Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 1
- 1.1 Definition of a plasma 1
- 1.2 Important characteristics 2
- 1.3 Short survey of the applications of plasma physics 6
- 1.4 Interactions between particles 8
- 1.5 Scattering cross-section and mean-free path 12
- 1.6 Momentum transfer cross-section 14
- 1.7 Energy dependences of scattering cross-sections 15
- 1.8 Distribution of particle velocities 18
- 1.9 Transport parameters 20
- 1.10 Thermodynamics of gases 25

References and bibliography 28

2. FUNDAMENTAL PLASMA PROCESSES 30
- 2.1 Particle orbits in electric and magnetic fields 30
- 2.2 Adiabatic invariants 33
- 2.3 Elastic collisions 36
- 2.4 Inelastic collisions 40
- 2.5 Mobility of charge carriers moving in a gas 48
- 2.6 Diffusion and ambipolar diffusion 50
- 2.7 Generation and excitation of charge carriers in a gas 53
- 2.8 Annihilation of charge carriers in a gas 55
- 2.9 Wall and electrode effects 57
- 2.10 Creation of a plasma 60

References and bibliography 63

3. PLASMA EQUATIONS 66
- 3.1 Maxwell's equations 66
- 3.2 Liouville's theorem 68
- 3.3 Boltzmann's equation 70
- 3.4 Macroscopic relations 74
- 3.5 Continuity equation 76
- 3.6 Momentum transport equation 78
- 3.7 Energy conservation equation 80

3.8 Boltzmann's equation treatment of diffusion and mobility 84
3.9 Fully ionised plasmas 86
3.10 The MHD approximation 89
References and bibliography 92

4. RADIATIONS AND WAVES IN PLASMAS 94
4.1 Radiations in a plasma 94
4.2 Plasma sheaths 98
4.3 Plasma oscillations 100
4.4 Electroacoustic waves 102
4.5 Electromagnetic waves 105
4.6 General theories of electromagnetic waves 110
4.7 Wave damping 111
4.8 Beam–plasma interaction 115
4.9 Plasma–plasma interaction 118
4.10 Shock waves 120
References and bibliography 123

5. PLASMA INSTABILITIES AND TURBULENCE 125
5.1 Plasma equilibrium 125
5.2 The magnetohydrodynamic (MHD) approximation 128
5.3 Energy principle 129
5.4 The wave approach 132
5.5 The Boltzmann equation approach 133
5.6 Classification of plasma instabilities 136
5.7 Instability and turbulence 143
5.8 Quasi-linear approximation of turbulence 146
5.9 Weak turbulence 150
5.10 Strong turbulence 153
References and bibliography 156

6. PLASMA DIAGNOSTIC METHODS 159
6.1 Introduction 159
6.2 Optical methods 160
6.3 Spectroscopic methods 164
6.4 Electrostatic and magnetic probes 166
6.5 Cavity perturbation method 173
6.6 Microwave propagation techniques 175
6.7 Dipole resonance methods 178
6.8 Shock tube measurements 180
6.9 Laser techniques 183
6.10 Miscellaneous diagnostic methods 187
References and bibliography 191

7. THERMONUCLEAR FUSION 194
7.1 Introduction 194
7.2 Conditions for thermonuclear fusion 195
7.3 Plasma discharges 200
7.4 Plasma confinement 204

7.5 Open thermonuclear systems 206
7.6 Closed thermonuclear systems 217
7.7 Fusion reactors 227
7.8 Energy production 228
7.9 Thermonuclear power plants 230
7.10 Future trends 231
References and bibliography 232

8. MAGNETOHYDRODYNAMIC APPLICATIONS 235
8.1 Introduction 235
8.2 MHD power generation 237
8.3 MHD a.c. power generation 244
8.4 MHD propulsion 247
8.5 Plasma torch and rockets 253
8.6 MHD pumps 256
8.7 MHD amplification 258
8.8 MHD lubrication 260
8.9 MHD thermal convection 262
8.10 MHD stirring 264
References and bibliography 265

9. THERMIONIC APPLICATIONS 267
9.1 Introduction 267
9.2 Thermionic emission analysis 268
9.3 Vacuum tubes 271
9.4 Gas-filled tubes 276
9.5 Thermionic converters 279
9.6 Magnetic triodes 287
9.7 The plasmatron 290
9.8 The Q-machine 291
9.9 Generation of radio-frequency energy 294
9.10 Thermionic amplifiers 295
References and bibliography 297

10. MASERS AND LASERS 299
10.1 Introduction 299
10.2 Electromagnetic wave generators 300
10.3 Emission of radiation 304
10.4 Amplification of radiation 308
10.5 Paramagnetism and Bloch equations 311
10.6 Masers 314
10.7 Lasers 319
10.8 Material considerations 323
10.9 Applications of the maser 324
10.10 Applications of the laser 325
References and bibliography 329

11. SOLID-STATE PLASMAS 331
11.1 Introduction 331
11.2 Solid-state physics 332

11.3 Motion of charge carriers in the absence of scattering 334
11.4 Motion of charge carriers in the presence of scattering 339
11.5 Generation and annihilation of charge carriers 340
11.6 Collective phenomena 346
11.7 Specific characteristics of solid-state plasmas 349
11.8 Waves in solid-state plasmas 351
11.9 Non-equilibrium solid-state plasmas 358
11.10 Possible engineering applications 359
References and bibliography 364

12. ASTROPHYSICS AND SPACE SCIENCES 366
12.1 Introduction 366
12.2 The earth's atmosphere 366
12.3 The ionosphere 370
12.4 The earth's radiation belts 375
12.5 The magnetosphere and the solar wind 379
12.6 Solar physics 382
12.7 The solar system 390
12.8 The milky way 392
12.9 The world of galaxies 394
12.10 Evolution of the universe 395
References and Bibliography 397

GLOSSARY OF SYMBOLS USED 399

PROBLEMS 404

INDEX 425