Contents

Foreword xv

Introduction xvii

A. THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE PHYSICS OF LIQUID CRYSTALS

CHAPTER 1. **Properties of liquid crystals** 3
1.1 Classification and structure 3
1.1.1 General considerations 3
1.1.2 Classification of smectic phases 6
1.1.3 The structure of individual phases 7
1.1.4 Columnar mesophases 12
1.2 Chemical aspects 12
1.2.1 Chemical classes 12
1.2.2 Structure and transition temperatures 16
1.3 The director. The degree of orientational order 18
1.3.1 The director 18
1.3.2 Degree of order 19
1.3.3 The experimental determination of S 20
1.3.4 The $\boldsymbol{S}$ tensor 21
1.4 A molecular–statistical description of the liquid crystalline state 22
1.4.1 General method of approach 22
1.4.2 Born's theory 24
1.4.3 Tsvetkov's semi-empirical model 25
1.4.4 Maier–Saupe theory 26
1.4.5 Cholesteric liquid crystals 28
1.4.6 Smectic liquid crystals 28

CHAPTER 2. **The anisotropy of a liquid crystalline medium** 31
2.1 Optical and dielectric properties of isotropic liquids 31
2.1.1 Dielectric permittivity 31
2.1.2 Debye's equation for the angular distribution of dipoles 33
2.1.3 Dipole relaxation time (Debye relaxation) 35
2.2 Magnetic anisotropy 36

2.3 Optical anisotropy 39
2.3.1 Absorption anisotropy (dichroism) 39
2.3.2 Absorption by impurities 41
2.3.3 Refractive indices 43
2.3.4 Anisotropy of a local field 45
2.3.5 The components of the molecular polarizability 49
2.4 Dielectric permittivity (static field case) 49
2.4.1 Maier and Meier's theory of static dielectric permittivities of nematic liquid crystals 50
2.4.2 A generalization of the Maier–Meier theory 52
2.4.3 Smectic mesophases 54
2.5 Frequency dependence of dielectric permittivities 56
2.5.1 Low-frequency dispersion in $\varepsilon_{\parallel}$ 56
2.5.2 Low-frequency dispersion in $\varepsilon_{\perp}$ 60
2.5.3 Dielectric losses and Cole–Cole diagrams 61
2.6 Properties of mixtures 64
2.6.1 Phase diagrams 64
2.6.2 Optical properties of mixtures 65
2.6.3 Dielectric anisotropy 66
2.6.4 Relaxation times 67

CHAPTER 3. **Visco-elastic properties** 69
3.1 Elasticity theory 69
3.1.1 Frank's equation for the elastic free energy density 69
3.1.2 Numerical calculations 73
3.1.3 Defects in the structure 74
3.1.4 Other examples of the application of elasticity theory 74
3.1.5 Molecular theories of the elastic constants 75
3.2 Principal equations for the dynamics of nematic liquid crystals 78
3.2.1 Hydrodynamics of an isotropic liquid 78
3.2.2 The dynamics of nematic liquid crystals 80
3.2.3 Some specific cases 82
3.2.4 Orientation of the director by the flow of a nematic liquid crystal 84
3.2.5 Diffusion coefficients 87
3.3 Fluctuations of the director and light scattering in nematic liquid crystals 88
3.3.1 Results of early investigations 88
3.3.2 The scattering wave vector 89
3.3.3 Chatelain's experiment 90
3.3.4 Fluctuations of the director 91
3.3.5 Correlation length of director fluctuations 93
3.3.6 Scattering cross-section 94
3.3.7 Dynamics of the fluctuations and quasi-elastic scattering of light 96

B. ELECTRO-OPTICAL AND MAGNETO-OPTICAL EFFECTS IN LIQUID CRYSTALS

CHAPTER 4. **Orientational effects in nematic liquid crystals** 101
4.1 Experimental procedures: methods of orientation 101
4.1.1 Cells 101
4.1.2 The electrodes 101
4.1.3 Orientation of the molecules 102
4.1.4 Planar orientation methods 103
4.1.5 Homeotropic orientation methods 104
4.1.6 Berreman's model 104
4.1.7 Tilted orientation 106
4.1.8 Weak anchoring of the molecules to a surface 106
4.2 Frederiks transition: theory 107
4.2.1 The simplest case 108
4.2.2 Generalization to include the anisotropy of the elastic properties 110
4.2.3 A field oriented at an angle to the director 112
4.2.4 Weak anchoring of nematic liquid crystal molecules to the restricting surface 113
4.2.5 Electrical conductivity 114
4.2.6 Crossed magnetic and electric fields 115
4.2.7 Dynamics of the Frederiks transition 116
4.2.8 Back-flow effect 118
4.3 Experimental investigation of the Frederiks transition: S and B effects 120
4.3.1 General considerations 120
4.3.2 The S effect 121
4.3.3 The B effect 123
4.3.4 Some special cases 124
4.4 The twist effect 125
4.4.1 Optical properties of a twist cell 125
4.4.2 Behaviour in an external field: the steady-state condition 127
4.4.3 The dynamics of the twist effect 128
4.4.4 Reverse twist effect 130
4.5 The guest–host effect in doped nematic liquid crystals 130
4.5.1 Change in intensity of the colouring 130
4.5.2 Colour switching 132
4.5.3 Change in fluorescence 134
4.6 The flexo-electric effect 134
4.6.1 Meyer's approach 134
4.6.2 Experimental determination of the flexo-coefficients ... 137
4.6.3 Dynamics of the flexo-electric effect 139
4.6.4 Microscopic approach to determining the flexo-electric coefficients 141

4.6.5 Other configurations 142
4.6.6 Non-uniform fields in Meyer's model 143
4.6.7 Flexo-electric domains 143
4.6.8 Some other consequences of the flexo-electric effect ... 145
4.7 The Kerr effect in the isotropic phase 145
4.7.1 The Kerr effect 145
4.7.2 Pretransition phenomena in the isotropic phase of nematic liquid crystals 146
4.7.3 Laser-induced Kerr effect 148

CHAPTER 5. **Electrohydrodynamic effects in nematic liquid crystals** ... 150
5.1 Electrical conduction 150
5.1.1 Ionic electrical conductivity of organic liquids 150
5.1.2 Concentration dependences of electrical conductivity in large samples 151
5.1.3 Thin cells 153
5.1.4 Frequency dependence of the electrical conductivity: ion mobility 156
5.1.5 Anisotropy of the electrical conductivity 157
5.1.6 Processes occurring near the electrodes 159
5.2 Anomalous alignment of nematic liquid crystals in an electrical field 162
5.2.1 Experimental data 162
5.2.2 Conductivity-induced torque 164
5.2.3 Balance of the torques 168
5.3 Mechanism of electrohydrodynamic instabilities in nematic liquid crystals when either $\Delta\varepsilon<0$ or small $\Delta\varepsilon>0$ 170
5.3.1 Domains and the diffraction of light 170
5.3.2 Threshold for the onset of Kapustin–Williams domains: steady-state case 171
5.3.3 Calculation including boundary conditions 173
5.3.4 Frequency characteristics of the threshold for an instability in a nematic liquid crystal with $\Delta\varepsilon<0$ 179
5.3.5 Experimental results 186
5.3.6 Thin cells 192
5.4 Behaviour of nematic liquid crystals with $\Delta\varepsilon<0$ above the instability threshold: dynamic scattering of light 195
5.4.1 Field dependence of the angle of deviation of the director 195
5.4.2 Velocity of the liquid and the focal length of domain lenses 196
5.4.3 Transition to turbulent motion of the liquid and dynamic scattering of light 197
5.4.4 Rise and decay times of an instability 199
5.4.5 Dynamic scattering of light 200

5.5 Some special cases when $\Delta\varepsilon<0$ 201
5.5.1 Finite anchoring energy of molecules to the surface and tilted director orientation 201
5.5.2 Influence of the sign of the α_3 coefficient 202
5.5.3 Different configurations 202
5.5.4 Periodic oscillations 203
5.5.5 Allowance for the flexo-electric effect 203
5.5.6 The influence of Poiseuille flow on an electrohydrodynamic instability 203
5.5.7 The influence of a magnetic field 203
5.5.8 Other theoretical approaches 204
5.6 Electrohydrodynamic instability in an isotropic liquid and in a nematic liquid crystal when $\Delta\varepsilon\gg0$ 204
5.6.1 The isotropic phase in a direct current 204
5.6.2 The isotropic phase in an alternating current 209
5.6.3 Instabilities in nematic liquid crystals with $\Delta\varepsilon>0$ 209

CHAPTER 6. **Cholestric liquid crystals** 212
6.1 The pitch of a cholestric helix 212
6.1.1 Textures 212
6.1.2 Methods of measuring the pitch 215
6.1.3 Cholesteric mixtures 217
6.2 Optical properties 218
6.2.1 Experimental data 218
6.2.2 The simplest model 219
6.2.3 General case of normal incidence of light on a planar texture 220
6.2.4 Oblique incidence of light on a semi-infinite planar texture 223
6.2.5 Thin cells 224
6.2.6 Non-ideal helix 224
6.2.7 Focal-conic texture 225
6.3 Features of the theory of elasticity and the dynamics of cholesteric liquid crystals 225
6.3.1 Equation for the free energy 225
6.3.2 Fluctuations in cholesteric liquid crystals 226
6.3.3 The permeation effect 227
6.3.4 Couette flow in a planar texture 228
6.4 Texture changes in cholesteric liquid crystals in external fields 229
6.4.1 Anisotropy of the properties 229
6.4.2 Orientation effects in the absence of a current 230
6.4.3 Effects related to the flow of a current 236
6.4.4 Behaviour above the threshold when electrical conductivity is present 238

6.5 Field untwisting of a cholesteric helix 240
6.5.1 The model 240
6.5.2 Field dependence of the pitch 241
6.5.3 A different geometry 244
6.5.4 The dynamics of the process 245
6.5.5 Experimental data 249
6.6 Characteristics of thin cells 250
6.6.1 The influence of the walls in the absence of a field 250
6.6.2 Features of field untwisting of a helix 251
6.6.3 Periodic instabilities 253

CHAPTER 7. **Smectic liquid crystals** 257
7.1 Characteristic elastic and viscous properties of the smectic phase 257
7.1.1 Smectic A elasticity theory 257
7.1.2 The divergence of K_{33} and K_{22} in the pretransition regions of the nematic phase 259
7.1.3 The scattering of light by smectic A 261
7.1.4 The dynamics of smectic A 263
7.1.5 Elastic properties of smectic C 266
7.2 Field effects 267
7.2.1 The Frederiks transition in smectic A 267
7.2.2 Experimental data 269
7.2.3 Parodi's model 270
7.2.4 A wave-like instability in smectic A 273
7.2.5 The flexo-electric effect in smectic A 274
7.2.6 The Frederiks transition in smectic C 275
7.2.7 The influence of a field on the smectic A to smectic C phase transition 277
7.3 Electrohydrodynamic instabilities in a smectic and in the pretransition region of the nematic phase 278
7.3.1 Electrical conductivity 278
7.3.2 Anomalous alignment 281
7.3.3 The electrohydrodynamic instability in smectic A 281
7.3.4 The electrohydrodynamic instability in smectic C 284
7.4 Properties of the chiral smectics C and H 284
7.4.1 Symmetry 284
7.4.2 Optical properties 285
7.4.3 Electro-optical behaviour 286
7.4.4 Other effects 289

CHAPTER 8. **Problems and perspectives for the practical application of electro-optical effects in liquid crystals** 290
8.1 Information displays 291
8.1.1 Alpha-numeric displays 291
8.1.2 Mosaics 294

8.1.3 Multiplexing 295
8.1.4 Matrix screens 297
8.1.5 Image converters 300
8.2 Devices for optical information processing 304
8.2.1 Modulators and deflectors of radiation 304
8.2.2 Integrated optical devices 306
8.2.3 Controllable transparencies 307
8.2.4 Liquid crystal logic elements 309
8.2.5 Optical filtration 309
8.3 Other examples 310
8.3.1 Light shutters 310
8.3.2 Storage devices 310
8.3.3 Non-destructive testing 310

Bibliography 312

Index 339