Journal of Organometallic Chemistry, 385 (1990) C55
Elsevier Sequoia S.A., Lausanne – Printed in The Netherlands
JOM 20580BR

Book review

Elements of Inorganic Photochemistry; by G.J. Ferraudi, Wiley–Interscience, New York, Chichester, Brisbane, Toronto and Singapore, 1988, ix + 248 pages, £32.50. ISBN 0-471-81325-7.

Two classic volumes already exist which describe the photochemistry of inorganic systems: *Inorganic Photochemistry* by V. Balzani and V. Carasiti, and *Concepts of Inorganic Photochemistry* by A. Adamson and P.D. Fleischauer. The book under review here, *Elements of Inorganic Photochemistry* by G.J. Ferraudi, must stand or fall by the way it measures up to these two standard texts, which are each excellent in their own right, and yet truly complementary.

One immediate and obvious advantage of the current volume is that it is so much more up-to-date. This, of course, brings both advantages and disadvantages with it. The author has not attempted the comprehensive and detailed treatments that were associated with the earlier volumes. Instead, he has concentrated upon principles and has highlighted selected areas. The nett effect is to create a volume suitable for the novice, for the new graduate student, and for the interested non-specialist. It will not excite the expert, but that is not its stated intention; it is not a direct competitor with the two earlier volumes, it is a teaching text with up-to-date examples. The author achieves his aims admirably, and is to be congratulated for writing a book which will be invaluable to all lecturers on photochemistry, and an excellent starting point for new graduate students.

The chapters cover basic principles, detection of intermediates, inorganic spectroscopy, kinetics of photoluminescence, photoredox reactions, ligand field photochemistry, and organometallic photochemistry (unfortunately, only 13 pages long). The text is practical, rigorous, mathematical, but not forbidding. The illustrative examples are well chosen, informative, helpful, and mostly of current interest.

All in all, this is a splendid little book. It will be of interest to lecturer and student alike, and is extremely good value at the price. It is a must for all chemical libraries. It is not a competitor for the two classic volumes, but it is an excellent primer for them. Indeed, the field is now wide open for a natural successor to the classic texts. However, the rapid expansion of this field would suggest that any successor will be a multi-volume, multi-author work.

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