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THE STORY OF ALI UFKİ-BOBOVSKI. NOTATION OF TURKISH MUSIC

SUMMARY: The first Ottoman musician to use Western notation to write down melodies was Ali Ufkî (ca. 1610–1675), born as Wojciech Bobowski (named also Albertus Bobovius or Ali Beg), later convert and lived at the Ottoman palace as a slave at the beginning of his stay in the Ottoman Empire. He gained fame thanks to his versatile personality and became a great dragoman in 1673. He wrote down the Turkish melodies by using European Music Notation and was compiling an anthology of vocal and instrumental melodies called Ali Ufkî's *Mecmua*, which is a unique document of Turkish musical culture of the seventeenth century. He eliminated the cumbersome transliteration, wrote all the music from right to left, and added the words of the songs written in Turkish with Arabic script, partly under the notes, and partly below the music. The evolution of his method is a case in point of acculturation between the Western system and the Islamic concept of graphism. We learn many things from Ali Ufkî, not only about music culture but also Ottoman culture and life as well. His manner to working with music recalls Umberto Eco's conception of *The Open Work*. While he was at the Ottoman Court, he thought to arrange and create symbols for Turkish Music. He kept his former identity in this way and was assigned to carry the Ottoman Sound as an absolute.

KEYWORDS: music notation, phenomenology, open work, Turkish music, Ali Ufkî Bey (Wojciech Bobowski, Albertus Bobovius/Ali Beg).

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1. Introduction

Albert Bobowski (ca. 1610–1675), who left some of the most precious works of 17th-century Ottoman culture, is of great importance in depicting Ottoman culture and life in this century. He was born and grew up in Eastern Poland, in Lviv. He was born as Wojciech Bobowski and also known Albertus Bobovius or Ali Bey. The information about his family and early childhood is limited, but it is clear that he received a good education due to the language and culture he had. Claes Ralamb, who was Sweden’s ambassador to Istanbul between 1657–1658, records from direct communication with Ali Ufkî that he was captured in the war with the Venetians in 1645, grew up in the palace, was a polyglot and man of letters, court music, and dulcimer in the community, and released by the sultan after working as a singer for ten years (Kut, 2008, p. 456); due to his skills, he was appointed as a private to the *Enderun Meşkhanesi* (Pawlina, 2025, p. 493). According to another source, he was among the prisoners aged 23–24 captured during the Ottoman-Polish war in the Kamieniec Podolski castle region near Lviv, in September 1633¹ (Behar, 2008, pp. 20–22; Uslu, 2019, pp. 299–304).

Thus, the interest in Turkish, Islamic religion and art arose, and “Orientalism” was reflected in the attitudes of many Polish nobles, such as King Sobieski. So, in the 17th century, large dictionaries were prepared, such as Meninski’s example.

We know relatively little about his eventful and adventurous life. For example, birth and death dates are approximately known. Actually, it is not known when and how he was captured and came to Istanbul, when he wrote the works he brought, whether he was married or not, and whether he had children (Ergişi, 2008, pp. 40–41). Even though he was a Sipahi *ulufe*—salaried—he lived in the house of the British ambassador in the beginning. Yet rent accounts from 1660 show that Ali Ufkî was now a tenant of a woman outside the palace and earned around 1800 *akçe*, Ottoman currency, per month (Uslu, 2019, pp. 299–304, as cited in Behar, 2008, pp. 28–29). In another source, Ali Ufkî was married, and one of his brothers was a trade traveler to Egypt in 1671 (Behar, 2008, p. 29; Uslu, 2019, pp. 299–304). Some sources state that Ali Ufkî “was a Muslim” (Bayle, 1720, as cited in Behar, 2008, p. 31; Meninski, 2000; Rålamb, 1745; Uslu, 2019, pp. 299–304). There is currently no definitive information about where and when Ali Ufkî died (1675?). The fact that there is no trace of his participation in the great circumcision-wedding celebration of Mehmed IV in Edirne

¹ There were Turkish-speaking people, such as Krzysztof Dzierżek, a landlord in Eastern Poland, who travelled to the Ottoman lands for diplomatic or commercial reasons. Dzierżek was diplomatic representative of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Ottoman Empire in 1587 and 1591, standard-bearer of Trotsky in 1588. He stayed in Istanbul between 1570–1576 and learned Turkish. He additionally served as ambassador to Ottoman several times between 1577 and 1591, and maintained relations with the Turkish and Tatar ambassadors who remained in Poland (Polski Słownik Biograficzny, 1948, p. 160).

in May–June 1675, and the fact that *Mecmua-yı Saz u Söz* was in the possession of John Covel and the Psalms and his other works were in the possession of Antoine Galland in September 1675, suggest that Ali Ufkî died in this year instead of 1677 (Uslu, 2019, pp. 299–304, as cited in Behar, 2008, pp. 30, 50).

Ali Ufkî was registered at the Ottoman palace between 1632 and 1643. It is not known when he later entered the palace as the translator of the Imperial Council. He is called *Santuri Ali Bey* because he plays the *santur* [an Eastern type of hammered dulcimer]. Due to his skills, he was appointed as a private to the *Enderun Meşkhanesi* (Pawlina, 2025, pp. 493–494). He was a palace slave, but was later freed and rose to the rank of Grand Dragoman in 1673. Along with his last anthology of notes and lyrics, Ufkî also left a draft work collecting the stages of his serious effort. The notebook in question is a type of diary, consisting of pages of notes written in Italian, Turkish, as well as details about medical prescriptions, budget lists, mathematical literary pieces from Tasso, poems, anecdotes, genealogy, etc. Ali Ufkî's *Mecmua* remains a unique document of 17th-century Turkish musical culture accessible to the West. Besides being a musician and dragoman, he wrote many important books: *De Turcarum Liturgia* [A Treatise Concerning the Turkish Liturgy] was published by Thomas Hyde in 1691—the publication of the English translation (1712) was a reference source in Europe for a long time. Then, upon a request from the Dutchman Levinus Warner, he translated the Bible into Turkish (Uslu, 2019, pp. 299–304).

Even in the 18th and 19th centuries, it was his best-known work in Europe. Ali Ufkî Bey has been able to prevent the aesthetic elements of a cultural area from disappearing (Kut, 2008, pp. 456–457). Behar draws attention to the possibility that he may have died between 1673 and 1677. This date dates back to a very short period of time before the Ottomans appeared for the second time in Vienna. The Polish-Austrian cooperation would nullify this initiative, but with the help of Ali Ufkî Bey and other cultural transporters, the traces of Ottoman culture will begin to be felt more closely in Europe. As a representative of cultural interaction, one of the common values of the Ottoman and Polish societies, Ali Ufkî Bey has been tried to be understood in terms of his place and importance in Ottoman culture—and as Agata Pawlina states, he was “one of the most remarkable figures in the history of cultural contacts between Europe and the Ottoman Empire” (Pawlina, 2024, p. 27). s

2. Musical Education and Entertainment in Ottoman Culture

The palace *Enderun* school is of great importance in terms of music education, founded by Sultan Murad I (years of reign 1362–1389) and developed during the reigns of Sultan Murad II (years of reign 1421–1451), Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror (years of reign 1451–1481) and Sultan Bayezid II (years of reign 1481–1512) of the Ottoman Empire. The *Enderun* school was directly under the oversight of the sultan himself and was an educational institution established to train qualified people to maintain the power of the Ottoman Empire. Music stud-

ies were conducted and continued in the palace. During the reign of Fatih Sultan Mehmet, the palace *Enderun* school was the most important school in terms of science and the arts. Fatih Sultan Mehmet was succeeded by his son, Sultan Bayezid II (years of reign 1481–1512), who similarly supported music culture among the Arab and Persian poets and minstrels who came to Istanbul in the second half of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. There were also musical masters. Some of them were educated by Bayezid II in the service of his sons or at the Ottoman court, and some of them were brought to Istanbul and educated in the *Enderun* by Yavuz Sultan Selim (years of reign 1512–1520). According to the ability of each student, either scholarly education was provided by scholars and art masters, or military training was given under the direction of officers at the *Enderun*. Musical education in *Enderun* was carried out meticulously, and young people who were musically gifted were sent to the *meşkhane*² to become instrumental and vocal musicians after being identified (Somakçı, 2017, p. 174).

As is known, Yavuz Sultan Selim's reign lasted eight and a half years, during which he restlessly took part in Persian and Egyptian campaigns. We have no information about his *fasıls*—the name given to sections in music where several pieces are played or sung; but as for his private life, we have information from Hakim Kazvini about his conversations with edibs and poets, his jokes, his friendliness. There are many valuable musical masters from Iran, among them Nayi Sheikh Murad, Neyzen Imam Kulu, Kanuni Sheikh Murad, and *daireci* (tambourine player and *fasıl* conductor) Maksud. Since he brought musicians and many other musicians to Istanbul and enrolled them in the *Enderun*, it is clear that he was interested in music. As a matter of fact, when his son Sultan Süleyman I—Suleiman the Magnificent (years of reign 1520–1566) became the ruler, in *Enderun*, the music committee called *Cemaat-i mutriban* was shown with their instruments and fees (Uzunçarşılı, 1977, p. 84). Musicians coming from Iran continued making music and became masters and participated in concert programs known as *fasl-ı hümayun*—court music at the palace. During the Ottoman period, it is known that famous musicians were trained at the *Enderun* School. Master composers and performers of the period were invited to the palace. Some of them, who had gained a little more confidence, worked as teachers in *Enderun*, e.g., Dede Efendi, Şakir Ağa, Tanburi Zeki Ağa, Kemani Ali Ağa. As a venue for the musical education of the children admitted to the palace, it was mostly used in Topkapı until the 17th century. The great and small rooms in *Enderun* in the palace were allocated during the reign of Murad IV (1623–1640; Somakçı, 2017, p. 174).

² *Meşkhane* refers to a place where education transmitted from master to pupil, known as *meşk*, is conducted. There were no class hours in the *Meşkhane*. It was open from morning to evening and music was played here continuously. In this training room, which was also used by masters, including *mehter* [military] musicians, students would receive education for at least fourteen years (Somakçı, 2017, p. 174).

The 17th-century highlights the growth of musical art within the broad scope of creative activities: the development of court music under the patronage of sultans, the all-pervading process of *mehter* music in communal life, the religious and secular music of dervish confreres with the great impact of the Mevlevi congregation, and urban music blending higher and lower traditions with an influx of folk elements and styles. Evliya Çelebi (n.d.) gives a detailed and colourful account of the professions of the 17th-century artisan guilds. According to his account, there were many professional musicians who made their living from music in the city, organized in workshops under the patronage of the sultan. *Ehl-i Hiref*—craftsmen’s fee—notebooks recorded the money given to musicians in a serious manner.

Although art music was aimed at smaller audiences in the court, elements and genres of urban and folk music were gradually assimilated into the classical repertoire. Conversely, compositions created by elitist musicians have found their way into the popular stream of urban music. The opportunities to listen to music or to practice music were so numerous that music permeated all social activities, from court life to the lower strata of social structures.

Music was an important form of entertainment used to overcome obstacles, appealed to all segments of Ottoman society, as well as many events in the city; music was part of festivities, feast days, and social entertainments to celebrate holidays, victories, and spontaneous events in street demonstrations. Many forms of event, including music, were considered permissible and tolerated by the *madrasa*—containing *ulema class* and *kadis*—Muslim judge—who formed the organization of education, judiciary, *fatwa* [an answer explaining religious-legal ruling], and religion in the Ottoman Empire. The coffeehouses, called *Meclis-majlis*, were located in the Tahtakale-Eminönü area and provided a place for storytelling and musical entertainment (Lewis, 1972, pp. 136–137). Beside this, the most popular leisure time entertainment was picnic parties organized around the city. The groves and gardens at Bosphorus were the most attractive areas where an elite and cosmopolitan society from Istanbul enjoyed listening to music and performances by jugglers, tightrope walkers, acrobats, and *köçeks*—dancers. The owners of luxurious mansions on the Bosphorus entertained their guests with shows and music. The role of music further increased in the 17th century; the palace music school expanded, and social acceptance of musical entertainment became even more widespread.

3. Notation in Turkish Music

The Latin word *note* means “writing, written sign” in the dictionary, and in musical art, the sign is used to indicate musical sound, “graphical representation” of sound, musical writing (Agayeva, 2007, p. 205, as cited in Öncel, 2015, p. 209). In the dictionary, it is mentioned as musical letters and signs that indicate sounds. In another source, we see that the special signs used to detect sounds and music on paper are called musical writing, that is, notes (Özkan,

1986, p. 37, as cited in Öncel, 2015, p. 209). In fact, although notation and music writing are used in the same sense in many musical works, we see that they are not used in the same sense in some important musical sources. When note writings used in the world from past to present are considered in general, it is seen that four different note writing approaches—letter writings, “neumatic” letter-shape writings, stringed note writings, and tabulatures—have emerged (Say, 1985, p. 891, as cited in Öncel, 2015, p. 209). Letter writings are note writing systems developed depending on the alphabet of the culture to which they correspond. Neumatic notation is a writing system based on shapes such as dots, curves, lines, and circles. String notation is a form of notation that began with placing neuma marks on string-like lines. The tabulatura system is a marking language developed for ease of instrument playing rather than being a direct note writing system, and this system, which is widely used in many cultures, is mostly used outside of vocal music (Feyzi, 2018, pp. 1891–1892).

As for Turks, how notation was throughout history? We see that music developed a lot, especially during the Uyghur period, although there is no detailed information about notation writing among pre-Islamic Turks. It is said that the first Turkish state to perform music based on script was the Uyghurs. Turks used different notation systems in the post-Islamic historical practice. It is possible to say that there is no unified system regarding notation here, what failure to ensure system integrity also delayed institutionalization. When looked at in terms of historical changes in the development of musical notation styles, it can be seen that the four basic approaches are widely used in notating musical works in Turkish Music. The first of these is the letter writing system, that is, a note writing system created by using letters and letter groups in the Arabic alphabet. It is possible to see the effects of the ancient Greek letter writing style in the formation of this system. In this system, while letters generally represent pitch, duration values are given with numbers corresponding to these letters. Although examples of this type of notation system can be found in different cultures, generally, “Arabs, Iranians, and Turks have traditionally written music with letter and number notes” (Popescu-Judet, 2007, p. 20, as cited in Feyzi, 2018, p. 1892). This notation system, generally known as the *Ebced* system, greatly influenced the period after its emergence and enabled the recording of musical works of both Central Asian-Arabic and Turkish cultures with its different genres created over the centuries (Feyzi, 2018, pp. 1892–1893).

The 17th century can be considered an important stage in the history of musical writing. In Ali Ufkî’s work *Mecmua-ı Saz-ı Söz*, written in 1650, he published around 550 works with a special Western music notation system, arranged in the opposite direction of the standard Western orientation. In the Ottoman musical tradition, music was initially recorded with a number of special signs before ultimately being written in Western notation. In this regard, Ali Ufkî was first musician who wrote down the repertoire for the purpose of determining it (Öncel, 2015, p. 215).

4. Ali Ufkî's Contribution to Turkish Music

Most Ottoman theorists of the 15th and 16th century were not interested in notation except for tablature notes and definitions of modal scales. Towards the end of the 17th century, many composers, singers, and instrumentalists emerged who helped develop Turkish classical music with their creativity. One of them was the well-known Polish convert Ali Ufkî, a complex and erudite musician (cf. Haug, 2019). Ali Ufkî gives information about the training of musicians in the palace school. *Sazendebaşı*—head of musicians—was a Genoese in his time. In the *meskhane*, where even the Mehter team worked, the enslaved boys/eunuchs were taught music and met with music masters and students. They played all the music by heart and improvised songs perfectly. Clowns, dancers, and comedians trained in the same place or outdoors. The practice continued until the evening prayer. Later, the *meskhane* was occupied by *mehter*—military music—masters who taught their students to play wind instruments.

Some European travelers of the same period have left distorted notations in their accounts which became known in Europe as Turkish melodies. Bülent Aksoy introduced the concept of “lost music” to music literature—that this author defines as music that fails to keep its living melodies. He uses this term for cultures that could not preserve it in written form. According to Aksoy, without four notebooks of Ali Ufkî, *Kantemiroğlu*, *Nayi Osman Dede* and *Kevseri*, written in the 17th and 18th centuries, the musical culture of these centuries would not have survived (Aksoy, 2008, p. 232, as cited in Öncel, 2015, p. 219).

Notation was used only for the description of modal scale or for theoretical purposes before Ali Ufkî. Turkish theorists of music proceeded to develop two models of modal classification in parallel, a taxonomic approach and a transformative one in the early 1400s. The principle of taxonomic classification was inherited from Islamic theorists. Essentially, taxonomy involves the procedures of systematic organization of observed data. The transformative model is evolutive and concerns an aspect of development proceeding from certain tonal points through transposition, modulations, and evasions at a deep and surface level. However, Ali Ufkî used Western staff notation in Ottoman music. The thought of writing down music came forth as an important issue in the 17th century. He wrote down about 1650 with European staff notation, over 550 vocal and instrumental melodies about 200, *türkü*—about 120—and included about 20 *fasıls*. Having a Western background in musical training, Ali Ufkî directed his endeavors toward the application of Western staff notation to write Turkish music (Behar, 2008, p. 47; cf. Haug, 2019, pp. 137–190). Ufkî is the first consummate musician to accomplish the sensational task of writing a large body of Turkish music with notes. The melodies are notated in bass clef on a five-line staff. Obviously, only Western-type accidentals, flats, and sharps are used. An accidental is a symbol that indicates an alteration of a given pitch. The most common accidentals are the flat (b) and the sharp (#). Repetition signs of the typical Western prima volta and secondary volta are abundantly marked in the

final passages at the ends of the sentences. Ufkî's approach to rhythm is based on the traditional European double-triple dichotomy with its simple implications. Specially created symbols are placed as time signatures in the form of a circle or triangle, where two or three numbers are added together. In the case of a compound, two or three symbols come together. There are no obstacles or special signs for rest. Scores give clear outlines of melodies and have both descriptive and prescriptive purposes, intended for memorization and performance.

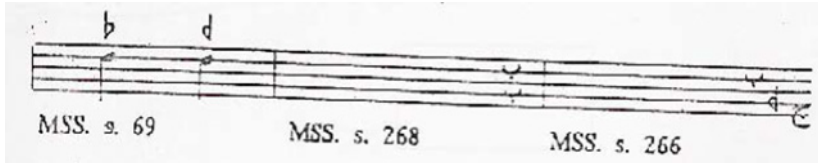
It is clear that the musical message of Ali Ufkî's score was aimed at the readers and interpreters of bicultural education who constituted the elite group of court musicians at that time. Ali Ufkî's notations of over 20 *fasıls* in his anthology of songs inform us about the program of the vocal instrumental suite of the 17th century, which integrated higher music genres like *beste*—named also *murabba*—*peşrev* and *semavi*, with dance pieces—*raksîye*—popular songs, *şarki*, and folk melodies, commonly known as *türkü*. Later Sultan Ahmed III (years of reign 1703–1730) was a pro-westernization sultan, and so Ottoman musicians of the period expanded the horizon of musical creativity and activity with their compositions in the mid-18th century. Sultan Ahmet the III's grand vizier Damad İbrahim Pasha of Nevşehir, who was at the forefront of the harmonious movement between music and word, the tulip period and halva conversations, was an excellent composer in music, although his poetry was of moderate level, so his conversation assemblies were attractive in Bosphorus (Uzunçarşılı, 1977, p. 94). Ali Ufkî used Western staff notation and he had no interest in explaining the theory of Ottoman music. Very important information has been obtained on various subjects related to Ali Ufkî's work. Among these, those directly related to our subject and the technical features of Ali Ufkî writing, especially the works of Arel, Oransay, and Uludemir. According to Sanal (Sanal, 1964), a part of the instrumental value of this manuscript, which includes special and instrumental compositions from both traditional Turkish art music and Turkish folk music, is also found in *Kantemiroğlu Edvar*—the book of music theory (Tura, 2001). The first article introducing Ali Ufkî's *Mecmua-ı Saz-ü Söz* is by Uluçay (Uluçay, 1948). Ufkî's notation shows us that he studied Western music before coming to Istanbul. Ufkî was also a person who knew the theory of medieval music. As a matter of fact, it can be seen that this is also reflected in the writing in which he uses traces (Ergişi, 2008, p. 44).

The alternation signs used by Ali Ufkî in his musical notes have been tried to be explained in the light of the sources we have. According to Uludemir, *sharp* sounds are translated into their natural state with flat. It is used as a guide symbol at the end of each line, indicating the height of the first note at the beginning of the next line. The line that looks like the tie line is the closest line. Sometimes it seems that this line is not drawn long enough to include the second cabinet. There is no dimension line, only the repeat line is used. However, the points on this line are placed in the opposite direction, not towards the direction of the section to be repeated. The sustain point used in this article is located to the left of the note, unlike normal usage (Uludemir, 1991, pp. 21–22, as cited in Ergişi,

2008, p. 48). Ali Ufkî's flat varieties and Ali Ufkî's diyez varieties are shown below (Figures 1, 2):

Figure 1

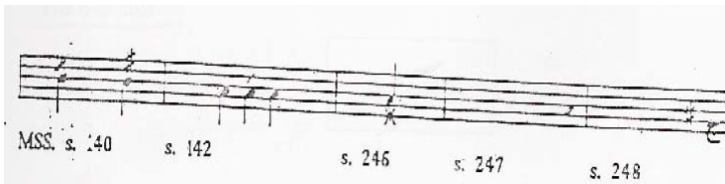
Flat Varieties



Note. Source: Ergişi, 2008, p. 49.

Figure 2

Diyez Varieties

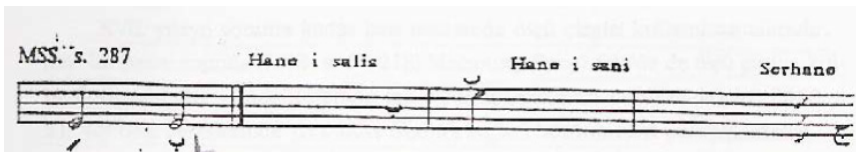


Note. Source: Ergişi, 2008, p. 49.

Special signs in Ali Ufkî's note writing (Figure 3) and sign in Ali Ufkî's musical notes indicating that the piece will pause *fermata-durak* are shown below (Figure 4).

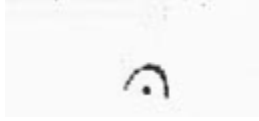
Figure 3

Note Writing



Note. Source: Ergişi, 2008, p. 49.

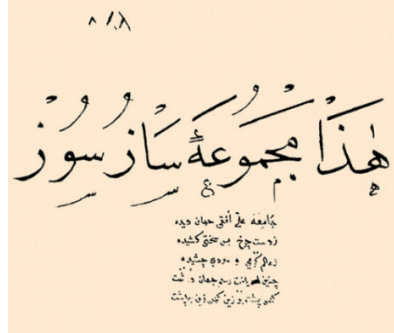
Figure 4
Fermata-Durak



Note. Source: Ergişi, 2008, p. 49.

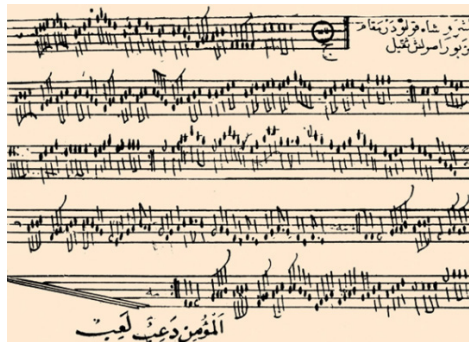
We had mentioned that *Mecmua-ı Saz ü Söz* (see Figures 5 and 6) was introduced for the first time in Turkey in an article written by Çağatay Uluçay (1948, p. 14). This was followed by many analyses (e.g., Ergin, 1968; Sanal, 1964; Şener, 1980) of the book.

Figure 5
Title Page From Mecmua-ı Saz-ü Söz



Note. Source: Özcan, 2008, p. 273.

Figure 6
Mecmua-ı Saz-ü Söz



Note. Source: Özcan, 2008, p. 273.

Haydar Sanal identified some of the *mehter* airs in his work *Mehter Musikisi* (1964) and Cafer Ergin translated some of the Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman texts in the book into Latin letters (Ergin, 1968). *Musiki Mecmuası* (this publication, which was left aside, was later completed by H. İbrahim Şener in the same journal) draws attention as an important work on this subject. It should be especially noted that Muammer Uludemir carried out the most important studies on *Mecmua-i Saz ü Söz*, which was published and facsimilized by Şükrü Elçin. In these studies, Uludemir analyzes technical information such as *usul* [rhythm and metre] change signs, keys, etc., in *Mecmua-i Saz ü Söz*. He gave a list of all the notes with their information. He also published the transcribed texts of instrumental *semâis* [poems written with an octave syllable meter and sung with a special melody], *murabba* [a poem consisting of four-line sections and folk songs in the work], and introduced many new works to the Turkish music repertoire. However, the edition of the work prepared by M. Hakan Cevher (Cevher, 2003) with some auxiliary technical information and research, the original text translated into Latin letters, and a translation of the notes written in the old Western notation into today's Western notation, is the most comprehensive publication on this subject to date (Özcan, 2008, p. 273). The works of Cem Behar, Yalçın Tura, Erhan Uslu, and other research on *Mecmua-i Saz ü Söz* are very valuable.

5. Semiotics in Culture and Music

The most general definition of culture is that culture is everything created by man outside of nature. Therefore, it also includes art and music. The origin of the term culture goes back to Cicero. By saying *Cultura animi philosophia est* [philosophy provides the care of the soul], Cicero emphasizes that *cultura* [care] should be considered as a process. Johann Gottfried Herder—in his work *Ideas for the Philosophy of the History of Humanity* (1784)—treated this term, which at that time was associated with the care and cultivation of the soil, as a process and linked it with the main goal of his time, “enlightenment”:

We can call this lifelong second creation of man culture, after the cultivation of the field; we can call it enlightenment, after the symbol of light; whatever name is chosen, the rings of culture and enlightenment will reach to the ends of the earth. (Posner, 2001, p. 26)

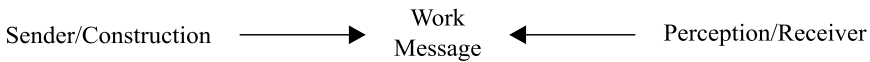
Following Peirce's semiotic theory, E. Cassirer (1874–1945) adopted the idea of unlimited meaning in semiosis. According to the common view, a sender wants to transmit a message to a receiver, establishes a relationship with the receiver through a channel, chooses a suitable code, chooses a suitable signifier from this code, and this unit must correspond to the message to be sent. This signifier in the selected code is related to a specific signifier in the whole code. The sender uses this signifier, i.e., a concrete instance of this signifier, i.e., a sig-

nifier. He proposed that culture should be the object of study for semiotics, which deals with culture as a whole. According to him, the symbolic forms existing in culture should be analyzed with the science of symbols. Semiotics exhibits symbolic forms as required by a really rigorous, precise and sharp way of thinking. Moreover, when analyzing a culture, it has to show that the symbolic forms in this culture are not a randomly assembled mass, but on the contrary, they come together as an embodiment of the functioning of the human mind (Posner, 2001, p. 28).

A prominent semiotician, Thomas Sebeok (2001), emphasized the combination of elements in every creation for modelling musical language. He suggested using Lévi-Strauss's method of semiotics for music, which Strauss used to study cultural processes and make sense of objects. Everything that people create can be considered as culture; therefore, culture is a dynamic processes that should be taken into account during the analyses. It also concerns music with contemporary analytical methods, such as musical semiotics. Molino and Nattiez adapted—from R. Jakobson's diagram of linguistic communication—to musical diagram fundamental for music semiotics (Figure 7 below). However, Jakobson's *message* (sender and receiver) was called neutral in Nattiez's theory (Nattiez, 1990, pp. 16–18).

Figure 7

Neutral Level in Nattiez's Theory



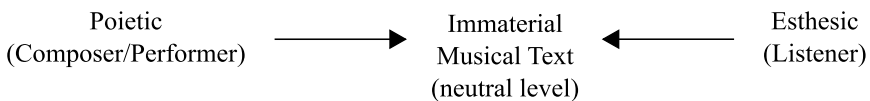
Note. Source: author's own elaboration based on (Nattiez, 1990, 16–18).

According to Nattiez, musical notation is regarded as the trace of a work at a neutral level, emerging through the composer's poetic process on the one hand and the listener/interpreter's aesthetic process on the other (Nattiez, 1990, pp. 11–13, 16–17). Nattiez states that Western music involves the interpretation of a score in performance and places the performance of the score at the end of the poetic process and the beginning of the aesthetic process.

In contrast, Nattiez views the poetic process in music based on oral traditions as the combination of composition and performance, thereby simplifying the model of musical transmission (Figure 8; Nattiez, 1990, p. 73).

Figure 8

Musical Transmission in Oral Traditions



Note. Source: Nattiez, 1990, p. 72.

Although the influence of oral tradition in Turkish makam music does indeed blur the boundary between notation and interpretation, Nattiez's models do not adequately describe the current position of traditional Turkish makam music. As societies globalize and become more visually oriented, the use of notation has become a tradition in both folk music and art music genres. However, the influence of the oral tradition is generally stronger in folk music compositions, which are usually shorter than in art music. As Salvucci (2024a, pp. 216) emphasized in his doctoral thesis, relying on notation for the transmission and preservation of compositions is more meaningful for Ottoman/Turkish art music compositions, which are longer and composed from beginning to end (Salvucci, 2024a, p. 157). Here, the final form of the music sign process consists of message or work, production, and aesthetic dimensions. The creation dimension is related to the construction, composition creation process, and the conditions of the creation of the work. The aesthetic dimension is related to perception and the recipient and the interpretation of the work. In this scheme, the boundaries of the work are drawn by the beginning pieces and parts of the music notes. It is the same as in Lévi-Strauss's serial and syntagmatic analyses. Thus, the making and the recipient stop, and the work itself begins (Littlefield, 1993, p. 332).

Eco published *Opera Aperta* [Open Work] prior to 1975, at a time when he had not yet focused much on semiotics. According to him, works of art allow for many different interpretations due to their "openness". However, at a time when deconstructive voices are increasingly heard against structuralism, Eco expresses his skepticism towards the idea that a work of art or a text can have an unlimited number of interpretations. Eco aimed to establish a dialectic between openness and the factors that limit interpretation in some way. Eco develops Peirce's concept of "unlimited meaning" and follows the path of Peirce's semiotics in order to draw limits to unlimited meaning and to search for criteria of interpretation (Göksel, 2006, pp. 85–86).

As Salvucci (2024b, p. 216) notes in his article, after Hockney, the forced narrative of a static viewpoint in European paintings through the use of perspective, Metin And characterizes the closed-form aesthetic in Western art and narrative theatre as goal-oriented, based on a chain of events. The closed-form narrative aesthetic coincides with the shaping of goal-oriented harmony and tonal music in 17th-century Europe and the development of perspective in European art around the same period. Closed-form theatre therefore aims to emotionally identify with its audience and establish a relationship with its characters, contrasting with the open-form aesthetic of traditional Ottoman theatre. Similar to the subjective, multi-faceted aesthetics of miniature art, the focus in open form Ottoman theatre is not on the leading actors, but on the audience, who perform the act of interpretation (And, 1970, p. 27, as cited in Salvucci, 2024b, p. 216). In music, too, *poiesis* is based on creation, whereas *mimesis* is more based on imitation. The open form of Ottoman music is more focused on *poiesis*.

Music that charms people of all cultures throughout the ages presents new ideas to human understanding. According to Thomas Sebeok (Casotti, 2003,

p. 275), musical language was created for modelling by human beings through combining elements in new ways. This perspective helps us see the musical world as a result of a modelling process that organizes the process in which sounds constantly disrupt and reconstruct the form (Casotti, 2003, p. 275). This is similar to what Lévi-Strauss regards as modelling. For him modelling can be human beings' construction of or making a minimized sample of a new form by deconstructing the form to understand the environmental perception which encircles them. The visual dimension of our environmental perception is objective-concrete, whereas its sound dimension is abstract.

In her essay *On Meaning in Music*, Susanne Langer (Arat, 1977) explains why she uses music as an example because sound is the easiest medium to use purely artistically. According to her, the history of music and aesthetics is full of events parallel to the history of thought. In this regard, many theories need to be taken into consideration in music studies. Therefore, the problem of the essence and function of music has changed its focus many times in accordance with these theories. While Kant placed music at the bottom of the art forms, W. James evaluated music as a form that has no purpose. Thinkers such as Helmholtz and Wundt emphasized that music is a form of pleasurable sensation and therefore the reason for the emergence of an aesthetics based on liking and disliking (Arat, 1977, pp. 157–158). The belief that music enlivens emotions went back to antiquity. In his seminal work *Republic*, Plato suggested that the public should not be influenced by immoral sources or be a weak or sybaritic people, who are defeated by their feelings. If music is really a language of emotions, first, the composer reflects his/her knowledge related to human emotions, but he/she never says how or when this knowledge was acquired.

6. Phenomenology and Ali Ufkî

Phenomenology is the discovery of existential “essence” in regard to subjective experience. All problems can eventually be brought back to a description of essential experience: “self” of consciousness or consciousness itself. Dan Zahavi asks: “What is the phenomenal meaning of this lived experience? How the phenomenal meaning of this lived experience gives itself to our consciousness, (self)awareness?” (Zahavi, 2005, pp. 15–16). It is not necessary to go through an experience, it means “what it is like” to have that experience and as long as there is something that says “this is”, there must be an awareness of these experiences themselves (Zahavi, 2005, as cited in van-Manen, 2017, p. 811). The most important type of communication is the one we have with ourselves, and it presents a difficult picture. What makes it even more challenging when it comes to others is this very communication. It can be seen that the notion of tolerance is embodied in the essence of communication processes, where the communicating agents could be in a position to extend the attitude of acceptance of other people's compartment, which might also exert a positive impact on their lives. The concept of relationality seemed to be very important among van Manen's existential themes

(Manen, 1997), since the experience of tolerance or intolerance cannot be discussed without taking into consideration the communicative relations between people and between cultures. In fact, communication as relationality is a phenomenon that can take place, *inter alia*, between individuals, groups, and cultural systems as well (Zaprucki, 2017, pp. 63–64).

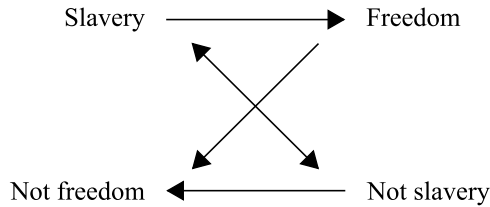
John Locke's treatment of consciousness and his use of the word semiotic are not accidental. In his work *An Essay on Human Understanding*, he emphasized the importance of understanding and awareness. The philosophical word is structurally a dialogical word, a reborn word commitment to the other. The constitutive character of understanding is dialogism. Dialogue is an external or internal discourse in which the word of the other prevails (not necessarily coming from another person), interferes with one's own word. Given this, the relationship with the other is the basis for the formation of the "I", individual thought; otherness takes place within the subject, within identity. The "I", which is itself a dialogue, is a relation between the same and the other. The "I" in the constitutional, structural, and dialogical sense tests the relationship with otherness, that otherness others, or the otherness of the self. Otherness is found both inside and outside, beside the subject. Philosophers such as Charles S. Peirce and Mikhail Bakhtin see dialogue as the modality of thought itself (Petrilli, Ponzio, 2010, pp. 39–40).

Ali Ufkî was conscious of his situation and, as an "other", not only adapted European musical notation to the Arabic alphabet, but also adapted himself to Ottoman culture. The notation of instrumental and vocal songs, musical texts, and lyrics are interspersed throughout Ali Ufkî's draft notebook (Behar, 2016). Since the lyrics of the songs are written in Turkish with Arabic letters, instrumental pieces are in his notational manuscript *Mecmua-i Saz ü Söz* (Elçin, 2000). Interestingly, Ali Ufkî additionally rendered the Turkish lyrics in Latin characters. Ufkî solved this dilemma in his manuscript by determining his own spelling rules, eliminating some transliteration difficulties, and writing all the music from right to left. The development of this script, partly under the notes, partly under the music, is an example of the acculturation between the Western system and Islamic graphic understanding. In this manner, European notation was not only used to record musical material, but also to establish a channel of communication between Western musical understanding and Turkish thought (Lasfolk, 2004, p. 1).

Adapting rationality as an existential choice as an expression of freedom when enslaved describes Ali Ufkî's situation well. Ali Ufkî adapted his lost life to court life. He was a hardworking man, and it must have been his way of life. Slavery and freedom are among the most basic systems regarding the essence of humanity and mankind, and their representations in Greimas's Semiotic Square are as follows (Figure 9):

Figure 9

Representation of Freedom-Slavery in Greimas's Semiotic Square



Note. Source: author's own elaboration.

Ali Ufkî encountered a different culture and music in Istanbul. When it comes to Istanbul music, encountering a hybrid culture and music is inevitable because Istanbul is a cosmopolitan city. Edgar Morin (Morin, 2001, p. 139) adopted a semiotic approach to the music that emerged when different cultures' music met in Andalusia: artistic creativity, fueled by stimulus and response, flamenco, considered the most original music of our time, the intermingling of Arabs, Jews and Spaniards transformed by the Andalusian people, and the bitter-tragic intelligence of the gypsies. Like Edgar Morin, Ali Ufkî similarly demonstrated that elements and genres from urban and folk music in Turkish music were increasingly assimilated and simulated into the classical repertoire during his period. Ali Ufkî both heard and saw the productivity and danger of opening up the voice of Istanbul (to the outside world) while preserving the essence of dual forces. In addition, we can say that Ali Ufkî preserved his status by writing his music in the closed form of Western musical notation.

7. Final Remarks

Although the first examples of the writing and publishing of Turkish musical works with the string notation system began to be seen with Ali Ufkî Bey, the first published studies in the context of the string notation system used today coincide with the last quarter of the 19th century. However, the adaptation of Western notation as an official system in the Ottoman Empire and its use by Ottoman musicians dates from 1828–1830 (Ayangil, 2008, p. 401; Behar, 1987, p. 41). This situation can be considered a result of increasing musical relations with Europe during that period. In this context, it can be said that the phenomenon of “duality and multiculturalism”, which is frequently mentioned in written sources about the *Tanzimat period*—the Westernization movement—and largely manifests itself in underlying dynamics such as melodic structure, instrument diversity, rhythm, and lyrics, is also felt to some extent in musical notation systems, and the work titled *Miftâh-ı Nota* is an important example of this. This notation system was created by combining two different musical notation ap-

proaches (letter notation and staff notation), but it did not gain sufficient widespread use during its time (Feyzi, 2018, p. 1907).

As a result of classical Western music education given at the *Musika-i Hümayun*, the Western notation, which had not been seen since Ali Ufkî in parallel with the Hamparsum notation that was widely used in this century, gradually infiltrated the Ottoman environment and became increasingly widespread and popular in the second half of the 19th century (Popsecu-Judet, 2007, p. 53, as cited in Feyzi, 2018, p. 1897). By the 20th century, Hüseyin Sadettin Arel's Turkish Music Sound System, the Arel-Ezgi-Uzdilek system, was greatly contributed to by Rauf Yekta Bey. It was used as a textbook in Turkish musical education at the Istanbul Conservatory with a pedagogical arrangement. In terms of music policy, following the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the Music Education School was opened in Ankara in 1924 at Atatürk's suggestion. The opening of this school became the first symbol of the Republic's emphasis on Western music culture; many state conservatories were established. On November 20, 1934, the National Music Congress convened in Ankara, and the Music Culture Policy of the time was determined. Following the confusion caused by the banning of Alaturka music within this structure, which was shaped by an understanding based on Western music, the ban on Alaturka music was lifted shortly afterwards (Topuz, 1998, p. 60). Today, Turkish Music Theory studies, which began with Yalçın Tura at the Musicology Department of the State Turkish Music Conservatory, founded in 1975, are continued by Şehvar Beşiroğlu, Ozan Baysal, and many other scientists and young researchers, such as Peter Noah Salvucci or Agata Pawlina from Jagiellonian University (Poland).

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