# LIQUID INTERFACES IN CHEMISTRY AND BIOLOGY



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### LIQUID INTERFACES IN CHEMISTRY AND BIOLOGY

## PREFACE

Phenomena involving interfaces have fascinated man since the beginning of recorded history. Over 2000 years ago ancient philosophers contemplated the interface between oil and water. Pliny the Elder (23–79 B.C.) documented his observations in the treatise "Historie Naturalis" and noted that waves could be dampened by pouring oil into water (Pliny, 1962). The mechanism underlying this effect is still not clear even today.

Titus Lucretius Carus (99–55 B.C.) discussed the ability of various liquids to mix with one another in his book "De Rerum Natura" and "crying teardrops of wine" were described in which droplets of alcohol-containing fluids appear to crawl up the side of a glass (Lucretius, 1953). In physical chemistry this is known as the Marangoni effect. Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) repeated Pliny the Elder's experiments with wave dampening and described the rise of a liquid in a small bore tube. This became known as capillarity because the tubes that were used were as fine as a hair. (The word capillus means hair in Latin.)

These and many other observations over time have culminated in the field known as surface science, which seeks to understand the physics and chemistry of interfaces. In most experimental situations only processes occurring in bulk phases are considered while those taking place at the interface between different phases go largely unnoticed. Yet the interfacial region can have totally unexpected properties, not intuitively apparent from a knowledge of bulk phase properties. Examples of interfacial phenomena include the ability to produce large ( $10 \times 10^6 \, \text{V m}^{-1}$ ) electrical fields at an interface due to asymmetric charge and dipole distribution; dramatic effects on solute distribution in a bulk phase due to differences in the energies required to partition a solute between the two phases; and development of catalytic sites at the interface of a dispersed two-phase system which allows reactions to take place that would not proceed in the bulk phases alone.

Processes occurring at the interface between two immiscible liquids are fundamental to life since cells and organelles are defined by membranes consisting of lipid bilayers that separate fluid compartments. Virtually all energy conversion processes in living organisms occur at these interfaces. The properties of liquid—liquid interfaces are also fundamental to a variety of industries including pharmaceuticals,

#### X PREFACE

cosmetics, paints, detergents, oil extraction processes, and mining.

Despite their obvious interest and significance, liquid-liquid interfaces are often poorly understood. This may stem from the fact that the field is relatively new, and until recently there has been little appreciation of the importance of interfaces to chemistry and biology. For these reasons we have dedicated this book to presenting the fundamental concepts and principal applications of surface science.

This book begins with a discussion of the thermodynamics of liquid interfaces. In Part A we introduce the principles of classical thermodynamics, discuss the measurement of interfacial tension, and present adsorption at liquid interfaces according Gibbs and Hansen's methods. Special attention is given to electrified interfaces in Part B, which includes interfacial potentials, electrocapillarity, and ion resolvation. Part C addresses the structure of interfaces, focusing on specific models of interfacial adsorption and a detailed presentation of the electric double layer. In this section the reader will learn about laser photochemistry at liquid interfaces and recent methods for visualizing interface structure by molecular dynamics. The chemistry of interfacial catalysis is presented in Part D, which includes the theory of ion transfer across interfaces, electrolysis and electrocatalysis at ITIES, and biochemical reactions and photoelectrochemistry with environmental applications. Part E is devoted to biological membranes and presents the topics of membrane thermodynamics, transport, and mechanics. In it we first introduce the structure and properties of biological membranes, then focus on membrane electrostatics and transport of ions and non-electrolytes. The mechanical properties of membranes are presented together with practical applications such as membrane self-organization, electroporation, membrane fusion, and mechanosensitivity. Tables of fundamental constants, useful relations, and quantities can be found in the appendix.

In summary, this book presents both the theory of surface science and its applications in modern biology and chemistry. The authors intend this basic text to be used as an introduction to surface science for scientists and engineers, as a textbook for students, and as reference resource for experts in the field.

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A

# THERMODYNAMICS OF INTERFACES

# INTRODUCTION TO CLASSICAL THERMODYNAMICS

#### 1.1. BASIC CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

The physical properties of liquid-liquid interfaces are modulated by temperature, pressure, and other thermodynamic variables. For this reason we begin with a chapter that outlines basic thermodynamic principles, and illustrate the principles with specific theoretical end experimental examples related to liquid-liquid interfaces.

Thermodynamics deals with the most general properties of macroscopic systems at equilibrium, and processes of transition between different equilibrium states. No special hypotheses about the structure of matter or the nature of heat are involved. Thermodynamic systems consist of large numbers of particles. Depending on its interaction with the environment, a given thermodynamic system can exist in any of four states. A system is called *isolated* if it does not exchange matter or energy with the environment. If the system exchanges only energy with the environment, it is called *closed*, and if the system can exchange both matter and energy, it is called *open*. Some thermodynamic systems cannot exchange heat with the environment, and are referred to as *adiabatically isolated*, or simply adiabatic systems.

Thermodynamic systems can be either homogeneous, or heterogeneous if they contain several physically homogeneous phases. They are characterized by properties called macroscopic parameters. Parameters can be *extensive* (additive) such as volume or weight, or *intensive*, such as density, pressure, and polarizability. Parameters determined by bodies that are not part of the system are called *external parameters*, and parameters determined by movement and distribution in space of particles included in the system, are called *internal parameters*.

A given thermodynamic system is determined by a set of independent parameters

necessary to define the equilibrium state of the system. Processes that occur in the system can change the number of parameters. If in a certain process all parameters change very slowly, so that the system is near equilibrium at all times, the process is called an *equilibrium* or *quasistatic* process. In nonequilibrium processes the individual parts are not in equilibrium with one another, and the number of parameters necessary to describe the system becomes infinite because all points of the system are essentially different.

Quantities that are independent of the previous history of a system and are completely determined by its current state, are called the *functions of state*. One of the most important functions of state is the total energy of the system, which can be divided into external and internal portions. The external energy includes both the kinetic energy and the potential energy of a system in a field of external forces, and all other energy is internal energy.

Two or more systems can exchange energy via work or by exchange of heat. The energy transferred by changing external parameters is called  $work\ W$ , and the energy transferred without changing any external parameters is called  $heat\ Q$ . By convention, the work W is considered positive if it is done by the system on external bodies. The heat Q is considered positive if the energy is transferred from the external environment to the system without changing its external parameters.

Each external parameter a is coupled to a generalized force A, so that the work performed by the system at an infinitely small change of this parameter is equal to

$$\delta W = A \, \mathrm{d}a. \tag{1.1}$$

The generalized force  $A_i$  is a function of external parameters  $a_i$  and of the temperature T. If two or more external parameters are involved in the change, then

$$\delta W = \sum_{i} A_{i} \, \mathrm{d}a_{i}. \tag{1.2}$$

The volume of the system V is one example of an external parameter, and a generalized force related to it is pressure P. In this case

$$\delta W = P \, \mathrm{d}V. \tag{1.3}$$

The work  $W_{ne}$  performed by a system undergoing a nonequilibrium transition from one state to another is always less than the work  $W_{eq}$  of an equilibrium transition

$$W_{\rm ne} < W_{\rm eq}. \tag{1.4}$$

**Equations of State.** In the state of thermodynamic equilibrium all internal parameters of the system are functions of external parameters and temperature. If a generalized force  $A_n$  is an internal parameter linked to an external parameter  $a_n$ , then the equations

$$A_k = A_k(a_1, ..., a_n; T)$$
 (1.5)

are called the thermal equations of state. If an internal parameter is the internal energy U, then the equation

$$U = U(a_1, ..., a_n; T)$$
 (1.6)

is called the equation of energy or the caloric equation of state.

The total number of these equations is equal to the number of degrees of freedom of the system, or the number of independent variables that determine this state.

Simple systems play a special role in thermodynamics. These are single-phase systems with a constant number of particles. The state of such systems is determined by a single external parameter, for example by the volume V and by the temperature T. They are described by one thermal and one caloric equation of state

$$P = P(V, T), \tag{1.7}$$

$$U = U(V, T). (1.8)$$

For example, in the elementary case of an ideal gas, the thermal equation of state is the familiar Clapeyron equation:

$$PV = nRT, (1.9)$$

where n is the number of moles of the gas and R is the gas constant, equal to  $8.31 \,\mathrm{J\,mol^{-1}\,K^{-1}}$ . It is impossible to derive the equation of state from general principles of thermodynamics. Instead, this equation must be determined either experimentally or by methods of statistical physics based on specific models.

Even if we cannot determine an explicit thermal equation of state, the mere fact of its existence leads to important conclusions. For instance, suppose we solve the equation of state (1.7) for the volume:

$$V = V(P, T). \tag{1.10}$$

Any change of the variables P and T produces a change in volume which can be presented as a differential:

$$dV = \left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial P}\right)_T dP + \left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial T}\right)_P dT. \tag{1.11}$$

The coefficients in front of differentials of pressure dP and temperature dT play a very important role in thermodynamics. These are partial derivatives which describe the change of volume in thermodynamic processes. The first coefficient  $(\partial V/\partial P)_T$  gives the isothermal change of volume related to changes of pressure at constant temperature, and characterizes the isothermal compressibility of the material.

The second coefficient  $(\partial V/\partial T)_P$  gives the change of volume with temperature at constant pressure and thereby characterizes volumetric expansion of the body. Obviously, each of these coefficients depends on temperature and pressure.

A similar relationship exists between pressure and temperature. The partial derivative  $(\partial P/\partial T)_V$  characterizes the rate of change of pressure with temperature at constant volume. However, this value is not independent, but can be expressed by the previous two derivatives. If we assume volume in (1.11) to be constant (dV = 0) it follows that

$$\left(\frac{\partial P}{\partial T}\right)_{V} = -\frac{\left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial T}\right)_{P}}{\left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial P}\right)_{T}}.$$
(1.12)

By changing the order of differentiation, one can find

$$\left(\frac{\partial P}{\partial T}\right)_{V} = -\left(\frac{\partial P}{\partial V}\right)_{T} \left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial T}\right)_{P} \tag{1.13}$$

or

$$\left(\frac{\partial P}{\partial V}\right)_T \left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial T}\right)_P \left(\frac{\partial T}{\partial P}\right)_V = -1. \tag{1.14}$$

In this way we can define useful coefficients that describe relationships between the volume, temperature, and pressure in thermodynamic processes. For instance, the coefficient of thermal expansion is the ratio of the derivative  $(\partial V/\partial T)_P$  to the volume  $V_0$  at a given pressure at  $0 \,^{\circ}\text{C}$  (273.15 K):

$$\alpha = \frac{1}{V_0} \left( \frac{\partial V}{\partial T} \right)_P. \tag{1.15}$$

Specifying a volume  $V_0$  that corresponds to a particular temperature 0 °C is required only for gases. For liquid and solid bodies, which expand much less as T increases, the index "0" can be omitted without loss of accuracy.

Other useful thermal coefficients include compressibility

$$\beta = -\frac{1}{V_0} \left( \frac{\partial V}{\partial P} \right)_T \tag{1.16}$$

and thermal coefficient of pressure

$$\gamma = \frac{1}{P_0} \left( \frac{\partial P}{\partial T} \right)_V. \tag{1.17}$$

Using the identity (1.14) one can find the relationship between the coefficients

to be

$$\alpha = P_0 \beta \gamma. \tag{1.18}$$

If the volume and pressure are referred to the zero temperature, the same quantities are called the thermodynamic coefficients of expansion, compression, and pressure:

$$\alpha_t = \frac{1}{V} \left( \frac{\partial V}{\partial T} \right)_P, \qquad \beta_t = -\frac{1}{V} \left( \frac{\partial V}{\partial P} \right)_T, \qquad \gamma_t = \frac{1}{P} \left( \frac{\partial P}{\partial T} \right)_V.$$
 (1.19)

These are related by an equation similar to (1.18).

Sometimes the isothermal modulus of compression is used instead of the coefficient of compression

$$K_T = -V \left(\frac{\partial P}{\partial V}\right)_T = -\left(\frac{\partial P}{\partial \ln V}\right)_T. \tag{1.20}$$

The isothermal modulus of compression  $K_T$  is always positive since any body is compressible to a certain degree. However, the coefficient of thermal expansion  $\alpha$  can have any sign. It is known, for example, that for water in the range from 0 to 4 °C it is negative.

The First Principle of Thermodynamics. The first principle of thermodynamics is that the internal energy of a system is a function of its state, and can only be changed by external influences. The change of internal energy  $\Delta U$  is equal to the sum of heat transferred to the system and the work performed on this system. If W is defined as the work performed by the system, then the first principle can be expressed mathematically as

$$Q = \Delta U + W. \tag{1.21}$$

Therefore the first principle reflects the law of energy conservation. The first principle also states that it is impossible to build an operating engine that could perform more work than the energy transferred to the system from outside. Such an engine is called a perpetual motion machine of the first kind.

For an elementary process, when an infinitesimal amount of heat  $\delta Q$  is transferred, an infinitesimal amount of work  $\delta W$  is performed and the internal energy undergoes an infinitesimal change dU, the equation of the first principle can be expressed as follows

$$\delta Q = \mathrm{d}U + \delta W. \tag{1.22}$$

Thus, if the system has passed from the known state 1 to the known state 2, it is