Serb. Astron. J. № 166 (2003), 71 - 77

UDC 929 (498.3)
Professional paper

THE ASTRONOMER – N. N. DONITCH

A. A. Baikov (1886 – 1958), A. Gaina

Academy of Sciences of Moldova,
1 Stefan cel Mare blvd, Chisinau, MD-2012, Republic of Moldova

(Received: February 22, 2003; Accepted: March 28, 2003)

SUMMARY: This paper describes a history of friendship and collaboration between the astronomers N. Donitch and A.A. Baikov. Information on other astronomers, L.V. Okulitch and E.A. Von der Pahlen, and meteorologists V.H. Dubinskii and Nina Gouma, can also be found. Details on the expeditions aimed at observing the total solar eclipses on 30 August 1905 (organized by the Imperial Academy of Sciences in Sankt-Petersburg) and 19 June 1936 (organized by the Romanian Royal Cultural foundation) are given. The main part represents the first English translation of the paper by Baikov, published earlier in Russian and Romanian, with a new preface, annotations, and comments.

Key words. biographies, obituaries

1. PREFACE

I have found the paper THE ASTRONOMER – N. N. DONITCH by A. A. Baikov at the National Archive of the Republic of Moldova (fond 2983, inv. no. 1, file 13) in 1994. Gheorghe Bezviconi, Romanian historian, transmitted it for the Archive in 1963.

Gh. Bezviconi was born on 14 April 1904 in Jitomir (Ukraine) (Chisinau, Enciclopedie, Museum Eds., 1997, p. 73). He was the son of Gavriil Bezviconnyi and Sofia Pigulevski (1876, Jitomir, Ukraine - 2. 04. 1934, Chisinau, Romania). Bezviconi lived in Chisinau from 1919 till 1937, while some researchers found that the family of Gavriil Bezviconnyi moved to Chisinau soon after the birth of the little Jorj. Since 1937 he lived in Bucharest (till 1966) and worked with the famous Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga. He is the author of outstanding research in genealogy and history. The Bezviconi's archive in Chisinau contains various documents concerning the history of Bessarabia. Bezviconi was decorated by the "Medaile d'Or de Institute Français pour l'Histoire" Medaile d'Honeur Vermeil du Societé Academique "Arts - Sciences - Lettres" and won other French, Romanian and Italian awards. Bezviconi died on 30 April 1966 in Bucharest.

As I have established while working at the Archive, the astronomer A. A. Baikov transmitted his unpublished paper to Gh. Bezviconi, before his death in Bucharest, approximately in 1958. Baikov was born in 1886 in Russia. He graduated from the Imperial Alexander Lyceum and the Physical and Mathematical department of the University in Sankt-Petersburg. He was a Colonel of the Russian Czarist Army during the WWI, and a student at the Medical Faculty of the Bucharest University in the period between the World Wars. Baikov worked in 1901-1907 at Pulkovo (see: Baikov A.A., Pulkovo Astronomical Observatory in 1901-1907, *Istoriko-Astronomicheskie issledovania*, 1959, pt. 5, Moscow, p. 445) and posse his own amateur laboratory in Pavlovsk near Sankt-Petersburg. He met, probably for the first time, N. Donitch in St.-Petersburg in 1904. After the WWI he was a refugee from the Soviets and worked in Dubasarii-Vechi and Bucharest. He participated in solar eclipses observations in 1905

(Asswan, Upper Egypt) and 1936 (Ineboli, Turkey;). Other details of his biography can be found below.

The Bezviconi's Archive contains also a few photographs (fond 2983, inv. no. 1, file 68): 1) a photo of the Observatory's Tower in Dubasarii-Vechi (in 1937), 2) a photo of A. Baikov with colleagues astronomers taken in Bucharest at the Observatory on Ipatescu, blvd. 21, after the World War II (approximately in 1948), 3) a photo of the aunt of N. Donitch, Elena Lysakowska, A. Baikov, Maria Donitch (Perks), A.T. Remmih with his family and guests at the Observatory in Dubasarii-Vechi taken before the WWII (approximately in 1937), and 4) a photo of N. Donitch, A. Baikov, and Nina Guma in Ineboli, during the expedition for the observation of the total Solar eclipse, Turkey, 1936.

Besides very valuable information on the Russian scientists emigrées after the WWI and the Romanian ones after the WWII, this paper by Baikov gives some new information on the expeditions for solar eclipse observations, and could help to elucidate some errors in the history of astronomy of the former communist countries (USSR and Romania).

It can be regarded, as well, as an important contribution to the investigation of the astronomical activity of the Astronomical Observatory in Dubasarii-Vechi in the period between the World Wars, which I intend to review in detail elsewhere.

2. A. A. BAIKOV (NEZAVISIMAIA MOLDOVA, 25.07.1995, 11.08.1995; FOAIE MATEMATICA, NOS 5/6, 1999, 1,3,4,6/2000, 1/2001) :

In 1904, at one of the sessions of the Russian Astronomical Society, the secretary of the Society read the proposal of the Presidium to elect N. N. Donich, who came to Petersburg from Odessa, to membership of the Society. The President, professor Glasenap, put the proposal to vote and the election was unanimous. At one of the next sessions, N. N. Donitch made a detailed report on his work and on the planned expedition.

The academician F. A. Bredikhin, who took under his protection the young and promising scientist, closely supervised the beginning of the scientific activity of N. N. Donitch, after his finishing the Novorossiisky University and coming to Petersburg. The plan of the observations of the eclipse on 30 August 1905 designed by N. N., interested me vividly, so that a few days after the report I have visited him at his flat on Moika Street 25, which became subsequently the place of our common work, scientific and friendly discussions. N. N. met often at breakfasts or lunches at Moika 25 with his friends and collaborators among whom L. V. Okulitch [1], an astronomer from Pulkovo Observatory, and baron E. A. von der Pahlen [2], doctor of mathematical sciences from the Götingen University, were habitués. I was added there soon. N.N. was charged with the observation of the Solar eclipse of 30 August 1905 by the Academy of Sciences, since he already enjoyed a reputation of specialist in the Solar research and Solar eclipses observation, earned after the expeditions organized by him. This time the plan of the observations was especially interesting, since it was planned to photograph the eclipse stereoscopically, i.e. from two sufficiently distant places, as in stereoscopical photography with two very close objective cameras, besides the usual observations and photographing of the Sun and corona. The difference consisted in the fact that the distance between the objectives would have extended to a few thousands kilometers. The expedition for the observation of the Solar eclipse was to be divided in two parts – one part should go to Spain, another part to Upper Egypt. Baron E. A. von der Pahlen and L. V. Okulitch entered in the composition of the expedition, apart from its leader, N. N. Donitch, who proposed me to enter also. N. N. and baron von der Pahlen left for Spain, while L. V. Okulitch and I went to Upper Egypt, together with the director of the Pavlovskii Meteorological Observatory V. H. Dubinskii, assigned to Upper Egypt for magnetic observations during the expedition [3].

During the winter of 1905-1906 after the return of the expedition we processed the results of the observations in the N. N.'s personal laboratory. Concomitantly with this, we made various laboratory researches in the field of spectral analysis, related to some problems of astrophysics. In the summer of 1906, I continued to process the observations of the eclipse in Pulkovo, in the absence of N. N.Donitch, who left for Bassarabia [4].

Next years our collaboration with N. N. became less close as a result of the N. N.'s marriage and later of my own marriage. N. N. spent a lot of time in Bassarabia, working at his Observatory in Dubasarii-Vechi [5]. He travelled almost every year abroad in expeditions for the observation of the Solar eclipses, being delegated by the Academy of Sciences (to Indochina, Spain, America), as well as to astronomical congresses, while I was occupied with the job and studies at the Ministry of the Imperial Court, Emperor Alexander's Lyceum, and the courses of the Physical and Mathematical Faculty at its Natural Sciences Department (Physiology and Microbiology) of the Sankt-Petersburg University. The death of my father and my subsequent marriage soon after the finishing of the Emperor Alexander's Lyceum interrupted my collaboration and common work with N. N., although we still often met with each other.

The World War I and the subsequent events parted us for long years. We met during the War, when I arrived to Petersburg from the front, while after 1917 we have received no news from one another till 1924 [6]. At that time, we met in Bucharest, where I have lived since 1919 with my second wife and with my son, born in Galati, who was ill with osteotuberculosis. N. N., who left Petrograd with his family for Dubasarii –Vechi, had come to Bucharest on a business trip. Namely, Donitch – being elected an honorary member of the Romanian Academy – saved from the expropriated the land the income for the purpose of the maintenance of the Observatory and continuation of its works. He was able to do that thanks to his scientific merits and a recommendation from the French scientists, who wrote a collective letter to the King of Romania with a request to preserve the land of the Observatory. N. N. continued to manage the land *de facto* as an owner, even if it was formally expropriated by the King's Foundation. He used the revenues for scientific expeditions, maintenance of the Observatory, and so on. This allowed the astronomers to complete the scientific outfit and to continue the studies; N. N. organized expeditions for Solar eclipse observations as formerly, and participated at various international congresses as a representative of Romania, being elected a member of the *Union Astronomique Internationale*. I helped N. N. in the organization of the International Astronomical Union expeditions in Bucharest, as well as in his business with the Academy and King's foundation. I began participating actively in his studies since 1933 only, since my job in Bucharest in various private enterprises and studies at the Medical Faculty, made coming to Bessarabia impossible. Only in 1933, when I received the military pension, which permitted me to become financially independent, I could fully concern myself with scientific research – in astronomy as well as in medicine.

Since 1933 I spent most of the summer time in Dubasarii-Vechi as N. N.'s guest with his kind family. The mornings and the evenings we spent obviously at the Observatory and in the laboratory. The Observatory, which consisted of an astronomical and a meteorological department, was located in the park of the Land of Dubasari, not far from the residences of the researchers. The Observatory had an assistant for meteorological observations, which N. N. maintained to be of paramount importance. One of them participated in the expedition to Turkey in 1936. The meteorological department was equipped with devices from the Central Meteorological Institute. The main instrument of the Observatory, which was mainly an astronomical one, was the big spectroheliograph, projected by N. N. before the World War I. By means of this instrument, N. N. obtained first class photographs of the solar surface and prominences, which permitted constant research in the solar activity and of the structure of its annual layers with all the phenomena in continuous occurrence and change. The spectroheliograph with the coelostat was placed in a special building at a clearing near the tower with the rotating cupola, in which the refractor equatorial with a 50 cm objective was mounted. These instruments and the devices coupled with them, permitted the researchers to realize various astrophysical observations. The refractor could be coupled with the prominences spectroscope for the systematical visual observations of the Sun. The refractor could be mounted on the same stand as a spectral and astrophotographical instrument, named the cometary triplet [7]. Not far from the equatorial tower the boxes of the meteorological instruments were mounted. In the yard of the observatory, close to the main building and the residences, a laboratory was located, built in 1927. The laboratory consisted of a hall, the cabinet of N. N. and a photographical laboratory. The library was also placed there, with many of the auxiliary instruments (photo cameras, objectives, spectroscopes and other), and a rich collection of negatives – which reflected the long scientific career of N. N. Below the laboratory was a cellar with constant temperature during the year, in which various measuring and meteorological devices were placed.

In a comfortable cabinet one could find a complete workshop with devices for correction, change and adjustment of various parts of the instruments. N. N. constructed these himself (except for those which had to be made on special order in the workshop of mechanical specialists). All day round he was occupied by whetting, polishing, soldering of different parts, manufactoring them with an exceptional precision and accuracy. In this laboratory N. N. spent all his life; here he made calculations, processed the observations, projected the expeditions plans, and reposed, encircled with lovely dogs. The dogs accompanied him in number of 2 to 4 during the evening walks, as well as on administrative trips, which were rare, since the administrative management of Dubasari was given to the husband of the daughter of the wife of N. N., A. T. Remmih.

From time to time we travelled with N. N. and sometimes we visited our neighbours (Stroganov in Balabanesti, Surucianu in Vadul lui Voda, etc.) or went to Chisinau for 2-3 days, every time by horses up to Bulboaca, and then by train. In Dubasari there were two cars owned by A. T. Remmih; N. N. did not approve the travel by cars on Bessarabian roads... At any time a few people were hosted in Dubasari, often for long time – mostly friends or relatives of Maria Heinrich Donitch, the wife of N. N., many of whom arrived from abroad. They were warmly welcomed in the family of N. N.. 10 to 12 people seated at breakfasts, lunches, five o'clock teas, and dinners, headed by the old lady Lysakovska, the aunt (sister of mother) of N. N., who nursed N. N., and who transferred to N. N. before her death (in 1937) the estate of Dubasari. The Observatory was visited from time to time by excursions from the Bessarabian schools, whom N. N. warmly welcomed, showing them each instrument and explaining them every detail. In the morning and the evening we made observations or various laboratory works, during which we opened and discussed many questions.

Since 1935, we begun preparations in Dubasari, as well as in Bucharest, for the total solar eclipse expedition on 19 June 1936. We chose for the observations the Turkish fortress Ineboli in the west of Black Sea in the Castomoni Vilaette. The expedition was supplied with equipment by the Royal Foundation. The expedition was composed of N. N. and myself, while for meteorological observations we took the assistant of the Observatory for meteorology N. K. Guma. For astrophysical observations (spectral and astrophotographical) we brought the long-focus 10 m coronograph with coelostat, the big spectrograph, the spectrograph with the objective prism, the short focus astrograph and the refractor equatorial of the Observatory, with which the latter two instruments were coupled. In addition, the meteorological instruments, as well as a small portable universal instrument (like a theodolite) for exact determination of the time and longitude of the place of the observations were brought. The expedition spent in Ineboli more than one month for installation and control of the instruments and other supplementary observations. Unfortunately, before the beginning of the total phase of the eclipse, a dense cloud covered the Sun, while the rest of the day was sunny. Thus, we could not realize the program planned, and we limited ourselves to secondary observations, which gave us informative material concerning the functioning of the instruments and the place of the observation (see also the paper by Donitch [8]).

After coming back to Dubasari the works at the Observatory continued, but the 1936 was the last year of my active collaboration with N. N. In 1937 and 1938 I could not come to Bessarabia, while the subsequent events made our collaboration definitely impossible. In these years N. N. himself left Bessarabia and spent them in Bucharest, where he was assigned to re-establish the Observatory of the late admiral Urseanu, located in a house (on the Ipatescu blvd), which was neglected, and which is now actually transformed into a Scientific and Experimental Museum, serving for the popularization of astronomy as well as for scientific observations accessible to its equipment. N. N. found this observatory totally abandoned, with an excellent Zeiss refractor, packed up in boxes, but he was not successful in his work of restauration, since the bombardments of Bucharest in WWII precluded the continuation of the works.

During the War, coming back to Dubasari, N. N. found a ravaged observatory. His creation, the big spectroheliograph, disappeared without trace, while separate parts of the fixed instruments (of the equatorial) were found fortuitously in the cellar of the Eparchial school in Chisinau [9]. The parts found were transported by N. N. to Bucharest to the Urseanu's Observatory, but after his departure from Bucharest they finally disappeared. He probably brought a part of them with him, together with his books [10].

In the spring of 1944 N. N. lived in Bucharest, in the Hotel of Capsa, intending to lieve for Germany to his wife, who came to live with her daughter, whose husband directed a firm there. He probably intended to visit the Zeiss factories in Jena, where he ordered various astronomical optical instruments. The bombardment of Bucharest began at this time. On April 15, the day of the Great Bombardment, N. N. left for a business in the city, when a bomb fell, destroying the building of Cartea Romaneasca and the Hotel of Capsa; the bomb went through his room, destroying all his personal things, books, and papers. Searching for another living room N. N. came to my empty flat on the Slavesti str., no. 8, in which lived a little old man, colonel Grigoriev, while I with my wife evacuated to Paris. Talking with colonel Grigoriev, N. N. told him that he shall return the next day and he indeed returned about 1 o'clock in the afternoon, when Grigoriev was absent. As a result of the alarm, the landlord dragged N. N. in the semi-base flat. At this same moment a bomb fell and exploded just at the entrance in the house, destroying three houses in the vicinity; while my house, where N. N. stayed, resisted the explosion, being much damaged, but saved Donitch, who was shocked and lost consciousness. The same evening N. N. moved to the empty flat of his cousin Marius Donitch, but after a few days another bomb exploded in the court of this house too. After a few days he left for Germany. After a series of difficulties and wanderings, N. N. with his wife came to Paris at the end of the War, where he was employed at the Paris Observatory. As I was informed incidentally, Donitch was delegated a few times by the Observatory to Africa, once to Tunis and Dakar, and a few times to Egypt, probably with a view to of the continuation of his investigations on zodiacal light [11]. His wife left after a few years to Argentine to her daughter, whose husband managed there a firm, so that N. N. was left alone and the last years of his life lived in very modest material conditions. According to the latest news he had grown very old (he was born on September 1 or 5 it seems [12]), was suffering from prostatitis (which he refused to cure), was living in very bad material conditions, but refused to come to his family to Argentine; he lived till this spring in Nice, in an old-men house, being soon transferred to a place near Nice [13].

I must tell a few words about N. N. as a human being. He was a man with funds left by his aunt Elena Nikolaevna Lysakovska (his father committed suicide, while his mother née Makri [14]), who loved him very much died early. N. N. was very talented, finished the Novorossiisky University [15] and concerned himself with the lovely matters of astronomy. His works drew attention, so that he moved soon to Petersburg, where he continued to work independently, under the protection and supervision of the great scientist F. A. Bredikhin, and to organize expeditions in pursuit of the Solar eclipses observations and other observations (spectral and photographical) of the Sun, in which he mainly specialized. He built, step by step, on his land in Dubosarii-Vechi a good personal observatory, which was perfected till his last days. N. N. was a happy, well balanced man. It was very pleasant to work with him. He helped, motivated, and advanced his collaborators. At the same time in his papers he emphasized the essential parts, showed the advantages, connecting this with a very exact and consistent communication of results. The adjustments of the parts of optical instruments he made by himself, loved this, working for many hours in his laboratory-workshop with files, soldering irons, and other tools; he made all with a wonderful and precision. As a result of his enjoyment of life, he invented many catch-phrases and was fond of jokes, which were sometimes tricky. N. N. liked much tales, being able to notice the comical aspects of the life and many things made him laugh sincerely. Being very modest and stingy in the everyday life, N. N. could be very wasteful for scientific devices and improvements. He loved animals, especially dogs. N. N. was encircled all the time by 2, 3 or 4 of such pets, accompanied him in the field walks and had a permanent place in the laboratory, where he fed them and played with them.

The multidisciplinary education allowed N. N. to be interested in all of the manifestations and aspects of human life, but he was not scattered about, so that the closest and lively parts of life interested him most. He loved music very much, especially the singing [16]. He used to learn singing in his youth, but having no a suitable voice gave up music, limiting himself to a fundamental familiarization with the

Italian singing school and voice training. However, in a circle of friends N. N. loved to sing Italian arias, following the rules of the *bel canto*. He loved Italian music, partially the French, and was indifferent to all others; the Russian music did not interest him at all, since he did not know it at all. On the contrary, N. N. knew well and loved the Russian classical literature (the poetry and prose), while the foreign ones he knew little and had no interest in them. He was not involved much with the contemporary literature and he did not read recent literary works, limiting himself by the reading of the scientific books and of the periodical publications. Thus, N. N. arranged his specific comfort and habits in scientific work, as well as in the everyday life which made him neglect the management of the land (of Dubossary) and had caused him much damage, since he did not get from his land half of what it could provide. He was very hospitable, of a well balanced will, merry, a lover of anecdotes and jokes in the circle of friends. N. N. could create around him in scientific work, as well as on holidays, a pleasant atmosphere, while helping his colleagues very much. The contribution by N. N. to the science of Romania during his long life is very considerable. One of his greatest merits is the entrance arrangement of Romania with the International Astronomical Union; he represented Romania at the IAU Congresses on various occasions. The everyday work in the field of Solar research, the observations of the planets transits over the solar disk, the zodiacal light observations and astrophysical observations generally, created of him a reputation abroad, while the rich material of these researches is appreciated by the whole astronomical community. The precise instruments, built by him, although unfortunately lost now, and the observational procedures developed by him, served much the world science and were highly appreciated by the specialists. So were his observations made in various parts of the world. His works and communications, containing exact and rigorously verified data, found an honorable place in the thesaurus of the world science. They will serve as a useful material for subsequent works in those fields of astronomy, in which he worked. Majority of people who met him and who collaborated with him, lost with him a valuable scientific creator [17].

3. NOTES and COMMENTS

1. L. V. Oculitch, was born in Bessarabia. He graduated from Odessa Novorossiisky University. He was a student of professor and director of the Observatory A. K. Kononivich and worked later at the astronomical observatories in Odessa and Pulkovo. Some additional information, concerning his relation with the astronomer V. V. Lebedintsev, who was appreciated by the Czar and who was the protagonist of a novel by L. Andreev, can be found in: L. M. Andreeva "The creation of "The story of 7 hanged men" by L. Andreev", *Istoriko-Astronomicheskie issledovania*, M., vol. 11, 255 (1972). His wife, Mme Okulitch, was a professor of practical astronomy at the University in Sankt-Petersburg since the WWI. We suppose that they lived in Romania or Germany after the WWI. They collaborated with N. Donitch in Dubasarii-Vechi in the period between the Wars.

2. Emanuel A. Von der Pahlen, a German astronomer, graduated from the Götingen University and obtained the degree of the Doctor in mathematics from the same University. He worked at the Astrophysikalishen Observatorium Potsdam in the period between the Wars. He participated in the expeditions for observing the solar eclipses in 1905, 1912, and 1914. He is the author of the following papers:

i) (In collaboration with N. Donitch) Observations de l'eclipse Solaire du 16-17 avril 1912: Rapport de la Mission Astronomique et Meteorologique de l'Academie Imperiale des Sciences de St.- Petersbourg. - *Bull. Acad. Sci. Russie.* 1921, T. 15, N. 1-18, p. 343-360;

ii) (in collaboration with N. Donitch) Sur la structure de l'atmosphère solaire basse, ditte chromosphère (présenté à l'Académie Roumaine le 4 juin 1923). - *Bull. Sect. Scient. Acad. Roum.* Bucuresti, vol. VIII, no. 10, p. 239 –251. Other related papers include:

iii) the structure of the solar granulation: Über die Helligkitsschannnungen und die Structur der Sonnen granulation im Ultraviolleten (in collaboration with P. Ten Bruggencate and W. Grotrian)), *Mittelung aus dem Institute für Sonnenphysik des Astrophysikalishen Observatorium Potsdam., Mit. 26 Abbildungen, Zeitschrift für Astrophysik*, 1938, 16, June, p. 51);

iv) stellar statistics: E.V. der Pahlen//" *Lehrbuch der Stellar statistik*", 1937;

v) globular clusters: Über die Beziehungen der offenen Sternhaufen zu den Milchstrabe engebilden, *Mit. 1, Abbildung Zeits. Für Astrophysik, 1935, 9, March, 100*;

vi) Bemerkungen zu einem Aufsatz von P. ten Bruggencate: "The radial velocities of globular clusters", Mit. 3 Abbildungen "The radial velocities of globular clusters", *Zeits. Für Astrophysik, 1, p. 200* (in collaboration with E. Freundlich) and other.

3. A photograph of V. H. Dubinskii was found also in the Bezviconi's Archives in Chisinau. The Konstantinovskii Magneto-meteorological Observatory in Pavlovsk was a part of the Main Physical Observatory in Petersburg. Three reports were published after the expedition: N.N. Donitch: Observations de l'eclipse totale de Soleil du 29-30 août 1905, *Bull. Acad. Imper. Sci. St. Petersburg*, 1905, v. XXIII, N. 4-5. p. 283; O nabliudenii polnogo solnechnogo zatmenia Solntsa 29-30 avgusta 1905 g. *Izvestiia RAO*, 1906, No. 3, p. 106; Observations de l'eclipse totale de Soleil du 29-30 août 1905, *Bull. Astron.,* 1908, vol. XXY, p. 377;

4. On 25 april 1906, the Physical and Mathematical department of the Bessarabian Society for Natural Sciences and amateurs of Natural Sciences was inaugurated. N. Donitch was a member of this Society. Besides N. Donitch, A. Amaftunsky was occupied by the Solar research and reported on his investigations on sunspots. N. K. Goronovitch, doctor of zoology and honorary member of the Society, popularized astronomy (see: *Trudy Bessrabskogo obshchestva estestvoispytatelei i liubitelei estestvoznania,* 1906-1907, under the supervision of E. E. Miller, vol. 1, pt. 2, Chisinau, 1907)

5. The Romanian name of the village is Dubasarii-Vechi. After 1812 it was renamed by the Russian administration in Staryie Dubossary. Donitch used both names in his papers (see on the toponymy of the village: N. Corlateanu, Astronomul de la Dubasarii-Vechi, *Viata Satului* 1994, 22 October).

6. During the Civil War in Russia, Donitch visited Russia from time to time and met in Dubasarii-Vechi astronomers from the right bank of the Dniester river. N. M. Stoiko writes ("Recollections about the Novorossiisky University and the Odessa Astronomical Observatory", *Istoriko-Astronomicheskie issledovania,* vol. X, p. 245-250, Moscow, Nauka Eds. 1969), that he met A. D. Bilimovich, who worked at that time in Odessa and later became a Member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences, and N. Donitch during the Civil War in Russia, where they gave talks on celestial mechanics, mathematics and astronomy. Between the colleagues of N. M. Stoiko were N. V. Zimmerman, the son of professor V. Zimmerman, D. V. Piaskovskii, I. I. Vitkovsky, who became later a Member of the Academy of Sciences of Poland, and V. S. Zardeckí, who became later a Professor of the University in Belgrade. Alexander Ya. Orlov directed the Odessa Observatory at that time.

7. N. Donitch, Observatoire d'Astronomie physique sis parc de Starya Doubossary (Doubossary Vechi), B., Cartea Romaneasca, 1924, 4 p.

8. N.Donitch, Observations de l'eclipse totale de Soleil du 19 Juin 1936 a Ineboli (Turquie), *Acad. Rom. Mem. Ser.* III, T. XIV, 62-78 (1938)

9. A part of the Donitch's spectroheliograph is actually in Kiev at the Observatory in Goloseyevo.

10. An interesting detail related to the Director of Odessa Observatory, member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and one of the friends of Donitch, Konstantine Dormidontovich Pokrovsky, was described by V. A. Smirnov and R. I. Chuprina (*Odesskii Vestnik*, No. 1 (1555) from 01.01.1994; see, also: *Istoria Astronomii v Odesse,* 1994, pt. 1, p. 75): On December 1942 a group of 50 lecturers (from Odessa,- our note) traveled as a delegation to Bucharest. K.D. Pokrovsky was invited by princess Cantacuzino. Cantacuzino revictualed later Pokrovsky and supplied him with medicaments during his illness. During his trip to Bucharest Pokrovsky visited the Observatory at Ipatescu blvd., 21, where Donitch worked. However, these visits and meetings, as well as other activities before and during the War, turned to misfortune in 1944 to Pokrovsky, who was arrested by the KGB of Ukraine and condemned for anti-Soviet activities. Pokrovsky died in a prison on 5 November 1944. It is significant to note that K. D. Pokrovsky was also often omitted from the Soviet history of science.

11. See in this context the papers by Donitch, concerning the zodiacal light observations. A. A. Baikov has in view the expeditions to Upper Egypt in the period between the Wars. Donitch made expeditions to Tamanrasset in Mountanious Sahara in the winters of 1945-1949 being delegated by the CNRS on the suggestion by Bernard Lyot. In the springs of 1946 and 1947 he developed his photographs in the photographical laboratory of the Department of the Astrophysics of the Observatory in Meudon and discussed results often with the collaborators of this Department R. Servejean and Gualtiero Olivieri.

Henri Chretien (1878-1956), the creator of the well-known Ritchey-Chretien telescope, who lived and worked in Paris until 1906, and later in Nice, where he directed the "Observatoire de la Côte d'Azure", and Donitch met together during several visits by Donitch to France. Their meetings are due to the Comte Aymar de la Baume Pluvinel (? - 1938) and Henri Deslandres (1853-1948), who were in friendly relations with Donitch. I shall give detail on the correspondence between Donitch and Chretien in a forthcoming paper.

12. Nicolas Donitch was born on 1 September 1874 in Chisinau in the village of Petricani and was baptized on 22 September of the same year in the Haralambie church. The birth date of the astronomer in the certificate of the asteroid 9494 Donici at the Harvard Smithsonian center for Astrophysics is incorrect.

13. A. Roman and B. Kovarsky, private communications: his father Nicholas, the son of Andronache Donitch (lawyer, the author of a code of laws, and an amateur astronomer and geodesist) committed suicide in 1878, in consequence of the loss of his land. The Donitchs clan appears since the beginning of the XVII-th century. The writer Alexander Donitch was a brother of Andronache. The anthropologist, professor of the University in Geneva, Alexander N. Donitch (1886-1936) was a cousin of the astronomer.

Among them were the general of the Czarist Army, poet and fighter for the National Liberation of Bessarabia Matei Donitch (1847-1921). Some of the Donitchs were related with the clan of Cantacuzino, among whom were many Romanian Princes and Nobles.

The mother Limonia, was a daughter of the Greek Nicolas Makri (1796-1853), who was a relative of the Constantinople Patriarch Gregory. In 1821, during the Hetaeria, he escaped from Dimitsak (Turkey) to Bessarabia and became a Bessarabian noble. The children of Nicolas Makri were highly educated. The mother Limonia, and the grand father Andronache educated Nicholas till 1893, when Limonia died. Her little sister Elena (the wife of Lev Lysakovsky), who graduated from the Odessa Institute of Noble girls, educated Nicholas till his entering the Richelieu Gymnasium in Odessa. It is interesting to note, that L.O. Lysakovsky was a grandson of Cristophor Sikard, who was a son of a diplomat and a friend of Richelieu.

14. The death date and place of Nicolas Donitch is still unknown in spite of my investigations in Nice.

15. Nicholas Donitch studied at the Physical and Mathematical Department of the Odessa Novorossiisky University in 1893-1897. His professors were S. P. Sleshinsky, I. M. Zanchevsky, S. P. Yaroshenko, V. V. Preobrajensky, F. N. Shvedov, A. V. Klossovskii, A. K. Kononovich. The first paper by N. N. Donitch, "Ueber das Spectrum des Meteoriten von Grossliebenthal," was written under the supervision of professor and Rector of the University F. N. Shvedov, who was also born in Bessarabia, while later he worked under the supervision of A. K. Kononovich.

16. Donitch was a relative of the composer C. Romanoff, who wrote also his memories on Nicholas Donitch. He was one of the *canto* teachers of Nicholas Donitch.

17. At the end of the paper by A. A. Baikov, Gheorghe Bezviconi wrote "A.A. Baikov died in Bucharest in 1958".

I have found recently the book by Gh. Bezviconi "The Capitol's Necropolis" (Bucharest, 1962), where the birth date of Andrei Baikov (astronomer) is given: 1886. He was buried at the Ghencea Military Cemetery.

АСТРОНОМ – Н. Н. ДОНИЧ

А. А. Баиков (1886 – 1958), А. Гаина

Academy of Sciences of Moldova,
1 Stefan cel Mare blvd, Chisinau, MD-2012, Republic of Moldova

UDK 929 (498.3)
Стручни чланак

У раду је описана историја пријатељства Н. Донича и А. А. Баикова. Могу се наћи и информације о астрономима Л. В. Окуличу и А. А. Вон дер Палену и метеоролозима В. Х. Дубински и Нини Гоума. Такође се говори и о детаљима експедиције за посматрање потпуног помрачења Сунца 30. августа 1905. (у организацији Краљевске академије наука у Петрограду) и 19. јуна 1936. године (у организацији Румунске краљевске културне задужбине). Главни део рада представља први енглески превод рада Баикова, објављеног раније на руском и румунском језику, са новим предговором и коментарима.