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THE CASE OF UNIREA *NEWSPAPER IN UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS*

Abstract: Scientific research revealed a series of unpublished documents concerning the initiation of proceedings against Unirea newspaper from Blaj, in the period of Aurel C.Domşa's editorship.
This study proposes a systematic analysis of the case itself, based on documents existent in the archive file, yet giving the reader the pleasure of entering intimacy of a character deeply rooted in publication of Unirea newspaper. For historians, documents presented within the paper may represent authentic sources of some future specialized works on this theme. The novelty of these documents gives at the same time, pleasure of literary reading and scientific exploitation of competent researcher.
We considered as necessary copying all documents, without intervening to update the language, for a better understanding of the text. Documents written in Hungarian were partially translated, by the wish of not altering the text, leaving to specialized and interested researchers their translation.
Presentation of documents in chronological order clearly delineates the overall picture of a political process under the guise of press case.

Keywords: case, press, court, verdict, editor.

Indubitably, appearance of a new Romanian newspaper, *Unirea* from Blaj, was regarded by Hungarian authorities from Budapest as potential peril to intention of Magyarisation of Romanians from Transylvania. Sub-entitled ecclesiastical-political sheet, the newspaper has given possibility of Romanian Church United with Rome to act both at ecclesiastical level and political level, for keeping identity of Romanian element from Transylvania. National and nationalist character of *Unirea* was remarked through extensive stands against any attempts of Hungarian government of oppressing and subjugating Transylvanian Romanian nation. Frequently, reaction of Hungarian authorities was immediate and vehement, sometimes even in the Hungarian Parliament, yet never was raised the issue of stopping appearance of the newspaper or taking some punitive measures against the editor. Practically, reactions of both sides limited to journalistic polemics, sometimes harsh, yet without materialisation of some restrictive actions on behalf of authorities.

This state of affairs ends in 1906, after fifteen years of uninterrupted appearance, by institution the legal proceedings against *Unirea* newspaper and editor Aurel C. Domşa. Action of Hungarian authorities was perceived at that moment, as an extremely grave event, with multiple consequences and implications, both at ecclesiastical and political level.

What determined such a position?

Thorough study of the newspaper between appearance interval 1906-1909, as well as thorough research of some archive documents, many of them new, unpublished complete the mosaic of actions, determinant for the correct, overall image of this case.

In issue 21 from 19 May 1906 of *Unirea* newspaper, editor Domşa publishes the leading article entitled *Aniversară (Anniversary)*[1], article that reiterated the wish of

[1] Aurel, C. Domşa, *Aniversară*, in „Unirea" issue 21 from 19 May 1906, pp.159-160.

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Transylvanian Romanians gathered in Blaj, on 3-15 May 1848. Research of the text does not indicate more pronounced emphases towards line of articles with nationalist characteristics usually published in *Unirea*. Neither analysis of the text from Hungarian perspective identifies supplementary elements in relation to the *classical* speech promoted by *Unirea.* In fact, article proposed to readers a retrospective of events from Blaj, from 1848, an analysis of stage of acquired national and ecclesiastical liberties, as well as urge of continuing fight for Romanian cause from Transylvania.

The second article, entitled *Din parlament*[2]*(From the parliament)*, published by the same editor Domşa, in issue 24 of *Unirea* from 9 June 1906, depicts the tense atmosphere of Hungarian parliament's meeting, led by the presiding minister Wekerle, within which Romanian deputies Aurel Vlad, Alexandru Vajda and Iuliu Maniu delivered long speeches that focused on defending rights of Romanian nation from Transylvania. We notice the diplomatic tone used by Maniu, by comparison with the combative tone, pronounced theatrical, of the other two Romanian deputies.

The last[3] article, the third, published by Domşa is entitled *Viena şi magiarii*[4]*(Vienna and Hungarians)*. Semantic research of the text indicates great differences in relation to the first two articles. Quality of the article on the whole, fluent expression, the approached tone, style used for its drawing up, pertinent information entitle us to assume that the article would have been written by another person and only attributed to Domşa. The assumption is plausible also by the decision taken by the founder of the newspaper, that the authors not to sign their articles. Experience of long researching *Unirea* newspaper reveals the rule of attributing the leading article to the editor-in-chief. Yet, there are also exceptions that may confirm our assumption. Obviously, until discovery of definite clues, based on documents, article Vienna and Hungarians remains attributed to Domşa.

The article in itself may technically be considered a model article, having three distinct parts: introduction, account itself and conclusion. In introduction, we find a sharp analysis of diplomacy in European context, of the major role imposed by it in approaching some interstate positions. The second part encompasses the account itself of two events occurred simultaneously in the capital of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, Vienna, that resulted in tensioning of relations between Austria and Hungary, but also between the Austrian government and monarch.

The first event takes place to the Hungarian palace Bankgasse, on Sunday, 10th of June 1906. Here, the Hungarian government led by Wekerle meets in an informal meeting that focused on approaching a position in the matter of common military pretensions. At the same date, mayor Lueger of Vienna convenes an ample popular manifestation of protest against the Hungarian government that only imposed, without consulting the Austrian government, *independent Hungarian customs tariff.*

More than 30.000 Austrian citizens responded to this appeal. The tone of prince Liechtenstein, nationalist-extremist, transformed the protest into spontaneous popular revolt, both against the Hungarians and the monarch. Words such as Jewish-Hungarians, let Hungary disappear, down with Kossuth had the role of inciting the nation, the manifestation peaking with the symbolic hanging of Kossuth, in fact a puppet dressed in red-white-green that bore the inscription Kossuth, and breaking with stones the windows of the palace where the meeting of the Hungarian government was held. Naturally, the event, first of this type from the Empire, imposes a special analysis.

[2] Aurel C. Domşa, *Din parlament*, in „Unirea" issue 24 from 9 June 1906, pp.183-184.
[3] The last article from the series of the three articles published in „Unirea", that were at the base of proceedings initiated against the newspaper and editor Domşa.
[4] Aurel C. Domşa, *Viena şi magiarii*, in „Unirea" issue 25 from 16 June 1906, pp.191-192.

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What factors could determine change of tolerant attitude of the Austrian nation, into a force action, characterised by intolerance?

Unilateral interpretation of the Pact from 1867 by the Hungarian government, wish of an independent Hungarian state, own political and economic interest, accentuated throughout time, the tense relations between the two governments, Austrian and Hungarian, a state preserved by the monarch of the Empire himself by the decisions he took. Worth noticing is the protestors' manner of action, similar to that used by Wekerle to overthrow Fejervary government. The end of the article, the conclusion of editor Domşa is synthesised in a well-known Romanian proverb: „What you do not wish to be done to you, do not do to others", regarded in this case, as a possible threat to Hungarian government, through a similar manifestation of the whole Romanian nation from Transylvania.

We insisted upon the three articles, *Aniversară, Din parlament* and *Viena şi magiarii*, shortly analysing their content, to reveal the common feature, in compliance with the direction approached by *Unirea* newspaper throughout its existence, that of defending national Romanian interest in the context of permanent process of Magyarisation of Transylvanian Romanians. Articles do not include identifiable elements of juridical nature; they are not contrary to deontological journalistic approach; they do not mirror chauvinistic or extremist positions against the Empire or the Hungarian government.

Still, they formed into counts of *Unirea* newspaper and editor Aurel C. Domşa, within the proceeding instituted by the Hungarian authorities. The case was carried out along two coordinates: civil and penal, this way being wished to be an example of riposte against Transylvanian Romanian press. It is a classical case of intimidation, practiced by the Hungarian government in all fields, we refer either to education, church, culture or public administration.

II.1. Stages of the case

The proceedings initiated against editor Domşa and *Unirea* newspaper was one political, obviously. Hungarian authorities wished that this case to be an example for Romanian publications and Romanian authors of articles, so that any attempt of „instigation" to have as a juridical reference, the sentence delivered in this case. The duration of the case was intently increased, exactly to maintain actual this subject in the collective conscience of Romanian journalists.

II.1.1. Judicial research

The first document that records initiating proceedings against editor Domşa is search warrant no 8188/906 b.f./32Bm/1906 issued by Blaj district court on 10 July 1906. The search warrant, issued based on Law 173, envisages search both at the domicile of Domşa, and headquarters of *Unirea* editorial office. The count mentioned in the warrant was instigation, without detailing the type of instigation or details related to the event. Yet, it is recorded that *Unirea* newspaper published in issue 21 from 19 May 1906, the article *Anniversary*, without being signed by the author, and for that purpose, the search followed to obtain the manuscript of the article to identify the author.

Interesting is the fact that Domşa affirmed during hearings that he did not know the article's provenience. It is possible that this fact to have been only an artifice used by Domşa to make difficult the research in itself, but it is also likely that this article not to have indeed

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being written by Domşa. The warrant is signed by judge of the Cluj Royal Trial Court[5] on 8 July 1906 and bears the stamp of the institution.

At the same date, 10 July 1906 it is issued a document identical as form and content, the search warrant no 8189/906 b.f./33 Bm/1906 that makes reference to the article *From the parliament*.

The third search warrant no 8069/906 bf/34Bm/1906 is dated to 17 June 1906 and invokes the article *Vienna and Hungarians*. We notice a discrepancy between date of signing the search warrant, 13 June 1906 and date of appearance of the article in *Unirea* newspaper, 16 June 1906. Definitely, it is an error of editing the document made by officials, its issuing before date of article appearance being illogical. Following chronological order of articles, but also documents issued until that time, we can assert that the document was signed on 13 July 1906 and issued on 17 July 1906.

Particularity of this case is given by triple issuance of documents: three search warrants, three summonses, three convictions, yet united into one cause recorded in one criminal case file. The manner of judicial research of Hungarian authorities, in the case of *Unirea* newspaper, induces the idea of existence of three criminal case files, one for each article or, splitting the file into three independent causes. In reality, one criminal case file existed, no 8408-1907, with a sentence at least bizarre, contrary to usual practices of time. The finality of these approaches[6] does not record identification of manuscripts or other evidence which to allow attribution of these articles to editor Domşa.

I mention that research of issues afferent to months June, July, August and September 1906 of *Unirea* newspaper does not record any article concerning the subject of searches or of an eventual case.

II.1.2. Criminal case file

Series of search warrants was continued shortly after by a new series of documents, three *summonses in criminal matters*, no Bm 38/1906, Bm 39/1906 and Bm 40/1906. The purpose of summonses was hearing editor Domşa, „with the caveat that in case of failure to attend, a warrant for arrest will be issued”[7]. Date of attending to the headquarters of Blaj District Court was 28 July 1906, at 15 o'clock. Two summonses were issued at the same date, 26 July 1906, by Blaj Court, being signed by judge Vermeş Istvan. For the third summon[8], we notice again a difference between date of issuance, 30 July 1906 and hearing date, 28 July 1906. It is likely that the two errors to be a simple coincidence, but at the same time we may assume that the two documents were dated subsequently.

Intention of Hungarian authorities became clear. It was wished an accumulation of convictions into one criminal case file, with juridical procedures carried out in three separate causes. We may assume that judging editor Domşa in the case of real guilt would have led to one sentence and implicitly to one conviction. Yet in this case, rules were broken by the wish of stopping from the very beginning any intention of Romanians from Transylvania to affiliate to Austrian movement against Hungarian government.

Unfortunately, there is no reference to the result of hearings. Yet most likely, they were not concludent. Blaj Court issued a new series of three summonses, no Bm 41/1906, Bm 42/1906 and Bm 43/1906. The date of new hearings to the headquarters of Blaj District Court

[5] Translation from Hungarian into Romanian of the text comprised in the document is Cluj King's Bench or Cluj Royal Trial Court.
[6] We refer here to result of searches conducted to the domicile of editor Domşa and headquarters of *Unirea* editorial office.
[7] Summon in the criminal matter no. Bm 43/1906.
[8] Summon in the criminal matter no. Bm 40/1906.

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was 3 August 1906, at 15 o'clock. The three summonses were issued at the same date, 2 August 1906, under the signature of the same judge Vermeş Istvan. Neither result of these hearings is known. Yet, definitely was gathered sufficient evidence for opening the criminal case file. The first document that records explicitly existence of the criminal case file no 8408-1907 is the response of Cluj Royal Trial Court given to the request forwarded by the lawyer from Cluj, Pordea Iuliu, as for establishing his fees in this case, 300 crowns, in compliance with Law Bprta 485. In fact, the document is only a *Conclusion*, no 9828-1907 bfto, from 11 September 1907, that established three major issues: the fee of lawyer Pordea, payer of the sum in the person of editor Domşa and appointing this lawyer as official defender of the case. Although there is no other document concerning the person of defender until 11 September 1907, *Unirea* newspaper records in the article *Procesele noastre (Our cases)*[9] that the first lawyer of defence in this case was Iuliu Maniu, assisted only by lawyer Pordea from Cluj. Otherwise, this article covers by its explanations the journalistic void between May-November 1906, concerning the subject of proceedings initiated against Domşa, and completes the existent precarious historical source.

II.1.3. Delivering the sentence

Absence of any article in the above mentioned period, concerning the initiation of proceedings against editor Domşa, is explained in the text of the article: *„until the day of the sentence we did not know about the papers of the case, because re-reading the inculpative passages we do not find at all, the offence that we are charged with".*

We may assume that this case was either dealt with naivety, without sizing the peril of Hungarian authorities' intention of drastically penalising *Unirea* newspaper, or it was dealt with indifference, having as reference guide for resolving, practice of previous cases. Definitely is that only after delivering the first sentence, on 17 November 1906, that envisaged the period of 8 months of arrest, payment of a fine of 1.200 crowns, payment of legal expenses and obligation of publishing the sentence in *Unirea* newspaper, attitude towards this case of competent Romanian authorities changes radically.

We must mention here that sentence gave the possibility to the defendant to transform the value of the fine into 60 days of imprisonment. The short account from pages of *Unirea* newspaper, of case's development, reveals the chauvinistic character manifested by the judicial authorities: prosecutor Jeney Aladar, president of the Trial Court Rudnyanszky Bela, the two assistant lawyers and notary of the case. Relevant on this line are two moments from the case: the first, at the beginning of the meeting, is indignation of president Rudnyanszky when hearing answers given in Romanian, and the second, intervention of Iuliu Maniu as for translation into Hungarian of the article *Din parlament*, intently vitiated by the translator of the case. Out of the speech-plea held by Maniu, mainly characterised by defending Romanian values from Transylvania, we notice argumentation according which newspaper *Unirea* would not have been the semi-official sheet of Blaj Greek-Catholic Archdiocese. A short commentary is imposed as for this issue.

Scientific research of existent documents, as well as of *Unirea* newspaper, regarded through historical source, definitely indicated affiliation of the newspaper to Romanian Church United with Rome from Blaj. Expressly, the masthead specifies the attribute of editor, either responsible editor or responsible publisher, or owner. Only on 7 April 1906, issue 14 of the newspaper records in the masthead the attribute of owner-publisher and responsible editor

[9] *Procesele noastre*, in „Unirea" issue 43 from 24 October 1906, pp.375-377. Article is not signed, but is attributed to Aurel C. Domşa.

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of Domşa[10], situation maintained until appearance of issue 1 from 5 January 1907. From this date on, the masthead indicates Domşa as owner-publisher, Augustin Gruiţia being hired as responsible editor. It is unlikely that these changes to have been a simple coincidence with initiation of proceedings. Exoneration of Uniate Church from any responsibility in the case of instituting legal proceedings against its organ represents a sufficiently convincing argument to trigger major changes in the editorial and publishing structure of *Unirea* newspaper.

Although the variant of instituting legal proceedings against *Unirea* newspaper was long circulated amongst historians, thorough research of documents demonstrated that this is not verified. Practically, there is no reference about the position of defender of *Unirea* newspaper, but only of editor Domşa. Final sentence of the case does not concern *Unirea* newspaper, but, juridically, only the person of Domşa. Involvement of the newspaper in the case may be considered only through ownership, in the sense that the owner is responsible of property.

II.2. Appeal

Terms of the sentence delivered in the case of editor Domşa demonstrated once more that, liberty of expression was accepted by Hungarian authorities, only to convenient limits and submission, censorship being varied. Conviction of the editor of a Romanian organ from Transylvania represented a detriment for this liberty, opening by the created precedent an authentic *Pandora's box* in the field. Obviously, the immediate reaction of defence was initiating measures for lodging the appeal. The series of new documents discovered on the research revealed diversity of action plans in the cause of appeal: hiring some specialised lawyers on criminal matters, intercession of bishops with certain bodies, raising Transylvanian Romanians' awareness through press, as for peril of this anti-Romanian approach.

The first document forwarded to Cluj Trial Court is the act of appeal itself, drawn up this time by the renowned lawyer from Cluj, Iuliu Pordea, by which was demanded annulment of the sentence as being ungrounded. Unfortunately, the document is not dated, but, by correlation of data encompassed in the correspondence of Pordea, we may assert that it was drawn up and lodged in May 1907, with the registration number 5674/1907. After this date, we assist to slowing down of the case, either due to beaurocracy, or intently.

The letter of lawyer Pordea from 7 June 1907 is relevant on this line. He notices: „*...I have found out about the papers of your case – I have searched for the same number even yesterday, - but it seems that the respective archivist was ordained to handle the papers, - so that all interested not to find them. This is all I can communicate, that on the decision of Curia from the file, - is signed by president that on 1 August 1907 debates will be carried out – this occurring during the autumn session.*"

The hearing date, envisaged for August, was again delayed due to transfer procedure of documents. Practically, from the moment of lodging appeal documents to the Royal Trial Court from Cluj, have passed almost six months until the date of their registration to Curia[11]. The letter of lawyer Pordea, dated to 16 October 1907, confirms registration of documents no 10385 from 15 October 1907, yet without mentioning a hearing date.

A new letter of the same lawyer, dated to 4 September 1907, confirms his appearance for defender in the cause of Domşa record to the hearing from 9 September 1907. At all surprising is his position in relation to result of the case: *„What will be the result? I really*

[10] See Sorin Valer Russu, *Ziarul Unirea de la Blaj 1891-1918. Prezentare generală*, Galaxia Gutenberg Publishing House, Tg-Lăpuş, 2012, p.67

[11] Curia is the correspondent of actual Appellate Court.

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don't know. Chauvinism of jurors from Cluj is well-known; they may prejudge that we have a verdict and case, – yet, it is not excluded, the remission of conviction – in the worst scenario"

Chronology of researched documents reveals the course of an atypical juridical case, at least by comparison with the actual juridical system, where it is known exactly institutional hierarchy: Trial Court, Court of Law, Appellate Court, High Court of Cassation and Justice. I am substantiating this by identification of a document, the letter of lawyer Pordea from 28 September 1907, document that includes also transposition of the concept of null and void appeal lodged at that date to the Trial Court. Without existing confusion between institution of the Trial Court and Curia, we notice existence of two appeals considered parallel, to two trial courts, without compliance to juridical norms. The text of the document is eloquent: *„herein, I transpose the concept of null and void appeal presented to the Court Trial nowadays. (...) Please, let me now whether you wish me to represent you to Curia, - to take care of things, in case of an affirmative answer".* Passing the appeal from the court below to the court above is based on a sentence, in this case penal one. Or, inexistence of a sentence to the appeal made in the court below, excludes possibility of appeal to the court above.

The end of 1907 does not record resolving the case by a final sentence. Similarly, we notice that neither *Unirea* newspaper excels in assigning consistent spaces for articles that record development of the case, fact at least curious. There are only two articles concerning this subject throughout 1907.

The first article, entitled *Anul al XVII (Year XVII)*[12], appears in issue 2 of Unirea newspaper from 19 January 1907, without signature of the author, but attributed to Domşa. The article represents a plea in favour of activity of *Unirea* newspaper throughout its existence, underlining the active role amongst clergy and Uniate believers, the subject of the trial being tangentially touched through analysis of the newspaper.

The second article, entitled *Polonyi Geza*[13], is published in the 4th issue of *Unirea* from 2 February 1907 and represents critique addressed to the minister of justice Polony Geza, minister that made himself remarked through his harsh decisions. In this context is remembered also the case of *Unirea* newspaper, as well as the first sentence given in this case. It was expected that such an event as it is that of a press case to raise editors' attention through accounts of different stages of the case. Unfortunately we can only notice the subject being ignored, either as interest or strategy used within the case.

Year 1908 proved to be decisive for the development of the proceedings initiated against editor Domşa. The first document of the year concerning this case is recorded on 5 January 1908. We refer to the letter of lawyer Pordea by which Domşa was informed of dismissing the null and void appeal and setting forth the initial sentence as definitive sentence of the Trial Court. The letter of the same lawyer Pordea, from 25 January 1908 confirms lodging of pardon application on the address of bishop Vasile Hossu, deeply involved from this moment on in development of the case. According to text, the application was to be forwarded to the Minister of Justice, through bishop Hossu that was in Vienna.

The result of the appeal is presented in the definitive sentence of Cluj Royal Trial Court, dated to 30 January 1908, sentence that confirms the position of the first instance, that of Blaj Court. Therefore editor Domşa was obliged, following the definitive sentence, to pay the fine of 1.200 crowns and serve eight months in jail. Shortly, after the sentence was delivered in the case of appeal lodged to Cluj Trial Court, Curia pronounced also in the case of the second appeal, confirming all previous sentences.

[12] *Anul al XVII*, in „Unirea" newspaper issue 2 from 19 January 1907. Article, although without the signature of the author, is attributed to editor Domşa.
[13] *Polonyi Geza*, in „Unirea" issue 4 from 2 February 1907. Article is also attributed to Domşa.

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From this moment on, *Unirea's* defence and that of editor Domşa mainly focused on interceding with different decisional bodies for remission and to extend the time limit for attending arrest. It was appealed also to less conventional methods, meaning contacting local personalities from Cluj, whose word might influence to a certain extent decision of remission.

The letter of lawyer Frâncu from Cluj, dated to 10 February 1908 confirms this fact: *„ (...) we are worried, because here at the prosecution Mr. Dr. Pordea was refused to come here, although he is in good relations with the Messieurs. Although the attempt must not be abandoned because the issue is decided definitively by the minister of justice, and I think if you do not have influential acquaintances, my substitute from the Post office might help you, to whom I may write immediately after receiving the notice that the application was forwarded".*

In the same date, 10 February 1908, editor Domşa receives a new letter on behalf of lawyer Pordea by which he is informed of his intercession with prosecutor Csipkis to obtain agreement of being incarcerated to the prison from Cluj and not to that from Szeged. Obviously, it is made reference to the intercession of a deputy, indicating here Iuliu Maniu[14], with minister Rieckl. Out of analysis of this letter's text we notice two important aspects: indifference showed by prosecution and Curia as for any subsequent decision concerning serving of punishment, as well as necessity of an insistent intercession with the minister of justice, the sole authority that might change the result of appeal and implicitly of sentence.

The letter from 12 February 1908 is consistent from the point of view of provided information:

- pardon application is refused,
- prosecutor Csipki insists upon immediate serving of the conviction,
- lawyer Frâncu indicates a lawyer like stratagem of extending the time limit for attending jail to serve the conviction, by forwarding a medical certificate issued by family physician, concerning insupportableness of climate from Hungary and necessity of serving the conviction in Cluj,
- it is indicated as being necessary intercession of deputy Iuliu Maniu for passing on this request.

A short letter, like a postcard, is sent by bishop Hossu to editor Domşa, assuring him of personal delivery of request for shifting the serve of the conviction in Cluj.

On 5 March 1908, lawyer Frâncu draws Domşa's attention, through a new letter, to possibility of sending the petition of serving the conviction in Cluj, to the minister of justice from Pest, in 6 or 7 March. It was also recommended *„to may do in time all writs in absencia in Pest."* Practically, these *writs* meant moving a parallel mechanism with the official approach, much faster and more efficacious by which certain influential persons could shorten the long route of documents.

Correspondence of bishop Vasile Hossu with editor Domşa, from 6 March 1908 is an authentic presentation of the functioning chart of this mechanism, much faster and more efficacious. Thus, we know that the request of Domşa got through bishop Vasile Hossu to the prime minister Wekerle, yet who asked for a copy of the sentence, as well as incriminating articles. From this point, the request was returned „in hand" to his cabinet chief, following to be reanalysed together with the requested papers. We may assume existence of an amiable relation, based on mutual respect of positions, between bishop Hossu and chief of cabinet of Prime Minister, Barczy Istvan. Assumption is valid as Domşa is advised by the bishop, as papers requested by Wekerle to be personally handed over to Barczy through Maniu. In only three days the documents get on the table of the prime minister, fact acknowledged by letter

[14] In the text of the letter is remembered the forename of deputy Gyuluka, forename attributed in small circles from Budapest to Iuliu Maniu.

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of lawyer Pordea from 9 March 1908, by which informs Domşa of this fact. Hence, a route of documents, which officially would lasted months, ended in only 3 days. Resolution of the request followed to be reanalysed on 31 March 1908, fact confirmed by the telegram sent by Maniu from Pest, on 30 March 1908: *„only tomorrow morning the affairs will be managed, I will let you know immediately, Maniu"*.

Indeed, resolution of the request takes place on 31 March 1908. The fact is acknowledged by the telegram of Maniu addressed to editor Domşa, whose text is eloquent: *„the minister suspended serving the sentence until de other one is not resolved*[15] *I am asking you, you must not leave*[16] *anywhere Iuliu."*

A first piece of information about the pardon application lodged by Maniu to the Prime Minister Wekerle is revealed from the letter of bishop Vasile Hossu, that was in Budapest, from 2 July 1908, addressed to Domşa, by which he communicates the result yet unofficial of the request, meaning imprisonment period was reduced from eight months to two months. In the same day, Domşa also receives the official decision[17] concerning remission of punishment. For everybody was clear that remission of imprisonment period from eight months to two months was maximum concession that the Hungarian authorities were willing to make. The case[18] undergoes from this moment on into a new phase, the last, by which „defence"[19] of editor Domşa demands[20] serving the sentence of imprisonment in Cluj and not to Szeged, the main motive invoked being his precarious state of health, incompatible with the climate from Szeghed.

We do not know whether the invoked motive is real or only a lawyer like stratagem. Definitely is that, although the first part of the case was characterised by the intention of Hungarian authorities to increase the duration of the case for propagandistic purposes, the last part that regarded serving the sentence was characterised by maximum operativity. Thus, the request tabled by Domşa on 9 July 1908, through lawyer Pordea is resolved in only two days.

The letter of lawyer Amos Frâncu, from 11 July 1908 confirms to Domşa the positive resolution of the request. On 29 July 1908, by notice no 7547/1908 of the Trial Court from Cluj, Domşa is informed, by official writing, of serving the sentence in Cluj, provided that he attends the prison from Cluj, on 1 August 1908.

Research of some new documents[21] confirms the decision of Domşa of presenting himself to the prison from Cluj, not in 1 August, but on 3 August 1908. According to *the release letter*, the period spent by Domşa in the prison from Cluj spanned from 3 August 1908 to 3 October 1908. Regarding this last document, we may assert that it represents an authentic portrait[22] in numbers and data of editor Domşa: age 40, height 173 cm, round face, robust, brown and round eyes, brown hair, brown skin, without particular signs on the body. Similarly, the same document confirms his good health when released.

II.3. Evidence of solidarity

[15] It is referred to pardon application of the conviction forwarded by Maniu to the Prime Minister Wekerle.
[16] Text refers to beginning of serving the imprisonment conviction.
[17] Decision no. 6675/1908 of Ministry of Justice concerning remission of imprisonment period from 8 months to 2 months.
[18] Although the case of Domşa was closed juridically by delivering the final sentence, in this article we refer to the case, as to the whole ensemble of actions undertaken from the initial moment, to release from prison.
[19] We refer here to the lawyers of defence.
[20] Letter of lawyer Pordea from 9 July 1908 records receiving a request from Domşa, to be forwarded to the prosecutor to change the detention place, from Szeged to Cluj.
[21] We only remember here the document *Elbocsato-level* no 248/1908, that attests serving the sentence to the jail from Cluj, from 3 August1908 until 3 October 1908.
[22] This information was encompassed in the release letter *Elbocsoto-level* no 248/1908.

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The news of proceedings initiated against editor Domşa and implicitly *Unirea* newspaper represented a valid core of mobilising all human and material resources. Bishops, lawyers, important Transylvanian personalities have brought their contribution to diminishing effects of sentence delivered in this case. Next to these, a numerous group of supporters of editor Domşa and implicitly *Unirea* newspaper manifested solidarity, offering moral and financial support to Domşa family. The case in itself was not anymore regarded as an individual action against one person, but an offence brought to the Uniate Church and by it, to the whole Romanian nation from Transylvania. Throughout time existed proceedings initiated against some newspapers or Romanian magazines, but none against an organ under the patronage by the Romanian Church of a majority in Transylvania. Otherwise, it is explainable reaction of Domşa's supporters, Uniate priests in general, but not only, who perceived this press case as a detriment to national being. Collection of letters comprised in Domşa's correspondence from the respective period is eloquent for what we asserted above.

The first letter[23] from the correspondence file records the following: *„I have read what you have been gone through with the patriots from Cluj. We love you even more, now, because ideas you defended are of our whole nation and I am glad together with the other brothers from here that you defend them not only by words and pen, but also by fact and life."* We also notice the irony addressed to „*patriots from Cluj*", clear reference to Hungarian authorities involved in judging the case.

Bishop Vasile Hossu, whose contribution was significant throughout the case, draws attention: *„Everything will be good again, only a lesson must be revealed, Unirea newspaper must stick to the original programme strictly and encourage militant policy because everything is attributed to the metropolitan bishop, while he has nothing to do with Unirea."*[24] Affirmation of the bishop is at least confusing, because the „original" programme included both the ecclesiastical side and political one.

Himself founder of *Unirea* newspaper, agreed also with political structure of the newspaper, even more, he obtains approval on this line, as a favour of metropolitan bishop Vancea. It is true that during the beginnings the newspaper, Hossu, at that time responsible editor of *Unirea* newspaper, represented sufficient guarantee of the metropolitan bishop, as regards the involvement degree of the newspaper in politics. Once with his promotion as bishop and taking over prerogatives afferent to his position, approaching political issues came to responsible editors and subsequently to owners of *Unirea* newspaper. Documentary research work evidenced change in tones and prioritisation of political component within leading articles, mainly those against Hungarian authorities. Pertinent and documented analysis, as response in case of anti-Romanian measures wished by Hungarian administration, was replaced along with chauvinistic articles, many of them of obvious subjectivity. Such an attitude foreshadowed shortly inclination of balance in favour of Hungarian authorities. Domşa case represented such an action, meant to balance the direction line of the newspaper.

Another letter[25], this date from Vienna, signed by Victor, mentioned the material support granted to Domşa family: „*please await a small package from me on Thursday*". About receiving such material support, especially, food, we encounter notes also in the texts of other letters. His good friend, Aurel Pop, vicar from Jucul Superior, writes him amongst others: *„Do not take it amiss Pal, if I am sending you a duck and a hen, and because also at us hens lay few eggs (50). Eat them together with your respectable lady at high glee and*

[23] Letter of Mr. Niculae from Piteşti, from 11 October 1906.
[24] Letter of bishop Vasile addressed to Domşa, from 19 November 1906, written in Lugoj.
[25] Letter of Mr. Victor written in Vienna, on 19 November 1906. It is unlikely that the letter to belong to Victor Szmigelski, even if this travelled frequently to Vienna.

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healthy."[26] There existed also persons who have offered financial support, according to own possibilities. Thus, the short letter of Mr. I. G. Bibicescu addressed to the wife of editor, Livia Domşa, mentions the sum of 200 crowns donated by E. Corada, as „*contribution to the fine to which publicist Domşa was convicted*".

Amongst names of those who were solidary with Domşa's cause, we remember the following I. Şerban[27], I. Costin[28], A. Florin[29], Ştefan Sita[30], Ariton[31], Hodoşiu[32]family, Victor[33], Octavian[34], N. Radu[35], Ion I. C. Brătianu etc. Very likely, those who had signed the letters only by first name are found among close friends of the editor.

We mention here also existence of a new document, referring to friends and his close collaborators. On his onomastics, Domşa, imprisoned in Cluj, receives a sign of collective affection that he enjoyed among his friends from Blaj, represented by a list with their signatures. The letter is an authentic document, bearing autographs of local, civil and ecclesiastic personalities, such as Iacob Mureşian, Demetriu Radu, Augustin Caliani, Aurelia Bariţiu, G. Munteanu, M. Coltor, Alexandru Ciura, Ioan Raţiu etc.

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[26] Letter of priest Aurel Pop, rector from Jucul Superior, signed on 24 November 1906
[27] Ioan Şerban, Uniate priest from Firez parish, letter from 11 October 1908.
[28] Ioan Costin, Uniate priest from Cristur parish, letter from 8 October 1908.
[29] A. Florian, probably external collaborator of the newspaper, letter from 7 October 1908 bears the postage stamp and stamp of Austrian Post Office.
[30] Ştefan Sita, Uniate priest from Lunca, letter from 5 October 1908.
[31] Ariton, friend and collaborator of Unirea newspaper, from Reghin, letter from 4 October 1908.
[32] Hodoşiu signs the congratulatory telegram addressed to Domşa, with no 763.
[33] Victor signs the congratulatory telegram, no 587.
[34] Octavian, probably brother of editor Domşa, signs the letter from 26 September1908.
[35] N. Radu from Szeged, letter from 24 September1908.

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