

Preface

Magnetic control of the properties and the flow of liquids can be a challenging field for basic research as well as for applications. An important condition for a technically interesting magnetic control of fluids is that the requested magnetic fields should be as small as possible.

An excellent material fulfilling this condition are suspensions of magnetic nanoparticles - commonly called ferrofluids. These fluids exhibit coupled liquid and superparamagnetic properties, leading to the possibility to control their flows and properties with magnetic fields having a strength of about 10mT. After the first synthesis of stable ferrofluids in 1964, a rapid development of ideas for applications as well as of basic fluid mechanics investigations took place. Till now the research field experiences a strong ongoing growth, recently triggered by the establishment of a national research program on magnetic fluids in Germany and documented by numerous presentations of the 9th International Conference on Magnetic Fluids (ICMF9), held in Bremen in 2001.

One of the most challenging aspects of ferrofluid research is the interdisciplinarity of the field. Besides chemistry for the preparation of magnetic fluids, basic theoretical physics for the description of their properties and behavior, fluid physics and rheology for the investigation of flows and rheological properties under influence of magnetic fields are needed to cover the basic research interests. In addition engineering and medical applications contribute to the importance of ferrofluid research for everyday life.

Most of these aspects are covered in this issue of *Lecture Notes in Physics*, which is mainly based on a series of plenary talks given during ICMF9. Starting with a review of preparation techniques for ferrofluids the chemical aspect of production of stable magnetic colloids is highlighted, followed by two contributions showing different approaches for a quantitative characterization of ferrofluids.

Part two of the issue is devoted to basic questions concerning the behavior of ferrofluids in the presence of magnetic fields. Three contributions highlight different ways to describe the fluids theoretically. Macro- and microscopic approaches are shown together to enable a comparison of their advantages and problems. The section ends with a specific example of magnetic control - the influence of fields on heat and mass transfer in ferrofluids.

In the third part, the question of magnetic control of the fluids properties is addressed using the example of magnetoviscosity - i.e. the change of the viscous properties of magnetic fluids in a magnetic field. The combination of theoret-

ical description and experimental investigations documents the complexity of the problem and gives a good overview on the actual state of knowledge in these problems. The part ends with a contribution on magnetorheological fluids, building the bridge to the application possibilities of magnetoviscous effects.

Finally, part four deals with question concerning application of magnetic fluids. Since the major progress in this respect is actually concentrated in the field of medical applications, a single contribution on cancer therapy using ferrofluids as a drug carrier is included in this issue.

In total, this issue of *Lecture Notes in Physics* provides the reader with all basic knowledge needed to enter the field of ferrofluid research as well as with the most recent developments achieved.

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Stefan Odenbach

List of Contributors

Christoph Alexiou

Department of Otorhinolaryngology
Head and Neck Surgery,
Klinikum rechts der Isar
Technical University of Munich
81675 Munich
c.alexiou@lrz.tu-muenchen.de

W. Arnold

Physics-Department E 17
Technical University of Munich
81675 Munich
Germany

Christian Bergemann

Chemicell
10777 Berlin
chemicell@aol.com

Elmars Blums

Institute of Physics
University of Latvia
LV-2169, Salaspils
Latvia
eblums@tesla.sal.lv

Georges Bossis

LPMC
UMR 6622
University of Nice
Parc Valrose
06108 Nice Cedex 2
France
bossis@naxos.unice.fr

Stuart W. Charles

Department of Chemistry
University of Wales
Bangor Gwynedd LL57 2UW
UK
stuartcharles@uk.uumail.com

Paul C. Fannin

Department of Electronic and
Electrical Engineering
University of Dublin
Trinity College
Dublin 2
Ireland
pfannin@tcd.ie

Peter Hulin

Department of Otorhinolaryngology
Head and Neck Surgery,
Klinikum rechts der Isar
Technical University of Munich
81675 Munich
p.hulin@lrz.tum.de

R. Jurgons

Department of Otorhinolaryngology
Head and Neck Surgery,
Klinikum rechts der Isar
Technical University of Munich
81675 Munich

Sandris Lacis

Department of Physics
University of Latvia
Zellu str.8
LV-1586

Riga
Latvia
lacis@unice.fr

Mario Liu
Institut für Theoretische Physik
Universität Tübingen
D-72676 Tübingen
Germany
mario.liu@uni-tuebingen.de

Alain Meunier
LPMC
UMR 6622
University of Nice
Parc Valrose
06108 Nice Cedex 2
France
ameunier@unice.fr

Konstantin I. Morozov
Institute of Continuous Media
Mechanics
UB of Russian Academy of Sciences
614013 Perm
Russia
mrk@icmm.ru

Hanns Walter Müller
Max-Planck Institut für Polymer-
forschung
Ackermannweg 10
D-55128 Mainz
Germany
hwm@mpip-mainz.mpg.de

Stefan Odenbach
ZARM
University of Bremen
Am Fallturm
D-28359 Bremen
Germany
odenbach@zarm.uni-bremen.de

Fritz G. Parak
Physics-Department E 17
Technical University of Munich
81675 Munich
Germany
fritz.parak@ph.tum.de

Ronald E. Rosensweig
Consultant
Summit, NJ
U.S.A.
rerosen@comcast.net

Roswitha Schmid
Department of Otorhinolaryngology
Head and Neck Surgery,
Klinikum rechts der Isar
Technical University of Munich
81675 Munich
Rosi.Klein@lrz.tu-muenchen.de

A. Schmidt
Department of Otorhinolaryngology
Head and Neck Surgery,
Klinikum rechts der Isar
Technical University of Munich
81675 Munich

Mark I. Shliomis
Department of Mechanical Engineer-
ing
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
P.O.B. 653
Beer-Sheva 84105
Israel
shliomis@netvision.net.il

Steffen Thurm
ZARM
University of Bremen
Am Fallturm
D-28359 Bremen
Germany
thurm@zarm.uni-bremen.de

Olga Volkova

LPMC

UMR 6622

University of Nice

Parc Valrose

06108 Nice Cedex 2

France

volkova@unice.fr

Albrecht Wiedenmann

Hahn-Meitner-Institut Berlin

Glienicker Strasse 100

D-14109 Berlin

Germany

Wiedenmann@hmi.de

Andrey Yu. Zubarev

Department of Mathematical Physics

Ural State University

Lenin Av., 51

620083 Ekaterinburg

Russia

Andrey.Zubarev@usu.ru

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