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Kudo

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(54) **LIQUID CRYSTAL DISPLAY DEVICE AND
METHOD OF MANUFACTURING THE SAME**

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G02F 1/1335 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **349/114**; 349/113

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 349/114,
349/113

See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

By using a photosensitive organic film, an uneven layer for forming a reflective electrode of a reflective region of a trans-flective liquid crystal display device and a protrusion for multi-division alignment of liquid crystals are concurrently formed. The heights of the uneven layer and of the protrusion are adjusted by using accumulated amounts of light to which the photosensitive organic film is exposed. The uneven layer can be used as an adjusting layer for adjusting the thickness of a liquid crystal layer.

21 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets



FIG. 1A



FIG. 1B

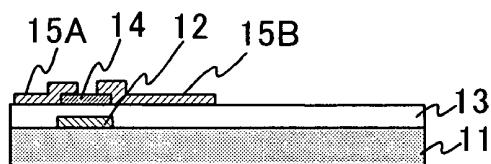


FIG. 1C

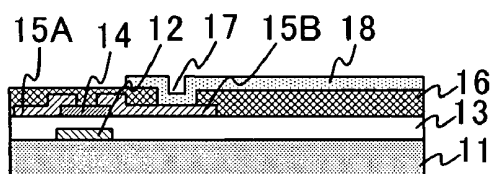


FIG. 1D

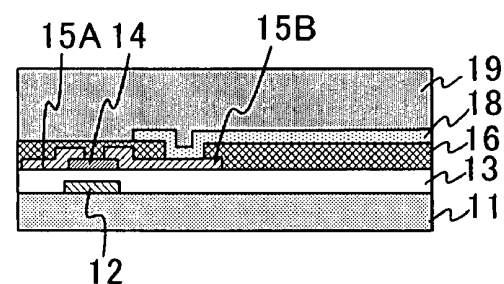


FIG. 1E

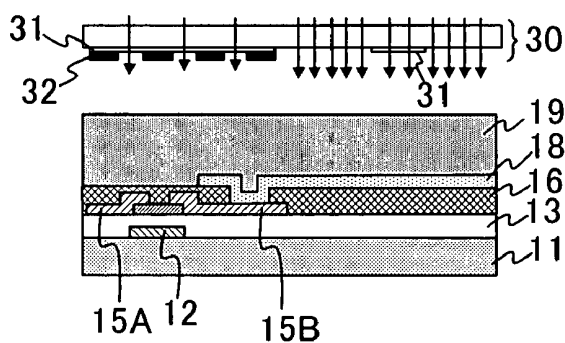


FIG. 1F

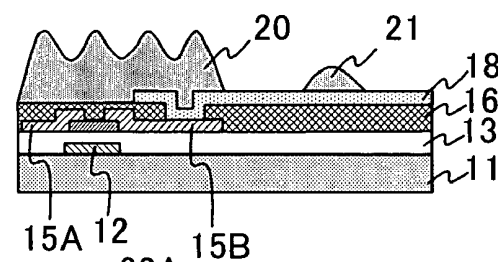


FIG. 1G

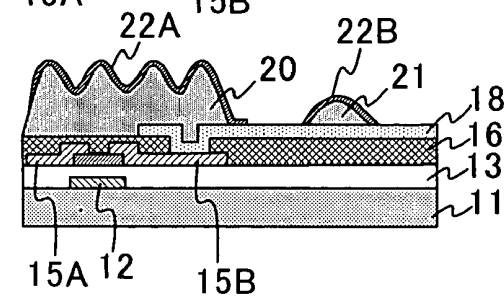


FIG. 2

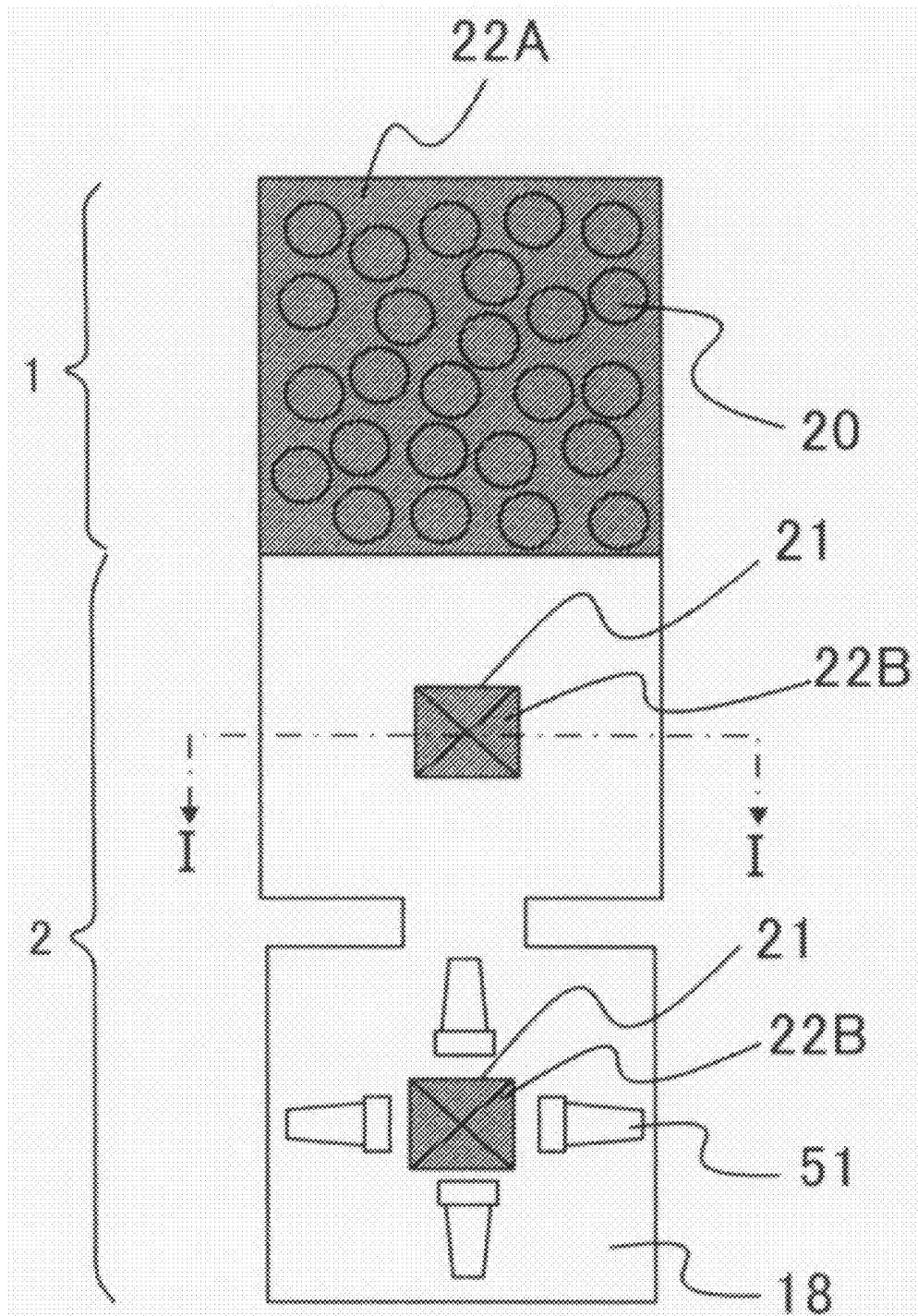


FIG. 3

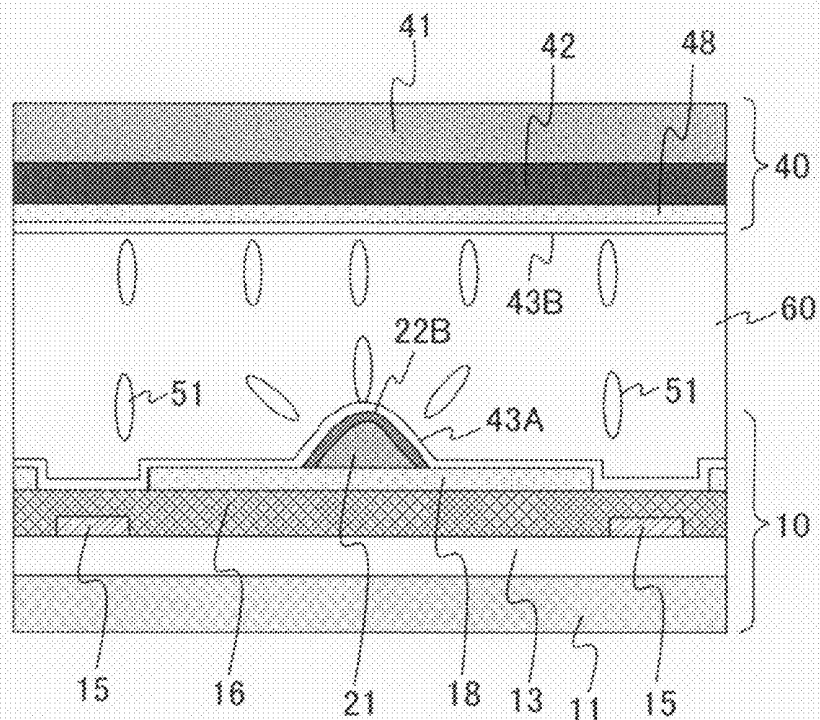


FIG. 4A

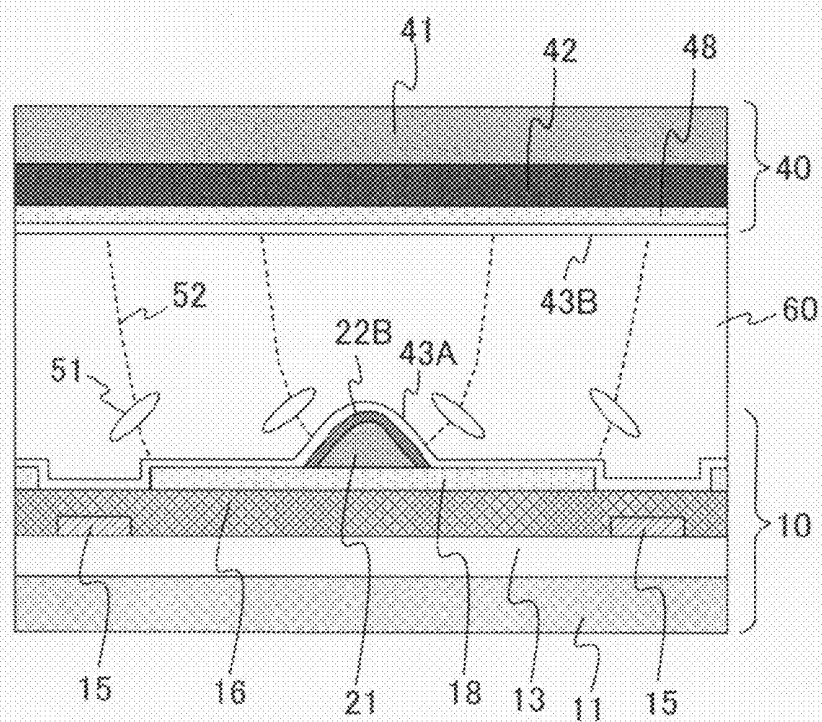


FIG. 4B

FIG. 5A

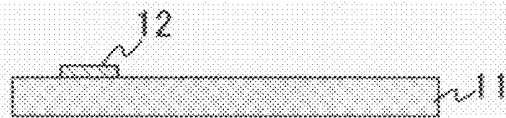


FIG. 5B

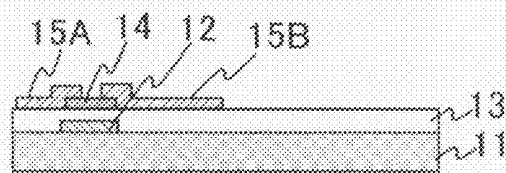


FIG. 5C

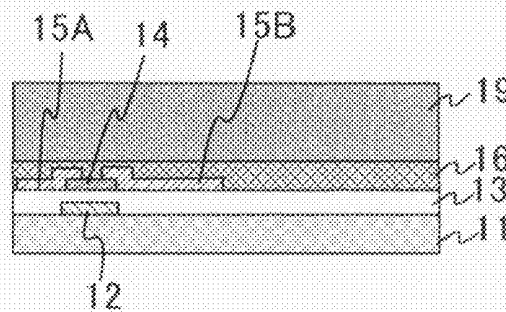


FIG. 5D

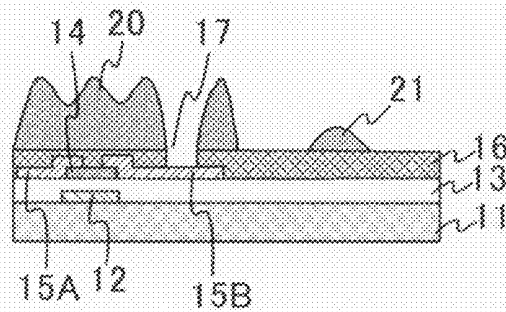


FIG. 5E

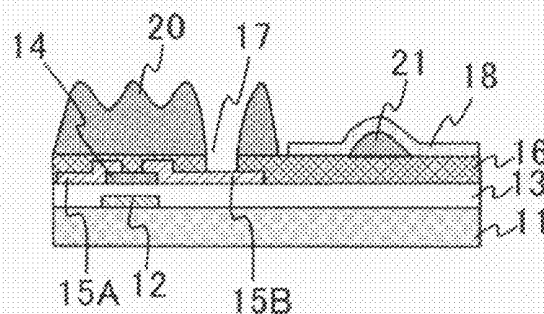
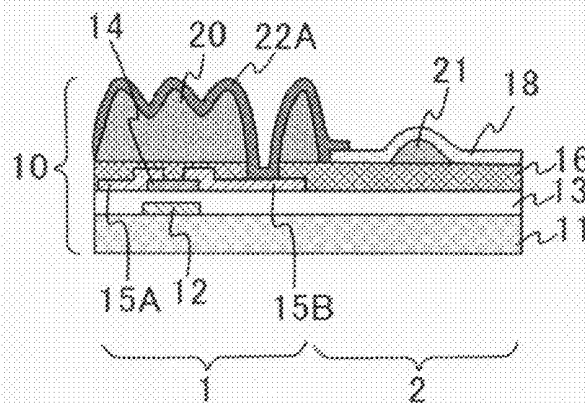


FIG. 5F



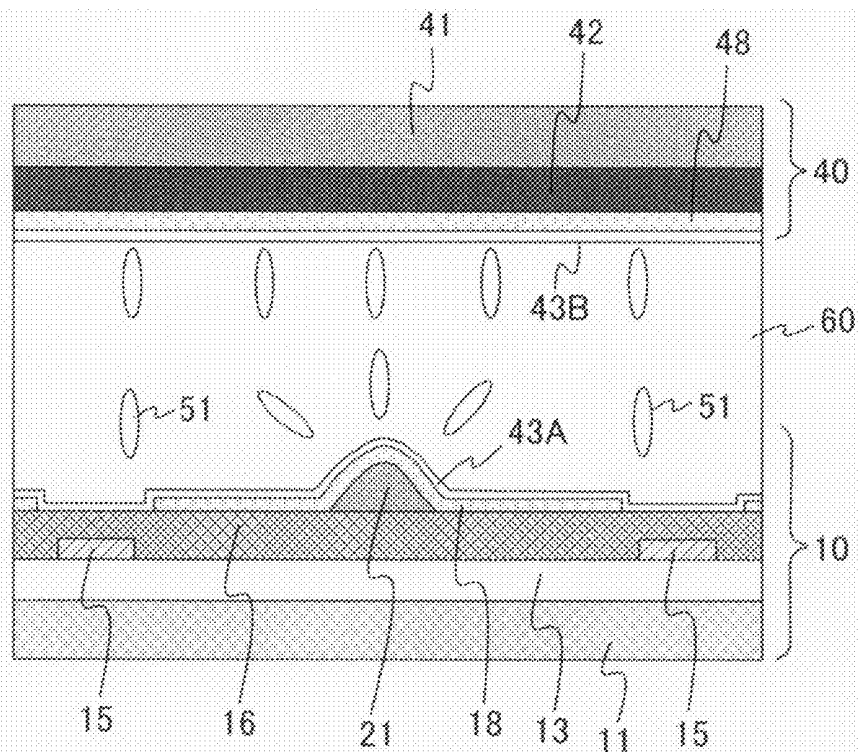


FIG. 6A

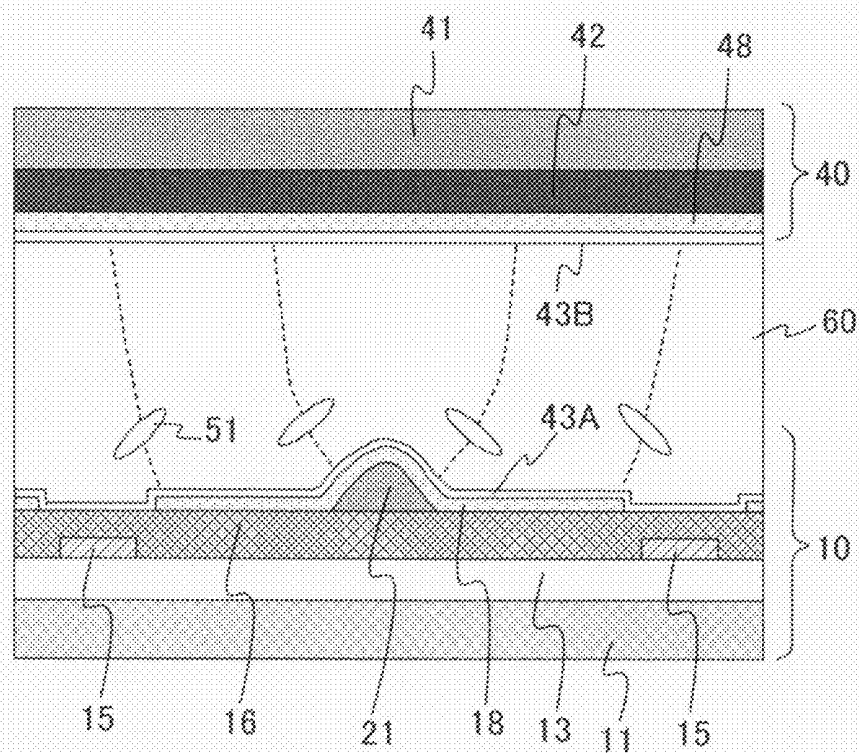
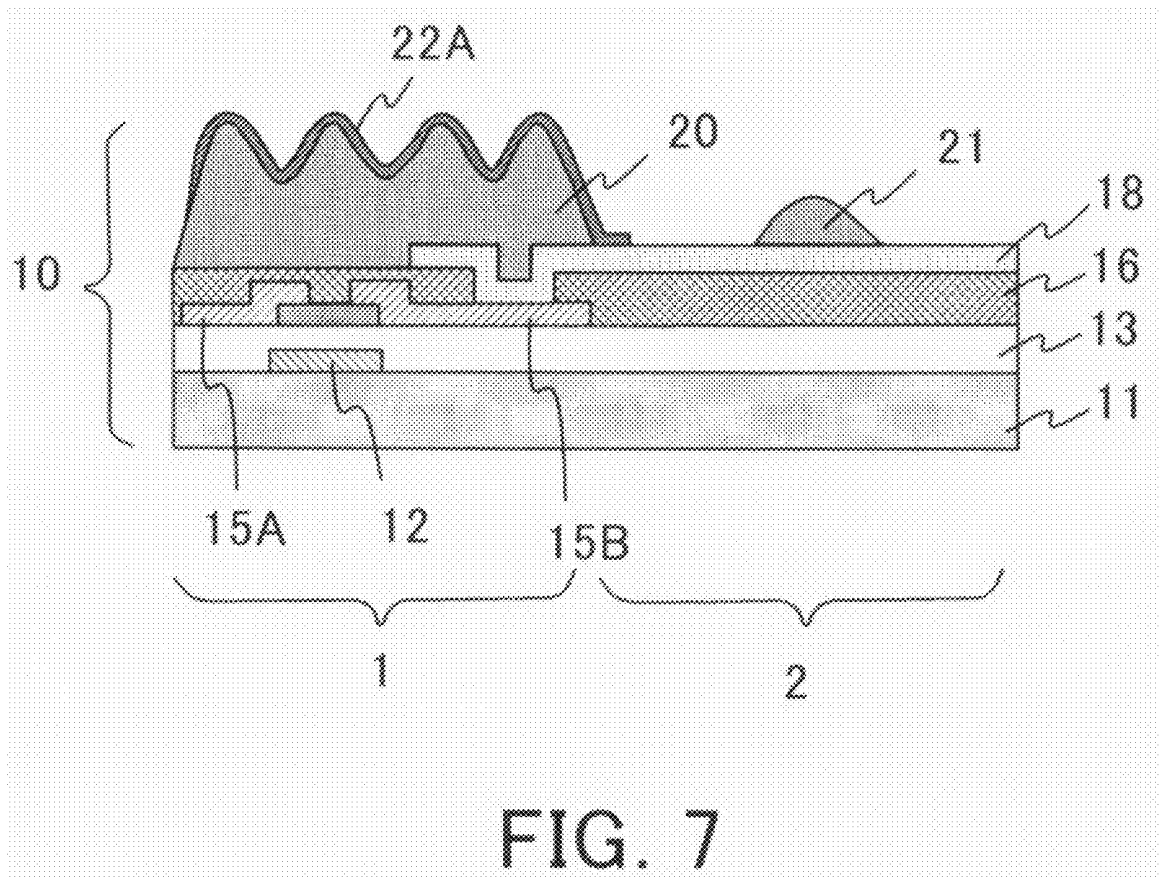


FIG. 6B



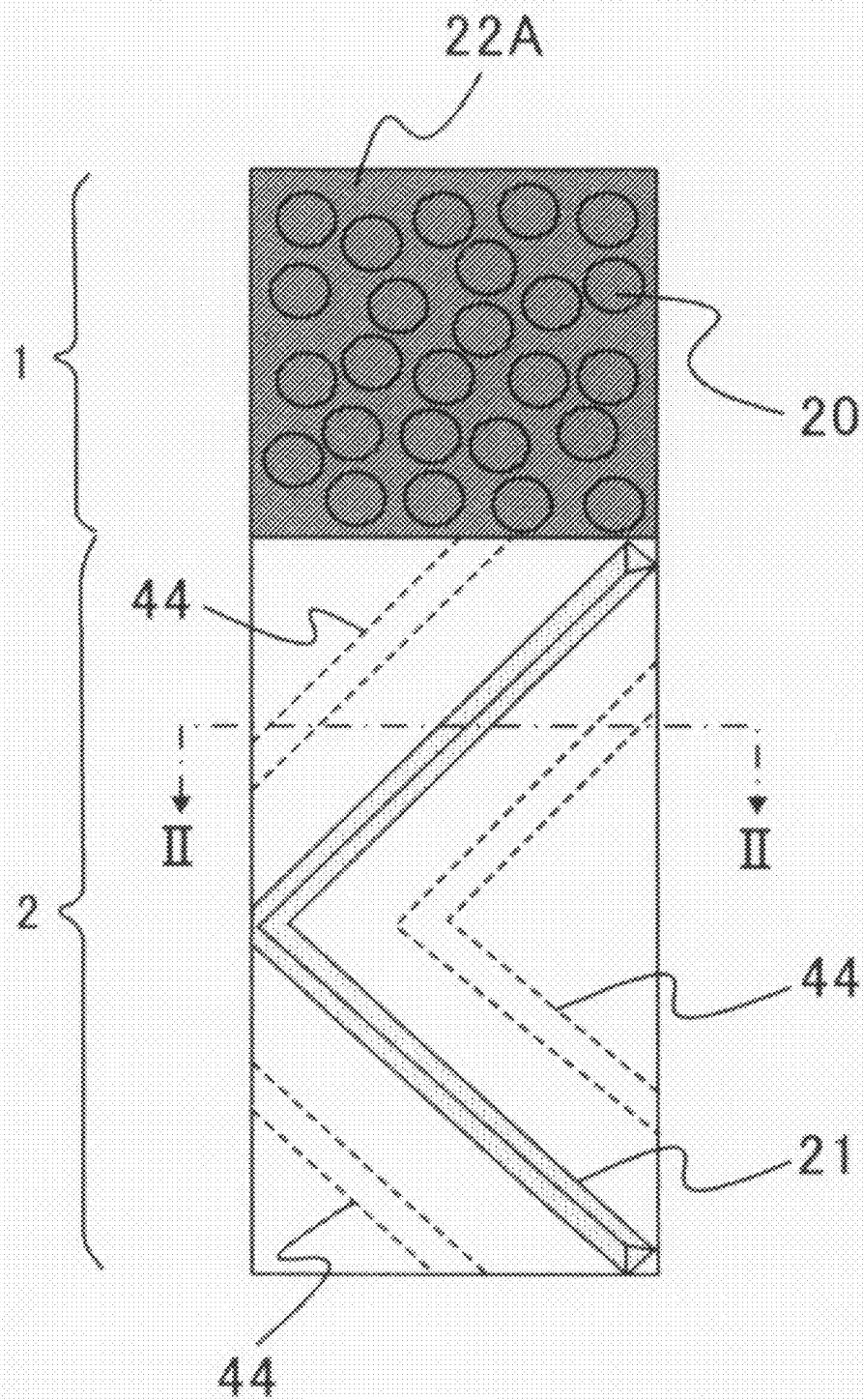
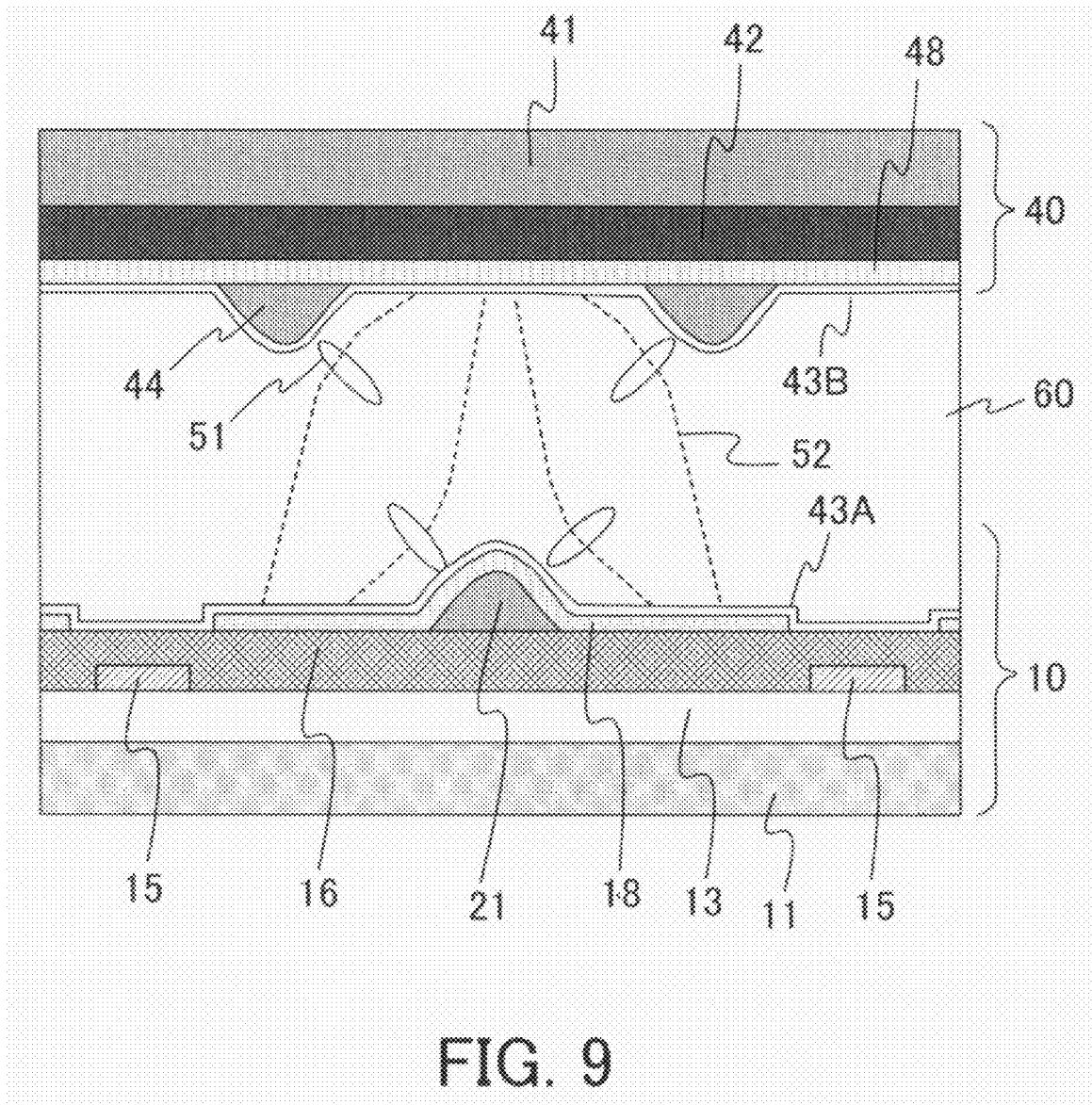


FIG. 8



LIQUID CRYSTAL DISPLAY DEVICE AND METHOD OF MANUFACTURING THE SAME

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a liquid crystal display device and a method of manufacturing the same, and particularly to a transfective liquid crystal display device (hereinafter referred to as a transfective LCD device) and a method of manufacturing the same.

2. Description of the Related Art

Transfective LCD devices are increasingly adopted to displays or display units which are mounted on mobile devices such as recent cellular phones, digital camcorders and digital cameras. This is because usual transmissive liquid crystal display devices (hereinafter, referred to as a transmissive LCD device), which are used for a display of a laptop computer and a monitor of a desktop computer, have the following disadvantage. Specifically, in a case of the transmissive LCD device, it is hard to view the display at a site in strong sunlight due to the reflection of the light on the surface of the LCD device.

As a light source, the use the backlight indoors, and use ambient light, such as the sunlight, outdoors. Thus, as for transfective LCD devices, a good display performance is obtained anywhere. In addition, since the power consumption in the transfective LCD devices is small, the devices are most suitable as the displays for the mobile devices and the cameras.

Recent mobile devices, especially cellular phones and the like, have functions not only as telephones, but also as digital cameras and as devices that allow the users to watch TV. In such uses, the LCD devices have been more frequently used in a landscape mode in addition to a portrait mode. In such a case, when a viewing angle (a field of view) of an LCD device is narrow, the difference in display quality between the portrait mode and the landscape mode is markedly great. As a result, the performance of the LCD device decreases in the case of the landscape mode. Consequently, demand for a small LCD-device with a wide viewing angle has increased.

Some of methods for making a transfective LCD device to have a wide viewing angle will be described below. In general, an LCD device having twisted nematic type (TN type) liquid crystal material has a narrow viewing angle. For this reason, an optical compensation film is frequently used as a method of increasing the viewing angle. In this method, although the viewing angle in the horizontal direction increases to some extent, an increase in the viewing angle in the vertical direction is limited. As a result, the viewing angle in the portrait mode and that in the landscape mode are different from each other in this LCD device. This is not a problem in a case of a display device, such as a monitor, which is fixed when in use. However, in a case of a mobile device used in both portrait and landscape modes, the performance of the LCD device may decrease for a TN-type LCD device in which the optical compensation film is used. As a consequence, in recent years, a vertical-alignment liquid crystal display device (a VA-LCD device) having liquid crystal material with negative dielectric anisotropy is increasingly used for a mobile device. In a case of a VA-LCD device, when a voltage is not applied, liquid crystal molecules (LC molecules) are aligned perpendicular to a glass substrate. When a voltage is applied, the LC molecules are tilted according to a voltage value, and then the LC molecules show optical anisotropy. However, when the LC molecules are not regulated, the directions in which the LC molecules incline are not fixed.

For this reason, it is necessary to regulate the inclination directions of the LC molecules. When regulating the directions, the property of a wide viewing angle can be obtained by using a multi-domain alignment method for causing the LC molecules to evenly incline in all directions. The alignment of the LC molecules is usually divided into two or four directions.

In a usual multi-domain alignment method of the LC molecules, each electric flux line between substrates facing each other is deformed so as to control the inclination directions of the LC molecules. There are two methods for deforming the electric flux lines between substrates, and thereby controlling the inclination directions of the LC molecules. In one method, a protrusion is formed of an organic insulating film or the like. In the other method, slits are provided to a pixel electrode. An example of the method in which a protrusion is formed of an organic insulating film or the like is disclosed in Japanese Patent Application Laid-open Publication No. H-11-242225 (hereinafter referred to as Patent Document 1). An example of the method in which slits are provided to a pixel electrode is disclosed in Japanese Patent Application Laid-open Publication No. 2004-069767 (hereinafter referred to as Patent Document 2). Patent Documents 1 and 2 described above are used separately or in combination. Manufacturing costs for multi-domain alignment of the LC molecules by using the protrusion is higher than that using the electrode slit since an organic insulating film needs to be used to form the protrusion. Hence, in many cases, the protrusion is provided to one of a pair of substrates forming an LCD device, and slits are provided to a pixel in the other substrate. The use of any one of the methods increases the number of processes for manufacturing a VA-LCD device as compared with a case where TN-type LC is used, and thereby manufacturing costs for the VA-LCD increases.

An example, in which neither a protrusion or slits are used for multi-domain alignment of the LC molecules, has been proposed in Japanese Patent Application Laid-open Publication No. 2003-287754 (hereinafter, referred to as Patent Document 3) and the like. This Patent Document 3 discloses a method in which multi-domain alignment of the LC molecules is achieved with a pixel electrode formed smaller than a common electrode facing the pixel electrode, and formed in a fairly-symmetric shape. However, there is a problem that the alignment of the LC molecules is not stable since the central point of each of multi-domains of LC molecules cannot be fixed.

Furthermore, in the transfective LCD device, conditions (retardation values) under which the optimum optical properties can be obtained are different between the transmissive and the reflective region not only in a case of the VA type LCD device, but also in a case of the other types. For this reason, as described in Japanese Patent Application Laid-open Publication No. H-11-242226 (hereinafter referred to as Patent Document 4), it is necessary to use a multi-gap structure in which the thickness of liquid crystal layer in the transmissive region is different from that of the reflective region. In addition, for purpose of obtaining the good reflective performance of transfective LCD device, it is necessary to form a reflective electrode with an uneven surface for obtaining a diffuse reflection property. To form the uneven surface, a photosensitive organic film is normally used. Aforementioned Patent Document 4 discloses a method in which the organic film for forming the uneven surface is also used as an adjusting layer for adjusting the thickness of an LC layer for forming a multi-gap structure.

As described above, in one of the pair of substrates in the VA type transfective LCD device, it is necessary to form

three elements, that is, the adjusting layer for adjusting the thickness of the LC layer, the reflective electrode with the uneven surface, and any one of the protrusion and the pixel slit for multi-domain alignment of the LC molecules. Japanese Patent Application Laid-open Publication No. 2004-246328 (hereinafter referred to as Patent Document 5) discloses a method for concurrently forming protrusions and an organic insulating film with an uneven surface for diffusion reflection. Here, the protrusions are used to achieve multi-division alignment of the LC molecules. However, in the method of Patent Document 5, an organic insulating film needs to be formed twice in order to separately form an adjusting layer for the thickness of an LC layer.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to provide a transmissive LCD device which solves the above-described problems in the prior art.

A transmissive LCD device of the present invention includes an uneven layer in a reflective region, and a reflective electrode on the uneven layer. Here, the uneven layer is formed of a material for an organic film. A transmissive region is provided with a protrusion which is formed of the material for the organic film, and which is for spatially dividing the alignment of the LC molecules in an LC layer into multiple domains. In the transmissive LCD device of the present invention, an uneven layer of the reflective region and a protrusion of the transmissive region are both formed of a material for the organic film. This material for the organic film is formed of a photosensitive organic film. An uneven layer of the reflective region is characterized in that it is also used as an LC-layer-thickness adjusting layer which causes the thickness of the LC layers of the reflective region and that of the transmissive region to be different from each other. In a transmissive LCD device of the present invention, an LC with negative dielectric anisotropy is used for the LC layer.

In the transmissive LCD device of the present invention, a protrusion can be provided on or under a pixel electrode. In the transmissive LCD device of the present invention, the height of the uneven layer and that of the protrusion can be formed differently from each other. Incidentally, the uneven layer in the reflective region can be made higher than that of the protrusion in the transmissive region.

In the transmissive LCD device of the present invention, a transmissive electrode of the transmissive region and a reflective electrode of the reflective region are formed as follows. Specifically, after the transmissive electrode made of a transparent film is formed on an insulating substrate, a photosensitive organic film is formed on the insulating substrate. Moreover, using a photomask, the photosensitive organic film is exposed, and then is developed. Then, in areas respectively of the reflective region and the transmissive region on the insulating substrate, an uneven layer and a protrusion, which are formed of photosensitive organic films, are concurrently formed. A reflective electrode made of a light reflection film is formed on the uneven layer. The height of the uneven layer and that of the protrusion are adjusted by controlling an estimated amount of light exposure. Incidentally, after forming the uneven layer and the protrusion using the photosensitive organic film, the transmissive electrode may be formed in an area of the transmissive region including the protrusion.

In the transmissive LCD device of the present invention, a protrusion for multi-domain alignment of the vertical-alignment liquid crystal material and an uneven layer of the reflective region, which is also used as an LC-layer-thickness adjusting layer, are concurrently formed in the same manu-

facturing processes as those for a usual transmissive LCD device using a TN type LC with positive dielectric anisotropy. Accordingly, the present invention makes it possible to obtain a low-cost transmissive LCD device with wide viewing angle and with a high contrast ratio.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The above and other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent from the following detailed description when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings wherein:

FIGS. 1A to 1G are cross-sectional views for illustrating processes of manufacturing an LCD device according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the LCD device according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 3 is a plan view of a pixel of the LCD device according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIGS. 4A and 4B are cross-sectional views taken along the line I-I of FIG. 3, and are views for illustrating operations of the LCD device according to the first embodiment of the present invention.

FIGS. 5A to 5F are longitudinal cross-sectional views for illustrating a process of manufacturing an LCD device according to a second embodiment of the present invention;

FIGS. 6A to 6B are cross-sectional views for illustrating operations of the LCD device according to the second embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 7 is a cross-sectional view of an LCD device according to a third embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 8 is a plan view of the LCD device according to the third embodiment of the present invention; and

FIG. 9 is a cross-sectional view taken along the line II-II of FIG. 8, and is a view for illustrating an operation of the LCD device according to the third embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

An embodiment of an LCD device of the present invention will be described below with reference to FIGS. 1A to 1G. First, a chromium (Cr) film is formed on a glass substrate **11** by sputtering. By patterning this Cr film, a gate electrode **12** of a thin film transistor (TFT), which is used for switching a pixel, and a scanning line (not shown) are formed (FIG. 1A).

Thereafter, by a chemical vapor deposition (CVD) method, a silicon nitride (SiN_x) film is formed as a gate insulating film **13** on the entire surface of the glass substrate **11**. Subsequently, by the CVD method, an amorphous silicon (a-Si) film is formed as a semiconductor film, and a phosphorus-doped amorphous silicon (n⁺a-Si) film is formed as an ohmic contact film. Then, the a-Si film and the n⁺a-Si film are patterned to be in the shape of islands by photolithography to form a semiconductor film **14**. Subsequently, the Cr film is formed by sputtering and patterned to form a source electrode **15B**, a drain electrode **15A** and a signal line (not shown) of the TFT (FIG. 1B). Then, after an n⁺a-Si film remained between the source electrode **15B** and the drain electrode **15A** is removed, an SiN_x film is formed by a CVD method as a passivation film **16**.

Thereafter, a contact hole **17** is formed on the passivation film **16**. A transmissive electrode **18** is formed by using an indium tin oxide (ITO) film. The ITO film is formed by sputtering. The transmissive electrode **18** is electrically connected to the source electrode **15B** through the contact hole **17**

(FIG. 1C). Next, a positive-type photosensitive acrylic resin is formed as an organic film **19** by a spin coating method, on the entire surface of the glass substrate **11** (FIG. 1D). Then, using a photomask **30**, exposure is performed (FIG. 1E). Incidentally, arrows illustrated on a part of the photomask **30** of FIG. 1E figuratively represent an amount of light transmitting through the photomask **30**.

Subsequently, by performing a development process and a heat treatment, an uneven layer **20** for obtaining a diffuse reflection property, and a protrusion **21** for multi-domain alignment of LC molecules are simultaneously formed (FIG. 1F). At this time, the thickness of an LC layer of a transmissive region **1** after completion of the LCD device is set to be approximately twice the thickness of an LC layer of a reflective region **2**. For this reason, the height of the uneven layer **20** from the surface of the substrate is adjusted so that there is a difference in thickness between the LC layers of the transmission part **1** and the reflection part **2**. The height of the uneven layer **20** from the surface of the substrate is adjusted by selecting an appropriate thickness of coating acrylic resin and an appropriate amount of light exposure. In addition, although the protrusion **21** concurrently formed needs not be as high as the LC-layer-thickness adjusting layer, the amount of light exposure of the protrusion **21** is set larger than that of the uneven layer **20** since the protrusion **21** is formed of the photosensitive acrylic resin which is the same as the material of the uneven layer **20**. As a result, the protrusion **21** can be formed lower than the uneven layer **20**.

After that, on the uneven layer **20** and the protrusion **21**, electrode films **22A** and **22B** configured of laminated films formed of an aluminum (Al) film, a molybdenum (Mo) film and the like, are respectively formed (FIG. 1G). At this time, the transmissive electrode **18** and the electrode film **22A** partly overlap each other, and then are electrically connected to each other. The electrode film **22A** on the uneven layer **20** is used as a reflective electrode in a reflective region. Incidentally, the Al film and the Mo film are formed by sputtering. As the materials of the electrode films **22A** and **22B**, silver (Ag) or the like can be used instead of the laminated films each formed of the Al film and the Mo film. The electrode films **22A** and **22B** may be formed of laminated films of more than two layers. Each of Al and Mo may be an alloy formed with another metal. The electrode film **22A** may be formed of a single layer such as Al or Ag.

Subsequently, an alignment film **43A** formed of polyimide resin is formed on a TFT substrate **10**. Thereafter, a CF substrate **40** that similarly application was done of alignment film **43B** including a color filter (CF) **42** is overlapped with the TFT substrate **10** using a spacer (not shown) to control the distance between these substrates. Then, the liquid crystal material is filled in between these substrates, and are then enclosed therein with a sealant. Thereby, an LC layer **60** is formed, and thus an LCD device **100** is completed (FIG. 2).

On the photomask **30** used for an exposure of the organic film **19** shown in FIG. 1E, an opaque film **32** is formed in an area which corresponds to a convex part of the uneven layer **20**. Then, on the photomask **30**, semitransparent films **31** are respectively formed in areas corresponding to a concave part and an area corresponding to the protrusion **21**. In many cases, the semitransparent film **31** is mainly formed of any one of semitransparent films including a thin metallic film formed of Cr or the like, a silicide film formed of tungsten (W) or Mo, a metallic oxide film, or the like. By choosing appropriate light transmittance and an amount of light exposure of the semitransparent film **31**, the height of the uneven layer **20** from the surface of the substrate and the height of the protrusion **21** from the surface of the substrate can be set to be

desired values. More types of conditions for processes can be included by setting different values for the light transmittance of the semitransparent films in the following two respective areas of the photomask **30**. Specifically, one of the areas corresponds to the uneven layer **20** and the other area corresponds to the protrusion **21**. For example, when the transmittance of the semitransparent film in an area corresponding to the protrusion is set higher than that of the semitransparent film in an area corresponding to the uneven layer, the protrusion **21** can be made lower than the uneven layer **20** with the same light exposure.

Incidentally, although the positive-type photosensitive acrylic resin is used to exemplify the material of the organic film **19**, an opaque organic film formed of novolac resin or the like, or an organic film other than the opaque organic film may be used. Moreover, the material of the organic film **19** may be a negative-type photosensitive resin.

In addition, a pattern less than the limit of resolution of an exposure equipment can be used, instead of the semitransparent film **31**. For example, in a case where the resolution limit of the exposure equipment is 3 μm , the same effect as that of the semitransparent film can be obtained by providing grids or lines/spaces having the size of 1 μm to a photomask, or by arranging dots having the size of 1 μm . This method is generally referred to as a gray tone in contrast to a halftone using a semitransparent film. A gray tone mask makes it possible to control light transmittance by choosing the appropriate widths of the lines/spaces and the width of the spaces, or the size of the dots and the intervals therebetween. The gray tone mask has a merit that manufacturing costs thereof is reduced since fewer processes are required for the gray tone mask than for the halftone mask. Also in a case where the gray tone mask is used, the height of the uneven layer and that of the protrusion can be controlled by changing the light transmittance of the two areas of the gray tone mask, which are an area corresponding to the uneven layer **20** and an area corresponding to the protrusion **21**.

Next, an effect of multi-domain alignment of LC molecules of the present invention will be described with reference to FIGS. 3, 4A, and 4B. Referring to FIG. 3, a pixel includes a reflective region **1** and a transmissive region **2**. An electrode film **22A** is formed on an uneven layer **20** in the reflective region, and a transmissive electrode **18** is formed in the transmissive region. The electrode film **22A** and the transmissive electrode **18** are electrically connected to each other. The transmissive electrode **18** has a shape formed in such a way that relatively symmetric shapes are connected to each other. In the example of FIG. 3, the shape is formed in a way that two squares are connected to each other. In the substantial center of each of the squares, a corresponding one of the protrusions **21** is formed. Each protrusion **21** has a shape of a square pyramid, along the surfaces of which LC molecules **51** are aligned. In the example shown in FIG. 3, the LC molecules **51** are aligned in four directions of upper, lower, right and left of the drawing. As an example other than that shown in FIG. 3, the protrusion **21** may be disposed in a way that the square-pyramid shape thereof is rotated at an angle of 45 degrees. In this case, although the direction in which a viewing angle is widened is rotated by 45 degrees, the appropriate direction and the size of the viewing angle can be chosen depending on in which direction the viewing angle is needed. The shape of the protrusion **21** may be a sphere. In this case, LC molecules are aligned uniformly along the entire surface of the sphere.

FIG. 4A is a view showing a state of the alignment of the LC molecules to which no voltage is formed. FIG. 4B is a view showing a state of the alignment of the LC molecules in

a case where a voltage is formed between the transmissive electrode **18** and a common electrode **48**. In FIGS. **4A** and **4B**, the same reference numerals as those in FIG. **1** designate the same elements or components as those in FIG. **1**. Reference numerals **15** of FIGS. **4A** and **4B** designate signal lines. Normally, a CF **42** is provided to each pixel in the CF substrate **40**. Here, the CF **42** is formed on the glass substrate **41**, and is formed by using three kinds of color resists through which waves of light of red, blue, and green are transmitted, respectively. On the CF **42**, an ITO film is provided as a common electrode **48**. On the surfaces respectively of the TFT substrate **10** and of the CF substrate **40**, alignment films **43A** and **43B** for vertical alignment are formed. As the materials of the alignment films **43A** and **43B**, polyimide resin or the like is used. An LC layer **60** having negative dielectric anisotropy interposed between the two substrates. Reference numerals **51** of FIGS. **4A** and **4B** schematically represent the LC molecules. When a voltage is not formed (FIG. **4A**), the LC molecules **51** are aligned perpendicular to the surfaces of the alignment films **43A** and **43B**. Accordingly, in relatively flat parts of the transmissive electrode **18** and of the common electrode **48**, the LC molecules **51** are aligned perpendicular to the substrates. However, since the LC molecules **51** in the part of the protrusion **21** are aligned perpendicular to the tilted surface, the LC molecules **51** are aligned in a way that they are tilted against the surface of the substrate **11**. When a voltage is formed between the transmissive electrode **18** and the common electrode **48**, electric flux lines **52** are generated, as shown in FIG. **4B**, due to the effects of the edge of the transmissive electrode **18** and the protrusions **21**. The LC molecules **51** tilt as shown in FIG. **4B** since the LC molecules **51** tend to align in a way that the longitudinal directions thereof are perpendicular to the electric flux lines. Hence, as shown FIG. **3**, the protrusion **21** in a shape of a square pyramid makes it possible to regulate a state of the LC molecules **51** to be one in which the LC molecules are aligned in four directions. This is because the LC molecules **51** are aligned with the four surfaces of the square pyramid. At this time, since the transmissive electrode **18** has a symmetric shape, such as the square shown in FIG. **3**, and since the common electrode **48** is larger than the transmissive electrode **18**, the electric flux lines **52** are made symmetrical to each other along the four edges of the transmissive electrode **18**. Thereby, the LC molecules are aligned in four directions as in the above case. The LC molecules are aligned stably in four directions by causing the surfaces of the protrusions **21** and the respective edges of the transmissive electrodes **48** to correspond to each other. Here, in a case where the protrusion **21** is not provided, the alignment of the LC molecules is unstable since the center of dividing domains is not fixed. In the present embodiment, providing the protrusion **21** to the center of the transmissive electrode **18** provides an effect of facilitating the LC molecules to align in four directions, and of stabilizing the alignment of the LC molecules by fixing the center of the dividing domain.

As described above, the transmissive region **2** has been described. Meanwhile, the uneven layer **20** is formed on the reflective region **1**. Thus, each convex part has the same function as that of the protrusion **21** of the transmissive region **2**, so that the LC molecules are aligned in different directions. Accordingly, a protrusion needs not be provided to the reflective region **1** as in the transmissive region **2**. However, in order to stabilize the alignment of the LC molecules **51**, slits may be formed in the common electrode toward the electrode film **22A**, for the purpose of aligning the LC molecules **51**.

The height of the uneven layer **20** and that of the protrusion **21** are described with specific values thereof. The thickness of

an LC layer in a transmissive region is defined as an average distance between the alignment film **43A** on the transmissive electrode **18** in the region where the protrusion **21** is not formed, and the alignment film **43B** on the common electrode **48** of the CF substrate **40**. The thickness of an LC layer in a reflective region is defined as an average distance between the alignment film **43A**, which is formed on the surface of the electrode film **22A** on the uneven layer **20**, and the alignment film **43B** on the common electrode **48** of the CF substrate **40**. Moreover, the height of the uneven layer **20** and that of the protrusion **21** are defined respectively as average heights from the surface of the passivation film **16**.

In a case where the thickness of the LC layer of the transmissive region **2** is set to be $4\text{ }\mu\text{m}$, the thickness of the LC layer of the reflective region **1** is half the thickness of the transmissive region **2**, i.e., $2\text{ }\mu\text{m}$. For this reason, the height of the uneven layer **20**, also serving as a LC-layer-thickness adjusting layer, needs to be $2\text{ }\mu\text{m}$. In contrast, it suffices that the height of the protrusion **21** for performing-multi-domain alignment be $1\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ or less. Rather, when the height of the protrusion **21** is $2\text{ }\mu\text{m}$, which is the same height as the uneven layer **20**, an angle of a surface of a slope of the protrusion **21** against the surface of the substrate **11** (hereinafter referred to as a tilting angle) is large. As a result, the alignment of the LC molecules becomes unstable. In addition, if the tilting angle is reduced while maintaining the height of the protrusion **21** to be $2\text{ }\mu\text{m}$, the bottom surface area of the protrusion **21** inevitably increase. However, when a voltage is not formed as shown in FIG. **4A**, the LC molecules **51** are aligned obliquely to the substrate surface in the part of the protrusion **21**. For this reason, birefringence occurs, and then light leaks in a black state. As a result, a contrast ratio (hereinafter referred to as contrast) is reduced. Hence, on the protrusion **21**, an electrode film **22B** which is formed of the same metallic film as the electrode film **22A** is formed as a light shielding film. However, due to the electrode film **22B** formed of a metallic film, transmittance is reduced at the time of a white state. Consequently, it is desirable that the protrusion **21** be formed low and small in the range in which no problem occurs at the time of multi-domain alignment on LC molecules. Consequently, the height of the protrusion **21** needs to be altered, in consideration of the fact that the height of the uneven layer **20** is fixed so that the uneven layer **20** can also serve as the LC-layer-thickness adjusting layer.

Next, a second embodiment will be described with reference to FIGS. **5A** to **5F**. On a glass substrate **11**, a gate electrode **12** of a TFT and a scanning line (not shown) are formed of Cr films (FIG. **5A**). The Cr films are formed by sputtering. Then, an SiN_x film is formed as a gate insulating film **13** by a CVD method. Subsequently, by the CVD method, an a-Si film is formed as a semiconductor film, and an n⁺a-Si film is formed as an ohmic connection layer. The a-Si film and the n⁺a-Si film are patterned to be in island shapes by photolithography to form a semiconductor film **14**. Thereafter, the Cr film is patterned by sputtering to form a source electrode **15B** and a drain electrode **15A** of the TFT, and a signal line (not shown) (FIG. **5B**).

Then, the n⁺a-Si film remained between the source electrode **15B** and the drain electrode **15A** is removed. Thereafter, an SiN_x film is formed as a passivation film **16**. Subsequently, acrylic resin, as an organic film **19**, having the property of a positive-type photosensitivity is formed on the entire surface of the substrate (FIG. **5C**). After that, an organic film **19** is exposed, and then developed. By performing a heat treatment on the organic film **19**, an uneven layer **20**, a protrusion **21** and a contact hole **17** are formed. The uneven layer **20** is used for obtaining a diffuse reflection property is formed. The protrusion

sion **21** is used for performing multi-domain alignment on LC molecules is formed. The contact hole **17** is passed through the uneven layer **20**. Furthermore, the contact hole **17** which is passed through the passivation film **16** is formed by a dry etching method (FIG. 5D). Then, an ITO film is formed as a transmissive electrode **18** by sputtering (FIG. 5E).

Next, a reflective electrode **22** configured of a laminated film formed of an Al film and an Mo film is formed on the uneven layer **20**. The Al film and the Mo film are formed by sputtering. The reflective electrode **22** is electrically connected to the source electrode **15B** through the contact hole **17**. The transmissive electrode **18** is electrically connected to the reflective electrode **22** (FIG. 5F).

FIG. 6A shows the alignment of LC molecules in a case where a voltage is not formed. FIG. 6B shows the alignment of LC molecules in a case where a voltage is formed between the transmissive electrode **18** and the common electrode **48**. Although the operation and the effect of the LCD device of the present invention are the same as those in the first embodiment, the present embodiment is different from the first embodiment in that the protrusion **21** of the present embodiment is formed under the transmissive electrode **18**. As shown in FIG. 6A, since the LC molecules **51** are aligned in a tilted state around the protrusion **21** even when a voltage is not formed, a birefringence occurs. As a result, light leaks at the black state, and this causes the contrast to be reduced. Consequently, as in the first embodiment, reduction of the transmittance can be prevented by shielding the protrusion **21** with a metallic film. However, transmittance is reduced because an area of a part through which light passes at the white state (an aperture ratio) is reduced. For this reason, the luminance for the LCD device is reduced. Accordingly, whether the light shielding film is attached may be determined depending on which one of the luminance and the contrast is given a priority.

In a case where a light shielding film is provided to the protrusion **21** of the structure of the second embodiment of the present invention, the light shielding film can be formed by leaving a Cr film at the time when the gate electrode **12** or the source electrode (the drain electrode) is formed. Here, the material of the Cr film is the same as those of the gate electrode **12** or the source electrode. Incidentally, the light shielding film can also be formed at the time when the reflective electrode **22** is formed, by leaving the laminated film formed of an Al film and an Mo film, on the protrusion **21**. Here, the material of the Al film and that of the Mo film is the same as that of the reflective electrode **22**.

Next, an LCD device according to a third embodiment of the present invention will be described with reference to FIG. 7. In the present embodiment, a protrusion **21** is formed on a transmissive electrode **18**. Moreover, a reflective electrode is not formed on the protrusion **21**. Although not formed in FIG. 7, a light shielding film may be provided to a lower layer of the protrusion **21**, or to a CF substrate, as described in the second embodiment of the present invention.

In the third embodiment of the present invention, the protrusion **21** is formed in a rib-like shape as shown in FIG. 8. In addition, as shown in FIG. 9, protrusions **44** are also provided to a CF substrate. Hence, using protrusions respectively on both substrates, which are a TFT substrate **10** and a CF substrate **40**, LC molecules are made to be aligned in different directions. Incidentally, in the present embodiment, since the protrusion **21** is placed on the transmissive electrode **18**, how the electric flux lines curve is different from that in the first and second embodiments. Thereby, how the LC molecules **51** incline is also different, while the multi-domain alignment method is essentially the same as those of the first and second

embodiments. Furthermore, the protrusion **21** and the uneven layer **20** of the present embodiment can be formed in the same way as that of the first embodiment of the present invention. Incidentally, dashed lines indicated by reference numerals **44** designate positions where the protrusions **44** are disposed. Here, the protrusions **44** are provided to the CF substrate facing the TFT substrate **10**.

While this invention has been described in connection with certain preferred embodiments, it is to be understood that the subject matter encompassed by way of this invention is not to be limited to those specific embodiments. On the contrary, it is intended for the subject matter of the invention to include all alternative, modification and equivalents as can be included within the spirit and scope of the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A liquid crystal display device comprising:

a first substrate;

a second substrate facing the first substrate; and

a liquid crystal layer interposed between the first substrate and the second substrate,

wherein a reflective region and a transmissive region are provided to a pixel, the pixel having a pixel electrode consisting of a reflective electrode of the reflective region and a transmissive electrode of the transmissive region, which are provided on the first substrate, the reflective electrode being formed on an uneven layer made of an organic film and the transmissive region including a protrusion formed of the same organic film material as the uneven layer to cause alignment of liquid crystal molecules in the liquid crystal layer to be spatially divided into multiple domains; wherein thickness of the liquid crystal layer in the reflective region and thickness thereof in the transmissive region are different from each other,

wherein the uneven layer of the reflective region is also used as a liquid-crystal layer-thickness adjusting layer to cause the thickness of the liquid crystal layer in the reflective region and the thickness thereof in the transmissive region to be different from each other.

2. The liquid crystal display device according to claim 1, wherein the liquid crystal layer is formed of liquid crystals with negative dielectric anisotropy.

3. The liquid crystal display device according to claim 1, wherein the protrusion is disposed under the transmissive electrode.

4. The liquid crystal display device according to claim 1, wherein the protrusion is disposed on the transmissive electrode.

5. The liquid crystal display device according to claim 1, wherein height of the uneven layer and height of the protrusion are different from each other.

6. The liquid crystal display device according to claim 1, wherein height of the uneven layer is higher than that of the protrusion.

7. The liquid crystal display device according to claim 1, wherein the thickness of the liquid crystal layer of the reflective region is about half the thickness of the transmissive region.

8. The liquid crystal display device according to claim 1, wherein the protrusion has one shape of a hemisphere and a square pyramid.

9. The liquid crystal display device according to claim 1, wherein the organic film material is formed of a photosensitive organic film.

10. The liquid crystal display device according to claim 1, wherein the transmissive electrode has a shape in which symmetric shapes are connected to each other.

11

11. A method of manufacturing the liquid crystal display device as claimed according to claim 1, the method comprising:

forming the transmissive electrode made of a transmission conductive film on the first substrate;

forming a photosensitive organic film on the first substrate; developing the photosensitive organic film after exposing by using a photomask, thereby concurrently forming an uneven layer and a protrusion formed of the photosensitive organic film respectively in an area of the reflective region and in an area of the transmissive region on the substrate; and

forming a reflective electrode made of a metallic film on the uneven layer.

12. The method of manufacturing the liquid crystal display device according to claim 11, wherein the uneven layer and the protrusion are formed to have heights different from each other by exposing the uneven layer and the protrusion to different accumulated amounts of light, respectively.

13. The method of manufacturing the liquid crystal display device according to claim 11, wherein a part of the photomask includes a semitransparent film.

14. The method of manufacturing the liquid crystal display device according to claim 11, wherein light transmittance of a part of the semitransparent film of the photomask, which corresponds to the uneven layer are different from light transmittance of another part thereof, which corresponds to the protrusion.

15. The method of manufacturing the liquid crystal display device according to claim 11, wherein a part of the photomask includes a mask pattern having pattern width less than a limit of resolution for exposure.

16. The method of manufacturing the liquid crystal display device according to claim 11, wherein, while the metallic film is formed on the uneven layer, a metallic film of the same

12

material as that of the metallic film on the uneven layer is concurrently formed on the protrusion.

17. A method of manufacturing the liquid crystal display device as claimed according to claim 1, the method comprising:

forming a photosensitive organic film on the first substrate; developing the photosensitive organic film after exposing by using a photomask, thereby concurrently forming an uneven layer and a protrusion formed of the photosensitive organic film respectively in an area of the reflective region and in an area of the transmissive region on the first substrate;

forming a transmissive electrode made of a transmission conductive film on the transmissive region; and

forming a reflective electrode made of a metallic film on the uneven layer.

18. The method of manufacturing the liquid crystal display device according to claim 17, wherein the uneven layer and the protrusion are respectively formed to have heights different from each other by exposing the uneven layer and the protrusion respectively with estimated amounts of light exposure which are different from each other.

19. The method of manufacturing the liquid crystal display device according to claim 17, wherein a part of the photomask includes a semitransparent film.

20. The method of manufacturing the liquid crystal display device according to claim 17, wherein light transmittance of a part of the semitransparent film of the photomask, which corresponds to the uneven layer, and light transmittance of another part thereof, which corresponds to the protrusion, are different from each other.

21. The method of manufacturing the liquid crystal display device according to claim 17, wherein a part of the photomask includes a mask pattern having pattern width less than a limit of resolution for exposure.

* * * * *

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[标]申请(专利权)人(译)	NEC液晶技术株式会社		
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摘要(译)

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