

# Preface

Photochromism is well recognized as one of the most fascinating research fields in chemistry. It is defined as the photoinduced reversible transformation of a chemical species between two stable forms accompanied by distinguishable changes in the absorption spectra. In the early days of research, only the change in color induced by photoirradiation was the focus of attention. However, in recent years, we have come to regard photochromism as photon-working switches or photoswitches—photochemically induced reversible changes in any of the properties or functions of ordinary molecules, biomolecules, supramolecules, polymers, and integrated molecular systems.

As described by Dr. J.-C. Micheau in his narrative history, the PHoto-switchable organic molecular systems and deviceS (PHENICS) network and symposiums from 2008 acted as catalysts of international collaborations between France, Japan, Russia, and China, and later Germany. These collaborations and exchanges have greatly increased the number of researchers and advanced the quality of research in photochromism worldwide. At the end of the second 4-year activity term of PHENICS in 2015, the board members decided the best way to show the great progress and high quality of research produced by the PHENICS members was to publish a commemorative book collecting their research results. The contributed manuscripts were categorized into five areas—Reviews, Development of Novel Photoswitches, Photophysics of Photoswitches, Supramolecular Photoswitches, and the Photosynergy Effects of Photoswitches—thus covering the history of research in photon-working switches in the past decade. This work can be regarded as an abundant yield of grapes produced in the vast vineyards and sublime chateaux of the PHENICS network. We can thus say this book signals the opening of a new barrel of grand cru!

We would like to thank the French Centre National de Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) for their generous support of PHENICS activities. We are confident that

these active international partnerships will further expand and advance fruitful and promising research on photon-working switches.

*Santé!*

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