

**DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE TEACHING STAFF OF CRAIOVA
IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY**

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Abstract

The Education Law from 1864 not only laid the foundation of the modern education system in our country, but also marked the moment when teachers, as a social and professional group, became a familiar and mandatory presence in society. Due to the economic power of the citizens of Craiova, the number of public and private schools grew constantly in the second half of the 19th century and this phenomenon was reflected in a similar increase in of the number of teachers, who became an influential professional group within the city.

This article gives an overview of the main instruments used by the Ministry of Education to discipline the teachers, who were regarded not only as subordinate civil servants, but also as a group with a massive potentiality for both undermining and increasing the social order.

Key words: *Teachers, Discipline, Punishments, Authority, Education Law*

At the end of the decade that followed the Revolution of 1848, with its almost 25.000 inhabitants, Craiova was the second largest city in Wallachia, surpassed only by the capital, Bucharest¹. Forty years later, at the end of the nineteenth century, Craiova had already grown to 45.000 inhabitants, but had become the fifth largest city in the country (meanwhile the country got bigger, as Wallachia and Moldova united in 1859 to form Romania), after Bucharest, Iași, Galați and Brăila². This important position on the economic, demographic and cultural map of the country was a reflection of the particular economic importance of the city, where lived a very dynamic community, controlled by a relatively small but influential nobility (formed by old boyar families from Oltenia, like Știrbei, Bibescu, Filișanu, Otetelișanu, Vlădoianu, Bălcescu, Brăiloiu, Bălcescu, Glogoveanu, Argetoianu etc.) and a relatively equal in number upper bourgeoisie (which included mainly leaseholders, merchants and industrial entrepreneurs – activities monopolized also by a small number of families: Mihail, Opran, Nicolaid, Fieraru, Aman). The whole picture of the society of Craiova was completed by the numerous representatives of the middle and petty bourgeoisie, the civil servants and the peasants, who lived in the city but continued to practice agriculture and other activities specific to the rural area³.

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¹ Titu Georgescu, Constantin Bărbăcioru, Florea Firan, *Istoria Craiovei*, Craiova, Editura Scrisul Românesc, 1977, pp. 62-66; Mircea Pospai, *Memoria Băniei*, București, Editura Sport-Turism, 1982, p. 107.

² Ion Bulei, *Românii în secolele XIX-XX. Europeanizarea*, București, Editura Litera Internațional, 2011, p. 101.

³ Luchian Deaconu, Otilia Gherghe, *Craiova 1859-1878. De la Alexandru Ioan Cuza la Carol I*, Craiova, Editura Sitech, 2000, pp. 128-149.

From a social point of view, the teachers, as civil servants, had very few representatives in the middle bourgeoisie (mainly the ones who taught at the superior course of the local high school for boys, the headmasters of the second grade schools and the inspectors), the rest of them being part of the more heterogeneous lower bourgeoisie or, as in the case of the rural elementary schoolmasters, of the medium or working peasantry. The fact that the teaching staff belonged to several different social classes was the direct result of the official wage system of the teachers enforced by the Ministry of Education, which perpetuated significant differences between different categories of teachers. For example, the system introduced in 1883 divided the teachers into six different categories, paid at the end of every month with 90 lei (elementary schoolmasters from rural area), 150 lei (teachers of gymnastics and vocal music – official named “masters” of gymnastics or music), 200 lei (teachers of religion, art drawing, calligraphy and foreign languages), 225 (urban elementary schoolmasters), 280 lei (teachers of seminaries (lower classes), pedagogical institutes, scientific schools or secondary schools for girls) and 360 lei for teachers who had classes in high schools, secondary schools, seminaries (upper classes), commercial schools, veterinary schools and pharmacy schools¹.

In the 1850's, an official education system had been functioning in Craiova for more than a century. This system had begun with the schools founded as a dependency of some of the churches of the city (the oldest one was, most likely, the one which functioned from the early 18th century, with a paleoslavonic teacher, in the rooms of the important church of “Sf. Dumitru”²), and continued with the public school from the local monastery Obedeanu, which was organized in 1775 by Alexandru Ipsilanti and was dedicated to the offspring of local nobility, who learned Greek, Paleoslavonic and Romanian³.

The local education system suffered an important metamorphosis in the fourth decade of the 19th century, when, in a few years' time, were founded two education institutions which would represent, for more than a century, the most important schools for boys and girls in the city: The Central School for Boys (1831), which continued, at the institutional level, the old school from the monastery “Obedeanu”⁴ and would later transform into “Carol I” High School for Boys and the Boarding School for Girls “Lazaro-Otetelișanu” (1835)⁵, which developed in the 20th century into “Elena Cuza” High School for Girls. In addition to these schools, in the 1860's in Craiova functioned

¹ *Lege pentru fixarea și gradarea remunerărilor membrilor corpului didactic* (1883), în C. Lascăr, I. Bibiri, *Colecțiunea legilor, regulamentelor, programelor și diferitelor deciziuni și dispozițiuni generale ale acestui departament de la 1864-1901*, București, Imprimeria Statului, 1901, pp. 37-38.

² Nicolae Iorga, *Orașele Olteniei și mai ales Craiova în pragul vremurilor nouă (1760-1830)*, Craiova, Editura Scrisul Românesc, [f.a.], p. 15.

³ Gh. Pârnuță, *Școlile din orașele Țării Românești*, în *Contribuții la istoria învățământului românesc* (culegere de studii), București, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1970, p. 140; Marin Popa Nemoiu, *Memorii asupra situației istorice și juridice a Bisericii Obedeanu*, Craiova, Tipografia Sf. Mitropolii a Olteniei, 1941, pp. 51-52; Mihai Popescu, *Documente privitoare la începuturile școlilor din Craiova*, în “Arhivele Olteniei”, X, 1931, nr. 56-58, p. 347; V.A. Urechia, *Istoria școlilor de la 1800-1864*, tom IV, București, 1901, p. 105.

⁴ Nicolae Andrei, *Ani de lumină*, Craiova, Editura Scrisul Românesc, 1976, pp. 41-46.

⁵ Elena Joița, Ionel Turcin, Ioana Popescu, Carmen Petre, Mihăiță Stoica, *Colegiul Național “Elena Cuza” din Craiova: prima școală de grad mediu pentru fete din Principatele Române (de la începuturi până la 1864)*, Craiova, Editura Policrom, 2003, p. 60; N. Andrei, Gh. Pârnuță, *O prestigioasă instituție școlară: Liceul de filologie-istorie din Craiova*, Craiova, Editura Scrisul Românesc, 1985, pp. 33-41.

The Day School for Girls “Lazaro-Otetelișanu” (which accepted girls from poor families, whereas the boarding school with the same name was destined to form girls from the local upper society), two elementary schools for boys and other two for girls (“Externatele de fete Brâncovenesti” – founded in 1860 as private schools and transformed into public state schools two years later) and many private schools, which exploited the incapacity of the official system of education to cover the various educational needs of the city’s children¹.

Consequently, in 1864, when the famous *Education Law* of Alexandru Ioan Cuza was adopted, in Craiova the teacher was already a familiar presence, and became more familiar with time, as the number of the professors grew one year after another. Undoubtedly, the 1864 law marked the beginning of the Romanian modern education system and gave a significant boost to the local initiatives of supporting education. The result was that the education system of Craiova jumped from only five elementary public schools in 1864 (3 for boys and 2 for girls) to a staggering number of seventeen public schools (9 for boys and 8 for girls)² and also that, in a period shorter than two decades, in Craiova were founded five new secondary schools for boys, The Pedagogical Institute for Boys (1870), The District’s School for Arts and Industrial Trades (1871), The Public Commercial School for Boys (1877), “D.A. Sturdza” Military High School (1881) and *The Science Gymnasium?* (Gimnaziul Real de băieți) (1882), and one for girls – The Secondary Day School for Girls “Regina Elizabeta” (1882). More importantly, all this time a parallel private school system functioned, which almost doubled the figures stated above³.

At the end of the 19th century the teachers were not only a *familiar and compulsory* presence but also a social and political force, with aspirations and demands, which the officials from Bucharest were compelled to take into consideration.

In this context, the laws and regulations issued by the Ministry of Education between 1864 and 1898 acted not only as means of organizing the educational activities but also as means of *controlling and subordinating* the entire teaching staff. Accordingly, in spite of constant opposition from the teachers, their freedom was diminished with every law or regulation issued by the officials from Bucharest, evolving from “a liberty that could lead to impunity or irresponsibility”, offered by the law from 1864, to a more restricted

¹ ***, *Temeiuri pedagogice ale dezvoltării învățământului public și particular craiovean (de la începuturi până la 1864)*, Craiova, Editura Aius, 2001, pp. 77-78; Nicolae Andrei, *Istoria învățământului din Craiova*, vol. I, Craiova, Editura Alma, 2003, pp. 351-357.

² Boldescu Ulysse, *Dare de seamă asupra situațiunei comunei Craiova*, Craiova, 1891, p. 11; Nicolae Andrei, *Istoria învățământului din Craiova*, vol. II, Craiova, Editura Alma, 2005, pp. 267-269.

³ Alexandru F. Dinu, Marian Barbu, *Liceul “Frații Buzești” Craiova – 115 ani*, Craiova, Editura Aius, 1997, p. 19; Nicolae Andrei, *op. cit.*, pp. 123, 237-238; Liubovia Bușe, Ion Popa, Elena Murărețu, *Monografia Liceului Pedagogic Craiova*, Craiova, Întreprinderea Poligrafică Oltenia, 1970, p. 31; A. Vasculescu, *60 de ani (1877-1937) ai Liceului Comercial de băieți “Gh. Chițu” din Craiova*, Craiova, 1937, pp. 5-6; Eugenia Cioroianu, *Pași spre infinit ... Istoricul Colegiului Tehnic de Arte și meserii “Constantin Brâncuși” din Craiova (1871-1948)*, vol. I, Craiova, Editura Aius, 2001, p. 10; Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Naționale Dolj (The Dolj District’s Service of the National Archives), fond Liceul externat de fete “Regina Elisabeta” Craiova, dos. 1/1882, ff. 1, 5, 48.

medium, dominated by the paternalist authority of the school's headmasters, who were transformed by the 1898 Haret law into "the first inspectors of their schools"¹.

To ensure the respectability of this profession, the Ministry explicitly included some specific constraints to all the members of the teaching staff. For example, the teachers were not allowed to engage in any form of commercial or other activity which could infringe upon "the dignity of their character" or be incompatible with the duties specific to this profession. It was forbidden, also, to sell books or other various items to the pupils, to teach the pupils from the class in private (for money) or to lodge them and to become associates, headmasters or teachers in schools attended by pupils who attended, at the same time, the school those teachers belonged to. All the teachers had the obligation to live in the same locality with the school where they taught and, in addition, the secondary teachers were forbidden to practice any permanent activity, either public or private². Similar limitations were applied to the teaching staff of the public schools from Craiova which abided by their own regulations³.

According to the official standards of that time, the teachers who served in the Romanian public schools could be punished for their improper behaviour with one of the following sanctions:

a) *warning*, delivered by the direct superior, through a secret letter (as stated by the Law of Education from 1864) or by the district inspector (as was stated by the laws issued later by the Ministry of Education);

b) *fine*, which consisted in retaining the salary for 10-15 days and could be decided only by the minister of education, as a response to a convincing report written by a local inspector;

c) "*cenșura*", which acted as a more punitive fine, consisting in retaining payment for a period of 15-30 days. The money that came from these two penalties was transferred into the budget of an institution that helped local officials to build schools – *Casa Școlilor*.

d) *transfer* from one school to another, of the same rank and from the same locality; this was decided by the minister of education, based on an official note from the Permanent Council of the Ministry of Education. This note was the result of the Council's deliberations on the inquest by one of the inspectors. This particular sanction was extremely effective, for example, when dealing with the powerful conflicts that sometimes occurred between the members of the teaching staff;

e) *postponing* the action of conferring the title of professor in ordinary, for a period of time that could not exceed one year;

f) *delaying* the promotion to the next salary level by one year. Both of the last two sanctions were authorized by the minister, in the same conditions as was the transfer;

¹ This resolute opposition of the teaching staff against any change of the parameters that defined the official limits of their working conditions, led, among others, to the political legend that any minister who would propose a law that intended to increase the control over the teachers, would, inevitably, "fall" – Gheorghe Adamescu, *Problemele învățământului secundar*, București, Imprimeriile "Independența", 1923, p. 19.

² C. Lascăr, I. Bibiri, *op. cit.*, pp. 29, 58-59, 68-70, 84-85, 145-146, 280-281, 348, 525-527; SĴAN Dolj, fond Liceul externat de fete "Regina Elisabeta" Craiova, dos. 1/1905, f. 832.

³ Augustin Radu, Cristina Roșianu, *Școala "Cornetti". Anuar 1911-1935*, Craiova, Editura Sim Art, 2008, p. 303; *Regulamentul Școlii de Meserii din Craiova*, Craiova, Tipo-Litografia Națională Ralian și Ignat Samitca, 1900, pp. 22, 23.

g) *suspension* from the teaching staff, for a period of at least three years or for indefinite time, was enacted only by the minister and it implied, also, that the person who suffered this penalty could no longer receive any wages from the Ministry of Education;

h) *transfer* to a school of the same rank but from another locality;

i) *temporary exclusion* from the teaching staff, for a period no longer than 2 years. During this time, the penalized teacher no longer had the right to receive any salary;

j) *permanent exclusion* from the teaching staff. The last two sanctions could be officially pronounced only by the minister, based on the decision of the Ministry's Judgment Committee and were placed into operation through royal decree. According to the laws of education from that period, all the teachers who were officially condemned for fraud, theft, breach of trust, perjury, indecent assault, embezzlement, bribery, collecting illegal taxes or stealing official documents were excluded *ex officio*, without even going through the debate of this committee¹.

The most important sanctions were decided by various committees and commissions, functioning separately for elementary schools teachers and for secondary or superior schools teachers. For example, the elementary schools teachers were judged by two different committees, one in Bucharest and one in Iași, each of them composed by a university professor and two members of the Court of Appeal, designated for six years through royal decree. All the committee's resolutions were executory and without appeal. Suspension, disciplinary transfer and exclusion could be pronounced only after the accused had been summoned before the Permanent Council or the Judgment Committee, to second his opinions, in writing or orally. On the other hand, the task of judging the members of the teaching staff from the secondary schools was carried out only by a single commission, formed by five members, appointed by royal decree from the professors from the two universities.

The trial itself was organized by imitating the specific elements met in real justice procedures: the accused teacher was summoned before the committee and informed about the accusations and about the evidence that was used to incriminate him. During the actual trial, the accusation was made by a representative of the Ministry of Education, while the accused professor could choose between being his own defense attorney or being represented by an official council for the defense, selected from the members of the didactic personnel. The committee was the one who decided if the session was open to the public or not or if an additional inquiry was required. The verdict was executory and without appeal (with the exception of the sanction of permanent exclusion from the didactic personnel, which granted the right to appeal to the minister of education.

The justice system applied to the teachers functioned on the principle of "the second chance", since the effects of the sanction could be rendered void if the punished professor succeeded in convincing the committee that he had reformed. The measure of prescribing a sanction was decided by the Ministry's Council of Inspectors and pronounced by the minister and was granted in accordance with the seriousness of the punished deed. The model used in such cases was as follows: 1) the warning and the fine after one year from their pronouncement, 2) "cenzura", the transfer to the same locality, and the delaying of

¹ C. Lascăr, I. Bibiri, *op. cit.*, pp. 30, 58, 68, 85, 119, 145, 157.

the promotion to the next salary level, after three years from their pronouncement and 3) suspension and the transfer to other locality, after five years from their pronouncement¹.

This justice system was, apparently, widely accepted by the teachers, since it functioned almost without major changes until the early 1920's, when, in the circumstance of the minister's national inquiry regarding the details of a new education law, the professors from Craiova focused on rather insignificant issues, such as transferring the minister's competence of pronouncing a sanction such as a fine to the district inspector or establishing a district court of appeal, placed in direct subordination to the similar court from Bucharest, which would have acted as a Supreme Court².

As to the actual facts that could lead to a sanction, the education law from 1864 gave a great deal of liberty to the justice and control authorities, just stating, in a vague manner, that an official punishment became necessary every time a professor "would compromise, in any way, the dignity of his character"³. This abnormal situation was eliminated only in the last decade of the 19th century, when the actions that were prohibited and could lead to a sanction were explicitly written down. By the new "code", the sanctions could be pronounced in accordance with the following model:

a) *the warning* was applied when dealing with negligence when enforcing the law, the official regulations, programs and pedagogical principles and, also, for small violations of everyone's duty and of the natural respect owed to the school superior authorities;

b) "*cenșura*" and *suspension* were given for repeated negligence in applying the standards imposed by the laws and regulations, for the lack of respect manifested towards the superiors, materialized in "disrespectful words or writings" about them or by repeatedly disrespecting their orders;

c) *temporary and permanent exclusion* were pronounced against all teachers who were proved to have "an obvious pedagogical inaptitude", situation considered to be characteristic of each of the following cases:

1. when a teacher, due to one or many blamable actions, loses the respect of the society and of the children he was supposed to educate, and, subsequently, finds himself in the situation to not being able to give them an efficient education;

2. the incapacity of the teacher to maintain the children's discipline (or to succeed in doing so only by violent means, explicitly forbidden by the official regulations);

3. the insufficient mastery of the volume of knowledge required to teach a certain subject matter. If the professor that was found guilty of such a drawback had a previous length of service of more than 20 years and his morality was "proven", the exclusion could be replaced, if considered necessary, by compelling the culpable teacher to take a vacation, used, obviously, to recoup the informational gap. During this time, his classes were given to a substitute teacher selected by the Ministry and paid by the replaced teacher with half of his monthly salary. The same measure was also applied, but not as an act of punishment, to the teachers who were brought, by a disease or an infirmity, to the state of not being able to teach properly.

¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 69, 146, 592; SJAN Dolj, fond Școala primară de fete "Ștefan Româneanu", dos. 6/1903-1910, f. 30.

² SJAN Dolj, fond Inspectoratul Școlar Craiova, dos. 21/1923, f. 127vs.

³ *Actele Societății Profesorilor Secundari din România pe anul 1897. Planul reorganizării școlilor secundare*, București, Tip. "Corpului Didactic" C. Ispășescu & G. Brătănescu, 1897, p. 111.

4. when a teacher made public, through writings or public speeches, ideas that came into direct conflict with the fundamental principles of the state. Such was, most probably, the reason for excluding from the teaching staff the local professor D. Pătrășcanu, accused for his “shameful attitude” manifested during the German military occupation from World War I. A similar case was the one of the former German language teacher at the local “Carol I” High School, M.W. Schroff, who proposed, in the same historic context, that the Romanian History class should be eliminated from the national educational plan¹.

In reality, the most numerous acts of violation of the discipline performed by the teachers in this period were given, by far, by the huge numbers of absence-without-leave situations. This violation of the official regulations was so frequent, that it called for the repeated intervention of the Ministry of Education, which tried constantly (and also unsuccessfully) to limit the proportion of this “plague of the Romanian education system”, as it was called by an official message from the end of the 19th century². In order to stop this widespread bad habit, the education law from 1864 mentioned explicitly that if a teacher missed his classes more than three times during one month, he was to be punished by losing the adequate salary for that specific period. Also, if a teacher had missed his classes for a period that exceeded one month, without an official vacation or a decent excuse, he would have been considered, by default, resigned from the didactic staff.

The laws and regulations adopted afterwards not only maintained this obligation in the terms mentioned in 1864, but acted in the direction of extending it to the other regular activities that implied the actual presence of the teacher (school committees, conferences, exam commissions, school festivities etc.), adding, at the same time, the sanction of retaining the salary for any absence and the stipulation that, in case of repeated absence, the guilty teacher could receive additional sanctions³.

Obviously, the law ensured the right of every teacher to miss his classes, but only if he had previously asked for an official vacation. In order to obtain this permission, a teacher had to write an official request to the headmaster of the school, who sent it further, depending on the period in discussion, to the local inspector (who had the authority to approve a vacation of no more than five days), the district inspector (5-30 days) or to the Ministry (the only institution invested with the authority to approve a vacation longer than one month). In order to ease the decision of the Ministry, when sending this request, the headmaster always had to attach a document expressing his personal opinion about the righteousness of the motives invoked by the teacher and a record of all the vacations that the teacher had had in the previous two years, with the specific mention of the motive for every approved vacation. The Ministry could, from

¹ SJAN Dolj, fond Studii, Articole, Monografii, dosar Istoria Craiovei, f. 349; *Informații* în “Gazeta Școalei”, An IV, Nr. 7-9, iulie-septembrie 1922, pp. 45-46; Nicolae Andrei, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

² *Circulara către decanii facultăților și directorii școlilor secundare în privința absentării profesorilor de la cursuri* (1892), în C. Lascăr, I. Bibiri, *op. cit.*, pp. 1382, 1383.

³ SJAN Dolj, fond Inspectoratul Școlar Craiova, dos. 1/1914, f. 367; C. Lascăr, I. Bibiri, *op. cit.*, pp. 29, 58, 69, 84, 145, 156, 348, 526, 590, 600, 691, 732.

case to case, admit, refuse, revoke, prolong or shorten the period of vacation requested by the teacher¹.

The solicitor was not allowed to leave on vacation before the official confirmation was communicated, with the exception of emergency situations, death of a close relative or if the teacher had been summoned to fulfill his citizen's duties. During this forced vacation, the professor was replaced by a substitute teacher, chosen by the teacher with tenure from the teachers of the school he taught in or from outside the institution, who preferably had the professional studies required by the subject matter taught. If the vacation exceeded the period of two months, the substitute teacher was appointed by the Ministry *ex officio* and was paid by retaining 80% of the salary of the teacher he supplied for. The absences could have been excused, also, if the teacher had missed because of a "short-term disease", certified as such by the school's principle, with the condition that this situation should not be repeated for more than two days in one year.

Because the absence of only one teacher from the school could have seriously destabilized the efficient functioning of the education institution, the Ministry tried to specify in the most explicit way possible all the situations in which a professor was entitled to legally miss his classes, trying, in this manner, to limit the abuses and, especially, the exploitation of the law's loopholes by the teachers. Those cases were: illness; when the professor was appointed in an administrative position or worked on a scientific task; to complete the studies abroad (if the Ministry recognized the utility of this action for the Romanian school); when elected in an office commission.

In order to facilitate the control of the obligation not to miss work, the law stated that every school should have an attendance register, where every teacher had to write the details about the moment when he entered and exited the classroom and the subject he taught during the class. After a close check of the register, the headmaster notified the Ministry, every month, about all the absences made by the teachers during the last month, mentioning separately the legal and illegal absences, together with his personal opinion about the validity of the motives given by the teachers. The Ministry was the one that finally decided which of the absences could be or not be excused, and then ordered the adequate retaining of the salary, which was applied to the wages for the next month². The motives used by the teachers from Craiova to ask for a vacation were, as mentioned in the archive documents: illness, illness of a member of the family, motherhood, family interest, the mandatory participation in an exam commission or in various conferences or congresses, the citation in justice court as a witness or as an expert in a certain matter, the burying of a relative, indisposition or various types of agricultural work³.

This kind of complicated system imagined by the officials from the Ministry proved its efficiency when dealing with the generic teacher, genuinely interested in doing his job

¹ SJAN Dolj, fond Școala Generală "Obedeanu", dos. 18/1871, ff. 22, 26; fond Liceul externat de fete "Regina Elisabeta" Craiova, dos. 1/1885, ff. 1, 13, 92, dos. 1/1895, f. 140, dos. 1/1896, f. 11.

² C. Lascăr, I. Bibiri, *op. cit.*, pp. 69, 84, 145, 156, 526, 600, 692, 732-734; SJAN Dolj, fond Liceul externat de fete "Regina Elisabeta" Craiova, dos. 1/1885, f. 83.

³ SJAN Dolj, fond Școala Generală "Obedeanu", dos. 18/1871, ff. 21, 22, 26, dos. 20/1872, ff. 5, 5vs, 7, 7vs, 26, dos. 21/1873, f. 11; fond Liceul externat de fete "Regina Elisabeta" Craiova, dos. 5/1882, f. 69, dos. 2/1883, ff. 3-5, 12, dos. 1/1885, ff. 1, 89, 91, 93, 124, 138, dos. 1/1886, ff. 42, 45, dos. 1/1888, ff. 3, 15, dos. 1/1897, ff. 5, 33, 163, dos. 2/1897, f. 192, dos. 1/1901, f. 327, dos. 1/1904, f. 179, dos. 1/1906, f. 233, dos. 1/1908, f. 317; Eugenia Cioroianu, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

as best as he could, but failed completely in the case of some of the teachers from Craiova who chose to fully ignore the laws and regulations, missing their classes for days, weeks or even months in a row. Such was the case, for example, of the canto teacher from the local High School “Regina Elisabeta”, Mr. Nanulescu, who, as it is written in the two desperate messages transmitted to the Ministry of Education by the school’s headmaster (on 17, and then again in 27 November 1892), simply stopped coming to school, without bothering to give a reason for this behavior or of his colleague from the teacher’s room, Mr. B. Franchetti (the Music teacher), who not only exceeded, illegally, the period approved by the minister for his vacation, but omitted to pay the adequate payment (at that moment, half of his salary) for the teacher who had been his substitute for the previous three months!¹ A negative model for his colleagues was considered to be, by the school management, C. Olteanu, one of the teachers of the Central School for Girls, who was accused of constantly breaching his obligation to be in class on time, because he was too busy managing his own private boarding school for boys. When he bothered to come to school, continued the accusation, he spent his time “smoking, chatting and talking politics”².

Missing classes was, no doubt, the most common (and also one of the most excusable) action through which the teachers breached the official regulations, but these doings did not cover by far the entire field of misbehaviour the teachers from Craiova were capable of. The full picture of the teacher’s potential for illegal actions could not be reconstructed without mentioning all the other bad actions the professors from Craiova were accused of:

- tearing into pieces the children’s test papers from the winter exam, based on the argument (announced by the school’s principal!) that the pupils’ writings were not finished in due time;

- refusing to communicate the mark to the pupil;

- failing the schoolgirls for reasons of “personal vendetta” (in reality, for the petty reason of cashing the small fee of 20 lei, owed by every pupil who wanted to go in for a second examination. This accusation was launched, at the end of the 1890-1891 school year, against the music teacher Mr. Nanulescu, by the headmistress of the “Ecaterina Urziceanu” Institute for Girls, in a petition sent directly to the Ministry of Education);

- “borrowing” various things belonging to the children (allegation referred to one of the substitute teachers for Romanian language from Liceul de fete “Regina Elisabeta” from Craiova, Miss Nițescu, who was accused of taking home the shirt of one of her schoolgirls, Opran, who came from one of the richest families of the city);

- ignoring the education laws, regulations and other official documents, by modifying (without being entitled to do so) the education program, using textbooks which did not receive authorization from the Ministry of Education, constraining pupils to buy various books or notebooks which were not included in the curricula and, consequently, were useless;

- giving private lessons to pupils from the classes they taught;

- missing the school conferences;

¹ SJAN Dolj, fond Liceul externat de fete “Regina Elisabeta” Craiova, dos. 2/1891-1892, f. 242, dos. 1/1895, f. 38.

² Nicolae Andrei, Gheorghe Pârnuță, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

- renting rooms to the pupils from the school he belonged to;
- initiating all kind of intrigues regarding the fellow teachers;
- stealing the school's attendance register;
- initiating verbal or physical altercations with other teachers;
- using the school's servant for personal use;
- setting a fee for the pupils' preparation for the exam of admission to the secondary schools from Craiova, by some of the representatives of the teaching staff. This issue was considered to be one of the most delicate, since "the very dignity and moral purity" of the civil servants' most important segment was at stake. Moreover, some of these teachers pushed things even further, by organizing these paid lessons in the classrooms of the school they belonged to;

- rudeness manifested during the classes (a habit widely spread in that time). One of the many examples of this kind was the one of T. Macinca, professor at the prestigious local Central School for Girls (organized as a boarding school for the girls of the nobility from all the region of Oltenia), who was accused by the headmistress of the institution, Louise Favre, of constantly being late to classes, as he was too busy managing, at the same time, his own boarding school for girls and one of the most important printing houses in the city. This situation was made worse by the fact that this particular teacher used to come to school an hour late, afterwards he postponed entering in the classrooms for almost another hour, which he used for discussing with his colleagues. When he finally entered the classroom, he usually got upset with the girls' wrongdoings and started addressing them in a derogatory manner before "running upset from the classroom", in the end¹;

- punishing the pupils by applying physical corrections. Such an example was the one of the Music teacher of the local "Carol I" High School, I. Ilarian, denounced for his "bad habit" of beating his children with the fiddlestick. After applying this pedagogical method on his 2nd class pupil, Duiliu Marcu (the future architect, designer of the plans of some important buildings from the capital – Athenée Palace Hotel, The Library of the Academy, The Military Academy, The Elisabeth Palace etc.), he was punished by the Ministry (on the 29th of November), at the headmaster's proposal, by official warning. Another teacher from the same education institution was accused, in the same period, of beating "in an awful manner" his pupil Sîmbeteanu Ion, who, as a result, was left with head lesions and a dislocated leg².

An interesting case is the one of the father D. Brănescu, ex teacher and headmaster of the Seminary from Vâlcea and also professor, for a long period, at the "Carol I" High School from Craiova, author of various textbooks and pedagogical books and one of the highly cultivated local men. As a result of his activity, he found himself accused of attacking the Church authorities "in the most unworthy way possible", publishing a series of brochures gathered together under the name of "Father Brănescu's Hat", a gesture which was considered incompatible with the position of a teacher and priest. The official outcome of this event was that the teacher from Craiova was judged by the Ecclesiastical

¹ Nicolae Andrei, Gheorghe Pârnuță, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

² Nicolae Andrei, *op. cit.*, pp. 116, 137, 138; SJAN Dolj, fond Liceul externat de fete "Regina Elisabeta" Craiova, dos. 1/1886, ff. 67, 67vs, dos. 2/1891-1892, ff. 139, 139vs, dos. 1/1893, f. 168, dos. 1/1894, f. 227, dos. 1/1899, f. 33, dos. 1/1901, ff. 3, 3vs, 8, dos. 1/1905, f. 198, dos.1/1906, f. 163; fond Inspectoratul Școlar Craiova, dos. 1/1914, f. 367.

Court, which pronounced the maximal punishment – defrocking (depriving him of his ecclesiastical status). He also became the subject of an official inquiry of the Ministry of Education, made public through the address No. 1840/19th of February 1880, and conferred to judgment by a discipline commission of the Ministry, formed by teachers from the secondary schools, recruited by casting lots¹.

One of the most scandalous cases from the period analyzed in the present article, was the one of the teacher of the Elementary School from the village Dobroești – Teleorman, C. Necșulescu, who was accused of having an affair with the daughter of the local peasant who had agreed to lodge him during his service in the village. The teacher in question was denounced to have previously promised the girl to marry her, and that, afterwards, when the girl got pregnant, refused to keep his promise. For his deed, the teacher was punished by being restrained from receiving any job as a substitute teacher in a rural school for the next year (this punitive measure did not apply, at least not explicitly, to the urban schools!)².

In conclusion, the laws and regulations issued by the Ministry of Education between 1864-1898 acted not only as means of imposing the discipline, of ensuring the efficiency of the education activities and of forcing the teachers to respect the high standards required by their profession, but also in the direction of transforming a teaching staff which was almost permanently discontented with the economic and professional status into an easier to control social group.

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¹ Nicolae Andrei, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

² SJAN Dolj, fond Inspectoratul Școlar Craiova, dos. 1/1915, f. 876.

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