

Research Stay - Tecnológico de Monterrey, México 2009

In my third year as PhD student at the Institute of Physical Chemistry (University Mainz), I had the chance for a seven week research stay at the Tecnológico de Monterrey, in Monterrey, México, from January to March 2009. The Tecnológico de Monterrey, or just the 'Tec', is a private university founded in 1943 and rated one of the best of whole México. Additionally to the main campus in Monterrey, the Tec is a multi campus university system with academic centers in different regions of the country (e.g. México City, Guadalajara etc.). The campus in Monterrey is a beautiful green area with spacious and architecturally interesting



buildings and various free-living animals like peacocks and deer. I worked in the Department of Chemical Engineering on the self-assembling process of poly(butadiene)-b-poly(ethylene oxide) copolymers in water, employing the equipment of the Centre of Microprocess Technique.

The micromixers and the OSPB plant (from IMM, Germany) were new and thanks to my Mexican supervisor Prof. Montesinos I had absolute freedom in using them - perfect conditions for my research. Moreover I had jolly days in the lab

together with my Mexican colleagues in the office (mostly Master students) and the engineers, as they were very kind and very frolicsome people, smiling (and singing) most of the time. My Spanish was not good enough for real conversations, but luckily my colleagues and also most students at the Tec are very good in English and quite talkative - so the language was never a problem on the campus. That is different outside in the city... Monterrey is home of about 3.9 Million people in the north of México. The city was an industrial hub in México, especially for its steel mills, and it is an important industrial site till today. The city's appearance is changing right now, as they started to redesign Monterrey a couple of years ago. Now you can stroll



around beautiful parks or along its fancy canal. Monterrey is surrounded by beautiful mountains and it is therefore also called 'la ciudad de las montañas'. Wherever you are, you will see the overlooking 'El Cerro de La Silla' - the saddle. The climb is a 3 hours torture, but the view from top is worth the trouble.

In general life in México is less ordered, almost chaotic, but once plunged in to the Mexican way I had a lovely time. The Mexicans I met were very friendly and always willing to help, but without Spanish I would have been lost, what in turn forced me

to improve my Spanish skills.

I thank Prof. H. Löwe (University Mainz, IMM Mainz) and Prof. A. Mendoza (Tec de Monterrey) for initiating this cooperation, my supervisor HD M. Maskos (University Mainz, IMM Mainz) and especially Prof. A. Montesinos (Tec de Monterrey) for a great time in Monterrey.

