

❖ Potential and Excess Charge Density as a Function of Distance from the Central Ion

In order to determine the potential and excess charge density as a function of radial distance r , consider a very small volume element dV , situated at distance r from the reference ion, in which ψ_r and ρ_r are electrostatic potential and excess charge density, respectively.

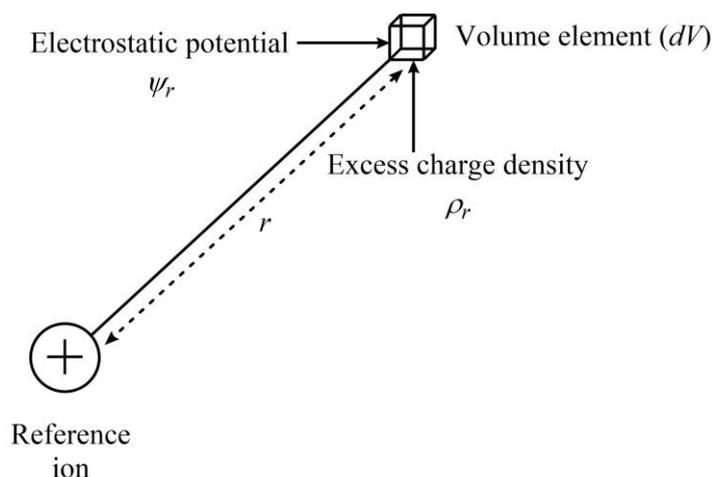


Figure 6. The depiction of electrostatic potential and excess charge density in dV volume element at distance r from the reference ion.

Since we want to study how electrostatic potential and excess charge density depend upon the distance from the reference ion, the first thing we need to develop it mathematically is a correlation of these two parameters i.e. ψ_r and ρ_r . One such relation for spherically symmetric charge distribution is the Poisson's equation in electrostatics which can be given as:

$$\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{d}{dr} \left(r^2 \frac{d\psi_r}{dr} \right) = -\frac{4\pi}{\epsilon} \rho_r \quad (33)$$

Now the excess charge density in the volume element dV can be obtained by multiplying the total number of ions per unit volume with their corresponding charges i.e.

$$\rho_r = n_1 Z_1 e_0 + n_2 Z_2 e_0 + n_3 Z_3 e_0 \dots n_i Z_i e_0 \quad (34)$$

or

$$\rho_r = \sum n_i Z_i e_0 \quad (35)$$

Where n_1 is the number of first kind ions with $Z_1 e_0$ charge, n_2 is the number of second kind ions with $Z_2 e_0$ charge and so on up to i th type.

Now, from the Boltzmann distribution law of classical statistical mechanics, we know that

$$n_i = n_i^0 e^{-U/kT} \quad (36)$$

Where U represents the total change in the potential energy of the i th particle in going from the bulk concentration n_i^0 to the actual concentration of the i th particle i.e. n_i . At this stage, three cases arise, the magnitude of U can be zero, positive or negative. If $U = 0$ i.e. there are no ion-ion interaction, $n_i = n_i^0$, which implies that concentration near the reference ion will be equal to the bulk concentration. If $U = -$, i.e., there are attractive ion-ion interaction, $n_i > n_i^0$, which implies that concentration near the reference ion will be higher to the bulk concentration. In the third scenario, if $U = +$, i.e., there are repulsive ion-ion interaction, $n_i < n_i^0$, which implies that concentration near the reference ion will be less to the bulk concentration. Now according to the Debye-Huckel model, only simple Coulombic forces need to be considered for very dilute solutions. Therefore, excluding all other short-range interactions like dispersion ones, the potential of average force U simply can be written as given below.

$$U = Z_i e_0 \psi_r \quad (37)$$

After using the value of U from equation (37) in equation (36), we get

$$n_i = n_i^0 e^{-Z_i e_0 \psi_r / kT} \quad (38)$$

Putting the value of n_i from equation (38) in equation (35), we have

$$\rho_r = \sum n_i^0 Z_i e_0 e^{-Z_i e_0 \psi_r / kT} \quad (39)$$

Now because the Debye-Huckel model considers the solutions in which ψ_r is much less than kT , we can conclude that $Z_i e_0 \psi_r \ll kT$. Therefore, $e^{-Z_i e_0 \psi_r / kT}$ can be expanded as

$$\rho_r = \sum n_i^0 Z_i e_0 \left(1 - \frac{Z_i e_0 \psi_r}{kT} \right) \quad (40)$$

or

$$\rho_r = \sum n_i^0 Z_i e_0 - \sum \frac{n_i^0 Z_i^2 e_0^2 \psi_r}{kT} \quad (41)$$

The first term of the above equation gives the net charge on the whole of the solution, and it must be zero since the overall electrical neutrality is maintained. Therefore, the above equation takes the form

$$\rho_r = - \sum \frac{n_i^0 Z_i^2 e_0^2 \psi_r}{kT} \quad (42)$$

The above equation is the “linearized Boltzmann distribution”.

Rearranging the Poisson's equation for excess charge density i.e. equation (33), we get

$$\rho_r = -\frac{\varepsilon}{4\pi} \left[\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{d}{dr} \left(r^2 \frac{d\psi_r}{dr} \right) \right] \quad (43)$$

Where n_i^0 is the bulk concentration of the i th species and k is simply the Boltzmann constant. Equating the Poisson's expression with the Boltzmann Formula i.e. from equation (43) and (42), we get the linearized Poisson Boltzmann equation as:

$$-\frac{\varepsilon}{4\pi} \left[\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{d}{dr} \left(r^2 \frac{d\psi_r}{dr} \right) \right] = -\sum_i \frac{n_i^0 Z_i^2 e_0^2 \psi_r}{kT} \quad (44)$$

or

$$\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{d}{dr} \left(r^2 \frac{d\psi_r}{dr} \right) = \left(\frac{4\pi}{\varepsilon kT} \sum_i n_i^0 Z_i^2 e_0^2 \right) \psi_r \quad (45)$$

Now assume a constant κ^2 with value

$$\kappa^2 = \frac{4\pi}{\varepsilon kT} \sum_i n_i^0 Z_i^2 e_0^2 \quad (46)$$

Using the value of equation (46) in equation (45), we get

$$\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{d}{dr} \left(r^2 \frac{d\psi_r}{dr} \right) = \kappa^2 \psi_r \quad (47)$$

To solve the above differential equation, assume that ψ_r is a function of a new variable, called μ , as

$$\psi_r = \frac{\mu}{r} \quad (48)$$

Differentiating equation (48), we get

$$\frac{d\psi_r}{dr} = -\frac{\mu}{r^2} + \frac{1}{r} \frac{d\mu}{dr} \quad (49)$$

Multiplying both sides by r^2

$$r^2 \frac{d\psi_r}{dr} = -\mu + r \frac{d\mu}{dr} \quad (50)$$

Now first multiplying both sides by d/dr and then by $1/r^2$, we get

$$\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{d}{dr} \left(r^2 \frac{d\psi_r}{dr} \right) = \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{d}{dr} \left(-\mu + r \frac{d\mu}{dr} \right) \quad (51)$$

or

$$\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{d}{dr} \left(r^2 \frac{d\psi_r}{dr} \right) = \frac{1}{r^2} \left(-\frac{d\mu}{dr} + r \frac{d^2\mu}{dr^2} + \frac{d\mu}{dr} \right) \quad (52)$$

$$\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{d}{dr} \left(r^2 \frac{d\psi_r}{dr} \right) = \frac{1}{r} \frac{d^2\mu}{dr^2} \quad (53)$$

Using the value of equation (48) and (53) into equation (47), we have

$$\frac{1}{r} \frac{d^2\mu}{dr^2} = \kappa^2 \frac{\mu}{r} \quad (54)$$

or

$$\frac{d^2\mu}{dr^2} = \kappa^2 \mu \quad (55)$$

The general solution of such an equation may be written as

$$\mu = Ae^{-\kappa r} + Be^{+\kappa r} \quad (56)$$

Where A and B are two unknown constants. Now using the value of μ from equation (56) into equation (48), we get

$$\psi_r = A \frac{e^{-\kappa r}}{r} + B \frac{e^{+\kappa r}}{r} \quad (57)$$

Since the potential at $r = \infty$ must vanish, this boundary condition is satisfied only if $B = 0$. Therefore, the acceptable form of the equation (57) should be like this

$$\psi_r = A \frac{e^{-\kappa r}}{r} \quad (58)$$

To evaluate the value of constant, imagine a situation in which ions are so apart from each other that there are no ion-ion interactions. Such a situation can be created by diluting the solution to a very large extent. In this state, potential around the reference ion will simply be due to the reference ion itself i.e.

$$\psi_r = \frac{Z_i e_0}{\epsilon r} \quad (59)$$

Furthermore, at such large dilution, the bulk concentration will almost be zero ($n_i^0 = 0$) which in turn would make $\kappa = 0$. Thus, the equation (58) in such a scenario will be

$$\psi_r = \frac{A}{r} \quad (60)$$

Equating the results of equation (59) and (60), we have

$$\frac{Z_i e_0}{\epsilon r} = \frac{A}{r} \quad (61)$$

or

$$A = \frac{Z_i e_0 r}{\epsilon r} \quad (62)$$

After putting the value of A from equation (62) in equation (58), the final result for electrostatic potential is

$$\psi_r = \frac{Z_i e_0}{\epsilon} \frac{e^{-\kappa r}}{r} \quad (63)$$

The expression is the solution of the linearized Poisson-Boltzmann equation.

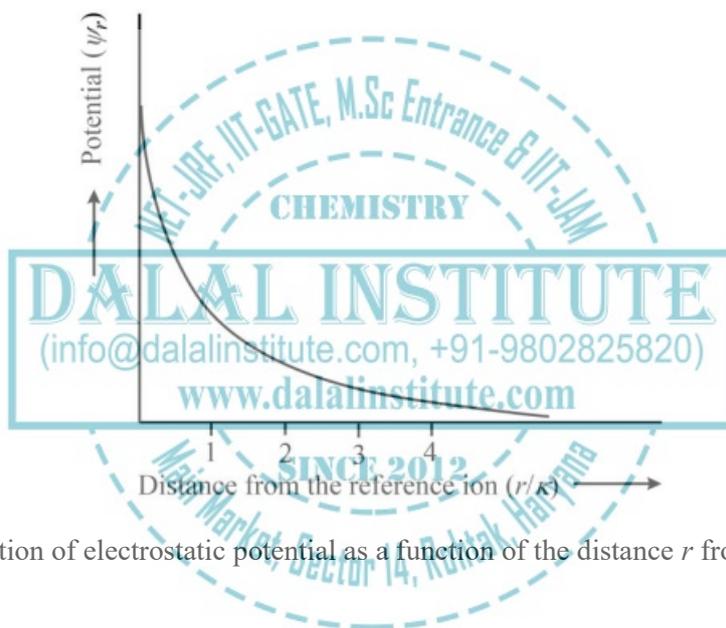


Figure 7. The variation of electrostatic potential as a function of the distance r from the reference ion.

Now, in order to evaluate the excess charge density as a function of distance from the reference ion, compare equation (33) and equation (47) i.e.

$$\kappa^2 \psi_r = -\frac{4\pi}{\epsilon} \rho_r \quad (64)$$

or

$$\rho_r = -\frac{\epsilon \kappa^2 \psi_r}{4\pi} \quad (65)$$

Now putting the value of electrostatic potential from equation (63) in equation (65), we get the expression for excess charge density as a function of r .

$$\rho_r = -\frac{\varepsilon\kappa^2}{4\pi} \times \frac{Z_i e_0}{\varepsilon} \frac{e^{-\kappa r}}{r} \quad (66)$$

$$\rho_r = -\frac{Z_i e_0 \kappa^2}{4\pi r} e^{-\kappa r} \quad (67)$$

Now because the magnitude of ρ_r is a consequence of the unequal distribution of anions and cations, the above also defines the ionic population distribution around the reference ion.

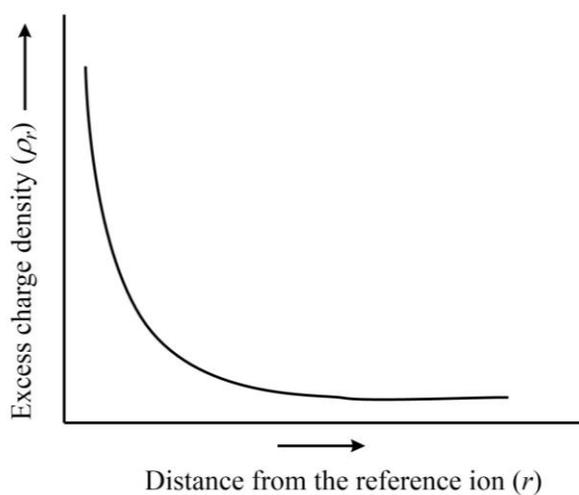


Figure 8. The variation of excess charge density as a function of the distance r from the reference ion.

Hence, the magnitude of excess charge density declines exponentially as the distance from the reference increases. It is also worthy to note that the sign of excess charge around the reference ion is always opposite to the reference ion. A negatively charged reference ion has a positively charged surrounding atmosphere and vice-versa.

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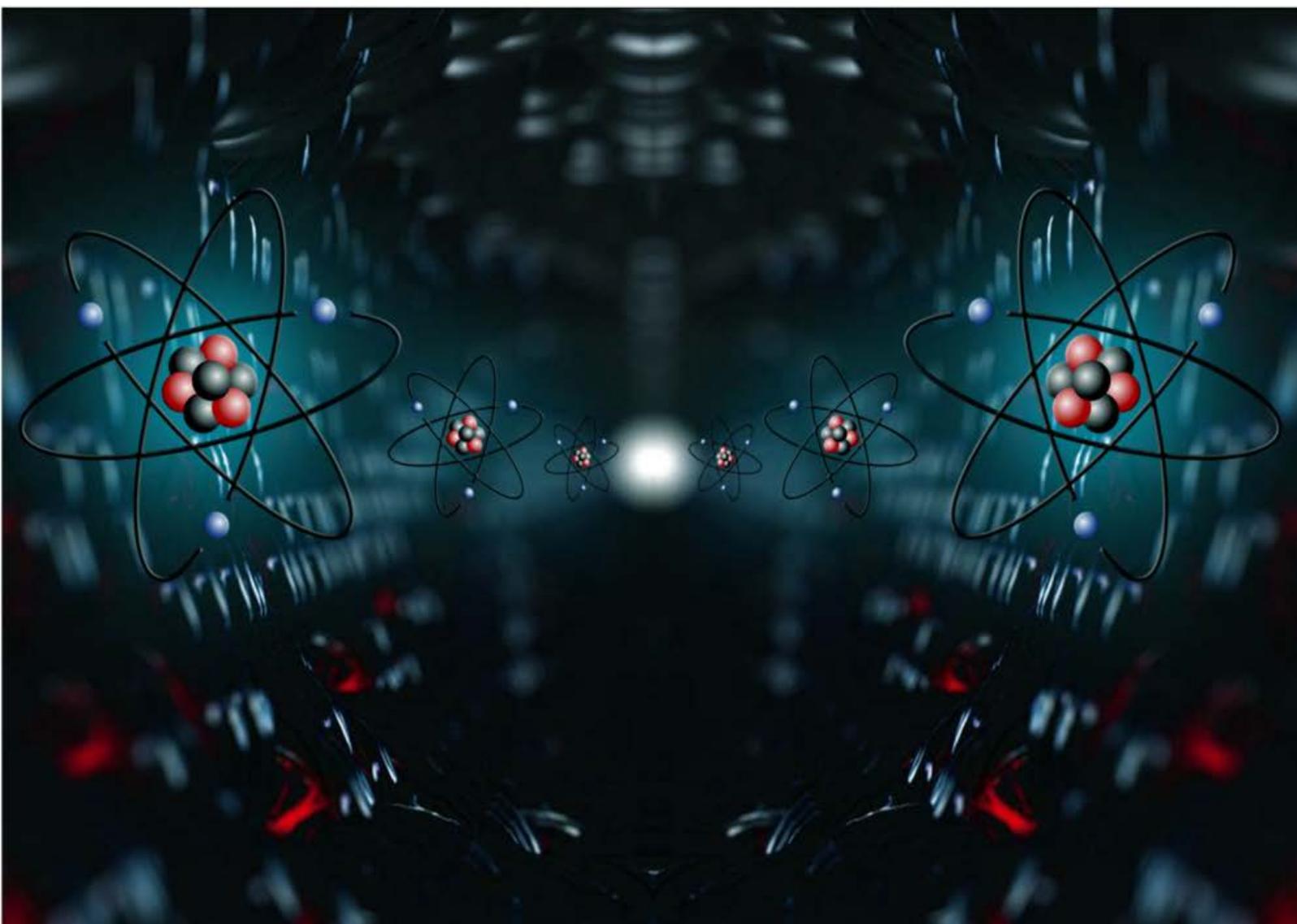
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Volume I

MANDEEP DALAL



First Edition

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Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1	11
Quantum Mechanics – I	11
❖ Postulates of Quantum Mechanics	11
❖ Derivation of Schrodinger Wave Equation.....	16
❖ Max-Born Interpretation of Wave Functions	21
❖ The Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle.....	24
❖ Quantum Mechanical Operators and Their Commutation Relations.....	29
❖ Hermitian Operators – Elementary Ideas, Quantum Mechanical Operator for Linear Momentum, Angular Momentum and Energy as Hermitian Operator	52
❖ The Average Value of the Square of Hermitian Operators	62
❖ Commuting Operators and Uncertainty Principle (x & p ; E & t).....	63
❖ Schrodinger Wave Equation for a Particle in One Dimensional Box.....	65
❖ Evaluation of Average Position, Average Momentum and Determination of Uncertainty in Position and Momentum and Hence Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle.....	70
❖ Pictorial Representation of the Wave Equation of a Particle in One Dimensional Box and Its Influence on the Kinetic Energy of the Particle in Each Successive Quantum Level	75
❖ Lowest Energy of the Particle	80
❖ Problems	82
❖ Bibliography	83
CHAPTER 2	84
Thermodynamics – I	84
❖ Brief Resume of First and Second Law of Thermodynamics.....	84
❖ Entropy Changes in Reversible and Irreversible Processes.....	87
❖ Variation of Entropy with Temperature, Pressure and Volume	92
❖ Entropy Concept as a Measure of Unavailable Energy and Criteria for the Spontaneity of Reaction	94
❖ Free Energy, Enthalpy Functions and Their Significance, Criteria for Spontaneity of a Process ...	98
❖ Partial Molar Quantities (Free Energy, Volume, Heat Concept).....	104
❖ Gibb’s-Duhem Equation.....	108
❖ Problems	111
❖ Bibliography	112

CHAPTER 3	113
Chemical Dynamics – I.....	113
❖ Effect of Temperature on Reaction Rates.....	113
❖ Rate Law for Opposing Reactions of Ist Order and IInd Order.....	119
❖ Rate Law for Consecutive & Parallel Reactions of Ist Order Reactions	127
❖ Collision Theory of Reaction Rates and Its Limitations	135
❖ Steric Factor.....	141
❖ Activated Complex Theory	143
❖ Ionic Reactions: Single and Double Sphere Models	147
❖ Influence of Solvent and Ionic Strength.....	152
❖ The Comparison of Collision and Activated Complex Theory	157
❖ Problems.....	158
❖ Bibliography.....	159
CHAPTER 4	160
Electrochemistry – I: Ion-Ion Interactions	160
❖ The Debye-Huckel Theory of Ion-Ion Interactions.....	160
❖ Potential and Excess Charge Density as a Function of Distance from the Central Ion.....	168
❖ Debye-Huckel Reciprocal Length	173
❖ Ionic Cloud and Its Contribution to the Total Potential	176
❖ Debye-Huckel Limiting Law of Activity Coefficients and Its Limitations.....	178
❖ Ion-Size Effect on Potential.....	185
❖ Ion-Size Parameter and the Theoretical Mean - Activity Coefficient in the Case of Ionic Clouds with Finite-Sized Ions.....	187
❖ Debye-Huckel-Onsager Treatment for Aqueous Solutions and Its Limitations.....	190
❖ Debye-Huckel-Onsager Theory for Non-Aqueous Solutions.....	195
❖ The Solvent Effect on the Mobility at Infinite Dilution	196
❖ Equivalent Conductivity (Λ) vs Concentration $C^{1/2}$ as a Function of the Solvent	198
❖ Effect of Ion Association Upon Conductivity (Debye-Huckel-Bjerrum Equation)	200
❖ Problems.....	209
❖ Bibliography.....	210
CHAPTER 5	211
Quantum Mechanics – II	211
❖ Schrodinger Wave Equation for a Particle in a Three Dimensional Box	211

❖ The Concept of Degeneracy Among Energy Levels for a Particle in Three Dimensional Box	215
❖ Schrodinger Wave Equation for a Linear Harmonic Oscillator & Its Solution by Polynomial Method	217
❖ Zero Point Energy of a Particle Possessing Harmonic Motion and Its Consequence	229
❖ Schrodinger Wave Equation for Three Dimensional Rigid Rotator.....	231
❖ Energy of Rigid Rotator	241
❖ Space Quantization.....	243
❖ Schrodinger Wave Equation for Hydrogen Atom: Separation of Variable in Polar Spherical Coordinates and Its Solution	247
❖ Principal, Azimuthal and Magnetic Quantum Numbers and the Magnitude of Their Values.....	268
❖ Probability Distribution Function.....	276
❖ Radial Distribution Function	278
❖ Shape of Atomic Orbitals (<i>s</i> , <i>p</i> & <i>d</i>).....	281
❖ Problems.....	287
❖ Bibliography	288
CHAPTER 6	289
Thermodynamics – II.....	289
❖ Clausius-Clapeyron Equation.....	289
❖ Law of Mass Action and Its Thermodynamic Derivation	293
❖ Third Law of Thermodynamics (Nernst Heat Theorem, Determination of Absolute Entropy, Unattainability of Absolute Zero) And Its Limitation.....	296
❖ Phase Diagram for Two Completely Miscible Components Systems	304
❖ Eutectic Systems (Calculation of Eutectic Point).....	311
❖ Systems Forming Solid Compounds A_xB_y with Congruent and Incongruent Melting Points	321
❖ Phase Diagram and Thermodynamic Treatment of Solid Solutions.....	332
❖ Problems.....	342
❖ Bibliography	343
CHAPTER 7	344
Chemical Dynamics – II	344
❖ Chain Reactions: Hydrogen-Bromine Reaction, Pyrolysis of Acetaldehyde, Decomposition of Ethane.....	344
❖ Photochemical Reactions (Hydrogen-Bromine & Hydrogen-Chlorine Reactions).....	352
❖ General Treatment of Chain Reactions (Ortho-Para Hydrogen Conversion and Hydrogen-Bromine Reactions).....	358

❖ Apparent Activation Energy of Chain Reactions	362
❖ Chain Length	364
❖ Rice-Herzfeld Mechanism of Organic Molecules Decomposition (Acetaldehyde)	366
❖ Branching Chain Reactions and Explosions (H_2-O_2 Reaction)	368
❖ Kinetics of (One Intermediate) Enzymatic Reaction: Michaelis-Menten Treatment	371
❖ Evaluation of Michaelis's Constant for Enzyme-Substrate Binding by Lineweaver-Burk Plot and Eadie-Hofstee Methods	375
❖ Competitive and Non-Competitive Inhibition	378
❖ Problems	388
❖ Bibliography	389
CHAPTER 8	390
Electrochemistry – II: Ion Transport in Solutions	390
❖ Ionic Movement Under the Influence of an Electric Field	390
❖ Mobility of Ions	393
❖ Ionic Drift Velocity and Its Relation with Current Density	394
❖ Einstein Relation Between the Absolute Mobility and Diffusion Coefficient	398
❖ The Stokes-Einstein Relation	401
❖ The Nernst-Einstein Equation	403
❖ Walden's Rule	404
❖ The Rate-Process Approach to Ionic Migration	406
❖ The Rate-Process Equation for Equivalent Conductivity	410
❖ Total Driving Force for Ionic Transport: Nernst-Planck Flux Equation	412
❖ Ionic Drift and Diffusion Potential	416
❖ The Onsager Phenomenological Equations	418
❖ The Basic Equation for the Diffusion	419
❖ Planck-Henderson Equation for the Diffusion Potential	422
❖ Problems	425
❖ Bibliography	426
INDEX	427



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