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REPORT

In 2008 I was awarded of fellowship by the Sverker Åström Foundation for the Furtherance of Swedish-Russian Relations. I stayed in Sweden as an intern from August till December 2008. The main purpose of my visit was to study in detail the Swedish system of education, particularly system of liberal adult education from the point of view of defending human rights.

During my internship I traveled a lot in Sweden: I visited human rights organizations -Swedish Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Stockholm; Worker's Educational Association in Sweden – ABF in Oscarshamn; Universities- Linköping University, Stockholm University, Lund University; conferences in different parts of the country. However, most of the time I spent as a research-student in Vimmerby Folkhögskola. The school, which specializes in teaching adults (older 18 y.o). This type of school gives a priority to applicants with little schooling.

Internship in Folkhögskola.

Unlike others scholarship holders of the Foundation, whom in general make their internship in organizations and companies located in Stockholm, I had a unique chance to stay 4 months in the homeland of the famous Swedish writer- Astrid Lindgren. The small provincial town with population about 15 thousand people is called Vimmerby. It is located in the southern part of Sweden and it takes about 4 hours to get there from Stockholm by train. During the period of my stay in Vimmerby Folkhögskola I was absorbed well in learning process and had a grate chance to study the adult education system “*within inside*”. I tried both to be a student and as a teacher in folkhogskola. I was enrolled in general course group and attended classes with all other students, lived in student's dormitory, participated in all celebrations and activities.

Besides, I taught as a volunteer a short-term Russian language course for students in folkhogskola.

To make my research about liberal adult education more effective, I visited another two completely different schools. Ädelfors Folkhögskola, which specialized in teaching disable people and people with special needs. Oscarshamn Folkhögskola, where they offer courses for church organ-players.

I also visited several Universities, including Linköping University and its Folk High School teachers training department.

Conferences.

Visits to conferences and seminars give me an opportunity to travel a lot and see different parts of the country. I could really understand the size of Sweden, because I traveled by buses and trains.

In November 2008 I visited pedagogical conference (Mimer Conference) in the southern town Lund, which is located not so far away from the neighboring Scandinavian

country- Denmark. Lund is very beautiful, old town with temperate climate. I remember the character of the people most of all. They are very friendly, sociable, always with smile, ready to help you. I'm dreaming to come back once to that wonderful town.

Sweden is a quite lengthy country. It was taken about 20 hours to go by train from south part to the north. Thus, I arrived to the southern city Luleå to visit the largest forum for Human rights in the Nordic countries-The Swedish Forum for Human Rights (Luleå 13-14 Nov.2008). That time about 4 thousand people, not only from whole Sweden, but also from many countries came to southern distant city to unite their efforts. Luleå-the city, which is located on the sea coast, where during the winter time the Sun, comes to the sky just for several hours a day; where you can rarely meet somebody, walking on the street, but it is always active and busy atmosphere in Culture Hall and City library. That city gave me a lot of pleasant impressions, amazed with not so shiny but very fascinating and magic sun.

Culture and traditions.

Equally with research for me it was very important to feel and understand the Swedish live style, to accustom to culture and traditions. I think that I was very lucky, because the period of my intern in Sweden was full of national celebrations. Some of them we don't know well in Russia. I had experience to celebrate following days: United Nations day (24 Oct.), *All Saint Day (1st Nov.)*, Alfred Nobel's prize day (10 Nov.), Lucia Day (13 Dec.), Christmas Eve (Lutherans traditions 24 Dec.).

My visit to Sverker Åström.

That meeting in Stockholm for me was very valuable and long-expected. I was lucky to meet him twice. First time when I just came to Sweden and next time before I left Sweden. Sverker Åström is very talented person with rich and interesting destiny, it is impossible not to admire him. I keep with *care/ cautiously* the book with the author's signature, written by Sverker Åström about his live and career "Ögonblick från ett halvsekel i UD tjänst".

In conclusion, I would like to say sincere words of thanks to the President of the Foundation Disa Håstad for support, to Carl-Johan Westring and all Foundation's collective. Thanks to their care my internship in Sweden was both effective and pleasant and I could feel myself at home being abroad. I highly appreciate confidence and possibility to take part in Sverker Åström Foundation for the Furtherance of Swedish-Russian Relations fellowship program. In Sweden I established both professional and personal contacts, got new knowledge and new friends. I hope for continuation of collaboration with Swedish specialists, strengthening relations and mutual understanding.



Sverker Åström and me. August 2008.



Sverker Åström and Disa Håstad.



*"ABF" Worker's
Educational Association
in Sweden. Oscarshamn*



Vimmerby.



"Astrid Lindgren World" in Vimmerby.



Lucia Day. Celebration in Vimmerby.



Vimmerby Folk high school. The picnic for all students.



*Culture Hall in Lulea.
The Swedish Forum for
Human Rights was held
here.*



Stockholm. Slussen.