# Morphogenesis: space, time, information



#### <u>Course I:</u> Introduction — Control and Self-Organisation

Thomas Lecuit chaire: Dynamiques du vivant

1530



#### How to account for the emergence of complex shapes?

- Stability of forms
- Intrinsic dynamics
- Information



# Growth Shape Control



#### How to account for the emergence of complex shapes?

 Stability of forms
 Intrinsic dynamics
 Information: mechano-chemical



Growth

Shape

Control



#### Key notions from last year

### **Tissue mechanics: principles**

- Stability of forms
- Intrinsic dynamics

- Tissue cohesion and plasticity
- Properties of cell interactions: adhesion and tension
- Cell connectedness (adhesion) varies across tissues
- Cell-cell Adhesion: an active process
  - I. Equilibrium models: from affinity to the description of tissues as fluids with surface tension
  - 2. Adhesion as an active, out-of-equilibrium process: role of coupling to contractile actomyosin networks.
  - 3. Importance of dissipation: irreversibility.
- Cellular tension: also an active process
  - 4. Membrane tension
  - 5. Cortical tension

<u>COLLÈGE</u>

 Interplay between adhesion and tension underlies balance between cohesion and plasticity: tension reinforces or remodels adhesive interfaces (shear versus tensile stress?)



E-cadherin::GFP Myosin-II::Cherry

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#### Development: Cell behaviours are organised in space and time



Sea Urchin Embryo



Zebrafish Embryo



### A simplistic metaphor



But:

- Information is intrinsic
- What is the nature of developmental information?



### Information underlies the stability of forms

- Stability of forms in spite of perpetual current of matter and recycling
- Stems from persistence of information during development and from generation to generation



Charles Quint (1530)





Philippe IV (1630) Charles II (1685)

Erwin Schrödinger What is Life? 1948





10<sup>7</sup> years



### Concept of « developmental information »: Historical overview

- 18th century: towards a materialist model
- Buffon.
  - 3 key notions explain the form of animals and plants.
    - « molécules organiques »: biological particles (molecules or cells)
    - « forces pénétrantes »: forces acting upon particles following the model of newtonian gravitational forces
    - « moule intérieur »: notion of volumic mould that informs the organisation in 3D of the particles. Abstract notion.

Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière. ChapIII. De la nutrition et du développement (1749-1789)

Maupertuis.

Affinity: Qualitative (ie. intrinsic) properties of particles underly the self-assembly (auto-organisation) of particles into organs

> Vénus physique (1745) Essai sur la formation des corps organisés 1754



- 19th century: Claude Bernard:
- - physico-chemical forces govern living matter
  - -« morphological forces » govern the formation of living organisms

Définition de la vie 1875







### Concept of « developmental information »: Historical overview

• The slow path towards a mechanical model of epigenesis: genetic information

• Preformation and mechanics: Development is an unfolding (entwicklung, déploiement) process, associated with growth. The unfolding and growth is explained mechanically Forms are not mechanically explained (creationism)

• Epigenesis and vitalism:

William Harvey (XVIIth century). Gradual elaboration of biological forms. Follows a finalist, vitalist philosophy (inspired form Aristotelian entelechy)

• Mechanical model of epigenesis:

Descartes attempted but failed.

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Biological information is intrinsic, materialised in the form of chemical molecules, and heritable Required the chromosomic theory of heredity by Sutton and Boveri.

Biological information is an intrinsic property of living matter: DNA on chromosomes.





Ergebnisse über die Konstitution der Chromatischen Substanz des Zellkerns. Theodor Boveri, 1904



### Spatial patterns during Development

 Macroscopic patterns (>mm) emerge from molecular interactions (nm-µm) Regularities: symmetries, repetition of units (segments), characteristic lengths, ... Are there general principles underlying the development of patterns?





Shinji Takada



Interface Focus (2012) 2, 433-450 doi:10.1098/rsfs.2011.0122



Tony Hisgett/Wikipedia









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Shiyer et al, and Mahadevan, C. Tabin 2013

#### Spatial patterns: axis specification and coordinate systems

• Macroscopic patterns (>mm) emerge from molecular interactions (nm-µm)





#### Coordinate systems as a descriptive task

• Theory of transformation from d'Arcy Thompson

- I. System of coordinates
- 2. Transformation between related species via deformation of the coordinate system.
- 3. Mechanical forces (stress) induce deformations (strain)







### Positional information: an intrinsic coordinates system



#### Positional Information and the Spatial Pattern of Cellular Differentiation<sup>†</sup>

L. WOLPERT

Department of Biology as Applied to Medicine, The Middlesex Hospital Medical School, London, England

J. Theoret. Biol. (1969) 25, 1-47

- Set up a coordinate systems to specify positional identity (information)
- Interpret the positional information to produce structures and differentiate
- Uncouples information and interpretation at cellular and tissue levels

based on the discovery of scaling property of developmental processes (e.g. Hans Driesch's observation of « regulative » development in sea urchin: cells are not pre-specified, and generate their own coordinate system)

 Mechanisms of positional information are potentially general: (ie. may be used in different contexts)



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« Universality » of positional information

#### Positional information: an intrinsic coordinates system

- Clones of cells carry the Antennapedia mutation
- Cell identity (namely antenna or leg identity) is changed autonomously: see selector gene.
- Invariant property: position along the proximo-distal axis.
- There is an equivalence of different relative positions along limb axis: positional information





# What is the nature of « morphogenetic information »?

#### • Genetic information: DNA sequence on chromosomes

- Not a simple « blueprint ». More akin to a « recipe » (contains the rules of agency/interaction) or to an « operating system » than to a « hard disc »: contains a prescription of the sequence of operations to be conducted in a finite amount of time.
- 2. Genetic information acts upon itself (recursion) and encodes the means to read itself: an algorithmic machine?

• <u>but also:</u>

- **physics:** Genetic information does not contain a prescription of every molecular or cellular position.
  - I. Information deployment depends on the nature of the physical world (chemical composition),
  - 2. length and time scales, nano-world properties (role of energy conversion and of thermal fluctuations),
  - 3. physical constraints imposed by physical laws acting within cells and across tissues, organisms (mechanics, thermodynamics).





#### • environment and history: the outcome of interaction between Genetics and Physics

- I. Geometry/Organisation: how information flows in a cell or a tissue.
  - The cell is not a simple 3D, isotropic solvent. It is organised (discontinuities, dimensionality...)
- 2. Epigenetic information: environment (cell composition-chemistry, organism physiology...)
- 3. History: e.g. cell organisation in the egg at fertilisation and in organism that hosts the egg, evolutionary history embedded in DNA sequence



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### Modes of biological organisation in space and time

• Two modalities of information flow during morphogenesis

#### Programme





Self-organization



# Programme



- hierarchical, indirect interactions
- modular
- long and short range interactions
- high-wired
- multiple parameters



http://courses.biology.utah.edu/bastiani/3230/ DB%20Lecture/Lectures/b10FlyZygotic.html



The amount of information required to model/ encode is very large



Rob Philipps, Jane Kondev, Julie Theriot, Hernan G. Garcia. illustration: Nigel Orme *Physical Biological of the Cell* (Garland Science)

# Programme



- hierarchical, indirect interactions
- modular
- long and short range interactions
- high-wired
- multiple parameters





Rob Philipps, Jane Kondev, Julie Theriot, Hernan G. Garcia. illustration: Nigel Orme *Physical Biological of the Cell* (Garland Science)

# Programme: gene regulatory networks



- hierarchical, indirect interactions
- modular
- long and short range interactions
- high-wired
- multiple parameters



Kiran Rafiq, Melani S. Cheers, Charles A. Ettensohn Development 2012 139: 579-590; doi: 10.1242/dev.073049



# Programme

• « Conductors »: organiser, master control gene, selector genes, morphogens etc





### Genes control cellular decisions: epigenetic landscape

• Differential gene regulation underlies cellular differentiation pathways during development

The epigenetic landscape of Development

Cell determination and differentiation pathways during development (creodes)

Gene activity moulds the landscape



The strategy of the genes. 1957



The complex system of interactions underlying the epigenetic landscape. The pegs in the ground represent genes; the strings leading from them the chemical tendencies which the genes produce. The modelling of the epigenetic landscape, which slopes down from above one's head towards the distance, is controlled by the pull of these numerous guy-ropes which are ultimately anchored to the genes.



#### Conrad Waddington



#### **Differentiation Landscape**



Antennapedia: Homeotic transformation antenna to leg



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### Development as a tree of decisions: selector gene

- Differential gene regulation underlies cellular differentiation pathways during development
- Garcia Bellido: distinction between selector genes, and cytodifferentiation genes

« Genes of a first group (*cyto-differentiation genes*) would include those controlling cell behaviour relevant to morphogenesis and common to most developing systems: mitotic rate, mitotic orientation, cell recognition and cuticular differentiation.

Those of a second group (*selector genes*) seem to control developmental pathways and share several operational characteristics. A functional scheme is advanced showing how selector genes may become activated and control development. We postulate that inductor molecules interfere with the products of activator genes which are selector specific. In this way signals extrinsic to the genome become translated into genetic ones. The activation, or repression, of selector genes occurs once in development and remains clonally irreversible ». García-Bellido A. *Ciba Found Symp.* 1975;0(29):161-82.

• The embryo as a *genetic and cellular automata*: each cell division marked by decision to activate or repress gene expression

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adult Drosophila

Engrailed

Information

**Mechanics** 

Differentiation



#### Development as a tree of decisions





#### Development as a tree of decisions



Oikopleura dioica (Tunicate, Urochordate)

Hiroki Nishida



#### Master control gene: organogenesis



Eye development



Halder G, Callaerts P, Gehring WJ. Science. (1995) 267(5205):1788-92.

#### Master control gene: cell differentiation

• Expression of a single gene (Sub) induces a competenental Cell formation differentiation program (denticle formation)

(Necessary and Sufficient)







**Mechanics** 



Chanut-Delalande H, Fernandes I, Roch F, Payre F, Plaza S (2006). PLoS Biol 4(9): e290.

#### The concept of Organiser: inspiration

• Developmental « stimulation » can be triggered by certain tissues in Hydra



Ethel Browne (1885-1965)



4. A new hydranth can be stimulated to grow out from a hydra by (1) the graft of the peristome tissue at the base of the tentacle, with 121

of a regenerating hydranth and by (3) the graft of the material of a bud. Neither a wound nor the graft of any other kind of tissue will stimulate the stock to send out a new hydranth.



### The concept of Organiser: axis duplication

• Embryonic axis duplication is induced by a graft from the dorsal region of an amphibian embryo









Hilde Mangold

Wnts

Hans Spemann





Xwnt-8 Xnrs BMPs BMPs TGF-β/Nodal receptor

### The Spemann's organiser produces inhibitors of several signalling pathways



E. de Robertis. Nature Rev. Mol. Cell Biol. (2006) 7:297-302.

### Specification of positional information by morphogens

• Case study: antero-posterior axis specification in the Drosophila embryo









#### Positional information: Morphogen gradient

- Gradient of concentration/activity of a molecule
- Activity thresholds induce gene transcription at different position
- Concentration of morphogen is a positional information



W. Driever and C. Nüsslein-Volhard *Cell* (1988) G. Struhl, K. Struhl and P. MacDonald *Cell* (1989)

Lewis Wolpert, J. Theoret. Biol. (1969) 25: 1-47



#### Positional information: Morphogen gradient concentration





R. Philipps, J. Kondev, J. Theriot, H. G. Garcia (ill. N. Orme) *Physical Biological of the Cell* (Garland Science)



### The concept of Organiser: axis duplication

- Axis duplication in limbs can induced by specific secreted molecules
- The developmental induction acts non-autonomously: it influences cells at a distance (>100µm)







## Mode of organisation: Morphogen gradient

• Gradient of concentration/activity of a molecule

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• Activity thresholds





Kicheva et al, M. Gonzalez Gaitan, Science (2007) 315:521



### Mode of organisation: Morphogen gradient

- Gradient of concentration/activity of a molecule (Shh)
- Activity thresholds



Tetsuya Tabata, Yuki Takei Development 2004 131: 703-712



Rolf Zeller et al. Nature Reviews Genetics 10:45-858 (2009)



# Programme



- hierarchical, indirect interactions
- modular
- long and short range interactions
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- multiple parameters



http://courses.biology.utah.edu/bastiani/3230/ DB%20Lecture/Lectures/b10FlyZygotic.html







Rob Philipps, Jane Kondev, Julie Theriot, Hernan G. Garcia. illustration: Nigel Orme *Physical Biological of the Cell* (Garland Science)

# Self-organization



- local and direct interactions
- few rules and parameters

Complexity emerges from very simple rules The amount of information required to model/encode is very small





Scott Camazine, J-L Deneubourg, NR. Franks, J. Sneyd, G. Theraulaz and E. Bonabeau Self-Organisation in Biological Systems Princeton University Press

# Self-organization

- local and direct interactions
- few rules and parameters



- Ants (Lasius niger) form pellets, move them around and deposit them.
- The form pillars evenly spaced

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• Once pillars reach a certain height, ants form roofs that bridge pillars.



Anaïs Khuong et al, and Guy Theraulaz. PNAS 113:1303-1308. 2016

# Self-organization

- local and direct interactions
- few rules and parameters

Two kinds of local and direct interactions:

- stigmergic-based interactions: local amplification of soil deposition is dependent on pheromone concentration added by ants. Pheromone life-time depends on temperature
   > controls the spacing of pillars
- 2. **template-based interaction** between ant's body and built structure: depends on length of animal

#### >controls the height of roof





- Model constrained by data (interactions)
- Only free parameter is pheromone life time



Anaïs Khuong et al, and Guy Theraulaz. PNAS 113:1303-1308. 2016





- Branching morphogenesis as a controlled programme
- I. Stereotypical sequence of branching
- 2. Tube growth driven by FGF signalling
- 3. Dynamic pattern of FGF expression controls branching
- 4. FGF expression under complex upstream control





Clemens Cabernard, M. Neuman and Markus Affolter. J Appl Physiol 97: 2347–2353, (2004)





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- Branching morphogenesis as a controlled programme
- Stereotypical branching pattern

# The branching programme of mouse lung development

Ross J. Metzger<sup>1</sup><sup>†</sup>, Ophir D. Klein<sup>2</sup><sup>†</sup>, Gail R. Martin<sup>2</sup> & Mark A. Krasnow<sup>1</sup>





R. Metzger et al., G. Martin, M. Krasnow. Nature 453:745. 2008

- Branching morphogenesis as a controlled programme
- Stereotypical branching pattern comprising:
- 3 modes of branching 2.
- 3. organised in 3 sequences (order
- Suggests a deterministic programme, 4.
- with a hierarchical and modular 5. organisation
- Propose that this is **controlled by a** 6. genetically encoded subroutine and a global master routine
- Space-filling strategy 7.



Domain branching







Orthogonal bifurcation (surfaces/interior)

End view





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- Branching morphogenesis as a self-organised process
- I. Tip of growing branches follow local rules: tip branching, tip elongation or tip termination.
- 2. Statistical rules operating at the population level, but not local deterministic rule: no exponential growth but balance of tip bifurcation by tip termination.
- 3. Phenomenology well predicted by a Branching Annihilating Random Walk.

a(x,t) active tip i(x,t) inactive tip

$$\begin{cases} \partial_t a = D\nabla^2 a + r_{\rm b} a \left(1 - \frac{a+i}{n_0}\right) \\ \partial_t i = r_{\rm e} a + \frac{r_{\rm b}}{n_0} a(a+i) \end{cases}$$

4. Gives rise to a density dependent feedback  $(\rightarrow)$ 









E Hannezo et al. B. Simons. Cell (2017) 171, 242–255

• Branching morphogenesis as a self-organised process



- I. Pulse of active tips at front and steady concentration of ducts behaind.
- 2. Fluctuation scaling law (giant fluctuations) characteristic of non-equilibrium.  $(\Delta n)_L = n_L^{\alpha}, \quad \alpha > \frac{1}{2}$
- 3. Intrinsic polarity of growing network from isotropic local statistical rule (due to density dependent feedback).
- 4. There is no need for genetically encoded deterministic sequence of a programme
- 5. Strategy that optimises expansion rate of network (at the expense of space filling).







E Hannezo et al. B. Simons. Cell (2017) 171, 242–255



# What is specified by morphogenetic information?

- Genetics/Biochemistry
  - I. Where: function of regionalisation
  - 2. When: temporal sequence
  - 3. How fast: rate of change
  - 4. Direction: polarisation
  - 5. How much: amplitude
  - 6. Specificity: molecular affinity
  - 7. Antagonistic activities: activators/inhibitors

#### • Output: length scale and time scale

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- diffusion:  $\lambda = \sqrt{D.\tau}$  D: diffusion coefficient
- **Transport**:  $\ell = v.\tau$  v: velocity of motor





- Output: length scale and time scale
  - propagation of deformation:  $\tau = \eta / E$
  - hydrodynamic length:  $\ell = \sqrt{\eta} / \gamma$ 
    - Thomas LECUIT 2018-2019

# What is specified by morphogenetic information?

- Mechanics: stresses and material properties specify deformations
  - Where: depends on distribution of stresses (e.g. active stresses) and/or on stiffness E. Ι. Friction ( $\gamma$ ) affects gradient of stress.  $\partial \sigma / \partial x = \gamma$ . v
  - 2. **How fast:** rate of deformation depends on viscosity  $\eta$ When: deformations governed by mechanical properties of cells
  - 3. **Direction**: isotropic/anisotropic stress, tensile versus shear stress,
  - How much: amplitude 4.

5.

COLLÈGE

- **Specificity**: molecular specificity of mechanotransduction (Integrin, Cadherin etc)
- Antagonistic activities: e.g. active vs elastic 6. or active stress vs friction











# Mechano-chemical information

#### Biochemistry

- Sets mechanical parameters (stiffness: actin crosslinkers, viscosity: turnover)
- Regulates stresses (eg. activation of motors)
- diffusion:  $\lambda = (D.\tau)^{1/2}$
- transport:  $\ell = v. \tau$

D: diffusion coefficient v: velocity of motor + processivity



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#### COLLÈGE DE FRANCE

Mechanics

- affects transport of molecules: advection by flow
- elicits mechanotransduction: stress/strain dependent effect
- affects geometry of environment: polarity
  - propagation of deformation:  $\tau = \eta / E$
  - hydrodynamic length:  $\ell = (\eta / \gamma)^{1/2}$

E: stiffness η : viscosity γ : friction



#### Self-organisation with mechano-chemical information









#### Colloque: le 22 Mars 2019



#### Controlled and Self-organised Morphogenesis

Karen Alim (MPI Göttingen) Suzanne Eaton (MPI Dresden) Jérôme Gros (Institut Pasteur) Edouard Hannezo (IST Vienna) Maria Leptin (EMBL) Jean-Léon Maître (Institut Curie) Edwin Munro (Univ. Chicago) Ewa Paluch (UCL) Olivier Pourquié (Harvard Medical School) Guillaume Salbreux (Crick Institute) Cliff Tabin (Harvard Medical School) Marie-Hélène Verlhac (Collège de France)



#### I. Self-organisation: spatial and temporal instabilities

I I. Turing like instabilities (mechano-chemical)I 2. Excitability, oscillations etcI 3. Trigger waves

Courses 2 & 3 — 27 Nov , 4 Dec

- 2. Tissue deformations: control and self-organisation
  21. Folding, invagination, branching Course 4 11 Dec
  - 22. Extension, flow Course 5 18 Dec



#### Tissue deformations: control and self-organisation

#### I. Tissue folding , looping, branching Course 4 — II Dec



Cortex convolution



Gut villi



lung branching



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#### Tissue deformations: control and self-organisation

#### 2. Tissue invagination Course 4 — 11 Dec



G. Schoenwolf U. Utah School of Medicine

Chick neural tube

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Sea Urchin endoderm



Drosophila mesoderm

#### Tissue deformations: control and self-organisation

#### 3. Cellular flow and tissue extension, rotation

#### Course 5 — 18 Dec



Patrick Keller (Janelia Campus)

Drosophila germband extension



Chick gastrulation



Drosophila genitalia rotation

