

My Swedish adventure

I was living in Stockholm for 3 months, 2 seasons and 1 interesting life.

Chapter 1 – Winter Stockholm

I arrived to Stockholm on 23d of January and there I have met the real winter. Snowy, sunny and cold. It was unexpectedly for me... So I've bought a warm hat and went to



investigate Sweden. Every day I discovered something new, amazing and unbelievable: self check-out lanes and prices in supermarkets; amount of coffee taken every day by Swedes, outdoor cafes in winter time; candles everywhere and so forth. Every time I found out how beautiful Stockholm, how interesting to live in other country and how exciting to meet new people.

I was very lucky to meet interesting people from cultural, political, economic field. I knew a lot not only about my theme but also about history, literature, art and even about



Russia. I was surprised by curiosity and awareness of Swedish people about politics and international relations. Another interesting fact is that all seminars, workshops, meeting etc are opened for everyone. Thank for this I had an opportunity to attend several seminars, like: "European Union Foreign policy"; "EU and Russia: interdependence"; "Kapuchinsky lecture: global capitalism" and many others. All these seminars were held in different places, like Stockholm

School of Economics (SSE), Stockholm University; University of Uppsala; Institute of foreign affairs, so I got acquainted with Swedish academic life. For me it was easy because I had office at SITE (Stockholm Institute of Transition Economics), one of SSE's institutes.

I should say couple words about SITE as very friendly and nice place. Thanks to SITE I could know how researchers work in Sweden, what is their work, their life etc. I can say that SITE's team is one of the best teams. One tradition which I like very much – Friday morning coffee, when we gathered all together for coffee, wonderful cakes and stories. One day SITE's team went out for skiing or skating. That was amazing day, very Swedish - sportive, cold and sunny. It was always so nice to meet somebody in the corridor or near coffee machine and had a short talk about everything.

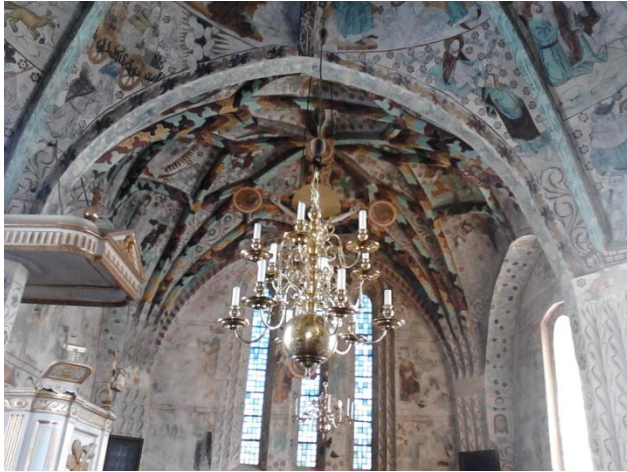
As I mentioned already my research, it's time to tell about it. The theme which I've chosen was "Corporate social responsibility of multinational corporations". Working in non-profit sector in St. Petersburg I was interested in business perspective towards social issues. I should say that my view of CSR has changed a lot. I tried to consider CSR from different perspectives: business, government, investing companies, NGOs. For 3 months I have had time to meet different people from companies (Stora Enso, Nordia), SIDA (Swedish international development cooperation agency), NGOs (Chilhood Foundation, Social Initiatives, CSR Sweden), investing company (East Capital). Thanks to these interviews I was able to draw a general picture of social responsibility of Swedish multinational companies. It will help me a lot in my future work and projects. This is a big advantage of the program – participating in it is a huge impact for future career and life. Certainly I'll use all my getting knowledge and experience in St. Petersburg. Moreover I would like to continue dialog with Sweden. And I have had already some plans for future joint projects.

Chapter 2 - Easter in Sweden

I was lucky to spend wonderful days in Sweden during Easter holidays. Interesting comparison with Russian Easter, you can know better culture and national traditions of a country, celebrating its holidays. this year we had Russian-Swedish Easter with colored eggs, kulich (special cake for Easter) and pashka special dish for Easter).



Thanks to Disa Hastad we (me and other scholars of Astrom Sverker Foundation) got fantastic tour around Stockholm. Disa was our guide and ideologist. We saw beautiful landscapes of countryside, visited Uppsala, some old churches and heard magnificent concert.



One day we went to Disa's "dacha" (country house) on archipelago. It's wonderful place even in winter and I envy those, who will come there in summer time. This place is worth to see.



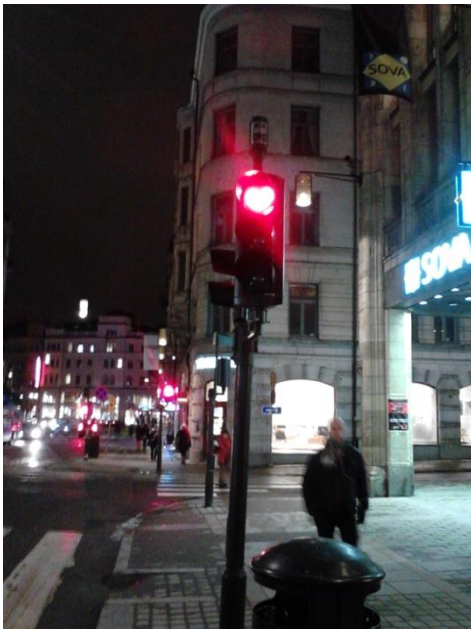
Chapter 3 – Spring in Stockholm

Spring was very slow this year. First warm days have come in late April. Then more I appreciated warm weather in Sweden, when you can bike by cozy streets, walk with coffee in your hand, see first flowers and have breakfast outside.





I fell in love with Stockholm. It's a city, where everyone can find something interesting. There are plenty museums, numerous exhibitions, many concerts and other event. You never get bored in this city. I tried to cover all: museums, galleries, concerts, libraries, pubs, clubs, parks, sport...but still so many things left.



Heart on traffic light. St. Valentine Day

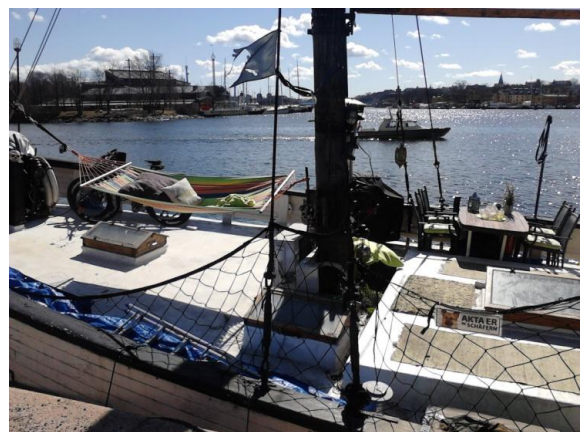


Junibacken - museum where you are always kid

Swedish design is famous in all over the world. And Swedish people are very esthetic. In any house, café, pub you find candles and soft light.



Stora Enso office



Sea cafe on the boat



Metro station - Solna

Stockholm subway is very functional and practical. But some stations are very interesting (on the blue line). There you can find fantastic paintings on the walls and sometimes even sculptures and small fountains.

I revealed just a small part of my Swedish life, which was very exciting, interesting and cognitive. Every new day brought its surprises and discoveries. I was happy to live this life, but it has not finished, because there are people who stay in your heart forever. I would like to say many thanks to Astrom Sverker Foundation, which made this life possible. And especially I'm very grateful to Disa Hastad and Torbjörn Becker, who were good mentors and friends for me.