

Agata Pawlina, MA
Jagiellonian University
Faculty of Philology

Project Title: Musical life in the Turkish sultan's palace in the 17th century, based on memoirs of Wojciech Bobowski (vel. Ali Ufkî, Bobovius)

PROJECT SUMMARY

The main objective of this research project is to investigate how an Ottoman-Turkish composer of Polish origin, Wojciech Bobowski vel. Ali Ufkî, Bobovius (1610?–1675?), described and perceived musical culture of the 17th-century Ottoman Court. This objective will be achieved by examining his musical and musicological works, which until present day have not yet been studied in any depth by Polish scholars.

Wojciech Bobowski spend most of his life in Constantinople, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. He is an author of body of work that currently is perceived as a part of Humanities, including: Musicology, Linguistics, Religious Studies, History, Ethnology and Oriental Studies. In Turkey he is better known by his Turkish name: Ali Ufkî, foremost as a composer of the Ottoman-Turkish classical music. In fact, his main treatise entitled *Mecuma-i Saz ü Söz* remains one of the most important sources for musicologists, as the first Ottoman-Turkish classical music anthology. Bobovius was also a polyglot, and with all those talents put to use, he became a link between the East and the West. He was known in the then-circles of the elite of the Ottoman Empire, as well as among European diplomats, voyagers and scholars.

The second objective of the research project is to gather existing knowledge on Wojciech Bobowski's biography and to fill existing knowledge gaps in it. Achieving this is crucial to fully understand Bobowski's unique perspective, as a 17th-century specialist of both European and Oriental music and languages.

A completely new perspective for research in this field proposed by the author – a turkologist, musician and Polish native-speaker, would shed a new light on the subject and could have a valuable impact also for international Humanities. The results of this project may inspire scholars of a few fields of science to conduct further research on under-researched works of Wojciech Bobowski – outstanding, yet almost completely forgotten “Turkish renegade” of Polish origin.