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**BETWEEN ART AND POLITICS: LVIV OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE
UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF SOVIETIZATION IN 1939 – 1941**

Abstract. *The purpose of the research is to find out, on the basis of the archival and published materials, scientific works, the formation of Lviv Opera and Ballet Theatre under difficult conditions of the Bolshevik ideology forced imposition, the spread of denunciations, humiliations, arrests, repressions, deportations, terror in 1939 – 1941; to trace a real situation of actors, personnel, financial, ideological, material and technical and other support. The methodology of the research is based on the socio-cultural and biographical approaches, principles of historicism, scientificity, objectivity, systematicity with the use of general scientific (synthesis, analysis, generalization), special (historical comparative, historical typological, hermeneutic) and specific (systemic, prosopographic) methods. The scientific novelty is due to the introduction into the scientific circulation of the previously unknown archival documents, decrees and resolutions of state structures of the Ukrainian SSR, little-known works, memoirs and publications, which make it possible to trace the competitive struggle between theatre*

troupes of Galicia for theatre premises, to see a real situation and position of actors, management work, etc. **Conclusions.** The occupying Bolshevik authorities attached great importance to the cultural and artistic institutions activities in Western Ukraine in order to promote their political ideas. The former City Velyky Theatre had a leading role among them in Lviv, which was nationalized with all its property upon the Soviet power emergence. It was called Lviv State Opera and Ballet Theatre. The Ukrainians had great hope of having their own national theatre for the first time. However, very soon the theatre troupe recruited the Jewish, Polish, and several Ukrainian artists. The theatre troupe was also flooded with the Soviet actors, vocalists, choirmasters, ballet masters, choreographers, conductors, and other artists who came from different cities of the USSR. The theatre was headed by the Russian-speaking communist O. Holtsman, and Ya. Poliansky became the Head of the party organization. The theatre was staffed by NKVD employees, who meticulously "looked after" the personnel and their families, performances, controlled the ideological purity of the staff, etc. The logical continuation of the Soviet occupation was denunciations, arrests, massacres, and deportations. The theatre did not stage any Ukrainian national performance in the 1940 season, limiting itself to the Russian, Soviet and European classics. There was planned only one Ukrainian production for 1941 among the others, but the war and the German occupation became a new reference point and catalyst in the theatre's activities.

Key words: Lviv Opera and Ballet Theatre, culture, art, performance, play, artists, repressions.

МІЖ МИСТЕЦТВОМ І ПОЛІТИКОЮ: ЛЬВІВСЬКИЙ ТЕАТР ОПЕРИ І БАЛЕТУ В УМОВАХ РАДЯНІЗАЦІЇ 1939 – 1941 рр.

Анотація. *Мета дослідження* – на основі архівних і опублікованих матеріалів, наукових праць з'ясувати становлення Львівського театру опери і балету в складних умовах примусового насадження більшовицької ідеології, поширення доносів, приниження, арештів, репресій, депортацій, терору 1939 – 1941 рр.; простежити реальне становище акторів, кадрове, фінансове, ідеологічне, матеріально-технічне та інші забезпечення. **Методологія дослідження** побудована на соціокультурному та біографічному підходах, принципах історизму, науковості, об'єктивності, системності із застосуванням загальнонаукових (синтез, аналіз, узагальнення), спеціальних (історико-порівняльний, історико-типологічний, герменевтичний) іспецифічних (системний, просопозграфічний) методів. **Наукова новизна** зумовлена введенням до наукового обігу досі невідомих архівних документів, указів й постанов державних структур УРСР, маловідомих праць, спогадів та публікацій, що дають змогу простежити конкурентну боротьбу між театральними труппами Галичини за приміщення театру, побачити реальне становище і позицію акторів, роботу дирекції тощо. **Висновки.** Окупаційна більшовицька влада для пропаганди своїх політичних ідей великого значення надавала діяльності закладів культури і мистецтва Західної України. Серед них, у Львові, провідне місце належало колишньому міському Великому театру, який з приходом радянської влади було націоналізовано з усім майном. Тоді він отримав назву Львівський державний театр опери і балету. Вперше за багаті вік в українців появилася велика надія своїй національній театру. Проте дуже скоро до складу театральної труппи набрали єврейських, польських та декілька українських артистів. Штатний склад театру також поповнили прибулі з різних міст СРСР радянські актори, вокалісти, хормейстери, балетмейстери, хореографи, дирекенти та інші фахівці високого мистецтва. Очолив театр російськомовний комуніст О. Гольцман, а Я. Полянський став керівником партійної організації. До театру були прикріплені штатні співробітники НКВС, які прискількиво "опікувалися" кадрами та їхніми родинами, постановками, контролювали ідейну чистоту колективу тощо. Логічним продовженням радянської окупації стали доноси, арешти, розправи, депортації. Жодної української національної вистави у сезоні 1940 року театр не поставив, обмежившись російською, радянською та європейською класикою. Серед інших лише одну українську постановку запланували на 1941 рік, але війна і німецька окупація стали новим орієнтиром й каталізатором в діяльності театру.

Ключові слова: Львівський театр опери та балету, культура, мистецтво, перформенс, вистава, артисти, репресії.

Problem Statement. In September 1939 the Soviet occupation of the Western Ukrainian lands changed the situation of the region's population radically. However, despite the

attractive national, social, economic, cultural, educational and other slogans of the “Soviet liberators”, there were many hidden sides on the path to the new government establishment. There were common denunciations, searches, arrests, torture, murders, deportations of the local population against the background of propaganda of “great” socio-economic, socio-political, cultural and other “transformations”. There are well known atrocities and tragic consequences of the repressive actions from archival sources, excavations of places of mass massacres, memoirs of contemporaries, etc. Domestic and foreign historians devoted their works to the above-mentioned issue (Rudnytska, 1958; Bilas, 1994, pp. 108–156; Ilnytskyi, 2018, pp. 120–150; Bilorusets, 2022; Bulyk, 2024, pp. 13–32).

However, many important issues remain beyond the scholars’ focus. One of them is the issue on the formation and activity of cultural and artistic centres in the Western Ukrainian lands under the conditions of denunciations, arrests, repressions, and forced imposition of the Bolshevik culture and ideology. At the end of 1939 the leading artistic centre of Western Ukraine was Lviv State Opera and Ballet Theatre. However, its personnel and creative activities were under a strict control of the administrative, communist party, komsomol, trade union bodies, and NKVD security forces, which complicated the work of the collective and determined its main priorities.

Review of Recent Research and Publications. It should be noted that the work written by O. Bonkovska stands out for its relevance among the most recent publications, in which there was made an attempt to classify theatres in the Western Ukrainian lands during the interwar period (Bonkovska, 2008). I. Zuliak conducted an interesting research, which was devoted to the theatrical activity of the “Prosvita” circles (Zulyak, 2009, pp. 98–105). There was a considerable focus on the theatrical activity of the Ukrainian cultural institutions during World War II by S. Maksymenko (Maksymenko, 2015), V. Ilnytskyi and M. Haliv (Ilnytskyi, & Haliv, 2023). R. Berest, O. Plahotniuk, O. Petryk, O. Kuzyk devoted their studies on the work of the talented representatives of Lviv ballet art (Berest, Petryk, & Kuzyk, 2022, pp. 104–114; Berest, & Plahotniuk, 2024, pp. 8–18) and the others.

The source base of the study consists of the documents taken from Fund R.-2133 (Lviv State Opera and Ballet Theatre) and individual files from Fund 1 (the “Prosvita” Society) of the State Archives of Lviv region, which enabled us to trace the process of the staff formation, cultural and educational, economic, ideological and political, and other activities of the theatre.

The purpose of the research is to highlight the basic principles of the formation of a creative troupe, characteristic features of the theatrical activity and a real situation of Lviv Opera and Ballet Theatre artists during the Soviet occupation of Western Ukrainian lands in 1939 – 1941.

Research Results. The Grand City Theatre was considered to be one of the most presentable, significant and majestic cultural institutions of interwar Lviv¹. It was Zygmunt Gorgolewski, the architect, who designed the Grand City Theatre, which was built at the turn of the 19th – 20th centuries during the Austro-Hungarian rule². The theatre building was decorated generously with rich modern decor, symbolic sculptural compositions, bas-relief

¹ Opened in 1900 as the Lviv Grand City Theatre. On December 19, 1939, under the Soviet occupation, it was renamed the Lviv State Opera and Ballet Theatre (nowadays the Solomiya Krushchynska Lviv National Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre).

² Zygmunt Gorgolewski (1845 – 1903) was a famous Polish architect, the author of a number of architectural projects, builder and restorer of many buildings in Hanover, Berlin, Kiel, Bonn, Halle, Opole, Poznań, Olsztyn, Lviv and other European cities.

stucco, which was an expression of significant creative achievements in the fields of design, construction, architecture, sculpture, stonework, and painting, etc. (Hrankin, & Sobolevsky, 2001, pp. 37–47).

The Grand City Theatre not only became one of the most elegant and prominent buildings, but also an architectural decoration of Lviv. It was a prominent place of creation and public representation, primarily of the high Polish culture from the time of its construction and during the interwar period. The Ukrainian culture was in a quandary at that time, which was determined by the limited scope of activities of small travelling theatres, in particular, Ivan Tobilevych theatre troupes (Ukrayinsky narodny, 2000, pp. 3432–3433), “Zahrava” (Ukrayinsky molody, 2000, p. 3429), I. Kohutiak Ukrainian Mobile Drama Theatre (Ukrayinsky rukhomy, 2000, p. 3437), the “Prosvita” amateur collectives (Derzhavnyi arkhiv Lvivs’koi oblasti [State Archives of Lviv Region – SALR], f. 1, d. 53, c. 10297, pp. 5–6), the first Ukrainian professional theatre “Ukrainian Besida” (Ukrayinska besida, 2000, p. 3340), individual workers societies (Pasitska, 2013, pp. 19, 30–35), the Ukrainian trade unions (Berest, 1995, pp. 50–57; Berest, I., Berest, R., Pasichnyk, M., Pasichnyk, S., Savchuk, Strelbytska, 2021, pp. 197–204) and the other organisations.

In a short article, the periodical “Chervona Ukraina” Ivan Kudla, Lviv artist, covered a real situation of the Ukrainian theatres under the Polish rule on October 9, 1939: “There merged two Ukrainian theatres Tobilevych Theatre and “Zahrava” Theatre last year, one collective was created – Kotliarevsky Theatre. It was located in Lviv, but we had to perform only 3–4 times during the year, and even then in the premises of the “Rozmaitosti” theater or in the Jewish theater. It was impossible to get to the city theatre. The troupe travelled around towns and villages, living under poor conditions and in hunger. The voivodeship, starosta and police censorship doublechecked the repertoire. Everything that even slightly resembled the folk, the Ukrainian, was crossed out mercilessly. The Polish adhered to its policy government consistently and stubbornly in persecuting the Ukrainian theatre, which was aimed at destroying the Ukrainian culture” (Kudla, 1939).

The Greek Catholic Church and its leaders provided the greatest support to the national culture, while there were tense and difficult conditions of the Ukrainian-Polish relations in the interwar Galicia. However, during the pre-war period, when the population of Galicia was under the Austro-Hungarian rule, the Poles’ attitude towards the Ukrainians was more balanced and tolerant in the field of culture and education, despite irregularities. It should be noted that even the patrons of the Ukrainian cultural institutions were the Polish Prince J. Czartoryski (Pasitska, 2013, p. 19), Count T. Diduszytski (Bulyk, & Berest, 2023, pp. 81–89), and others.

The Ukrainian culture occupied declaratively a dominant position in the artistic landscape of the region’s social life for the first time when there emerged the Bolshevik power in the Western Ukrainian lands at the end of September 1939. However, the Soviet occupation administration provided “support” of the Ukrainian national culture, first of all, as an integral part of the general policy of the forced assimilation of the Galicians in line with the Bolshevik ideology. The Soviet authorities sought to accelerate incorporation of the occupied territories into the Soviet political system, hence, tried to guise Ukrainization of the Western Ukrainian lands.

The history of the creation of Lviv State Opera and Ballet Theatre, which in Lviv was associated with the building of the Grand City Opera and Ballet Theatre, turned out to be quite complicated (Petryk, 2020, pp. 104–113). Hence, there merged two theatres: I. Kotliarevsky Ukrainian Theatre, headed by Volodymyr Blavatsky, and the “Artistic Tour” Theatre, headed

by Yosyp Stadnyk at the beginning of October 1939. As a result, there was announced the creation of T. Shevchenko State Ukrainian Theatre of Lviv, headed by V. Blavatsky, and Yo. Stadnyk became his deputy. The established theatre began to share the premises of the Grand City Theatre with the Polish Drama Theatre. “We already have the newly established Taras Shevchenko State Ukrainian Theatre of Lviv. It is located in the Polish city theatre, where we, the Ukrainian artists, were previously forbidden to enter” (Kudla, 1939).

In the periodical of the Lviv Regional Committee of the party “Vil’na Ukrayina” (“Free Ukraine”) it was reported that “the first T. Shevchenko Ukrainian Theatre in Lviv is preparing two plays for October holidays ... Two comrades Stadnyk and Blavatsky were in charge of the preparations” (Teatr do zhovtnya, 1939). There was stated another note in the above-mentioned periodical that “... the trade union of trade workers is actively preparing for the 22nd anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The girls Relia Gottlieb and Telia Buchdorf are working on decorating the hall, where the gala evening will be held. The young artists: Otto Lenz and Leon Kontorski painted portraits of comrades Stalin and Voroshylov. Lviv artists, who made a new map of Europe are helping to decorate the hall. An artistic montage has also been made, reflecting the collapse of gentry Poland. The singing group is studying the songs written by the Soviet composers” (U profspiltsi torhovelnykh pratsivnykiv, 1939).

There was issued the Resolution of the Council of People’s Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR on the establishment of state theatres in Lviv and the organization of their work on December 19, 1939. The first point of the Resolution was the task of organizing the “State Ukrainian Opera and Ballet Theatre” in Lviv, providing it with the premises of the former Grand (Velyky) City Theatre. The State Ukrainian Drama Theatre was temporarily offered the premises of the “Narodny Dim” (People’s House) and the “Rozmaitosti” Theatre, and the former Polish Theatre was offered the premises of the “Novynny” Theatre in Lviv (Halaychak, & Lutsky, 1995, p. 68).

However, V. Blavatsky, the director of the drama theatre did not give up hope for the prospect of establishing his troupe in the premises of the Grand (Velyky) City Theatre, emphasizing the ideological support of the Soviet authorities. On January 8, 1940 there was issued Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR with the wording “to satisfy” the petition of the employees of the Ukrainian State Drama Theatre and public organizations of the city of Lviv and to name the theatre – Lesia Ukrainka Theatre (Ukaz, 8.1.1940), which received a resonance in the collective, because no one from the collective had applied to the authorities with such a petition.

On February 4, 1940, in an interview with a correspondent of the periodical “Vilna Ukrayina” V. Blavatsky noted that “four months have passed since I. Kotliarevsky Ukrainian Theatre and Yo. Stadnyk Theatre were united into a single creative team. The newlyformed theatre received beautiful premises of Lviv Grand (Velyky) Theatre. The first plays were the works by the Ukrainian classical authors – “Khmara” (“The Cloud”) by A. Sukhodolskyi and “Zaporozhets beyond the Danube” by P. Artemovskiyi. The active team is proud that it is the first theatre in the western regions of Ukraine, where the Soviet play is first staged. We worked enthusiastically on the play “Plato Krechet” by the Ukrainian Soviet playwright, medalist Oleksandr Korniyuchuk (Chotyry misyatsi roboty, 1940).

A typical example of a werewolf was the active pro-Soviet activities of the Deputy Director, Yosyp Stadnyk, who was also one of the first to start forming a new Soviet theatre in Lviv. In 1940, he was even elected a Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR. Against a general background of his position and activities in various political systems, it is

difficult to unambiguously evaluate Stadnyk's real attitude towards the Soviet government. It seems that his flattering support for the Communist regime was primarily due to career ambitions (Kandydat, 1940).

The fact remains controversial that the process of the real formation and rise of the Ukrainian theatre was the result of interaction and cooperation of numerous artists with the Soviet occupation regime. There were persecutions, arrests and murders of the nationally minded Ukrainians, the Poles, the Jews, mass deportations, including the Polish population, the German colonists, and a powerful influx of the pro-Soviet elements, primarily Russian-speaking, into the Western Ukrainian lands, at the same time the Ukrainian artists celebrated the triumph of the first national plays in the history of the Grand (Velyky) Theatre in Lviv. In fact, there was formed a new moral liminality under the influence of the Bolshevik ideology, which was accompanied by forceful measures in the social environment.

The building of the Grand (Velyky) City Theatre in Lviv became the central venue for diverse political performances, which was decorated with the portraits of the Bolshevik leaders, red flags, communist slogans and other ideological rubbish. In fact, there was formed a new theatre within the walls of the Grand (Velyky) City Theatre in Lviv from the end of 1939, on the basis of the Resolution of the RNK of the Ukrainian SSR. The above-mentioned theatre was named Lviv State Opera and Ballet Theatre and subordinated to the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine in December 1939. At the same time, the administrative management of the institution was reorganized, subordination, staff, orchestra, choir, ballet troupe, workshops, sweatshops, an inventory of property, etc., was carried out. There were sent about 20 qualified, mostly Russian-speaking artists, choreographers, ballet masters, etc., to work in the theatre from Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odesa and other cities during the organizational period.

O. M. Holtsman, a member of the All-Union Communist Party (the Bolsheviks) was appointed as the Director of the Ministry of Culture Theatre, and M. Yo. Pekeran became the Chief Accountant. In the theatre there was established the komsomol and party organization. Ya. Ya. Poliatsky was appointed the party leader by Lviv Regional Committee of the Communist Party. There were several leading figures, who became the active propagandists of the Soviet region, for example, the Chairman of the MK M. S. Priples, the Chief Conductor M. D. Pokrovskiy, the Chief Director Prof. O. I. Ulukhanov, the Choreographer Ye. D. Vihiliev, the Vocalists O. P. Poliakov, F. M. Slonevska, V. I. Gilzenrad, the Ballet Soloist N. H. Prostakivna, the Concertmaster of the orchestra D. B. Shtriks, and the others. The new theatre administration emphasized that all cultural events and especially the election campaign in the western regions of Ukraine would provide an opportunity to show the whole world the "steel" unity of the Ukrainians (Velyka, radisna podiya, 1940).

The Bolshevik government tried to recruit not only the most famous and authoritative figures in science, education, medicine, industry, church, but also culture and arts from the first days of its establishment. Numerous Galicians became the deceived victims of the Communist regime. In particular, this happened during the organization and holding of the so-called People's Assembly of Western Ukraine in the city theatre on October 26–28, 1939, at which the communist government, through the mouths of delegates, tried to legitimize the occupation and present the act of annexation as the "reunification" of the Western Ukrainian lands with Soviet Ukraine (Şchurchalo, 2019).

There were some artists (Filypchak, Zulia de Bonze, Turska-Bandrovskya, etc.), who did not arrive at Lviv even after they received the financial support and guidance for work by the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 27).

Lviv State Opera and Ballet Theatre inherited three buildings from the former Grand (Velyky) Theatre. The main building was located in the central part of the city at 1 Holukhovskiy Square (nowadays 28 Svobody Avenue). There was a building for storing scenery in the suburbs of Lviv (in Klepariv), and there were production workshops at 6 Soniachna Street (nowadays P. Kulisha Street), which at the end of 1939 were reorganized into tailoring, decoration, carpentry, furniture and props and hairdressing workshops (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 30).

From the former Polish theatre there were also inherited many things: a large music library, numbering 37 thousand 724 volumes, a huge wardrobe of men's and women's costumes (about 20 thousand sets), over 500 pairs of men's and women's shoes, 9 pianos, an organ, a stage curtain with technical mechanisms, a Siemiradsky curtain, electrical equipment, a gas station and many other properties by Lviv State Opera and Ballet Theatre, which the theatre's Inventory Commission, consisting of the Chairman Poliansky Ya. Ya., members Pekerman M. Y. and Grinshtein S. N., estimated at 2 million 553 thousand 992 rubl. 92 kop. (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 12).

In 1940 the theatre management put premium on the decoration and repair of the premises (67,700 rubliv), as well as on the purchase of various goods despite the received, rich inheritance. There could be found various equipment and devices (1,900 rubliv), musical instruments (36,200 rubliv), a Fiat car (8,300 rubliv), a sculpture of Lenin (1,500 rubliv), carpets, furniture, among those purchased things etc., which amounted to a total of 70,600 rubliv (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, pp. 10–11).

Lviv Opera and Ballet Theatre began its work on January 15, 1940. Its annual creative activity can be divided into preparatory and production. According to the plan, the preparatory period was to last from January 15 to September 1, 1940. However, it ended only on September 21 of the same year and amounted to 248 days. There were diverse reasons for the delay, as indicated in the report, financial, material and technical, ideological and organizational difficulties, as well as tours in their premises of Kyiv Opera and Ballet Theatre, Kyiv Theatre of the Young Spectator, I. Franko Kyiv Theatre. Hence, the production period lasted for only 102 days, which was to be 122 days (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 35).

The official payment for the theatre staff provided for a monthly differentiated payment of an advance (prepayment) and the salary balance. The management began to practise taking away part of the earned money, and the director's fund was formed from the first prepayments. In particular, it was stated in the advance statement for January 1941 that O. M. Holtsman, the Theatre Director (765 rubliv 50 kop.) received the highest advance payment, from which only 50 rubliv were taken away, and the lowest (10 rubliv) – by a young ballerina N. Ya. Koliada, from which the entire amount was taken away to form the fund. At the same time, the advance payment of the talented prima ballerina of the theatre Valentyna Pereyaslavets (Berest, Petryk, & Kuzyk, 2023, pp.104–114) was 661 rubliv, but there were taken away 400 rubliv (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 23). Everything (delay and non-payment of part of the earned money) turned into a massive financial abuse by the administration and subsequently became a certain norm in the theatre management activities (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 22).

In total, there were taken away 4,960 rubliv, from the advance payment of 7,801 rubliv for January 1941, which was accrued as an advance payment for 49 people of the theatre, (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 30), which in its turn indicated the abuse of power, the establishment and development of a corrupt system in the institution. The theatre artists became hostages involuntarily without any rights in the above-mentioned situation. There

are no complaints or information about the dissatisfied individuals among the materials of the theatre's archival files. Due to a strict public control, hidden arrests and reprisals there were constrained not only the artists, but the entire surrounding society (Vasylchuk, & Drozdov, 2023, pp. 170–186).

It should be mentioned that the theatre employees reacted differently to the criminal actions of the Communist regime. There were mass arrests and the Galicians deportations to the east in the spring of 1940. The theatre was surrounded by a network of secret NKVD employees and the “party comrades”, who made the reports and denunciations at the first opportunity. A number of artists expressed their support for the new authorities, but the vast majority of actors tried to abstain from the public statements, as there was fear of distortions, denunciations, and arrest. The management collaborated actually with regular NKVD employees, who were attached to the theatre and kept a watchful eye on the personnel, studying their biographical data, family, political sympathies, preferences, connections, and work meticulously. In particular, there was one case regarding the discrepancy of accrued salary, the amount of 150 rubliv, by A. S. Kopchynskyi, which was considered by the court. V. M. Holubchuk was also on trial, who had a debt to the theatre's cash desk for purchased fuel in the amount of 271 rubliv 90 kop. (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 25). At that time, the theatre paid the NKVD employees 10 thousand 30 rubliv for the work performed in 1940, and also allocated 384 rubliv for the operational work (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, pp. 19–20).

There was founded the Institute for Advanced Training at the theatre at the beginning of 1940. The purpose of its activities was to establish ideological and political work and practical training for the theatre employees. There were conducted lectures on the history of the party, the Stalinist constitution, the international situation, etc., to the course participants. Given the multinational composition of the troupe, which included the Poles, the Jews and the Russians, there was a certain focus on the need to master the Ukrainian language, especially among the vocalists. Professors Ulukhanov, Liubynetsky, Olevska and Hartopan worked with the vocals at that time. There were also held practical classes in acting, make-up and flexibility. The ballet troupe was differentiated into three groups based on the practical experience gained (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, pp. 34–35). It seems that the members of the junior ballet group, which included young and talented ballerina Roma Pryima, were not given any cash dividends (Berest, & Plahjtniuk, 2024, pp. 8–18).

In general, the theatre was in a difficult financial situation in 1940. Its financial activities were based on the bank loans. The actual amount of funds from the main activity amounted to 2 million 697 thousand 652 rubliv 61 kop instead of the planned 2 million 622 thousand 500 rubliv for 1940. Of these, losses amounted up to 75 152 rubliv 61 kop. The main reason for the financial difficulties was the lack of working capital for the production of plays, the shortage of funds for the income part, which was associated with the delay and reduction of the season by 20 days, unforeseen expenses for electricity, payment to the artists for rented housing, business trips, celebrations, additional payments, etc. (SALR, f. R.-2133, d.1, c. 2, p. 39).

According to the archival documents, the city authorities were unable to provide the arriving artists with housing, and, hence, many people stayed at hotels and private apartments in the city. The theatre paid 72 200 rubliv for the artists' accommodation from the received credit funds at the end of 1940. There were large expenses for the electricity used (95 700 rubliv). The debt for the salaries, deductions and taxes amounted to 96 700 rubliv (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 36).

The expenses on paying the NKVD employees became a new element in the theatre's expense items (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 20). At the beginning of January 1941, the theatre's outstanding accounts payable amounted to 169 500 rubliv (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 36). On the initiative of the administration, the number of seats in the auditorium was increased from 1050 to 1162. This made it possible to increase the occupancy rate of the theatre hall for the morning performances from 85% to 111%, and for the evening performances – with a noticeable decrease in profit (SALR, f. R.-2133, d.1. c. 2, p. 35).

The clear pro-Soviet sentiments of the institution's management proved problematic for the practical implementation of the Ukrainian plays. It was noticeable in the first repertoire. Hence, the first own production of the Lviv Opera and Ballet Theatre was to be the opera by M. Lysenko "Taras Bulba" based on the novel under the same name written by M. Hohol. But a month before the season started, the opera director N. Smoliuch had announced the impossibility of staging the above-mentioned play (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 33).

There was an urgent replacement in the repertoire: the tried-and-tested Soviet opera "Tyhyi Don", prepared and staged, based on the novel under the same name by M. Sholokhov and staged by Leningrad composer I. Dzerzhynskiy. It should be mentioned that due to the nationalized property of the Grand (Velyky) Theatre, there were used for the production of "Tyhyi Don" material assets worth 6 131 rubliv 82 kop., which reduced the costs of staging the play significantly. I. Dzerzhynskiy arrived at Lviv from Leningrad and took care of the performance preparation. He was present at its premiere on September 21, 1940 (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 33).

In total, there were included seven performances in the repertoire of Lviv Opera and Ballet Theatre in 1940. After "Tyhyi Don", there were staged the operas "Tryviata" (24. X), "Aida" (25.IX), "Yevheniy Oniehin" (29.IX) and the ballets "Don Quixote" (24.IX), "Madame Butterfly" (5.XI) and "La Bohème" (18.XII) (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 32). As we see, there wasn't staged any Ukrainian performance in the theatre in 1940. The first season presented the works of the Russian, Soviet and foreign classics.

There was provided a significant material and technical assistance by nationalized funds (117,731 rubliv 20 kop) in order to stage the above-mentioned performances (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 30), which, in our opinion, should have reduced the costs of purchasing and improved the financial situation of the theatre.

The administration of Lviv Opera and Ballet Theatre began to form the repertoire for 1941 at the the end of 1940. The opening of the season was planned on February 5, 1941, with Reinhold Gliere's ballet "The Red Poppy" staged by Yevheniy Vihiliyov. There were considered for the staging the operas "Taras Bulba" (M. Lysenko), "Carmen" (J. Bizet), "Halka" (S. Moniushko), "Duma pro Opanasa" (V. Yurovsky), the operetta "The Gypsy Baron" (J. Strauss), the ballet "Prince Ihor" (A. Borodin), "Snihurochka" (P. Tchaikovsky), "Lileya" (K. Dankevych), etc. (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 30).

But the war and the German occupation changed the situation and plans of the theatre. The majority of the Russian-speaking artists and party leadership fled to the east, seeking salvation in the camp of Bolshevism (SALR, f. R.-2133, d. 1, c. 2, p. 30).

Conclusion. Hence, the widely publicized liberation of Western Ukraine from the Polish oppression and reunification with the Soviet Ukraine in September 1939 became a cover for the annexation of Western Ukrainian lands and the total Sovietization of the local population. Lviv Opera and Ballet Theatre took a leading place in the ideological and political consolidation of the Bolshevik government. Its management and personnel were renewed substantially due to the arrival of the Russian-speaking and pro-Soviet Ukrainian

artists in Lviv from various cities of the Soviet Union. At the theatre there was established a strict control not only over the activities and behaviour of employees, but also over their families, acquaintances, etc.

There were organized diverse training courses, lectures, circles, trade union, komsomol and party schools at the theatre in order to accelerate the introduction of the Bolshevik ideology. However, against the general background of widely promoted freedoms, abundance and prosperity, the denunciations, humiliations, arrests, murders, deportations, Russification, robberies and nationalization, the closure of museums, societies and, especially, the reformatting of national cultural values into a new ideological direction became a bitter daily existence. There dominated the Soviet, Russian and foreign classics in the theatre's repertoire, and the artists involuntarily became obedient and effective tools on the path to implementing the plans of the Bolshevik government.

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