THE INITIAL STAGE IN G.O. AVENARIUS’ RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC CAREER
IN THE FIELD OF CINEMATOGRAPHY

The purpose of work is to study thoroughly the initial stage of research and academic career in the field of cinematography of a prominent Ukrainian film expert of genius and one of the first national screen arts educators G.O. Avenarius. The research methodology consists in application of methods of personology, theory of personality and historical-biographic method. The marked methodological approaches allow to collect and investigate unknown and not popular facts from life, research and academic career in the field on cinematography of G.O. Avenarius. The scientific novelty of work is predefined by the necessity to study not popular pages of history of Ukrainian cinema and his figures that on those or other reasons remained out of eyeshot of home art critics. Conclusions. To summarize the above, one shall state, that the objectives to guide the research have been achieved, i.e. the initial stage of research and academic career in the field on cinematography of G.O. Avenarius, an outstanding Ukrainian film expert, one of the pioneering Ukrainian tutors in screen arts, PhD in Arts and founder of ‘Bill Stupy’ principal Film Fund in the entire Soviet Union, has been thoroughly scrutinized and investigated; his principal research works on history and theory of cinematography within the established timeline have been listed; his track record with pedagogical activities in the field of cinematography at the Odesa State College of Cinematography and the All-Ukrainian Photo and Cinema Management Department, Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography and Actor School under the Kyiv Film Factory has been restored.

Keywords: Georgii Avenarius, Odesa State College of Cinematography, Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography, Actor School, Kyiv Film Factory.

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Summary. Georgy Avenarius was born in December 1903 in the city of Borovichi of the Novgorod province in a noble family, about which in the Soviet times he was forced to remain silent, writing in the questionnaires that he was from the family of the working class.

Despite the fact that Georgy Avenarius graduated from the only one course at the Taganrog Commercial School (1912–1913) and finished only seven classes of the Odesa Third Gymnasium (1913–1920) [19, 19], he knew well Ukrainian, Russian, German, French and Polish languages and also a bit worse – Belarusian, Italian and English [19, 6].

A seventeen year old Avenarius (in 1920–1921) was called to the Workers ‘and Peasants’ Red Army (the Russian Red Army). After demobilization he worked in the APA dining room at the Odesa Jute Factory (in 1922–1924) as a cashier in the Odesa Society for the Promotion of Equine, as a forerunner of the Soviet Trade fleet (1924–1926) [19, 5 back].

He combined the work and the study at the Odessa Acting studio (The society of the friends of the Soviet photo and cinema). In 1926 he entered the technical (cameramen) faculty in the Odesa State College of Cinematography of the All-Ukrainian Photo and Cinema Management Department, having graduated from it on December 2, 1929, with his thesis «Principles of constructing an art film from the standpoint of the cinema operator and their psycho-physiological basis» with «the excellent marks» [19, 28].

While studying G. Avenarius was filmed as an actor in the films of the Odesa Film Factory: in the film by Peter Chardinin «Taras Treyasilo» (1926), in the film by E. Muchsin-Bay «Spartak» (1926), in the film of Georgii Tasin «Jimmy Higgins» (1927) and others.

After receiving a diploma, he worked as a trainee cameraman at the Odesa State Factory of the feature films and the popular science fiction films «Karmalyuk» (1931, directed by Favst Lopatinsky), «Station of the Umbrella», «Women's Hygiene», «Liberation», etc.

In some editions it is noted that Georgii Avenarius worked as an assistant of the operator on the film O.P. Dovzhenko «Zvenigora», although any autobiography from personal affairs of All-Russian State University of Cinematography named after S.A. Gerasimov does not mention it, therefore, most likely, this is a beautiful legend, or such practice was so small that Oleksandr Dovzhenko and Georgii Avenarius had forgot about it.

Cinema-pedagogical work G. Avenarius began in the Odesa State College of Cinematography and the Odesa Film Factory at the courses of film scriptwriters [19, 71]. After the organization in 1930 of the Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography on the basis of the Odesa State College of Cinematography and the Film Faculty of the Kyiv Art Institute, Avenarius was transferred to the Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography. The first two years of study at the Kyiv Film Institute he worked as assistant of the professor Ball on the department of cinema and sound cinema laboratories, where he studied general cinema technology, sensimetry and color studies. From 1931 to 1934, that is, before its closure, he was the dean of the artistic and cameraman faculties departments of the Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography [19, 5 back].

G. Avenarius was engaged in the introduction of new forms of teaching in the pedagogical process in Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography: «The question of linking plans and translating them into life should be conducted by an active method, in addition, the essence of the latter is to intensify both students and professors. It is not right to replace lectures by lecturers with a student's report. The student should be taught to work with a book. Training should be linked to production» [22, 698].

Although, as can be seen from an angry article «Shame for the Marxist-Leninist training of personnel for the personnel» published in the «Kinokadry» newspaper, Avenarius, along with other leading professors of Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography, ignored the scientific group of the dialectical materialism: «At 6 o'clock on December 8 (1931. – note O.B.) there was assigned the scientific group of the dialectical materialism. A group of 6 people waited for the rest until 7 o'clock, but haven't seen them come, had to break up, having spent costly time.
Such comrades as Gavrosnky, Avenarius, Savchenko, Novikov, Pavlov, Goncharov, Rybachak, Martens, Fainstein, Korniychuk, Vrona ... did not come» [11].

Georgii Avenarius from 1932 to 1936, as associate professor at four faculties of Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography, lectured on the «Scenario case» [22, 693] and «History of foreign cinema art» and «History of Soviet cinema art», which was perhaps the most favorite subject after film directing.

It should be noted that he developed the course on the history of cinema independently – this was the author's course of true great encyclopedia of cinema. One of the students of Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography G. Grigoriev wrote: «At first he seemed to us a bit prose, comparing to Korniychuk. But the further, the more the lecturer attracted our attention. He knew not only the history of cinema, but also the technique, photography, the difficult work of directors, knew a lot of trivia about the production of films in Hollywood, on studios in France, Germany, Italy. He was spreading with a generous hand the seeds of science, and we carefully recorded the actual material. Yurii Oleksandrovych calmly looked at us patiently and explained everything incomprehensible» [14, 38].

In almost twenty years, G. Grigoriev, who for absurd accusations had spent many years in Stalin's camps, and after rehabilitation, worked as a teacher in one of the Kyiv schools, on December 22, 1951 wrote a letter to his teacher, which was kept in the fund of G. O. Avenarius in White Piles: «Hello, Georgii Oleksandrovich!

From time to time I hear the news about you. In my memory memorable student years come back, so closely associated with you. I learned your addresses and wanted to talk a bit...

Could you please write a little about yourself, dear Georgii Oleksandrovich? Did your works on aesthetics survive or not? On what kind of theoretical questions are you working now?

Have you been able to publish those enormous materials that you had on the theory and especially on the history of cinema?

Did your archive survive?

I would be glad to receive news from you.

Sincerely yours,

Grigoryev.

Address: Kyiv, 72 Bulionska street, ap. 1. Grigoriy Prokofievych Grigoryev» [13].

Many students were surprised by the encyclopedic memory of the teacher. Some of them, for example, Y. Yasinsky doubted the exact dates and quotations that their teachers had generously distributed during their lectures, however, as they could see later, everything was right. In 1931 in the first page of the USSR's main cinematographic magazine «Proletarian cinema» a huge article by G.O. Avenarius «To the methodology of the definition of cinema genres» [3] appeared. In the leading Ukrainian magazine «Kino» in 1932 and 1933, Georgii Avenarius presented some interesting articles in the Ukrainian language «Editing Theories of Eisenstein» (in three pairs of numbers № 5–6 [5], № 7–8 [6], № 11–12 [7]) and «Expressionism in the Soviet Cinema» [2]; in the magazine «Photo for Social Construction» there were published a few cognitive articles on the photo: «The question of the creative method of portrait photography» [1], «Composition of a realistic portrait» [4] and «Photo-painting, as a style problem» [8].

Extremely important in the scientific and pedagogical activity of G.O. Avenarius there was a combination of theoretical and practical principles. Thus, in particular, he conducted lectures for students of the Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography not only in the auditorium on Taras Shevchenko Boulevard, 12, where the Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography was located until 1934, but also directly at the Kyiv Film Factory.

As an experienced practitioner, G. Avenarius taught his students to look at the cinema not from the viewer's point of view, but from the point of view of a professional: that is, not to romanticize the cinema process, but to approach it with a sober head and passionate heart.

In 1934, the Kyiv Film Factory opened the Actor School of Film Actors (ASFA), which until 1935 was led by Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography teachers V. Unakovsky and the dean of the art department G. Avenarius. They passed exams or so-called colloquiums among former students of the Kyiv State Institute of Cinematography film-actor's course, who completed the second year and, exceptionally, the most talented freshmen.

G. Avenarius conducted his first entrance exams to the Director's Laboratory of O. Dovzhenko at the Kyiv Film Factory. As a confirmation of this could be a document from the private archive of O. Paženko, the grandson of the director-laboratory assistant V. Dovbyshchenko: «To Comrade Dovbyshchenko: Due to the fact that the director of the director's studio of the Kyiv Film Factory O.P. Dovzhenko until recent time was busy in Moscow shooting of the film «Aerograd», entrance exams for the people who wish to enter the director's workshop, moved to August month of this year.

Arrival of the director O.P. Dovzhenko is expected these days. Please be prepared to arrive to Kyiv immediately after our telegraphic message.

Your presence for a creative acquaintance with you in Kyiv is obligatory during the stay at the Kyiv Film Factory director O.P. Dovzhenko.

The film factory covers all the expenses that will be associated with moving to Kyiv.

Secretary of the Admission Committee Avenarius» [15].

As mentioned above V. Dovbyshchenko wrote in the newspaper «Komsomolets of Ukraine», «the admission was conducted by the directorate in the absence of Comrade Dovzhenko» [10], who was shooting «Aerograd».

Conclusions. To summarize the above, one shall state, that the research objectives have been achieved, i.e. the initial stage in research and academic career in the field of cinematography of G.O. Avenarius, a prominent Ukrainian film expert, one of the pioneering Ukrainian tutors in screen arts, PhD in Arts and founder of «Bill Stovsky»
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However, there are great prospects for further research, since the final years of scientific and pedagogical research activities of Georgii Oleksandrovich Avenarius’ in the field of cinematography in Ukraine, still remain less explored.

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