

MS13 Structural Characterization of Functional Materials

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Dynamic, adaptive and self-healing crystals

P. Naumov¹

¹New York University Abu Dhabi - Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates)

Abstract

The anticipated shift in focal point of interest of solid-state chemists, crystal engineers and crystallographers from structure to properties to function of organic solids parallels the need to apply our accumulated understanding of the intricacies of crystal structure to explaining the related properties, with the ultimate goal of harnessing that knowledge in applications that require soft, light-weight, and/or biocompatible organic solids.¹ In these developments, the adaptive molecular single crystals warrant a particular attention as an alternative choice of materials for light, flexible, and environmentally benign devices, primarily memories, capacitors, sensors, and actuators. Some of the outstanding requirements for application of these dynamic materials as high-efficiency energy storage devices are strongly induced polarization, high switching field, and narrow hysteresis in case of reversible dynamic processes. However, having been studied almost exclusively by chemists, molecular crystals still lack the appropriate investigations that reliably evaluate their reproducibility, scalability, and actuating performance, and some important drawbacks have diverted the interest of engineers from these materials in applications. United under the umbrella term crystal adaptionics, the recent research efforts aim to realistically assess the appositeness of dynamic crystals for applications that require fast, reversible and continuous operation over prolonged periods of time. With the aim to highlight the most recent developments in the research of adaptive molecular crystals, this Perspective article discusses their assets and pitfalls. It also provides some hints on the likely future developments that capitalize on the untapped, sequestered potential for applications of this distinct materials class.

References

[1] P. Naumov, D. P. Karothu, E. Ahmed, L. Catalano, P. Commins, J. Mahmoud Halabi, M. B. Al-Handawi, L. Li, The Rise of the Dynamic Crystals (perspective article), *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* 142 (2020) 13256.

