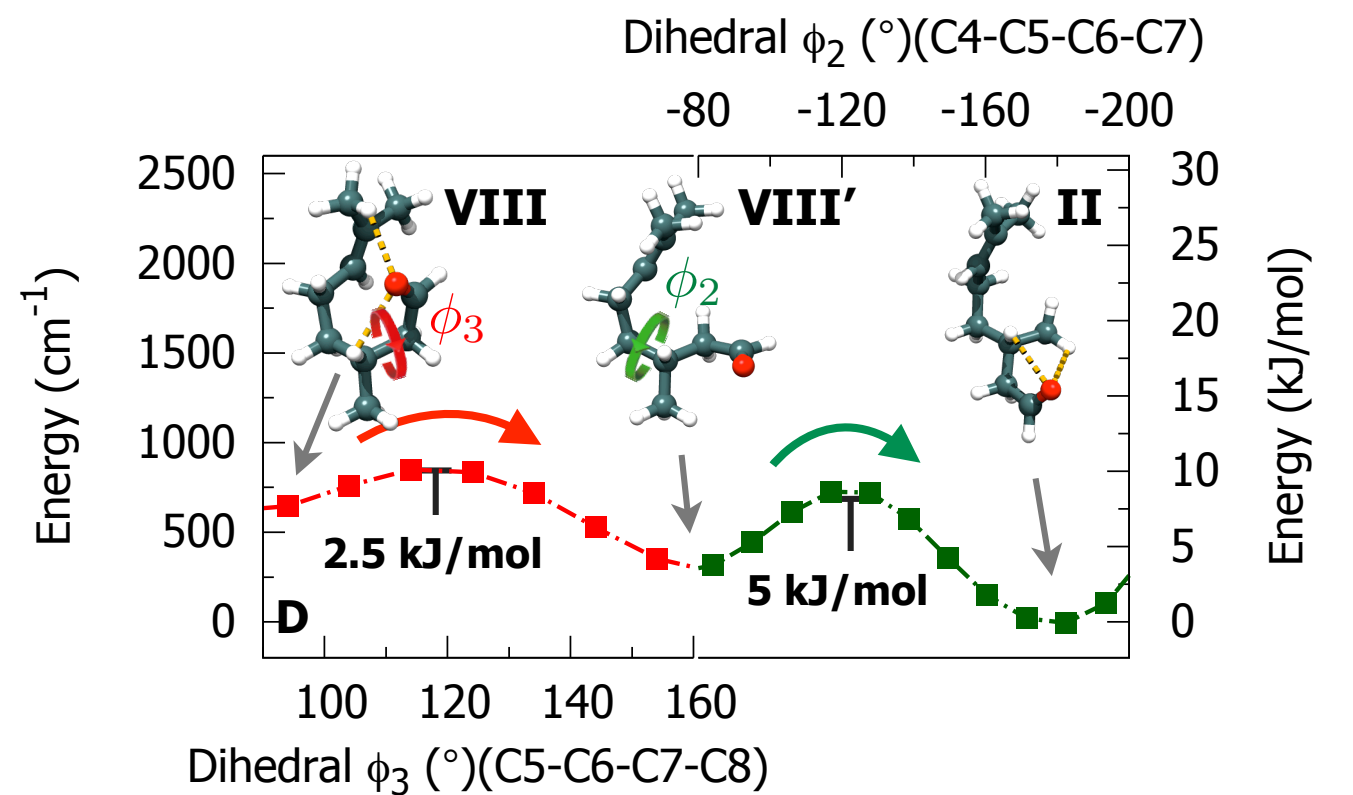
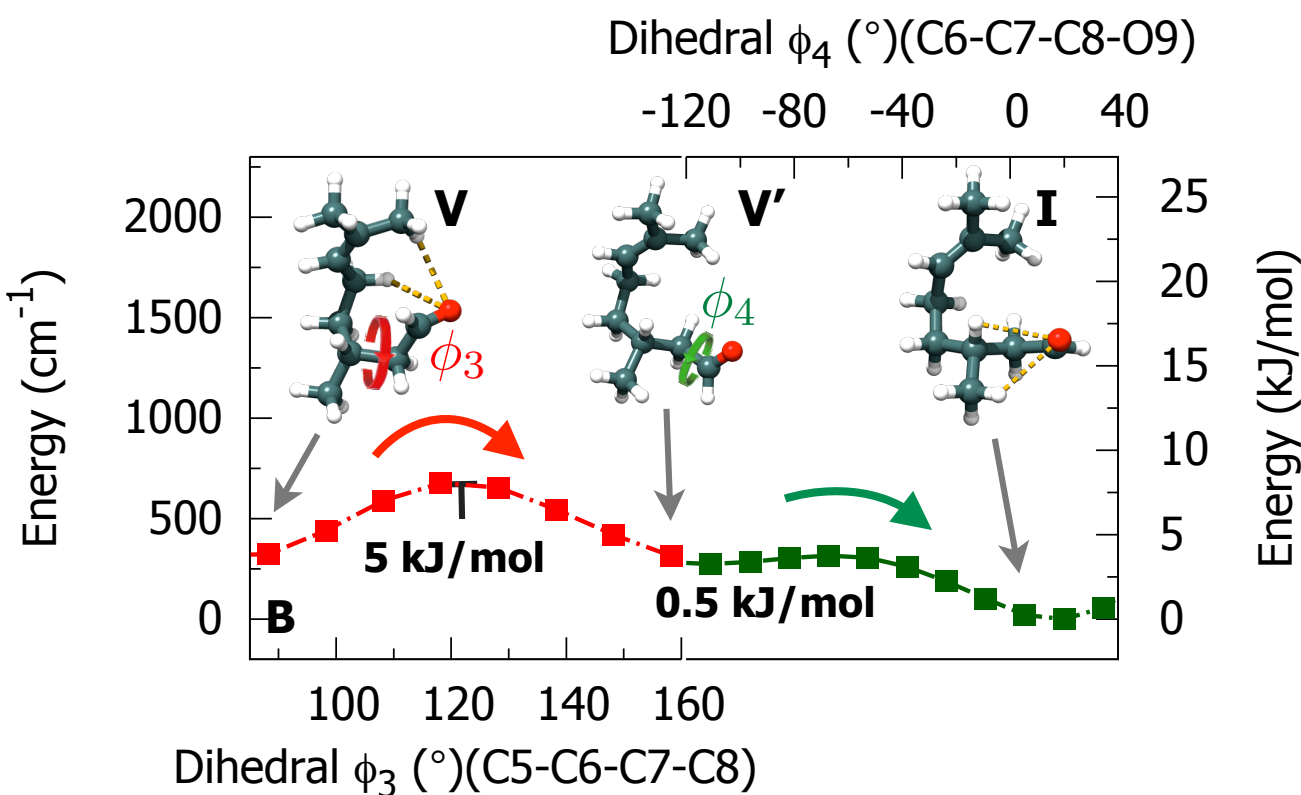
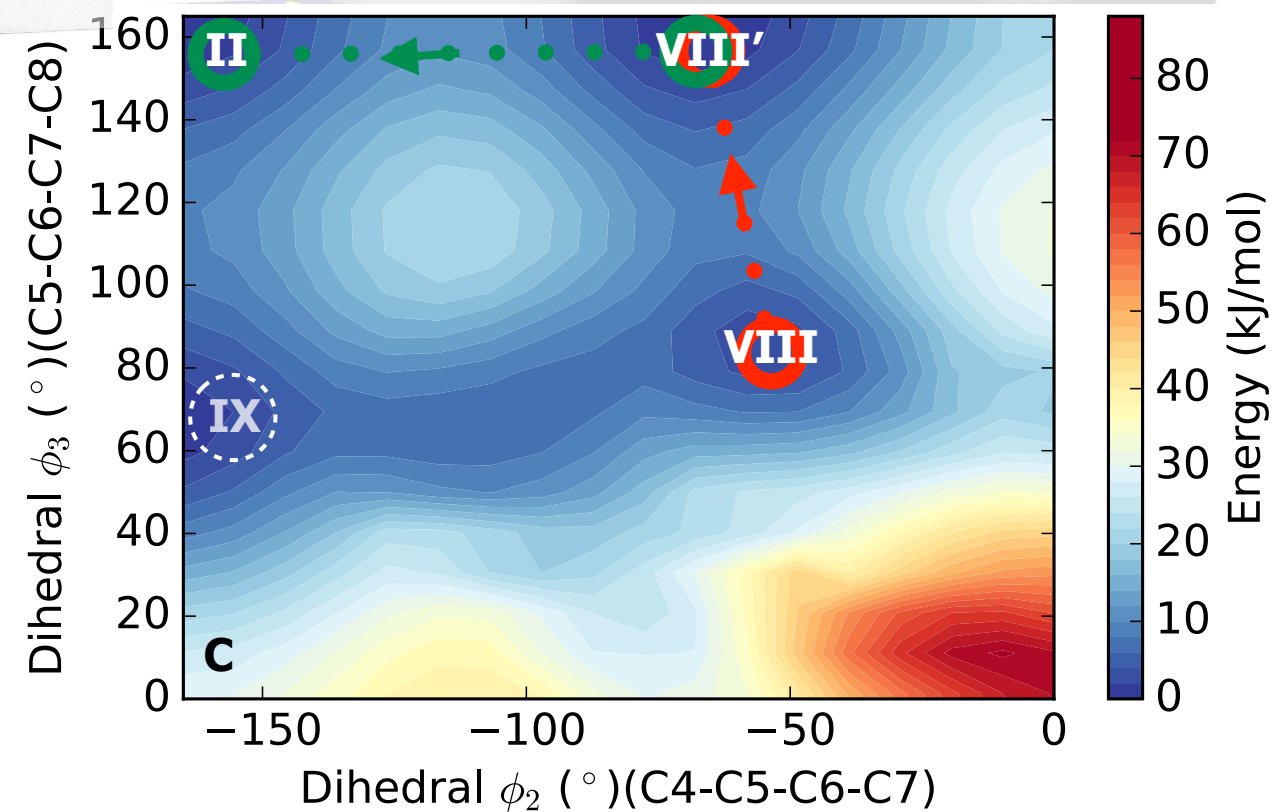
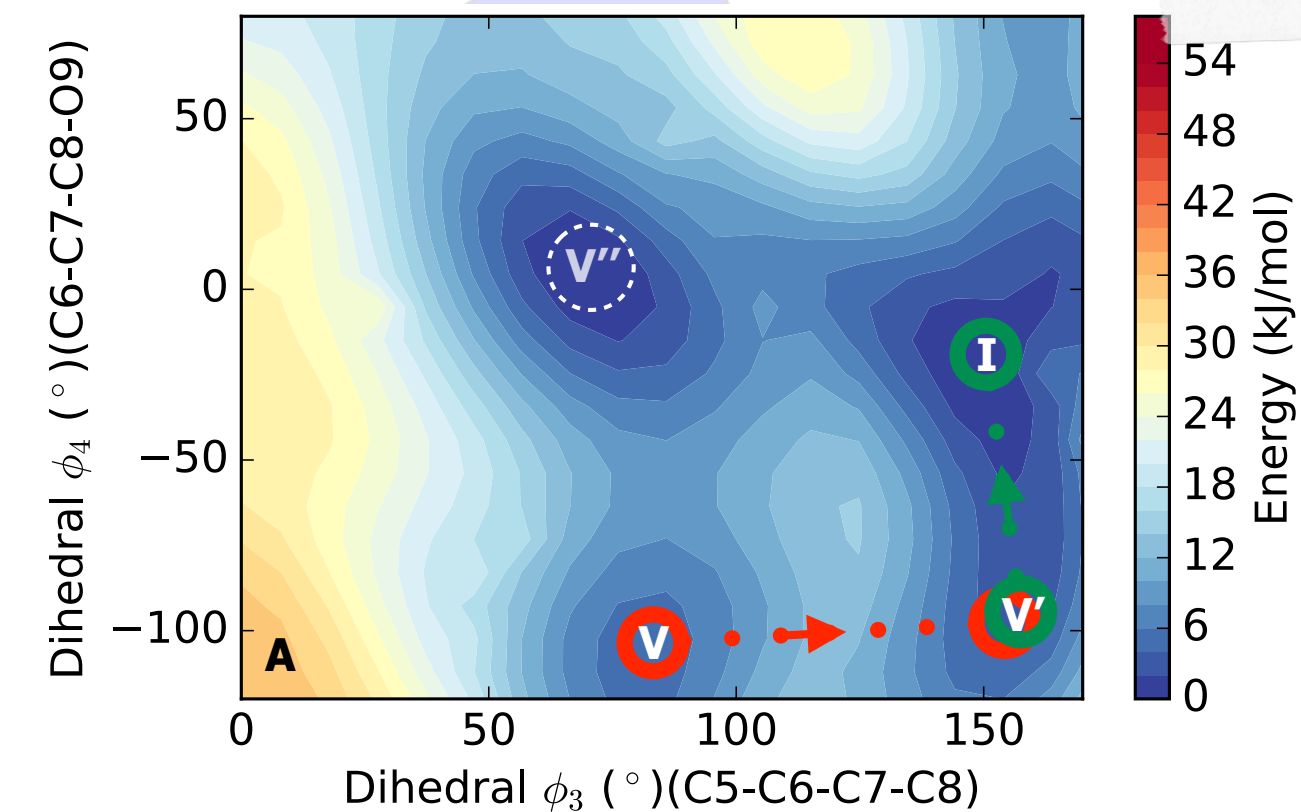








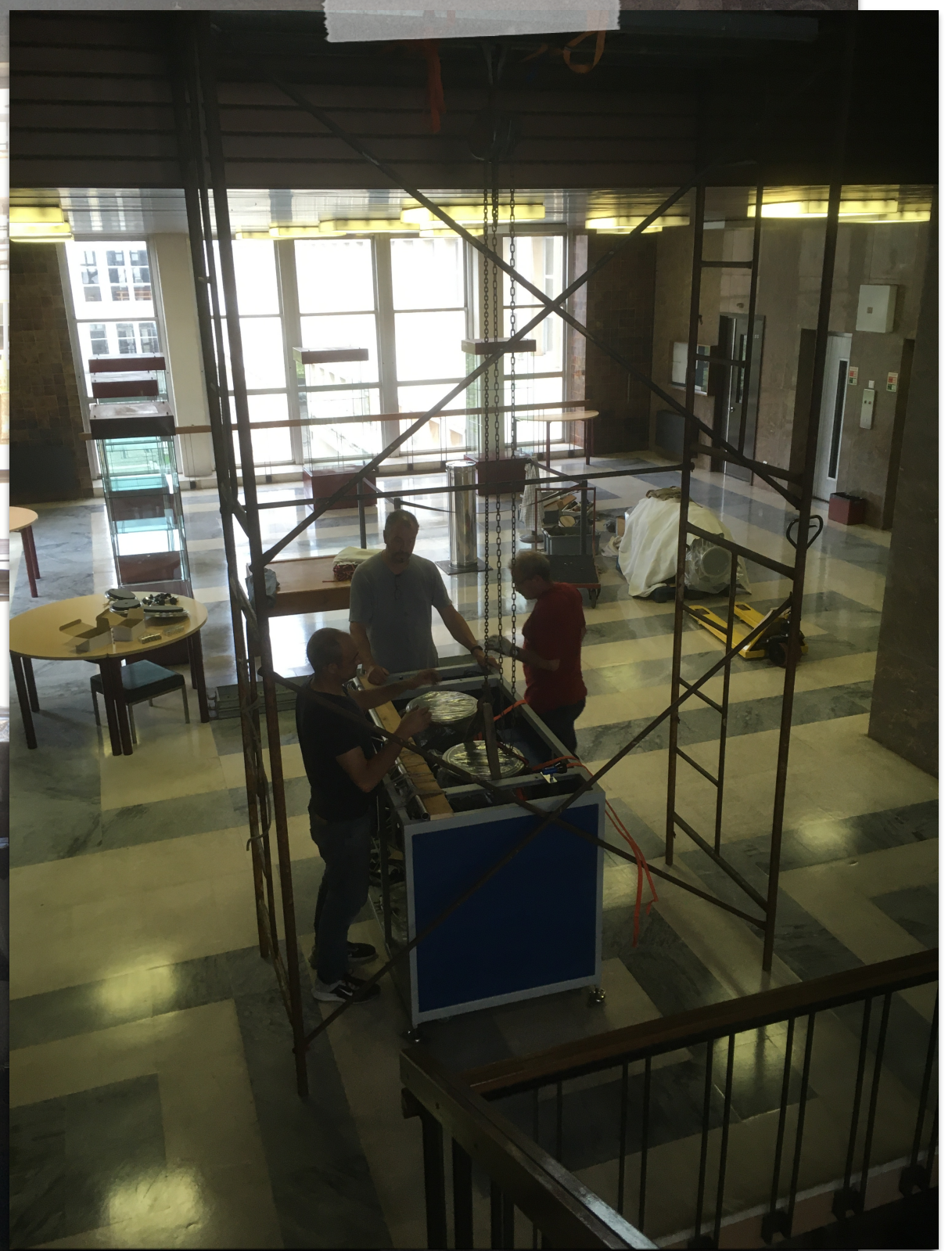
**Spectrum ↔ Structure**



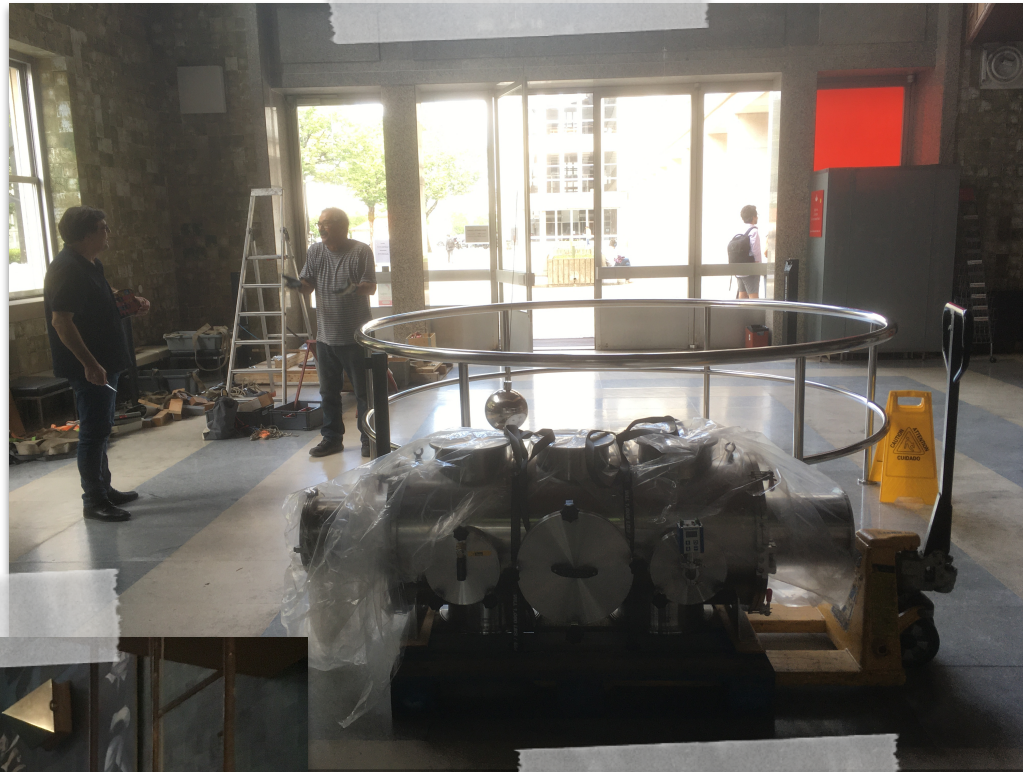










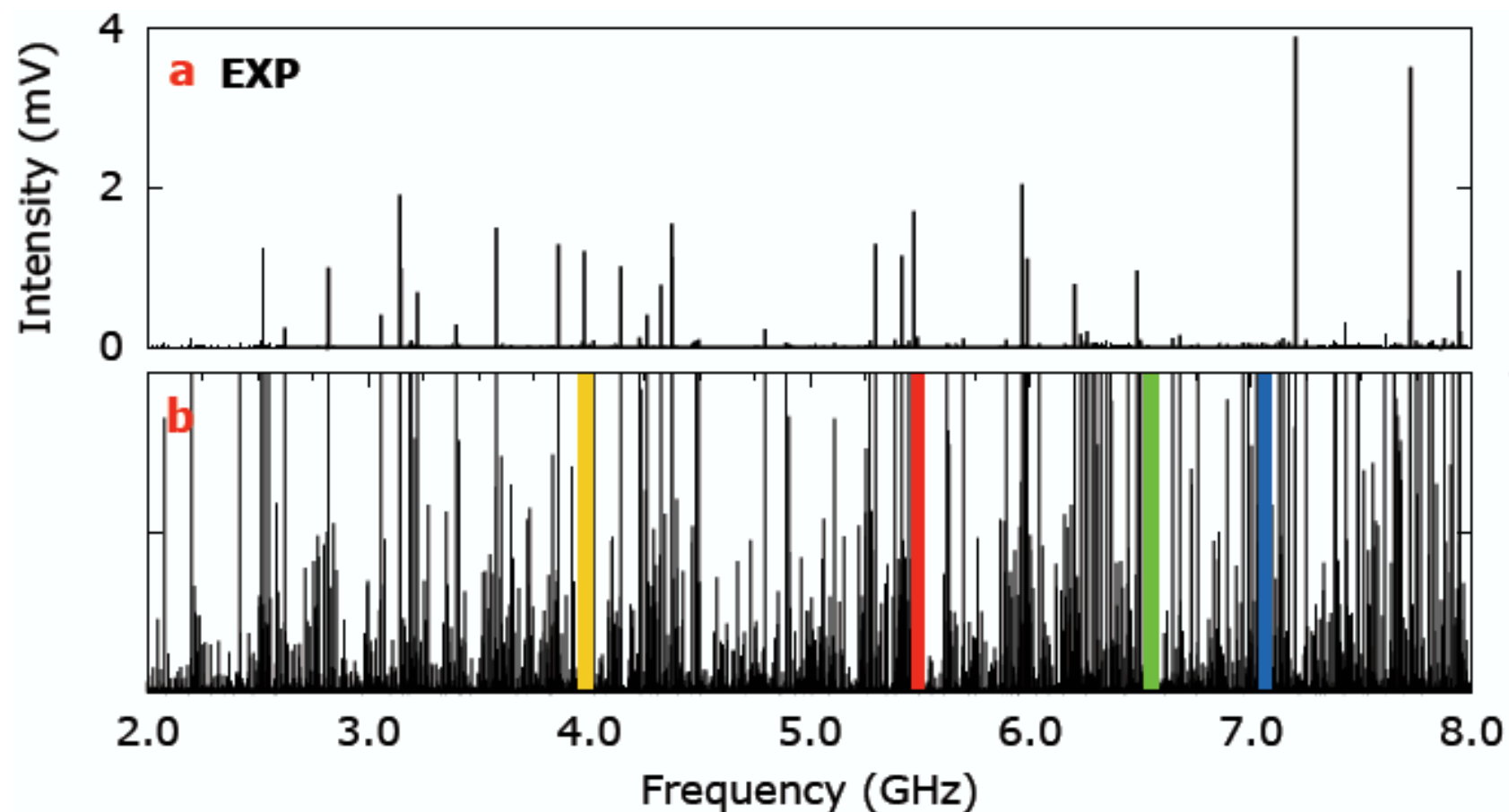
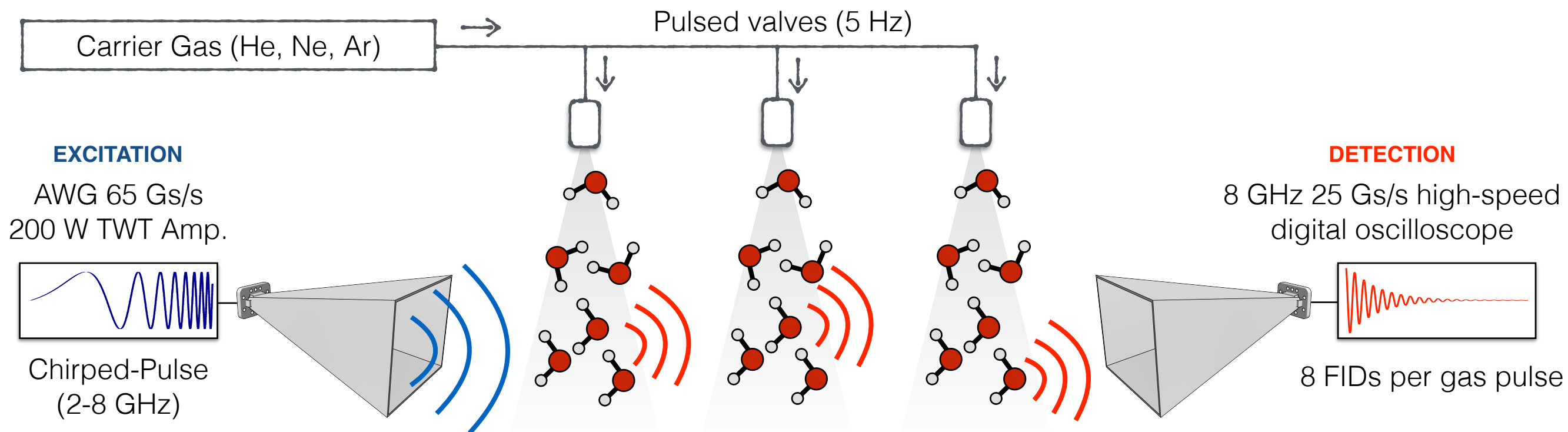








## Multi-nozzle chirped-pulse FT microwave spectrometer

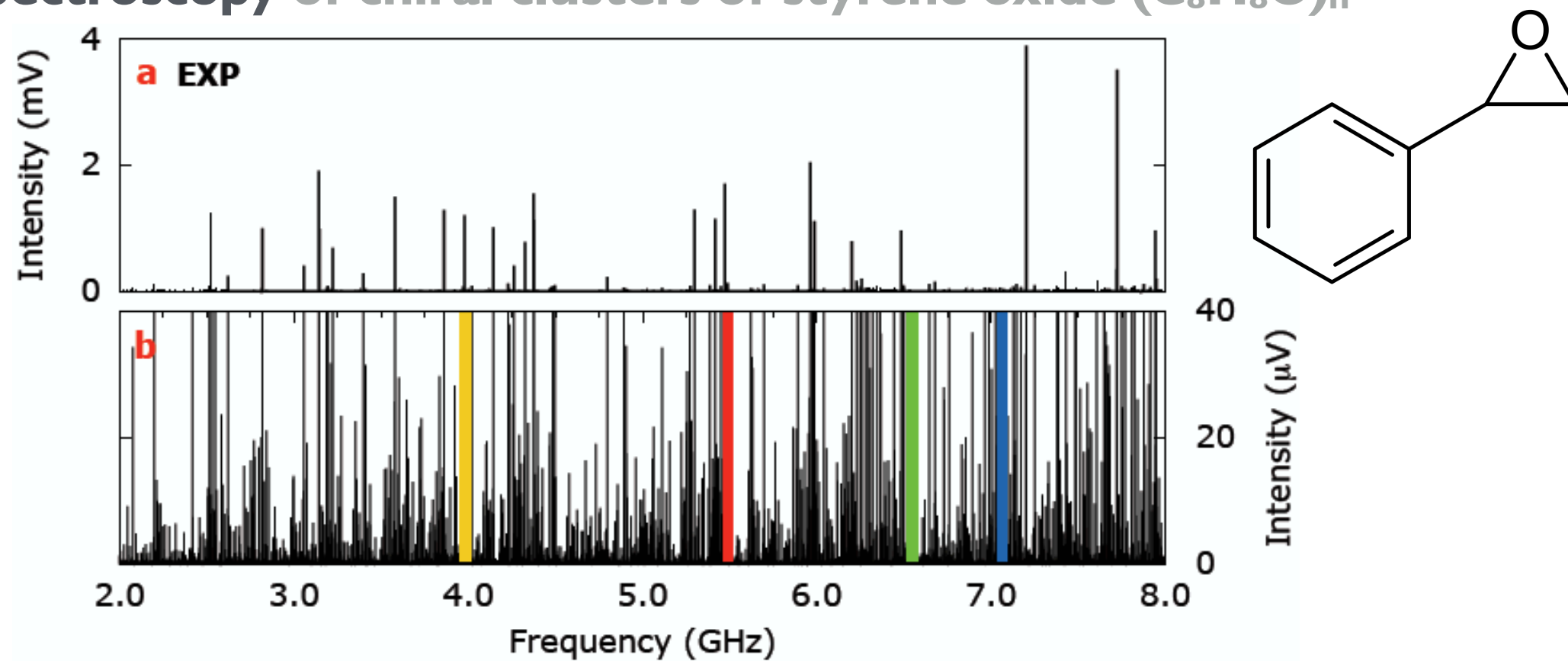


Specs:

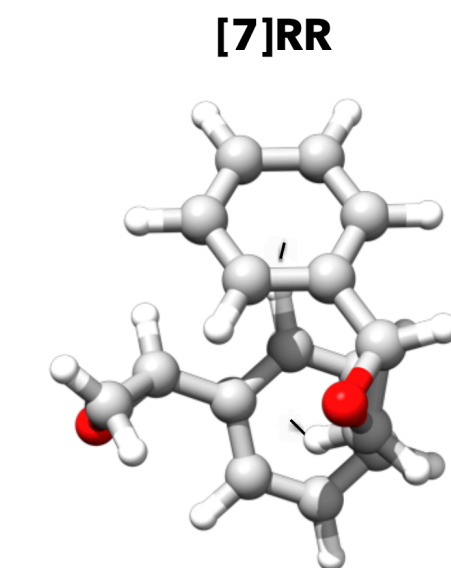
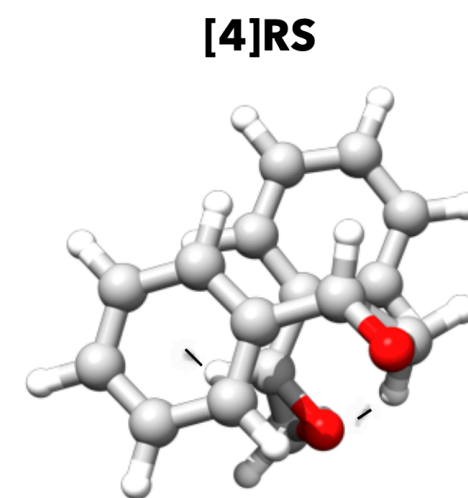
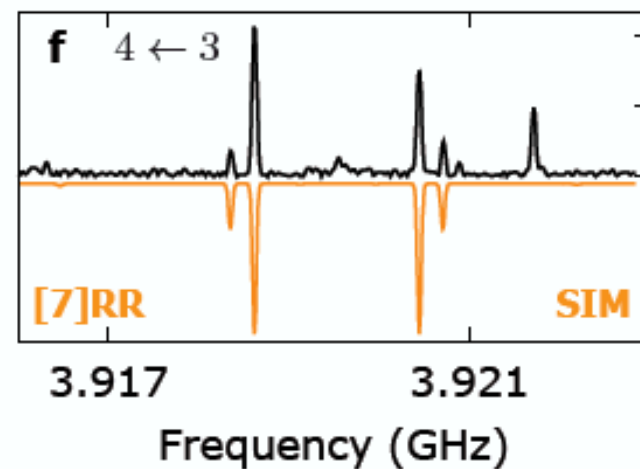
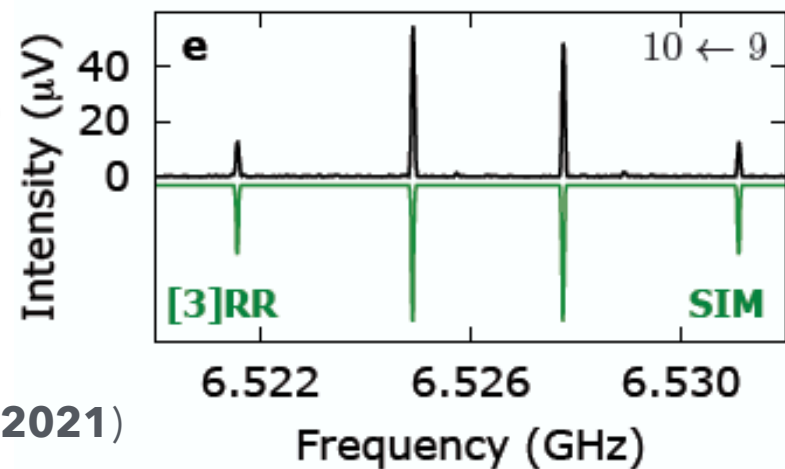
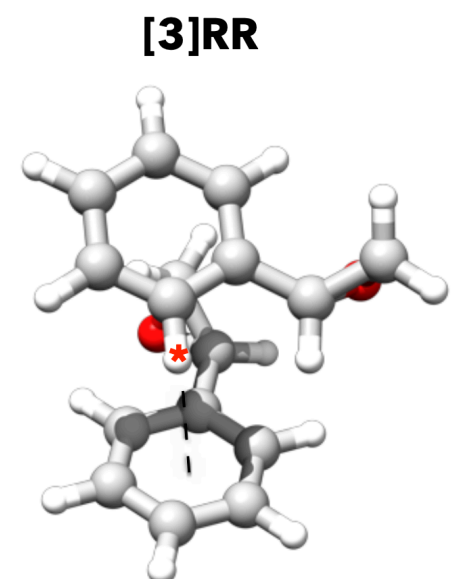
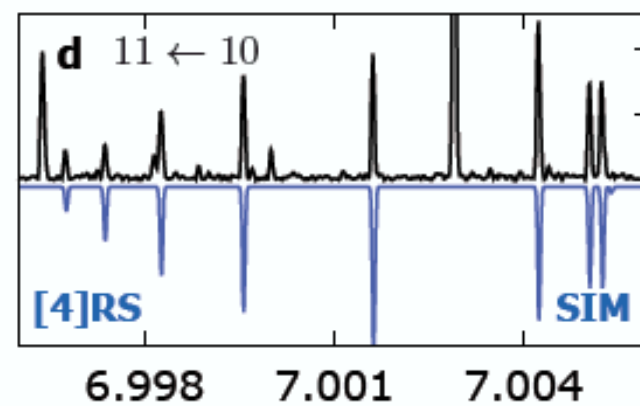
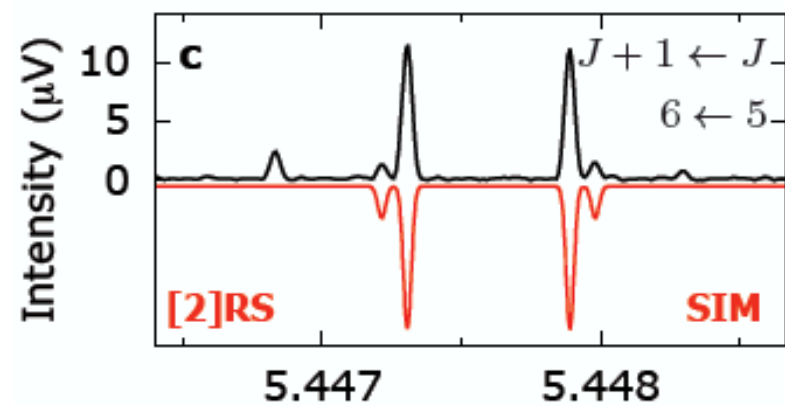
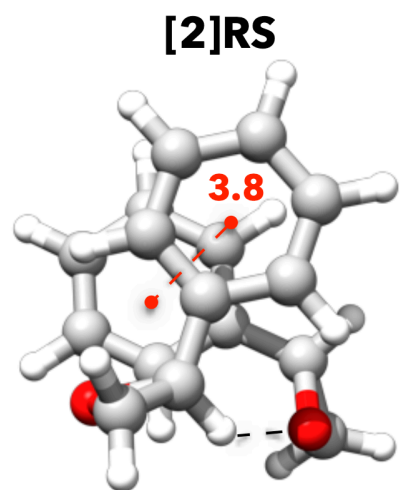
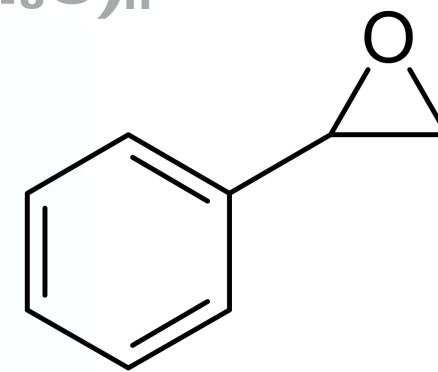
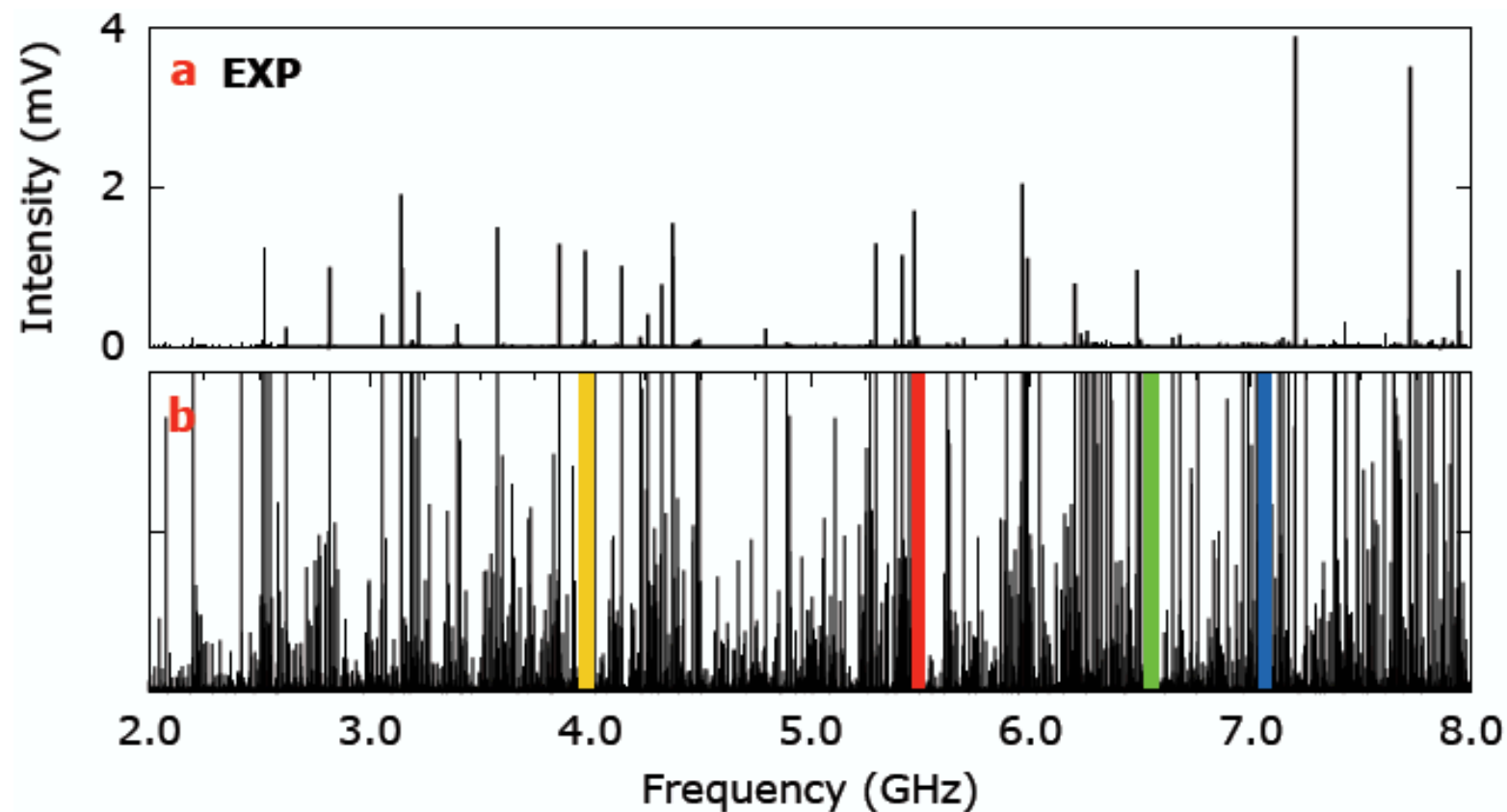
6 GHz  
single shot bandwidth  
 $10^6$   
resolution elements  
25 kHz  
frequency accuracy  
40 Hz  
effective rep rate  
 $\sim 1$ M avg FIDs  
in 12h measurement time



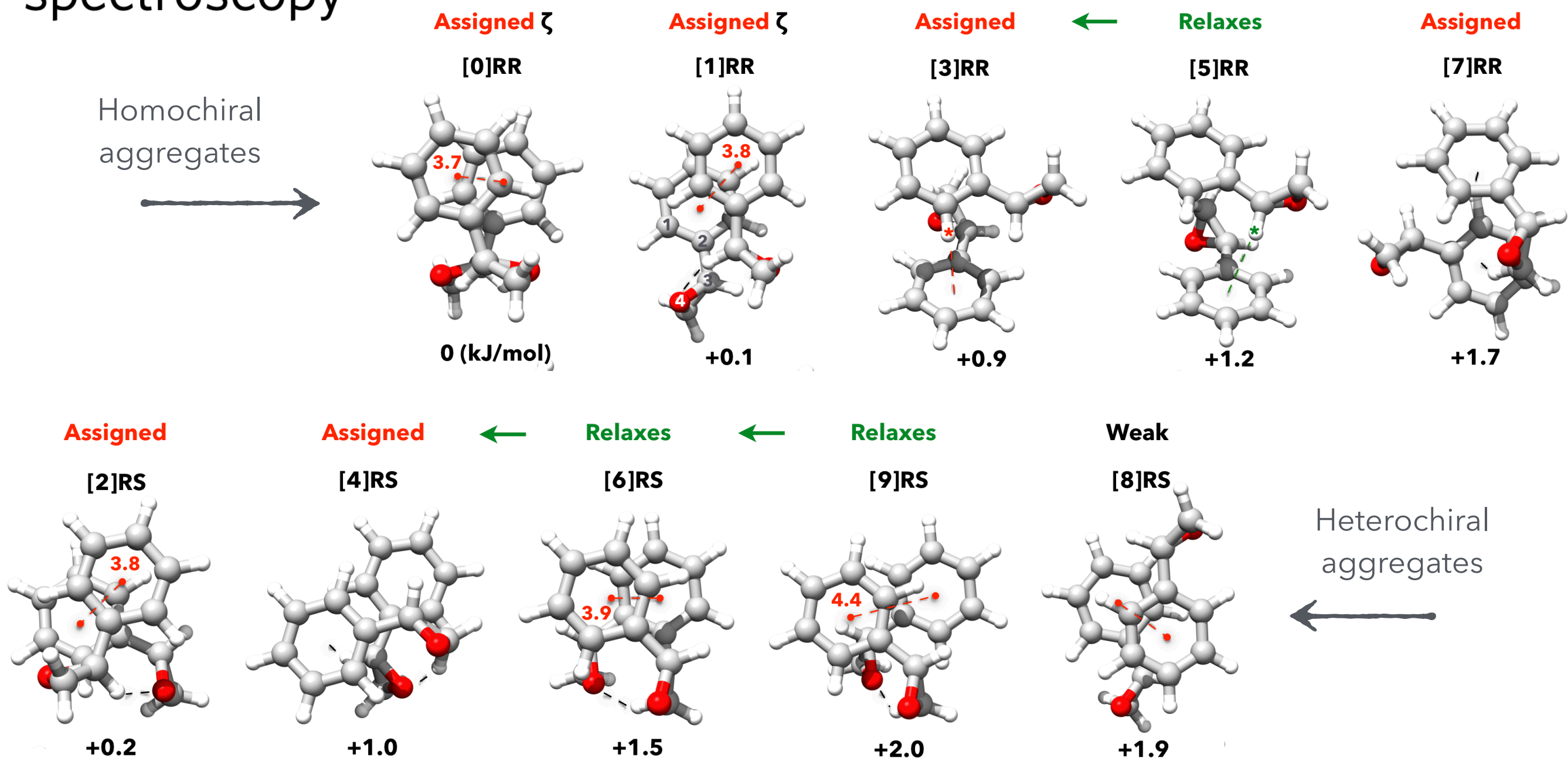
## Rotational spectroscopy of chiral clusters of styrene oxide ( $C_8H_8O$ )<sub>n</sub>



# Rotational spectroscopy of chiral clusters of styrene oxide ( $C_8H_8O$ )<sub>n</sub>



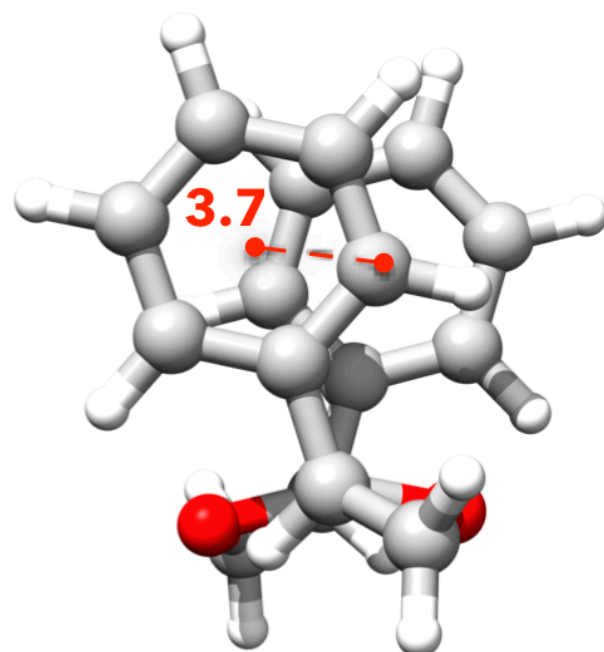
# Dynamic chiral self-recognition in aromatic dimers of styrene oxide revealed by rotational spectroscopy



<https://doi.org/10.1038/s42004-021-00468-4>

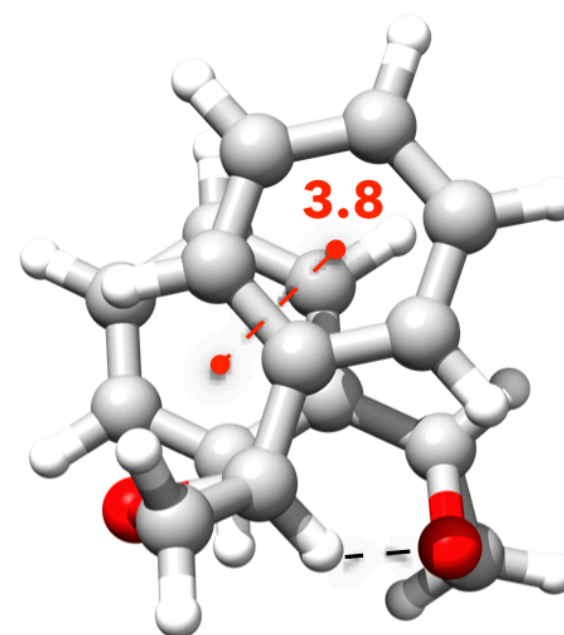
OPEN

# Dynamic chiral self-recognition in aromatic dimers of styrene oxide revealed by rotational spectroscopy



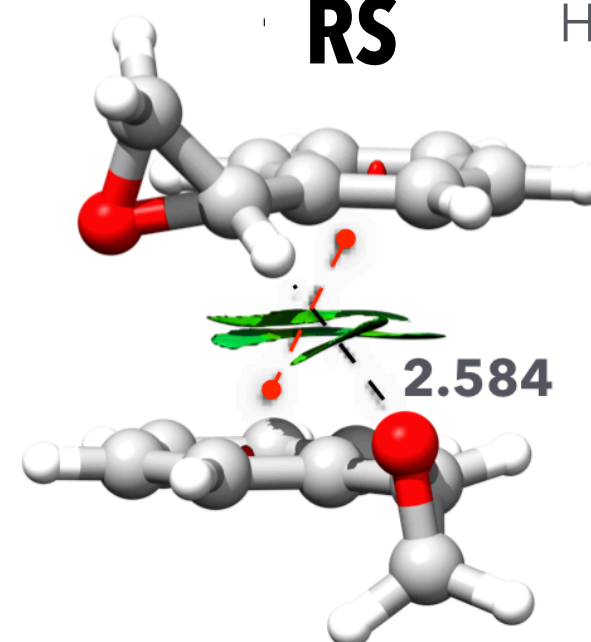
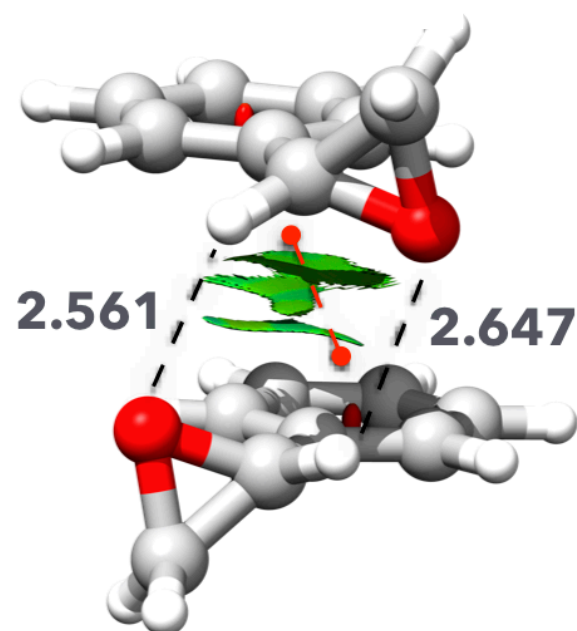
Homochiral

**RR**



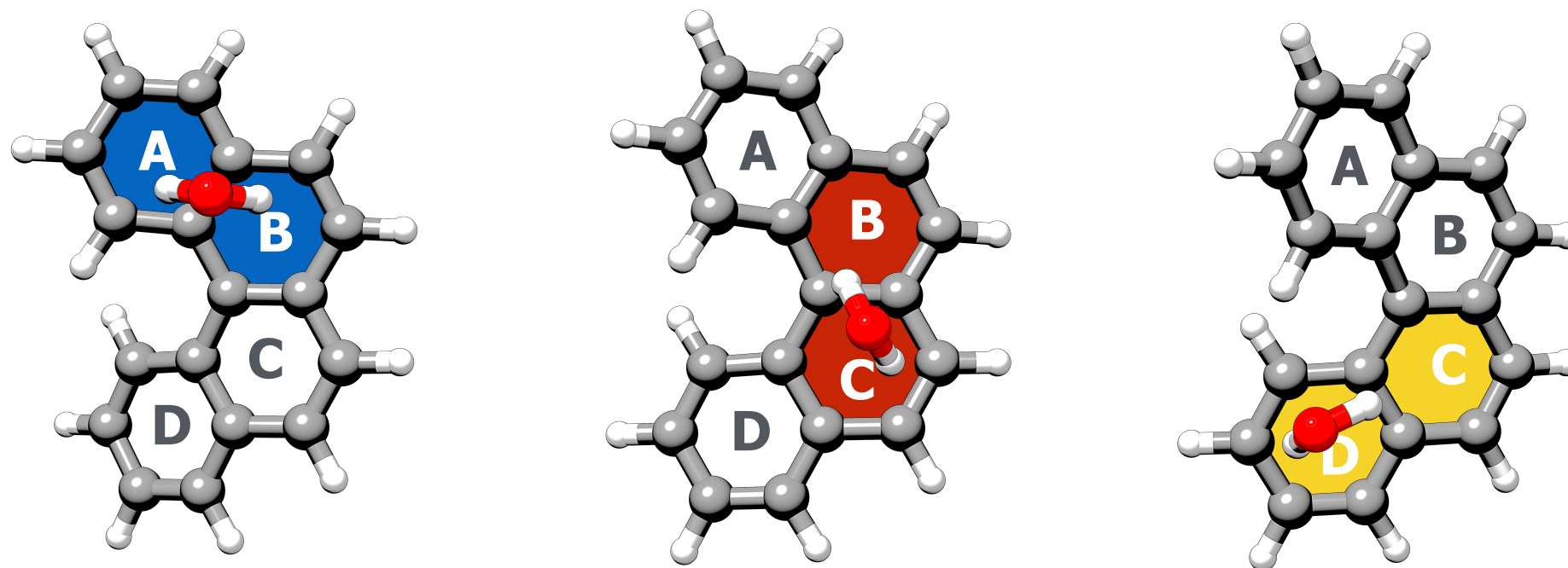
**RS**

Heterochiral

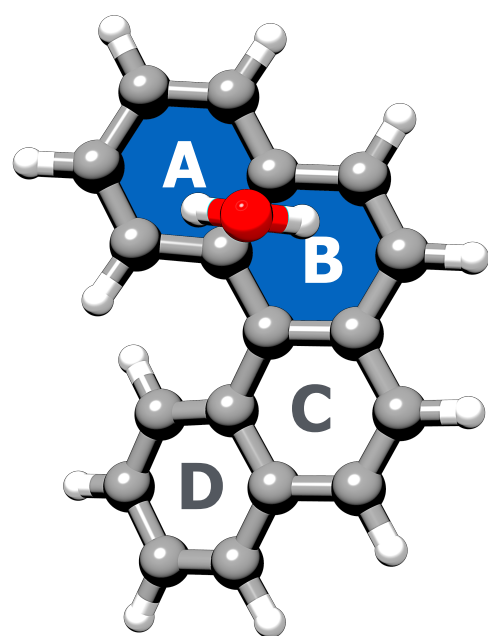




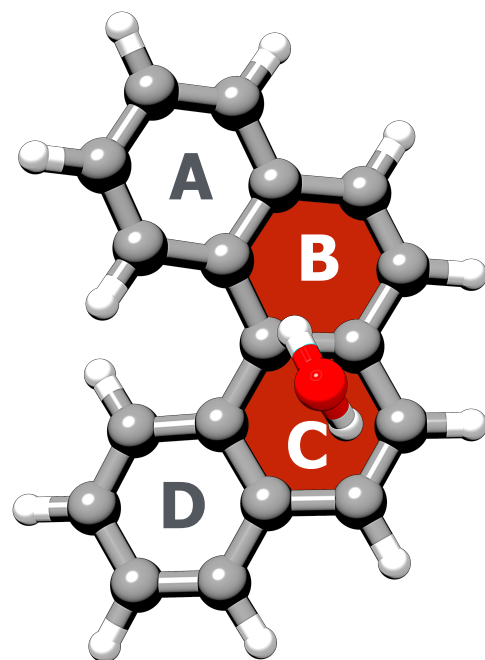
## Helical chirality: where is the docking site?



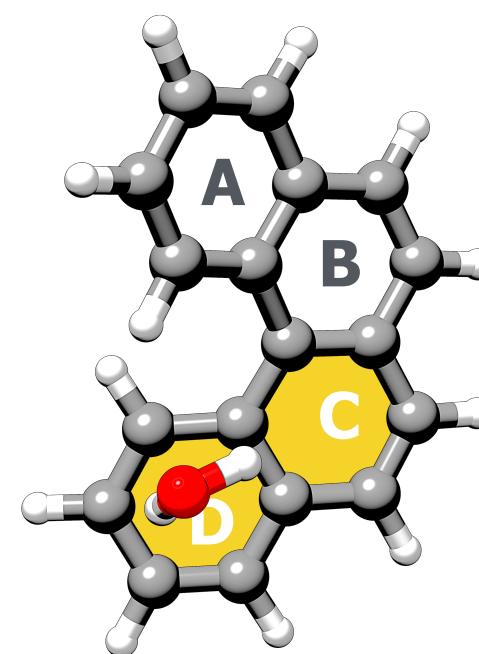
## Helical chirality: where is the docking site?



$\Delta E = +0.45$  kJ/mol

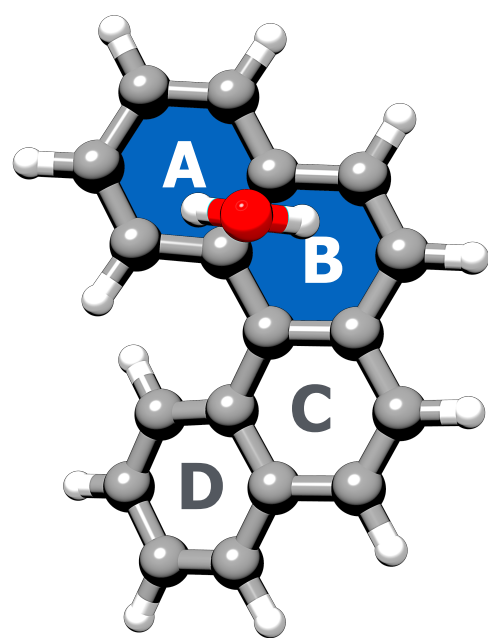


$\Delta E = +0.56$  kJ/mol

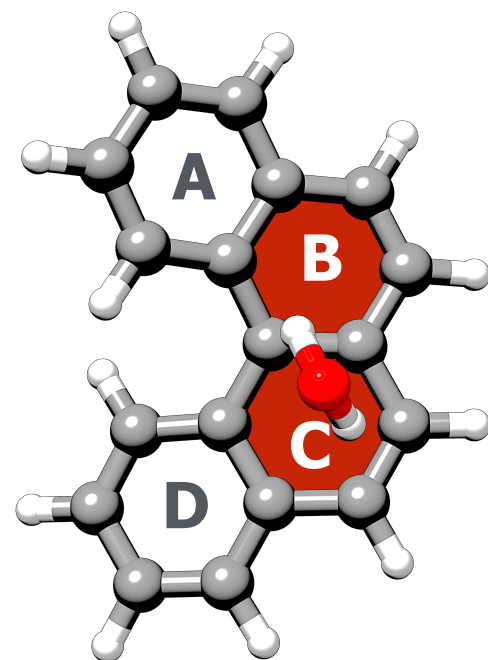


$\Delta E = 0$

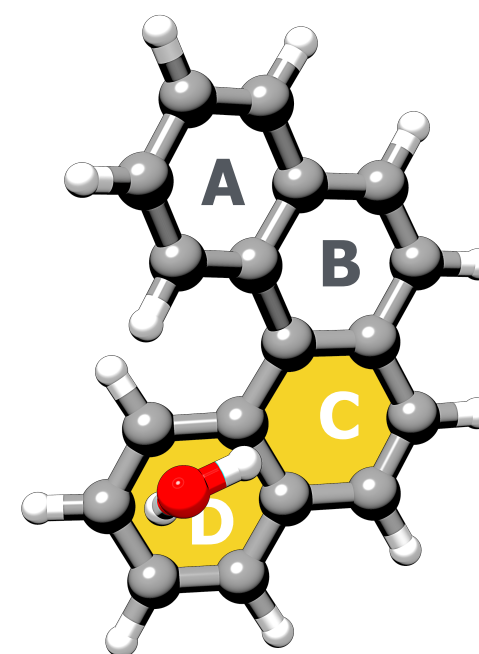
## Helical chirality: where is the docking site?



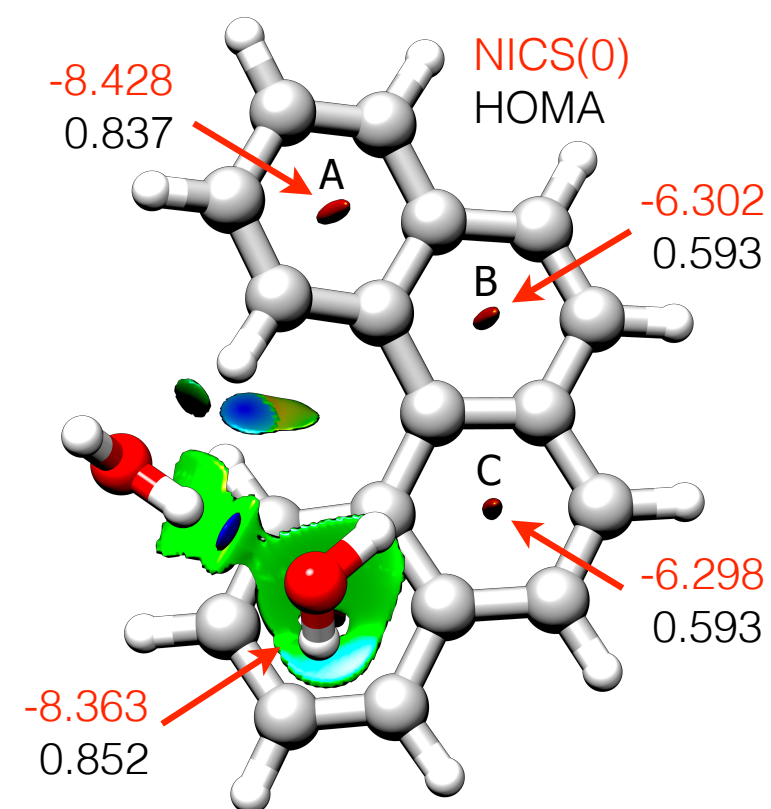
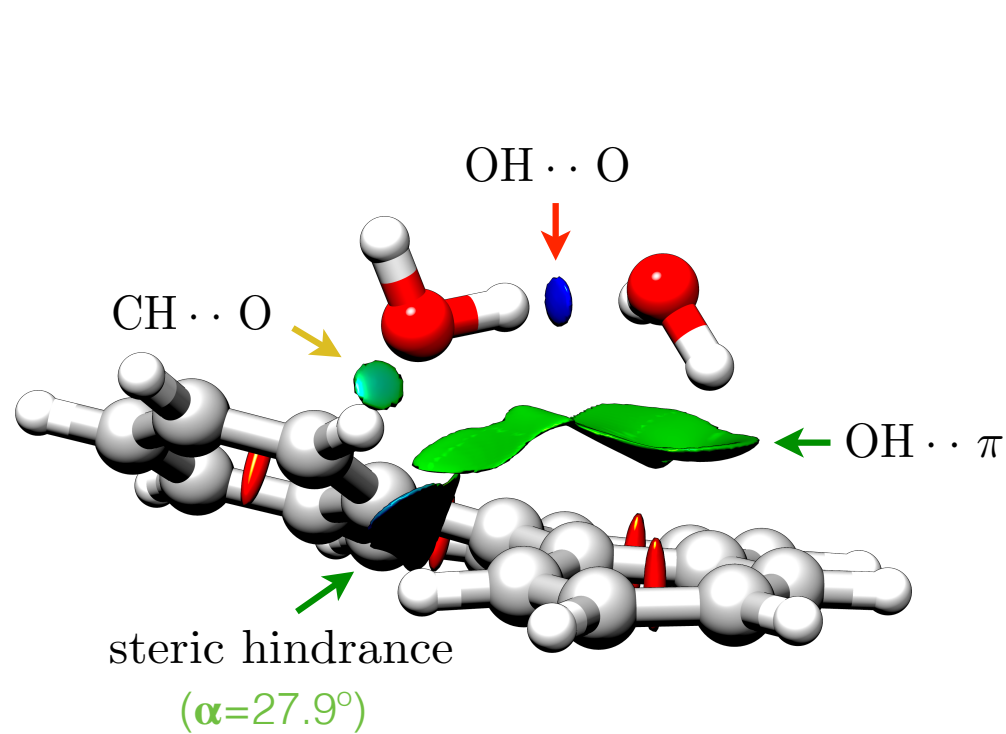
$\Delta E = +0.45$  kJ/mol



$\Delta E = +0.56$  kJ/mol



$\Delta E = 0$

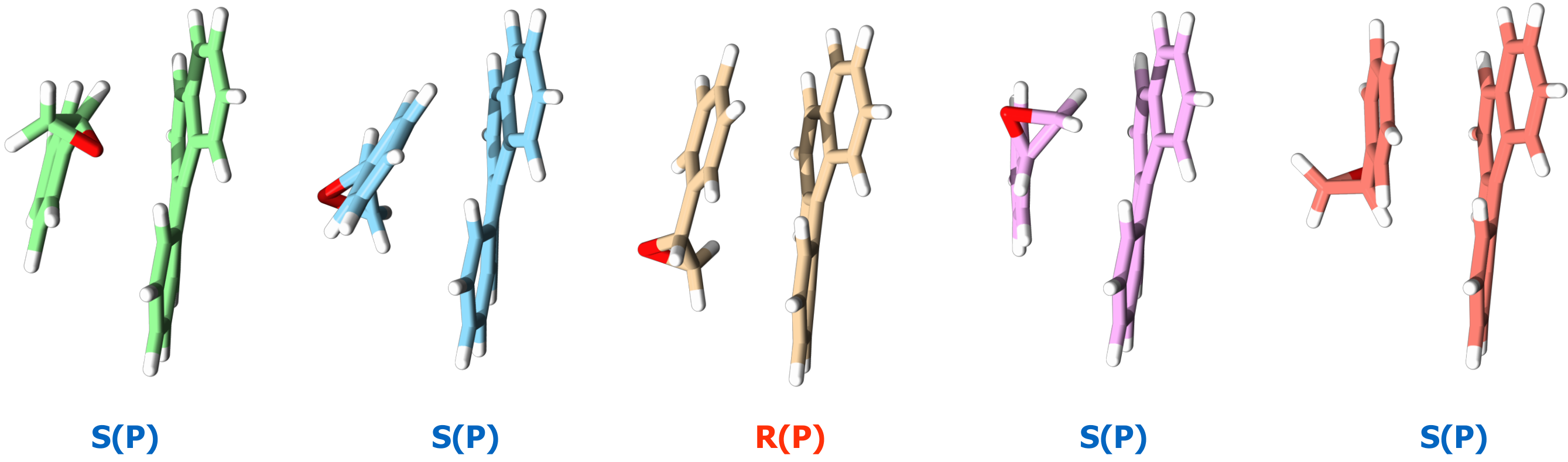


**Helical chirality: where is the docking site..** **If the ligand is aromatic?**



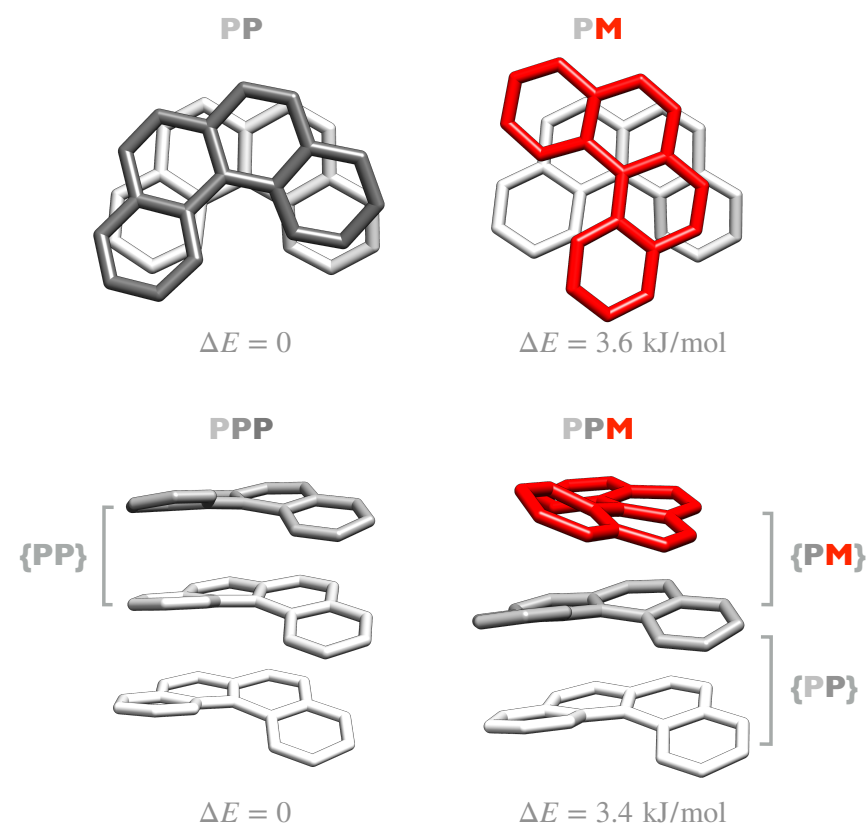
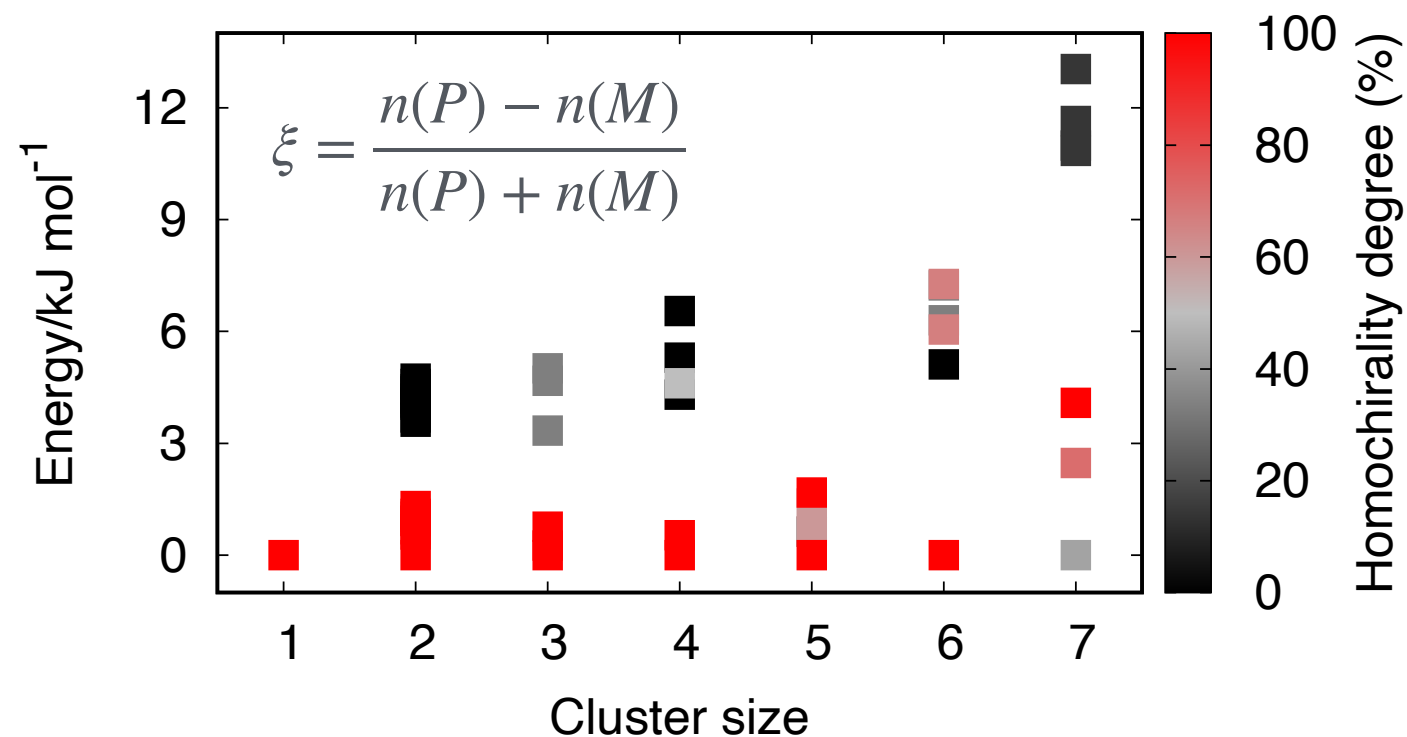
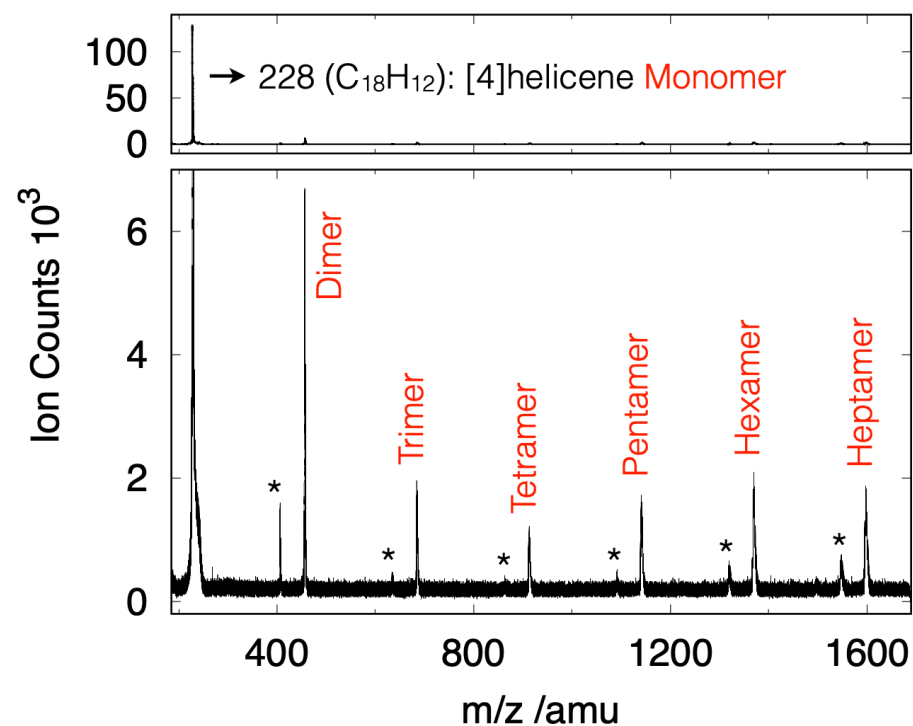
**Helical chirality: where is the docking site.. If the ligand is aromatic?**

Predicted complexation pairs at the B3LYP-D3BJ/aug-cc-pVTZ level of theory.



Apparent bias in aggregation motifs observed.  
4:1 for complexes predicted within 1 kJ/mol.

## Clustering helicenes: is there break of symmetry?



Melanie Schnell and Denis Tikhonov (**DESY**)

Amanda Steber (**University of Valladolid**)

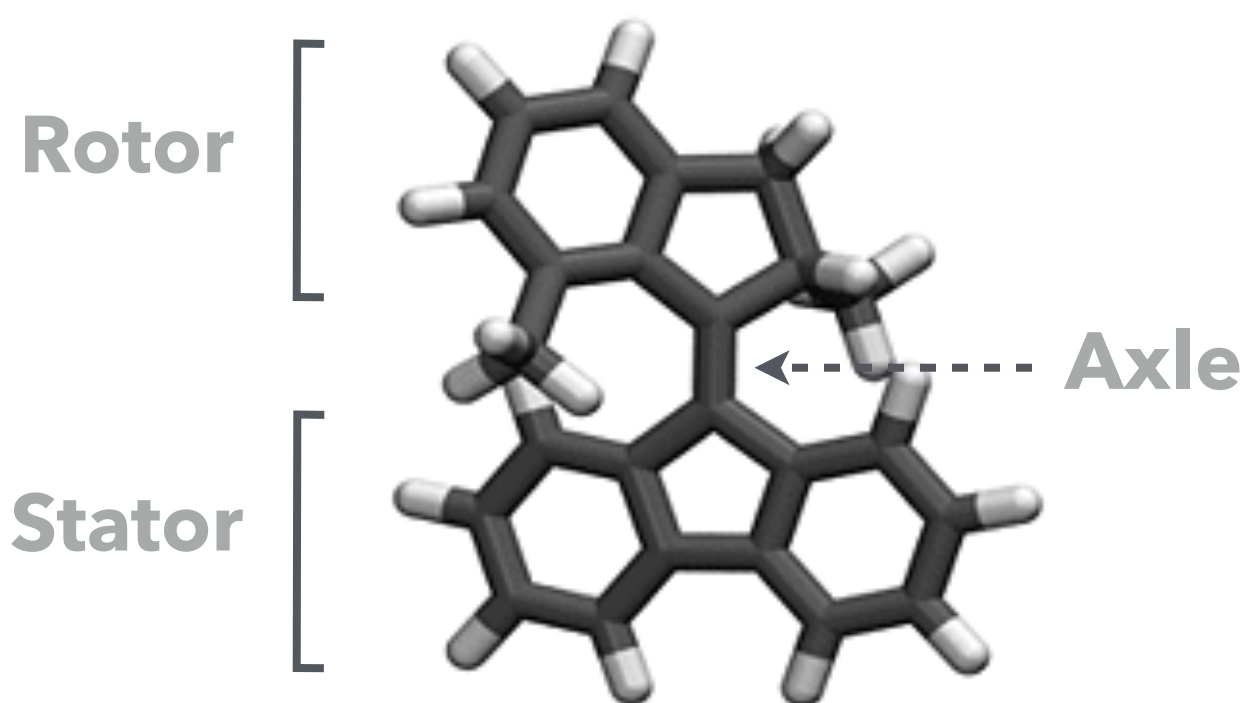
Laurent Nahon and Gustavo Garcia (**Synchrotron SOLEIL**)

Narcis Avarvari (**University of Angers**)

Helgi R. Hrodmarsson (**LISA**)

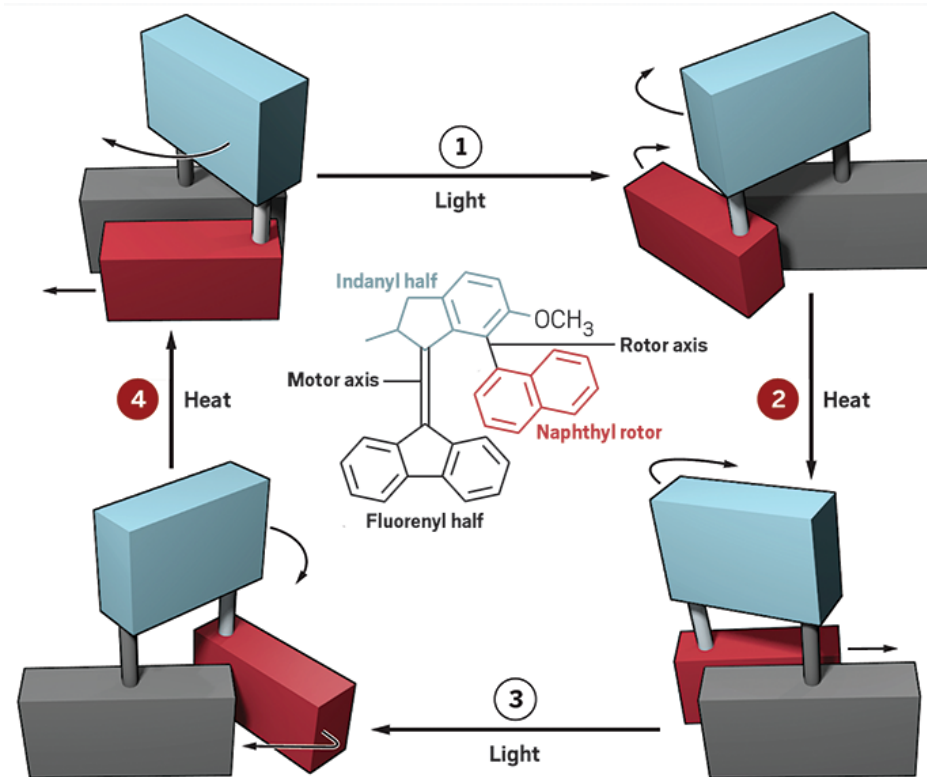
Johannes Neugebauer (**University of Münster**)

# High resolution spectroscopy of Artificial Molecular Motors (AMM)

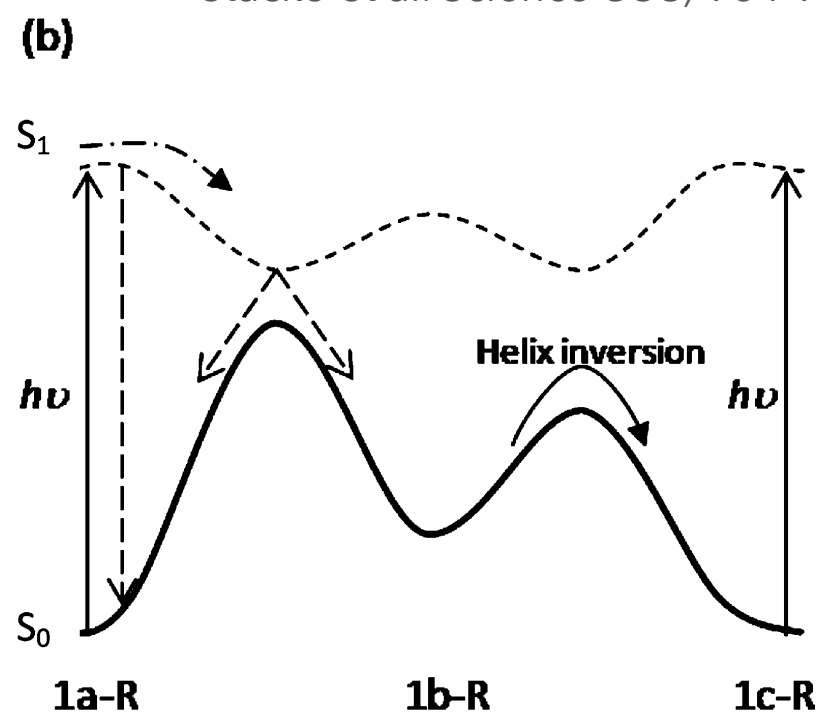
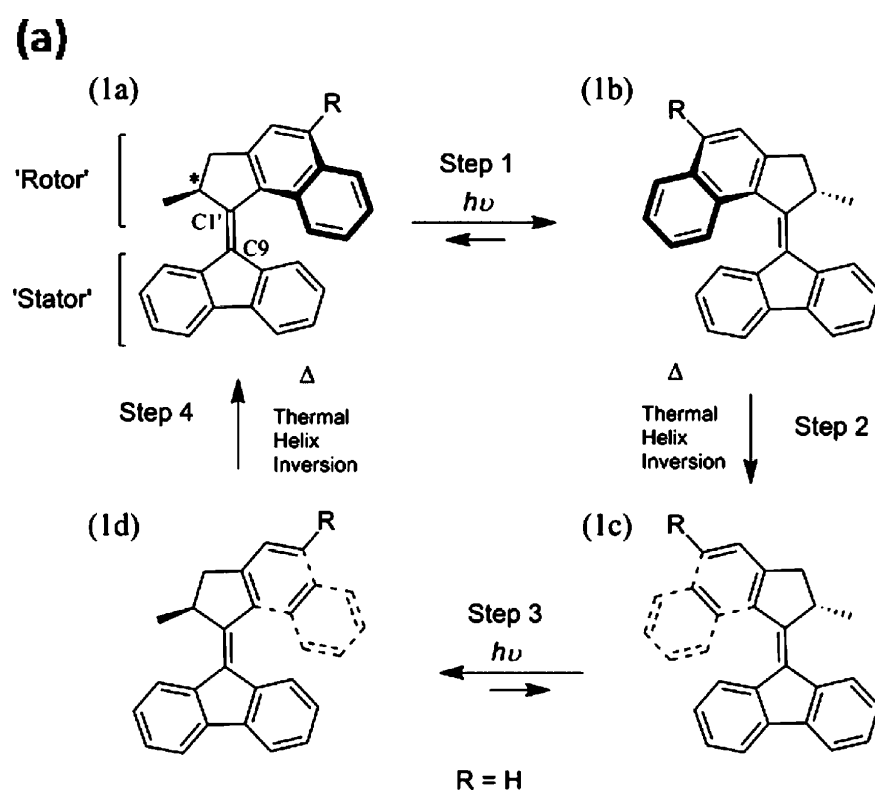


**Ben Feringa & Wesley Browne**

(University of Groningen, The Netherlands)

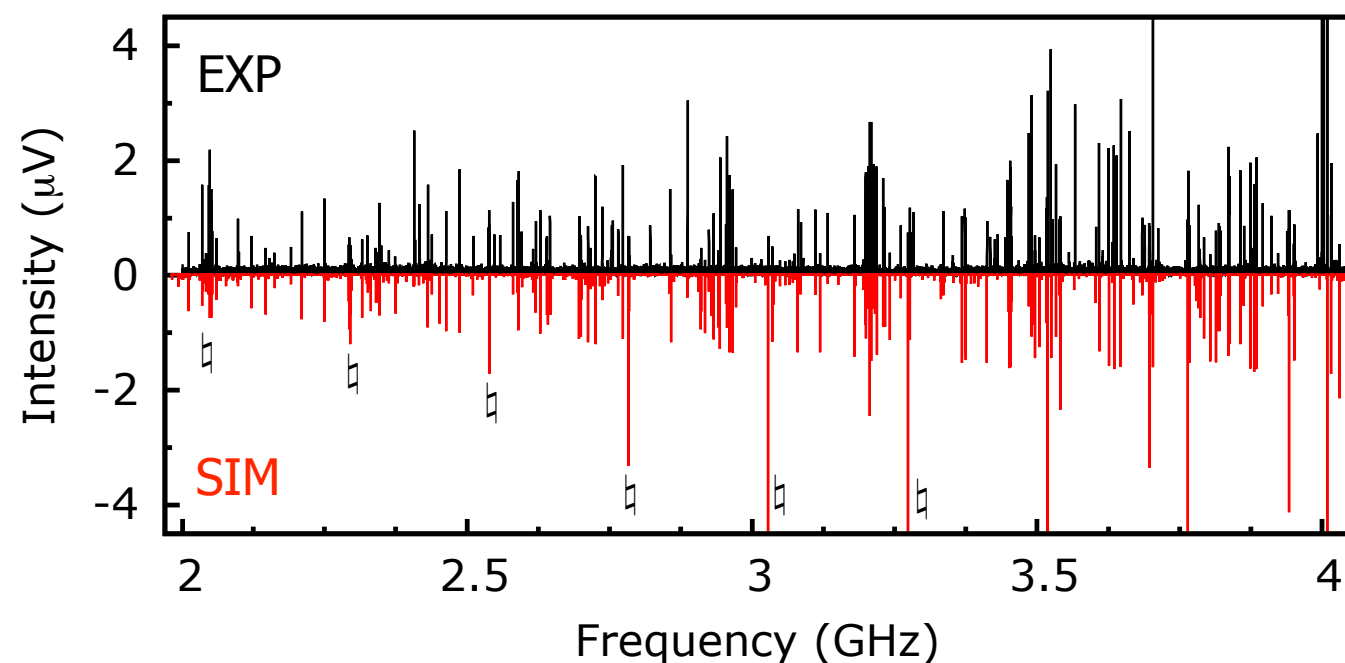


Stacko et al. *Science* **356**, 964-968 (2017)



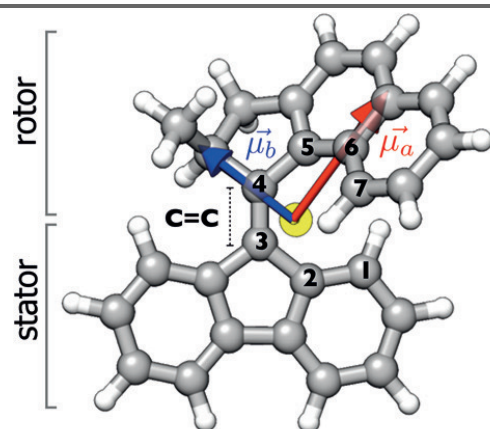
## Structural Evolution of AMMs. Where we stand.

### The **rotational spectrum** of the idle-mode of an **AMM**. **C<sub>27</sub>H<sub>20</sub>**



**Table 1:** Experimentally determined parameters for the vibronic ground state of the motor identified in the microwave spectrum.<sup>[a]</sup>

	Exp.	B3LYP-D3B) <sup>[c]</sup>
A [MHz]	307.183437(46)	308.633
B [MHz]	164.951398(47)	166.282
C [MHz]	122.506084(33)	122.875
$D_J$ [kHz]	0.001431(90)	—
$d_J$ [kHz]	0.000271(50)	—
$ \mu_a $ [D]	y	1.37
$ \mu_b $ [D]	y	0.99
$ \mu_c $ [D]	n	0.11
$N$	222	—
$\sigma$ [kHz]	3.4	—
$\kappa$	-0.540	-0.532

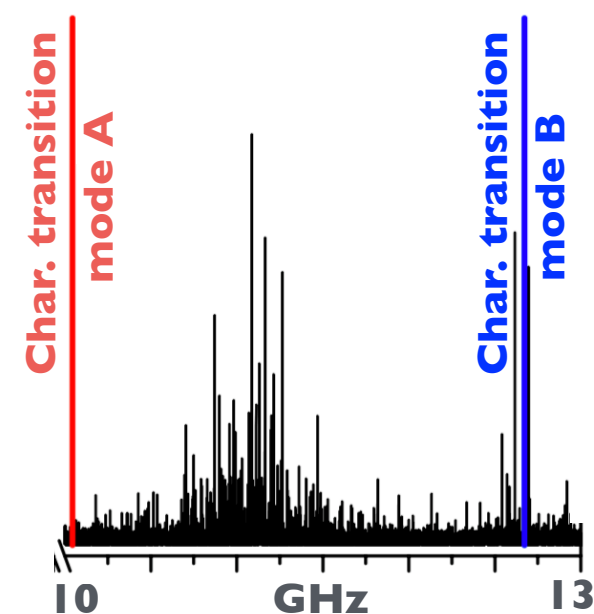
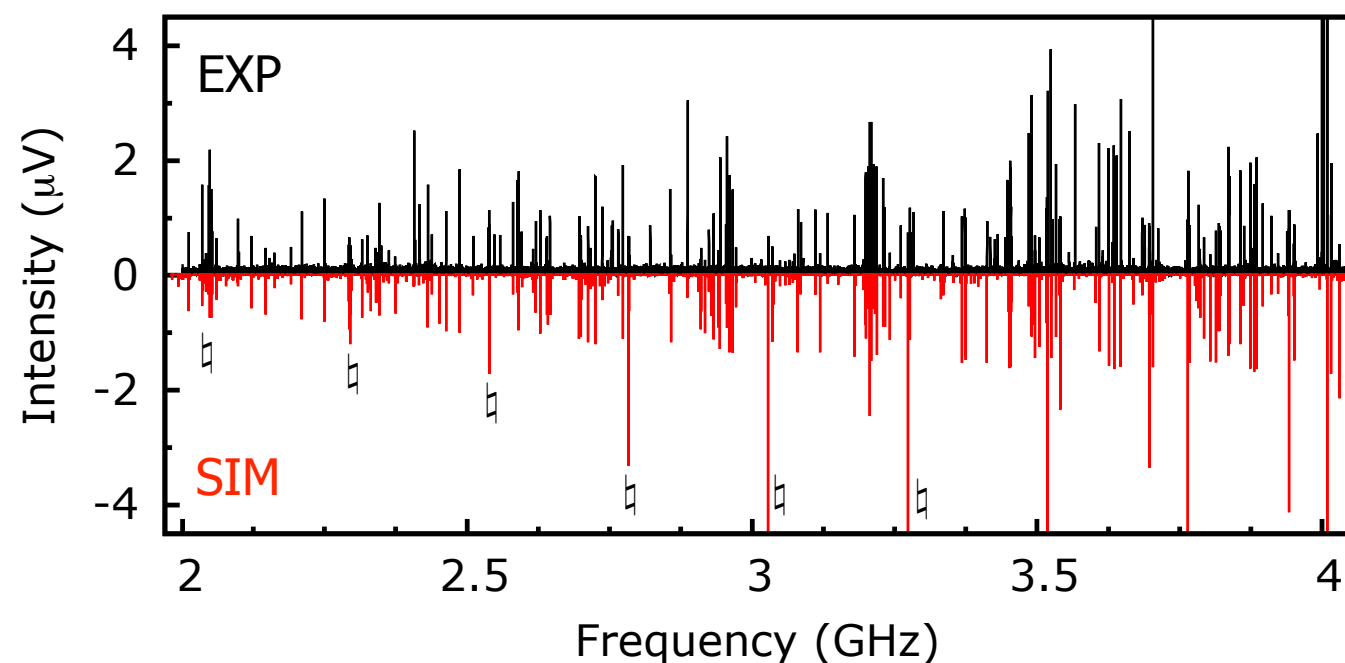


[a] Rotational constants ( $A$ ,  $B$ ,  $C$  in MHz) and quartic centrifugal distortion constants (in kHz); type of spectrum observed (a-type, b-type, c-type) with y being observed and n being not observed; predicted dipole moments; number of lines used in the fit; standard error of the fit (in kHz); asymmetry parameter  $\kappa = (2B-A-C)/(A-C)$ . The experimental frequency accuracy is 25 kHz. [b] 6-311++G\*\* basis set. [c] def2-TZVP basis set.



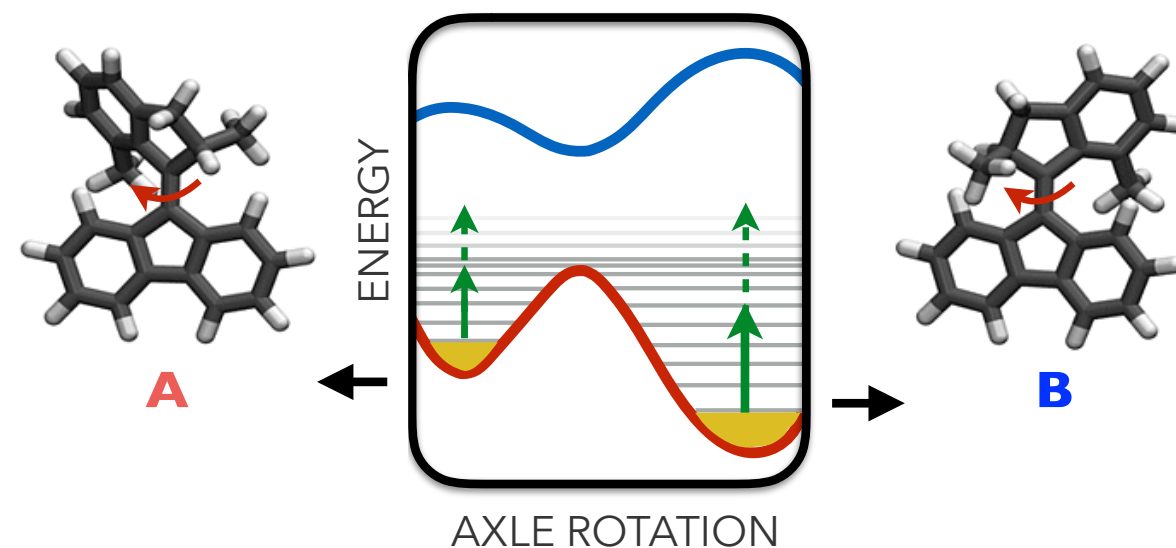
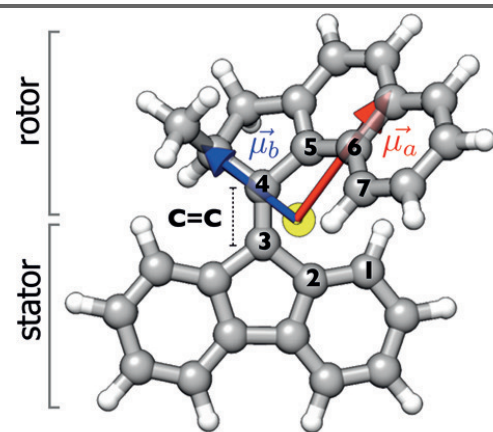
# Structural Evolution of AMMs. Where we stand. **Where we're going.**

## The **rotational spectrum** of the idle-mode of an **AMM**. **C<sub>27</sub>H<sub>20</sub>**



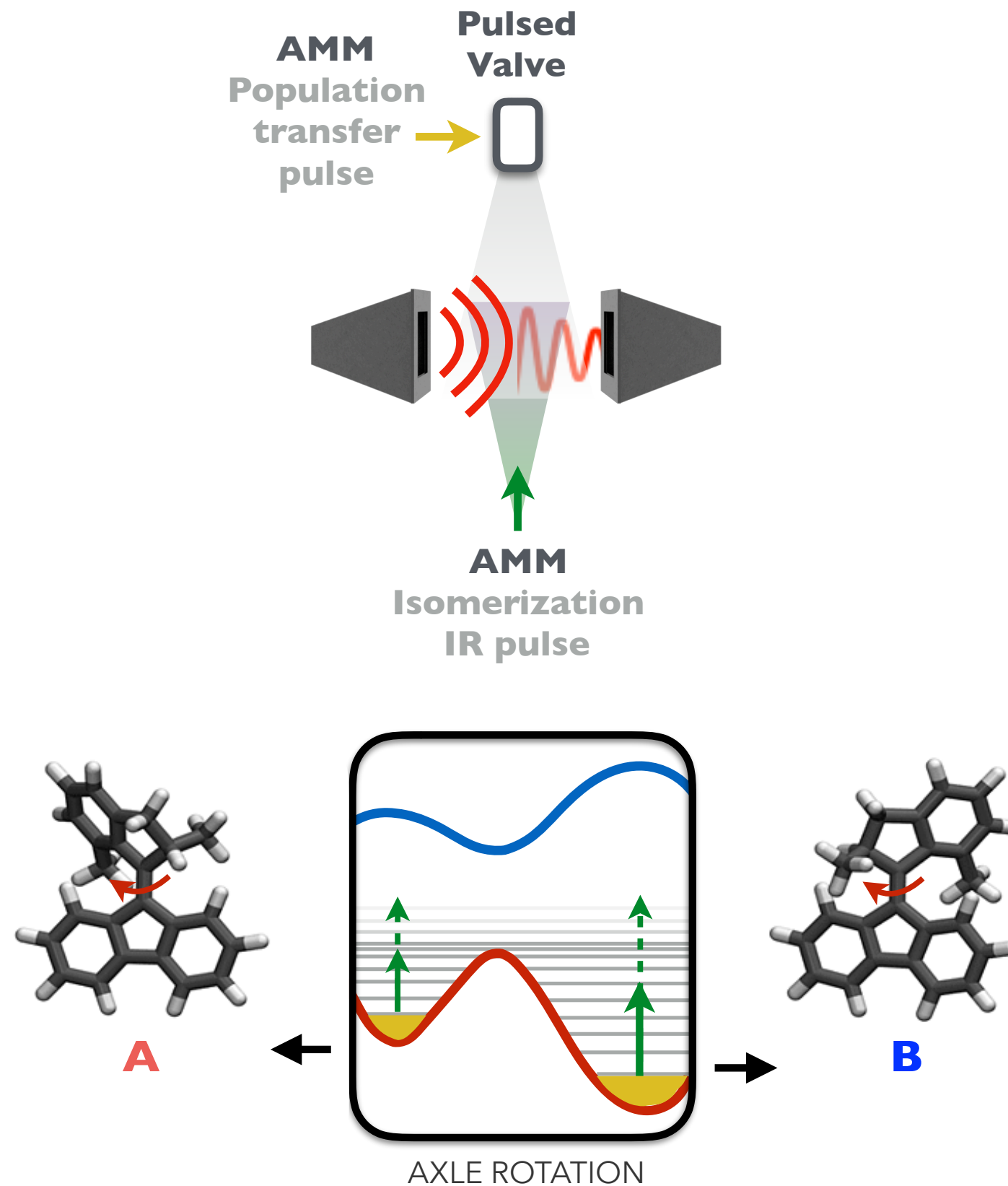
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[a] Rotational constants ( $A$ ,  $B$ ,  $C$  in MHz) and quartic centrifugal distortion constants (in kHz); type of spectrum observed (a-type, b-type, c-type) with y being observed and n being not observed; predicted dipole moments; number of lines used in the fit; standard error of the fit (in kHz); asymmetry parameter  $\kappa = (2B-A-C)/(A-C)$ . The experimental frequency accuracy is 25 kHz. [b] 6-311++G\*\* basis set. [c] def2-TZVP basis set.

# Structural Evolution of AMMs. Follow up challenges?

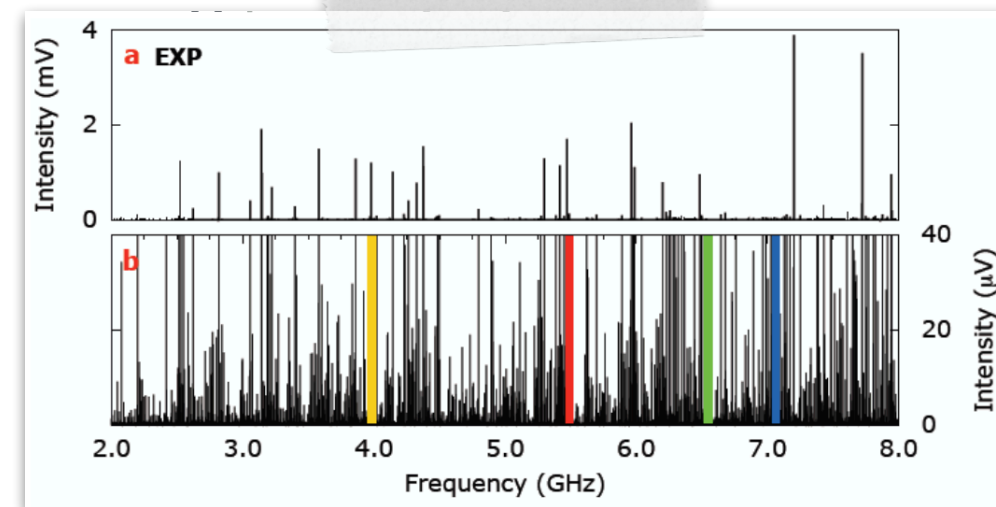


**Summary** | **Future work** | **Take home message**

- We can learn much on **structure-function relations** from rich, dense, conformationally-sensitive broadband **rotational spectra**.

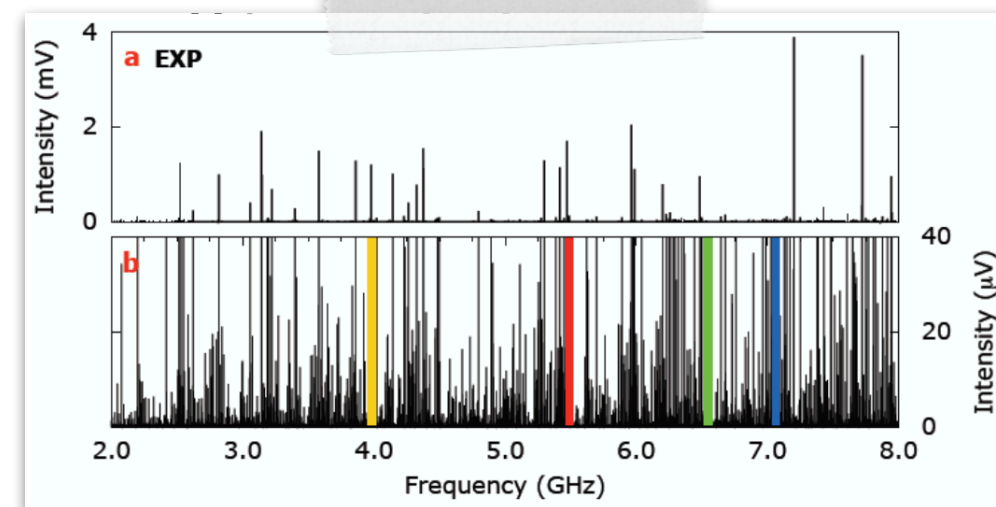
Summary | Future work | **Take home message**

- We can learn much on **structure-function relations** from rich, dense, conformationally-sensitive broadband **rotational spectra**.



## Summary | Future work | Take home message

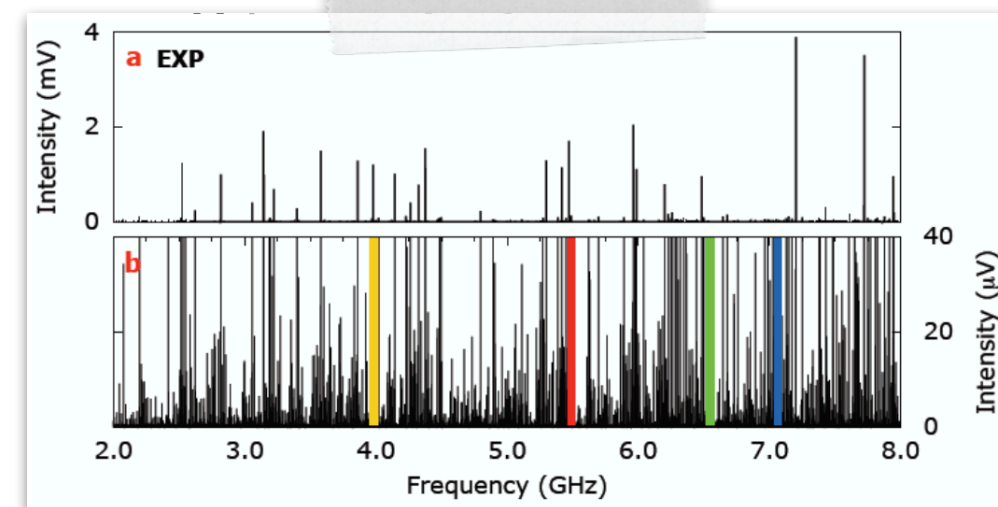
- We can learn much on **structure-function relations** from rich, dense, conformationally-sensitive broadband **rotational spectra**.
- **Pairing** schemes of **chiral molecules** can be studied extensively, and much insight gained on the **molecular recognition** problem.





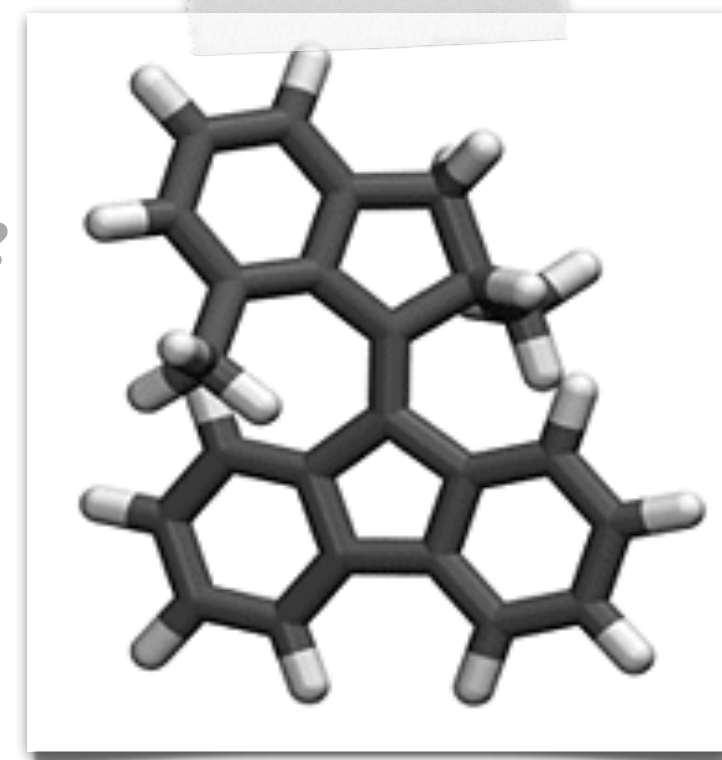
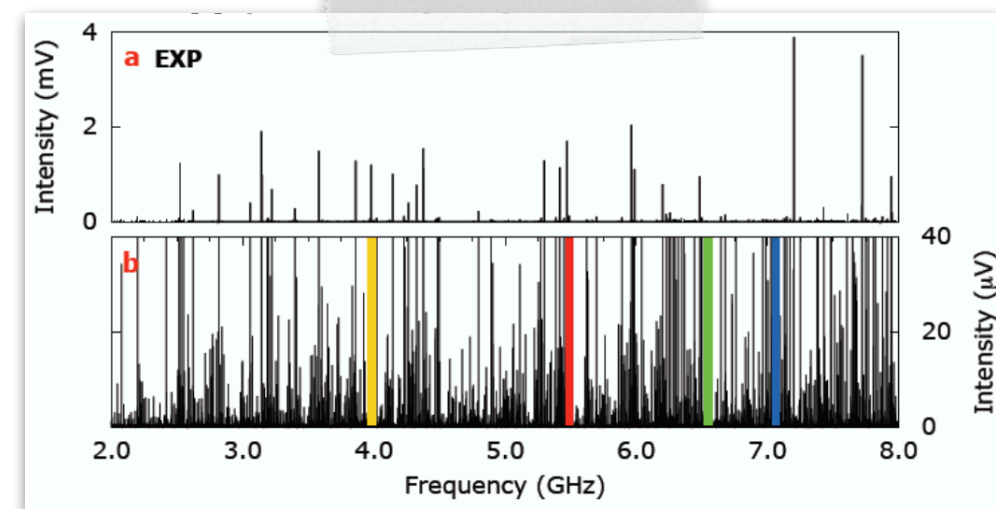
## Summary | Future work | Take home message

- We can learn much on **structure-function relations** from rich, dense, conformationally-sensitive broadband **rotational spectra**.
- **Pairing** schemes of **chiral molecules** can be studied extensively, and much insight gained on the **molecular recognition** problem.
- Can we **unlock rarer species** through new sample delivery methods, bringing the **promise of rotationally-resolved spectroscopy** to other domains?

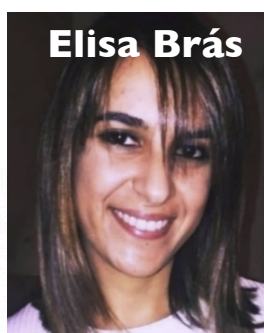
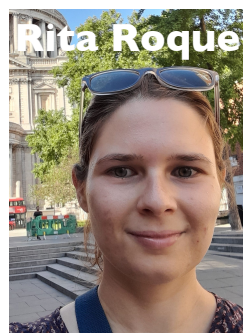


## Summary | Future work | Take home message

- We can learn much on **structure-function relations** from rich, dense, conformationally-sensitive broadband **rotational spectra**.
- **Pairing** schemes of **chiral molecules** can be studied extensively, and much insight gained on the **molecular recognition** problem.
- Can we **unlock rarer species** through new sample delivery methods, bringing the **promise of rotationally-resolved spectroscopy** to other domains?
- Can we reliably **extract dynamic information** from rotational spectra, in particular from large and complex molecular species such as **AMMs**?



# Spectroscopy & Molecular Physics Group @ CFisUC



## Collaborators



Melanie Schnell  
Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron



Cristóbal Pérez  
University of Valladolid



Christian Merten  
Ruhr University Bochum



Narcis Avarvari  
Angers University



Mark D. Marshall  
Helen O. Leung  
Amherst College MA



Ben L. Feringa  
Wesley R. Browne  
University of Groningen



Wybren Jan Buma  
University of Amsterdam

## Funding



**European Research Council**  
Established by the European Commission



Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia  
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