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Liquid Crystalline Polymers and Their Nanocomposites

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Message from the Guest Editor

The liquid crystal (LC) states of polymers were discovered with the discovery of aramids, such as poly(p-phenylene terephthalamide) (Kevlar) and poly(p-benzamide), by DuPont de Nemours Co. in the 1970s. These aromatic polyamides form LC states when dissolved in a solvent (lyotropic), such as sulfuric acid. In addition, the commercialization of aromatic polyesters (e.g., Xydar® and Vectra®) that form LC states in melts (thermotropic) in the 1980s sparked the continued and unabated growth of the field of LC polymers (LCPs). Wholly aromatic LCPs are highly crystalline, insoluble, and very often interactive materials. These polymers have a very high melting temperature, and, thus, they cannot be readily processed by spinning or molding. However, LCPs should be structurally modified to overcome these processing issues and prevent their thermal degradation before melting. The most common method for structural modification is to combine different mesogenic monomers, such as bulky side substituents, flexible alkyl side groups, or kink (nonlinear)-structured monomers.

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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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