

DÜNYA, in collaboration with *RUAH Spirituality Institute*, presents
Ali Ufki'nin Mezmurları / The Psalms of Ali Ufki
*An interfaith concert of sacred music exploring the shared traditions of
Judaism, Turkish Sufism, Greek Orthodoxy and Protestant Christianity*



Psalm 13 from *The Genevan Psalter*, as notated in Ali Ufki's *Mezmurlar* (ca. 1665)

directed by **Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol** (*voice, ud, cura, ney*) and **Robert Labaree** (*voice, çeng, percussion*)
co-producers: **Nektarios Antoniou** (*voice*) and **Noam Sender** (*voice, percussion*)

Beth Bahia Cohen (*yaylı tanbur, violin*), **Cem Mutlu** (*voice, percussion*)
Martin Near (*countertenor*), **Stephen Soph** (*voice*)
Scott A. Tepper (*voice*), **Panayiotis Thoma** (*voice*)

Sunday, December 4, 2005 / Temple Beth Zion, Brookline

Ali Ufki, born Wojciech Bobowski in 1610, was a Polish Christian who converted to Islam after his capture by the Ottoman Turks at the age of 18, becoming renowned as a musician and translator in the imperial court. Contemporary accounts say that he was fluent in as many as seventeen languages, including Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic, in addition to Polish and Turkish. He is revered by music specialists as the creator of a unique manuscript—the famous *Mecmua-i saz ü söz* of 1650—which preserved for modern times several hundred classical Ottoman songs and instrumental pieces, the first instance in which western staff notation was applied to Turkish music. However, he is better remembered internationally for a very different legacy: as the translator of the first Turkish version of the Bible (*Kitabı Mukkades*), the equivalent of the King James version (1611) so famous in the English-speaking world. Born a Protestant, Ali Ufki died a Muslim and is the author of a treatise in defense of Islam intended for a Christian audience, written in Latin.

Much less widely known are the poetry and music of Ali Ufki which serve as the starting point of tonight's concert, a musical exploration of the psalm tradition shared by the three monotheistic religions. His manuscript of 1665 entitled *Mezmurlar* (The Psalms) consists of rhymed Turkish translations of psalms 1-14 set to simple tunes preserved in western staff notation (see the excerpt above). While for years scholars assumed that these tunes were composed by Ali Ufki himself, a comparison with early European sources of the psalms reveals a startling fact: these 14 tunes are, note-for-note, identical to psalms 1-14 in the famous Genevan Psalter, assembled at the end of the 16th century under the watchful eye of one of the giants of Protestant Christianity, Jean Calvin, for use in the Reform congregations of Geneva, Switzerland. Among Muslims the psalms (*Mezmur* or *Davud*) are revered (along with *Tevrat/Torah*, *İncil/Gospels*, and *Kuran*) as one of "The Four Books" they consider the world's indispensable legacy of monotheism. But the psalms have never entered the mainstream of Muslim devotions as they have in Judaism and Christianity. As one who was raised a Christian and therefore steeped in the psalms as tools of worship, Ali Ufki, the recent Muslim convert, may have been attempting to bring into his new religious practice an aspect of worship which he missed. If this was his wish, it was not fulfilled. Instead, the more lasting impact of his *Mezmurlar* is the ecumenical spirit which they embody, a remnant of the cosmopolitan environment in which Ali Ufki lived at the eastern end of the Mediterranean in the 17th century, insulated from the religious wars which raged in Europe throughout his lifetime. The legacy of this brilliant but somewhat mysterious and ambiguous figure provides an appropriate point of departure for a 21st century interfaith exploration.

Co-sponsored by Temple Beth Zion

PROGRAM

Prologue

The program begins where Ali Ufki began when he created his Turkish psalm settings: with the words and melodies of the psalms of Jean Calvin's *Genevan Psalter*. Psalm 13 is followed by the simple words of a Sufi singer-poet (*aşık*/"lover") from the Turkish countryside which set the tone of open questioning which characterizes this collaborative concert.

Psalm 13 from the Genevan Psalter (1562)

words: Clément Marot / melody: Guillaume Franc

Jusques à quand as établi / Seigneur, de me mettre en oubli? / Est-ce à jamais? Par combien d'aage

How long Lord wilt thou me forget? / For evermore? and wilt thou let / My prayer be remember'd never?

Destourneras tu ton visage / De moy, las! d'angoisse rempli?...

Lord wilt thou hide thy face for ever / From me with woes and foes beset?...

Turkish sufi song (nefes): Bir Allah'ı tanyalım

Aşık Ali İzzet (recorded ca. 1970)

Bir Allah'ı tanyalım / Ayri gayri bu din nedir?

Senlik benliği nidelim? / Bu kavga doğuşte nedir?

İssiz dünyayı doldurdu / Kendini kula bildirdi?

Habil Kabil'i öldürdü / Orta yerde ki kan nedir?

Musa Tevrat'a Hak dedi / Firavun aslı yok dedi.

İsa İncile bak dedi / Sonra gelen Kuran nedir?

Bu gavur Müslüman nedir?

Let us all believe in one God / What are all these separate religions?

What is all this 'yourself' and 'myself'? / How did this struggle begin?

God filled the empty world / He let himself be known to man.

Abel killed Cain / What is all this blood on the ground?

Moses said, 'The Torah is the Truth' / Pharaoh said, 'It's not true.'

Jesus said, 'Look to the Bible' / After that comes the Koran: what is it?

What is this 'non-believer' and 'believer'?

Part I. Shared Devotions

In this first part of the concert, the distinctness of the four participating traditions is emphasized. Selections in each tradition follow on each other displaying the unique qualities of their texts and musical practices.

From Psalm 150 (Hebrew words; melody adapted from a Sufi Pakistani Qawwali by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan)

Halleluyah / Hallelu-el be-kodsho / Hallelu-hu birkiya uzo / Hallelu-hu bi-gvu-rotav / Hallelu-hu kerov gudlo/

Hallelu-hu be-teka shofar / Hallelu-hu be-nevel ve-khinor / Hallelu-hu be-tof u-makhhol / Hallelu-hu be-minim ve-ugav/

Hallelu-hu be-tsil-tseley shama / Hallelu-hu beh-tsil-tse-ley tru-ah / Kol ha-n'shama tehallel yah / Halleluyah

Praise God in the sacred sanctuary; praise God in the mighty heavens / Praise God for vast power; praise God for abundant greatness / Praise God with the sound of shofar (horn); praise God with the lute and the harp / Praise God with drum and with dance; praise God with strings and flute / Praise God with the resounding cymbals; praise Him with the clanging cymbals / Let every thing that breathes praise God. Halelu-yah. Praise God.

Evloyiso ton Kyrion (Greek Orthodox, Psalm 33/34)

Evloyiso ton kyrion en panti kero dia pantos i enesis avtou en to stomati mou. Allilouia! / En to kyrio epenesthete i psychi

mou akousatosan prais ke evphranthitosan. Allilouia! / Megalinate ton kyrion sin emi ke hipsomen to onoma avtou epi to

avto. Allilouia! / Exezitisa ton kyrion ke epikousen mou ke ek pason ton parikion mou errisato me. Allilouia! / Proselthate

pros avton ke photisthite ke ta prosopa imon ou mi kateschinthi. Allilouia! / Outos o ptochos ekekraxen ke o kyrios

eisikousen avtou ke ek pason ton thlipseon autou esosen avton. Allilouia! / Parenvali angelos kyriou kyklo ton

phouvoumenon avton ke risete avtos. Allilouia! / Yevsasthe ke idete oti chistos o kyrios makarios anir os elpizi ep avton.

Allilouia! / Phovithite ton kyrion i ayii avtou oti ouk estin hysterima tis phouvoumenis avton. Allilouia! / Plousii

evtochevsan ke epinasan i dhe ekzitountes ton kyrion ouk elattothisonte pantos agathou. Allilouia! / Devte tekna akousate

mou phovon kyriou didaxo imas. Allilouia!

I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. Alleluia! / My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. Alleluia! / O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. Alleluia! / I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

Alleluia! / They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. Alleluia! / This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. Alleluia! / The angel of the LORD

encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Alleluia! / O taste and see that the LORD is good:

blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Alleluia! / O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that

fear him. Alleluia! / The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any

good thing. Alleluia! / Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD. Alleluia!

A Mighty Fortress is Our God ("Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott", based on Psalm 46)

words and music: Martin Luther (1529), trans. by Frederick Hedge (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1853)

**A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:**

*Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott, ein Gute Wehr und Waffen
Er hilft uns frei aus aller Not, die uns jetzt hat betroffen*

For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Der alt böse Feind der ernst ers jetzt meint
Gross macht und viel List sein grausam Rüstung ist
Auf Erd ist nicht seins gleichen.

Noam's Niggun

Noam Sender

A *niggun* is an untexted melody used especially by Hasidic traditions of eastern Europe for the purpose of lifting the soul to higher dimensions of spiritual experience.

Modzitzer Niggun

An untexted melody thought to be from the tradition of the Modzitzer Hasidim.

Exomolyiste to Kyrio (in Greek) Psalm 135/136

Exomolyiste to kyrio oti avgathos. Allilouia! Oti eis ton eona to eleos avtou. Allilouia! / Exomolyisthe to theo ton theon. Allilouia! Oti eis ton eona to eleos avtou. Allilouia! / Exomolyisthe to kyrio ton kyrion. Allilouia! Oti eis ton eona to eleos avtou, Allilouia! / To piounti thavmasia megala mono. Allilouia! Oti eis ton eona to eleos avtou. Allilouia! / To piisanti tous ouranous en sinesi. Allilouia! Oti eis ton eona to eleos avtou. Allilouia! / To stereosanti tin yin epi ton hydaton. Allilouia! Oti eis ton eona to eleos avtou. Allilouia! / To piisanti phota megala mono. Allilouia! Oti eis ton eona to eleos avtou. Allilouia! / Ton ilion eis exousian tis imeras. Allilouia! Oti eis ton eona to eleos avtou. Allilouia!

O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good. Alleluia! For his mercy endureth forever. Alleluia! / O give thanks unto the God of gods. Alleluia! For his mercy endureth forever. Alleluia! / O give thanks to the Lord of lords. Alleluia! For his mercy endureth forever. Alleluia! / To him who alone doeth great wonders. Alleluia! For his mercy endureth forever. Alleluia! / To him that by wisdom made the heavens. Alleluia! For his mercy endureth forever. Alleluia! / To him that stretched out the earth above the waters. Alleluia! For his mercy endureth forever. Alleluia! To him that made great lights. Alleluia! For his mercy endureth forever. Alleluia! / The sun to rule by day. Alleluia! For his mercy endureth forever. Alleluia!

Nihavend Yürük Semai

Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol

(Turkish instrumental form in 6/8 used in the whirling ceremony of the Mevlevi Sufi order)

Part II. Synagogue, Tekke and Church: Jews, Sufis and Greeks in Istanbul

Synagogue, *tekke* (the meeting place of Muslim mystics, or Sufis) and Greek Orthodox church were three important venues of sacred music in Istanbul in the 20th century as well as in the time of Ali Ufki. The interaction among Sephardic Jewish congregations, Turkish Muslim mystical brotherhoods and Greek liturgical musicians in Istanbul is reflected in several of the pieces of Part II. The poetry of the first two pieces follow the tradition of the famous Rabbi and mystic Israel Najara (1555-1625), the legendary founder of the *Maftirim* choir tradition in the Ottoman empire, in which Hebrew poetry was sung to the melodies of secular Ottoman court music or Sufi devotional music.

Kha-desh ke-kedem, a *piyyut* (liturgical poem) in Hebrew from the repertoire of the Edirne *Maftirim*

words: Rabbi Hayyim Bejerano, Chief Rabbi of Istanbul in the 1920s

music: an unknown Turkish classical or Sufi composer (in *Hicaz makam*)

The performers first encountered this piece in a 1989 recording of Samuel Benaroya (b. 1908, Edirne, Turkey), member of the Edirne *Maftirim* chorus from 1920-34.

Kha-desh ke-kedem yah-meinu sho-khen ze-vula / Lishkon ka-vod be-arts-einu na-vah te-hila / Yarum ve-nisah kar-neinu me-od nah-ah-la / Na-vo el me-nu-kha-teinu el ha-nah-khala.

May the one who dwells on high renew our days once more / and may the presence to which all praise is due rest upon the earth in glory / May the one who dwells on high raise us to the highest peaks and bring us to the rest and the inheritance we seek.

Kahashekha Kaora (Psalm 139, verses 1-12) Music: Based on the *Maftirim* song Azkir Hasdei El Ne'eman.

Words adopted and arranged by Noam Sender.

Ado-nai kha-kar-ta-ni va-te-da / Ah-ta ya-da-ta shiv-ti ve-koo-mi ban-ta le-re-ee me-ra-khok / Ar-khi ve-riv-ee ze-ri-ta ve-khol drah-khai his-kan-ta / Ki en mi-lah bil-sho-ni hen Ah-do-nai ya-da-ta kkoo-la / Akh-or va-ke-dem tsar-ta-ni / va-ta-shet ah-lai ka-pe-kha / Pe-li-ah-ha da-aht mi-me-ni nis-ge-va lo oo-khal lah / Ah-na eh-lekh me-roo-khe-kha / ve-ana mi-pa-ne-kha ev-rakh / Im es-sak sha-ma-yim sham ah-ta ve-ah-tsi-ah she-ol hi-ne-ka / Eh-sa khan-fey sha-khar esh-ke-na beh-akh-rit yam / Gam sham yad-kha tan-khe-ni ve-to-kha-zeh-ni ye-min-ne-kha / Va-oh-mar akh kho-shekh ye-shoo-fe-ni ve-lie-la or ba-ah-deh-ni / Gam kha-kha-shekh lo yakh-shikh mi-meh-ka ve-lai-la ka-yom ya-eer ka-kha-she-kha ka-oh-ra

God, you have scrutinized me and you know / You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thoughts from afar / You encompass my path and my repose, You are familiar with my ways / For the word is not yet on my tongue, behold, God, You know everything I am about to say / You have shaped my past and my future,

Your hand gently on my shoulder / Awareness of you is beyond me; it is beyond my skills to fathom / Where can I withdraw from Your spirit? And where can I flee from Your presence? / If I ascend to heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in the lowest depths, behold, You are there / were I to soar on the wings of dawn, were I to dwell in the distant west, there too, Your hand would guide me and Your right hand would hold me in safety / Would I say, "Surely darkness will shadow me," then the night would become as light around me / Even darkness obscures not from You; and night shines like the day; Darkness and light are the same.

Dolap niçin inilersin (Turkish sufi devotional song) music: anonymous words: Yunus Emre (d. 1321)

<i>Dolap niçin inilersin / Derdim vardır inilerim</i>	Waterwheel, why do you cry out? / In my suffering, I cry out
<i>Ben mevalaya aşık oldum / Anun için inilerim</i>	I am in love with my Lord / I groan because I remember
<i>Benim adım dertili dolap / Suyum akar yalap yalap</i>	My name is the waterwheel of suffering / I draw the water, yalap yalap
<i>Böyle emreylemiş çalap / Anun için inilerim</i>	Working this way as I have been commanded / I groan...
<i>Suyu alçaktan çekerim / Çeker yükseğe dökerim</i>	I draw water from the depths / I draw it up and spread it
<i>Ben mevalaya zikrederim / Anun için inilerim</i>	I sing the praises of my Lord / I groan because I remember

Breath zikir and memory

In the Turkish Muslim tradition, *zikir* is understood as “remembering” (Arabic, *dhikr*) a special type of musical devotion in which repetition of short phrases of text and music, often combined with controlled deep breathing, creates a meditative state. Here, listeners are invited to allow the breath *zikir* to evoke their own personal memories of religious tradition, triggered by a tapestry of musical sounds specific to Christian, Jewish or Muslim experience. (Note: the word for “memory” in Hebrew is *zikaron*.)

Kyrie ekekraksa (Greek Orthodox, Psalm 140/141)

Kyrie ekekraksa pro se isakouson mou isakouson mou Kyrie / Kyrie ekekraksa pro se isakouson mou / proshesti phoni tis theiseos mou / en to enkrayene me pros se isakouson mou Kyrie / Katevthinthito e prosethi mou os thymiama enopion sou / Eparis tou cheirou ma thusia esperini eisakouson mou Kyrie.

Lord, I have cried out to thee, hear me, O Lord / Hear me, O Lord, when I cry unto thee / Attend to the voice of my supplication / When I cry unto thee, O Lord / Let me prayer arise as incense before you / and the lifting of my hands as a sacrifice/ Hear me, O Lord.

Grates Nunc Omnes Reddamus by Johann Walter (1496-1570), an important figure in the early German Reformation who composed multipart devotional music in both Latin and German.

Grates nunc omnes reddamus Domino Deo, qui sua nativitate nos liberavit de diabolica potestate
Let us offer thanks to the Lord who through his birth has freed us from the power of the devil

Part III. From Geneva to Istanbul and beyond: The Journey of Ali Ufki's Psalms

The 14 psalm settings in Ali Ufki's *Mezmurlar*, written in Istanbul, originated in Geneva, Switzerland, in the Psalm books of French-speaking Protestants. As the bloody conflicts between Roman Catholics and Protestants raged in Europe, Ali Ufki continued to correspond regularly with leaders of the Christian Reform movement in Europe from his new home in the Ottoman capitol. This final section of the concert begins with the Genevan version of Psalm 13 in French, followed by Hebrew, Greek, and Turkish versions of the same psalm and tune, adapted to the performance practices of each of these communities.

Psalm 13 in Four Traditions

To the chief musician. A psalm of David. 1 How long will you forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt you hide your face from me? / 2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long will my enemy be exalted over me? / 3 Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death; / 4 Lest my enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved. / 5 But I have trusted in your mercy; my heart will rejoice in your salvation. / 6 I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me.

PROTESTANT VERSION

From *The Genevan Psalter* (1562) sung in French and English
Rhyming text in French by Clément Marot, melody by Guillaume Franc.
Four part setting from *Les cent cinquante psaumes de David* by Claude Le Jeune (1601)

Jusques à quand as établi / Seigneur, de me mettre en oubli? / Est-ce à jamais? Par combien d'aage / Destourneras tu ton visage / De moy, las! d'angoisse rempli? ...

JEWISH VERSION

The *Genevan Psalter* melody (1562) sung in Hebrew

*Ahd ah-nah Adonai tish-kakheni netz-akh ahd ana tas-tir eht pah-neh-kha mi-meh-ni
Vah-ani be-khas-deh-kha vah-takh-ti yah-gel li-bi biyeh-shoo-atekha ah-shira lah-Adonai ki gah-mal ah-lai*

GREEK ORTHODOX VERSION (Psalm 12 in the Greek tradition)

The *Genevan Psalter* melody (1562) sung in Greek

Eos pote Kyrie epilipsimou is telos Eos pote apostrepsis to prosoposou apemou...

TURKISH SUFI VERSION

The *Genevan Psalter* melody (1562) as it was notated with rhyming Turkish text in the *Mezmurlar* of Ali Ufki (Istanbul, 1665).

*Ya Allah nice bu hamuş / İdersin beni feramuş / Daima böyle mi eylersin .
Nice dek benden yüzün gizlersin / Sana ümitvar kalmuş her tümüş...*

Zikir: A musical conversation on the psalms

The concert ends with a final *zikir*. Repeated phrases in different languages and musical idioms provide a framework for the three traditions to interact in a shared musical devotion. Over these *zikir* patterns soloists from each group improvise melodically on texts they have chosen in their own language.

chorus: repeated phrases in Arabic, Hebrew, Greek and Latin

Arabic: *La ilahe ilallah* (**There is no god but God**)

Hebrew: *Adonai hu hah-Elohim* (**The Lord is God**)

Greek: *Kyrie eleison* (**Lord have mercy**)

Latin: *Alleluia*

soloists: selected sacred texts in Turkish, Hebrew , Greek and Latin

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Beginning in the fall of 2005, DÜNYA is taking the *Ali Ufki Sacred Music Project* to schools, universities and religious groups in the New England area, offering a combination of performance and open discussion of interfaith issues built on the materials in tonight's concert.

For further information, contact DÜNYA at www.dunyainc.org

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The Musicians

Nektarios Antoniou (*voice*) teaches chant at Holy Cross School of Theology and Founder of the *Schola Cantorum* at Hellenic College. He is a post graduate student at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. **Beth Bahia Cohen** (*bowed tanbur, violin*) plays and teaches bowed strings from Eastern Europe and the Middle East and performs with *Ziyiá* and *Orkestra Keyif*. **Robert Labaree** (*çeng, voice, percussion*) is chair of the Music History Department of New England Conservatory. **Cem Mutlu** (*voice, percussion*) plays jazz and a variety of world musics with groups in the Boston area. **Martin Near** (*countertenor*) is a graduate of New England Conservatory and sings with the *Blue Heron Renaissance Choir*. **Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol** (*voice, mey, ney*) is a composer and jazz pianist and president of DÜNYA. **Noam Sender** (*voice, percussion*) performs with a variety of ensembles in the Boston area and is a board member of Temple Beth Zion. **Steven Soph** (*voice*) is a singer in the Boston area. **Scott A. Tepper** (*voice*) is a *Ba'al Tefillah*

(prayer leader) who has been involved with numerous Boston area congregations, currently Temple Beth Zion. **Panayiotis Thoma** (*voice*) is a student at Hellenic College.



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