液晶モノマーの傾斜光重合による分子配向パターン形成 メカニズム

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Mechanism of Molecular Orientation Pattern Formation by Gradient Photopolymerization of Liquid-Crystalline Monomers

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We have recently discovered that the periodic pattern of the molecular orientation of liquid crystal can be spontaneously formed by gradient photopolymerization of liquid-crystalline monomers. Since liquid crystals show optical anisotropy, the liquid crystal polymers with the periodic orientation pattern can be useful for the highly functional optical materials. However, the mechanism of the orientational pattern formation has not been still unclear. So far, we found that the orientational pattern formation occurs simultaneously with the formation of the dissipative structures of polymer, and that the interdiffusion of monomers and non-polymerizable molecules is the key to this phenomenon. In this study, we discussed the mechanism of the orientational pattern formation in details. The gradient photopolymerization was performed using mixtures of liquid-crystalline/non-liquid-crystalline monomers and non-polymerizable molecules (Figure 1). The periodic structures formed by the polymerization were compared to discuss the mechanism.

Keywords: Liquid crystal; Photopolymerization; Polymer concentration distribution

これまでに、液晶性モノマーと非重合性の液晶性低分子化合物の混合物を傾斜光重合すると、生成高分子の周期的な濃度分布と周期的な分子配向変化が同時に形成される現象を見出した。周期構造の形成メカニズムとして、光重合過程におけるモノマーと非重合性低分子化合物の相互拡散が鍵となると推察される。本研究では、このメカニズムをより詳細に検討するために、Figure 1 に示す液晶性/非液晶のモノマーおよび非重合性化合物を組み合わせて傾斜光重合を行い、形成される構造を観察した。液晶性モノマーと非液晶性低分子を混合した系を重合すると、周期的な分子配向変化に基づく縞状の構造を偏光顕微鏡観察により確認した。このことより、周期構造の形成は非重合性化合物の液晶性には依存しないことが明らかとなった。

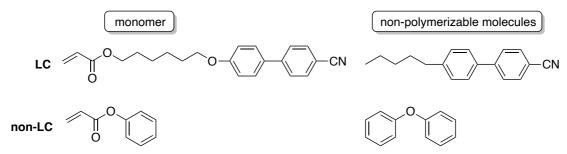


Figure 1 Molecular structures of liquid-crystalline/non-liquid-crystalline monomers and non-polymerizable molecules used in this study.