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THE KOMITASSIAD

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illustrations.

NAS RA Institute of Arts has made a significant contribution to Komitas studies. It is worth mentioning the publication of the academic edition of Komitas' works (1960–2006)

and of the two volumes of the *Komitaskan* collection [*Komitassiana*], the latter containing scholarly papers on the issues, arising from the great Armenian musician's heritage (1969, 1981).

The 150th birth anniversary of Komitas, NAS RA Institute of Arts marked with scientific conferences held in Moscow and Yerevan, as well as with the publication of the third volume of the *Komitassiana* (chief editor Anna Asatryan).

The long awaited volume was published by the decision of the Scientific Council of NAS RA Institute of Arts and, as part of NAS RA research work in the field of Armenian studies, sponsored by the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund.

As in the previous two collections, in this one too, the papers are dedicated to Komitas' life and oeuvre, his activity as a musicologist and folklore collector. However, as distinct from the previous volumes, this one, apart from music criticism, includes interdisciplinary research in visual art, literary and ballet criticism. Thereby, of all the three, this is the first to offer analyses of the representations of Komitas in visual arts, music and literature.

The volume under review opens with the paper of **Ararat Aghasyan**, Corresponding Member of NAS RA, Doctor of Arts, Professor, (Institute of Arts, NAS RA), entitled "Komitas as Seen by Armenian Artists and Sculptors" (pp. 7–24), which has provided a framework for the trilingual (Armenian, Russian, English) album bearing the same title. It is widely recognized that Komitas holds a special place in the Armenian culture. Many of the Armenian artists and sculptors have represented Komitas' image in various genres of arts. A. Aghasyan was the first to

examine and comprehensively present the image of Komitas in the works by the Armenian artists.

The core of the collection under review makes the musicological studies.

Doctor of Arts, Professor **Anna Asatryan** (NAS RA Institute of Arts), having paged through the archives of personal and scholarly communication between Komitas and A. Chopanyan, summed up the inferences, drawn from the material, in the article entitled “Arshak Chopanyan in the Creative Destiny of Komitas” (pp. 25–61). The paper underscores the pivotal role the renowned Armenian intellectual had had in the creative career of the great Komitas, and the contribution he made to Komitas studies. A. Chopanyan thought highly of Komitas’ talent and dedication, commended his efforts and promoted the musician’s oeuvre. A. Chopanyan printed materials about Komitas in his *Anahit* magazine. Those were detailed accounts of the concerts, organized by Komitas in Paris and Geneva, feedbacks and reviews of musicians regarding Komitas’ performance, recollections about him, on the one hand, and the autobiography and articles in musicology, written by Komitas himself, on the other.

Doctor of Arts, Professor **Anna Arevshatyan** (NAS RA Institute of Arts) in her “Vardapet Komitas and Grigor Gapasakalyan: Shared Approach to Khaz Studies” (pp. 62–76) expresses the opinion that comparisons, quotations from and references to the works of the music theorist from Constantinople Grigor Gapasakalyan, who was among the pioneers of national music criticism of the New Time, constituted a major part in Komitas’ draft research papers on khaz studies. “It means, – A. Arevshatyan concludes, – that Gapasakalyan’s works served as handbooks for Komitas, an encyclopedia of medieval scholarly and practical theory, and guided his efforts in his study of the khazes” (p. 76).

PhD in Arts, Associate Professor **Anahit Baghdasaryan’s** (NAS RA Institute of Arts) paper, entitled “Sound Imitation in the Oeuvre of Vardapet Komitas” (pp. 77–90), reveals that “Komitas’ punctuated imitations both by their resolution, harmonic quart-quint-octave structure, melodic narration and word-painting in a way correlate with the various trends of the art of music composition of the 19th and, mostly, of the 20th centuries, such as pointillism, dodecaphony, linearity and sonority. Moreover, thereby they often inhibit some phenomena of the 20th century European music” (p. 90).

The collection under review comprises a certain amount of research which once again documents Komitas’ international recognition.

The French Orientalist-Armenologist Frederic Macler visited Etchmiadzin in 1909, met Komitas in person and left insightful recollections of him in his travel notes and in the brochure *Music in Armenia*. NAS RA Corresponding Member, Doctor of Sciences in Philology, Professor **Aelita Dolukhanyan** (Armenian State Pedagogical University after Khachatur Abovyan) in her article “The Famous French Armenologist Frederic Macler about Komitas” (pp. 91–101) has introduced to academic circles Macler’s “forever up-to-date for Komitas studies” characterization of Komitas as a personality and professional.

Komitas’ image has been an incentive for the advancement of the Armenian literature as well. Quite a few works in verse and prose were dedicated to him. Among them, two poems stand out: Paruyr Sevak’s *The Unceasing Belfry* and Yeghishe Charents’ *Requiem Aeternam*. Doctor of Sciences in Philology, Professor **Azat Yeghiazaryan** (Russian-Armenian University) in his “The Image of Komitas in Paruyr Sevak’s and Yeghishe Charents’ Poems” (pp. 102–111), for the first time in Komitas studies examined the poems, written about Komitas in the latest period of Armenian literature, underscored their specificities and differences, which he attributed to both the time of their creation and the individualities of the poets.

Doctor of Arts, Professor **Lilit Yernjakyan** (NAS RA Institute of Arts) in her “Polylingualism and Identity in the Armenian Ashugh Tradition in the Light of Komitas’ Theses” (pp. 112–141) investigated the Komitassian model of the Armenian national musical identity, which, in the author’s opinion, was incompatible – in keeping with the ideology of the time – with the creations by ashughs, using different oriental languages. “Komitas’ primary scholarly tasks did not restrict the broad area of his creative interests,” – the musicologist remarks, – “which, besides peasant and sacred music, included the medieval gusan, ashugh and urban folk music” (p. 141).

Doctor of Sciences in Philology **Anushavan Zakaryan** (HPHJ) in his “Thomas Hartman at the Root of Founding the “Komitas Association”” (pp. 142–150) wrote about the role of the Russian composer and conductor Th. Hartman in the establishment of the “Komitas Association” in May 1919 in Tiflis. The article dwells upon the Russian composer’s article “Vardapet Komitas” and his lecture about Komitas.

Doctor of Sciences in Philology **Susanna Hovhannisyan’s** (NAS RA Institute of Literature after M. Abeghyan) “Komitas in the Tumanyan-Related Documents”

(pp. 151–164) highlighted novel noteworthy facts about Komitas' oeuvre, his life and, especially about his friendship with Hovhannes Tumanyan. The information has been derived from the documents related to Tumanyan: articles by and about the poet, sent and received letters, memories, captions to photographs, family archives, periodicals, etc.

Doctor of Arts, Professor **Mher Navoyan** (NAS RA Institute of Arts) in his "Komitas' Two Key Concepts of Music Theory (General Outline)" (pp. 165–188) points out that "when evaluating Komitas' heritage as a whole, special attention should be paid to his research as a musicologist, namely, to his insights and observations in music theory. In other words, *Komitas the theoretician* has to a great extent predetermined the exceptionality of the musical language thinking of *Komitas the composer* and the historical uniqueness of *Komitas the phenomenon* in the Armenian culture" (p. 165).

As is known, in his multifarious activities Komitas gave priority to and himself took notes of the musical component of the Armenian national epic *Sasna Tzrer*. PhD in Arts **Tatevik Shakhkulyan** (NAS RA Institute of Arts) in her research "Komitas And the Songs in the *Sasna Tzrer* Epic" (pp. 189–205) maintains that it was Komitas who laid the basis for the tradition of writing down the songs from the said epic. "He considered it a matter of great importance,- the author continues,- which explains why, as is evidenced by the archival handwritten documents, he had been planning to compose an opera based on the *Sasna Tzrer*" (p. 205).

PhD in Arts, Associate Professor **Lusineh Sahakyan** (Komitas State Conservatory of Yerevan) in her article "Vardapet Komitas and the Armenian School of Composition" (pp. 206–226) observes, "Komitas had formulated the regularities of folk music; the Armenian school of composition and musicological thought anchored on the Komitassian traditions. The creative principles, outlined by Vardapet Komitas, are up-to-date now and will remain as such in the future" (p. 225).

Paruyr Sevak's *The Unceasing Belfry* and Yeghishe Charents' *Requiem Aeternam* inspired the composer Edgar Hovhannisyan to write the music to a ballet named *Antuni* as far back as 1969. The libretto was written by the dancer and ballet master Maxim Martirosyan, who also staged the ballet. The premiere performance was given on November 20, 1969 at Yerevan Opera and Ballet Theatre. Doctor of Arts **Nazenik Sargsyan** (NAS RA Institute of Arts), basing her study on the in-depth examination of the video recording of M. Martirosyan's produc-

tion (1988) and his handwritten script, wrote her paper entitled “*Antuni: the First Ballet about Vardapet Komitas and the Genocide*” (pp. 227–244), which so far is the only attempt in the Armenian Ballet studies to address the performance and reveal its genre, style, composition and other distinctive features. The researcher states with certainty that the staging of *Antuni* has neither a preceding nor a succeeding analogue in the history of the Armenian ballet, up to the present day (p. 229).

PhD in Arts **Marianna Tigranyan** (NAS RA Institute of Arts) in her “The Songs of Wedding Dowry in Komitas’ Notations” (pp. 245–265) analyzes the songs, written down by Komitas. Having underscored, that the five notated samples of dowry ditties are among the few preserved ones and, as such, have even greater value, the researcher concludes that they give us an approximate idea of the archaic Armenian custom and bespeak the once fancy national wedding rituals.

The collection under review is certainly a notable contribution to the Armenian musicology. It reflects the current phase of Komitas studies, and thereby serves as a link in the chain of the Komitassiana interrupted in 1981. Thus, one of the most meaningful scholarly traditions of NAS RA Institute of Arts is retained.

We are convinced that the fourth volume of the Komitassiana will come out before long.

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