

**Report on the Spring Session of the French Photochemistry Group (GFP 2007),
Mulhouse, France, May 24-25 2007**

The 2007 spring meeting of the GFP was hosted by the Département de Photochimie Générale (DPG) of the Université de Haute Alsace. It was twinned with the 5th PolyRay Conference on May 22-23, 2007. The GFP meeting took place in the very modern Gaston Berger amphitheatre on the University campus during two wonderful and sunny days at the end of May. Our warmest thanks go to our colleagues in Mulhouse, particularly Jean-Pierre Malval, Céline Crouxé-Barghorn and Carole Ecoffet, for organising a stimulating and pleasant meeting.

Most of us will have had a thought for the terrible accident last year at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Chimie de Mulhouse. The wound will heal but scars will remain, as they should. Yet we will all have taken heart at the example set by our colleagues in Alsace and the ongoing vitality of the laboratory, attested not only by the perfect organisation of the meeting, but principally by the numerous contributions presented by members of the DPG. Edmond Amouyal (Ecole Polytechnique, Palaiseau), chairman of the GFP, thus opened the meeting on Thursday 24th by dedicating it to the memory of Dominique Burget, who lost his life in the explosion the 24th of March 2006.

The tradition of widening the GFP meeting to developments overseas was continued this year in two invited lecturers, Prof. Andrzej Kapturkiewicz of the Institute of Physical Chemistry in Warsaw in Poland and Prof. Eric Vauthey of the Physical Chemistry Department at Geneva University in Switzerland.

The opening talk at the first session was held by Prof. Andrzej Kapturkiewicz. He provided insights into the mechanisms of fluorescence in electron transfer reactions induced by electrochemistry. Alexandre Olivier (Talence) gave a very much appreciated talk on the spectroscopy of individual nanoobjects. Celine Dietlin (Mulhouse) gave a very thorough presentation on the photodissociation of aromatic ketones. The first session closed with a presentation by Vincent Diemer (Mulhouse) on the synthesis and the photophysical properties of donor-acceptor systems.

The afternoon session was opened by Prof. Eric Vauthey (Geneva). Eric delved into the fascinating intricacies of evidence for loose and contact ion pairs in bimolecular photo-induced electron transfer interactions. Christiane Carré (Brest) continued with a talk on photo-structuring of composite polymer – liquid crystal systems. Jacques Delaire (Cachan) gave a talk on fluorimetric dosage of lead in microfluidic devices, illustrated with an example of the new miniaturized reactor cells produced at ENS, Cachan. The session was concluded by Jean-Michel Mestdagh (Saclay) who presented new results on the ultrafast dynamics of acetylacetone in the S₂ state. This talk focused on

femtosecond gas phase spectroscopy and led to an interesting discussion on conical intersections.

After the first day's sessions, a tour of the temporary but fully functioning facilities of the DPG was organised by Professor Xavier Allonas and a very enthusiastic staff. The day was rounded off by the conference dinner which was held in a pleasant restaurant in the historical centre of Mulhouse.

The Friday session started with a talk by Jean-Pierre Malval (Mulhouse) on the dissociation mechanism of a naphthalimide photoacid. The session continued with a talk on the interactivity between photochemistry and holography by Yaël Israeli (Aubière), showing how criteria such as the quality and the durability of a hologram in molecular media should be addressed on photochemical grounds. Christian Ley (Paris) presented a femtosecond transient absorption study of Hypericine. His "detective story" showed how apparently conflicting experimental findings on the excited state dynamics of this molecule can be explained as due to different laser excitation conditions. A combined experimental and theoretical study of uracil photophysics was presented by Thomas Gustavsson (Saclay). Andrzej Kapturkiewicz gave a second plenary talk at the end of the second day. This talk was focused on the photophysical properties of luminescent intramolecular charge-transfer excited states. Several interesting aspects relating spectroscopic observable and Marcus theory were developed and illustrated by numerous examples. The final talk of the meeting was given by Safi Jradi (Mulhouse) who reported on AFM in pulsed force mode with particular emphasis on its utility in the characterization of photopolymers.

Needless to say, all the talks given during these two days gave rise to lively and prolonged discussions so much so that session chairmen had their work cut out for them! Posters were on view during the coffee breaks. This was also the moment for more informal discussions where surely many future collaborations were initiated.

Edmond Amouyal closed the meeting by thanking the organizers and announcing that the Autumn Meeting of GFP will be held in Cachan, France towards the end of November 2007.

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