

Rudenko Dmitry  
August – November 2015.

Sverker Åström Foundation scholarship has helped me to understand Sweden's peculiarities of academic life and culture. My experience of making a research is unique for the scholarship as I've been staying at the west coast in the University of Gothenburg and at the east coast in the University of Uppsala. The coasts are surprisingly different in many ways: people's communication, time pressure and focus on Russia. Gothenburg is more oriented to the West, Russian language can be rarely heard anywhere. Controversy, the first thing I heard at T-centralen in Stockholm was the Russian language. The east coast of Sweden is traditionally oriented to Russian studies as well. I regret not visiting the northern Umea University and the southern Lund University. The last one does not need to be introduced being the best Swedish University according to QS world ranking. The Umea University is also a well-known University in Sweden for its social science and for being in the top world universities under 50 years old. I hope to make such a visit some day in future.

I arrived to Stockholm in August and I stayed at Uppsala Centre for Russian and Eurasian Studies till September. It is a fantastic place, an international (with staff from Sweden, CIS, Canada, New Zealand, Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania) conglomeration of totally different views on CIS development. There is a good tradition of seminars arranged almost each week and devoted to different topics ranging from politics and economics to even ethnobiology and there is also a very useful tradition to have a shirtsleeves meeting after the seminar to debate and discuss. Being a guest researcher, I felt like it had been my working place for a long time. Unlike in Russia the working conditions are perfect in Sweden (and in my case it does not matter whether it is Uppsala or Gothenburg) as you don't need to share your office with a dozen of people (in Russia you usually don't have your own office at all), you have an access to all databases and libraries worldwide (in Gothenburg I could even order a book from the USA and keep it for half a year) and drink coffee proposed by the university. Although August is a dead season with people recovering after holidays I had some very productive meetings and discussions.



Fig. 1. UCRS views

Moreover, I visited two international conferences, which contributed much to my research experience. One of the conferences titled “Fighting Corruption in Developing and Transition Countries” was held in Stockholm at the Stockholm Institute of Transition Economics (SITE) where I met Jesper Roine, Elena Paltseva as well as Roman Bobilev. I was impressed by the high research level in economics there and I vigorously recommend young economists to stay at the SITE and to absorb all the experience.



Fig. 2. Stockholm and Disa’s “dacha”

I stayed at the department of social work in the University of Gothenburg from September till October 2015. I have chosen the University of Gothenburg for the opportunity to meet and to be advised by Bjorn Gustafsson, the leading poverty and inequality researcher in Europe. The intellectual atmosphere at the department is similar to Uppsala and I enjoyed it visiting open seminars and workshops at the other departments of the University, especially at the marvelous old manor Jonsereds Herrgard. I have finished two draft papers on poverty in Russia and on Russia’s regional development. Besides, I made one speech at the University of Gothenburg on 14 October where I presented my research on poverty trends in Russia. I also met several times a very interest and wise person Johan Öberg with whom I discussed many topics from culture to economics.



Fig. 3. Jonsereds Herrgard and Gothenburg

My staying in Gothenburg was also marked by the Nobel Prize week as Angus Deaton was announced to be the laureate in economics for consumption, poverty and welfare study, and Svetlana Alexievich in literature. Surprisingly but I was surrounded by people who knew Svetlana or was even friends of her as the writer had lived and had been published in Gothenburg. During the internship I become acquainted with the culture and traditions of Sweden, its history, visited a dozen of museums in Stockholm and Gothenburg. The crayfish party at UCRS should be

emphasized being a unique summertime eating and drinking celebration before the working season.



Fig. 4. Culture events

I'd like to express my deep gratitude to all the staff of UCRS and the department of social work at the University of Gothenburg for positive response to my research interests, and especially to Rasool Awla, Gunilla Fridolin, Bjorn Gustafsson, Birgitta Jansson, Katerina Katz, Anna Khomenko, Johan Öberg, Leonid Polishchuk, Ann-Mari Satre, Greg Simons as well as the UCRS president Claes Levinsson and human resources officer Pirio Ledesund for the very warm reception. I would like to say a special thank to Disa Håstad and all Sverker Åström Foundation for the opportunity of the internship in Sweden, as well as for feeling like at home.

I have acquired knowledge and experience not only in poverty study, met a lot of interesting people with whom I really want to be in touch. One small result is already achieved after my arrival to Tyumen as we have applied for the international conference and are going to collaborate.

Tack sa mycket!