

Legislative Regulations on addressing the Prefect's institution between 1866 and 1914

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Abstract

In the study we are making an analysis of the main legislative provisions that were used to organize the activity of the Prefecture, as an institution, between 1866 and 1914. The Prefecture is a traditional institution which is typical of the public administration in Romania. The first use of the term Prefect and Prefecture, in a sense which is closer to the one from our days, took place during the Romanian administration in Transylvanian, in the period 1848-1849. In the United Principalities this institution is known under the name of Prefecture starting with Alexandru Ioan Cuza's reign (1859-1866), but the term was imposed as such after the Great Union of 1918. Acting as representative of the government in the territory, the Prefect was invested with an executive function, in this quality having the possibility to assist at the County Council debates. Following the French model, the Prefect was the head of the Permanent Committee that dealt with all the legal actions, and was helped by the sub-prefect, in the sense that the latter had as a duty the supervision of the way the decisions taken by the County Council and the Permanent Council were put into practice. In 1861 a new institution was created: the Prefecture's director. In fact, the director of the Prefecture was the secondary representative of the government in territory, because, in the absence of the Prefect, he could sign all the documents

Key words: Prefect, Prefecture, institution, government.

Having the longest-lasting reign from the modern history of Romania, Carol I fulfilled his sovereign duties with rigorousness and conscientiousness (Damean, 2016: 35), requesting the precise observing of his platform, which had been focused on three objectives: “political stability through a constitutional regime, modernisation and dynastical continuity” (Damean, 2016: 15). Favoured by a series of principles stipulated by the Constitution from 1866 (Acad. Berindei, 2003: 560-564), the monarch held the key position within the executive power, which he was implementing throughout the ministries. They were exercising control on the local administration through the mediation of the prefects (Ghițulescu, 2001: 7).

In the present study we bring forward an analysis of the main legal provisions that regulated the activity carried out by the “prefect’s institution”, within the time interval of 1866-1914, generally, in the respect that, later on, we are going to make a more detailed analysis on addressing the evolution of this institution in Dolj County. In order to form a complete and precise image on the prefect’s institution, we have considered necessary to study the legal regulations related to the prefect’s attributions. Moreover, we have realised an analysis of the regulations that aimed the activity of the Prefecture, along with the functions that involved attributions, for the support of the activity carried out by the prefect.

As in any study of modern history, for the functioning of the administrative process to be understood, but also to underline the continuity of the prefect’s institution, in the actual meaning, there is needed a presentation regarding the previously established attributions, which we are to debate further on.

The prefects’ institution is a traditional one, specific to the public administration in Romania. The first use of the terms Prefect and Prefecture, in a meaning closed to that from nowadays, took place “once with the instauration of the Romanian administration, in a large part of Transylvania, during the Revolution from 1848-1849” (Pop, 2007: 10). In the period of the Austrian-Hungarian dualism (1867-1918), in Transylvania, “the supreme count”, the correspondent of “the prefect” from Romania, was appointed through a royal decree, had wide attributions, and was functioning as long as he was trustworthy (Pop, Pop, Vlaicu, 2010: 147-168). In the Romanian Principalities, the institution was known by the present name, which has been lasting since the ruling of Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1859-1866), the term becoming common after the Great Union from the 1st of December 1918 in Transylvania too (Pop, Pop, Vlaicu, 2010: 147-168). After the

Union of the Romanian Principalities, from 1859, there takes place a unification of the administrative organisation, regulated through "The Communal Law" (1st of April 1864) and the "Law for the County Councils" (2nd of April 1864) (Pop, Pop, Vlaicu, 2010: 149).

The legislative provisions from 1864 allot a reduced space for the Prefect, contrasting to the institutional importance (Ghițulescu, 2001: 229). His attributions were stipulated in the chapter "On the relations of the Prefect with the County Council and the Permanent Council" from the Law for the founding of the County Council (Of.G., 1864: 349), and showed effects until the modifications adopted during the conservative government (Mamina, Bulei, 1994: 38), from 1872.

Having the role of agent of the central administration in the territory, the Prefect, appointed or dismissed by the Ruler/King, without being imposed any special circumstances (Sora, 2007: 54), had to execute the orders and the dispositions of the government, respectively, he was opening or closing, or prolonging, the sessions of the Council. Furthermore, the Prefect, had to appeal against the actions of the County Council or the Permanent Committee, in case he considered they had acted beyond their competence, or damaged the county's interests, by suspending the carrying out of the decision for the 30 days (Of.G., 1864: 352). In addition, the Prefect provided the guardianship of the county decisions, with reduced value, or of some communal actions, being able even to suspend the mayors.

Agent of the central administration in the territory, the Prefect was invested with the function of executive body, a quality that would confer him the possibility to attend all "the debates of the county council" (Hamangiu, 1900: 1390). The council was obligated to listen to him, any time he would request or make propositions that he would consider necessary (Hamangiu, 1900: 1390). Nonetheless, the Prefect did not have a deliberative vote (Of.G., 1864: 352). Still as a county executive body, the Prefect was the only one trusted with the local interest administration, within the county (Of.G., 1864: 352), and the carrying out of the necessary works in case of elections, the dissolving of the County Council or the Permanent Committee (Hamangiu, 1900: 1391). Following the French model (Sora, 2007: 53), the Prefect was granted the leadership of the Permanent Committee, on behalf of which he was exercising all the court actions, related to the special interests of the county. Moreover, he was "the only one entrusted with the decisions of the Council and Permanent Committee" (Of.G., 1864: 352).

In his quality of executive body within the county, the Prefect was supported, in exercising his attributions, by the sub-prefect (Of.G., 1864: 352; Ghițulescu, 1864: 231), whose duty was to supervise the carrying out of the County Council's decisions, along with those of the Permanent Committee (art. 109) (Of.G., 1864: 352). Furthermore, he would "visit" all the communes from his small rural district, at least twice a year, or whenever he would consider necessary, reporting to the Committee the noticed state of affairs, along with any cases of abuse (art. 110). Lacking decisional power, the sub-prefect had the obligation to report the situation and any necessities of the administrated small districts to the Permanent Committee, at least a month before the meeting of the County Council (art. 111), and, once a year, more precisely in January, he would draft a report based on statistic data, on addressing the situation of the small districts, for the finished year, report which was forwarded to the same Committee (art. 112).

The multitude and the diversity of the attributions given to the *ispravnic*s (Sora, 2007: 54), who would later become prefects, imposed the constituting of a stable administrative body. In this respect, in 1861, there was created the institution of the prefecture's director, an institution whose functionality was regulated through the Decree no. 697 from the 7th of December 1861 (Of.G., 1861: 1077).

Appointed by the Ruler, on the recommendation of the internal affairs minister, the prefecture's director (Chiriță, 1999: 98) was directly subordinated to the Prefect, as an adjunct or replacer of him, and also a chief of the prefect's chancellery. In his quality of prefect's adjunct, the prefecture director was fulfilling the Prefect's attributions, "in case he was absent from the residence" of his county (art. 1, section III), or "in case of illness, leave or any other work duty" (art. 1, section V), assuring, in this manner, "the carrying out of all the cases", and assuring the interim of the prefect "in case of vacancy (...) until the appointing of another" (art. 1, section VII) (Ghițulescu, 2001: 231). By carrying out the attribution of the chief of chancellery, the prefecture's director had the following obligations: to receive the correspondence, to solve "hastily and precisely all the current affairs", to manage the internal documents, to supervise the activity of the Chancellery civil servants (art. 1, section VIII-X, XIV). Furthermore, the prefecture's director was directly responsible for all the papers that the Prefect had to sign (art. 1, section XI). In case the director of prefecture was missing, his first adjunct would countersign all the documents and would carry out all his work duties (art. 1, section VI).

By analysing the attributions of the prefecture's director, as they were established in the Regulations related to the prefecture directors, we can assert the following: the prefecture's director was not just a simple servant of the county administration, but a "deputy representative" of the Government in the territory, because he had the right to sign, instead of the Prefect, without expressed delegation.

Carol I had an agitated start in his reign, marked by political instability. Nonetheless, in the spring of 1871, there was reached the situation of having a stable government (Mamina, Bulei, 1994: 38-39), whose task was to re-establish the public order. Among the attributions of the new Government, there was also the legislative one, imposed by the requests of the state (Damean, Oncescu, 2015: 188).

From the numerous legislative bills, considered by the conservative government, there are worth mentioned the ones from the administrative field, being voted the law that brought modification to the provisions that referred to the functioning of the County Councils (Of.G., 1872: 459). If analysing the modifications brought to the institution of the prefect, we can assert that it lacked executive attributions, which were given to the Permanent Committee (art. 11) (Of.G., 1872: 473; Ghițulescu, 2001: 230), whose president was appointed by the head of the state, on the recommendation of the internal affairs ministry (Băbălău, Ciobotea, Zarzără, 2004: 69).

Studying the provisions established in Part III: "On the relations between the prefect and the council director and the permanent committee. The director in his quality of secretary. The relations of the sub-prefects with the committee" from the Regulation on the applying of county councils law (Of.G., 1872: 473), there can be noticed that the prefect "was the delegate of the government within the council and the committee", a quality that allowed him to "attend all the meetings", with the possibility "to be substituted by the prefecture director only at the Permanent Committee meetings" (art. 31). Moreover, there is mentioned that the Prefect was the only one responsible with the deciding of the council and committee meetings. The director signed all the correspondence that "would result" from "the ability" to fulfil the decisions, being "carried out" according to a pre-established model. The chancellery of the prefecture and the committee was just one, being led by the prefecture's director, who would become the secretary of the meeting for the Permanent Committee, being helped, and, in case of missing, "substituted" by one of the office chiefs (art. 33, 38). In his quality of chief of the Prefecture's chancellery, the director was granted the carrying out of the works, in at most 3 days, and with

the administration of the archives (art. 41). Furthermore, the prefecture's director had the obligation to regularly keep the evidence of the mobile and immobile wealth of the county (art. 40). Thus, there can be noticed that the prefecture's director gained the role of key servant in the carrying out of the activities, within the Prefecture.

Besides the attributions of administrator, "policeman" and peace judge, the sub-prefect (art. 43) had also the obligation to inspect the communes from his region, everything that was noticed being reported to the Permanent Committee. The legislative modifications promoted in the administrative field, in 1883 (Of.G., 1883: 4.321-4.323) and 1886 (Of.G., 1886: 722-730), stipulated that the Prefect would not execute the decisions made by the County Council, this attribution being granted to the Committee, which would have the right to control on the executive authority from the county, that was the prefect. Yet, the Permanent Committee was dependent on the prefect (Negulescu, Boilă, Alexianu, 1930: 508-510), due to the fact that the president of the Permanent Committee could require the help of the prefect for the execution of the decisions made by the committee and the county council, and he was in his turn obligated to offer his support, in case of appeal (Of.G., 1886: 730; Zoltán Györke, 2013: 23).

After the analysis of these provisions, there can be seen a change on addressing the principle of decentralisation, towards a centralised system, despite the numerous debates that took place among the politicians (Ghițulescu, 2001: 198-206).

The system inaugurated in May 1892 did not offer the possibility of local autonomy development and "any guarantee of good administration practice", as much as, "the attributions crowded around the prefect were so many and varied that, with all the objectivity", shown by a model civil servant, "he could not manage so many duties given to him, both as representative of the government, and unique administrator of all the material and moral situations and interests" (Băbălău, Ciobotea, Zarzără, 2004: 69).

Voted with a majority of 50 votes, "The law for the organisation of the exterior administrative authorities, related to the ministry of the internal affairs and the establishing of the administrative departments", from the 1st of November 1892, brought new elements. Thus, in Part I of the law, there were defined the notions of the administrative departments, and in Part II there was regulated the organisation of the authorities, external to the ministry of the internal affairs, along with their attributions. Moreover, there were introduced, for the first time, in the process of modernisation of the administration,

the conditions of admission in the public functions, within the Institution of the Prefect (Of.G., 1892: 4.905-4.908). For the efficient enforcement of this law's provisions, on the 4th of October 1892, there was adopted a regulation for the enforcement (Of.G., 1892: 5.033-5038). Hence, the general affairs administration was entrusted as following: in counties, to the prefects (art. 1 and 5) (Of.G., 1892: 4.905); in the small rural districts to the subprefects; in communes, to the mayors, leading these administrations with the help of a determined number of subordinates, who would constitute the chancellery (art. 9).

Through the law from the 1st of November 1892, the attributions of the Prefect were more clearly provisioned. Therefore, one can notice that he was appointed through a royal decree, on the recommendation of the minister of internal affairs (art. 13) (Of.G., 1892: 4.905-4.906), being directly subordinated to him, and representing the executive power in the department subjected to his administration, a quality in which the prefect would execute all the orders that he would be transmitted (art. 14). The Prefect was supervising the maintaining of the state's rights on addressing the citizens, the counties, the communes, the legal persons, and was inspecting periodically the sub-prefectures and the communes from his department, reporting the result of his inspection to the ministry of the internal affairs (art. 15). Furthermore, he would assume the task of publishing and enforcing the laws.

Among the main obligations of the Prefect, there are the following ones too: the maintaining of public order and safety, in case of emergency being allowed to use public force; the inspection of the national and county roads; the administration of the communal churches' goods, of the hospitals, asylums and public schools, along with other institutions in which he had the right to inspect, as in the case of the prisons. For a better functionality, the Prefect "would personally supervise all the moral people and the charity institutions from the county, either private or public, yet, not being allowed to take any direct measure, but notifying the difficulties or the nonconformities to the authority or the department whom the institution was subordinated to" (art. 17 and 18).

In his department, the Prefect had the right to supervise all the minor civil servants of the State, county, communes and other public administrations, reporting the issues to the specific authorities, which the servants would depend on. He was forwarding, each year, to the ministry of internal affairs, after the closing of the ordinary session for the county councils, a detailed report on the general financial,

economic and administrative condition of the county and all the communes from his competence (art. 19-22). Moreover, the Prefect was entrusted with the management of the administrative or preventive police from his department, and had the right to draw up regulations based on the laws and the regulations of the general administration. In order to produce effects, these regulations had to be approved by the ministry of the internal affairs (art. 23).

Another exclusive attribution of the Prefect was represented by the issuing of the passports, according to the instructions received from the ministry of the foreign affairs. In the towns where there was a police prefect, this task was carried out by the head of this prefecture (C.D.N.A., Dolj, Prefecture, file 282/1892: 40-41).

To the information presented above, there are added attributions stipulated in the Regulation on the enforcement of the law for the organisation of the external administrative authorities, depending on the ministry of the internal affairs and the establishing of the administrative departments: the Prefect was "a mediator between the his administrations and the central government" (art. 28) (Of.G., 1892: 5034), a quality due to which he would receive and solve any denunciations made by the private people or the communal authorities, against the decisions of the sub-prefects, on addressing the documents and facts that would belong to their administrative competence (art. 29); he would participate and preside over the public and official manifestations from the locality (art. 31 and 32); all the papers sent by the prefecture had to be signed by the Prefect, any time he would be at the residence of the county (art. 30).

The Prefect had also the obligation to supervise and coordinate the activities from the chancellery of the prefecture, which had in his organisational structure, besides the prefect, a prefecture director, "an office chief", an archivist, a registering clerk and copyists. As regarding the role played by each of these people, we are to detail further.

The prefecture's director was "the head of the prefecture chancellery" (art. 34) and was responsible with the solving and the sending of documents, according to the prefect's orders, along with the countersigning of the correspondence and all the works sent by the prefecture, under the signature of the titular prefect. The minister of the internal affairs could authorise, totally or partially, some of the administrative attributions of the Prefect, during his absence from the residence or the county, the prefecture's director (art. 36). He could replace the prefect in the chancellery meetings, any time he "misses from his position" (art. 35), a situation in which the correspondence

with the different public authorities was signed by the director, who would coordinate and was responsible for the works of the civil servants from his subordination (art. 37). The prefecture's director had to be familiarised with all the laws, regulations, ministerial decisions, orders, memorandums etc., internal or international, that would regulate the activity of the administrative service (art. 41). Moreover, he had the obligation to prepare ahead the works related to the situations that would change periodically, to give written reports to the Prefect, on the noticed irregularities, along with the taken measures for the solving of the problems, and with the propositions made for the proper functioning of the administration (art. 42). He would receive daily, from the archivist, the correspondence, would first study it and would later subject it to the Prefect for finding solutions (art. 43). The prefecture's director had to wear the same uniform and scarf, the moment he would replace the Prefect (art. 32, section 4).

The chief of the prefecture office (Of.G., 1892: 5035) was working with the prefecture's director, from which he would receive direct orders, would help him in drawing up the correspondence and the sending of works towards different authorities; he would supervise the functioning of the registry and archive. He would countersign, if the director was missing, the correspondence and would send the documents sent from the prefecture chancellery, along with those sent and signed by the director, if the Prefect was missing (art. 47).

The registering clerk had the obligation to receive, register and forward to the prefecture's director the official correspondence of the institution (art. 48). Additionally, every working day, the registering clerk would go, accompanied by one of the people on duty, to the post office, to collect the official correspondence that would arrive on the address of the prefecture (art. 49). The envelopes and parcels were opened by the registering clerk, after he had checked that the annexes, mentioned as sent, were indeed posted or not (art. 50). The personal letters, along with the correspondence labelled personal or confidential were given unopened, to the titular prefect, the prefecture's director, or the chief of the office, according to the recipient (art. 51). Every holiday or Sunday, the registering clerk would go and open the correspondence, and in case of urgent matters, which could not be delayed, he would immediately notice the director of the prefecture, and, if missing, the Prefect himself (art. 52). The recording of the correspondence was kept in a register, ordered according to the arriving of each paper, the registering clerk not being allowed to leave a space between the arrived documents, where could have been

recorded other papers too, after which the registering clerk would write the order number written next to each one (art. 53). The registering clerk of the prefecture would coordinate the activity of the people on duty, was commissioned with the buying and distribution of supplies for the chancellery, in case the Prefect of the county had not entrusted the task to another clerk (art. 58).

The archive of each prefecture was led by the titular archivist, under the immediate supervision and control of the chief of the prefecture office (art. 59). The archivist of the prefecture had the obligation to work with the next registers: the register of the archive; the register-statement; the rated register of the files (inventory); the recapitulative register of the files (decennial register). Besides these registers, the archivist could create other auxiliary ones, which could have been required under special circumstances, within the prefecture chancellery, but he would have to inform, firstly, the prefecture's director (art. 60).

After the archivist had registered accordingly the correspondence received from the registering office, he would immediately present it to the prefecture's director, along with all the anterior works, if they were related to each entered correspondence (art. 61). The archivist had the obligation to keep in good order, up to date, all the documents or the collections entrusted to him (art. 62-64). Each archivist of the prefecture needed to have his special inventory for all the files and documents from his care, being obligated to receive and hand over, when entering and leaving his function, to his replacer, after the inventory, the archive (art. 65).

Through the law from the 1st of November 1892, the administration of the general interest of the small rural districts was entrusted to the sub-prefect (Of.G., 1892: 5036), who still remained the commissioner of the prefect, a quality due to which he would have direct authority and control within his districts (art. 67 and 68). It was still the sub-prefect who was given the activity of administrative and preventive police, for the maintaining of public order and security, a quality that allowed him to take measures regarding the well-being and the tranquillity of the administrated people. Additionally, he was due a series of special attributions, among which we can enumerate: the mandatory published laws and general regulations, the execution of the general safety measures from his districts, the supervision and the police of the markets, fairs, the inspection and the supervision of the public places and roads, the supervision of the administration on addressing the properties of the churches from the rural communes, of

the asylums, charity organisations, schools, hospitals, which were functioning in the communes from his district (art. 70). He would give reports to the Prefect regarding the noticed abuse and needs, along with the necessary improvement (art. 74). The distinctive mark of the Sub-prefect was a scarf in the national colours. Besides his official uniform, legally established, he had to wear the uniform and the scarf in case of solemn meetings, receptions and public ceremonies (art. 82).

In addition to each Sub-prefect, there was also a deputy of his, who had the same attributions as the sub-prefect, which he would exercise under his direct orders and direction (art. 83 and 84). The deputy of the sub-prefect was also the chief of the district's chancellery.

Through the legislative changes for the organisation of the authorities outside the ministry of the internal affairs, from 1892, there were introduced general conditions and special conditions (Of.G., 1892: 5.036-5.037) for holding of executory functions within the prefecture. According to these regulations, there were established the necessary circumstances for filling a position and the professional evolution of the staff working in the prefecture chancellery, and the sub-prefects (Of.G., 1892: 5.037). Thus, the holding of a position of prefecture's director, subprefect and deputy sub-prefect was conditioned by the graduation of university with a degree in law of political sciences, in the country or abroad (Sora, 2007 : 57). For holding the position of chief of office there was requested a bachelor's degree (art. 80), and for the occupying of the other inferior functions from the prefecture's chancellery, there was requested at least a graduation certificate of four-grade secondary school or four-grade primary school (art. 90). In case there were more candidates, for the appointing and the promotion to the inferior positions from the prefecture, there was organised a competition, based on a procedural decision, approved by the ministry. The competition was presided by the prefect. Moreover, there were established clear rules on addressing the working hours (art. 94), along with the existence of an attendance book (art. 95). Additionally, there were established, for the first time, measures on the discipline of the clerks from the prefecture.

Voted in the meeting of the Deputy Assembly from the 16th of February 1894, the Law for the modification of some articles from the law on the county councils (Of.G., 1894: 1.757-1.759) was instituting the coordinates of a centralised regime, the Prefect receiving even more attributions (Györke, 2013: 24).

Therefore, the prefect was the head of the county administration, a quality through which he would execute the decisions made by the

county council, he would represent the council, defending in court, through the State's advocate, the cases against the county (art. 91). Furthermore, between the sessions, the prefect would prepare all the elements and the necessary clarifications for the matters to be debated by the council, in the following session, but, in cases of emergency, he could voice his opinion on the questions related to the competence of the council, under the limitation of the notice given by his commission, and with the obligation to subject the case to the council's attention (Of.G., 1894: 1.758). What is more, the prefect had the obligation to send and to execute all the decisions, either of the county council, or the county delegation (Of.G., 1894: 1.758). In case the council had made decisions to the detriment of the county, the prefect would have resorted to the government, in 10 days from the date of the adopting or the communication. Later, in 20 days, the government had to reject or to admit the appeal (art. 95).

The prefect was also the one attributed with responsibilities on addressing the county accountancy and the closing of accounts (art. 98), being able to request the revision of the county bank, any time he would consider appropriate, and he had to report any found irregularities to the minister of finances (art. 99).

Two weeks before the opening of each session of the County Council, the prefect had to send all the members the programme of the works (art. 100) that were to be debated within the council meetings, each year, at the opening of the ordinary sessions presenting the situation of the county from any point of view, to the Council. The presentation delivered by the prefect was published in the Official Gazette.

Furthermore, the greatest part of the attributions of the former permanent committee belonged to the competence of the prefect (Györke, 2013: 24). Being "multiple and varied", there was considered that the prefect would find "impossible to deal with so many responsibilities, both as representative and agent of the central government, and unique administrator of all the businesses and material and moral interests, such varied and numerous" (Negulescu, Boilă, Alexianu, 1930: 510).

The Prefect had a subordinate at the leadership of each small rural district - the sub-prefect. "Administrator of the county interests", the sub-prefect was the person who would visit all the communes from the district, would inspect the legal status registers and the condition of the communal houses, at least twice a year, and any time he would find irregularities, he had to report them to the prefect (art. 106). In

addition, he would hand the prefect, a month before the meeting of the county council, a report in which he would describe the necessities of the district, along with propositions for the improvement of the situation in it (art. 107). In January, the sub-prefect had to draw up a report in which there was depicted the condition of the district for the past year, which had to be accompanied by statistic data (art. 108). The public function of the sub-prefect also suffered transformations, both as regarding the form and the content. The sub-prefect, "an exterior administrative agent", who "had the mission to make the directions of the central administration known within the communes", had territorial competences only in the district where he was appointed. Unlike their previous status, when the sub-prefect was also a "peace judge", starting with 1894, he "would have just the role of simple administrative agent" (Györke, 2013: 25).

From 1901, the sub-prefect was called a communal reviser, and, in 1904, the entitling of the sub-prefect was changed into that of communal inspector. For years later, more precisely in 1908, he would become a district administrator.

In the same year (1908) there was opted for the division of the administrators on two classes. Thus, the function of prefecture director was to be exercised by a 1st class administrator, delegate of the ministry of internal affairs, at the request of the Prefect (Ghițulescu, 2001: 232).

The law on the organisation of the state's general police (Of.G., 1903: 3-9), from the 1st of April 1903, was granting the county Prefect with the right to give the officers and police agents from the county "special duty commissions" (art. 9), to issue ordinances for the maintaining of order and the prevention of crimes (art. 10), and to request, in case of rebellions, the intervention of the army (art. 11). As "a special safety measure", the prefect had the obligation to communicate directly to the minister of the internal affairs any information related to "conspiracies and plots" (art. 13). Moreover, it can be noticed that the policemen from the cities of Craiova and Galați, received the title of police prefects (Ghițulescu, 2001: 232).

By analysing the Institution of the Prefect, we can assert that the adopted legislative provisions that regulated the activity of it were in opposition with the institutional importance in the system of the local public administration. Both the law from 1892 and that from 1894 left a mark on the evolution of this institution, the two laws remaining in force, with feeble modifications, until the emerging of the law on the administrative union from 1925. From the study of the two laws, there

can be noticed that the evolution of the Romanian state was a complex one, contradictory and long-lasting, disputed between the liberal and conservative groups, yet, the process of modernisation of the state and its institutions continued.

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