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| Paradjanov, Sergei Iosifovich (1924-1990) |
| Sergei Parajanov; Sergei Paradzhanov |
| Born Sarkis Paradzhanian to Armenian parents in Tbilisi, Georgia, Sergei Paradjanov (also spelled Parajanov or Paradzhanov) was a Soviet filmmaker known for his complex imagery, stylistic innovations, and ethnographic themes. He achieved international fame with *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* (1964), which defied socialist realism and sparked protests in Kiev. He refused to acquiesce to pressure to dub his film *Shadows* into Russian, and instead maintained the Ukrainian dialect that his characters would have spoken. With scant resources he shot *Sayat Nova* (1969), a hagiographic celebration of the eponymous Armenian poet through a cinematic exploration of symbols reflecting the inner spiritual world expressed in his verses. *Sayat Nova* was censored and retitled *Colour of Pomegranates* before its release. Paradjanov was blacklisted for the next fifteen years, ostensibly for his political views and controversial speeches. He was imprisoned from 1973 to 1977. In 1984 he was finally permitted to release another film, *Legend of the Suram Fortress*, adapted from a Georgian story about a young man who is interred alive in the walls of a fortress in order to fulfil a prophecy. Paradjanov’s last complete film, *Ashik Kerib* (1989), depicts an Aizerbaijani bard on a quest to win the hand of his beloved. Paradjanov died of lung cancer while working on the film *Confession*, which he intended to dedicate to Armenia. |
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| Further reading:  (02Ar)  (Alaiya)  (Paradjanov)  (Holloway)  (The Parajanov-Vartanov Institute)  (Sergei Paradjanov: Official Website of the Yerevanian House-Museum)  (Steffen) |