

Armenian Folk Song Workshop

Komitas (born in 1869 as Soghomon Soghomonian) was one of the most important collectors of Armenian folk songs, and his exact and detailed researches established Armenian musicology on a scientific basis. His own folk-based songs and choruses and his liturgical chants are still popular among Armenians. He is regarded as one of the foremost Armenian composers who laid the foundation for Armenia's classical tradition. Komitas was an Armenian priest, musicologist, composer, arranger, singer, and choirmaster. He is recognized as one of the pioneers of ethnomusicology. Besides Armenian folk songs, he also showed interest in other cultures and in 1903 published the first-ever collection of Kurdish folk songs titled *Kurdish Melodies*. His choir presented Armenian music in many European cities such as Paris and Berlin, earning the praise of Claude Debussy, among others.



Painting of Komitas Vardapet by Sarkis Muradyan

During the Armenian Genocide, along with hundreds of other Armenian intellectuals, Komitas was arrested and deported to a prison camp in April 1915 by the Ottoman Turkey's government. He was soon released under unclear circumstances. The atrocities he has witnessed caused him deep mental and emotional distress. While he survived the Armenian Genocide, it was as if his soul was killed. The Ottoman Empire burnt his library and more than half of his lifetime work was destroyed, including a big part of his collection of the Armenian folk songs. He developed a severe case of posttraumatic stress disorder. The continuous widespread hostile environment in Constantinople and the mass-scale Armenian death marches and massacres have further worsened his fragile mental state. He was first placed in a Turkish military-operated hospital until 1919 and then transferred to a psychiatric hospital in Paris, where he spent the last years of his life in agony and died in 1935. Komitas is depicted as one of the main symbols of the Armenian Genocide in art. His ashes were transferred to Yerevan and buried in the Pantheon that was named after him.

Հով Արեք (Hov Arek)

Armenian

Հով արեք, սարե՛ր ը ջան, հո՛վ արեք,
Իմ տարտին դարման արեք:—
Սարերը հով չե՛ն անում,
Իմ տարտին դարման անում:

*Ամպե՛ր ը, ամպե՛ր ը, մի քիչ զո՛ւլ արեք,
Վարար անձրեւ թափե՛ք, ծո՛ւլ արեք,
Գեշ մարդու օր—արելը
Մեւ հողի տակով արեք:*

Հո՛վ արեք, ամպե՛ր ը ջան, հո՛վ արեք,
Իմ տարտին դարման արեք:—
Ամպերը հով չե՛ն անում,
Իմ տարտին դարման անում:

*Սարե՛ր ը, ձորե՛ր ը, դաշտե՛ր ը ու ջրե՛ր ը,
Մարմանդ—մարմանդ վազող աղբիւրնե՛ր ը,
Մի վե՛ր կացե՛ք, իմացե՛ք,
Տեսե՛ք իմ սրտի ցաւեր:*

Transliteration

Hov arek, sarer jan, hov arek
Im dardin darman arek
Sarere hov chen anum
Im dardin darman anum

*Amper amper, mi kich zov arek
Varar andzrev tapek, tsov arek
Gesh martu or areve
Sev hoghi takov arek*

Hov arek, amper jan, hov arek
Im dardin darman arek
Ampere hov chen anum
Im dardin darman anum

*Sarer, dzorer, dashter u jrer
Marmand-marmand vazogh agpyurner
Mi ver gatsek, imatsek
Teseq im srdi tsaver*

English Translation

Make breeze, dear mountains, make breeze,
Bring cure to my agony
The mountains are not making wind
(To bring) cure to my agony

Oh clouds, clouds, make a bit of a cool
Pour heavy rain, make a sea
The good day of a bad guy
Make it go under the black soil

Make breeze, dear clouds, make breeze,
Bring cure to my agony
The clouds are not making wind
(To bring) cure to my agony

Mountains, gorges, fields, waters,
Slowly running spring waters,
Don't stand up, know,
See the pains of my heart.

ՇՈՂԵՐ ՋԱՆ (Shogher Jan)

Armenian

Ամպել ա, ձուն չի՛ գալի,
Շողե՛ր ջան,
Սարիցը տուն չի՛ գալի,
Շողե՛ր ջան,
Դու շորորա՛, դուն օրորա՛
Շողե՛ր ջան,
Ամպի տակին ձուն կերևա,
Շողե՛ր ջան:

Սիրտս կրրակով լըցված,
Շողե՛ր ջան,
Աչքիս քուն չի՛ գալի,
Շողե՛ր ջան,
Դու շորորա՛, դուն օրորա՛
Շողե՛ր ջան,
Ամպի տակին ձուն կերևա,
Շողե՛ր ջան:

Սարի գլխին ձուն եկավ,
Շողե՛ր ջան,
Շեկլիկ յարըդ տուն եկավ,
Շողե՛ր ջան,
Ուն կերևա, ձուն կերևա,
Շողե՛ր ջան,
Բերդի տակին տուն կերևա,
Շողե՛ր ջան:

Transliteration

Ampel a, dzyun chi gali,
Shogher jan,
Saritse tun chi gali,
Shogher jan,
Du shorora, dun orora,
Shogher jan,
Ampi takin dzun kereva,
Shogher jan.

Sirts krakov Itsvats,
Shogher jan,
Achkitss kun chi gali,
Shogher jan,
Du shorora, dun orora,
Shogher jan,
Ampi takin dzun kereva,
Shogher jan.

Sari glkhin dzun ekav,
Shogher jan,
Sheklik yart tun ekav,
Shogher jan,
Un kereva, dzun kereva,
Shogher jan,
Berti takin tun kereva,
Shogher jan.

English Translation

It's cloudy, it's not snowing
Dear Shogher,
He/she is not coming home from the village
Dear Shogher,
Dance, lull,
Dear Shogher,
The snow is showing below the mountain,
Dear Shogher,

My heart is filled with fire,
Dear Shogher,
My eyes don't want to sleep,
Dear Shogher,
Dance, lull,
Dear Shogher,
The snow is showing below the mountain,
Dear Shogher.

It has snowed at the top of the mountain
Dear Shogher,
Your blonde lover came home
Dear Shogher,
We see a lot, we see snow,
Dear Shogher,
A house is showing at the bottom of the fortress,
Dear Shogher.