

Vovk Olha*(V. N. Karazin KhNU)***VASYL' KARAZIN (1773–1842)
AS «A PERSON OF FRONTIER»**

Slobozhanshchyna and its part Kharkiv region is borderline in many ways. E. g., the border between the geographical zones of the Forest-steppe and the Steppe passes through this territory. From ancient times and the Middle Ages, our region was a contact zone between nomadic and settled civilizations. In 17th century the region was re-inhabited by a settled population and formed as a multinational. The turning point in the history of the city is the opening of Kharkiv University in 1805 that contributed to the interpenetration of different cultures. In the 19th century, Kharkiv began to develop as a great scientific, industrial and business center, and in the first third of the 20th century, it was the capital of Ukraine. However, at the same time, this city was perceived as a kind of watershed line between the center and the periphery, the capital and the provinces. These and other reasons allowed Volodymyr Kravchenko to call Kharkiv «the capital of the Borderland».

Undoubtedly, the foundation of Kharkiv University as one of turning points in the history of the city. The present research is dedicated to a person who directly contributed to the implementation of this ambitious project — Vasyly' Nazarovych Karazin. It was his 250th anniversary in February 2023, and this jubilee was included in the All-Ukrainian list of memorable dates that was approved by the Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

We know Vasyly' Karazin as a prominent scientist and public figure, but at the same time we can call him «a person of frontier». His maternal ancestors were representatives of an ancient Cossack family (it is thought that one of his forefathers was a confidant of Bohdan Khmel'nytsky). At the same time, his paternal ancestors were emigrants from Balkan Peninsula (there are different versions of their ethnic identification including Bulgarian, Greek and Romanian).

As we can judge from Vasyly' Karazin's texts and activity's results, he identified himself, on the one hand, with «dear Ukraine» (first of all, Slobidska Ukraine), and, on the other hand, with the region of Central and Southern Europe. For example, he dreamed of making Kharkiv part of European educational space, but with keeping and cultivation of local peculiarities and traditions.

Vasyly' Karazin, was of the one of key person in the process of ground the university in Kharkiv. We should emphasize that this task was hard and almost fantastic, because in the early 19th century Kharkiv was a small town with a population of nearly 10 thousand people and a predominantly rural lifestyle of its citizens.

It should be kept in mind that the other aspect of Karazin's multiple identities appeared in the process of realizing the university's project. In St. Petersburg, he had an image and perceived himself primarily as a representative of Slobidska Ukraine. At the same time in Kharkiv, he acted as a representative and guide of the will of the central government. It is appropriate to mention here the thesis of Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytskyi about «double patriotism» of Karazin, who completed sincere love for his native Slobidska Ukraine, and, at the same time, patriotism of the empire. Importantly, as Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytskyi noted, this is not a reproach to Karazin, who «was a noble, bright, honored person and, of course, belongs to the Ukrainian historical process».

Let us mention one more aspect that is valuable. According to imperial politics, Kharkiv University was supposed to become a conductor of imperial values. However, Kharkiv University already from the first years of its existence became a powerful center of the Ukrainian National Revival. What matters is that Karazin laid the beginnings of this process personally. He was well versed in local history and culture, was a follower of the outstanding Ukrainian philosopher Hryhorii Skovoroda (his 300th anniversary was celebrated by UNESCO). Karazin supported the first Ukrainian magazines that were published in typography of Kharkiv University, and made public valuable sources there. All this is the reason

for Yuriy Lavrinenko to call Vasyl' Karazin the «architect of the Ukrainian Renaissance».

After leaving the university project, Vasyl' Karazin engaged in estate management. In addition, he clearly revealed himself in the role of a scientist and an inventor. As a representative of the Enlightenment, he had the desire to comprehensively understand and describe the world around him.

The bright and extraordinary personality of Vasyl' Karazin invariably attracted the attention of his contemporaries and descendants. His bio-bibliography is over 1,500. They are very varied thematically and geographically. Specialists from 19 countries studied the life story of Karazin.

Remarkably that the most important largest number of researches about Karazin were published in the territory of Slobidska Ukraine, first of all in Kharkiv. It is no coincidence, that in the memory of Kharkiv citizens, Vasyl' Karazin still remains one of the most famous and respected figures in the history of the city. For instance, he is one of the very few people in the history of Kharkiv whose name in city tour guides from the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 21st century was certainly marked as the most respected person of local history (according to research of Sergiy Posokhov).

Of course, the reason for this is the rapid development of Kharkiv that spread after the founding of the university, and the results of which Vasyl' Karazin still managed to see. Moreover, at the same time, we could suppose that he has been «the hero of the Borderland» because according to his nature he was «a person of frontier».

All people live and create in certain historical conditions and in a certain geographical environment. Biographers sometimes said that Vasyl' Karazin was a man of his time, but sometimes that he was ahead of his time. However, there is no doubt that he appeared in the right geographical place and brought the greatest benefit to his homeland.