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ARSHAK CHOPANIAN AND THE “ANAHIT” JOURNAL IN THE ORIGINS OF KOMITAS STUDIES

Abstract

The Armenian writer, critic, linguist, journalist and public figure Arshak Chopanian's (1872–1954) role in the creative life of Komitas is exceptional, and significant is his contribution to the formation of Komitas studies. Komitas and A. Chopanian's acquaintance took place in Paris in July 1901 and lasted through Komitas' death. A. Chopanian did not only highly appreciate Komitas's talent and the work he did, but also attached importance to creating favorable conditions for his activity and took a lot of practical steps to that end. In *Anahit*, the literary, artistic and public magazine founded by him in Paris in 1898, as well as in other periodicals of the time, such as *Byuzandion* (Constantinople), *Hayastani kochnak [Armenia's Bell]* (New York), etc., A. Chopanian placed

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Arshak Chopanian and the “Anahit” Journal in the Origins of Komitas Studies

articles, in which he commended Komitas’ activity, thereby making his works known to broader public.

On the pages of *Anahit*, A. Chopanian, on the one hand, presented the full-fledged panorama of Komitas’ concert activities that unfolded in Paris and Geneva, published materials assessing Komitas’ oeuvre, authored by various musicians, as well as memoirs, and, on the other, Komitas’ own studies in musicology and a piece of his literary legacy – his autobiography.

A. Chopanian’s Komitassiana had had also applied significance. Several important issues raised by A. Chopanian – in particular, the issue of burying Komitas in Armenia, and that of publishing his musical legacy – were brought to life in the near future.

Keywords: *Arshak Chopanian, Komitas, Armenian music, Anahit magazine, Paris, the year of 1901, the year of 1935.*

Introduction

“Komitas is a world unto himself; much has been written about him, and much more remains to be written. For a long time to come, the Armenian musicologist, composer, ethnographer, and patriot will continue to engage with this multifaceted and captivating figure.”¹

These lines were written by the Armenian writer, critic, philologist, journalist, and public figure Arshak Chopanian (1872–1954). Penned 90 years ago, in 1935, under the influence of Komitas’s passing, these words remain relevant even today.

The aim of our research is to revisit the pages of Komitas’s personal and creative interactions with A. Chopanian, to present the significant and profound role the renowned Armenian figure played in the creative destiny of the genius Komitas, and to uncover Chopanian’s contributions to the field of Komitas studies.

As A. Chopanian observed: “...I was one of those close to him who knew him most intimately, followed his work step by step, and was familiar with all his enthusiasms, hopes, desires, plans, difficulties, obstacles, and sorrows. With all my love and admiration, I endeavored to do everything within my power to ease his work.”²

Born on July 15, 1872, in Constantinople, and later actively engaged in

¹ **Chopanian**, 1935, № 6, 54.

² *Ibid*, 46.

literary pursuits in his hometown, A. Chopanian published the collection *"Voices of Dawn"* in 1891 and founded the literary semiannual *"Flower"* in 1895. In 1896, he moved to Paris, where, in 1898, he established the literary, artistic, and social journal *"Anahit"*.

Komitas and Arshak Chopanian

In July 1901, Komitas visited Paris for the first time. During this visit, 32-year-old Komitas met 29-year-old Arshak Chopanian. The meeting with Komitas became one of the most vivid and impactful events in Chopanian's life. "From the very first day," Chopanian would recall years later, "when I saw him and felt that extraordinary strength within him, I was bound to him with limitless love..."³

Under the impression of his first meeting with Komitas, A. Chopanian wrote his first article about the young musician, titled Komitas Vardapet. The article was published in *"Anahit"* in 1901, in issues #6–7, under the heading "Faces." According to the author, it was one of the most passionate articles he had ever written throughout his life.⁴

During several meetings, Komitas shared his thoughts and the program he intended to implement with A. Chopanian. The scholar was already confident that Komitas was "the person needed to radically renew Armenian music, rescuing it from its distortion and decline, and to introduce it to European musicologists, allowing it to claim its rightful place in world music, a place it has yet to occupy."⁵

On page 165 of the same issue of *Anahit*, in the "National Chronicle" section, brief information about Komitas is published: "Komitas Vardapet, who stayed in Paris for about a month, was surrounded by the admiration of the Armenian community in the city. Our chapel was filled with a large crowd on the few Sundays when the Vardapet sang. The talented artist is about to return to Etchmiadzin to resume his musical work there, which has been highly valued and encouraged by Khrimian Hayrik."⁶ It is not difficult to guess that the author of this unsigned article about Komitas is none other than A. Chopanian.

Later, A. Chopanian continued to dedicate numerous pages in *"Anahit"* to Komitas. The first significant outcome of the collaboration between Komitas and A.

³ **Chopanian**, 1931, № 1–2, 119.

⁴ See **Chopanian**, 1901, № 6–7, 141–144.

⁵ *Ibid*, 142.

⁶ Komitas Vardapet, 1901, № 6–7, 165.

Arshak Chopanian and the “Anahit” Journal in the Origins of Komitas Studies

Chopanian was the famous concert organized on December 1, 1906, at the Salle des Agricultures in Paris, which was dedicated to highlighting Armenian music and achieved exceptional success. The concert poster was designed by Edgar Shahin.

In the final issue of *Anahit* in 1906, an article titled *The Armenian Concert in Paris* was published, describing this concert. The author, who is most likely A. Chopanian, writes: “Mrs. Margarita Babayan, P. Mugunyan, and Shah-Muratsyan sang the solo pieces in a marvelous way, and Mrs. Shushanik Babayan played the piano masterfully, performing the Mushian and Yerevan all-dance melodies. Komitas Vardapet sang “Tiramayr” and “Havik”. The audience received all these pieces with enthusiastic applause, and five or six of them were repeated.”⁷

After the first part of the concert, A. Chopanian delivered an extensive French lecture titled “On Armenian Music and Poetry”, which was composed of two substantial sections. In the first, he briefly outlines Komitas's life path and provides a general description of his work, while in the second section, he discusses the compositions included in the concert program.

The article “The Armenian Concert in Paris” published in *Anahit* concludes with the following paragraph: “This concert brought great pleasure to the Armenians present and left an unforgettable impression on the Europeans. In our next issue, we will provide further details.”⁸

In accordance with *Anahit's* promise, the extensive article “*The Armenian Music Concert*,”⁹ was published in the January-February 1907 issue, which presents the opinions of Parisian music critics about the concert. The first published piece is the Armenian translation of A. Chopanian's French lecture “*On Armenian Music and Poetry*” (the original French text had been published in *Le Mercure Musical*).¹⁰ This is followed by Armenian translations of the article from *Le Mercure Musical* edited and founded by French musicologist and critic Louis Lalou, which appeared in the December 15 issue, as well as articles from *Guide Musical* in Brussels (December 9) and *Le Courrier Musical* (December 15).¹¹

Indeed, A. Chopanian not only published valuable information in *Anahit*

⁷ Armenian Music Concert, Paris, 1906, № 10–11–12, 240.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ See “Armenian Music Concert” (1907), *Anahit*, Issue 1–2, 23–31.

¹⁰ See **A.Ch.**, 1907, Issue 1–2, 24–27.

¹¹ See Armenian Music Concert, 1907, Issue 1–2, 27–31.

about this important event in early 20th-century Armenian musical life and his lecture, but also presented the reactions of the French press and the high praise from French experts in Armenian translation.

On the evening of January 13, 1907, at the invitation of the Art School's administration, Komitas Vardapet gave a lecture on Armenian music at the Rue de la Sorbonne hall, which "*Anahit*" also covers. In the article, which was most likely written by A. Chopanian, we learn that during the lecture, Komitas explained how the Armenian people create their songs, how they develop and spread them.

The speaker lists the types of these songs, showing the place and time of their creation and performance, illustrating each one through singing, "which greatly enlivened and captivated the lecture."¹² Then, the speaker clarifies the issues of foreign music's influence on Armenian music.

Following the lecture, there was a "small concert, composed purely of Armenian pieces, where their talents were once again demonstrated by O.M. and Sh. Babayan, B. Mugunian, and the speaker himself, Komitas Vardapet, who, after singing some songs, enchanted the audience by playing a pastoral tune on the Armenian "pogi" (a type of folk instrument)."¹³

Subsequently, Komitas and A. Chopanian continue their mission of spreading Armenian music together.¹⁴

In May 1907, the Armenian student community invites Komitas to Geneva to form a choir with local resources and give a concert for the benefit of the starving people of Van. Komitas forms a 50-member choir from Armenian and Russian students and prepares them for the concert to support the people of Van, which takes place on June 1, 1907, in the hall of the Geneva Conservatory.

In Geneva, just like in Paris, "Mr. Arshak Chopanian gave a lecture on Armenian poetry and music."¹⁵

Important information about the concert is provided in the article "Armenian Art in Europe," published in issues 6–7–8–9 of "*Anahit*" in 1907, where it discusses the concert organized by the students of Geneva on June 1st in the hall

¹² The Lecture of Komitas Vardapet, 1907, Issue 1–2, 32.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ For the creative collaboration of Komitas and Chopanian, see Asatryan 2019, pages 25–61.

¹⁵ Garegin V. Hovsepyan, 1907, № 10–11, 909.

Arshak Chopanian and the "Anahit" Journal in the Origins of Komitas Studies

of the Geneva Conservatory for the benefit of the starving people of Van.¹⁶

On June 3rd, Komitas, accompanied once again by A. Chopanian, travels to Lausanne and then to Bern to give concerts and lectures. In Lausanne, "Mr. Chopanian repeated his lecture, while Komitas Vardapet sang 12 pieces of folk and ecclesiastical melodies in the university hall, with the support of the organ."¹⁷ In Lausanne, Komitas and A. Chopanian are photographed with the Armenians from Constantinople, poet Ruben Sevak and theatrical figure Gaspar Ipekian.

In fact, Komitas and A. Chopanian were carrying out the same mission in Europe. Komitas was presenting the songs of the little-known Armenian peasant, while A. Chopanian, as "an Armenian scholar and poet, took on the noble task of making Armenian poetry accessible to the West."¹⁸

At the end of July 1907, Komitas, accompanied by A. Chopanian, travels from Paris to Italy to conduct professional research in the Venetian libraries. On July 25th, in the hall of the Mekhitarist Congregation in Venice, Komitas delivers a lecture, presenting the results of his research to the members of the congregation. He is then invited to repeat the lecture at the Murad-Raphaelian School.¹⁹

The next meeting between Komitas and A. Chopanian takes place at the end of October 1908. A. Chopanian, as a representative of Mush and Shabin-Karahisar, comes to Echmiadzin to participate in the Catholicos elections and is hosted by Komitas. "I felt more strongly how narrow the surroundings were for him there," A. Chopanian would later write, "he had countless things to do, but there was no environment for it. He would feel constrained there, especially after the broad and brilliant field of activity he had in Paris."²⁰

After the Catholicos elections, which took place on November 1st and in which Komitas also participated, A. Chopanian and Komitas, along with the Western Armenian representatives, travel to Tbilisi. The journey to Tbilisi left warm memories. On December 10th, Komitas and A. Chopanian visit the studio of Gevorg Bashinjaghian and are photographed with Hovhannes Tumanyan, Avetik Isahakyan, Ghazaros Aghayan, and Vrtanes Papazyan.

¹⁶ See "Armenian Art in Europe," 1907, № 6–7–8–9, 160.

¹⁷ **Garegin V. Hovsepean**, 1907, № 10–11, 909.

¹⁸ Armenian Art in European Press, 1907, № 7–8, 380.

¹⁹ On Komitas's lectures in Venice, see **H.K.T. Sahakian** 1907, № 7–8, 369–373.

²⁰ **Chopanian** 1931, № 1–2, 119.

Soon, Komitas faces a difficult choice: where to move, Constantinople or Tbilisi? Bishop Mesrop Ter-Movsesian invites him to Tbilisi to become the music teacher at the Nersisian School and the choir director of the city's main church. Meanwhile, Komitas's seminary classmate, Karapet Partizpanyan, invites him to Constantinople, stating: "...favorable conditions will be found there for all his work, and he promises full support for him and his friends."²¹

Komitas consults with A. Chopanian. "Which one to choose?" he hesitated to make a decision and asked for my advice. I urged him to choose Constantinople. At that time, Constantinople offered a wide field for artistic activity, the new regime had removed censorship, freedom of movement was granted, and communication between Constantinople and Turkish Armenia had become easier. A revival of intellectual and national life had begun in our large community in Constantinople, where Komitas would be fully understood, encouraged, and supported in carrying out his work on a broader scale. He listened once again to my friendly advice and went to Constantinople. What a marvelous job he did there, how both Armenian and foreign societies there appreciated him, is known to all. But then came the Great War, and events occurred that shook his mind and placed him in the painful condition in which he remains to this day..."²²

However, according to A. Chopanian, the ideal solution would have been for Komitas to move to Paris. In Paris, Chopanian was confident, "he could both implement his entire program and enrich his artistic and technical resources, which he did partially during the one year he spent here. As the choir director of the Armenian Church in Paris, he would have secured his life, and he would have formed a magnificent Armenian choir that would have been the pride of our community in Paris. Besides strengthening our church with such a choir and making it a favorite and beneficial place for even foreign music lovers in Paris, he would have organized regular concerts in the city with that choir. In doing so, he would have brought the most valuable contribution to the Armenian cause and culture in the most beautiful form. And in his spare time, he would have dedicated himself to arranging the songs he collected, composing the conclusions of his critical studies, and creating personal musical works."²³

²¹ **H.J. Siruni** 1965, № 10, 23.

²² **Chopanian** 1931, № 1–2, 120.

²³ *Ibid*, 121.

Komitas in the Reflection of Letters Addressed to Arshak Chopanian

Komitas's extensive Correspondence, which is a unique and important part of his literary heritage, spans two decades (1894–1914). Komitas's letters are addressed to Margarita Babayan, Mariam Tumanyan, Hovhannes Tumanyan, Matteos Izmirlian, Garegin Levonian, Barsegh Gorganyan, Anton Mayilian, Vahram Mankunian, Spiridon Melikyan, Alexander Myasnikyan, Siranush, Nikoghayos Tigranian, and many others.

The correspondence between Komitas and A. Chopanian is extensive and valuable, beginning in 1901, after Komitas returned to Etchmiadzin from Paris.

The letters of Komitas addressed to A. Chopanian, which had arrived from Paris along with A. Chopanian's rich archive and were stored in the Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences' Museum of Literature and Art, were first published in the inaugural issue of the "Historical and Philological Journal," with an introduction and annotations by Matevos Muradyan, the first head of the Music Department at the Institute of Art of the Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences.²⁴

Komitas highly appreciated the personality of A. Chopanian and his contributions. "The Armenian nation is already greatly indebted to you," Komitas writes to A. Chopanian from Constantinople on December 25, 1912. "You were the first to understand well that in order to pave our future, we first needed to introduce ourselves to foreigners, to show that we are vibrant, children of light and builders in dark places..."²⁵

Although Komitas is generally reserved and introspective in his correspondence, in the letters addressed to A. Chopanian, his multifaceted interests, sharpness of thought, independence, and his vivid and delicate observational skills emerge. His letters reveal a heightened sensitivity toward the surrounding world.

Through these letters, we gain "first-hand" information about Komitas' activities. He shares details about upcoming and future projects, recent concerts, lectures, and creative endeavors. He frequently touches upon issues related to the classification, study, and publication of Armenian folk songs.

In his letters, Komitas' aesthetic views take shape, and his perspectives on Armenian music are formulated. Particularly noteworthy are the letters in which

²⁴ See Muradyan 1958, № 1, 245–267.

²⁵ Ibid, 263.

Komitas reveals his political views and orientations. It is in the letter addressed to A. Chopanian that he outlines his vision of the Armenian national-liberation movement (see the letter of December 25, 1912).

The contribution of Arshak Chopanian to the science of Komitas

Arshak Chopanian's first article dedicated to Komitas, the "great Armenian," where the author presented "the herald of that great force rising above our nation," as we have seen, was published in the June-July 1901 issue of "Anahit." This article not only became the first piece in the French press but also laid the foundations for the science of Komitas studies.

Indeed, "Chopanian should be regarded as the founder of Komitas studies, something that is not yet fully recognized among us."²⁶ After all, it was through his "analytical-scientific evaluations of the work and contributions of Komitas, and the questions he raised, that the further development and direction of Komitas studies were initiated and predetermined."²⁷

An important significance for the field of Komitas studies is Arshak Chopanian's extensive analytical article "Komitas Vardapet and Armenian Music,"²⁸ published in the joint issue of Anahit for 1931 (by the way, the editor had included a photo of Komitas in the issue's composition). The author wrote this piece in connection with the 60th anniversary of Komitas' birth, at the initiative of the Komitas Vardapet's Friends' Committee, for a solemn event held in Paris. The author sets out to interpret and reveal the immense role that Komitas played in our national music and cultural life.

In the article, Arshak Chopanian analyzes the life and work of the musician, examining and valuing the main directions of his activities. At the same time, the article, which is occasionally interspersed with memoirs, provides highly important information about the great musician.

In the pages of Anahit, Arshak Chopanian not only sheds light on Komitas' concert and scientific activities in Paris and publishes his scientific works but also highlights his work in Constantinople. For example, in the Anahit 1911 issue, number 3–4, in the "Chronicle" section, it is written: "Another equally admirable and important project is the plan to establish an Armenian Music Conservatory in

²⁶ Arevshatyan 1998, 15.

²⁷ Sahakyan 2010, 22.

²⁸ See Chopanian 1931, № 1–2, 103–127.

Arshak Chopanian and the “Anahit” Journal in the Origins of Komitas Studies

Constantinople under the leadership of Komitas Vardapet.”²⁹

Although the publication of *Anahit* ceased in 1911 and did not resume until 1928, Arshak Chopanian continued to publish articles about Komitas, covering a broad geographical scope. On April 3, 1912, issue № 4703 of the *Byzantion* newspaper published his article “Komitas Vardapet and Shah-Muradian,” while in the July 7–8, 1914 issue of *Byzantion*, Chopanian published the article “An Unprecedented Decision,” in which he addresses the well-known decision of the Ecclesiastical Assembly and describes it as the most unprecedented decision, considering it an affront to beauty and devoid of any semblance of justice.

In the 39th and 40th issues of the Armenian Call from New York, published in 1923, Arshak Chopanian’s article “Komitas Vardapet” was published in continuation.³⁰ In the first part of the article, the author provides valuable information about Komitas’ condition, while in the second part, he raises the issue of the need for the publication of Komitas’ unpublished works.

In his article, Arshak Chopanian appeals to the Armenian diaspora, particularly to the Armenians in America, urging them to support the publication of Komitas’ legacy. However, his appeal receives no response from either America or other places. As a result, he is forced to repeat his call. In one of the issues of Armenian Call from New York in 1925, his article “The Unpublished Works of Komitas Vardapet” is published,³¹ once again emphasizing the importance of publishing Komitas’ legacy.

However, after long and fruitless efforts, Arshak Chopanian would eventually find the only correct solution for the publication of Komitas’ legacy. Years would pass, and the Komitas Committee would send Komitas’ archives to Armenia. On September 26, 1949, on the occasion of Komitas’ 80th anniversary, the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR adopted a decision for the academic publication of the collected works of Komitas, with the task of its implementation assigned to the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, specifically to the Institute of Art. Between 1960 and 2006, the Institute of Art of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia carried out the academic publication of the collected works of Komitas, which not only became an exceptional event in the musical life of the Armenian people but also an important national phenomenon of significant

²⁹ **Chopanian** 1911, № 3–4, 92.

³⁰ See **Chopanian** 1923, № 39, 29.09.2023, 1226–1228, № 40, 6.10.2023, 1256–1257.

³¹ See **Chopanian** 1925, № 25, 27.06.2025, 806–809.

strategic importance.

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On October 21, 1935, at 6 a.m., Komitas's sensitive heart ceased to beat in France. On October 27, during the funeral ceremony held at the Armenian St. John the Baptist Church on Jean Gujon Street in Paris, the eulogies were delivered on behalf of the International Music Society by Professor Kurt Sachs, on behalf of the French Music Society by Amédée Gastouen, by the Armenian choirs and composers of Paris by Ara Parthevian, by Komitas's students by Hayk Semerjyan... A speech was made on behalf of Komitas's oldest friends and the Komitas Commission by Arshak Chopanian...

"By the order of the police, the passage of carriages through that street was prohibited for the entire duration of the ceremony. The people, silent, composed, disciplined, and thoughtful, remained there for one and a half hours to listen to the expressions of respect offered to our great musician. From the windows of the houses opposite, the French watched with awe the exceptional tribute that our people paid to one of their prominent figures who had passed away."³²

At the end of the mourning ceremony, Komitas's coffin was lowered into the small chapel in the basement of the church, with the aim of later transferring it to Armenia. Decades later, in 2003, a 6-meter bronze statue of Komitas by Davit Yeranyan was installed near the church. On its back is a cross-stone adorned with the Armenian letters of Mesrop Mashtots. In the priest's left hand is a book, while his right hand touches the body of a round-faced, fair-haired child. On the pedestal, it is written in both Armenian and French: "In memory of Komitas, the priest, and the 1,500,000 Armenian victims of the genocide committed by the Ottoman Empire in 1915." On January 29, 2019, a smaller version of Davit Yeranyan's Parisian monument was placed in the inner courtyard of the Komitas Museum-Institute in Yerevan, under a chinari tree.³³

In the October-December 1935 issue of *Anahit*, a detailed obituary by A. Chopanian is published, which includes not only valuable factual material related to Komitas's death and final farewell,³⁴ but also features three photographs of Komitas, including one from his deathbed. Additionally, it includes a reproduction of the death mask created by the artist Ariel Ajemian shortly after Komitas's

³² **Chopianian** 1935, № 6, 51.

³³ **Aghasyan** 2019, 18.

³⁴ See **Chopianian** 1935, № 6, 45–54.

Arshak Chopanian and the "Anahit" Journal in the Origins of Komitas Studies

passing. A. Chopanian's work on Komitas also had practical significance. Several important issues he raised found their resolution. For example, in his obituary, he addresses the question of burying Komitas in Armenia, which became a reality a few months later. On May 28, 1936, under the auspices of a committee created by the President of the Union of Composers of Armenia, Mushegh Aghayan, and following the words of Komitas's close friend, artist Panos Terlemezyan, and musicologist Ruben Terlemezyan, with the performance of "*Chinar es*"³⁵ (meaning "You are like a plane tree," referring to a tall and graceful figure) by Haykanush Danielyan, Komitas's remains were interred in the Pantheon of Cultural Figures in Yerevan, next to the grave of Romanos Melikyan. The Pantheon, which was located in a park, would soon be named after Komitas, and in its vicinity, the Komitas Museum-Institute would open its doors on January 29, 2015.

Another important initiative by A. Chopanian for the study of Komitas was related to the publication of Komitas's musicological and literary legacy in the pages of *Anahit*. In the 1907 issues of *Anahit*, the chapter "The Expansion and Influence of Folk Songs" from Komitas's work *Armenian Folk Music* was published with abbreviations and without musical examples.³⁶ The full version of this chapter was published posthumously in the 6th issue of 1935³⁷ and the 1st and 2nd issues of 1936.³⁸

A. Chopanian emphasized the importance of publishing Komitas's literary legacy. In the combined 1st and 2nd issues of *Anahit* in 1931, the "Autobiography of Komitas Vardapet" was published.³⁹

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can note that A. Chopanian's role has been both significant and exceptional, not only in the creative fate of Komitas but also in the field of Komitas studies. A. Chopanian not only highly valued Komitas's talent and his work but also emphasized the necessity of creating favorable conditions for his activities, taking numerous practical steps in this direction.

³⁵ See **Zaven**, 1936, 569.

³⁶ **Komitas Vardapet**, 1907, № 3–4–5, 70–73. **Komitas Vardapet**, 1907, № 6–7–8–9, 127–130.

³⁷ See **Komitas**, 1935, № 6, 27–29.

³⁸ See **Komitas**, 1936, № 1–2, 41–48.

³⁹ See the autobiography of Komitas Vardapet, 1931, № 1–2, 2–6.

Through articles published in *Anahit* and other periodicals (*Byzantion* in Constantinople, *Hayastani Kochknak* in New York, and others), A. Chopanian acknowledged and praised Komitas's work and contributed to the promotion of his creative legacy.

In the pages of *Anahit*, A. Chopanian, on the one hand, presented a comprehensive portrait of Komitas's concert activities in Paris and Geneva, published articles and assessments dedicated to Komitas by various musicians,⁴⁰ and dedicated pages to memoirs.⁴¹ On the other hand, he also published Komitas's musicological studies and autobiography.

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⁴¹ See **Govandjian** 1935, № 6, 39-41, **Yeghiazaryan** 1936, № 1-2, 65-70, and so on.

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Arshak Chopanian and the “Anahit” Journal in the Origins of Komitas Studies

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ԱՆՆԱ ԱՍԱՏՐՅԱՆ

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**ԱՐՇԱԿ ՉՈՊԱՆՅԱՆԸ ԵՎ «ԱՆԱՀԻՏ» ՀԱՆԴԵՍԸ՝
ԿՈՄԻՏԱՍԱԳԻՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԱԿՈՒՆՔՆԵՐՈՒՄ**

Ամփոփում

Բացառիկ է հայ գրող, քննադատ, բանասեր, լրագրող և հասարակական գործիչ Արշակ Չոպանյանի (1872–1954) դերը Կոմիտասի ստեղծագործական ճակատագրում, ծանրակշիռ նրա ներդրումը՝ կոմիտասագիտության ձևավորման գործում: Կոմիտասի և Ա. Չոպանյանի ծանոթությունը տեղի ունեցավ Փարիզում՝ 1901 թվականի հուլիսին և շարունակվեց մինչև Կոմիտասի մահը: Ա. Չոպանյանը ոչ միայն բարձր է գնահատել Կոմիտասի տաղանդն ու նրա կատարած գործը, այլև կարևորել նրա գործունեության համար նպաստավոր պայմաններ ստեղծելու անհրաժեշտությունը՝ այդ ուղղությամբ կատարելով բազմաթիվ գործնական քայլեր: 1898-ին Փարիզում իր ստեղծած «Անահիտ» գրական, գեղարվեստական, հասարակական հանդեսում և ժամանակի պարբերական մամուլում (այդ թվում՝ «Բիւզանդիոն» (Կ. Պոլիս), «Հայաստանի կոչնակ» (Նյու Յորք) և այլն) հրատարակած իր հոդվածներում Չոպանյանն արժևորել է Կոմիտասի գործունեությունը և նպաստել նրա ստեղծագործության պրոպագանդմանը:

«Անահիտ»-ի էջերում Ա. Չոպանյանը մի կողմից՝ ներկայացրել է Փարիզում և Ժնևում Կոմիտասի ծավալած համերգային գործունեության լիարժեք համայնապատկերը, տպագրել տարբեր երաժիշտների կողմից Կոմիտասին նվիրված հոդվածներն ու գնահատականները, էջեր հատկացրել հուշագրություններին, մյուս կողմից՝ հրատարակել Կոմիտասի երաժշտագիտական ուսումնասիրությունները և գրական ժառանգության էջերից մեկը՝ Կոմիտասի ինքնակենսագրությունը:

Ա. Չոպանյանի կոմիտասականը ունեցել է նաև կիրառական նշանակույթ-

Arshak Chohanian and the “Anahit” Journal in the Origins of Komitas Studies

յուն. նրա առաջ քաշած մի շարք կարևոր հարցեր, այդ թվում՝ Կոմիտասին Հայաստանում հուղարկավորելու և նրա երաժշտական ժառանգությունը հրատարակելու հարցերն իրականություն դարձան մոտ ապագայում:

Բանալի բառեր՝ Արշակ Չոպանյան, Կոմիտաս, հայ երաժշտություն, «Անահիտ» հանդես, Փարիզ, 1901 թվական, 1935 թվական: