1. Introduction

Coordination chemistry was born as a scientific discipline when Alfred Werner divided metal ammino complexes into two point of view of the continuous shape measures (CShM). In this review, the concept of the continuous shape measures is summarized and the derived tools, the shape maps and the path deviation functions are described. The main stereochemical trends that have been deduced from the application of such tools to more than 23,000 crystallographically independent fragments of coordination numbers between four and eight are also summarized.

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