



Molecular Crystals and Liquid Crystals

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/gmcl20>

FOREWORD

Version of record first published: 18 Oct 2010

To cite this article: (2003): FOREWORD, *Molecular Crystals and Liquid Crystals*, 398:1, 5-6

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15421400390220818>

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FOREWORD

This volume jointly presents the Proceedings of the first Italian-Japanese workshop on Liquid Crystals and of the 5th National Meeting of the Italian Liquid Crystal Society (SICL) held in Erice from 7 to 14 July 2002.

SICL was founded in 1994 by a group of Italian researchers active in the different area of Liquid Crystals Science. It has now about 200 members from more than 30 universities, laboratories and industries in Italy. SICL has been chaired by Prof. E. Chiellini (Pisa) and by Prof. F. Simoni (Ancona) and currently its President is Dr. P. Pasini (Bologna). The national meeting, which occurs every two years, is the traditional Italian site for presentation of the wide spectrum of scientific activities in the field of liquid crystals spanning from synthesis of new materials to structural properties, from interfacial phenomena to optical properties, from confined geometries to advanced photonic applications. It usually gathers chemists, physicists and engineers working in this field, providing a forum for young scientists to present their work and to interact with selected experts in the field. These national meetings started in 1994 in Amalfi, and since have been held in Marina di Ravenna (1996), Mondello (1998) and Reggio Calabria (2000). The 2002 event was organized in Erice within the framework of the International Liquid Crystal School established at the E. Majorana Centre in 1998 and directed by Prof. C. Zannoni. The days before the 2002 SICL meeting dates, the Italian Liquid Crystal Society and the Japanese Liquid Crystal Society have organized the first joint workshop with the aim of bringing together members of the liquid crystal communities of Italy and Japan for a presentation and discussion of recent results in the research efforts undertaken by these two communities. It is hoped that this joint Workshop will facilitate exchange and scientific cooperation between Italy and Japan in the more innovative areas of liquid crystal science and technology. The format of the workshop has been based on a number of keynote talks of leading Italian and Japanese scientists. In addition there was an opportunity for other participants to present their latest work as posters.

The two meetings have been attended by about one hundred scientists, 26 of them coming from Japan and some participants from other countries. The working schedule included 34 invited talks, mainly at the SICL-JLCS meeting, 9 oral presentations and 41 poster communications.

Some of the original contributions discussed in Erice were submitted for these Proceedings and the papers that appear here were refereed according to the standard procedure of this Journal.

The successful organization of the two meetings was only possible thanks to the help of many people and we would like to mention in particular Dr. C. Chiccoli, Dr. S. Orlandi and Dr. V. Stanic. The precious assistance of Miss S. Franguelli was essential for collecting and editing the manuscripts of this special issue. Moreover, it is a pleasure to thank the Director of EMFCSC, Prof. A. Zichichi, and the competent and helpful staff of the Erice Center, in particular Mr. P. Aceto and Mrs. F. Ruggiu. We also acknowledge financial contributions from Società Italiana Cristalli Liquidi (SICL), Ente per le Nuove tecnologie, l'Energia e l'Ambiente (ENEA), the Italian Consortium for Science and Technology of Materials (INSTM), the Physics Department of the University of Naples and the National Institute for Physics of Matter (INFM).

April 2003

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