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# Coordination Chemistry Reviews

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## Preface

The first International Symposium on the Photochemistry and Photophysics of Coordination Compounds (ISPPCC) was held in Mühlheim, Germany in 1974 over 30 years ago. Early meetings were motivated by the growing interest in the properties of excited states in transition metal complexes. Through the years new research areas were developed and the emphasis shifted from first, to second and third row transition metals. In the initial years results on first row transition metals such as chromium(III) were reported, while at the 12th and 13th ISPPCC meetings in Vermont and Lipari in 1997 and 1999, ruthenium, platinum, rhenium, and iridium complexes amongst others were discussed in great detail. At that stage supramolecular chemistry became a central area of interest and discussions on photoinduced energy and electron transfer processes became prevalent subjects that were discussed further in subsequent meetings. During this period the concept of molecular devices was developed and it was not surprising that applications such as, molecular-wires, photonic devices and photovoltaics became discussion subjects. Furthermore, with the development of dye sensitised solar cells the interaction between active surfaces and excited states became an active area of study.

The papers published in this issue of Coordination Chemistry Reviews were presented at the 17th ISPPCC meeting held in Dublin, Ireland, from the 24th to the 28th of June 2007. The symposium was attended by 221 participants from 22 countries. This large attendance is a clear indication that the excited state properties of transition metal complexes is still a dynamic and rapidly developing area of research. The importance of the meeting was furthermore highlighted by generous corporate donations. The programme consisted of 73 oral presentations and 114 posters covering a wide range of metal complexes, illustrating basic properties as well as the potential incorporation of transition metals in photonic applications. A trend that was already prevalent at the 15th ISPPCC meeting in Hong Kong, where applications such as light emitting diodes, nanoscale surface structures, luminescent sensors, solar cells and photocatalytic systems were central in the discussions. During the

Dublin meeting important lectures on sensors, photocatalytic fuel production and biomedical applications were presented. However, the central aim of the meeting was energy and more specifically the potential of solar energy as an environmentally sustainable energy source. To further highlight this potential and also to make the general public aware of the importance of science and photo processes in particular, a public discussion was organised. This meeting outlined sustainable energy issues in general and in particular the potential of solar energy as a sustainable energy source and attracted an audience of 400 interested and lively participants from environmental, corporate, governmental and scientific backgrounds. This event had a considerable influence on the perception of energy issues in Ireland and during the last year energy issues were discussed in a series of public meetings that proved very popular and informing. This is a good example of how scientists can promote public interest in issues directly relevant to society as a whole. One person who has a long standing passion in this area is Professor, Vincenzo Balzani. It is not my task to comment on the papers appearing in this volume but I would like to highlight the interview with Vincenzo, where he discusses his scientific career, society and life in general.

The 18th International Symposium of the Photochemistry and Photophysics of Coordination Compounds will be held in Sapporo, Japan, 4–9 July 2009.

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