

Secondment at St. Petersburg State University –

Experience gained by Ali Lantukh, ESR Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro

in October 17, 2016 – January 14, 2017

Retreating from Rio's blazing sun to St Petersburg on secondment as part of the PRIMO Marie Curie training network provided snowy respite as well as useful research activities, professional development, and a chance to soak up the beauty on offer in the city. Working on aspects of Russian foreign policy and its permutations in Latin America, this secondment, arranged and generously hosted by Dr. Alexandra Gennadyevna Koval and Prof. Sergei Feliksovich Sutyryn at the Department of World Economy, exposed me to the opinions and insight offered by academics and experts in relevant fields. This included accessing institutions and experts at the university itself, the St Petersburg European University, the Latin America Institute at the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the People's Friendship University, among others. This access also provided a useful window into the specifics of Russian academia, helping me to further my understanding of the country's research and knowledge contexts.



Alongside these interviews, presenting my work at the department's annual world economics conference, a graduate seminar, and a round table outreach event as part of the PRIMO programme on prospects for Russian-Latin American politico-economic ties gave opportunities to develop my work as well as my Russian language skills. I also benefitted greatly from St Petersburg State University's excellent collection of Russian- and English-language resources. All of this in addition to the world class art and culture St Petersburg has to offer (with specific highlights being a performance of Rakhmaninov's Vespers at St Isaac's Cathedral, a concert from French composer/pianist Yann Tiersen at the Philharmonia, the Hermitage's Impressionists, and the Russian Museum's 20th Century Russian art) provided a memorable and full experience in Russia. Special thanks to Alexandra Gennadyevna, Sergei Feliksovich, the administration at St. Petersburg State University, and the PRIMO ITN's management team at the University of Hamburg for all of their assistance.

