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### Book review

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*Photochemistry and Photophysics of Coordination Compounds*; edited by H. Yersin and A. Vogler, Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, 1987, xi + 343 pages, DM 94. ISBN 3-540-17808-2.

This volume represents the conference proceedings of the Seventh International Symposium on the Photochemistry and Photophysics of Coordination Compounds, held in Schloss Elmau, Garmisch-Partenkirchen (West Germany) on 29th March–2nd April, 1987. Six broad topics were covered: metal-centred excited states (5 papers), photophysics and photochemistry of chromium(III) complexes (7 papers), excited state properties of tris(2,2'-bipyridine)ruthenium(II) and related complexes (15 papers), photoredox processes (9 papers), organometallic photochemistry (14 papers), and miscellaneous (12 papers). Within the organometallic section, such diverse compounds as tungsten carbyne complexes,  $[\text{HRu}_3(\text{CO})_{10}(\mu\text{-COCH}_3)]$ ,  $[\text{Re}(\text{cp})(\text{CO})_2(\text{py})]$ ,  $[\text{M}(\text{CO})_6]$  (M = Cr, Mo, and W),  $[\text{Ir}(\text{cp})(\text{CO})_2]$ ,  $[\text{Ni}(\text{CO})_2(\text{RN}=\text{C}-\text{C}=\text{NR})]$ ,  $[\text{Fe}(\text{CO})_3(\text{RN}=\text{C}-\text{C}=\text{NR})]$ ,  $[\text{Mn}_2(\text{CO})_{10}]$ , and  $[\text{Mn}_2(\text{CO})_8\text{L}_2]$  (L = phosphines) were investigated, and topics such as photoisomerization, photochemical C–C bond formation, C–H activation, photocatalysed hydrogenation reactions, and photocatalysed alkene metathesis reactions were discussed.

The publication of proceedings volumes must present a problem to publishers. Firstly, if the papers are worthwhile, they will be published (at approximately the same time) in the primary journals; if they are worthless, then why publish them anyway? Secondly, proceedings volumes are often very expensive. Thirdly, gaining the cooperation of over fifty busy authors to produce camera-ready-copy to a deadline is not easy. Finally, the resulting mishmash of typefaces, print quality, diagram quality, etc. often leads to an unattractive end product.

The first problem is one of area and scientific merit. There is little value in proceedings where there is not a strong theme, or where the contributions are scientifically weak. However, this (particularly for large international conferences) is often balanced (in the eyes of the publisher) by a guaranteed block sale to the participants. The volume under review is, happily, scientifically valid, and gives a very useful state-of-the-art coverage of an exciting and fast developing field. Moreover, the editors have circumvented problems two and three, by producing an attractive paperback edition, and (presumably) by dire and dark threats to the contributors. The fourth problem of presentation is not avoided, however, and is compounded by the lack of a subject index. However, this volume represents good value for money, and will be on the shelves of most libraries, as well as in many private hands.

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