

SOME MEMORIES ABOUT NMR AT ETH ZURICH IN THE MID-1980S

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Probably the most formative research experience of my career was the 12 months or so I spent at ETH-Zurich. In 1984 and 1985 I was a post-doc with a position shared between the research groups of Richard R. Ernst and Kurt Wüthrich. With my background in organic chemistry and molecular mechanics acquired at the university of Vienna the learning curve in “hardcore” NMR was a steep but also very rewarding one. In retrospect this was the most exciting and rewarding period of my scientific life. While I did not stay long enough at ETH to give an authoritative report, I am glad to share some of my memories and recollections from that time, which was period of rapid development of NMR concepts and applications of 2D NMR methodology and also a unique opportunity to meet exceptional scientists, who were concentrated at that particular period in that remarkable environment and are famous in the NMR-community today. Some of the “hot” topics at the Laboratory of Physical Chemistry and the Institute of Molecular Biology and Biophysics at that time, which still have a sustained impact on the NMR research community today were Cartesian product operators,^[1] coherence transfer pathways,^[2] composite pulses,^[3] protein structure from 2D NMR (protons only!)^[4] and multiple quantum filters.^[5] To that last topic I was able to make some moderately useful contributions at that time^[6–8], which turned out to be the foundation for some of my later research topics.

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