

More than 80 years since its establishment the Odessa National Maritime University (ONMU) has remained a unique combination of its calling, mission, organization, distinctive repute and glorious history hard-gained by generations of its scholars and graduates. Nowadays this higher education institution continues to enjoy its deserved fame both in Ukraine and abroad. Moreover, though still young compared with other national universities, the Odessa Institute of Water Transport Engineers (OIWTE) — Odessa National Maritime University (ONMU) stands prominently in the first ranks of founders of marine engineering education and of maritime industry, in general.



This narrative is just a humble attempt to reflect on major historical stages of OIWTE-ONMU's past lovingly nurtured by several generations of its scholars and staff members, those who brought fame to the University by merging their hearts and whole lives with it.

It all started with an Odessa Institute of Water Transport Engineers (later on, OIWTE, OIMFE, now ONMU) established in 1930. The first decision on that was made at the People's Commissariat for Communication Routes of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (PCCR USSR) Conference on January 9th, 1930 as response to a growing demand of the then bustling Soviet Union and Ukrainian Republic's economies for water (inland and marine) transport network, internal and external cargo carriage capacities. More flesh was added to the idea later on at a special meeting of April 13th, 1930. Among the participants were those who later became «the founding fathers» of the «Vodniy Institute» ('vodniy' in Ukrainian and Russian means «belonging or having relation to water»; the name was widely used at that time and has largely remained till now): Head of PCCR Central Personnel Administration, top-ranking officials from the party committee and the Union of Water Transport Workers, Head of the Odessa Polytechnic Institute (OPI), chairs of departments of OPI's Shipbuilding Department, future chairs of departments of the institution being established, V. S. Dyshkant and B. L. Nikolai, as well as professors V. A. Laptev, V. Ye. Naydenov and others.

The preparatory work resulted in the plan of establishing the Odessa Institute of Water Transport Engineers on the basis of the Shipbuilding Department of the Odessa Polytechnic Institute with three departments to start: those of ship engineering, hydraulic engineering, and maintenance. The first public enrollment notice was published on April 20th, 1930 and lectures were to start just about a month later, on May 15th.

As soon as proper school and lab premises were finally found, the head of republican government V. Chubar signed off the decree establishing OIWTE on June 12th, 1930. The newly-born centre of higher education was given the three-floor building of the pre-Bolshevik privileged boarding

school for daughters of the aristocracy constructed under Architect A. Shashin's design back in 1859.

Vasyli Stepanovich Dyshkant well known for his practical life experience and extensive professional background became the first OIWTE director in November 1930.

In 1932–1936, the Institute was chaired by Mykhail Dmytrievych Demydov, a 28-year old who devoted himself completely to his job. His unreserved efficiency and enthusiasm paid entirely changed the Institute which already in 1934 turned into a source of highly professional seafarers.

It was then when the Institute managed to coordinate its colossal scientific and research efforts around its Scientific and Research Institute of Post-graduate Studies (SRIPS). In 1932, a special research pool was built; then, in a matter of two next years, welding, chemical, x-ray examination, electrotechnical, hydraulic, heat engineering etc. laboratories appeared. All in all, the Institute's team managed to set up couple of dozens of research and training labs that were chaired by prominent scholars G. K. Suslov, F. R. Gantmakher, G. Bekk, G. Ye. Pavlenko, M. G. Chebotarev, and M. G. Krein.

Then the WWII broke out. For the professors and students of OIWTE it was the time of self-sacrifice and heartfelt desire to go to the front as soon as possible.

In the face of an imminent blockade of Odessa the Institute formed a fighter battalion company under the command of V. F. Kravchuk, Institute's professor. In the days of

most severe fights when losses in regular divisions of Odessa defenders reached 30% of the complement, 700 more from the Institute, among them Ya. Belakovskiy, S. Kamenskiy, Ye. Karpenko, V. Zagoruchenko and other professors, joined the people's volunteer corps division. Among dozens of institute's young women who passed the courses of nurses and medical assistants and went to the frontline were Z. Anosova, S. Revenko, T. Burzak and K. Vychlinska.

Students made fighting holes and entrenchments on approach to Odessa (nearby the station of Vygoda), erected barricades in case of street fighting, paid their most efforts in the sea port evacuating city residents, equipment and cultural valuables.

In the summer of 1941 45 students used the advanced plan to pass their diploma defense to be sent to the front as already chartered engineers the very next morning.

The early August of 1941 ushered in a long and hard campaign of Institute evacuation toward the eastern part of the Soviet Union. After over two months of a sore trial full of organization challenges, everyday hardships, climate changes and moral exhaustion, the Institute staff found themselves in the city of Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

During the years of evacuation in Uzbekistan the Institute headed by V. D. Zemskov, and since 1942 by A. V. Budnytskiy, was busy training so much-needed engineering and maintenance personnel for the front.

The first war-time graduation took place in spring 1942. Out of the total of 150 graduates, 40 were sent to the Red Army's Academy of Motorization and Mechanization while the rest joined the Fleet. Those attending their lectures worked in parallel at industrial plants (assembled production facilities at the local filature and silk-weaving manufacture).

The liberation of Odessa opened way back home for evacuated scholars and students of the OIMFE (that was renamed into the Odessa Institute of Water Transport Engineers (OIWTE) in 1945). A serious challenge waited returnees: the demolished Odessa Sea Port, its wharfs and ship repair yards needed to be restored as soon as possible. The titanic work involved a dozen thousands of young people, among them Vodniy's students, who worked for 20, 30, 40 hours overtime.

Gradually the institute was returning to post-war life. The autumn of 1994 saw the beginning of a new academic year, as professors and assistant professors V. Laptev,

P. Mynyaev, B. Nikolai, G. Pavlenko, T. Kovalyov, V. Tverdiy, A. Staroselskiy and others finally returned to their lecturing desks to bring knowledge to some 615 1st through 3rd year students. The Institute's teaching staff was then 104, of them including 6 Professors and 33 PhDs.

Postwar years saw reconstruction and expansion of the national transportation system and, what was more important, the beginning of construction of shipyards, ship repair yards and ports. That prompted a huge demand in skilled personnel and thus predefined the role and place of the OIEWT in the training of marine and onshore engineering specialists.

In summer 1945 the Institute's team celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Odessa Institute of Water Transport Engineers (based on the date when the shipbuilding department had been established with the local Polytechnic Institute). By that time the Institute had trained more than three thousand specialists, of those 500, during the WWII time.

The years 1944–1945 saw the opening department mechanization of ports to match the already existing five ones. The number of chairs grew to 27. The number of students in 1950 doubled compared with the first postwar year (782 in 1945). Starting from 1950, the Institute began training marine engineers and economic managers for countries from Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. During the first postwar decade the teaching staff in the Institute got bigger both in numbers and in quality: in 1955 there worked 11 doctors of science, over 30 PhDs, 28 senior professors, and 72 assistants.

The OIMFE's research capacities in that period were aimed at the implementation of economic projects for Glavmorport (Central Department for Sea Ports), Glavmorstroy (Central Department for Marine Building), Black Sea Shipping Company, Ship Repair Yards № 1 and № 2, Yanvarkosgo Vosstanya Plant, and Odessa Harbour Administration.

A new stage of scientific and research work in the Institute began with advent of a new President A. A. Kostyukov, Professor, Doctor of Science, Honored Science Worker of the USSR. His research activities were focused on solving practical production tasks. His many-year scientific work Theory of Ship Waves and Wave Resistance brought him an honorary scientific award named after academician A. M. Krylov.

The hall of scholarly fame of the Institute boasts many prominent names, among them: Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences of USSR, well-known mathematician and astronomer, Prof. V. P. Tseseyevych; specialist in the field of internal combustion engines, Honored Worker of Science of the USSR, Prof. Yu. Ya. Fomin; a distinguished scientist in the field of kinetics and automation of metallurgical processes, theory of melting, and mathematical modeling, Academician of the Academy of Sciences of USSR, Prof. V. I. Makhnenko.

Starting from the second half of the 1960ties, the priority in Institute's work shifts to implementing computer techniques; then new labs were created and teaching programs were changed. Students underwent their practical internships at plants and ports throughout the former Soviet Union, as well as on overseas cruise and cargo routes.



*Privileged boarding school for daughters of the aristocracy, photo of 1882*

The new President, Prof. N. I. Kovalenko who came to office in 1971 initiated a vast renovation of material and technical basis of the Institute and contributed to the commissioning of a new nine-floor training building. The 70–80ties of the 20th century marked a new phase of Institute development when international relations with Bulgaria, Cuba, Finland, Yugoslavia and other countries were forged. In 1978, the Odessa Institute of Marine Fleet Engineers received the Order of Friendship from the Republic of Vietnam.

By late 70ties, there were 15 doctors of science and 105 PhDs in the Institute: more than 40% of the overall research and teaching staff.

Fundamental organization of scientific work done by the Institute's scholars boosted research work among studentship. Throughout 1970–1979, some 80 research papers by students were awarded with medals, diplomas and prizes.

In July, 1979 the Institute was headed by its alumnus, Doctor of Technical Sciences, Prof. V. A. Zagoruiko. At that time, scientific research work of the institute translated into high economic effect. For instance, the implementation of 50 its scientific projects brought 2 million Soviet Ruble-worth of benefit. The Institute hosted a variety of scientific seminars on building mechanics (prof. Ya. L. Nudelman), thermodynamics (prof. Ya. Z. Kazavchinskiy, prof. V. A. Zagoruchenko), theory of machinery and mechanisms (prof. V. I. Nebesnov), and discreet mathematics (prof. A. A. Zykov).

The outstanding achievements in training top-notch maritime transport personnel led the team of OIEWT to the Order of the Red Banner of Labor and the Honorary Diploma of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Ukrainian Republic.

The Institute safely sailed through economic and political turmoil of late 80ties — early 90ties of the last century. In spite of economical challenges and staffing problems it survived through dire straits of restructuring under the directorship of Doctor of Technical Sciences, Prof. Yuriy Leonidovich Vorobiev — way more: the institute spurted into the lead position in implementing a new multi-level-system of European education with a rating-based method of knowledge control among other post-Soviet higher education institutions.

In 1994, OSMU was granted the 4th (highest) accreditation grade by the Ministry of Education and Science of



*Interior of the Church of Czarina Alexandra the Mortar at the university*

Ukraine. In 1994–2000, the Institute started offering new lines, areas and specialties of engineer training: Ship Power Plant Operation and Maintenance, Management Information Systems and Technologies, Law, organization and management of Ship and Ocean Engineering Equipment Surveillance, Transport Customs Control Organisation.

According to the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of August 29, 1994 the institute was renamed into the Odessa State Maritime University and President of Ukraine Decree of February 26, 2002 granted it the national status to acclaim its years long substantial contribution of the University staff into the development of the maritime industry of Ukraine, CIS and other countries worldwide. The University has prepared more than 40 thousand professionals for Ukraine and 64 countries of Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The Odessa National Maritime University (ONMU) entered the first decade of the third millennium with an immense research and training potential, its 33 chairs now employing 480 scholars, of them 35 doctors of science, 52 professors, 170 PhDs, and 128 assistant professors. The current President who has been managing the University since 2003 is Doctor of Economic Science, Professor Iryna Volodymirovna Morozova. The University of today is a unique educational establishment of its kind that is certified according to the international standard ISO 9001:2008 and successfully moves ahead in search of new advanced methods of training up-to-date professionals for the needs of Ukraine as a maritime state and for foreign countries as well. The University initiates and conducts annual international scientific conferences on shipping and in humanitarian dimension.

The roster of prominent graduates from the University of Soviet times includes the Minister of Maritime Fleet of USSR, Hero of Socialist Labor T. B. Guzhenko and President of Black Sea Shipping Company, Hero of Socialist Labor A. Ye. Danchenko whose invaluable input in the development of the national maritime industry has been recently immortalized in memorial plates on the entrance columns of the University. These names will forever remain in the memory of generations of vodnikys (water engineers).

Among other remarkable names who brought fame to their Alma Mater are ex Director of the Yuzhny Port, Full Cavalier of the Order of Merits V. G. Ivanov; People's Deputies of Ukraine, Heroes of Ukraine S. K. Strebko and



*At a construction site of a new building for training*

N. P. Pavlyuk, well known Ukrainian comic writer, People's Artist of Ukraine M. Zhvanetskiy, lampoonist V. Ilchenko, Honored Artist of Ukraine, the lead singer of the Kyiv Opera House G. Krasulya, female poet L. Zabashta, to name just a few. Undoubtedly, all of those persons of prominence deserve a proud mention on the pages of this book along with scores of other notorious names.

After Ukraine gained its independence in the 1990ies, a new task of reforming the system of higher education had arisen. About the same time a process of forming the integral educational and cultural space commenced in Europe which Ukraine joined in 2005.

The University was among the first schools to bring innovations into their educating systems. The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine supported the University's initiative and in 1993 allowed to implement a pilot modular system of training and knowledge control pretty much similar to that applied under the Bologna Process. The transition was led by University's Scientific and Methodological Council with President, Prof. I. V. Morozova and deputy President, Ass. Prof. A. V. Konopliov at its head who had dealt with approximating University standards to the Bologna Process before and promptly facilitated necessary changes.

As a result a credit-modular system of organization of educational process was worked out and introduced at the University in 2004 as part of approaching to Bologna Accords requirements.

A two-year implementation of the new program provided for realization of the principle of systematic and individual learning throughout the academic year, extended possibilities for comprehensive education of students and for multifaceted development of their creative capacities. The system is aimed at promoting individual learning towards qualitative changes in «teacher-student» relationships in order to create the atmosphere of cooperation.

The control over the knowledge received by students plays an important part in training process organisation.



*The honor guard near the flag of Ukraine and ONMU colours during the festive event*

Based on the experience of world's leading universities a system of accumulated appraisal of knowledge has been elaborated. This system exists in many, in particular European, countries and has proved its effectiveness in time. It allows for an intensive studying process, systematic learning of working material, and a psychological relief for students during learning. It also invites to using interactive and multimedia means in the education process. For these purposes a special program has been worked at the University. Several departments already have lecturing and practical rooms equipped with appropriate facilities.

In order to provide realization of and control over implementation of programs undertaken by the Ministry of Education and the Scientific and Methodological Council of the University in a most effective way, the University established an Education and Methodology Department (EMD) in April, 2007.

The department's team to engage in continuous organizational and methodological activities aimed at working out and applying new techniques in education, systemizing experience and expanding advanced methodology, assisting scholars and teachers in acquiring new knowledge for their further professional growth.

The EMD pays attention to coordinating different fields of the educational process: training of higher-school specialists; fostering cooperation between ONMU departments in the area of development of professional programs compliant with national education standards; elaboration of curricula etc.

The department proactively uses experience of practical professionals, Senior Traffic Control Service Inspector I. M. Smagina, Senior Educational Service Inspectors O. L. Saliy, N. I. Mokanu, N. V. Zubkova, E. P. Rozsohan.



*Coordinating meeting of the participants of the project ALRAKIS II of the European education program ERASMUS in ONMU*