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Preface

Lanthanoids together with scandium and yttrium, the so-called rare earth elements, constitute the largest group in the Periodic Table and their compounds have been used extensively in the field of inorganic materials. However, their use in organometallic chemistry, especially in organic synthesis is unprecedented in the pre-1975 literature and, after the pioneering work of Professor Henri B. Kagan, they are now documented year by year in the unique chemistry of both lanthanoid complexes and their use in organic synthesis. The abundance of rare earths, and their uniqueness in chemical and physical behaviour, establishes their current and potential importance. This availability, coupled with the unique reactivity of lanthanoid compounds, has recently led an increasing number of investigators to tackle lanthanoid chemistry. The wealth and growth of knowledge about lanthanoid chemistry provides justification for this lanthanoid issue.

In this special issue research papers have been included not only on organic synthesis but also on preparation and characterization of lanthanoid complexes. This research is by investigators from around the world, and not just from Japan where much of this research in application to organic synthesis has been done. This volume contains representative papers that address new lanthanoid chemistry.

It is hoped that the chemical community will find the timing and diversity of the research in this volume to be of real value. I personally thank all the contributors, and Professors Peter J. Craig, the journal general editor, and Hiroyasu Sato, of Mi'e University, for the kind cooperation required to make this volume possible.

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