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Book review

Reaction Mechanisms of Inorganic and Organometallic Systems, R.B. Jordan, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1991, 352 pages £30.00. ISBN 0-19-506945-5

In the Preface to the above volume, the author states that the book has evolved from lectures given to senior undergraduates and graduate students. With such a relatively wide audience there is an obvious danger that a text so based may fall between these two groups, being too detailed for undergraduates and too general for postgraduates. To some extent this situation does unfortunately arise, for example, Chapter 1, entitled rather colloquially "Tools of the trade", deals with the analysis of rate data and the basic theory of kinetics. Such elementary material seems out of place in a text at this level; however, the treatment of more complex systems, also dealt with in both this Chapter and in Chapter 2 which is very short (5 pages), will undoubtedly be useful to graduate students working in the general field of solution kinetics.

Subsequent chapters deal with familiar topics including ligand substitution reactions, stereochemical change, reaction mechanisms of organometallic systems and oxidation reduction reactions. In some cases the treatment of a topic is based on detailed kinetic studies whilst in other cases it is based on more general reactivity studies. Inorganic Photochemistry is covered in just over 20 pages whilst BioInorganic systems merit a mere 15 pages.

In summary, the treatment of most of the above topics is of a rather general nature and appears to be more suitable for undergraduate readership than a more specialized postgraduate one. Unfortunately, very few undergraduates will be able to afford the price of this text. Finally, it should be pointed out that the title is somewhat misleading in as much as the text deals only with reactions of transition metals, thereby excluding the organometallic chemistry of Main Group elements.

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