

Preface

The editor's idea of producing a special volume of *Coordination Chemistry Reviews* concerned with 'Coordination Chemistry in Germany' eventually proved more difficult than anticipated. In trying to keep to the roots of this journal's name and to provide a representative selection of articles rather than a complete compilation of all groups active in the area of coordination chemistry, it was found that the number of working groups in this field is in fact rather limited today. Main group and solid state chemistry as well as organometallic chemistry, at the border of organic chemistry, have been and still are the strongholds of present-day inorganic chemistry in Germany. This situation is certainly different from that of the beginning of this century following the development of the theory of coordination compounds by Alfred Werner in Switzerland.

It is by no means a coincidence that a fair number of the contributions to this special issue are from the field of bioinorganic chemistry. This discipline, at the interface of coordination chemistry, biochemistry, biology, and medicine, also enjoys considerable attention among inorganic chemists in Germany. Interest in this field has been reflected by, among others, a special programme of the German Science Foundation (DFG) to boost bioinorganic chemistry.

The list of contributors to this special issue is not comprehensive. As the guest editor, I would have appreciated having received contributions from a few more colleagues who represent German coordination chemistry on the international scene. Unfortunately other commitments, including those of writing articles for other special issues of *Coordination Chemistry Reviews*, have prevented some of them from adding to this volume. It is also true that the idea of producing a 'German' issue was not met with enthusiasm by all colleagues addressed. The question was raised whether in times of an increasing internationalism, of European unification, and of the merger of scientific journals from individual national European chemical societies to common ones, the endeavour of a 'national' issue is still appropriate. Although sharing this concern in principle, I am convinced that this special issue will not be misinterpreted in terms of a relapse. Furthermore, I am sure that there will be many European specials in *Coordination Chemistry Reviews* in the millenium to come, and that the policy of developing topics-related special issues will be continued.

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