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A LIFE PATH AND A CREATIVE CAREER OF THE FILM DIRECTOR GRIGORIY LIPSHITZ

This article investigates a life path and a creative career of the Ukrainian director of documentaries, non-fiction and feature films Grigoriy Lipshitz; his studies in VDIK in the workshop of film directors L.V. Kulieshov and S.M. Eisenstein were mentioned; the work of the script writer and the film director tandem of G. Lipshitz and O. Pavlenko during the work on the movies «The Willows and the Pavement» was reconstructed; his creative activities in the Ukrainian cinematography as a script writer and a movie director of feature, documentary and popular science films on the Kyiv Movie Factory was analyzed; the situation with the film «The Green Street» was specified. In order to identify the enemy in the squad, an additional false convoy, loaded with stones and the military waste (sleeve, bands etc.) was created. Among the nine men, there is one enemy, and they should define him.

Keywords: Grigoriy Lipshitz, cinema, Leo Kulieshov, Sergey Eisenstein, Kyiv Movie Factory (motion picture studio), film director, creative tandem, scenario writer.

Despite the references on personal life and career of the pupil of L.V. Kulieshov and S.M. Eisenstein, the director of feature, popular science and documentary movies Grigoriy Iosipovych Lipshitz (28.11.1911, Odessa – 14.03.1979, Kyiv) in the publications by L. Goiseko¹, M. Filkevych^{2 3}, V. Ilyashenko⁴, O. Bezruchko⁵ and others, we can acknowledge that Ukrainian art historians in fact did not research the creative work of G. Lipshitz during his work at Kyiv Film Studio (Kyiv Movie Factory) remains unknown.

Since the age of sixteen, Grigoriy Lipshitz was working first as an apprentice mechanic, then as locksmith, apprentice founder, founder on the Odessa Agricultural Machine Engineering plant of October Revolution. He was combining the work with the studies at the evening workers' faculty. After graduating, the industrious qualified worker Grigoriy Lipshitz, being a proletarian by origin (work at a plant and the workers' faculty) received a permit of the Central Committee of All-Union Leninist Young Communist League, under which he entered the directors department of the Moscow State University of Cinematography (now – Russian State University of Cinematography named after S. Gerasimov) without passing the exams.

In 1931–1932, Lipshitz studied in the Film director workshop of L.V. Kulieshov. According to the then concept of quantitative increase of proletarian artists, around fifty film director students were enrolled that year, so after the return of S.M. Eisenstein from the foreign business trip it was decided to charge him with the half of the course. Due to this decision of the institute management, Lipshitz continued mastering the film director's specialty from another outstanding teaching director since 1932.

Many years later, during an interview dedicated to studies in an institution of Sergey Mykhaylovich Eisenstein, Grigoriy Iosypovych Lipshitz and his classmate Mykhaylo Borysovych Viniarskyi called this period «The best years of our lives», which became a title to the publication «Film Expert's Notes»⁶ and a book dedicated to their teacher «S. M. Eisenstein: PRO et CONTRA»⁷.

¹ Гойсейко, Л. (2005). *Історія українського кінематографа, 1896–1995*. Київ: Кіно-Коло, 461.

² Фількевич, М. (2006). *Довженківці: сторінки нашої історії*. Київ, 178.

³ Фількевич, М. (2003). *Сторінки нашої історії*. Київ, 188.

⁴ Ілляшенко, В. (2004). *Історія українського кіномистецтва [1893–2003]*. Київ: Вік, 412.

⁵ Безручко, О. (2016). Кінематографічна діяльність учня С.М. Ейзенштейна українського режисера Г.Й. Ліпшиця *Матеріали круглого столу з міжнародною участю «Український кінематограф у світовому контексті»*. Київ: Видавничий центр КНУКіМ, 14-17.

⁶ Винарський, М., Липшиц, Г. (2006). Лучшие годы нашей жизни: Воспоминания о занятиях в режиссерской мастерской Сергея Эйзенштейна. *Киноведческие записки*, 80, 124-148.

⁷ Винарський, М., Липшиц, Г. (2015). *Лучшие годы нашей жизни. Воспоминания о занятиях в режиссерской мастерской Сергея Эйзенштейна* С.М. Эйзенштейн: PRO et CONTRA (Сергей Эйзенштейн в отечественной рефлексии): антология. СПб.: Изд. Русской Христиан. гуманитарной. академии, 447-448.

After graduating from the workshop of S.M. Eisenstein with major in «Film director», Grigoriy Iosypovych Lipshitz was called to the Red Army for a year. As a person with a higher education, he became a student of the School of junior avia specialists in the city of Rzhev¹.

On October 6, 1937, after demobilization, Grigoriy Lipshitz went to work to the Kyiv Movie Studio, where before the war he worked as a director's assistant on the films «Squadron No.Five» (1938, director – Abram Room) and «Fighters» (1939, director – Eduard Pentslin).

However, being a graduate of the Film Institute, he claimed the launch of his own film as a director. At that moment, the Kyiv Studio had about twenty young film-makers who had a diploma of the Kyiv State Cinematography Institute and the Higher State Cinematography Institute, who were waiting for the launch of their debut film in the so-called «reserve» for many years. In Kyiv and all-USSR cinematography newspapers and magazines, there were appeals to give young filmmakers a chance to start: «Of course, it is important to carefully select politically and creatively tested people from this «reserve» and give them the production load. This will immediately help to expand the Studio production capacity. We should offer young specialists for the creative work more boldly and decisively»².

One of these «reserve» young directors Mykola Tryaskin, who in January 1937 graduated from VDIK Film Director Academy and was sent to the Kyiv Studio for shooting his thesis, in early September was angrily asking in the newspaper «For the Bolshevik Film» in the article with a blatant header «Mismanagers in the script department», «Seven months have passed from the moment, when I graduated from the department of film directors of VDIK academic course, and was sent by the Main Culture Administration to the Kyiv Movie Studio to make my trial work here. And I've been waiting on the script for seven months»³.

Grigoriy Lipshitz waited for the script for three years to start shooting his debut film. His classmate Oleg Pavlenko was first working as an assistant director on the teacher's film «Byezhyn's meadow» at the «Mosfilm» studio, but after its closure and destruction in 1927 and, as a result of large-scale persecution of S.M. Eisenstein, succeeded in transferring to the Kyiv Movie Studio, where he started searching a script to launch together with Lipshitz.

In September-October 1940, G. Lipshitz and O. Pavlenko wrote a script based on the work by Albert Maltze «I Don't Care»⁴, and S. Eisenstein liked it. The teacher, who after graduating in a creative tandem with P. O. Pavlenko of a new film «Oleksandr Nevsky» (1938) returned Stalin's trust and good attitude, and even received the academic title of Doctor of Arts (1939), in autumn 1940 wrote a letter to the head of the Committee on Cinematography at the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR I.G. Bolshakov, promising to consult his former students in their debut concerning the specifics of life in America, which he visited during his foreign business trip.

However, the head of the Soviet cinematography Ivan Bolshakov forced young directors to work on more politically feasible script based on the book by Wanda Wasilewska «The Willows and the Pavement». Grigoriy Lipshitz and Oleg Pavlenko faced a choice: to stay without shooting or to make a film offered by the management. Lipshitz's classmate Nathan Lyuboshytz said, «After graduation, one could make a breakthrough with the production, only having agreed to a bad script»⁵. So, the creative tandem G. Lipshitz – O. Pavlenko started working on a new script.

M.I. Romm, who was appointed as art director of the USSR State Administration of Film Production in 1940, disliked the script of «The Willows and the Pavement», so he provided that dialogues were finished by a famous Soviet writer and script writer Yuriy Karlovych Olyesha.

After many revisions, by the end of 1940 the script writer and the film director tandem of G. Lipshitz – O. Pavlenko prepared a film project (literary and director's script) «The Willows and the Pavement» which was included into the production plan of the Kyiv Movie Studio for 1941.

¹ Особова справа «Ліпшиць Григорій Йосипович, кінорежисер» (1960). *Центральний державний архів-музей літератури і мистецтв України (ЦДАМЛМ України)*, Ф. 655, Оп. 1, Спр. 1094, Арк. 12 зв.

² Борисов, Е. (1937). Студия без сценариев. *Кино*, 4 октября.

³ Тряскін, М. (1937). Головогеси у сценарному відділі. *За більшовицький фільм*, 4 вересня.

⁴ Акт ревізії фінанс.-господар. д-ті Київ. кіностудії з 1 січ. по 1 жовт. 1940 р. (1940). Списки творч. працівників студії, 1940 р. *Центральний державний архів-музей літератури і мистецтв України (ЦДАМЛМ України)*, Ф. 670: Національна кіностудія художніх фільмів ім. О. П. Довженка, Оп. 1, Спр. 66, Арк. 15.

⁵ Любошиц, Н. (1939). *Учитель и его ученики*. Музей Національної кіностудії художніх фільмів ім. Олександра Довженка, Ф. Ейзенштейн Сергій Михайлович, 19.

The art director of O. Dovzhenko Kyiv Film Studio told in his speech before the Kyiv film-makers about a curious marketing measure that would help the short film «The Willows and the Pavement» by the young film-makers to get into a full film distribution, to provide that the debut film by G. Lipshitz – O. Pavlenko was watched by more people especially in Ukraine, because the movie was filmed in Ukrainian, «I will add three or four short films to compose a program with «The Willows and the Pavement», which could be considered a full-length film»¹.

Since February 1941, the young film-makers, VDIK graduates Grigoriy Lipshitz and Oleg Pavlenko started filming this debut film², but the war did not allow them to shoot «The Willows and the Pavement», material of which was lost during the evacuation of the Kyiv Studio to Ashgabat.

From the first days of the war, G. Lipshitz and O. Pavlenko both volunteered for the front, but Lipshitz first got to spare cavalry regiment, from which in October 1941 he, as a film-maker, was sent to the studio in Ashgabat³, where the evacuated studios «Mosfilm» and the Kyiv Studio of Feature Films were operating. In Ashgabat, Lipshitz worked as an assistant director on the film «Levko» (1941) and as a second director on the short film «Stebelkov in Heaven» (1941, script writer and director: Boris Yurtsev)⁴.

However, during his 4-month stay at the rear, Grigoriy Lipshitz always wanted to go to front, for, being a person with higher education, he was originally sent to the Military Political School (Tashkent), after finishing which in March 1942 he was sent to the valiant airborne troops, where he became a deputy company commander of the 5th airborne corps. During his stay in Moscow, officer G.I. Lipshitz met S.M. Eisenstein.

At the front, the deputy company commander of 84 guards, company 33 guards regiment, division 2 guards of the army Grigoriy Lipshitz courageously fought in Stalingrad. He was awarded with the medal «For Defense of Stalingrad» (1943), then, during the liberation of the motherland from the Nazi invaders as a part of Southern, Don, 4th Ukrainian, Baltic, 3rd Byelorussian Fronts⁵ he received the medal «For Military Merit» for personal bravery (1944). During the assault of Keninsberg where he was seriously injured, after which he was healing around six months (from April 1945 to September 1945), he was awarded the Order of the Red Star (1945) and medals «For taking Keninsberg» (1945) and «For Victory over Germany» (1945)⁶.

Oleg Zakharovych Pavlenko, with whom Grigoriy Iosipovych Lipshitz started shooting the film «The Willows and the Pavement» in 1941, also volunteered for the front, where in one of the fierce fighting he was killed inside a burning tank.

After demobilization of October 6, 1945, the Guard Captain of reserve Lipshitz returned to Kyiv Studio, where he was included into a group of the second directors⁷. According to Lipshitz's classmate Nathan Lyuboshytz, «During the war and a decade after it there were so few films in production every year that one could count them on the fingers of both hands. Masters wanted work, not to mention beginners»⁸.

¹ Довженко, О. П. (1941). Виступ на парт.-вироб. конф. Київ. кіностудії *Рос. держ. архів літератури і мистецтв*, Ф. 2081, Оп. 2, Спр. 62, Арк. 5.

² Особова справа «Ліпшиць Григорій Йосипович, кінорежисер-постановник» (30 грудня 1961 р.-15 березня 1979 р.) Архів Національної кіностудії художніх фільмів ім. Олександра Довженка, Ф. 670, Оп. 1-л, Спр. 2141, Арк. 6.

³ Особова справа «Ліпшиць Григорій Йосипович, кінорежисер-постановник» (30 грудня 1961 р. – 15 березня 1979 р.) Архів Національної кіностудії художніх фільмів ім. Олександра Довженка, Ф. 670, Оп. 1-л, Спр. 2141, Арк. 13.

⁴ Особова справа «Ліпшиць Григорій Йосипович, кінорежисер-постановник» (30 грудня 1961 р. – 15 березня 1979 р.) Архів Національної кіностудії художніх фільмів ім. Олександра Довженка, Ф. 670, Оп. 1-л, Спр. 2141, Арк. 7.

⁵ Особова справа «Ліпшиць Григорій Йосипович, кінорежисер-постановник» (30 грудня 1961 р. – 15 березня 1979 р.) Архів Національної кіностудії художніх фільмів ім. Олександра Довженка, Ф. 670, Оп. 1-л, Спр. 2141, Арк. 6.

⁶ Особова справа «Ліпшиць Григорій Йосипович, кінорежисер» (1960). *Центральний державний архів-музей літератури і мистецтв України (ЦДАМЛМ України)*, Ф. 655, Оп. 1, Спр. 1094, Арк. 3 зв.

⁷ Списки творчих працівників Київської кіностудії з анкетними даними за 1949 р. (1949). *Центральний державний архів-музей літератури і мистецтв України (ЦДАМЛМ України)*, Ф. 670: Національна кіностудія художніх фільмів ім. О. П. Довженка, Оп. 1, Т. 1, Спр. 314, Арк. 31.

⁸ Любошиц, Н. (1939). *Учитель и его ученики*. Музей Національної кіностудії художніх фільмів ім. Олександра Довженка, Ф. Ейзенштейн Сергій Михайлович, 19.

At the time of «few films», G. Lipschitz worked at the Kyiv Studio of Feature Films as a film director (second director) in the feature film «The Three» (in 1946 the film was out of production), «The Scout's Feat» (1947, director B. Barnet, awarded with the State (Stalin) Prize), «Flag Bearers» (1948, based on the same-named trilogy by O. Honchar («Alps», 1946; «Blue Danube», 1947; «Golden Prague», 1948), awarded in 1948 with the State (Stalin) Prize), «The Green Street» (195, director V. Eysymont), «In the Steppes of Ukraine» (1952, director T. Levchuk)¹.

In encyclopedic article «Lipschitz Grigoriy Iosypovych» from «Cinema: Encyclopedic Dictionary», the film «The Green Street» is stated as a popular science², but Lipschitz's personal file contains a record, which states that in this film, the second director Grigoriy Lipschitz «Didn't take the role assigned to him from the very beginning, and didn't find the contact»³ with the director of this film Victor Eysymont, who specialized in feature films. Thus, «The Green Street» is a feature film.

Let's look deeper into this rather strange accusation for Lipschitz who worked a lot in cinematograph and always found common language with everyone, even with famous metropolitan directors, such as the Russian Soviet director Boris Vasylyovych Barnet on the film «The Scout's Feat» which received State (Stalin) Prize, where G.I. Lipschitz also was the second director.

It should be noted that, prior to the record about the confusion between G. Lipschitz and V. Eysymont, a phrase was written, «Lipschitz has production experience, and always deal perfectly well with the work entrusted to him»⁴. Conflicts between creative people are frequent, especially on set, when some film-makers suddenly had the «star disease», and these cases aren't, as a rule, included into the personal files, that is, the management of the Kyiv Studio knew the real culprit of the conflict, but was forced to make a record in the personal file of the Ukrainian director who was ranked below his Russian counterpart in the rules of precedence. The key to understanding the essence of the conflict can be a phrase: «Lipschitz Didn't take the role assigned to him»⁵.

The famous Soviet director Victor Vladyslavovych Eysymont after receiving the second State (Stalin) Prize for the film shot together with Herbert Moritsovych Rappaport, for whom it was also the second State (Stalin) Prize at the Leningrad Studio for Feature Films «Lenfilm», a biopic «Oleksandr Popov» (1949), was sent to the Kyiv Studio for Feature Films to «raise the level of the Ukrainian cinematography» to shoot a film under the working title «The Green Street».

Most likely, after a conflict with the chief of the staff (a name for second studio directors, so it was recorded in the personal file of Lipschitz on this incident), the director ceased shooting and left Ukraine. At least, his filmography has no «The Green Street»⁶, and the next film «Fire on the River» (1953) was filmed at the M. Gorky Studio in Moscow. Publicity was so strong that they were forced to enter this information into the personal file of Lipschitz, however, because the Ukrainian director was not guilty, later, in order to restore justice, there were attempts to cover this inscription. The film was closed, information about it is poor, and therefore, we have now this confusion in the encyclopedia⁷.

Like most film-makers during the «age of few films» at Stalin, in the 1940ies G. Lipschitz earned for living by dubbing Russian films into the Ukrainian language. For example, he was director of dubbing for around twenty films, including «Good Afternoon Moscow» (1946), «The Scout's Feat» (1947),

¹ Особова справа «Ліпшиць Григорій Йосипович, кінорежисер-постановник» (30 грудня 1961 р.-15 березня 1979 р.) Архів Національної кіностудії художніх фільмів ім. Олександра Довженка, Ф. 670, Оп. 1-л, Спр. 2141, Арк. 7-7 зв.

² Липшиц Григорий Иосифович (1987). *Кино: Энциклопедический словарь*. Москва: Советская энциклопедия, 237.

³ Особова справа «Ліпшиць Григорій Йосипович, кінорежисер-постановник» (30 грудня 1961 р. – 15 березня 1979 р.) Архів Національної кіностудії художніх фільмів ім. Олександра Довженка, Ф. 670, Оп. 1-л, Спр. 2141, Арк. 30 зв.

⁴ Особова справа «Ліпшиць Григорій Йосипович, кінорежисер-постановник» (30 грудня 1961 р. – 15 березня 1979 р.) Архів Національної кіностудії художніх фільмів ім. Олександра Довженка, Ф. 670, Оп. 1-л, Спр. 2141, Арк. 30 зв.

⁵ Особова справа «Ліпшиць Григорій Йосипович, кінорежисер-постановник» (30 грудня 1961 р. – 15 березня 1979 р.) Архів Національної кіностудії художніх фільмів ім. Олександра Довженка, Ф. 670, Оп. 1-л, Спр. 2141, Арк. 30 зв.

⁶ Эйсымонт Виктор Владиславович (1970). *Кинословарь*: в 2 т. Москва: Советская энциклопедия, 2, 983.

⁷ Кино: Энциклопедический словарь (1987). *Липшиц Григорий Иосифович*. Москва: Советская энциклопедия, 237.

«In the Name of Life» (1948), «Precious Grains» (1948), «Glory to Labor» (1949), «Kuban Cossacks» (1950), «A Great Citizen» (1950), «Skandenberg» (1954), «Dangerous Paths» (1955), «Tiger in a Sheep Skin» (1955)¹ and others.

G. Lipshitz, as other film-makers of that times, had to seek the right to shoot feature films in the difficult period of the «few films» at Stalin. That is why his creative achievements include several documentary and popular science films, which were much easier to get a permit for then, «Cog-Sagyz» (1949), «Sport Ukraine» (1951), «A Lesson for Life» (1952), «Our Champions» (1954), «Feed Lupin» (1955), «Ivan Franko» (1968), «Uzhgorod» (1968), «Lions» (1968)².

Grigoriy Iosyfovych Lipshitz had his own debut as a director of feature films late, only in 1956, after Stalin's death, and, accordingly, ending of a period of »few films« so difficult for artists. After working on the script, G. Lipshitz in creative tandem with V. Kraynichenko became the director of the film «Journey to Youth» (1956). Then he shot his independent full-length feature film «The Swallow» (1957). In 1958, he worked on the script for «Death Match», then switched to the script «Katya, Katyusha», for which in 1959, as a director, film «Katya, Katyusha». Three years later, Grigoriy Lipshitz, with a script by Ivan Stadnyuk, shot a lyrical comedy «Where Happiness Leaves», released under the name of «Artist of Kokhanovka» (1961); in 1964, he shot «Harsh Game», in 1965, the romantic drama «The Month May».

In 1967, G.I. Lipshitz was sent to the Kyiv Studio «Tsentrnaukfilm», where he shot «Ivan Franko», «Uzhgorod», «Lions» (all in 1968). After returning to the Kyiv Studio of Feature Films, he became a director of the film «Dima Got Angry» (1968).

A very popular military 3-episode TV show by Grigoriy Lipshitz was «There is No Way Back» (1970) based on the novel by Victor Smirnov and Igor Bolharin. The subject was very close and interesting for a director, a veteran paratrooper himself. In the film, a group of partisans receives a task to deliver weapons to the German concentration camp in the rear and ensure the successful uprising of prisoners.

In order to identify the enemy in the squad, an additional false convoy, loaded with stones and the military waste (sleeve, bands etc.) was created. Among the nine men, there is one enemy, and they should define him.

In his last years of life, G.I. Lipshitz shot two TV films: in 1973, a conflict romantic drama «Comrade Team» based on the novel by P. Lebedenko «Ice Go into the Ocean» and in 1976 – a topical film on the working days of the proletariat «Be My Brother»³ about two brothers, Viktor and Nikolai Kovalenko, who found each other through the decades after the war. The artist's personal file contains a letter to the chairman of the State Committee of the RM USSR V.G. Bolshak, where it was mentioned that Donbass miners were watching enthusiastically these two television movies⁴.

G.I. Lipshitz, like many other film-makers, whose creative youth and mature years passed in the terrible times of repressions, the great war between the Soviets and the Nazi and Stalin's «lack of films», wasn't lucky to fully self-actualize. Although, G.I. Lipshitz had no regrets, «We had time for few things. We could be discontent with an absolute right. But we regret nothing»⁵.

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¹ *Особова справа «Ліпиць Григорій Йосипович, кінорежисер-постановник»* (30 грудня 1961 р.-15 березня 1979 р.) Архів Національної кіностудії художніх фільмів ім. Олександра Довженка, Ф. 670, Оп. 1-л, Спр. 2141, Арк. 7–7 зв.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid, 8.

⁴ Ibid, 46-47.

⁵ Винярський, М., Липшиц, Г. (2006). Лучшие годы нашей жизни: Воспоминания о занятиях в режиссерской мастерской Сергея Эйзенштейна *Киноведческие записки, 80*, 148.

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