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EXECUTED LIGHT. ACTOR STEPAN SHAHAIDA AS A VICTIM OF STALINIST TERROR

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“Colleagues loved Stepan Vasylovych for his sincerity, cheerful disposition and humor” (from the memoirs of Oleksandr Shahaida’s son)

“There is no more room for graves in the cemetery of executed illusions” (Vasyl Symonenko)

***L. Briukhovetska*. Executed light. Actor Stepan Shahaida as a victim of Stalinist terror**

The article examines the life and work of one of the leading Ukrainian theater and film actors Stepan Shahaida (1896–1938) in the discourses of the Cultural Renaissance of Ukraine in the 1920s and the historical trauma caused under the conditions of the Bolshevik terror. The Ukrainian Renaissance — an important phenomenon of the XX century — became possible thanks to the NEP, Ukrainianization and some autonomization in the economic and cultural life of the Ukrainian SSR. Stepan Shahaida — one of the most famous actors of that time — made his contribution to the achievements of theatrical art, which gained its national uniqueness thanks to the efforts of the director, a proponent of Europeanization, Les Kurbas. As his student and associate in the famous “Berezil” theater (Kyiv, Kharkiv), Shahaida played the main roles in the plays “The fooled ones” by Marko Kropyvnytskyi, “Commune in the steppes” by Mykola Kulish, “Jacquerie” by Prosper Merimee, “The Golden Belly” by Fernand Krommenlink, “The King is playing” by Victor Hugo. After starring in the film “The Man from the Forest” by Heorhii Stabovyi, he transferred to the Odesa Film Factory, where he successfully embodied the image of the Cossack Chapyra in “Pearl of Semiramis” also directed by H. Stabovyi. During ten years, he played in many films, including: “Five Brides” by Oleksandr Soloviov, “The Museum Guard” by Borys Tiahno, “Perekop” by Ivan Kavaleridze, “Karmeliuk” by Faust Lopatynskyi, “Ivan”, “Aerograd” by Oleksandr Dovzhenko, “Rich bride” by Ivan Pyriev. The actor is characterized by high professionalism and humanity.

Stepan Shahaida, like many conscious Ukrainians, took part in the Liberation War for the Ukrainian sovereignty. He was arrested and shot on January 20, 1938 in the cells of the NKVD, becoming an innocent victim of Stalinist repressions.

Keywords: *Stepan Shahaida, cultural revival of Ukraine in the 1920s, theater of Les Kurbas, Ukrainian cinema of the 1920s, Stalin’s repression of the Ukrainian intelligentsia.*

***Л. І. Брюховецька*. Розстріляне світло. Актор Степан Шагайда як жертва сталінського терору**

У статті розглядається життя та творчість одного з провідних українських акторів театру і кіно Степана Шагайди (1896–1938) як типовий приклад для дискурсу про культурне відродження України 1920-х рр. та історичну травму, спричинену умовами більшовицького терору. Як і багато свідомих українців, він брав участь у Визвольній боротьбі за суверенітет України. Заарештований і 20 січня 1938 р., розстріляний у камерах НКВС, С. Шагайда став невинною жертвою сталінських репресій.

Відродження — важливе явище XX століття — стало можливим завдяки непу, українізації та певній автономії в економічному та культурному житті УРСР. Степан Шагайда — один із найвідоміших акторів того часу — зробив свій внесок у досягнення театрального мистецтва, яке завдяки зусиллям ре-

жисера Леся Курбаса, прихильника європеїзації, набуло своєї національної унікальності. С. Шагайда, який був його учнем і однодумцем у відомому театрі «Березіль» (Київ, Харків), грав головні ролі у виставах «Одурені» за Марком Кропивницьким, «Комуна в степах» Миколи Куліша, «Жакерія» Проспера Меріме, «Золотий живіт» Фернана Кроммелінка, «Король грає» Віктора Гюго. Після головної ролі у фільмі «Людина з лісу» Георгія Стабового, він переходить на Одеську кінофабрику, де успішно втілює образ козака Чапири в «Перлині Семіраміди» згаданого вище режисера. Протягом десяти років С. Шагайда зіграв у багатьох фільмах, серед яких: «П'ять наречених» Олександра Соловйова, «Музейна варта» Бориса Тягно, «Перекоп» Івана Кавалерідзе, «Кармелюк» Фауста Лопатинського, «Іван», «Аероград» Олександра Довженка, «Багата наречена» Івана Пир'єва. Актора відрізняє високий професіоналізм і людяність.

Ключові слова: *Степан Шагайда, культурне відродження України 1920-х рр., театр Леся Курбаса, український кінематограф 1920-х рр., сталінські репресії української інтелігенції.*

Problem statement. In the process of decommunization and decolonization of the Ukrainian cultural space, the history of cinema occupies an important place. The origin and development of Ukrainian cinematography still leaves many unknown facts. Not cinematography in Ukraine, but rather Ukrainian cinematography.

The purpose of the article is to show how the cultural renaissance of Ukraine was formed, the direction in which it moved, and the achieved results that led to the beginning of Stalin's terror, using the example of the creative fate of a specific Ukrainian actor, Stepan Shahaida.

Presentation of the main research material. Many Ukrainians born at the turn of the XIX and XX centuries are "self-made" people. A vivid example is the actor Stepan Shahaida (1896, Biloholovy village, now Ternopil region — 1938, Kyiv). He came from a poor family, his parents had to leave their native Ternopil region and move to Bosnia, to Devedin village, in order to save themselves from famine. At the age of 26, having finally chosen acting as his profession, Stepan Shahaida worked with such famous directors as Les Kurbas and Oleksandr Dovzhenko. Les Kurbas was his teacher, he formed him as an actor. Oleksandr Dovzhenko filmed him in the main role in "Aerograd" (Mosfilm studio), with which he was supposed to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of the authorities after brutal harassment in the press, and if we take into account that the main characters in the films of this Master were his second "self", then it was Stepan Shahaida, in the image of the tiger hunter Stepan Hlushak, who had to embody the alter ego of the author of the film.

In this article, the life and work of one of the leading Ukrainian theater and film actors will be considered in the discourses of the Cultural Renaissance of Ukraine in the 1920s and the historical trauma caused under the conditions of Bolshevik terror.

The Cultural Renaissance of Ukraine as a kind of phenomenon of creative intensity of the nation arose thanks to the Liberation Struggle of Ukraine and awareness of national identity. The overthrow of the monarchy in 1917 was perceived by Ukrainians as liberation from colonial dependence on the Russian Empire and an opportunity to freely develop their culture. Political shifts were called to life by creative forces, and many scientific and creative intellectuals appreciated the chance to revive the native language, literature and art, which were discriminated against during the time of tsarist Russia — the government considered them as a manifestation of separatism. From 1917, for four years, Ukraine had been fighting against the Bolsheviks for its independent state, but was defeated. In order to attract the population of the union republics of the USSR, the Kremlin authorities introduced the process of indigenization (in the Ukrainian SSR — Ukrainization). Together with the NEP policy, this allowed Ukrainians to work fruitfully in various fields of economy and culture. The Cultural Renaissance developed until 1927 and bore valuable fruits. As for the cinema, in 1917-1920 it functioned in the south of Ukraine — in Odesa and Yalta — as a continuation of pre-revolutionary Russian cinema. Therefore, we can talk about the cinematography of the Cultural Renaissance of Ukraine as the day of its birth and formation. It took place intensively, at an incredibly fast pace, thanks to the organizational talent of administrators and economists and the creative energy of artists who came to cinema from literature (screenwriters) and theater (directors and actors), as well as a part of pre-revolutionary specialists — actors, directors

and cameramen. Valuable contributions to the development of Ukrainian cinema were made by foreign, mostly German, experts (cinematographers, decorators, laboratory workers). The totality of these creative forces, the ambitious goal for just four years of activity of the All-Ukrainian Photo Cinema Administration (VUFKU) gave successful results, brought Ukrainian cinema to the international space and to the leading positions in the USSR in terms of economic and creative indicators. It was a short period of relative freedom and autonomy in the economic and cultural spheres.

Having given these few years of relative freedom, the Kremlin authorities in the early 1930s completed the process of Ukrainization, carried out collectivization in the countryside, and industrialization of production sector. Stalin, breaking the resistance of political opponents, strengthened his power with terror and intimidation. If before Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine, someone still doubted that Ukraine's stay in the USSR was nothing more than Russian occupation, then from the point of view of current events, it is more than obvious. The stabilization of the Stalinist regime in the period between 1929 and 1933 was a time of mass purges, when many citizens of the country, including members of the Bolshevik Party, had to go through moral execution. This also happened in the scientific and cultural space of Ukraine: 1929 — arrests of Ukrainian scientists, 1930 — the SVU (the Union of Liberation of Ukraine) trial, 1932–1933 — Holodomor, 1934 after the assassination of one of the Bolshevik leaders Kirov — repression against the Ukrainian intellectuals, executions in Bykivnia, exile to GULAG. In 1937, the year of the so-called Ezhovshchina (The Great Purge), there were again mass shootings of innocent victims of Bolshevism. The country was completely isolated. At that time, norms of "revolutionary legality" were introduced in the USSR, on the basis of which political repressions were carried out, and this norm was based on the principles of "revolutionary expediency" of the fight against the alleged counter-revolution.

Therefore, the 1930s became the deadliest period for Ukrainians and remain a collective trauma to this day, especially since these crimes go unpunished. The memory of the victims of Bolshevik terror should remind us that the enemy's intentions have not changed, and he has not given up his bloody goal even now.

During the Khrushchev thaw, the innocent people that had been punished were rehabilitated, but not everybody was rehabilitated, and those guilty of these crimes were not punished. Already in the mid-1960s, re-Stalinization began at the top notch of society of the Soviet Union. The figure of silence surrounding the repressions, as D. Vedienieiev stated, "did not contribute to the establishment of legal awareness and respect for inalienable human rights. The national memory, the socio-cultural heritage of the Ukrainian people was impoverished as a result of the taboo on studying the activities of prominent figures of national statehood, the national liberation movement, science, art, religious figures, military leaders, etc." (Vedienieiev, Dmytro, 2012).

Ukrainians began to uncover the crimes of the Bolshevik regime in the late 1980s, when access to archives was given and banned works were published. By the decree of the President of Ukraine dated May 21, 2007, the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Political Repressions was established annually on the third Sunday of May. For three decades of independent Ukraine, the intellectual opinion of society has been working to restore historical justice and honor the memory of the victims of Stalinist terror. But there is still a lack of understanding of the causes and consequences of numerous facts of collective trauma. It is missing because it was forbidden to mention these tragedies throughout the years of the USSR's existence. Unlike the Nuremberg Trials, which punished Nazi criminals, unfortunately, nothing similar happened to the criminals of the Stalinist regime. Therefore, in the Russian Federation, which is the successor of the USSR, the punitive structure of the KGB only changed its name, but not its essence, so the KGB-like regime was revived at the beginning of the XXI century, manifesting itself in aggression and crimes committed by the terrorist country in Ukraine.

According to the definition of scientists, "in social theory, the concept of collective trauma becomes widespread in the middle of the XX century due to the rethinking of the fundamental principles of theories of social change. Collective trauma refers to the destructive, disfunctional consequences of social transformations that affect large groups of

people. Among them, in particular, wars, disasters, terrorist acts, other events related to death, loss of freedom, etc. (Sushyi, 2014, p. 19). The concept of cultural trauma is also singled out, the specificity of which "consists in the fact that mastering cultural traumas creates solidarity, increases the space of clarity for society" (ibid., p. 22). The memory of the events that took place in Ukraine in the XX century remains relevant. We were not participants in the tragedies of the 1930s, but we inherited them and are experiencing them. To overcome the psychological consequences, as scientists advise, we must share the experience of historical trauma and build a new identity in the format of hope.

There are thousands of victims of the Stalinist regime among the Ukrainian creative intellectuals. Literary experts who publish previously banned books, historians who study archives and publish scientific studies continue to work in Ukraine (only ten years ago there were about 5,000 scientific works on the problem of illegal repressions and the rehabilitation of their victims), journalists who make TV programs and documentaries , museum workers who arrange the expositions, open new museums (in particular, the memorial complex "Bykivnia Graves", the Holodomor Museum) in order to bring to the broad sections of society, and especially to the youth audience, the names of those who have been pushed out of the information space for a long time, to expand the field of historical memory.

The Bolshevik authorities equated the art of speech, stage and screen with the ideological weapon necessary to manipulate the consciousness of the masses, and did so quite successfully. Considering artists and directors to be minions of the party, executors of its direct instructions, the authorities in the USSR considered any opinion that did not fit into its postulates as opposition to the system — active, as in the case of the writer and polemicist Mykola Khvylovyi, or passive, as in the case of the neoclassicists. Neoclassicists, avoiding current topics, delved into European culture, finding valuable material for research and exerting an intellectual influence on students — in the literature of that time, this was recorded in the image of one of the heroes of the novel "The City" by Valerian Pidmohylnyi, whose prototype was professor Mykola Zerov. In 1937, both the author of the work and Mykola Zerov were shot in Sandarmokh (Karelia) together with hundreds of other Ukrainian intellectuals. Investigators and prosecutors accused Pidmohylnyi, Zerov, and other famous Ukrainian writers and scientists of counter-revolutionary activities, and, for the sake of variety, of espionage for the benefit of some foreign country, especially those who spoke foreign languages or met with foreigners. Neither counter-revolutionaries nor spies existed in this environment, and if the motherland defines you as an enemy of the people, then you should not doubt it, and the masters of interrogation knew how to extract confessions.

Crimes of the penal system, committed among Ukrainian cinematographers, are less well known. If writers had a choice: emigration abroad (poet and translator Yurii Klen), suicide (Mykola Khvylovyi), silence, repression and concentration camps or one more option — glorification of the party, then cinematographers who were arrested and then released after some time had the opportunity emigrate to Moscow — this is how one of the leading film directors, Heorhii Stabovyi, screenwriter, editor and director Vasyl Radysh, saved himself, although he lost his right to a profession. Oleksandr Dovzhenko and his wife Yuliia Solntseva escaped from the real threat of arrest in Moscow, and actor Semen Svashenko, who played the main roles in the silent Dovzhenko's trilogy, went there as well. Galician Faust Lopatynskyi had no intention of leaving Ukraine and was shot in 1937 as a Polish spy and an "enemy of the people." The famous cinematographer, producer of the Dovzhenko's "Arsenal" and "Earth" Danylo Demutskyi suffered as a representative of a socially unreliable category of the population, he had a noble origin, which automatically caused distrust in the USSR authorities, he was accused of a non-existent connection with his cousin, a White Guardsman, whom Danylo Porfyrovych saw only once in his life. Demutskyi had to realize his talent for a long time at the Tashkent Film Studio. Film director Arnold Kordium also found himself in Central Asia, and was accused of misrepresenting the image of the main character in the film "Wind from the Rapids" (another title is "The Last Pilot") with Ukrainian theater luminary Mykola Sadovskyi in the main role. Directors Marko Tereshchenko, Borys Tiahno, and Pavlo Dolyna survived, but were

suspended from working in cinema. The talented cinematographer, innovator and researcher of cinematography Oleksii Kaliuzhnyi also emigrated to Moscow, where he was invited to teach at the film institute, but the Chekists found him there as well — he served his prison sentence in the north of Russia, where he was shot (his investigative file is not in the Ukrainian archives), and the films he shot, including Ivan Kavaleridze's experimental film "Shower rain", were destroyed. A giant range of repressions descended upon screenwriters and administrators. Among the latter, Zakhar Khelmno, Ivan Vorobiov, Hryhorii Kosiachnyi, that is, almost all the heads of the VUFKU (except Oleksandr Shub), as well as the director of the Yalta, Odesa and Kyiv film factories, Solomon Orelovych, were shot. The martyrology of Ukrainian writers "Altar of Sorrow" includes 246 writers — victims of Stalinist terror. Among them are those who collaborated with the VUFKU as screenwriters and editors: Mykhailo Semenko, Dmytro Falkivskyi, Hryhorii Kosynka, Oles Dosvitnii, Hryhorii Epik, Mike Johansen, Geo Shkurupii, Dmytro Buzko, Volodymyr Yaroshenko, as well as Russian-language writers who worked in cinema, Mykola Borysov and Isak Babel.

Moscow's policy was to rid the Ukrainian film industry of Ukrainians — while Ukrainian directors were arrested and forced to "voluntarily-forcefully" leave their homes and work in Ukraine, Russian film directors who lacked space in Moscow studios worked instead at the newly built Kyiv Film Factory: Mykola Shpykovskyi, Mykola Ekk, Hryhorii Roshal, Oleksandr Havronskyi (served imprisonment as a Trotskyist), Ivan Pyriev, Abram Room. This fact confirms one of the methods of the government to form *homo sovieticus* by mixing the population.

Until the beginning of the Second World War, Ivan Kavaleridze continued to work at the Kyiv Film Studio, but in 1935 he also suffered devastating criticism for the film "Prometheus", which was inspired by Taras Shevchenko's poem "Caucasus".

In the hierarchy built by the authorities, film actors were considered executors of the director's conceptual vision, so it was not possible to make ideological demands on them. However, while "working" on interrogations with Stepan Shahaida, the Chekists forced him to admit that he "unconsciously faked the image of Karmeliuk" (Shahaida, 2017, p. 102). Actors whose names appeared in the credits of Ukrainian films, especially the most popular ones, were also considered "enemies of the people", fabricating standard accusations. Some (Yosyp Hirniak, Les Podorozhnyi) were sent to the GULAG, others (Stepan Shahaida, Mykola Nademskyi, Borys Zahorskyi, Leonid Barbe, Serhii Minin) were exterminated. They also destroyed the films where they were filmed, freeing up space for "ideological" bush-leaguers. Actually, in those dark times, the authorities were not interested in the quality of artistic products, the main thing was that their producers sang odes to the party and its leader, as well as reported their colleagues to the relevant authorities. It should be emphasized that Moscow did not want Ukraine to have success in culture and science recognized abroad. Some of the talented figures were turned into Russian figures, and some were liquidated.

During the period of silent cinema, Ukrainian cinema developed its own acting school, the core of which was made up of "Berezilians" who had got professional training at the theater of Les Kurbas. The activities of Les Kurbas as a director and as the head of the Berezil Art Association can be compared with the activities of Max Reinhardt in Germany — both were innovators and reformers of the theater, both successfully trained actors who became leading actors of cinema and brought glory to their national cinematography.

The most popular silent movie actors in Ukraine were "Berezilians" Amvrosii Buchma, Stepan Shahaida (both came from Galicia) and Mykola Nademskyi — this is confirmed by the largest number of mentions in the periodicals of those years.

In the early 1920s, Amvrosii Buchma was a leading actor in the Berezil avant-garde theater organized by Les Kurbas. Stepan Shahaida also joined this theater, but a bit later. And if we talk about the career of both of them in the cinema, Shahaida replaced the popular Buchma and remained popular until the day of his arrest. The difference between them is that Buchma was lucky — thanks to the role of Lenin in the play "Truth" based on the play by Oleksandr Korniichuk, he avoided arrest and until the end of his days played on the stage of the leading Ukrainian I. Franko Drama Theater. In Soviet times, a lot was

written about Buchma, books were published, but Shahaida, of course, was not mentioned.

The world war, revolution, civil war, changing borders, newly formed countries, ideological dogmas — all this is the reason that little information about Shahaida's life has been preserved. The memories of people who spoke to him and remembered his stories remained. And also documents from the archives of the SSU — the former KGB.

Shahaida's childhood can be imagined as a large family from Yurii Illenko's film "The White Bird with a Black Mark", which shows how children were hired so that they would not die of famine — this happened in Bukovyna, which was part of Romania until 1940. Shahaida's childhood was spent in the village of Devedin in Herzogovina, where his parents moved. The boy had a beautiful voice and sang with his father in the village church. Having heard his singing, a clergyman from Lviv suggested that he move to this city, and there in 1912 the boy became a servant in the Cathedral of St. George, from where he moved to the Pochaiv Lavra, where he studied icon painting and carpentry in an icon painting workshop. Shahaida's youth coincided with the beginning of the First World War: in 1914, to avoid the Austro-Hungarian mobilization, he moved to Russia. In 1915–1918, he worked as an orderly, disinfectant and storekeeper in the organization of the All-Russian Zemstvo Union, a carpenter at a boiler foundry in Moscow.

Shahaida's subsequent biography was typical of the Ukrainian intellectuals — in April 1918, he returned to Ukraine to defend Ukrainian statehood. He joined the First Hundred of the Bohdan Regiment of Sich riflemen[1]. During the period of the Hetmanate, he served in the personal guard of Hetman Pavlo Skoropadskyi — as a hereditary cadre military hetman, he knew people who were suitable for military service, and properly evaluated Stepan Shahaida. In December 1918, when the Hetmanate was replaced by the Directory, the future actor continued to serve in the Ukrainian army, but after its defeat in 1920, he joined the Red Army as a volunteer. Being a member of the 45th Red Banner Volyn Division, thanks to his good voice and acting skills, he participated in the regimental dramatic and choral circles. After the disbandment of the regiment in 1922, with the help of his army friend Oleksa Lazoryshak, he entered the theater studio at the "Berezil" theater, where he studied acting and took part in plays.

As follows from this fact, Shahaida owes the start of his professional acting biography to Oleksii Lazoryshak (1892–1945), who during the formation of the Berezil Art Association was a political commissar there, then made a career in other structures as an administrator, in the end, in his speeches, he "emphasized Kurbas' incorrect, bourgeois-nationalist line in Berezil" (Revutskyi, 1989, p. 64). On October 5, 1933, when the authorities removed Les Kurbas from the management of "Berezil", Oleksa Lazoryshak was appointed director of this theater. But he also, like Les Kurbas, fell into the hands of the Chekists — his arrest in the spring of 1937 as a Polish spy was mentioned by Stepan Shahaida in his statement to the head of the Regional Directorate of the NKVD" (Shahaida, 2017, p. 101).

Shahaida's creative life lasted only 15 years, five of them (1922–1927) were dedicated to the theater, and during his ten-year career in cinema, he managed to appear in 26 films. Stepan Shahaida's work in the theater was very intensive, he participated in many performances of "Berezil". This theater needed an actor — an "intelligent harlequin", Les Kurbas trained him with his talent and energy, like many others, he wanted "the artist to become a master of theatrical action" (Les Kurbas Theater, 1923, p. 104).

For the first time, he appeared on the stage of "Berezil" in the expressionist play "Gas" by Kaiser. It took from 100 to 150 rehearsals for its release, Les Kurbas made the leading force not an individual, but the working class. The performance testified to the hellish work of the director, artist and actors. Critics enthusiastically wrote that the theater in Ukraine had never seen such a huge and flawless work of art. According to the reviews of the press at

1. The First Ukrainian Bohdan Khmelnytskyi Regiment is the first Ukrainian military unit in the Russian army. It was formed on April 18 (May 1) 1917 in Kyiv on a voluntary basis. The creation of the regiment marked the beginning of the Ukrainization of military units in the Russian army. The soldiers of the regiment were historically called Bohdanivtsi. The Bohdan regiment became a pillar of the Ukrainian national movement and the foundation of the creation of the Ukrainian Army.

the time and a few photographs, theater historians reconstructed it. A researcher of Kurbas' work and the "Berezil" theater, Natalia Yermakova carefully analyzed her heart-breaking scenes, in particular, the scene of the "wedding tank of the Daughter of the Billionaire's Son (V. Chystiakov), when the heroine's movements were drawn as if "graphically", that is, without emotions, sketchily. Three of her partners (D. Antonovych, S. Shahaida, and B. Balaban) were worthy performers of this "spiky," so to speak, "geometric tank" (Yermakova, 2012, pp. 161–162).

The next play, in which Stepan Shahaida took part, was "The fooled ones". After German expressionism, the appeal to the classical Ukrainian thing was a movement towards the traditional Ukrainian theater, not in a traditional, but in an avant-garde solution. In the production of Faust Lopatynskyi, this is a comedy filled with circus tricks, which the actors mastered through exhausting rehearsals. Shahaida played the role of Dranko, and the role of Kuksa was played by Marian Krushelnytskyi and Yosyp Hirniak. As Yosyp Hirniak recalled, "Kuksa and Dranko removed the external signs of circus clowns and all their behavior continued like this" (Hirniak, 1982). The level of skills of the Berezilians involved there — Hirniak, Shahaida, Zinaida Pihulovych — was universally recognized, their acting art developed rapidly.

All subsequent roles confirm the wide acting range of Stepan Shahaida. In the play "Sava Chalyi" based on the historical drama of Ivan Karpenko-Karyi Shahaida played the role of Shmyhelskyi. In Bereza-Kudrytskyi's stage interpretation of "Communes in the steppes" based on Mykola Kulish's play, which testified to Berezil's appeal to modern Ukrainian drama, which required new directorial and acting searches, Shahaida played the head of the commune.

Critics called Borys Tiahno's play "Jacqueria" by Prosper Merimee colorful and emotionally strong. Here, Stepan Shahaida got the main role — the leader of the "forest brothers" — Gray Wolf.

"Berezil" expanded the genre palette and entered the territory of satire theater and variety theater. In the play "Shpana" by Volodymyr Yaroshenko — a satirical depiction of a topical problem related to the new, already socialist bourgeoisie, the audience especially singled out Valentyna Chystiakova, Oleksandr Serdiuk and Stepan Shahaida.

The theater of Les Kurbas is transferred from Kyiv to Kharkiv, the capital of the Ukrainian SSR of that time, and "Berezilians" open the season with the play "The Golden Belly" by F. Krommenlink. Yurii Shevelov, a resident of Kharkiv, regarded it as a milestone in the history of the "Berezil" theater. In his opinion, from this play "began the theatrical thinking of the Kurbas Theater". Being a student at that time, he was impressed by the performance, and many years later he wrote in his memoirs: "There was no love intrigue in the play, no class struggle and no victory of the proletariat. <...> The whole play was the story of a disease — the disease of avarice, the gradual transition from youthful generosity to ever more devastating avarice, the story of the dying of human feelings in the soul of a person poisoned by the taste of gold, and ultimately to the extinction of life itself. The elements of the theater play were layered on top of this <…>, it became a means of a philosophical vision of the world and man <…> in the general style of switching everyday life through the grotesque into philosophy" (Shevelov, Yu. (Yurii Sherekh), 2001, p. 106, 107). According to modern theater experts, "The Golden Belly" by F. Krommenlink in the production of Les Kurbas was decided as a farce. Here, Shahaida faced not just any test. He plays the main role — Auguste. Yurii Smolych, an active theater critic of that time, wrote: "A capable performer S. Shahaida. He deals well with transitions, but Pierre Auguste is an exceptionally difficult role" (Smolych).

"The King is playing" by Victor Hugo was translated by Maksym Rylskyi for "Berezil", the play was set by Borys Tiahno. The performance, as well as the creative direction of the theater itself, was highly appreciated by Yurii Smolych: "The artistic means of "Berezil" — a qualified acting ensemble, direction — all this convinces that the classical repertoire finds quite worthy performers in the Ukrainian theater and the audience gets to know the classical repertoire from serious, high-art productions". (Hudran, 1927). Shahaida played Saltobadil there. One of the reviews emphasizes that the actor "in simple tones and colors without cartoons gives an outstanding stage figure, having characterized it surprisingly truthfully. This simplicity may be against Saltobadil's melodramatic physiognomy, but it artistically deepened the image" (ibid.).

Not all the plays in which Stepan Shahaida's acting talent was showcased have been mentioned, there were much more of them, but even from these it is clear what difficult creative tasks were fulfilled by the actor, what various characters he had to embody on stage. On the basis of Les Kurbas' productions of Mykola Kulish's dramas, passions of an all-Ukrainian scale flared up: at the Theater Dispute in 1929, Kurbas not only ardently defended his position of eternal movement and artistic search, but also exposed the ignorants. In the early 1930s, the harassment of Les Kurbas in the press for distorting the party line intensified. The directive instructions that the proletariat is moving to the creation of artistic products and to the direct management of the entire artistic front sound quite serious.

Stepan Shahaida's film career began, once again, thanks to Les Kurbas. In the summer of 1924, when "Berezil" was on tour in Kharkiv, at the insistence of the All-Ukrainian Photocinema Administration (VUFKU), Kurbas took up the production of short feature films at the Odesa Film Factory. The scenarios offered to him did not pretend to be more than propaganda, but the management of the film factory decided that this would be enough for a test of strength. The first to be filmed was an "anti-religious" satire called "Vendetta" and the director appointed Yosyp Hirniak and Stepan Shahaida (the role of deacon Hordii Sviatoptytsyn) to play the main roles. In Kurbas' next films — "McDonald" (a political satire on the British prime minister) and "Arsenal" — the main roles went to Amvrosii Buchma, after which Buchma was involved in his epics "Taras Shevchenko" and "Taras Tryasylo" by the leading director of the film factory Petro Chardynin. Therefore, it was Les Kurbas who paved the way to cinema for his actors. But the films he shot in 1924–1925 were destroyed, leaving only memories and descriptions made public during the "thaw".

If the film career of Les Kurbas did not work out (according to one of the film officials, Kurbas wanted to bring an individualistic and vivid expression to his film work), then the actors of his theater — Semen Svashenko, Les Podorozhnyi, Zinaida Pihulovych, Petro Masokha — began to occupy leading positions in Ukrainian cinema. And this was a tangible step in the Ukrainization of this Russified art form. The most indicative in this sense is Buchma's career at the Odesa Film Factory, which developed rapidly, which was facilitated by his sociability, wit and ability to capture the attention of the public. In the end, he leaves "Berezil" and fully devotes himself to work in the cinema. After "Vendetta", Shahaida's next role was the role of the thief Mytko Kutsyi in the comedy "Vasia the Reformer", which was staged by Faust Lopatynskyi based on the script of Oleksandr Dovzhenko. However, the director leaves the stunt production unfinished, and the cameraman Yosyp Rona, who was finishing it, did not manage to make the film successful (it has not been preserved).

At the beginning of 1928, Stepan Shahaida left the theater and went to work at the Odesa Film Factory of the VUFKU. His role in the film "The Man from the Forest" contributed to this decision. Of course, after such an education, such a theatrical repertoire and creative tension, the roles offered to Stepan Shahaida by cinema look primitive and flat. But cinema attracted theater actors with great popularity and it was impossible to resist such a lure. In addition, it is clear: compared to the exhausting creative practice of "Berezil", it seemed like a resort. Although not necessarily a resort — in the films where Shahaida was shot, his characters, and therefore the actor, had a lot of physical exertion.

Film director Heorhii Stabovyi, who had a flair for talented people, was not afraid to take risks, inviting little-known actors to play roles in his films. He appoints Stepan Shahaida for the main role — the engineer Gray, the head of the construction of a small hydroelectric power station — in his film "The Man from the Forest" (premiered in January 1928). The film has not survived, there is only a photo of the working moment of the shooting, but the expressive manly face of the main character, depicted in a conventional style, appears on the poster for this film. Since then, interest in this actor has been growing among film directors, and it is not by chance that his characters become the personification of their time. If Buchma is primarily associated with the historical genre, then Stepan Shahaida, in his first notable role, declared himself as an enthusiast and a devotee of building a new life.

Having switched to full-time work in the cinema, he starred a lot, in particular, in the films of Heorhii Stabovyi, Oleksandr Soloviov, Hryhorii Roshal,

Borys Tiahno, Ivan Kavaleridze, Faust Lopatynskyi, Oleksandr Dovzhenko. As we can see, directors who clearly knew the purpose of their own creativity are interested in this actor. In 1928, the palm of victory in film acting went to Stepan Shahaida.

At that time, Ukrainian cinematographers had finally abandoned the primitive campaign poster and were looking for an opportunity to create psychologically more voluminous characters, they needed an actor in whom professionalism would be combined with an expressive appearance and texture. Stepan Shahaida fully met these needs. However, he could capture the viewer's attention with his plasticity, as in Ivan Kavaleridze's film "Perekop". Today, this geographical name does not mean anything except its direct meaning — the isthmus of land connecting the Crimean Peninsula with the mainland. But after 1920, when the Red Army broke through the defenses of Wrangel's White Army and captured Crimea, this name became symbolic and marked a victorious offensive. That is why Kavaleridze believed that his film was not only a recreation of the events of the war between the Reds and Whites, which took place in the south of Ukraine, but also the implementation of the first five-year plan and the struggle "against the kulaks". In this propaganda film, which, largely thanks to the cameraman skills of Mykola Topchii, took on an avant-garde form, the actors, accordingly, created not only images of people, but also signs and symbols. Here, Stepan Shahaida, who played the representative of the center of Comrade Artem, accurately embodied the symbol of a confident winner who will not give up the gains of the revolution for a moment, a winner who leads the working masses. It is clear that it was not easy to create such a largely poster-like image. Monumentality could be read in it — and not by chance, because Ivan Kavaleridze, already a famous sculptor at that time (before the revolution, he studied in Paris and managed to build a monument to Princess Olha in Kyiv, which today, like two other monuments to outstanding historical figures — Yaroslav the Wise and Hryhorii Skovoroda — decorate the squares of the capital of Ukraine) also belonged to the monument to the Bolshevik Fedor Sergeev (Artem) near Sviatohirsk in Donbas, mounted in a rock[1]. Thus, he instructed Stepan Shahaida to bring this character to life on the screen.

Ivan Kavaleridze recalled in his memoirs: "I saw Shahaida in Merimee's drama "Jacqueria". The leader of the peasant rebellion, Gray Wolf, argues with the churchman Brother Jean (Amvrosii Buchma). Outstanding artists argue with each other with such conviction and persuasion that the audience forgets about the theater; in front of them there are live people, history, the Middle Ages... Thomas Müntzer in his duels with the Catholic Church, Archbishop Avvakum in a polemic with Patriarch Nikon and Tsar Oleksii Mykhailovych. You leave the theater, but they, these historical figures, do not leave you, they remain in your memory; as if alive, emerge before the eyes" (Kavaleridze, Ivan. Shadows, 2005).

Stepan Shahaida, working in the popular art of cinema, was ready for any reincarnations, the most unexpected directorial decisions. His heroes fight for the victory of the "proletarian revolution" in various situations, both close to the truth of life and frankly propagandistic. His characters have to kill not only class opponents, but also their own relatives (for example, in the film "I Give You", his hero kills his son, who goes from the Reds, where he fought with his father, to the army of the Ukrainian People's Republic). And such a collision is likely, because in the hell of those battles, the front could pass through one family, as, for example, in Yurii Yanovskyi's novel "Riders", where the Polovtsi brothers kill each other.

It should be remembered that the theme of battles prevailed in the Ukrainian cinema of the 1920s — and that is why Shahaida had to repeatedly fight in front of the camera, repeating what he experienced in real life. In the films about the Liberation Struggle ("civil war" in Soviet terminology), the Soviet authorities welcomed manifestations of Bolshevik fanaticism in class confrontations. A new mythology of invincibility was being created — so new heroes were needed. Stepan Shahaida did not get to play the local leaders, but his representative of the center

1. Today, this monument, installed on the right bank of the Siversky Donets river, is the tallest Cubist object in Europe — 22 meters in height, and including a pedestal — 28 meters. And at the same time, it is the heaviest concrete sculpture in the world — more than 800 tons. On such a scale, there are no analogues in the world. According to modern researchers, this monument has nothing to do with the real image of the Bolshevik Artem, neither in portrait nor anthropologically.

from "Perekop", the father from the film "I Give You" are depicted entirely in the spirit of Soviet ideology.

If Ivan Kavaleridze focused on experimental cinema, striving to push the usual boundaries of cinematography, to give the image a symbolic meaning, then Heorhii Stabovyi, already a fully formed film director, looking for the appropriate way of self-expression, also cared about the viewer. Stepan Shahaida's most notable role in silent cinema was the role of Zaporozhets Chapyra in Stabovyi's film "Pearl of Semiramis". Unfortunately, the film did not survive: during the Stalinist era, the slightest hint of the history of Ukraine, and especially those pages related to the heroism of Ukrainians, was considered treason and "bourgeois nationalism." Although it is not clear what kind of nationalism could be seen in the picture in which the history of Odesa was depicted in a humorous way. And the humor is not accidental, because the script was written by Stanislav Weiting-Radzynsky, a journalist from Odesa. Thanks to the few shots and the interesting and witty critic Mykola Ushakov and his report on the filming, printed in the magazine "Kino", you can understand what historical collision and humor of the picture was. The Turks starred in the film who established their fishery on the Black Sea coast, where the lighthouse stood, the French general De Fougeot, who fled the revolution in his country to Russia and began to serve Catherine II, and the Zaporozhians, who found a free place to live here and managed to capture the Turkish fortress, although the French general declared that it was not done according to the rules, and ordered his army to capture it again. There are episodes in the film where, with a change of government, the owner of the tavern changes the signs and the portrait on the wall — as Mykola Ushakov noted, "the transfer of modern household features to the past is one of the best methods of irony" (Ushakov, 1927).

In 1929, Stepan Shahaida was filmed by Vasyl Radysh, and at the same time he was invited to the Yaresky village in Poltava region to be shot in an episode of the film "Earth" by Oleksandr Dovzhenko. Radysh did not let the actor go. We learn about this from the protocol of the meeting of the Board of the VUFKU dated August 23, 1929, where the member of the Board P. Kosiachnyi reported: "In a conversation with the director Radysh, the latter categorically refused to send it, citing a number of reasons" (Protocols of the Board of the All-Ukrainian Photocinema Administration (1922–1930)). S. Shahaida did not star in "Earth", but he starred in two subsequent films by Dovzhenko — "Ivan" and "Aerograd" — in the first one in partnership with another "Berezilian" Petro Masokha, in the second one — with actor Stepan Shkurat.

But first, let's finish the review of his works in silent cinema. The role of a sailor in Borys Tiahno's film "The Museum Guard" can be considered successful (a photo with the actor was put on the cover of "Kino" magazine, 1930. No. 21–22). Here his character is not a monument, but a person who, thanks to the professor, begins to understand artistic values. This is the story of a professor who, in the whirlwind of revolutionary events, renounces his nationalist views and takes the side of the Soviet government. The script was written by Moisei Zats, shot by an experienced cameraman Borys Zaveliev, the main roles were played by Ivan Zamychkovskyi, Nina Li, Stepan Shahaida, Les Podorozhnyi (Brief synopsis of the film "The Museum Guard", 1929).

At that time, no one saw anything anti-Soviet in the film. But in 1932, when official propaganda was crushing all the directors of the VUFKU, the critic Adelheim, examining the work of Borys Tiahno, explained what the "deviation" from the party line was in the first film. He reminded that the center of the film — "The Museum Guard" — is a Ukrainian intellectual who devoted his life to museum work, collecting and processing museum collections. Such a character, by the way, is not peculiar for the cinema of that time — the directors covered mainly the events of class battles or the "hard work" of workers for the sake of a new life. The vast majority of films were reduced to schemes, but if it was possible to go beyond the boundaries of the scheme, then such convincing dramas as "Two Days" by Stabovyi or "Arrest Warrant" and "Night Cab Driver" by Heorhii Tasin could appear, psychological portraits in which were created by talented actors Ivan Zamychkovskyi, Valentyna Varetska and Amvrosii Buchma. "The Museum Guard" seems to have gone beyond the sharp collisions that unfolded in these mentioned films. The old professor (Ivan Zamychkovskyi) was engaged in science, was on the side of the National People's Republic of Ukraine (in

Adelheim's article — "on the side of the Petliurites"), but his political orientation changed dramatically when he saw how the Poles, allies of the "Petliurites", treated museum exhibits: a Polish officer enters the museum on horseback and destroys the most precious old relics. The theme of the film was the old professor's wavering between "the Ukrainian counter-revolution and his switch to the side of the Bolsheviks" (Adelheim, 1920). The reviewer considers only such a problem to be narrowed, and "the transition of an honest bourgeois intellectual to another camp is actually motivated by the negative essence" (ibid.). Adelheim excuses the director by saying that he was pressured by Zats' script. But, in his opinion, the shortcoming of the picture is the camera, because "there is no revolution, civil war in the picture, we only observe the dawn of these distant events. <...> The mistake of the director of the film lies precisely in the fact that Borys Tiahno did not take the narrow specialist interests of the professor to wider social horizons" (ibid.). In 1938, while already under arrest, Borys Tiahno explained to the Chekists: "I also plead guilty to having set the nationalist scenario of M. Zats, where the gradual intergrowth of nationalists into socialism was shown" (Protocol of the interrogation of Borys Tiahno). So the Chekists were able to turn the content of the work upside down. In the film "The Museum Guard", Shahaida played a former revolutionary sailor who became a commissar and contributes to the correct political orientation of the elderly professor. His open face, the uniform of a sailor cannot fail to evoke sympathy.

The actor embodied extreme revolutionary fanaticism in the image of his father in the aforementioned film "I Give You" by Vasyl Radysh (the film has not been preserved). In this way, the still relatively young actor entered age specific roles. His character, like Gogol's Taras Bulba, kills his son because he betrayed the Bolsheviks and went over to the side of the Ukrainian People's Republic.

In 1930, he played Professor Grabar in the film by Heorhii Stabovyi "They impede my stepping". Here, his hero is an agent of the "counter-revolution" who infiltrated the environment of Soviet scientists.

The actor also played a representative of the opposite camp in Oleksandr Soloviov's film "Five Brides". It concerns the fact that the UPR detachment gives the residents of the Jewish town an ultimatum: there will be no massacre if they give the officers "five brides". The film lacks action and development of the plot, so the emphasis is put on the actors — Amvrosii Buchma demonstrated an incredible skill of reincarnating into two characters at once — a rabbi and a fool. Stepan Shahaida embodies the calm dignity of a Ukrainian officer, his hero has an spectacular appearance, does not evoke negative emotions, he just silently waits for his "prey". This film was preserved till now.

Shahaida belonged to flexible actors, that is, he could play heroes of different characters and beliefs with the same success. He also looked natural in films of the historical genre (Zaporozhian Chapyra, Karmeliuk — Ukrainian Robin Hood).

"Karmeliuk" by Faust Lopatynskyi is an adventure film based on the script of Stanislav Weiting-Radzynsky. It is about a local conflict — the peasant leader Karmeliuk with his small squad challenges Count Pihlovskyi, who owns a tapestry factory and takes advantage of his serfs. The actor had a tiring job, when his Karmeliuk saves his squad, which he ordered to leave, and he himself chases the rocks, calling upon himself the "fire" of a considerable army. The film was criticized for "romanticizing the past" even at the time of its release, and later representatives of vulgar sociological criticism used it as an argument for accusing the director of bourgeois nationalism, and they did not even consider it necessary to support it with any arguments. From the current point of view, nationalism is nowhere near — a feature film in which the events are fantasized by the screenwriter. Lopatynskyi explained to the commission that he did not want to make this film at all (he dreamed of "Zakhar Berkut", but they did not allow it), but if he refused, he would be accused of welfarism. Together with the cameraman Oleksii Kaliuzhnyi, he was looking for an original visual solution, but these searches were not of interest to blind critics.

Already under arrest and apparently sensing the finale of the terrible story, Shahaida claimed in his statement to the head of the NKVD regional office dated December 24, 1937 that "Karmeliuk" was banned as a nationalist picture and that he "unconsciously falsely created the image of Karmeliuk" (Shahaida, 2017, p. 102).

Not all silent film actors were able to adapt to sound cinema. Shahaida did not have any problems here — he continues to act: in 1932 in Oleksandr Dovzhenko's film "Ivan", in 1934 in Hryhorii Gricher-Cherikover's film "Crystal Palace", in 1935 — in "Aerograd", 1936 — in "Zaporozhian beyond the Danube" by Ivan Kavaleridze and in the same year — in the "collective farm comedy" "The Rich Bride" by the Russian director Ivan Pyriev.

In "Ivan", he had an insignificant role. He played a peasant who arrives with his son Ivan at the majestic (which is exactly how it is shown in the film) construction of Dniproges (Dnieper Hydroelectric Station). Two-thirds of the film is occupied by an industrial landscape shot from different angles. It was taken as a triumph of hard work. Young Ivan hammers the rails with all his might — physical labor is shown in contrast to the work of machines. Actually, the idea of the film, as explained by the director, is that the rural youth who came to the construction site should learn — in the finale, Ivan enters the audience and joins the student youth. Shahaida had short episodes in the role of a father: a meeting with his relative, when both express joy with long laughter. Introducing Ivan to him, Shahaida's hero sternly told his son: "Take off your hat!". And Shahaida's character also has a phrase about youth, in which he sees the leading stratum of society.

Hryhorii Gricher-Cherikover's film "Crystal Palace" shows the tragedy of a young architect who goes to his death in solidarity with the working class. The events take place in the 1920s in one of the industrial cities of Western Europe. Shahaida organically transformed into Martin Bruno, an intellectual architect.

Oleksandr Dovzhenko's film "Aerograd" belongs to the so-called defense cinema. Stepan Shahaida played the main role — the tiger hunter Stepan Hlushak, known in the taiga for his courage and as a masterful hunter. From a modern point of view, the film can be called surrealistic — it lacks psychological motivations, in particular, the viewer is not told why Hlushak's old friend, the hunter Khudiakov, became a traitor. Dovzhenko filmed "Aerograd" in the conditions of rapid deployment of illegal repression. So, it can be assumed that this is why he shows Khudiakov as a conditional traitor, the viewer has to believe it without delving into the life circumstances. Apparently, this is why Stalin liked this film, that the traitor is killed not by the punisher of the NKVD, but by a comrade of the "traitor". Full of calm and dignified demeanor, soft pronunciation (the film is in Russian) of Stepan Shahaida testify not to his bloodthirstiness, but on the contrary, to his humanity (this contrasts especially with the manner of acting of the Russian actor Borys Dobronravov, who plays the role of Shabanov, an outspoken enemy of the Soviet government). That is why the author of the film gives Hlushak the opportunity to show himself firstly as a defender of the homeland from enemies — to kill spies who are heading through the taiga, carrying dynamite in their backpacks (it is also unknown what they are going to blow up). Then the hero of the film leads his squad against the enemies — in "Aerograd" these unconscious Old Believers succumbed to the propaganda of a Japanese samurai saboteur. The scene of the collision is not shown fully, but the main thing in it is that Hlushak was convinced that his old friend Khudiakov was with the enemies. Before shooting his old friend, who became a traitor, Stepan Hlushak says with restrained dignity: "Be the witnesses of my sadness." The phrase is eloquent. The actor in this film worked in a wide range — from light humor to tragedy.

Just like Dovzhenko, Kavaleridze, filming Hulak-Artemovskyi's opera "Zaporozhian beyond the Danube", popular since the XIX century, had to rehabilitate himself before the authorities, not with a defensive, but with an entertaining film. The director transfers the work to the screen not verbatim, he goes beyond the limits and starts with horsemen rushing after the rider. This is Andrii, a Cossack, and he wants to secretly cross the Danube to Turkish territory to his fellow Ukrainians and his beloved Oksana. And he succeeded thanks to the fisherman Stepan. He saves Andrii from the Russian detachment, ferried him across the Danube to the Turkish side on his boat. Shahaida's role is small, but significant, because Stepan naturally had to deceive both the Russian and Turkish squads. His comedic talent was revealed even more fully in the role of the hairdresser Baraba in Ivan Pyriev's Russian-language film "The Rich Bride". The audience loved this character for his cheerful disposition and musical talent, because he is not only a hairdresser,

but also heads a village orchestra that performs fiery dance tunes on summer evenings. Stepan Shahaida was among the creators of the film who were presented for the award. But the NKVD decided in its own way...

The actor was arrested on December 17, 1937. Researcher Liudmyla Novikova gives the reminiscence of Shahaida's son Oleksandr about this event: "Dad was in the prime of his physical and creative powers. He actively took part in public activities, as a deputy of the district council he often met the voters. Always tried to respond to complaints and always helped. In addition, my father often went to film festivals, where he performed in front of the audience <…>

On December 17, 1937 <...> after midnight, there was a knock on the door. Parents were not asleep yet. Mom was reading. Father was sitting by the radio and was turning the knob, going through the stations. <...> Turning the knob and catching stations from all countries of the world was a great pleasure for him. Mom opened the door. Two people in NKVD uniforms entered, accompanied by our neighbor Kamynskyi. A search and arrest warrant was issued. Father became pale, white as a wall. While they were searching, rummaging through my clothes, underwear, books, my toys, my father and mother were not allowed to talk. And only when they were allowed to say goodbye before leaving, mother asked father: "Stiopa, tell me honestly, are you guilty of something? — I swear by the most precious thing for me — my son's life, that I am not guilty of anything!" — he replied with tears in his voice, approached me, sleeping, and kissed my forehead in farewell" (Shahaida, 2015).

In the materials of the investigative case of Stepan Shahaida, stored in the Central State Archive of Public Associations of Ukraine, it is stated: the reason for his arrest was the information "received" by the Kyiv Regional Office of the NKVD:

"Indictment bill on the case No. 83968".

"Kyiv Regional Office of the NKVD received information that the resident of Kyiv, Shahadin-Shahaida Stepan Vasilievich, a former member of the Petliura army, is anti-Soviet, and is suspected of espionage for the benefit of Poland" (Indictment bill No. 83968). It is clear that he was accused of uncommitted crimes. And how can it be called crimes?! The facts in the indictment have nothing in common with a crime, and the "spy testimony" is formulated as a complete absurdity, because it turns out that as a "Polish spy" he "reported" on: a) the state of the Kyiv film factory; b) the products being produced; c) the political attitudes of actors and employees of the film factory (ibid.).

Accoding to Olena Polidovych, the head of the research department for the protection of monuments of cultural heritage, archeology and fund work of the National Cultural and Historical Reserve "Bykivnia Graves", "investigators did not need any evidence. More important for them was the recognition of the fact of connections with the "enemies of the people", which Stepan Shahaida did not deny. The experienced actor, known for his dramatic work, was hardly surprised by how the interrogation process was structured. The arguments of the investigators were very similar to the motivation of the "heroes of the revolution" he was familiar with...

Stepan Shahaida agreed with almost everything, reserving the only right — self-justification. "I have never been and never will be a conscious counterrevolutionary, a nationalist, a saboteur, a spy," — these words end the statement written by Shahaida on the eve of the interrogation.

In a situation of death threats, for the investigators he was like an unconscious Galician nationalist, taught from an early age that "every Ukrainian should fight for an independent Ukraine" (Polidovych, 2021).

On January 20, 1938, at the age of 42, his life was cut short by an NKVD-representative's bullet. Among the thousands of other repressed people, he was taken to the forest near Bykivnia village near Kyiv, where executioners from the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs took the tortured in cells and shot them. The apartment was taken from the wife and son and they found themselves on the street. Fortunately, the wife's sister sheltered them, thus Shahaida's family moved to Moscow, where Stepan Vasyliovych's grandson lives to this day.

The cinematography of the time of VUFKU was created by charismatic personalities who sacrificially devoted their strength and talent to this young art. Without this self-sacrifice, success

would be impossible. But as rapid and victorious was the Ukrainian Cultural Renaissance of the 1920s, as total and merciless, its destruction was. Arrests of Ukrainians нав taken place before, but the beginning of mass repressions is the middle of 1929, when intellectuals — writers and scientists were arrested as members of the mythical "Union for the Liberation of Ukraine". From the circle of cinematographers, Yurii Tiutiunnyk was then imprisoned, but, of course, not as the responsible secretary of the VUFKU, as he had been already working for several years, and not as a co-author of the script for "Zvenyhora", but as a cornet general of the UPR army, whom the Cheka tricked out of emigration. In 1934, many Ukrainian writers who worked on scripts and were editors at film factories and the VUFKU were arrested.

"What kind of government is this, which has so many enemies!" — Oleksandr Dovzhenko exclaimed in despair in a close circle (the Master's words were carefully noted down by the secret staff and collected in the case-form file kept against him at the NKVD).

Rehabilitation of the Shahaida case took place in 1958 at the request of his wife. Relatives were not informed about the burial place. A street in Ternopil is named after him. His fate was presented at the photo-documentary exhibition about repressed theater actors "Names Erased from Posters", which in 1921 was demonstrated at the entrance to the territory of the National Historical and Memorial Reserve "Bykivnia Graves". For the 80th anniversary of the Great Terror, the Center for Cinematographic Studies of "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy" National University published a collection of articles and documents "Repressed Cinematographers. Current memory" (2017), which included research on the shot ones: screenwriter Mike Johansen, film director Faust Lopatynskyi, actors Mykola Nademskyi and Stepan Shahaida, artists who served sentences in the GULAG or in exile — cinematographers Danylo Demutskyi, Mykola Topchii.

In May 2019, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Odesa Film Studio, a memorial plaque was solemnly opened on the facade of the administrative building, on which the memory of thirty outstanding cinematographers, repressed by the totalitarian regime in the first half of the XX century, was immortalized.

Conclusions. The Cultural Renaissance of Ukraine, as a phenomenon of the nation's creative intensity, arose thanks to the Liberation Struggle and awareness of national identity and developed until 1927. We can talk about the cinema of these times as the day of its birth and formation. It took place intensively, at an incredibly fast pace, thanks to the organizational talent of administrators and economists and the creative energy of artists who came to cinema from literature (screenwriters) and theater (directors and actors), as well as some pre-revolutionary specialists — actors, directors and cameramen. Valuable contributions to the development of Ukrainian cinema were made by foreign, mainly German specialists (cinematographers, decorators, laboratory workers). The totality of these creative forces, the ambitious goal of the All-Ukrainian Photocinema Administration (VUFKU) in just four years of activity yielded successful results: Ukrainian cinema entered the international space and advanced positions in the USSR in terms of economic and creative indicators.

In the early 1930s, the Kremlin authorities completed the process of Ukrainization, carried out collectivization in the countryside, industrialization in industry. The Bolshevik authorities equated the art of speech, stage and screen with the ideological weapon necessary to manipulate the consciousness of the masses, and did so quite successfully. Considering artists and directors to be minions of the party, executors of its direct instructions, the authorities in the USSR regarded any opinion that did not fit into its postulates as opposition to the system and punished mercilessly.

Prospects for further research. There are thousands of victims of the Stalinist regime among the Ukrainian creative intelligentsia. Therefore, the work of literary experts, historians, scientists, journalists, and museum workers is of great value in order to convey the names of those who have been pushed out of the information field for a long time to the broad sections of society, and especially to the youth audience.

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