

## 175 YEARS FROM THE DEATH OF DIMITRIE DANIEL PHILIPPIDE

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Prominent personality of South-East European culture, Dimitrie Daniel Philippide, of Greek origin, had activated all his life on the Romanian land. Scholar, monk, professor, and researcher in natural science, supporter of Enlightenment left several works among which *Geography* and *History of Romania*. The events from South-Eastern Europe made Dimitrie Daniel Philippide to spend the last years of his life in Bessarabia where he died on November 10, 1832 and was buried in St. Nicolae church cemetery from Bălți.

**Key-words:** D.D. Philippide, Bessarabia.

Among the personalities who contributed to the Romanian culture, there were a great number of scholars who lived on the territory of the Romanian states, including Bessarabia that belonged since 1812 to the Russian Empire. Further research on their biographies is still necessary and it may form a common project of the History Institute of the Moldavian Academy of Science with the Institute of South-East European Studies of the Romanian Academy.

About Dimitrie Daniil Philippide (Daniel Philippidis), Greek scholar, who through his whole activity, through original writings, through teaching and as a translator, there are many facts to be discovered. For instance, the document we are publishing had not been found yet.

In the National Archives of the Republic of Moldova, in Chișinău, in the files with birth certificates of the town of Bălți, we discovered the death certificate of D. Philippides (see the photo), who died at Bălți, in 1832. According to the death certificate where the age of the deceased, 97 years, it would result that he was born in 1745. Actually his age can not be accepted. Philippides was born in the village of Milies on Pilon Mountain, in Thessaly, Greece. The Romanian historian Gheorghe Bezviconi supposed the birth date was 1770<sup>1</sup>. Other researchers had advanced the year 1750 (in any case they considered a birth date before 1765)<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Gheorghe Bezviconi, *Profiluri de ieri și de azi*, Chișinău, Universitas, 1992, p.131.

<sup>2</sup> Olga Cicanci, *Dimitrie Daniel Philippide. Istoria României*, București, Editura Pegasus Press, 2004, p.11.

The discussions have all the reasons to continue, certainly will be acquired. Sure is only the fact that he died on November 10, 1832 (in other sources is indicated November 6)<sup>3</sup>, in Bălţi. From the registration we can find out that “on the tenth day of November [is dead] the professor “the Greek” Dimitrie, son of Vasile Philippide”<sup>4</sup>. The age that figures here is 97, which is probably exaggerated. In the rubric „which was the cause of death” is mentioned „old age”. The person who made this statement was the priest Procopie Timofeevici Fronea. Dimitrie Daniil Philippide was buried in “the cemetery of Bălţi” by the archpriest Avramie Antonovski. But, unlike to other buried parishioners, where it is only noted that they were buried in the Bălţi cemetery, right to the name of Philippide is written the name of the priest who served the office together with the “priests’ synod”. This consignment shows that the funeral ceremony was not ordinary but it was accompanied with a religious service officiated by a big number of ecclesiastics, which will suggest that Dimitrie Philippide had a notable position among intellectuals and churchmen from Bessarabia in that period.

Gheorghe Bezviconi believed that the priest Daniel Philippide had settled in Bessarabia and for many years was superior at a monastery near Bălţi<sup>5</sup>. Alexandru Philippide whose grandfather Nicolae Philippide, had been Daniel’s brother (about his ancestor does not have more information)<sup>6</sup>.

Historian Sorin Iftimi did not found documents about Daniil being an abbot (egumen) in Bessarabia<sup>7</sup>.

Regarding the other family members who survived Daniel the information is scarce. In the 1835 census, made for the Russian administration of Bălţi, we find only Dimitrie Philippide, which in 1835 was 35 years old, being inscribed as “subject to the Turkish country (Ottoman Empire)”. He lived on the estate of boyar Egor Katargi<sup>8</sup>. This Dimitrie Philippide, from Bălţi, is no longer mentioned in the census for 1854.

We may add that Dimitri Daniel Philippide could be found by 1814–1815 in Chişinău and Cetatea Albă, cities where the Russian administration set up, few

<sup>3</sup> Olga Cicanci, *op. cit.*, p.17.

<sup>4</sup> A.N.R.M., Fond 211, *Registrelle metricale ale regiunii/guberniei Basarabia*, inv. 1, u.p. 54, f. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Gheorghe Bezviconi, *op. cit.*, p.131.

<sup>6</sup> Alexandru Philippide, *Noiţã bibliografică asupra lui Dimitrie Philippide*, in “Arhiva”, tom. IV, Iaşi, 1893, p.163.

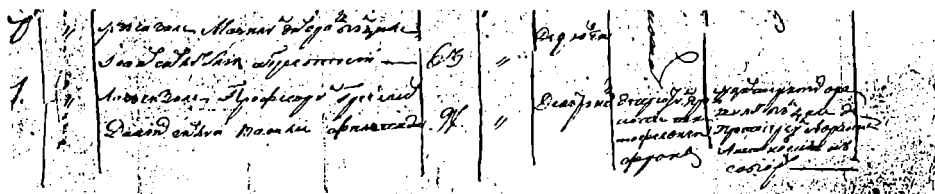
<sup>7</sup> Sorin Iftimi, *Pe urmele lui Daniil Philippidis (1755–1832)*, in “Cercetări istorice. Buletin al Complexului Muzeal Naţional Moldova”, (Serie nouă), XXI–XXIII, 2002–2004, Iaşi, 2007, p. 332.

<sup>8</sup> A.N.R.M., Fond 134, *Administraţia Financiară a Basarabiei*, inv. 2, u. p. 597, f.38v., Iordaki Catargi (1797–1871).

years later, a Committee for helping the Greek refugees, menaced by “Turks wrath”<sup>9</sup>. Their protection concerned the Provisional Government of Bessarabia.

Therefore, we think Dimitrie Philippide was living, during that time, in Chişinău and Cetatea Albă, towns where massive Greek communities existed<sup>10</sup>.

Between 1816 and 1818 he is in Leipzig where he printed his works on the history and geography of Romania, in Iaşi and Chişinău, he was a guest of his former student Ioan Baş.



Certificate of death, Dimitrie Daniel Philippide

<sup>9</sup> A.N.R.M., Fond 450, *Comisia greacă auxiliară din Chişinău de pe lângă Guvernul Provizoriu al Basarabiei*, inv. I.

<sup>10</sup> See Silvia Corlăţeanu-Granciuc, *Contribuţii documentare la istoria Comunităţii Greceşti din Basarabia în secolul al XIX-lea*, in “Tyragetia”, X, Chişinău, 2001, p. 166.