

Please do not tell Swedish students

I have to admit that I was not really sure what to expect when I arrived at IPMZ in early August. Sure, I knew some great colleagues since before, I had briefly visited Zürich a couple of times, and I knew that I was going to teach and do research. Still, such knowledge is not sufficient to prepare anyone for what it really means to live and work in another country. That is why living and working abroad is probably the best learning experience one can have, making us more aware not only of the new country but also of our home country. To paraphrase Blumler and Gurevitch, living and working abroad has the capacity to make the invisible visible. What then have I learnt during my months in Zürich and at IPMZ?

First and most important, I have had a really great time, and I have learnt that people working at IPMZ are very hospitable. Everyone that I have met and worked with at IPMZ has been very welcoming, friendly and helpful in different ways. Thank you everyone for our discussions, taking me to lunches and occasional beers, helping me translate obscure documents, for practical help, and for always being there.

Second, I have learned that students at IPMZ in general are very engaged, hard working, and nice to interact with. I have found it truly interesting and rewarding to work with them. Compared to Swedish students they may be less talkative and display greater respect for professors: whether the latter is for good or bad I am not always sure of.

Third, I have learned that there is a format beyond traditional lectures – that is seminars – where the students are expected to prepare and hold in-class presentations. This format was all new to me, but I found it very appealing, and I have been impressed by the students' presentations.

Fourth, I have learned that there are places where students can expect that books and book chapters are copied for them, and where those copies and journal articles are magically uploaded in an easily accessible place. From a student perspective this must be great: from the perspective of an author this might suggest undermining a market that we depend on. In either case, please do not tell Swedish students about this habit of copying books and book chapters. And please do not tell them that you send them your powerpoint-presentations, at times even before classes.

These are just some of the lessons learned related to the work at IPMZ. Beyond this, I have learned many other things about the Swiss society. For example, I will never again think that Swedish prices are high. Right now Swedish pizzas seem like a bargain – although the Swiss pizzas do taste better. I have also learnt to really enjoy «Cordon Bleu», «Schnitzel», «Spätzli» and «Geschnetzeltes». In Zürich there also appears to be a market for pre-boiled, colored eggs, not only during Easter but also around the year. Another new thing I learnt is that concrete ceilings and walls appear to be fashionable, and that there are places in the world where people actually do not cross the street when the lights are red. If you dare to cross the street when the light is red, some ten-year old boy might very well start complaining at you ...

Most importantly, I have gotten to learn several new great friends and colleagues, with whom I really look forward to staying in contact and work with in the years ahead. Not really knowing what to expect when I arrived in early August, I now know for sure that IPMZ is a great place to work with great colleagues and students, and that Zürich is a beautiful and

great city to live in. Thus, I really look forward to staying in touch and to coming back for more visits in the future! Thank you for everything during these months!

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