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**Chapter I
KOMITAS AND HIS TIME PERIOD**

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KOMITAS'S NATIONAL MUSICAL IDENTITY PARADIGM AND ARMENIAN BARD TRADITION

In Komitas studies the basic concepts formulated in his articles and essays have been interpreted and estimated regarding the two main branches of Armenian monodic music – religious and folk as paramount representations of the nation's musical identity. Armenian urban and bard music were beyond Komitas Vartapet's scholarly interests as he considered them mostly typical to Near East musical tradition, which he characterized by a different aesthetic system.

My considerations on the artistic aspects and national background of the phenomena and especially of the *ašut/ashugh*/(bard)¹ song art, which is not incorporated in the Komitas's musical identity paradigm, aim at revealing the essence of the contradictory statements, sometimes even derogatory evaluation of this particular branch of music, which gave rise to certain disagreements, patterning the opposing concepts of the “Armenian” and “Eastern”.² The sociological aspect of the problem relates to the different aesthetic perceptions as conceived by Armenians

¹ Arm. աշուղ – *ašut*.

² The Armenian reality saw the emergence of a polarized opinion in certain layers of the society, according to which some genres of Armenian traditional art music, particularly *mughams* are rather characteristic of Muslim, Persian–Turkish culture, thus, are incompatible with national culture and esthetic, religious–cultural symbols typical of the national identity. See **L. Երնջակյան**, Աշուղական արվեստը և մշակութային ժառանգության պահպանման խնդիրները, *Հայ աշուղագիտությունը և արդի հիմնախնդիրները*, Երևան, 2005, էջ 3–13 (**L. Yernjakyan**, *Ashugh Art and Issues of Preservation of Cultural Heritage*, in: *Armenian Ashugh Studies and Modern Issues*, Yerevan, 2005).

of different background and belonging to different social layers, which supplemented the dichotomy of “Armenian – Eastern” by “high / low cultural tastes”.

Over the past years some studies by American–Armenian researchers have echoed the statements found in this cultural discourse. Their application to the musical realities developed in the Armenian Diaspora contributes to the understanding of the musical world of the Western Armenian cultural center – the “Armenian Polis”. It helps also to evaluate the creative and enlightening activity of Armenian music scholars, bards and instrumentalists in the context of the multi–national traditions developed in the Ottoman Empire where “*the Armenians did not regard themselves as living in Diaspora*”.³

The discussion of the identity problem in the context of cultural traditions makes the musicologists of the Diaspora consider the changing or the many–compound concept of identity as a key factor for interpreting Armenian musical culture at the crossroads of the East and West, or Christian and Muslim Easts.

Rightfully perceived as a cultural hero by both Western and Eastern Armenians for his personality and unique contribution to Armenian culture, Komitas's aesthetic perceptions, however, cannot be considered the only national–cultural guideline for the interpretation of musical thinking, tastes and preferences of the descendants of the Diaspora Armenians.⁴

In this respect, it is important to understand the criteria for *Armenianness* in the perceptions of Western Armenians.

The descendants of the disrupted history and culture, irrespective of their social class, have nostalgic feelings for Eastern instrumental

³ See *Armenian Constantinople*, edited by Richard G. Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian, Mazda Publications, Costa Mesa, California, 2010, p. 1–19.

⁴ **Sylvia A. Alajagi**, *Music and the Armenian Diaspora: searching for home in exile*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2015.

music and traditional melodies – *makams*, *semayis*, *peşrafs*, urban genres *türkü* and *şarki* – mostly authored by Armenian musicians; and they express regret for hundreds of untranslated and unresearched legacy of Turkish-speaking *ashughs*/bards and instrumentalists, admired by Turkish sultans.⁵

The examination of the identity issues in the light of Komitas's views is not an end in itself and does not in any way intend to focus on the controversial ideas expressed by Komitas. It is the one-sided and superficial interpretations cited in some western musicological works that give rise to justified concern; these interpretations, as it were, distort the ethnic-cultural identity of Armenian music.

For one thing, Komitas's well-grounded examination of the cultural interactions and common features, the comparative tables of Armenian and Eastern modal scales are claimed as evidence bearing out the Turkish influence. The question becomes even more serious in the case of the Armenian bards' works composed in different eastern languages and especially in Turkish.

Undoubtedly, as compared with the century-old Armenian spiritual monody and genuine genres of folklore, this domain of art has many links with Near-Eastern traditional music. Principal similarities are apparent in the structural peculiarities – in the prosody of poetry and in the modal system of musical component, the terminology of which is of foreign origin. However, the similarity doesn't assume a one-sided influence. Musical-poetry and narrative tradition is not likely to be borrowed or imitated automatically unless there is a cultural base. My point is that in the basin of Near East we view the Armenian *ashugh* art that has a history of centuries, both from the perspective of its national origin, within the organic boundaries of folk, spiritual and old *gusan*

⁵ See **Lucina Agbabian Hubbard**, The Musical World of Armenians in Constantinople; in: *Armenian Constantinople*, p. 287–308.

music, and in the context of the relations with Near East traditional art music, the active component of which it used to be.

The classical period of *ashugh* art is not characterized by national pathos. The task of the bard was to gain such mastery of musical, linguistic-cultural complex so as to enable him to amaze the multi-language audience as virtuoso composer-poet-instrumentalist. In this sense the ceremony of bard contests were the best way to display mastery and knowledge. The contests had little concern about the influences revealed by language criteria, but rather first and foremost they revealed the professional skill of the bard guided by divine gift and spiritual values.

The Armenian bards living in different centers of the Near and Middle East drew their material from Armenian reality, they were knowledgeable in national music and literature, they treated Christian themes in their moral-religious songs, even though they used common metrical forms, composing in Persian, Georgian, Turkish and took foreign nicknames. The protector of Armenian bards was St. Karapet of Mush (St. John the Baptist), who endowed them with the talent and skills, and his monastery became a pilgrimage site.

Prominent musicologist Robert Atayan, the foremost authority in Komitas studies, observed the widely spread phenomenon of performing folk-national and *ashugh* songs by different Eastern nations, in not only their local mother tongue but also in foreign languages. But along with it, he mentioned, that it was tendentiously used as proof of foreign influence on Armenian music.⁶

The semantic transformations of the symbolic images of Sufi mysticism, the abundant use of allegoric expressions, epithets and foreign words in the art of the Armenian *ashughs* can be accounted by the regularities of aesthetic norms established both in all Eastern bard

⁶ See Robert Atayan's preface in: **Կոմիտաս, Երկերի ժողովածու**, հատ. 10, Երաժշտագագրական ժառանգություն, Երևան, «Գիտություն» հրատ., 2000, էջ 16 (**Komitas**, The Complete Works, Vol. 10, Yerevan, "Gitutyun" Publishers, 2000, p. 16).

art and in medieval Armenian poetry, in which traits of Persian poetry are available as well. The use of Persian, Arabic and Turkish words and allegories has been typical of the songs created by bards of different nations. The Arabic term *ašūt–ašik* (*ashugh–ashik*), which means a lover of Divine truth and beauty, was adopted by musicians–poets of different nations, along with secularization of *ashugh* art. The famous Armenian *ashugh* Sayat–Nova’s role in the development and sustainability of musical relationships of the Caucasian and Iranian peoples in the late medieval period was great. Composing in four languages (Armenian, Georgian, Azeri and Persian) and personifying the ideals of neighboring nations in musical–poetic characters, Sayat–Nova first of all was the successor of *gusan* art of Armenia, as well as medieval poet–melods (*tatergus*).⁷

In which field might we look for the source of the renowned Sayat–Nova’s knowledge and wisdom, whatever lyrical poetry his metaphorical verse may be related to? Or were we to interpret the symbolic saying ‘love monastery, love desert, love stone’ in terms of Biblical scriptures, Christian outlook or Sufi religious–aestheticism, the fact remains that his exquisite songs have secured their place in the system of the Armenian cultural values due to spiritual charge of his songs. Notwithstanding the fact that Sayat–Nova’s melodies have been enriched and saturated by elements typical of other Eastern cultures, they can be truly identified as masterpieces of national Armenian bard music in their overall structure. Powerfully individual in the context of canonic and traditional Eastern culture, the great master went beyond the ethnic boundaries to leave his name not only in the last

⁷ **Ն. Թահմիզյան**, *Սայաթ–Նովյան և հայ գուսանա–աշուղական երգ–երաժշտությունը*, Փասադենա, Դրագարկ հրատ., 1995, էջ 6–7 (**N. Tahmizian**, *Sayat–Nova and Armenian Minstrel Tradition*, Pasadena, Drazark Press, 1995, p. 6–7):

verse of his songs, but also in the history of national and Near–Eastern musical–poetic art.⁸

During the years of Komitas' research–creative activity the national *ashugh* school was at its height and was immensely popular. However, it was not his intention to focus on it. In his article titled 'Armenians Have Their Own Music' Komitas wrote that no one had the right to expect him to have equal knowledge of all branches of Armenian music.⁹ However, there is also evidence that he appreciated *ashug*/bards Shirin, Jivani, Sheram, who were his contemporaries, and Komitas himself was also known for his masterly performance of their songs. Moreover, from the study of his unpublished materials concerning his musical conceptions it can be implied that he intended to use two so–called Eastern–Turkish songs recorded in his native town of Kütahya, as prayers for *Vardanants Liberation Battle*, which were left unaccomplished. Nevertheless, he used the name 'Eastern–Turkish melodies' rather than 'Armenian–Turkish' for the songs he recorded from the singing of his relatives in his native village, most probably because of the language. There is a similar inconsistency between Komitas's ideas on urban art, which can be traced back to the diversity of stylistic and melodic sources, and his activity as a collector and performer.

Komitas made some observations on bard art in his article "Armenian Peasant Music",¹⁰ and in his unfinished, but significant work entitled "An Overview of Armenian Folk Music", published in Paris in

⁸ **L. Երնջակյան**, Սայաթ–Նովայի խաղերի երաժշտագեղագիտական հիմքերը, *Սայաթ–Նովա–300*, Երևան, «Գիտություն» հրատ., 2012, էջ 7–22 (**L. Yernjakyan**, Music–Aesthetical Foundations of Sayat–Nova's Songs, in: *Sayat–Nova–300*, Yerevan, "Gitutyun" Publishing, 2012, p. 7–22):

⁹ See **Կոմիտաս**, *Հոդվածներ և ուսումնասիրություններ*, Երևան, պետական հրատ., 1941, էջ 49 (**Komitas**, *Articles and Studies*, Yerevan, State edition, 1941, p. 49).

¹⁰ See **Կոմիտաս**, Հայ գեղջուկ երաժշտություն, *Անահիտ*, Փարիզ, 1907, էջ 70–73 և 127–130 (**Komitas**, Armenian Peasant Music, in *Anahit*, Paris, 1907, p. 70–73 and 127–130); the same article is published in **Komitas**, *Articles and Studies*, p. 15–44.

1907.¹¹ Those observations mostly concern his impressions on the content, performing style, pronunciation and intonation of bard songs, the use of traditional melodies authored by other bards and the use of musical instruments. There might be different interpretations of, for example, ‘Arab and Persian heavy melodies’, which were avoided by Armenian bards as they were considered inappropriate to epic style. It is not clear whether Komitas meant the musical–stylistic characteristics of classical *mughams*, *taqsims* or other folk–urban genres. In some other cases he mentions the fact that Armenian bards performed and sang melodies typically belonging to Arabic–Persian–Turkish style.

In his analysis of some samples of bard songs, Komitas sometimes exaggerated the Persian–Turkish influence in the works of Armenian *ashughs*. By performing Gusan Sheram’s (known as Ashugh Gigo from Alexandropol) *Motley Garments You are Wearing* both in Armenian and Eastern style at the end of his presentation on Armenian peasant music at the International conference held in Paris in 1904, Komitas emphasized the importance of performative stylistic features in terms of national interpretation. But eventually he defined it as a Turkish–style melody composed in *Araban* or *Karjihar* mode. The song, however, is characteristically an Armenian folk melody, written in fourth basis Aeolian minor as renowned musicologist K. Kushnaryan states, a style widely used in different genres of Armenian monody.¹²

Komitas also considered the Armenian performing style from the angle of gender differences: the foreign unpleasant declamatory style and pronunciation was mainly typical of rural men, while women

¹¹ See **Կոմիտաս**, Մի թոռուցիկ ակնարկ հայ ժողովրդական երաժշտության վերա (իրատ. Մ. Մուրադյան), *Սովետական արվեստ*, 1955, №5, էջ 44–50 (**Komitas**, a Prompt Essay on Armenian Folk Music, published by M. Muradyan, in *Sovetakan Arvest*, 1955, No. 5, p. 44–50).

¹² **Х. Кушнарев**, *Вопросы истории и теории армянской монодической музыки*, Ленинград, гос. муз. изд., 1958, с. 448 (**Kh. Kushnaryov**, *Issues on History and Theory of Armenian Monodic Music*, Leningrad, State edition, 1958, p. 448).

preserved pure Armenian style.¹³ In addition to this, we do know that he was also critical of the church musicians – “*the self-proclaimed ‘tiratsu,’¹⁴ who had imposed their individual tastes*” over the established norms of chanting Armenian liturgical music.

It can be assumed that Komitas’s criticism was not addressed to the *ashugh* music, but those aspects of its performative Turkified and Persified style, which are unacceptable from a national perspective such as unduly embellishments, palatal or nasal vocalizations, melismatic, passages, or improperly lengthened syllables.

Without going further into the details of multilingual Armenian bards creating in different foreign styles, I would like to look at the phenomenon from an altogether opposite aspect and note that particularly the creations of these bards in different styles and in different languages enriched the melodic core of Near Eastern musical culture. Especially in Constantinople and in many other cities of Asia Minor and Iran, Syria, Lebanon, over 600 Armenian bards, often hiding their nationality, made major contribution to the formation of the Eastern traditional classical repertoire.¹⁵ A great number of Armenian melodies and *tats* called ‘hava Armani’ (Armenian melody) were disseminated in the wide mosaic of Near Eastern art, became a canonic song, but without any reference of the name of the author.¹⁶ A vivid example of this is sultan Abdulaziz’s favorite *hijas*, which Kemani Sepuh performed for him

¹³ **Komitas**, *Articles and Studies*, p. 16.

¹⁴ *Tirac’u/tiratsu* is a low rank church musician who assists the priest in conducting the Armenian Divine Liturgy.

¹⁵ **Խ. Ամիրեան**, Թուրքալեզու հայ աշուղներ. Օսմանեան կայսրութիւն. 16–20–րդ դարեր (**Kh. Amirean**, Turkish Speaking Armenian Ashugs. Ottoman Empire. 16–20th centuries). J. Kasparian, Aulnay-sus-Bois, Paris, 1989, էջ 4:

¹⁶ **Լ. Երնջակյան**, *Աշուղական սիրավեպը մերձավորարևելյան երաժշտական փոխառնչությունների համատեքստում*, Երևան, «Գիտություն» հրատ., 2009, էջ 38–41 (**L. Yernjakyán**, *Ashoogh Love Romance in the Context of Neareastern Musical Interrelations*, Yerevan, “Gitutyun” Publishing, 2009, p. 38–41):

on the violin.¹⁷ Interestingly, the *hijas* mentioned above, as well as *Vardar ovasi* (melody of the field) and other *turkus* are variations of the medieval elaborate melody *My Heart is Trembling* by XIII century Armenian poet–melod Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi.¹⁸ It is worthy of mention that many songs by Sayat–Nova have become part and parcel of many cultures (e.g. *Come Listen to Me, O Crazy Heart*) under the name of *t'arak'yama-gyozallamasi* (panegyric of female beauty). In this respect the study of the musical component of *ashugh* art as one of the major standards of the syncretic genre, allows to define the national origin of different *ashugh* songs.

Due to political circumstances, in the context of endangered national identity issues, Komitas's cautious approach had its say in the dismissal of the question in a certain phase of Armenian musicology. His urgent concern was to secure the distinctive nature, unique characteristics of Armenian music, especially church music and to provide guidelines for its development in accord with the national aesthetic perceptions.¹⁹

The derogatory overtones present in Komitas's sayings on bard art, as well as his thoughts on their hybrid style make it difficult to clarify his stand about bard art. However, I would like to emphasize one culturological vantage point, a hint that is present in them, which has been overshadowed in the discourse on Komitas's contradictory thoughts. I mean the concept–terms 'Armenian *gusan*' and 'Armenian *gusan* school' by which he described the sedentary and wandering Armenian musicians as if directing the question of their genealogical roots to the ancient layers of Armenian secular professional song art with the identification of the praiser – *govasan*, epic singer – *vipasan* and bard–*gusan*. As a matter of fact, the explanation of the name of the first epic singers, i.e. *gusans*,

¹⁷ **Lucina Agbabian Hubbard**, *The Musical World of Armenians in Constantinople*, p. 287–308.

¹⁸ *Halk Turkuleri*, Istanbul, 1929. See also **L. Yernjakyan**, *Ashoogh Love Romance in the Context of Neareastern Musical Interrelations*, p. 94–96.

¹⁹ **Komitas**, *Articles and Studies*, p. 49.

can be found in Armenian language. The word *govasan* (which means praiser) has been transliterated in Persian and become *gusan*, the etymology of which is not traced in Persian.²⁰

While classifying Armenian *gusans* according to their social class: town/village, professional qualities: educated/uneducated, language differences: Armenian – speaking/Turkish speaking, Komitas, as it were, defined them in the context of common Eastern tradition, bridging them to medieval Armenian professional song art in particular and to national folk music in general.

It is hard to say why Komitas used the term *gusan* (instead of *ashugh*): was it the scholar's or artist's intuition, or did he want to appreciate the continuity of historical hereditary factor of the musical-poetic art? Or maybe he just avoided using a non-Armenian term.²¹

Parallel to the development of musical-poetic and narrative genres in late Middle ages, many Near Eastern cultures began to use a terminological system, which was adopted and made applicable for folk-professional musicians of the region, even though it had its counter parts in every other language. The study of the art of *ashughs-ashiks* and *sazandars*, who in new historical-cultural conditions came to replace *gusans*, *ozans* and *mtrubs* (*mutribs*), does not reveal any absolute similarity between them, neither does it reveal presence of any virtual invariant or its mechanical borrowing in any culture.

Could we maintain and be guided by the term *gusan* used by Komitas and somehow avoid the ground less speculations on the origin of the

²⁰ Հ. Աճառյան, Հայոց լեզվի պատմություն, հատ. 2, Երևան, Հայպետհրատ, 1951, էջ 619–630 (H. Acharyan, *The History of Armenian Language*, Vol. 2, Yerevan, State edition, 1951, p. 619–630):

²¹ See Մ. Մանուկյան, Կոմիտասը և հայ աշուղական-գուսանական երգարվեստի հարազատության հարցը, *Կոմիտասական 2*, Երևան, Հայկական ՍՍՀ ԳԱ հրատ., 1981, էջ 230–232 (M. Manukyan, Komitas and the Question of Affinity to Armenian *Ashugh-Gusan* Song Art, in: *Komitasakan 2*, Yerevan, Publication of Academy of Sciences of the Arm SSR).

Armenian bard art and the application of foreign terminology common in Eastern traditions? Definitely no! We can't ignore the major differences in the period, social historic factors, linguistic, thematic and structural peculiarities and distinctive religious connotations, etc., in order to specify Armenian *ashughs* oeuvre in the development of bardic tradition in Asia Minor. But it should be mentioned that it is still a problem in Armenian musicology.

During the Soviet period and also in the context of the revival of national problems, Post Genocide reaction, the negative connotation of the word *ashugh* was disposed of as an undesirable phenomenon not compliant with Armenian culture and came to be temporarily replaced by the word *gusan*. At present the conventionally combined term *gusan-ashugh* serves as a sort of compromising option, which makes possible to appreciate the comprehensive legacy of Armenian *ashughs* in the aesthetic canon of the East, bringing together the past and the present.

It is also interesting to mention the research on American–Armenian composer Alan Hovhaness, which contains distorted quotations allegedly belonging to Komitas, e.g. that Armenian music as well as Turkish and Kurdish music belong to the same branch and use the same vocal technique and microtones.²²

Another quote: “*The Ashughs in Turkey and Azerbaijan... accompany themselves by saz, but the ashugh recordings in Armenia have been made by the accompaniment of kamancha, kanun, tar and duduk ensembles. All these instruments belong to Turkish and Persian traditions, however Armenia as a Christian state, on the fringe of these countries is unique in*

²² **Լ. Երնյակյան**, *Ալան Հովհաննեսի երաժշտությունը Արևելք–Արևմուտք մշակութային խաչադիմերում*, Երևան, «Գիտություն» հրատ., 2015, էջ 108–111 (**L. Yernjakyan**, *The Music of Alan Hovhaness at East–West Crossroads*, Yerevan, “Gitutyun” Publishing, 2015, p. 108–111). See also **D. Winnard**, *The Ethnomusicological Influences on the Performance and Teaching of Selected Piano Works of Alan Hovhaness*, Master’s thesis, San Diego University, 1997, p. 31–32.

its ability to organically absorb those traditions in its culture”²³ Such disputable observations and arbitrary judgements, which can be found in academic and popular scientific publications are explained by scarce material and translations from Armenian on the subject in foreign languages, by biased interpretation of available sources and by misleading information piled up in the works on Turkish music. The works written by renowned musicians, composers and scholars at the Turkish government's initiative and direction also have their role to play. One of such works is the ethnomusicological research called “Turkish folk songs from Asia Minor” by Béla Bartók.²⁴ The author's ideas and arguments supporting Turkey's stand have unfortunately become the historical–theoretical guide for the research into Armenian traditional and composers art. In a number of my publications I spoke about this valuable collection and brought to light the Turkish-oriented ideas and the deficiency of the arguments and conclusions expressed in the “Foreword” by Bartók, as well as examined the “songs of doubtful origin” as defined by Béla Bartók. The renowned folklore expert was amazed by the originality of the poetic and musical features, literary expressions and distorted incomprehensible “Turkish words”, the unnatural abundance of the allegories and interpolations of the text, etc.²⁵ However, quite a number of phenomena which Bartók defined as ‘strange’ and even ‘mysterious’ can be explained by the Armenian origin of those songs, though Bartók never mentioned the fact. It is worth remembering that the promotion of national culture launched by Atatürk in 1934 greatly depended on the presentation of Turkish culture by researchers and

²³ See **S. Broughton and others**, *World Music: The Rough Guide*, Published by Rough Guide/Penguin, London, 1994, p.114.

²⁴ **B. Bartók**, *Turkish Folk Music from Asia Minor*, Princeton University Press, 1976. In 1936 Bartók was invited by the Turkish government to collect folk music and inspire research in that field. Among those accompanying the composer and taking part in the field study was the composer Adnan Saygun, a member of the ruling party. For reasons unknown as of today their relations were later disrupted.

²⁵ **B. Bartók**, *Turkish Folk Music from Asia Minor*, Introduction, p. XXVI, p. XXXIII.

musicians of foreign nationality, which is still a common practice today.²⁶ Many studies are ordered to draw certain pre–designed conclusions. The culture of multinational Ottoman Empire was presented as belonging to one–nation, excluding the possibility of Greek, Jewish, Armenian and other co–authorship to it.

The new millennium brings new challenges and new criteria. The problems illustrating Anatolian multinational traditions, Western Armenians ‘nostalgic’ feelings and national identity have begun to be revised and examined in the light of the musical traditions of the nation’s living in the area. Eliot Bates’s “Music in Turkey” is one of the works that mark a new stage in musical Turkology; statements presented in them shed a new light on the concept of “Anatolia’s musical tradition” and imply the importance of Armenian art in understanding the nature of multifaceted Ottoman culture and the process of its further Turkification.²⁷ Research shows that many songs which were initially performed in Armenian, Greek, Kurdish and other languages were later translated into Turkish and then they were recorded and spread in Turkish, while at home people went on performing those songs in their mother tongues.

The national and common Eastern tendencies of folk–professional music make possible to view it in the context of cultural interactions, rather than restricting the examination to typically national problems and statements on its uniqueness.

Armenian–Eastern dichotomy is a realia determined by the process of the formation of Armenian culture. The alienation of Eastern–biased phenomenon diminishes the holistic vision of national music. Rightfully

²⁶ **L. Երնջակյան**, Հայ–թուրքական երաժշտական կապերի օրինակներից, Հայ արվեստի հարցեր, Երևան, ՀՀ ԳԱԱ «Գիտություն» հրատ., 2010, էջ 61–70 (L. Yernjakyan, On the One Model of Armenian–Turkish Musical Interrelations, in: *Issues of Armenian Art*, Yerevan, “Gitutyun” Publishing, 2010, p. 61–70):

²⁷ See: **E. Bates**, *Music in Turkey*, New York, Oxford, 2011. **B. Yildiz**, *Experiencing Armenian Music in Turkey: An Ethnography of Musical Cultural Memory*, Würzburg, 2016, Ergon Verlag, Würzburg in Kommission, p. 51–55.

perceived as a cultural hero by Armenians all over the world for his personality and unique contribution to Armenian, as well as other Eastern nations culture, Komitas Vardapet's understanding of the national music identity, which he believed to be embodied in the music of Armenian peasant, does not rule out the possibility of other approaches and interpretations.

The *ashugh* art with its folk-national and common Eastern roots, with its 'Sayat-Nova' cultural symbol builds up the multi-layered character of Armenian music art portrayal, emblematising its dual natural on East-West crossroads. Looking upon folk-professional *ashugh* art as historical component of national cultural legacy contributes to the expanding the boundaries of 'Armenianness'. It is hoped that the inclusion of the facts and scientific provisions related to Armenian *ashugh* art will lay down ways in the modern ethnomusicology to the international recognition of Armenian bard tradition in the Near East multi-voice space.

Abstract

In this paper the realities, not included in Komitas's musical identity paradigm are discussed and elucidated, in particular the artistic background of bard music in the light of his notions on *Armenian/Oriental* dichotomy. In the context of the various issues related to national music and a threatened national identity that were resulting from the historical-political circumstances of the time, Komitas Vardapet's activity, that resembled a cultural feat, and the choice of the directions of his scientific researches, as being ones aimed at typically Armenian religious and folk music, are quite reasonable. Yet, among numerous unsurpassable activities it is truly worth mentioning that he studied the musical folklore of different eastern nations, namely that of the Persians, Turks and the Kurds, highlighting the social historic context of creation of songs and regarding cultural interrelations exceptionally important. Komitas has his profound place as a pioneer in the ethnomusicology of his time. Nonetheless, some of his polarized views and approaches, which gave rise to misinterpretations allow to rethink and enhance the musical identity paradigm "...to have a complete idea of our national music". *Ashugh* art, with its national folk and common eastern roots and the "Sayat-Nova" cultural

symbol build up the multilayered portrayal of Armenian music art, emblemizing its dual nature on East–West crossroads. Looking upon folk professional *ašut* song art as a historical component of cultural heritage contributes to expanding the boundaries of “Armenianness” and paves a pathway to the recognition of the Armenian music tradition in the Middle East multi–voice space.

Keywords: Komitas, national identity, folklore, bard music, Near East.

Լիլիթ Երնջակյան (Հայաստան)

արվեստագիտության դոկտոր, պրոֆեսոր

ՀՀ արվեստի վաստակավոր գործիչ

ՀՀ ԳԱԱ Արվեստի ինստիտուտ

Երևանի Կոմիտասի անվ. պետական կոնսերվատորիա

ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԵՐԱԺՇՏԱԿԱՆ ԻՆՔՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԿՈՄԻՏԱՍՅԱՆ ՀԱՐԱՑՈՒՅՑԸ ԵՎ ԳՈՒՍԱՆԱ–ԱՇՈՒՂԱԿԱՆ ԱՎԱՆԴՈՒՅԹԸ

Ամփոփում

Հոդվածում քննարկվում են ազգային երաժշտական ինքնության կոմիտասյան հարացույցում չընդգրկված իրողությունների, մասնավորապես՝ աշուղական երգարվեստի գեղարվեստական հիմքերը՝ Կոմիտասի սկզբունքային դատողություններից սկզբնավորված «հայկական» և «արևելյան»՝ միմյանց հակադրվող հասկացությունների լույսի ներքո: Ժամանակի պատմաքաղաքական հանգամանքներով թելադրված ազգային երաժշտական խնդիրների և վտանգված ինքնության սրված համատեքստում միանգամայն հասկանալի են մշակութային սխրանք նշանավորող Կոմիտաս Վարդապետի գործը և գիտահետազոտական կողմնորոշումները զուտ հայկական նկարագրով օժտված եկեղեցական և ժողովրդական երաժշտության նկատմամբ:

Արևելյան ազգերի՝ պարսիկների, թուրքերի, քրդերի երաժշտական ֆոլկլորի համեմատական ուսումնասիրությամբ՝ միտված հայկականի սահմանագատմանը օտար արևելանից, ինչպես նաև մշակութային փոխազդեցությունների գործոնի կարևորումով, Կոմիտասն իր ժամանակի էթնոերաժշտագիտության առաջատար հիմնադիրների շարքում է: Սակայն նրա դրույթներում տեղ գտած որոշ մտքերից ու «բևեռացված» տեսակետներից բխող տարրնթերցումները առիթ են տալիս վերանայելու և համալրելու երաժշտական ինքնության հարացույցի բաղադրիչները:

Աշուղական արվեստն իր ազգային ժողովրդական և ընդհանուր արևելյան ակունքներով, «Սայաթ-Նովա» մշակութային խորհրդանիշով ամբողջացնում է հայ երաժշտարվեստի բազմաշերտ դիմագիծը, իմաստավորում նրա երկփեղկ խորհուրդը Արևելք-Արևմուտք խաչադիներում: Արևելյան թեքում ունեցող ժանրերի՝ որպես ազգային մշակութային ժառանգության պատմական բաղադրիչի դիտարկումն ընդլայնում է «հայկականության» սահմանները և ուղիներ հարթում Մերձավոր Արևելքի «բազմաձայն» հնչյունային տարածքում հայ երաժշտության միջազգային ճանաչման համար:

Հիմնաբառեր՝ Կոմիտաս, ազգային ինքնություն, ֆոլկլոր, աշուղական երաժշտություն, Մերձավոր Արևելք: