

Professor Marcelo de Andrade Romero, “It is Wonderful to Learn from Each Other”

Every year hundreds of foreigners come to Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, some on business and others to study. Professor [Olaf Hauer](#) from Germany, Stefano Maria Capilupi , a lecturer from Sapienza University of Rome, Carlo Rubbia , a Nobel Prize Laureate in Physics, and Professor Kazuyoshi Takayama from Tohoku University, Japan, are among the visitors.



This time we interviewed Professor Marcelo de Andrade Romero, Director of the Ecological Office of the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, Dean of the School of Architecture and Urbanism. Professor Romero started lecturing at the Institute of Civil Engineering, SPbPU, at the beginning of the second semester. It is clear that he specializes in architecture, however, in his interview Professor Romero did not speak either about the co-existence of favelas and luxurious districts in his country of sharp contrasts, or about the difference of fazendas from shakaras. Marcelo de Andrade Romero dwelled upon his special attitude to Saint-Petersburg, shared his impressions about working for our university and, most importantly, he expressed his opinion on the way the Polytechnic University and the University of Sao Paulo can strengthen their cooperation.

- Mister Romero, you have arrived from the country where the sun shines all the year round. What did you think about Saint-Petersburg at first?

- There are cities that welcome you at once revealing all their secrets and legends. And there are cities where you feel like a guest and you are eager to get back home as soon as possible. Saint-Petersburg gave me a warm welcome; it has become my good friend. I feel at home here.

- Could you, please, name your favorite places in our city?

- I stroll along the streets, drop into cafes, parks and gardens, find new places. One of my recent discoveries is Faberge Museum. I will definitely tell my relatives and friends about this museum and I will advise them to visit it if possible. By the way, I like the site where the Polytechnic University is located very much. It makes you feel inclined to socialize and ponder. I am sure that in summer your park will surprise me even more. Your students are so lucky to study here!

- Brazil is a wonderful country with an interesting history, exceptionally beautiful places and sights. Is there anything at home that you particularly miss?

- Of course, it is the carnival in Rio de Janeiro, Mount Corcovado, Iguazu Falls, Copacabana Beach, one of the most famous beaches in the world, Chapada Diamantina National Park, the Cathedral of Brasília and many others. Yet, one should try to abandon the traditional tourist routes both in Saint-Petersburg and Brazil. Nonetheless, I miss the bright Brazilian sun most of all (Laughing).

- Mister Romero, could you, please, speak about your personal goal and what made you fly thousands of miles and come to Russia?

- Currently, our countries are interested in developing cooperation in the sphere of science and education. The executives of the University of Sao Paulo are striving to find new partners in Russia, establish direct contacts with your educational organizations and share experience. My dream is a firm and reliable friendship

between the Polytechnic University and the University of Sao Paulo. I do not want my words to seem too pompous, but I am a builder and I want to build a reliable “educational” bridge between Russia and Brazil. I am already lecturing at the Polytechnic University. In the nearest future I am planning to take part in the joint international research and experimental development projects (as part of collaboration between BRICS countries), as well as organizing Sustainable Development Summer School. Certainly, this kind of cooperation is becoming possible owing to the great support from the Administration of the Polytechnic University.

- It seems to us that Russian-Brazilian “educational bridge” has a reliable basement already!

- I believe that our mutual efforts in terms of cooperation are to result in closer ties between our young people. For me personally partnership with the Polytechnic University means clear prospects for research, experience sharing and innovative projects in which students are supposed to participate by all means. International experience for any of them is hard to overestimate. I have a great hope that the students of the University of Sao Paulo will join the educational programs offered by your university, and that they will take part in summer schools, international seminars and conferences. It is wonderful to learn from each other!

- How do you estimate the facilities of the Polytechnic University?

- The Polytechnic University is not only a higher education establishment, but also a large research center. I have been shown the laboratories here, I have got acquainted with research teams and I can say that I am inspired by the synergy and enthusiasm of your scientists. And the main thing is that students take part in this process alongside with research scientists.

- In your opinion, what are the principal differences and similarities between the students from our countries?

- They are young and joyful! And intelligent! (Laughing). What else does one need at this age in order to win and achieve? Young people speaking different languages and having dissimilar tastes and needs have a lot in common, though. These people develop together with the world; they have more opportunities than the previous generations. They are ambitious, brave, talented and open-minded. Besides, engineering jobs are in great demand in Brazil and the same can be said about Russia. Today, education is oriented at practical application and it means establishing close ties with industry and economy. We are teaching people who are absolutely sure of what they are going to do tomorrow. This is another important task of modern education – to create prerequisites for further professional development. Our world is changeable but the quality of education should stay invariably high.

- Finally, what do you wish the students of the Polytechnic University?

- I wish them never to stop, to move forward in spite of hardships. To read more

books and to feel happy at the beginning of every single day.

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