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PHILOSOPHY OF KOMITAS VARDAPET'S ECOLOGICAL IDEAS

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Abstract: In the report, an attempt is made to reveal the philosophy of the ecological ideas of the 20th century musician Komitas Vardapet using the analytical and comparative method. In this work, the lectures, researches and articles given by him in France, Turkey, Russia and other countries served as research material. The study highlights the evolution of the research mind of a musician-spiritualist with a humanitarian worldview, who made the transition from the study of his native ethno-religious culture to the way of studying and developing the music of other regional ethno-religious communities and thus enriched the universal culture. In that context, the issues of ecological ideas, the study of the philosophy of healing music, and the organization of a harmonious dialogue between man and nature in the world over time are analyzed. From the presented point of view, Komitas Vardapet's rich musical heritage has not been studied yet.

Keywords: nature, health, music, ecology, harmony, endoecology, ideas, harmony, ethnicity, religion.

At present humanity and its biosphere are in a rather precarious position. According to the World Health Organization, 8.7 million people died due to air pollution in 2021 alone. Even the space between the Earth and the Moon is polluted by man. According to the UN, 284 million people used drugs in 2020.

For visionary philosophers, the priority is not only to clarify and study the nature of things but also to ensure that the best available scientific experience is applied. We therefore consider it necessary to study the spiritual heritage of humanist intellectuals from a philosophical point of view. The goal is to discover ideas of human communication and the human relationship with nature in order to form an universal algorithm for a healthy lifestyle.

One of the intellectuals who studied the relationship between man and nature in the last century was the priest, musician, folklorist Sghomon Sghomonian ordained as Komitas Vardapet.

Komitas Vardapet's philosophical ideas are determined by the peculiarities of the scientific and cultural atmosphere that prevailed in Armenia and in the world during his life. Komitas was born in the Ottoman Empire. Under the care of the Armenian Apostolic Church he received a theological education at the Gevorkian Seminary of St. Etchmiadzin and was awarded the title of *archimandrite*. In 1896 he left for Berlin to study at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Kaiser Friedrich Wilhelm University and at the Richard Schmidt Conservatory.

Returning to his homeland, Komitas made records of around four thousand songs of Armenians, Kurds, and other regional ethnic groups. Komitas Vardapet was a scholar of European and Armenian music, as well as Western philosophy. He thought it important to study music within the regional historical and cultural context, taking into account the composer's life experience.

His "Songs of the Holy Liturgy", "Armenian Church Music", "Armenian Church Melodies" and other studies are devoted to issues of sacred music (Komitas, 2005).

In addition to sacred music, Komitas made a significant contribution to the development of secular music. In his opinion, the people are both poets and musicians. Worthy of attention are "Armenian Village Music", "Armenian Church and Folk Songs" and other works. Komitas Vardapet does not create characters in the etude "Lori plow song in Vardablur village style" and does not develop subjective ideas around them (Komitas, 2007, pp. 92-130). He simply describes and interprets the song of farmers cultivating the field day and night, under sunlight and starlight. Komitas studies how a man working with a plow, through singing, enters into a hopeful dialogue with God, people, animals and the world.

Komitas writes that a villager during his lifetime creates a song in accordance with his living conditions. "During a walk, the peasant's attention and consciousness are captured by those objects or phenomena that resemble and correspond to his inner world... When we hear how the sound of each word simultaneously expresses a thought, so a folk song immediately presents its idea or meaning before our soul's gaze, and we understand this meaning" (Komitas, 2007, p. 222). It is appropriate to recall the thoughts of the Roman philosopher and poet Lucretius about nature's influence on the soul:

"In what nature can things affect the soul?

Excite him, evoke a lot of emotions,

When matter has no feeling at all" (Lucretius, 1960, p. 62).

Komitas's characters are taken from the actuality of people who trust and glorify God and cooperate with nature. His ideas are born from observations of man's relationship with the universe. The logic of his essay is based on

facts. Komitas explores the ideas of a person living in harmony with nature.

In some of Komitas's works, his transition from general ecological ideas to more specific ones is noticeable: the field of physical and spiritual harmony of a person. In other words, the field of individual and social endoecology. Guided by the pan-musical concept of Romanticism, he tries to study the influence of music on human health.

In 1912, Komitas Vardapet gave a lecture in Constantinople on the influence of dance on a child. He considers dance one of the oldest fine arts, analyzing the development of dance and the harmony of life and the universe reflected through dance. "In every life, there is a dance. After-all, isn't the life of the whole universe already a dance?" (Komitas, 2007, p. 75). He focuses on the round dance from a group psychology point of view. Komitas mentions the importance of song and dance for energizing a person and training the body. He believes that until children develop a moral philosophy, it is necessary for their brain to be "beneficially influenced" through the vibrations of music. Komitas emphasizes the psychobiographical connection between sound as a physical phenomenon and a person. In the study "Armenian Village Dance" he discusses the qualities, directions, sizes, and characters of dance movements (Komitas, 2005, p. 284). He comes to the conclusion that Armenian dance does not arouse painful emotions.

Komitas's study "Healing with Music" is especially connected with the theme of humanitarian music as a phenomenon that strengthens and heals the soul (Komitas, 1915). Komitas notes that he is trying to elucidate how the sages of the ancient world healed the sick with the help of music and refers to the manuscript of the 13th century philosopher Hovhannes Yerznkatsi. Komitas highlights that according to the author of the manuscript, music impacts the psyche and the soul.

Komitas Vardapet divides music into "divine" (spiritual) and "human" (wordly) types. According to him, music classified as "divine" is used in churches "to bring sinful souls to repentance and to drive sinful thoughts to good". Komitas thinks that if music heals the soul, it can also heal the body.

He relates positively to the experience and

views of his predecessors. “The ancients tried and found it useful as medicine, so they decided and implemented that “singing is also necessary for the sick,” because, “just as drinking medicine” affects the disease, “so music acts” in listening to it”.

Komitas Vardapet tries to analyze the concept of the “old traditionalists”, probably the Pythagoreans, regarding healing through the influence of sound. There is no doubt that Komitas was well aware of the connection between music and **physiology**. In fact, Komitas studied the impact of a physical phenomenon, sound vibrations, on living intelligent matter. This is, in fact, an interesting theoretical experiment on human endoecological recreation.

Komitas is one of the intellectuals who developed humanitarian and philosophical thought, noticed, appreciated, and studied music from the point of view of ensuring ecological and endo-ecological harmony. Christian philosophy had a fundamental influence on the formation of Komitas’s worldview. In the works of Komitas, we do not find ideas that reflect ethno-religious phobias.

Komitas Vardapet recorded, studied, and developed the musical heritage of the peoples of the Middle East. Thus, he defended the idea of cultural freedom. Komitas tries to study and recognize people and ethnic societies through their songs and dances, as conditioned by the peculiarities of nature. Komitas shows affinity to the ideas of freedom and the equality of people and ethnic communities.

It is difficult to sufficiently appreciate the role of Komitas Vardapet’s humanitarian philosophy in the arena of healthy dialogue between civilizations, because music is a language understandable by all peoples and civilizations. The ideas of love and respect for nature, women, parents, and the younger generation are reflected in Komitas Vardapet’s poems “Busabarev”, “Cloud”, “Autumn”, “Affectionate Love”, “My Mother’s Lullaby”, “Prayer” and other poems (Komitas, 2004).

His works reflect the idea of the continuity of man’s self-improvement through the knowledge of himself. It can be said that the ideas of Komitas’s philosophy were born and inspired not with the peculiarities of Armenian philosophy but also under the influence of European Romanticism. As a result, an original

dialogue between Eastern and Western musical philosophies was born.

Thus, in summarizing the essay, we can conclude that Komitas Vardapet’s ideas can be divided into two groups:

- Harmony between man and nature.
- Knowledge of self and self-improvement.

There is no doubt that the core of Komitas’s philosophy is humanism; the greatest value in his worldview is a person living in harmony with nature and him or herself, which is meant to create the best conditions for the **development of life**. In other words, Komitas Vardapet has experience with grappling with a comprehensive rational understanding of the human existence. From the point of view of Romanticism, he distinguishes man as the highest value and nature as the greatest teacher. In the philosophy of Komitas, the connection between man and nature, the spirit of struggle and victory of the working man stands out, directing humanity and society towards the heroic, and universal, the divine.

Conclusion

In Komitas Vardapet’s research, a transition is noticeable from folklore songs and correlating facts to revealing the ecological content of the whole by presenting certain ideas. He tries to reveal the divine in human nature, because he believes in God and in the creative nature of man. In the course of his activities, Komitas sought to comprehend the issue of comprehensive harmony between man and the universe through music. Through the theoretical provisions of music, he tried to harmonize the activity of man as a historically developing whole with his cradle: the universe. In his works, intelligent living matter, man, and the nature of the earth appear as components of the cosmic system.

The philosophical ideas of Komitas go beyond the ethno-religious framework and turn into universal values that feed the universal concept of ethno-religious tolerance. Philosophy is a phenomenon that awakens the human mind and pushes it forward with sound logic, and the study of the spiritual heritage of Komitas Vardapet allows us to state that the

future of the individual, humanity, and all of nature is determined by the development of humanitarian philosophy.

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