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ART

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THE ARMENIAN PARADOX OF SERGEI PARAJANOV

Abstract

Sergei Parajanov once said that he was born not on January 9, 1924, as is generally accepted, but rather in November 1923. He said that his father, overjoyed to have finally had a son, spent several weeks partying and drinking before deciding to go and record the birth of his son at the civil registry office. Consequently, according to this true or invented story, Parajanov's centenary coincides with the centenary of Armenian cinema, which was celebrated in Yerevan in November 2023, and to which this article was written.

In the Western world, presenting Parajanov as an "Armenian filmmaker" is not always self-evident, since he is rather characterized as of Armenian "origin", or Armenian "decent", and even sometimes as a "Georgian", "Russian", or "Soviet" artist.

Parajanov's work can be comprehended within a global Paradox, which consists in freely and unexpectedly crossing the conventional borders and limits, including semantic definitions. This principle theoretically and visually focuses on Parajanov's masterpiece *The Color of Pomegranates*, which is arguably the best film of the Armenfilm studio. It was also described by some critics as a "non-film", since it disrupts the very essence of cinema: the movement. Thus, the terms "Armenian" and "filmmaker" are simultaneously exact and problematic.

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Hence, Parajanov's paradox can be defined as his unique ability to stand on both sides of the borders (or the definitions) at the same time.

The article investigates this fundamental paradox regarding Sergei Parajanov's Armenian identity.

Keywords: *Parajanov, cinema, Armenian filmmaker, paradox, idiot, Godard, Pasolini.*

Introduction

As part of the centenary of the Armenian cinema, organized by the National Cinema Centre of Armenia in Yerevan from November 2 to 4, 2023, it is impossible not to invoke its most prominent figure – that of Sergei Parajanov, who remains the most striking, the best-known, if not the most charismatic character in the Armenian cinema.

In fact, he invited himself, so to speak, to the party, which seems quite natural; because what is a party without Parajanov, and *a fortiori* what is a celebration of Armenian cinema without Parajanov? The party would be missing its most authentic magician, its dimension of pure, original and naïve wonder.

According to a story told by Parajanov (reported by his nephew Garik Parajanov, who has since become a director himself), he was born not on January 9, 1924, as is generally accepted, but in November 1923. Sergei said that his father Hovsep, overjoyed to have finally had a son, spent several weeks celebrating and drinking before deciding to go and record the birth of his son at the civil registry office.

So, in keeping with this legend, or this whimsical director's umpteenth joke, the centenary of Parajanov is not in a few months – it is now. And so, curiously, it coincides with the centenary of the Armenian cinema, which is just one more opportunity to boldly assert that Parajanov is the native figure of the Armenian cinema, its purest mythical component.

Indeed, when we think of the Armenian cinema, it is the name Parajanov that first comes to mind. And yet, even at this most basic level of presentation, we are confronted with a difficulty: the designation of Parajanov as a specifically "Armenian" filmmaker is not entirely satisfactory, because it seems insufficient. It doesn't mention more than 20 years of his life and work in the Ukraine, at the Dovzhenko studio in Kiev, where he produced more than half of his total filmography; and it leaves untold his attachment to his hometown, the Georgian

capital Tbilisi, where he lived out the last years of his life. In contrast, he lived in Armenia only occasionally, and it is known that several times he refused fully official offers of the Soviet Armenian authorities, backed by his friends, to settle in Yerevan.

And yet, Parajanov never thought of himself or presented himself as anything other than "Armenian."

As soon as he left the USSR for the first time, one of the first questions he was asked in Europe was: "Do you feel that you're Armenian or Georgian?"¹ Previously, he had declared in an interview:

"Armenia is not a tourist destination for me. I am Armenian to the core."²

The explanation of this fact is historical and cultural. Nationality, traditionally understood as *ethnicity*, is inherited and not chosen. In Parajanov's time, in the countries that formed the USSR where he lived, you did not choose your nationality (ethnicity) any more than your gender or species. Your nationality was carried for life in your passport, where it was indicated in entry no. 5, so it was something that stuck to you, an official, objective fact. In this context, Parajanov made it clear that, for him, a director's nationality (ethnicity) was a big part of his talent, and that he himself owed all his talent to *his people*, the Armenians...

So, when we say "Parajanov — Armenian filmmaker," we are both accurate and, *at the same time*, as if caught up in a whirlwind of paradoxes, *from the outset* we enter a zone of imprecision, a labyrinth of definitional uncertainties, semantic indeterminacies concerning words, concepts and ideas that are received and accepted, innate or acquired.

To put it briefly, *whatever one says of Parajanov* will always be stamped with the seal of insufficiency. The very term "filmmaker" is also sometimes controversial, or in any case it calls for a complementary explanation, since Parajanov is also sometimes defined as a "plastic artist," sometimes as a "filmmaker-artist," or an "artist-filmmaker":

"It does not fit at all with the very concept of filmmaking in the conventional sense of the word... and it is no coincidence that many film historians and film critics have denied its relation to cinema, seeing in it only pictorial and pantomimic virtues," wrote Garegin Zakoyan in 1984.³

¹ *Libération*, February 9, 1988.

² "Les Cîmes du monde", in *Cahiers du cinéma*, No. 381, March 1986, p. 46.

³ **Chernenko** 1989, 35.

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Aleksandr Antipenko, the cinematographer on *Kiev Frescoes*, the film by Parajanov which was halted in 1966, told me: "This style is absolutely unique to Parajanov, I call it anti-cinema."⁴

So it was pointed out to Parajanov during his lifetime that his masterpiece, *The Color of Pomegranates* perhaps did not belong entirely in cinema. Others, less well intentioned towards the extravagant director, did not hesitate to speak pejoratively of "diafilm," which means "slide film" or even "slideshow"...

Thus, the two terms of Parajanov's basic definition, "Armenian filmmaker," though accurate, always call for additional comments, adjustments, and biographical, historical, cultural, linguistic details, etc., practically ad infinitum. One might even ask: when do we reach a *sufficient* point of explanations to assert anything about Parajanov? Besides, whatever the amount of illustrations in terms of photos, drawings, film extracts that we choose to illustrate our point, we stumble into a kind of spell that always seems to leave us wanting more...

We are thus plunged into a *paradox* at the very moment when we try to state the "zero point" of Parajanov's characterization, as we would any artist, namely his profession and his nationality. For comparison, the terms "Tarkovsky – Russian filmmaker" are accurate, but also sufficient. The scene is set: we are faced with great Russian poetry (with his father, Arseny Tarkovsky, who is a worthy representative), Russian music, Russian literature with Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, Russian philosophy, Russian Orthodoxy, etc.

In the case of Parajanov, this setting is discovered and revealed gradually, and through a certain effort. He invites us to stroll there, to explore its expanse which is at once ravishing, unsuspected, and incomprehensible: "peripheral" cultures compared to Moscow, folk, minority, unofficial, underground cultures. It is he who always guides us, by enchantments.

There is, thus, a fundamental Paradox that drives and governs Parajanov's work and life, which are blurred.

When I speak of Parajanov's "Armenian paradox," I do not mean, of course, that this paradox is Armenian in itself. It is rather the being-Armenian of Parajanov, his Armenianness, or more precisely his representation of being Armenian, which is a *moment* of this Paradox.

⁴ "Un film complètement différent," interview with Naïri Galstanian, in Dominique Bax, Cyril Béghin (dir.), *Serguei Paradjanov, Monographie*, éd. Magic Cinema, Bobigny, coll. Théâtres au Cinéma, n°18, 2007, p. 93.

To define this Paradox, I propose to describe it as a phenomenology of the obstacle.

Phenomenology of the Obstacle

In 1982, when *Sayat-Nova* was released in France, Serge Daney scrupulously described the exchange of glances in the film as a game of tennis.

The material presence of the *panjara* (Persian word meaning “window,” used by Sayat-Nova in his poetry) can be declined in all of Parajanov’s films in the form of the frame, window, veil, curtain, grillwork, screen, etc., defining the imminence of a *threshold*, a border, a delimitation. It is, thus, about crossing, passing, transgression, which take place constantly in Parajanov, on screen as in life: we cross the very frame of the screen, in the proper sense as in the figurative sense; we blur the semantic definitions of language, transgressing social and institutional conventions... It is in this sense (of the crossing and transgression of thresholds and limits) that Parajanov’s life and work are entangled, confused. By definition, the sacred refers to the existence of a line not to be crossed. The screen, for Parajanov, is both fantasy and simulacrum, in accordance with the two senses of the Greek word *fantasia*. It is both the principle of departure and the point of arrival, obstacle and opening, opacity and transparency. It looks out onto another space-time, just as it returns our gaze.

Alice Letoulat wrote in her recent book *Archaism and Impurity: The Deviations of Pasolini, Parajanov and Oliveira*:

“(...) what counts, (...) for the filmmakers of ambiguity that are Pasolini, Oliveira or Parajanov, is to **stand on the border** that traces the conflicting relationship between its various facets, **to always stand on a definitional threshold**.”⁵

“(...) finally, the last gesture undertakes to *extend* beyond canonical limits **in order to balance itself on a threshold** that forms a passage.”⁶

“It is a **balancing act**: to remain fruitful, the marginal position must **stand on a precarious edge**, with ambiguity constantly under threat of becoming fixed in a new, policed norm. For Pasolini, Oliveira, Parajanov (...), we must therefore

⁵ *Archaïsme et impureté*. 2022, 19.

⁶ *Archaïsme et impureté*. 2022, 20.

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remain at the point of trouble, on a threshold from which it becomes possible to reconsider hierarchies, whether aesthetic, social, or temporal.”⁷

But it rather seems to me that Parajanov is precisely one who takes a stand. And not only does he take a stand, but he takes a stand *passionately*, every time. He is not one to relativize, to remain comfortably on the threshold, to present everyone with a neutrality or relativity of things. On the contrary, he confirms his insights passionately, however reckless this passion may be: for example, for Ukrainian nationalists in the 1960s, or for freedom of artistic creation; he boldly flaunts his strong opinions on Lenin, Gorbachev, perestroika, homosexuality, etc. It was indeed the imprudence of his original yet also uncompromising visions that sealed his fate.

To stand on the threshold, as Letoulat writes, is to be neither on one side nor on the other. Parajanov’s positions and biases are always strong, radical and assertive. His border crossings and slippages are unexpected and elusive each time, and therefore “dangerous” and unacceptable to some because they are unruly.

Rather than standing on the threshold, Parajanov is interested in extracting from a given situation the possibility of play, the provocation of *passion*. Play in the almost mechanical sense, which consists of slipping into the margins, venturing into out-of-frame definitions and conventions. But play and passion converge on *emotion*, which is, by definition, movement, not equilibrium. Parajanov is not interested in equilibrium, but rather in the incessant, astonishing (and unexpected) swing from one side of the threshold to the other; in other words, he is interested in movement, in astonishment, the hallucinated and hallucinating passage of the threshold as such.

Rather than the threshold, Parajanov prides himself on frequenting and even inhabiting the margins. The margins of our expectations. When will he be here rather than there, on this side or on the opposite? When will he adopt the most unruly and unpredictable posture? What will he further scheme to bring us to stupefaction and *épatage*?⁸

⁷ *Archaïsme et impureté*. 2022, 21.

⁸ *Épatage*: an artist forcing a response through deliberate provocation; an archaic and dis-used French word, but frequent in Russian.

"True art often consists of getting out of the frames in which you have been enclosed," says Parajanov.⁹ Yuri Mechitov – his regular photographer, recently suggested that "No matter how you define Parajanov, he always escapes. He is everything at once."

The difficulty lies precisely in thinking about Parajanov's phenomenological ubiquity, on both sides of the threshold, taken to its ultimate contradictions. This is the basis of the Paradox that governs his work.

Ubiquity means to be on one side of the threshold, to be situated *already and at the same time* on the opposite side, simultaneously, paradoxically, incomprehensibly, even irrationally. In an *idiotic* way. When Parajanov says, for instance, "I opened a small window in Armenian cinema,"¹⁰ only laypersons see it as just a metaphor.

The ultimate goal of this Paradox, through the play of crossing the threshold and the union of opposites, attains the original function of the magician: to make primordial astonishment perceptible by causing amazement and wonder.

Pasolini also took on, to the point of no return, this vital duplicity of reality that expresses the oxymoron, the figure of speech that makes opposites coexist. Life is a contradiction, which is synonymous, for the author of *Teorema*, with both sanctity and scandal. Oxymoron is to Pasolini what paradox is to Parajanov.

The Idiot-Prophet

In Parajanov, the idiot and the prophet are another incarnation of the coincidence of two opposite poles. The unconventional attitude that the filmmaker cultivated all his life, his excess and his reckless daring, in short, his madness and eccentricities, find an analogy with the figure of the idiot, which runs throughout Jean-Luc Godard's filmography and who is often embodied by Godard himself, with a recurring reference to Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*. Is it not, on the part of Parajanov, an act of idiocy to assert the incomprehensibility and hermeticism of his images?

Etymologically, the *idiot* is that which is proper, simple, unique, irreducible in his singularity, and as such – *untranslatable*, valid for itself. Hence the terms *idiot* and *idiotism* in linguistics as well as, for example, *idiopathy* in medicine, which refers to a symptom or "disease existing by itself, independent of any other

⁹ *Paradjanov, le dernier collage*, documentary film by Ruben Guevorkyants, 1995.

¹⁰ "Les Cimes du monde", 1986, 46.

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pathological condition, and whose cause is unknown,"¹¹ in other words, an inexplicable disease, untranslatable in terms of known pathologies.

What distinguishes the *idiot* from both the madman and the imbecile is the relationship with rationality, which, in the latter two, is desperate and hopeless, respectively. In this sense, there is *nothing* to understand in the madman or in the imbecile. In the case of the idiot, the relationship with reason is intrinsic, and it is only at the cost of an *a priori* judgment that he can be reevaluated or disqualified. Unlike the imbecile and the madman, the idiot is not opposed to the wise person, but to the pretense of knowledge. The idiot aims to speak the truth, or to allow it to happen. The space created by his letting go (social, rational, institutional) offers a privileged vantage point from which to refine a freedom of vision. It is a salutary maneuver of freedom. Playing the idiot is an exercise in *thought* for Godard, and for Parajanov, in *aesthetic vision*.

In the USSR, where there could only be official truth, Parajanov was one of the few to say things differently, head-on, bluntly, taking on the role of the hysteric, the one through whom scandal occurs. Symmetrically, in the "free world," in the West, the idiocy of Godard is "that last bulwark of the contemporary intellectual who does not simply want to accept the defeat of his social role, nor to become the amusing intelligence which keeps the gears of media society turning."¹²

Les Carabiniers (1963) was subjected to extremely virulent criticism in France. His "mental instability" was spoken about.¹³ *Pierrot le Fou* (1965) was banned for those under eighteen for, officially, "mental debility," says Godard.¹⁴

In Parajanov's case, while he was *already* incarcerated, the Soviet authorities considered a psychiatric asylum. Parajanov is an Armenian Pierrot le fou who could say to himself, like Belmondo, after wrapping his head in dynamite and lighting the fuse: "After all, I'm an idiot."

¹¹ <https://www.vulgaris-medical.com/encyclopedie-medicale/idiopathique/>

¹² Cf. Dario Marchiori and Jérôme Moland, "Godard, la matière, l'écran et le mot (d'esprit)," in *Vertigo*, 2011/2, no. 40, p. 59.

¹³ Dominique Paini, "Les Figures de l'idiot chez Godard," lecture given (in the presence, by videoconference, of J.-L. Godard) on October 6, 2004, in *Morceaux de conversations avec Jean-Luc Godard*, filmed by Alain Fleischer, éditions Montparnasse, Paris, 2010.

¹⁴ Ibid.

This is essentially what great Georgian actress Veriko Anjaparidze means when she remarks to Parajanov, almost politely: "And to think that an Armenian is so stupid"¹⁵...

If the prophet's words only make sense *a posteriori*, those of the idiot are always already out-of-date. In accordance with his principle of phenomenological ubiquity, Parajanov is both totally out-of-step (literally: out-of-frame) and visionary. He is an idiot-prophet, a sort of Mullah Nasreddine of the cinema, that "jester of Persia,"¹⁶ about whom one speaks of "divine nonsense," "high silliness," "idiocies," "absurdities," and "paradoxes"...¹⁷

In a drawing which serves as a personal manifesto, executed with a ballpoint pen in the mid-1960s, Parajanov depicts himself as a giant, his head crowned with laurel leaves and given a standing ovation by the crowd. An endless army of haloed angels or saints rushes to his feet to climb a ladder that will carry them perilously onto his shoulders, then over his head, so that they can shout their praises to the director over loudspeakers: "VIVAT!," "BANZAI," "GLORIA!," "HURRAH!" etc.

The drawing bears the following inscription in capital letters:

I AM A GENIUS
ALTHOUGH INCOMPREHENSIBLE
BUT
ALSO MISUNDERSTOOD

THE HOUR OF RECOGNITION IS AT HAND
HURRAH FOR THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE!
HURRAH FOR THE MISUNDERSTOOD!

At his feet, the crowd chants "HURRAH!" as at a May 1st demonstration on Red Square in Moscow... During these annual parades of grandiose proportions,

¹⁵ "Чтобы армянин – и был такой глупый," quoted by Vassili Katanyan, in *Параджанов. Цена вечного праздника* [Parajanov. *The Price of an Everlasting Celebration* (in Russian)], Dekom, Nizhny Novgorod, 2001, p. 77.

¹⁶ *Les Aventures de l'incomparable Mollâ Nasroddine, bouffon de la Perse*, by Didier Leroy, ed. Souffles, Paris, 2003.

¹⁷ All these terms form the titles of the collections of stories about the mythical character of Nasreddine Hodja, translated and presented by Jean-Louis Maunoury, published by Editions Phébus, Paris.

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the people had the opportunity to religiously and demonstratively acclaim their leaders, veritable embodiments of modern saints, who stood like demigods on a height unattainable to ordinary mortals, adopting generous gestures of greeting. Parajanov, it is said, once marched in his own parade. But instead of the giant portraits of the gods Marx, Engels and Lenin, he brandished... his own portrait. Cheering himself on, like an “incomprehensible” loner, lost in the middle of a crowd in a trance. The anecdote is funny, but monstrously cheeky. A similar scene is shown in this manifesto-drawing, in which the entire Soviet film profession is no match for him. In this sketch, there are no Armenian elements, no pomegranates, no church, no ashugh or Princess Anna, nothing that recalls the themes developed at Armenfilm. This is the director of the Dovzhenko Studios speaking, so it would probably be around 1965-66, at the time of *Kiev Frescoes*. This drawing proclaims his individual position against all. In a masterful and literally megalomaniacal lucidity, Parajanov links his genius to his necessarily “incomprehensible” and scandalous character. Of the two adjectives (*incomprehensible* and *misunderstood*) with which he adorns himself, it is the first which carries the decisive message (note, between the two, the illogical conjunction “but also”).

As if being abstruse and inaccessible, endowed with an irreducible singularity – in other words, *idiotic* – should be, for a creator, part of the very nature of his genius.

Finally, Parajanov (who, in Tbilisi, never failed to show his guests Sayat-Nova’s tomb, located in the courtyard of Surb Gevorg Armenian church¹⁸), knew only too well these Armenian verses by Sayat-Nova, among his most famous, inscribed on the stele of his tomb as an epitaph:

Drinking is not given to everyone,
My water comes from another spring.
Reading is not given to everyone,
My writing is of a different nature.

Not everyone can drink, i.e. *taste* its particular water (because of its pronounced, unusual, harsh character) nor even digest it, and therefore, metaphorically speaking, read and understand its writing. Neither taste nor

¹⁸ He led Denis Donikian and his French acolytes there in April 1980, cf. D. Donikian, *Les Chevaux Paradjanov*, Lyon, 1980, republished by Actual Art, Yerevan, 2020.

knowledge (in French, *saveur* and *savoir* stem from the same Latin root) are within the reach of “everyone.” Sayat-Nova, the very popular, beloved poet of the peoples of the Caucasus (who composed and sang in Armenian, Georgian and Turkish, that still unites the peoples of this complex region to this day) thus asserts in these verses that, deep down, he is not as easily accessible as he might seem, and therefore that a moment of opacity belongs to him. This is precisely what underpins his depth and originality, rather than overwhelming and abolishing it. The possibility of being *a priori* incomprehensible (*another* spring, *another* writing) infuses his poetry with its exceptional height. Its *de jure* inaccessibility is a direct reflection of the depth of its quality, and *therefore* of its popularity. This essentially popular, vernacular, even marginal aspect of Sayat-Nova’s poetry, correlated with the elitism of its sentiments and philosophy of life, is a paradox that exactly, and as it were genetically, describes Parajanov’s situation. Like his 18th-century poet-compatriot he is of unfathomable richness, but born of the people and returning to them. The filmmaker of genius, the expert in objets d’art, and the refined aesthete is, *in equal measure* a buffoon, a “merchant” (as he describes himself in a prison letter), mercantile, generous, megalomaniac, and naïf. The museum cult and the spirit of the bazaar, are yet another coincidence of opposites.

Conclusion

So, is Parajanov Armenian? Is Parajanov a filmmaker?

These questions are echoed and updated on the centenary of Armenian cinema, as with every enchanting invitation to the labyrinthine journey through the Maestro’s universe. “I’m not a painter,” he used to say, to emphasize that his profession – filmmaking – *synthesized* the plurality of his plastic, narrative and directing practices. As a child, Parajanov marveled at the diversity and skill of the craftsmen in his native Tiflis, which aroused in him astonishment and a desire to create; this, he said, later led him to choose a profession that brought together all these original qualities in practice. “Everyone knows that I have three homelands: Georgia, where I was born, the Ukraine, where I worked, and Armenia, where I’m going to die.”¹⁹ The dialectical cycle seems to come full circle with the return to the homeland, which ensures the perpetuation of his legacy, as in the fate of his last hero, Ashik-Kerib. Parajanov is Armenian in the same way as he is a

¹⁹ Interview on January 15, 1988, in Yerevan for Armenian television.

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filmmaker: paradoxically, in the primary and dialectical sense, seminal and diasporic, immanent and centrifugal, autochthonous and cosmopolitan, traditionalist and iconoclast. These interdisciplinary and intercultural *slippages* are the very foundation of the “movement” that underpins Parajanov’s “cinema.”

Translated from French by James Steffen

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Ամփոփում

Համաձայն մի պատմության, որը պատմում էր Սերգեյ Փարաջանովը, ինքը ծնվել է ոչ թե 1924 թվականի հունվարին, ինչպես համարում են, այլ 1923 թ. նոյեմբերին: Հայրը, ըստ նրա, այնքան է ուրախացել, որ վերջապես որդի է ունեցել, որ ուրախությունից մի քանի շաբաթ խնջույք է արել:

Հետևաբար, ըստ այս հորինված կամ իրական վարկածի, Փարաջանովի 100-ամյակը զարմանալիորեն համընկնում է հայ կինոյի 100-ամյակի հետ, որը նշվեց Երևանում, 2023 թ. նոյեմբերին, ինչի առիթով էլ գրվել է այս հոդվածը:

Փարաջանովի՝ «հայ կինոռեժիսոր» (Armenian filmmaker) ձևակերպումը խնդրահարույց է Արևմուտքում, որտեղ հաճախ ասվում է ոչ թե «հայ», այլ «ծագումով հայ» կինոռեժիսոր: Երբեմն նաև նա ներկայացվում է որպես «վրացի», «ռուս» կամ «խորհրդային» արվեստագետ:

Փարաջանովի ստեղծագործական ամբողջությունն ընդգրկված է մեկ ընդհանուր պարադոքսի մեջ, որը կարելի է բնորոշել որպես պայմանական սահմանագծից այս կամ այն կողմ ազատ և անսպասելիորեն անցնելու յուրահատուկ ճկունություն: Դա վերաբերում է նաև իմաստաբանական (սեմանտիկ) սահմանագծին և սահմանմանը:

«Նռան գույնը» ֆիլմում այս սկզբունքը տեսականորեն և տեսանելիորեն խտացված է: Անգամ որոշ կինոքննադատներ համարել են, որ «Նռան գույնը» բնավ ֆիլմ չէ, քանի որ այն խախտում է կինոյի էությունը որպես «շարժում»: Այսպիսով, Փարաջանովին որպես «հայ կինոռեժիսոր» բնութագրության երկու բառերն էլ խնդրահարույց դարձան, մինչդեռ երկուսն էլ ճշգրիտ են: Այսինքն՝ պարադոքսի էությունը նրա մեջ է, որ Փարաջանովին հաջողվում է գտնվել սահմանագծի հակադիր կողմերում միաժամանակ:

Բանալի բառեր՝ Փարաջանով, կինո, հայ կինոռեժիսոր, պարադոքս, իդիոպ, Գողար, Պազուինի:

АРМЯНСКИЙ ПАРАДОКС СЕРГЕЯ ПАРАДЖАНОВА

НАИРИ ГАЛСТАНЯН

Резюме

Сергей Параджанов рассказывал, что он родился не в январе 1924 г., а в ноябре 1923 г., и отец так радовался рождению сына, что отмечал это событие несколько недель подряд и лишь потом оформил свидетельство о рождении сына.

Соответствует это истине или нет, неизвестно, но столетие С. Параджанова магическим образом совпадает со столетием армянского кино, которое отмечали в Ереване в ноябре 2023 г.

На Западе представлять Параджанова как «армянского кинорежиссера» весьма проблематично: там предпочитают говорить о нем как о режиссере «армянского происхождения» (или о его «армянских «корнях»»). Иногда его даже представляют как «грузинского», «русского» либо «советского» кинорежиссера.

Творчество Сергея Параджанова состоит из одного общего парадокса, который можно охарактеризовать как (свободное, неожиданное) пересечение условных и общепринятых рубежей, в том числе и семантических определений. Этот принцип теоретически и визуально сконцентрирован в фильме «Цвет граната» – шедевре Параджанова, который считается лучшим фильмом киностудии «Арменфильм». В свое время некоторые кинокритики даже охарактеризовали «Цвет граната» как «не-фильм», ввиду того, что он нарушает сущность кино, которое есть «движение». Следовательно, словосочетание «армянский кинорежиссер» одновременно и точное, и проблематичное. То есть, суть парадокса состоит в том, что Параджанову удастся находиться по обе стороны определений, или границ, одновременно.

Ключевые слова: *Параджанов, кино, армянский кинорежиссер, парадокс, идиот, Годар, Пазолини.*