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Rector V.F. Stanis: On the Path of Continuity and Improvement of the Peoples' Friendship University

Liudmila V. Ponomarenko , Galina O. Lukyanova  

RUDN University, Moscow, Russian Federation

 lukianova-go@rudn.ru

Abstract. The article is devoted to the activities of Vladimir Frantsevich Stanis, the second rector of the Patrice Lumumba Peoples' Friendship University of Russia. He was a charismatic leader who enjoyed enormous authority among his colleagues and made a huge contribution to the development of this unique university. The article outlines the main stages of the biography of V.F. Stanis, his difficult life path from the participation in the Great Patriotic War to the work in public offices, as a result of which he gained vast experience in organizational and managerial work. The authors pay special attention to the diverse activities of V.F. Stanis in the position of the rector of the Peoples' Friendship University which he held for more than 20 years (from 1970 to 1993) and note that it was during this period that his scientific and pedagogical potential and leadership talent were fully revealed. It is emphasized that thanks to his work with the personnel V.F. Stanis managed to ensure the creation of prominent scientific and methodological schools in various fields at the Peoples' Friendship University. At the same time, both in the USSR and abroad there became especially famous not only scientific schools of natural sciences and humanities, but also original methods of teaching Russian as a foreign language and foreign languages, including oriental ones developed by the university teaching staff. Moreover, the rector actively developed other areas of the university's activities: international relations, extracurricular work, which required deep knowledge of the history of foreign countries and understanding of the current political situation in them. The authors show that thanks to his enormous dedication and careful attitude towards the staff and students, V.F. Stanis managed to create an international team of the Peoples' Friendship University of many thousands.

Key words: leader, scientific schools, teaching methods, Russian studies, foreign languages, international cooperation

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Ректор В.Ф. Станис: по пути преемственности и совершенствования Университета дружбы народов

Л.В. Пономаренко , Г.О. Лукьянова  

Российский университет дружбы народов, Москва, Российская Федерация
[✉lukianova-go@rudn.ru](mailto:lukianova-go@rudn.ru)

Аннотация. Исследование посвящено деятельности второго ректора Университета дружбы народов (УДН) имени Патриса Лумумбы Владимира Францевича Станиса, харизматичного лидера, пользовавшегося огромным авторитетом среди коллег и внесшего огромный вклад в развитие этого уникального университета. Обозначены основные этапы биографии В.Ф. Станиса, его сложный жизненный путь от участия в Великой Отечественной войне до работы на ответственных государственных постах, в результате чего он приобрел огромный опыт организационно-управленческой работы. Особое внимание авторы уделяют разносторонней деятельности В.Ф. Станиса на посту ректора Университета дружбы народов в течение более 20 лет, с 1970 до 1993 г., подчеркивая, что именно в этот период полностью раскрылся научно-педагогический потенциал Владимира Францевича и его талант руководителя. Подчеркивается, что благодаря умелой работе с кадрами В.Ф. Станису удалось обеспечить формирование в УДН сильных научных и методических школ в рамках различных направлений. При этом особую известность в СССР и за рубежом получили не только научные школы естественных и гуманитарных наук, но и самобытные методики преподавания русского языка как иностранного, иностранных языков, в том числе восточных, разработанные профессорско-преподавательским составом Университета. Вместе с тем ректор активно развивал другие направления деятельности Университета: международные связи, внеаудиторную работу, что требовало глубокого знания истории зарубежных стран и тонкого понимания текущей политической обстановки в них. Авторы показывают, как благодаря огромной самоотдаче и бережному отношению к кадровому и студенческому составу В.Ф. Станису удалось сформировать многотысячный интернациональный коллектив УДН.

Ключевые слова: лидер, научные школы, методика преподавания, русистика, иностранные языки, международные связи

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Introduction

The role and place of an individual in the historical process, the relationship between objective and subjective factors in this process are discussed both in Russian and world science. A leader whose authority is based on good qualities, such as heroism, wisdom, kindness, etc., has a positive impact on the international and domestic aspects of a state development. Vladimir Frantsevich Stanis was such a charismatic personality.

V.F. Stanis was born in the town of Nezhin, Chernigov region. His father was a regiment commissar, his mother was a teacher. Before the Great Patriotic War, his family lived in various garrisons on the Soviet Ukraine's territory. He was one of the first of his peers to volunteer for the Red Army, and then he received training at the Kiev Artillery School. After graduating he was sent to Stalingrad, to the front line of a fierce battle with the enemy. V.F. Stanis was always proud of his participation in the great battle on

the Volga, as well as of the fact that he contributed to the Great Victory. All this built his character and determined his further life.

After the end of the war, he graduated with honors from the Faculty of Economics of Lomonosov Moscow State University in the specialty “Political economy.” He was awarded the qualification of “University teacher of political economy.” After that he was sent to the party and political work in the Altai Territory; then he took the position of the secretary of the Barnaul city committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). However, by his own admission, the idea of engaging in scientific and pedagogical activities was always on his mind.

At the same time, V.F. Stanis took a part-time post-graduate course at the Faculty of Economics of Lomonosov Moscow State University. In 1955 he defended his candidate’s dissertation, in 1974 — the doctoral dissertation. In 1960–1961 V.F. Stanis was sent to pedagogical work at the Higher Political School in Hanoi. After returning to the USSR, he worked as a lecturer at the Lomonosov Moscow State University.

Over a long period of time, he was an instructor in the ideological department, the science department of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) Central Committee, and then held the high post of Deputy Minister of Higher and Secondary Special Education of the USSR. In these positions, he gained considerable experience in organizational and managerial work (Filippov, 2010).

V.F. Stanis as a Rector of the Peoples’ Friendship University

In 1970, Vladimir Frantsevich succeeded Sergei Vasilyevich Rumyantsev as the rector of the Peoples’ Friendship University. His name is associated with the first decade of the University’s existence, when a solid foundation for its future activities was laid. Today, the Patrice Lumumba Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia is a part of the history of Russia. Founded in 1960, the Peoples’ Friendship University was being created during the period

of the triumph of national liberation movements in various countries of the world, and it gradually took its rightful place in the world educational space. The first rector S.V. Rumyantsev made a huge contribution to science, education, culture, development of international relations. He left kind memories among thousands of graduates and lecturers who worked together with him (Savin, 2013, pp. 3–5).

Certainly, the establishment of such an educational institution was a completely new and unique experience for the higher education system of the Soviet Union. It should be noted that at that time many young people from the Third World countries could not get higher education. Our university gave them such an opportunity.

In December 1970, at the Academic Council of the Peoples’ Friendship University, the USSR Minister of Education V.P. Elyutin introduced the new rector — V.F. Stanis. L.V. Ponomarenko, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor of the Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Patrice Lumumba Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia who was a first-year student at the time recalls: “We, first-year students, saw the rector on the podium at the meeting. He spoke very convincingly about the development of higher education and the place of the Peoples’ Friendship University in it.”

It is noteworthy that a special period in the life of V.F. Stanis is associated with his work at the University: it was there that his scientific and pedagogical potential and leadership talent were fully revealed. From December 1970 to June 1993, more than 22 years, he was the rector of this unique university. It was an incredibly difficult work, but he left behind a close-knit international team of many thousands. On June 21, 1993, the Academic Council elected V.F. Stanis the first president of RUDN University in its history.

V.F. Stanis made a great contribution to the development of the University. As the rector, from 1983 he was also the head of the Department of Political Economy. He was a prominent scientist in the field of political economy and global economy, the author of

scientific works on economic problems of developing countries. Under his leadership, 17 candidate dissertations and 8 doctoral dissertations were defended. V.F. Stanis exerted great influence on the development of economic education and professional training of economists at the Peoples' Friendship University. It is well known that education is of strategic importance in the activities of a state, since an effective educational system is one of the decisive factors in the growth of the national economy and a country's authority on the world stage. A person with profound professional knowledge is better able to solve complex issues of social and personal development. V.F. Stanis strove to ensure that undergraduate and graduate students should develop a holistic understanding of economic, social and political phenomena in their complexity and inconsistency.

New forms and content were increasingly introduced into the educational process. This was a natural development of education aimed at training international personnel. V.F. Stanis was a teacher, mentor of undergraduate and graduate students and lecturers.

Showing a keen interest in all areas of student life, he could appear unexpectedly anywhere: in the classroom, in the student dormitory, in the canteen, at the KVN performance. The graduate students remember that he passionately cheered them on at ski competitions, and they won. Many of them still remember that V.F. Stanis encouraged the students every year before their leaving to work in the "Youth of the Planet" construction team and before their working in the pioneer camp. He used to come to Tarasovka, where the pioneer camp was located; together with the pioneers and pioneer leaders, he always participated in many events, even played football. His drive and enthusiasm inspired his subordinates in all areas of work.

L.V. Ponomarenko, who worked with V.F. Stanis for many years after graduating from the university notes: "I worked for a year in the Republic of Guinea as a French translator. When I returned to the university, I was happy to receive a diploma with honors from V.F. Stanis and to hear his instructions. After graduating

from the university, I was faced with a choice: either to go abroad to teach history in French, or to work at the University. I was offered a job in the party committee of the Peoples' Friendship University as the head of the office of socio-political information. At that time, this structure ensured the interaction of the Peoples' Friendship University with political organizations, the reception of delegations, the organization of political studies for communities and political organizations and of rallies, etc. It is very important that V.F. Stanis valued the personnel. He regularly selected the best graduates to work at the university. These were, as a rule, young people who had served in the army; they were often from province, Komsomol party activists, participants in the building brigade movement. The brightest and most talented among them were V.M. Filippov, G.A. Balykhin, V.M. Savin, and others. I happened to be one of the people chosen by V.F. Stanis. Many of them became statesmen, heads of universities, doctors of science, and professors."

It should be noted that the rector invited the best graduates of Lomonosov Moscow State University to work at the Peoples' Friendship University. Thus, the Department of Philosophy was staffed by graduates of the Philosophy Department of Lomonosov Moscow State University — N.S. Kirabaev, P.K. Grechko, V.M. Naydysh, N.P. Narbut, who at that time were young promising specialists and later became famous scientists, doctors of science, professors, and heads of the departments of RUDN University. At that time, a significant achievement was that the best philosophical school in the USSR, Lomonosov Moscow State University, formed the basis of the philosophical field of the Peoples' Friendship University.

Eminent professors and lecturers worked at the University, among them were outstanding scientists who created their own scientific schools: corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences A.A. Iskenderov, corresponding member of the Academy of Medical Sciences of the USSR T.T. Berezov, laureate of the Lenin and State Prizes, Professor Ya.P. Terletsky et al.

As a deputy of the Moscow City Council, V.F. Stanis always helped university graduates to improve their lives and to get jobs in Moscow. At the same time, like the first rector S.V. Rumyantsev, V.F. Stanis paid special attention to the selection of the teaching staff. Thus, prominent historians, such as the corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences A.A. Iskenderov, professors K.V. Malakhovsky, I.I. Orlik-Garlik, O.K. Dreyer and other leading experts who were famous in historical science were invited to the University and successfully carried out teaching activities there.

Continuing the course of the first rector, V.F. Stanis focused his attention on Russian studies, which always remained one of the priority areas in the activities of the university, since at that time three quarters of the Peoples' Friendship University student population were foreign undergraduate and graduate students from Asia, Africa and Latin America. In 1978, there began cooperation between the teachers of the Russian language of the Peoples' Friendship University and the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center on teaching foreign cosmonauts and astronauts the Russian language. It was in those years that the School of Russian Studies of the Peoples' Friendship University under the leadership of E.I. Motina, whom our cosmonauts called "Catherine the Great" for her talent and outstanding organizational skills, received worldwide recognition.¹

This is illustrated by the fact that at the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center, the training of foreign cosmonauts was conducted and is still conducted by the teachers of the Russian language of the RUDN University using the unique proprietary intensive methods developed at the University. The "Intercosmos" program within the framework of which this training was conducted began operating in the late 1970s.²

¹ Pugachev I. A., Kashchenko E. Catherine the Great: Person and Scientist // Newspaper "Friendship". 2019 (March 31). No. 3 (1547). P. 2–3. (In Russian). See also: (Motina, 2005).

² Berkut A. Russian Language in Space Orbit // Newspaper "Friendship". 2021 (April 30). No. 4 (1569). (In Russian).

At that time the triumph of the Russian language in the world was celebrated, which was greatly facilitated by the improvement of the school of teaching Russian as a foreign language at the Peoples' Friendship University: new textbooks and teaching aids were published, listening courses were developed, a laboratory of experimental phonetics operated, etc. On the basis of the departments of the Russian language at the Peoples' Friendship University, there was created the Faculty of Advanced Training for teachers of the Russian language (Balykhina, 2005, p. 25), at the origins of which was Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor T.M. Balykhina.

Another significant achievement of V.F. Stanis was the special status given to the teaching of foreign languages at the University: during his rectorship, it developed into a unique system, which was not found in any Soviet university: along with a diploma in their specialty, students received a diploma of translator in various languages — not only European, but also Oriental. It is important to emphasize that in an effort to improve the professional training of university students and expand their employment opportunities, it was V.F. Stanis who introduced the teaching of Oriental languages, such as Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, and Swahili. It is still an attractive feature of our university, and its graduates have a high level of proficiency, usually in several foreign languages, which makes them competitive and in demand in the labor market.

Everything that was studied at the University was improved in practice. Under the leadership of the rector, extensive practice bases were created in various parts of the Soviet Union. At the university there were also programs to familiarize foreigners with the Soviet reality: delegations of foreign undergraduate and graduate students, led by the Peoples' Friendship University lecturers, traveled to the Union republics, where they became familiar with the socio-economic and cultural processes taking place there.

At the origins of the establishment of the University there were such founding organizations as the Union of Soviet Friendship

Societies, the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, the Central Committee of the Komsomol, and the Committee of Soviet Women. Moreover, they actively participated in the formation of the student population and helped them in solving issues of everyday life. In addition, these organizations ensured the participation of the University in the country's various events: Olympiads, world festivals of youth and students (the university always formed its own delegation to the festival), the World meeting of girls under the auspices of the Committee of Soviet Women, etc. The programs to familiarize foreigners with the Soviet reality were organized and subsidized also by the founding organizations. Therefore V.F. Stanis was in constant close working contact with A.S. Dzasokhov, V.V. Tereshkova and other leaders of these organizations.

International Cooperation of the University

It should be noted that the situation in the world has always affected the activities of the University as an internationally oriented educational institution. In the 1970–1980s, the Peoples' Friendship University was at the forefront of the Cold War, so the role of the university administration was extremely important: it was necessary to understand in detail the essence of the processes taking place in the world. At that time the Peoples' Friendship University was visited by various foreign delegations (approximately 150 annually), which came to the USSR on both official and state visits, mainly from the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. At least 2–3 times a week, various leaders arrived at the university, including the President of Mozambique Samora Machel, the Prime Minister of Ceylon Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen Ali Nasir Muhammad, as well as the leaders of the communist parties of Lebanon (Walid Jumblatt), Peru (Jorge Del Prado), Argentina, Chile (Luis Corvalan), Uruguay (Rodney Arismendi), Paraguay, Venezuela. Prominent leaders such as Romesh Chandra, the Secretary General and

Chairman of the World Peace Council, and Freda Brown, the Head of the International Women's Federation, also visited the University.

Yasser Arafat, the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) visited the Peoples' Friendship University more than once. During one of his visits to the University there happened a curious incident. According to the etiquette, V.F. Stanis was waiting for Yasser Arafat in his office for negotiations. However, the Arab students met their leader near the University, and, pushing aside the guards, carried Yasser Arafat to the podium of the club. In this ambiguous situation, V.F. Stanis was not at a loss. When Yasser Arafat was about to deliver his inspiring speech, V.F. Stanis took advantage of the short pause, went on the stage and greeted "Yasser Arafat, a friend of the Peoples' Friendship University."

It was necessary to prepare for all visits, to carefully study the political situation in the countries from which the delegations arrived, as well as to have knowledge of the economic situation in those countries.

Among the many friends of the USSR, it was Bangladesh that occupied a special place. Its people had to overcome great difficulties, and the USSR provided them with fraternal assistance. In 1972 the Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman paid an official visit to the USSR, during which he visited the Peoples' Friendship University. During the rally the undergraduate and graduate students demonstrated their solidarity with Bangladesh. By the decision of the Soviet leadership, V.F. Stanis was appointed the head of the USSR — Bangladesh Friendship Society. He visited this country several times.

V.F. Stanis visited 50 countries of the world. He was in Chile during the coup led by A. Pinochet. He presented his observations in the articles and books. Unfortunately, his book *About the University and Myself* was not finished.

According to the Western mass media, our university trained guerrilla fighters for struggling against legitimate governments in Asia, Africa and Latin America. V.F. Stanis had to confront

those unsubstantiated accusations. Moreover, he always emphasized the priority of studies and academic preparation at the Peoples' Friendship University. However, it should be emphasized that the University was quite politicized and close to the realities and processes in the developing countries. The events taking place in the world often directly affected the students and the fate of their families. Therefore, their reaction was quite natural: politics often influenced the sphere of relationships in the classrooms and hostels. Thus, the creation of the rebellious Biafra in Nigeria in the late 1960s — early 1970s and the outbreak of hostilities seriously complicated relationships within the community of Nigerian students. Thus, there arose quite a lot of conflict situations in a number of host countries. The disagreements in the world communist labor and national liberation movements influenced the daily life of the Peoples' Friendship University.

It is noteworthy that V.F. Stanis helped to resolve many conflict situations. It is known that Ernesto Che Guevara became a symbol of the armed struggle of Latin Americans. It was around his name that Latin Americans, including those with leftist views, were consolidated. They were led by Cuban students. It is obvious that students, especially from Latin America, with their youthful maximalism and assertiveness, easily fell under the influence of such sentiments. It took a lot of effort and tact to extinguish these sentiments and urge the Cubans to enter other universities in the USSR. In this regard, as well as at the request of political organizations and communities, at the University there was created a system of political circles and seminars. On instructions from V.F. Stanis, leading professors and lecturers conducted the clubs and seminars in the evening on the issues that were previously thought out and agreed upon with the fraternities, taking into account the specifics of the host countries. The classes were conducted by both experienced and young teachers: associate professors N.G. Shabalina, A.I. Ivanov, Yu.V. Irkhin, N.S. Kirabaev, P.K. Grechko and others.

When communicating with foreign figures, V.F. Stanis and the university administration

developed a deep vision of the pressing problems of the national liberation movement and the situation in the host countries as a whole. Thus, the political intuition of V.F. Stanis was evident in his assessment of the situation in the territory of Zimbabwe that was being liberated at that time. The USSR authorities relied on the leader Joshua Nkomo, who visited the USSR and spoke at a rally at the Peoples' Friendship University, and ignored Robert Mugabe, another prominent politician who was later elected president of the country.

In general, the rector of the Peoples' Friendship University paid great attention to the work with the communities of foreign students. When considering a difficult situation in the community, he always took into account the historical, ethnic, and national features.

Visits of state and party delegations, leaders of national liberation movements, public figures of foreign countries were a constant everyday process at the University. In this regard, our organization (the office of socio-political information under the party committee) under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee for International Activities V.Sh. Agamoglanov, with the participation of the student department organized rallies and meetings with figures of foreign countries. In those years, the University was visited by the presidents of India, Sri Lanka, Madagascar, Somalia and many other countries. General Secretaries of communist parties and figures of foreign public organizations also visited our university. V.F. Stanis received all of them in his office, where he held negotiations; then there were rallies with the participation of the guests. The "On Donskoy" club of the Peoples' Friendship University sometimes could not accommodate all undergraduate and graduate students and lecturers who wanted to attend such events.

A special, unforgettable date in the life of the University was the celebration of its 15th anniversary at the State Kremlin Palace. V.F. Stanis personally supervised the preparations for the celebration. On the occasion of the anniversary of the Peoples' Friendship University, he was awarded the Order of

Peoples' Friendship for merits in training personnel for the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

It is necessary to mention that both within and outside the Peoples' Friendship University, not everyone approved of the idea of naming the University in 1961 after Patrice Lumumba, the Head of the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, according to V.F. Stanis, his name became a symbol of the victory of the national liberation movement; besides, given the specifics of the contingent, it corresponded to the mission of the University. In 1974, V.F. Stanis invited P. Lumumba's elder son, François, to visit the Peoples' Friendship University. F. Lumumba became familiar with the University which was named after his father. V.F. Stanis suggested that the young man continue his graduate studies at the Faculty of Economics, but he did not accept the idea and subsequently received a degree at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Budapest.

When "perestroika" started, the period of the 1970–1980s was characterized as an "era of stagnation." However, V.F. Stanis and his colleagues, who were working under his leadership, did not see any stagnation in the academic sphere and international activities: the international cooperation was actively developing, the number of students was increasing and geography of the host countries was expanding.

Years went by, the University lived and developed putting into practice the concept of V.F. Stanis who believed that the University is a large family of undergraduate and graduate students and teachers. He even preferred to celebrate the New Year with his team in the then new building of the Peoples' Friendship University on Miklukho-Maklaya street.

The rector and later president of RUDN University, V.F. Stanis, watched with great sadness and regret the processes that were taking place in the post-perestroika period of the 1990s. He was annoyed to see that Russia was abandoning the countries of Asia, Africa and

Latin America, leaving behind embassies, diplomatic missions, cultural centers, which entailed a decrease in the number of foreign students at RUDN University. The concepts of "internationalism" and "peoples' friendship" receded into the background. The Russian Federation distanced itself more and more from its long-term partners, which was clearly manifested in its foreign policy, where the developing countries were pushed to the back burner. The resulting vacuum was filled by Western countries and rapidly developing China.

In such difficult conditions, V.F. Stanis urged in all his speeches in the 1990s "not to be Ivans not remembering kinship," to rely on the knowledge acquired at RUDN University, "as a traveler relies on a staff."

Conclusion

In terms of age, the Peoples' Friendship University is quite young, but the activities of its rector V.F. Stanis became a bright page in its rich history. He was awarded the Order of Lenin, the Order of the October Revolution, the Order of the Red Banner of Labor, the Order of Peoples' Friendship, the Order of the Red Star, the Order of the Badge of Honour, the Order of the Patriotic War of the First Class, the Order of Friendship and eight medals. The University gained international recognition; the international team increased significantly. V.F. Stanis and his era at the University are part of the life history of a huge galaxy of graduates who took their rightful place in the development of their countries. Certainly, there remains interest in the internationally oriented university which to this day carries out a noble cultural and humanitarian mission, training specialists for foreign countries and striving to strengthen friendship between peoples.

The teachers and graduates of the Peoples' Friendship University are proud to preserve the traditions of the University laid down by V.F. Stanis and contribute to the high mission of training the world elite.

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About the authors:

Ponomarenko Liudmila Vasilievna — PhD, Dr. of Sc. (History), Professor, Professor, Foreign Languages Department, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, RUDN University; eLibrary SPIN-code: 7339-3127; ORCID: 0000-0002-9994-3097; e-mail: ponomarenko-lv@rudn.ru

Lukyanova Galina Olegovna — PhD (Philology), Associate Professor, Head, Foreign Languages Department, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, RUDN University; eLibrary SPIN-code: 6395-2994; ORCID: 0000-0002-4033-4852; e-mail: lukianova-go@rudn.ru