

Field Report
UC BERKELEY CASE-CRRC FIELD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
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My visiting scholarship at the UC Berkeley (in the frame of the UC Berkeley CASE-CRRC Project) helped me substantially to develop my ongoing research and course syllabus project, by gathering a number of recent academic material (mainly books and articles)¹ on the process of public schooling in the Russian Empire, the USSR and Eastern Europe during the first half of the 20th century. I was particularly interested in studies which privilege the social and cultural perspectives on the educational process in that region.

Of a particular help for my research and teaching project were the meetings and discussions with some professors from the UC Berkeley, namely Profs. Victoria E. Bonnell, John Connelly, and Yuri Slezkine. During the face to face meetings with these prominent professors and intellectuals I received many useful suggestions and advices to improving my teaching and research projects. I particularly appreciate the two meetings (one at the beginning and another at the end of the scholarship) I had together with the other Carnegie fellows, the graduate students facilitators and the professors responsible for the Program (Edward Walker, Victoria Bonnell, Yuri Slezkine, with the participation of professors John Connelly and Mark Brilliant). These meetings occasioned very fruitful and lively discussions on the topics of the fellows' teaching and research projects. These discussions helped me to reconsider critically a number of issues arose by my syllabus project (and research), such as the (rather difficult) relation between public education and state propaganda in the radicalizing regimes of the late 1930s in the East European countries and USSR, the role of education in the nation building processes in the Eastern Europe and USSR, the public education as a factor of social mobility and/ or "symbolic violence" in that region, etc. The meeting with prof. Norman Naimark at the Stanford University was very interesting and informing, particularly concerning the functioning of the American system of academic research in the ongoing context of global change and challenges.

During my visit at the UC Berkeley, I attended the classes of Victoria E. Bonnell, John Connelly and Mark Brilliant. I very much appreciated the specific teaching style of these three classes (two for undergraduate and one for graduate students), however all of them characterized by a "dialogic" manner of teaching and the complex, "surrounding" presentation of the taught subjects. The workshop provided by Dr. Kim Starr-Reid from the GSI Teaching and Resource Center made us familiar with the "technological" ins and outs of the syllabus elaboration.

I took advantage of the visit to Stanford University for exploring the Hoover Institution's Soviet archive funds (namely the Fund of the Council of People's Commissar (*Sovnarkom*) of the USSR, 1922-1958 from GARF), in order to get even a fugitive impression of the archive documents produced by the Soviet Ministry of Education (*Narkomat Prosveshcheniia*) concerning the mass schooling and literacy campaigns in the Western republics (especially Belorussia, Ukraine, Moldavia), from 1921 to 1956. This short visit at the Hoover Archives gave me a strong incentive to search for new opportunities to make a longer and thorough documentation research there.

¹ See also the reading list with all the consulted publications (46 articles and books). A number of articles published in international reviews were downloaded through the academic databases available at the UC Berkeley Library. I also consulted and copied in the UC Berkeley Library several books on the topic of my research and syllabus (history of public education in the Eastern Europe and USSR). In this context, I would like to thank Liladhar R. Pendse for his kind commitment to help me in getting more efficient my bibliographic research. Several books (electronic and paperback) on this topic were also purchased thanks to the fellowship's special allowance in this sense. Some books were donated by professors, others were bought at the corner bookshops in Berkeley.

The scholarship at the UC Berkeley Field Development Project was for me a rather unique (and certainly the first) opportunity to get acquaintance with one of the more prominent intellectual and scholarly milieu in the U.S.A. and the world, especially in the field of the history of the Eastern Europe, Russia and USSR. The professors met during this scholarship, the consulted bibliographical and archival sources at the UC Berkeley library and Hoover Institution, the graduate and undergraduate students at this university met at that occasion and, finally, the other Project's fellows were for sure a crucial investment in my academic development. It will be also, indirectly, a significant asset to the intellectual development and openness of the scholarly milieu in social sciences of my country (Republic of Moldova), since I will use the acquired knowledge and experience in my further interaction and projects with my students and colleagues.

Not least, I highly appreciated at the UC Berkeley (and particularly at the Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies) the so friendly, culturally open, and intellectually rich and stimulating university ambiance, so that I am now looking forward to get another fellowship which would allow me to benefit more and longer of that academic environment of excellence.