**Title:** Formal-Stylistic and Compositional Features of Collages by Sergey Paradzhanov

**Abstract.** Collages by Sergey Paradzhanov may be characterized as one of the outstanding high points of his creativity, as a model of contemporary visual art practice of the time. It is underlined that collages turned out to be almost only way to experiment during his hard times. Compositional and stylistic features of Sergey Paradzhanov’s collages are revealed, as well as the principles of intertextuality, their associative nature, and “recursive reconstruction of elements”. It is pointed that in Paradzhanov’s collages “scantiness” of materials was compensated with the exquisite play with textures and visual interpretations (refined with subject-spatial combinations, sense and visual citations, which formed the basis of Paradzhanov’s “alphabet”). It is emphasized that the most important feature of his collages is forming the “meta-language of the visual” that opens the possibility for a dialogue with the parallel art spaces. Paradzhanov’s use of all possible means of the collage thinking caused him exceeding the limitations of a collage, allowing to synthesize traditional collage techniques with the elements of decollage, assemblage, and ready-made.

**Keywords:** collages of Sergey Paradzhanov, compositional features, formal stylistic decisions, visual art practices.

**Problem statement.** Research of creativity of the world-famous director and artist Sergey Paradzhanov has been going on for several decades. His magnetic films have long been included in the treasury of world cinema, and at least dozen documentary films has been filmed about Sergey Paradzhanov. In this context, Paradzhanov’s artistic work is still on the background. The collage is an integral and extremely important part of the artist’s oeuvre. The collage strated to determine the originality of his artistic style from the very beginning of his professional work. Collages make a significant layer in creative work of the master.

Collage accompanies Paradzhanov from the very beginning of his artistic path, and since the mid-1960s it became a kind of “parallel direction” (as labeled by V. Katanyan) of his cinematographic art.

Thus, the analysis of Sergey Paradzhanov’s collages in the context of development of the visual culture of Ukraine in the second half of the twentieth century is an urgent need for contemporary Ukrainian art studies.

**Analysis of recent research works and publications.** Attention to the artist’s creativity arises in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Nevertheless, the professional re-
search of Sergey Paradzhanov’s creativity began actively in the 1990’s, after the death of the artist. The issue of artistic works by Paradzhanov has been addressed by L. Grigoryan, V. Katanyan [8], M. Oganesyan [12], O. Petrova [14], L. Lemesheva, T. Bodnarchuk [4].

**Objectives:** to study collage in the work of Sergey Paradzhanov as an organic component of the development of visual culture of Ukraine in the second half of the twentieth century.

**Presentation of the main research material.**

**Materials and techniques.** As previously noted, collage technique was an important stage in the development of art in the 20th century. The collage changed the boundaries between genres, forming a new artistic space between art and life. For example, the Dadaists are considered to be the founders of collage principles in art by many researchers. They asserted the collage as an artistic method, which did not depict the reality in photographic manner “in the age of photography” [15, p. 65].

There is no doubt that this key feature acts in a different light in the history of Paradzhanov’s creativity in order to understand the art of collage. What was a creative method for Western European artists (that is, the subject of free choice of materials and techniques of creation), was the only possible reality for Paradzhanov.

As many of his memoirists testify, from time to time the master had no choice whether to take things out of the garbage or to engage his personal subject environment to create collages, which, under normal circumstances, practically does not go over the line. In the vast majority of his creative periods, Sergey Paradzhanov’s collage existed as a kind of “unintentional art”. “Scantiness” of materials was balanced with the visual interpretation, which was thoroughly refined by subject-spatial combinatorics. Therefore, present-day general perception of many works, performed by Sergey Paradzhanov, causes a radically different impression: jewelry, colourful luxury and “wealth”.

In general, material world of Paradzhanov’ collage solutions is extremely broad. For example, V. Katanyan recalls, “He could use literally everything as a material—from jewelry to scrap. If I say ‘scrap’, I mean broken electric bulbs, glued in a chimerical combination on a sheet of plywood and inserted into a frame. He called it Infarction. Why not? If I say ‘jewelry’, then I mean, for example, a complimentary letter from Federico Fellini. Sergey hung it in an old decaden frame under a carriage lamp over his head and encrusted it with fragments of mother-of-pearl, peacock feathers and dried petals of the lotus” [8, p. 83]. Witnesses of his creative experiments, namely, G. Kuntsev, V. Bazhenov, M. Oganesyan, characterize content of Sergey Paradzhanov’s collages in a similar manner.

Svetlana Shcherbatyuk, wife of S. Paradzhanov, confessed in an interview that after his arrest and conviction, she could not understand her husband’s request to send him blank postcards. Subsequently, it turned out that they became one of the main materials for his prison collages [12, p. 34]. Paper (both textured and with printed elements) and fabric (from fragments and specially fragmented patches, to finished things) were among materials, used by the master the most. Probably, he was particularly interested in texture, as evidenced not only by his friends and colleagues, but also by a number of systematic repetitive technical and technological solutions used by Sergey Paradzhanov to develop a variety of themes and moods.

Separately worth noting is the fact that Sergey Paradzhanov's technical implementation of the collage has not always been a formal practice of creative life. High-quality work needed both physical and creative energy. Thus, V. Bazhenov, art critic and close friend of Sergey Paradzhanov, retells a characteristic case of the process of creating a “bulky and laborious collage”. The master had to ask his numerous visitors and friends to leave his workshop for several days, as collage assembly took place on the same table where guests were sitting [5].

In our opinion, a special style of Sergey Paradzhanov—to “frame” his own painting as vulgar, sometimes frankly obsessive, regarding the subject of baguets’ work (frames)—can be considered as an element of both techno-technological and formal-stylistic solution.

In particular, V. Katanyan recalls that “Sergey specially liked frames: he made and painted them, brought them from everywhere, he begged, exchanged and even simply picked them up without asking. He used long, oval, gilded, velvet, church frameworks in his work. He did not consider the work completed, until he found the framing. Unworthy junk, cluttered in the frame, received an artistic essence. An old-fashioned worn-out single woman’s shoe immediately attracted attention when it was placed in a rounded frame on the wall of his gallery” [8, p. 83].

Numerous cases of using the baguette space by the master as an additional collage plane, for example, in his work Puppet elections, can be considered a typical example of the alienability of “framing” of a collage from the original author’s idea (1985). Sometimes the squaring of the baguette rectangle turned into an internal “quote”, around which Sergey Paradzhanov closes another structural frame, as in the Crying Gioconda (1977), where rectangular frame overlaps the oval one, or in Marilyn Monroe (1980) with two baguette rectangles strung together on the top of the other. Misunderstanding of this particular feature of Paradzhanov’s technique distorts the authenticity of the master’s collages in a polygraphic or web representation.

Among such cases, we should single out the replication of the collage To the Death of Vysotsky (1980) without Paradzhanov’s frame, which in fact should be considered as unsuccessful fragmentation of the authentic work: golden openwork of the baguette with two pearl ribbons means the image of Vysotsky-Pushkin in another stylistics and adds “volume of time” between these two figures.

Certain formal-stylistic solutions of Sergey Paradzhanov’s collages have a concrete emotional and everyday motivation. Thus, reacting to the story of Pasolini’s death, Paradzhanov planned to create the collage Lamentation of Pasolini (1975). The master formed its general aesthetics and direct artistic solution “under the impression of a bouquet of flowers hanging from the ceiling in the room” [8, p. 37].
Sergey Paradzhanov’s letters remind of a small series of collages (three or four works) devoted to spouses of R. Shchedrin and M. Pliisetskaya. The collages were to be executed as “plastic subjects”. The story of the removal of “Faberge cufflinks”—eagles and diamonds presented by me (author’s note) and two fans of Boucher and Watteau of the 17th century from Rodion Shchedrin during the search gave an impulse to this topic [7, p. 39].

During the winter of 1976 Sergey Paradzhanov wrote in his letters to friends, “...I could not find any form and expression to congratulate you on your birthday! Take Carmen Suite (collage of candy wrappers and foils—authors’ note), impromptu, which I liked. <...> I’m afraid to write because I can cause distrust. It is allowed to glue and paint, as it is fun for prison authorities (authors’ note)” [8, p. 39–40]. As a result, it should be pointed out that the correspondence of Sergey Paradzhanov contains many similar memoirs, which, along with the analysis of works of the master, show the origins of formal language of the artist, clearly pointing to the emotional and everyday aspect. For example, Sergey Paradzhanov “celebrated” the amnesty news (1988) with collage creation and sent a telegram to his friends [8, p. 99].

The quotation is an important feature of figurative-stylistic language of Sergey Paradzhanov. In collage art of the master it appears in two aspects: 1) as a synthesis of textures, variations and colour accents, presented in a pure style of the collage that is typical for Sergey Paradzhanov; 2) as a combination of “fragments” of existing and, as a rule, well-known works of art. The quotation in its direct artistic sense is an integral part of the collage attribute. However, the master from the very beginning of his creative career is in several artistic systems at the same time. He actively uses aesthetic experience of various national cultures. He ”...synthesizes artistic styles: from Byzantine and Armenian frescoes and miniatures to Iranian Kajar painting, from Tiflis everyday life to surrealism, from pop art to Russian icon painting, from films of Kurosawa to Hakob Ovnatanyan, a unique artist of the 19th century, from Ukrainian legends and songs, from Hutsul everyday life to optical art, from collages of Max Ernst to the poetry of Eigesche Charents, theatrical experiments of Evgeny Vakhtangov and Georgiy Yakulov” [2, p. 198–206].

G. Kuntsev, the sound control supervisor of the film Legends of Suram Fortress, worked with Sergey Paradzhanov and stated that the master “could not be indifferent when passing a beautiful thing” and he could steal “not only the frame for a collage, but whole wooden gates, if they attracted his look and were to his taste” without any warning; “he took it as easily, as he gave it away” [10].

His close friends note that this feature is typical for Sergey Paradzhanov in relation to “other people’s ideas and finds”. Sometimes Paradzhanov perceived them “too careless”, “If he liked them, he appropriated them unknowingly, without noticing it.” Thus, V. Katanyan gives an example of borrowing the idea of a collage on a mirror, which Sergey Paradzhanov “took from the artist Mikeladze,” but he believed that he had invented it himself [8, p. 71–72].

An important feature of figurative-stylistic language of Sergey Paradzhanov is a symbolic narration (symbol-narrative). The subject matter of his work is not obvious, since the manner of the artist did not presuppose obligatory preservation of original essence of the subject.

The existence of Paradzhanov’s “alphabet” of signs and symbols creates difficulties in reading of some author’s works, in terms of idea and from the point of view of image analysis. For example, Sergey Paradzhanov usually put a kind of “signature” that is a collage self-portrait with nibble of barbed wire. It was typical for collages of the prison period, which were sent by mail, and hence they were part of epistolary communication of the artist with addressees. Sometimes this motive was repeated, with scissors cutting the wire, as a metaphor of liberation and a dream of freedom [10].

Features of compositional vision of Paradzhanov’s collage works are also not of the same type. Filmmaking process was definitely reflected in artistic practice of the master; his attraction to visionism in the screen language influenced the aesthetics of paintings.

The collage work Praying for Ovnatanyan (1966) is atypical in this sense. In compositional sense, the space of a work is divided into two zones that differ in scale and plasticity of elements. The left part of the “canvas” is devoted to creative reminiscences of Ovnatanyan, who is known in the history of painting as a portrait painter. One and a half dozen of female portraits are collected by Paradzhanov in a plane less than half the space of the picture. Separately worth noting is the fact that the artist chooses only two women (Natalie Teumyan and Solome Ovnetanyan, artist’s wife) from the dozens of works. Let us dare to assume that such a task was not simple in terms of idea and technique, because he had to engage at least sixteen printed reproductions in the collage work. In spite of the fact that the first album (1969) devoted to the artwork of Ovnetanyan came to light only in three years after collage creation (1966), and the size of Paradzhanov’s “canvas” excludes the possibility of using postcards, the question of working material appears to be very relevant.

This mass of portraits is mostly black and white, with a special emphasis on colour printing. It looks even more plasticized with the figure of Jesus (probably borrowed by Paradzhanov from the reproduction The Descent from the Cross) that “floats” in the air over the crown of the church on the right side of a work. The master introduces the fragment of the picture with the church into general story with two accents: the scorched edge on the left side of the image, which divides the space of the canvases into two zones and generalizes colour construction of the background of the entire left side of the canvases; and the use of a random “drawing” of electric wires on the background of the sky to organize the movement of elements of right and left parts of the work. In the end, the figure of the Cross, as in the funicular (whose cabin Paradzhanov placed nearby), moves toward a mass of female portraits that is the alusion of the church choir, which performs “praying” for salvation of the artist’s soul.
Hakob Ovnatanyan is the first exponent of purely secular art for Armenian culture. Therefore, the use of pieces of woven cloth with traditional Armenian ornaments is not accidental. S. Paradzhanov puts them on the entire quadrature of works between collage space and baguette. Emphasized “feminine” texture and symbolism of the fabric (let us remind you that Armenian folklore does not associate “home spun practice” with male practices) one more time distinguishes gender peculiarity of Ovnatanyan’s creativity, which is emphasized by S. Paradzhanov’s collage means.

In addition to peculiarities of the work, the essay has quite logical reminiscences with documentary and poetic film-sketch Hakob Ovnatanyan, which S. Paradzhanov shot at the film studio Armenianfilm in 1965, right after the Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors. This film is the first masterpiece of the master, which clearly shows Paradzhanov’s desire to use the means of special mise-en-scene construction. A number of objects and frames for pictures change in the frame into fragments of Ovnatanyan’s works, which generally look like collage material: at first only hands, then only eyes and fragments of the face and the bust in the end. S. Paradzhanov emphasizes gender aesthetics of images in the film, as well as in the collage. For example, when the viewer sees a woman’s face on the screen, it is accompanied by flute sounds; but man’s “nature” is accompanied by sounds of drums.

There are many statements and arguments in favor of the fact that “Paradzhanov realized images of the unfilmed movies in his collages” [13, p. 48]. This fact once again raises questions about the relationship between frame composition (scene) and the collage of Sergey Paradzhanov.

Zaven Sarkisyan, the director of Sergey Paradzhanov House Museum in Yerevan and a long-time researcher of his art, believes that “collages, drawings, dolls, hats” gave the master an opportunity to free his “enormous creative energy”, especially in those years when the artist was not in demand as a director. “Where I was not allowed to shoot a film,” said Paradzhanov, “I began to make collages. A collage is a compressed kind of film” [16]. In our opinion, Sergey Paradzhanov’s creativity cannot be considered within the limits of traditional ideas about differences between artistic language of filmmaking and fine arts because the master had his own, specific vision of filmmaking. A film is a collage for him. That is why almost all of his films are “frescoes”, “canvases”, “screen paintings”, etc.

That is, above-mentioned judgment of Sergey Paradzhanov should be considered only in the context of his films. In other words, rethinking the statement of Sergey Paradzhanov, when he was not allowed to “shoot” collages, he “glued” them.

Numerous cases of combination of cinematographic techniques with means of expressiveness of fine art labeled by N. Nikoryak as “intermedial markers” are unnecessary arguments in favor of above-mentioned reflections [11, p. 353–354].

In addition, there are cases when collage was used by Sergey Paradzhanov as the point of entry into the script space. For example, G. Kuntsev mentions sketches of the film, which the artist wrote in prison and “presented to Fellini.” They were based on real prison experience of Sergey Paradzhanov. According to G. Kuntsev’s evidence, a collage portrait of the central character “was displayed at all exhibitions” and it turned into a kind of visual synopsis [10].

Using all the possibilities of collage thinking caused the fact that traditional collage became a kind of a genre. Sergey Paradzhanov overcomes traditional flatness of scrappy painting quickly enough and uses assembly techniques each time, experimenting with fully prepared objects. On the other hand, he changes their texture and quality in order to achieve the intended effect.

This original break of the collage pattern allows the master to synthesize traditional techniques of collage with such contemporary art techniques: decollage, assemblage and ready-made.

The principle of colour-space substitution (E. Panofsky) dominates in the collage compositions of the master. Sergey Paradzhanov uses the object as a spot, as a colour accent quite often. It destroys the form and therefore, the main content of the thing [3, p. 162].

Intercollage deserves particular attention in the context of analyzing the composition of Sergey Paradzhanov’s collage works. Intercollage is a method that was widely used by the Dadaists. Its usage is associated with kaleidoscopic “transpositions—transformations” in the creativity of the master. The artist-improviser used them in a number of collage works. For example, he used assembling materials for collage; disassembled certain parts of already prepared and even exhibited artworks to use them in another work, updated or completely changed the names of works, etc.

Thus, L. Abramyan recalls the fact when Paradzhanov “renamed” the collage-portrait of the Ukrainian philosopher Hryhoriy Skovoroda into the portrait of the poet Egishe Charents [1]. The collage The Night Bird of Tarkovsky (1987) is an example of such “transformation”. The compositional solution of this work was changed by Paradzhanov in connection with the death of the director. It is significant that the master not only re-thought the original idea of the work and changed the direction of the story, but also transformed the plane collage into a bulk assembly-installation with a ker- osene lamp and a wooden black bird [1].

Conclusions.

1. In the second half of the 20th century, the collage art was at the forefront of discussions between the academic artistic environment and the art practice of contemporary art. In the 1970s the thesis on the collage understanding as an art of any field of human life was formulated for the first time, as a tendency of the second half of the 20th century. It has been transformed by the artist or it is perceived by him without change. The nature of art ceases to be precisely fixed sphere and collage is used as the main argument in favor of such point of view.

Analysis of theoretical heritage of national and Western European art history of the second half of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century allows us to distinguish...
the following characteristic features of formal-stylistic language of collage art: 1) intertextuality (the “quoting” method), which denotes the phenomenon of the ratio of artistic work to cultural space of the sign and the symbol; 2) the reversal of elements’ reconstruction; the possibility of restoring the “historical background” of the collage, recognizing fragments of famous works of art or ordinary details of everyday life that form the subject-spatial language of the work; 3) the associative poetics of collage that can be used in composition of a work or to increase the significance of formal aspect, when the artistic image is created by placing or stratification of certain materials, forms or coloured “spots” on one another. Illustrative material can be used and figurative material receives a new interpretation due to the movement from usual context to an unusual environment; 4) the most significant feature of formal-stylistic language of collage art is the formation of a “visual metalanguage” that greatly expands the genre boundaries of collage art and creates opportunities for dialogue with other spaces of the creation.

2. What was a creative method for Western European artists (that is, the subject of free choice of materials and techniques of creation), was the only possible reality for Paradzhanov. In the vast majority of creativity periods, Sergey Paradzhanov’s collages existed as a kind of “unintentional art”. “Scantiness” of materials was balanced by a visual interpretation, which was thoroughly refined by subject-spatial combinatorics. Therefore, today general perception of many works by Sergey Paradzhanov causes a radically different impression: jewelry, colourful luxury and “richness”. Probably, the master was particularly interested in texture, as evidenced not only by his friends and colleagues, but also by a number of systematic repetitive technical and technological decisions used by Sergey Paradzhanov to develop a variety of themes and moods.

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Формально-стилістичні та композиційні особливості колажів Сергія Параджанова

Анотація. Колажі Сергія Параджанова охарактеризовано як один із визначних творчих здобутків майстра, як зразки сучасної (contemporary) для свого часу арт-практики в межах візуального мистецтва. Акцентовано увагу на тому, що для С. Параджанова в скрутні для його творчості часи колажи стали чи не єдиною можливою лабораторією творчих пошуків. Розкрито композиційні та стильові особливості колажів С. Параджанова; виявлено присутність у них принципів інтертекстуальності, асоціативності, «зворотності реконструкції елементів» та ін. Підкреслено, що в колажах С. Параджанова «бідність» матеріалів компенсувалася вищуканою грою фактурами, візуальним синтезом, яка відображалась предметно-мистецьким рухом, надихаючи творчі осягання майстра.

Ключові слова: колажи, композиційні особливості, формально-стилістичні візуальні арт-практики.

Золотухіна Н. А., Мархайчук Н. В., Тарасов В. В., Чадаєва Е. Ю.
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