

Traditional Music as Resource in Andreas Georgiou's *Doron Exagnismou*

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Andreas Georgiou (b. 1959) is a Cypriot guitarist and composer whose creative spirit finds a comfortable home in the genres of jazz and ethnic music. His compositions and improvisations exhibit daring experimentations that combine pitch resources drawn from the indigenous music of the eastern Mediterranean region, especially Greece and Cyprus, with non-diatonic modes used in contemporary art music. This peculiar pitch vocabulary is often subjected to exploitation in ways that resemble techniques and approaches utilised by composers of pitch-centric art music in the first half of the twentieth century.

His *Doron Exagnismou* (Gift of Purification) for voice, guitar, and kaval, from the album *Asate* (2003), provides good example of this practice.¹ In it, Georgiou builds the organization of pitch on the exploitation of specific scales and pitch cells from the eastern Mediterranean region.² Much of the interest in this work is found in his manner of exploiting his pitch material and the effect of these pitch manipulations on form and formal functionality. Uncovering these processes will be the primary focus of this study.

Pitch and Formal Structure

Doron Exagnismou comprises four sections: the guitar introduction and the three primary sections, A, B, and C. For the following discussion refer to the score in Example 1 and to Table 1, which outlines the work's formal structure. The guitar introduction presents part of the pitch material as well as the primary pitch centres that govern the work, (see Examples 1a and 2). More specifically, the composer introduces four melodic cells (*a*, *b*, *c*, and *d*):

a, Saba tetrachord on C# ($\hat{1}-\hat{2}-\flat\hat{3}-\flat\hat{4}$)

b, major scale tetrachord on B

c, Hijaz pentachord on D# ($\hat{1}-\flat\hat{2}-\hat{3}-\hat{4}-\hat{5}$)

d, scale degrees $\hat{7}$, $\hat{1}$, $\hat{2}$, and $\hat{3}$ of the Lydian mode on D#.³

¹ Libra Music, LM028-2.

² Cypriot folk music manifests itself in two broad ways in the works of the composer. On the one hand, one encounter works in which the folk exists as melodic quote, either as a short melodic cell exploited through expansion and/or variation, or in the form of an entire theme that is also subjected to exploitation (i.e., *Στείλε Με Μάνα στο Νερό* [Send Me, Mother, to the Water] from the album *Modus Vivendi*, ΕΜΣΕ, CON1089, 1994. On the other hand, we also find works that seem to draw elements of Cypriot folk music from the composer's subconscious cultural memory. This appears to be the case with *Doron Exagnismou*.

³ Obviously, in the absence of the mode defining raised fourth scale degree, the specific scale degrees are insufficient in outlining the Lydian mode (they are shared by the major scale as well). That Georgiou intends the Lydian mode will be clear in later appearances of the specific pitch cell succession.

Section A features the main theme of the work in the kaval, and is governed in its entirety by C# Aeolian (Example 1b). In section B, the leading melodic line is again given to the kaval, but this time it is accompanied by a textless obbligato melody in the voice (Example 1c). With respect to pitch content, section B develops its musical fabric from the four cells and the pitch centres found in the introduction. In section C, the basic melody is given jointly to the kaval and the voice (Example 1d). Similarly to section A, the composer introduces new pitch material, F# Mixolydian, generated by the succession of two harmonic structures, F# major and E major (Example 3).

The introduction and section B share an important grammatical feature: a well-regulated chromaticism that occurs via the manipulation of the four qualitatively different cells *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d* (Table 1). In both statements of the introduction, cell *a* initially forms an adjacency with cell *b*. For the first ending, *a* is juxtaposed with *c*, whereas for the second ending *c* is replaced by *d*, creating the following successions: *abac* | *abad*. The corresponding pitch centres are C#–B–C#–D# and C#–B–C#–D \natural , respectively. In the juxtaposition of cell *a* with cell *d* during the second ending, C# is succeeded by D \natural instead of D#. The chromatic interplay between C#, D \natural , and D#, especially the sudden shift from C# to D \natural during the second ending, has significant psychological impact, which is deepened by the melodic obligation of D \natural to return to C#.⁴

Table 1. *Doron Exagnismou*, Formal and Pitch Structure.

Section	Pitch Material	Pitch Centres
Intro	pitch cells <i>a b c d</i>	C# B C# D# C# B C# D \natural a b a c a b a d
A	Aeolian mode	C#
B	pitch cells <i>a b c d</i>	C# B C# D# C# B C# D \natural a b a c a b a d
A	Aeolian mode	C#
B	pitch cells <i>a b c d</i>	C# B C# D# C# B C# D \natural a b a c a b a d
C	Mixolydian mode	F# (E) F# (E)
B	pitch cells <i>a b c d</i>	C# B C# D# C# B C# D \natural a b a c a b a d
A	Aeolian mode	C#

⁴ Throughout the introduction C# is established as the global pitch centre. According to the grammatical tendencies of modal music, the lowered second scale degree (presently D), on account of its semitone relationship with the pitch centre of the given mode, exhibits a strong tendency to resolve downward to the modal final, in this case C#.

Example 1a. *Doron Exagnismou*, Introduction.

The musical score for the guitar introduction of *Doron Exagnismou* consists of three staves. The first staff, labeled 'Guitar', shows a melodic line in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 3/4 time signature. It features two phrases, 'a' and 'b', each marked with a slur and a fermata. The second staff, labeled 'Gtr.', continues the melodic line starting at measure 5, with phrase 'a' and a first ending '1.' leading to phrase 'c'. The third staff, also labeled 'Gtr.', starts at measure 9 with a second ending '2.' leading to phrase 'd'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, fermatas, and repeat signs.

Example 1b. *Doron Exagnismou*, Section A (adaptation).

The musical score for the Kaval Section A of *Doron Exagnismou* consists of four staves. The first staff, labeled 'Kaval', shows a melodic line in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 14/8 time signature. The subsequent three staves provide a rhythmic accompaniment, primarily using eighth and quarter notes. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, fermatas, and repeat signs.

Example 1c. *Doron Exagnismou*, Section B (adaptation).

Kaval

Voice

a

b

a

c

d

Example 1d. *Doron Exagnismou*, Section C (adaptation).

Kaval +

Voice

Kaval +

Voice

Example 2. *Doron Exagnismou*, Introduction: Melodic Cells, *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d*.

a

b

c

d

Example 3. *Doron Exagnismou*, Section C, Pitch Material.

F# Mixolydian

F# triad

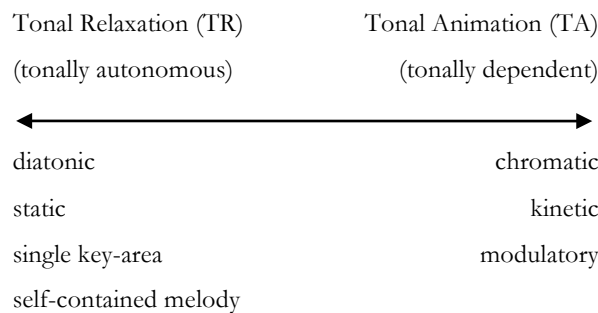
E triad

Compared to the introduction and section B, sections A and C are quite different in character. Both are more diatonic and more autonomous as melodic units. The nature of each section's categorical character, and consequently the sufficient distinction between the sections, is a crucial feature of the form in which *Doron Exagnismou* is cast. These considerations bring us to our next subject of interest, namely, the dialogue between the organization of pitch and formal functionality.

Before appraising this dialogic relationship, a terminological digression is in order. My use of 'categorical character' is intended to distinguish between melodic units that are either *tonally relaxed* (TR) or *tonally animated* (TA). Tonal relaxation and tonal animation may be considered as opposite ends of a spectrum, as indicated in Figure 1. Melodic units may be categorized as tonally relaxed or tonally animated, as determined by the following features of tonally relaxed (TR) formal sections:⁵

1. In a TR section, a single key area or mode is retained throughout;
2. A TR section is more diatonic than chromatic;
3. A TR section presents a self-contained melody (i.e., one that concludes on a member of the tonic chord);
4. A TR section creates harmonic closure with a strong cadence;
5. TR sections include other music features, such as rhythm, texture, and register that contribute to a sense of stasis rather than movement.

Figure 1. Tonal Relaxation-Tonal Animation Spectrum



By conceptualizing relaxation and animation as opposite ends of a spectrum, it is understood that these are relative states and that the features above listed need not be present (or absent) in their entirety to imply a degree of tonal relaxation (or animation). For our purposes it is enough to recognize that within a given piece the more tonally relaxed sections possess a sense of autonomy, whereas the tonally animated ones are dependent. Consequently, tonally relaxed sections are usually associated with the principal thematic formal sections, such as the refrain of a rondo or arch form, whereas tonally animated sections are usually episodes containing transitional and/or developmental passages.⁶

⁵ TR and TA are my terms. This list of conditions is indicative. A phenomenological investigation of the dichotomy between tonal autonomy and dependency exceeds the purposes of this study. I apply these terms in a broad sense, with no suggestion that any section exhibiting these characteristics can necessarily be perceived as bearing a theme.

⁶ The episodes of part forms, such as rondo and arch form, are usually organised as themes (though variably different in character from the refrain), or as units that contain transitional and/or developmental passages. This, as well as the tonally kinetic nature of episodes, are acknowledged in several studies that address the rondo. See William

The projection of the three sections (A, B, and C) against the tension spectrum graph serves a double purpose. First, it allows us to assess their categorical character. Second, it permits us to elicit refined information that can facilitate our understanding of their respective formal functions within the work's formal structure. In terms of categorical character A and C exhibit many similar features of tonal relaxation. Both utilise a single mode on a single pitch centre throughout; they both deploy notes of the governing scale exclusively; and they both emphasise the primary chords of the governing scale, particularly the tonic. However, sections A and C also both have melodic structures that prevent full closure (Examples 4a and 4b). In both sections the final melodic events set out the melodic implication $\flat\hat{7} \rightarrow \hat{1}$: B→C# in section A; E→F# in section C. Yet the music temporarily denies the realization of these implications *within* the sections themselves. In each case, the melodic implication is resolved upon the arrival of the subsequent section B. However, since section C is based on the Mixolydian, a V-quality mode, it is more modally centrifugal than the more stable A section, in the Aeolian mode.⁷ Thus, while sections A and C exhibit many features of tonal relaxation, this is somewhat attenuated by their respective momentary denial of melodic implication. Nevertheless, on balance both sections tend towards tonal relaxation, and this is especially the case in comparison with section B.

Like sections A and C, section B features an internally unresolved melodic implication, (Example 4c). But contrary to those more autonomous sections, section B exhibits additional features that give it a strong sense of tonal animation. As mentioned earlier, it comprises four distinct pitch cells on four different pitch centres and features a tension-building polyphonic fabric. It is also the section with the most intricate surface rhythmic structure.

Example 4a. *Doron Exagnismou*, Sections A and B, melodic implications.

c#: i ————— bVII ————— bVI ————— bVII —————

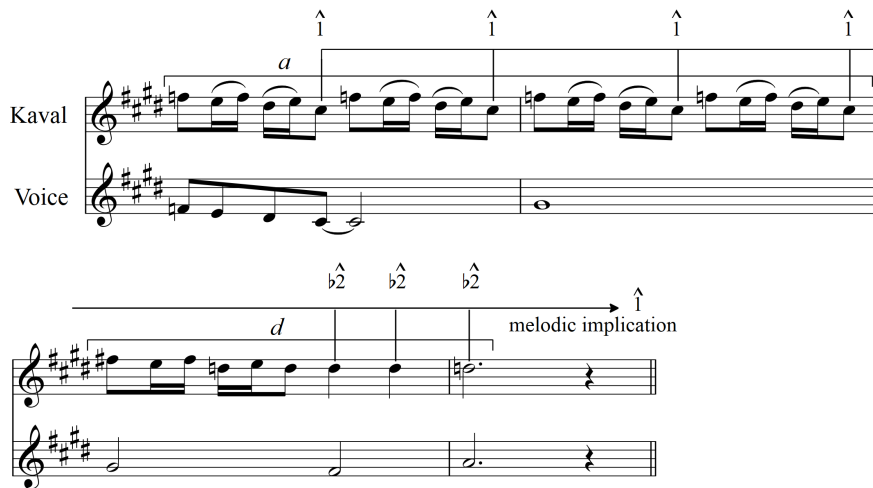
Example 4b. *Doron Exagnismou*, Section C, last 4 bars.

F#: I ————— bVII —————

Caplin, *Classical Form* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 231–4; James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 397–401; and James Mathes, *The Analysis of Musical Form* (Englewood Cliffs: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007), 221–6.

⁷ A V-quality mode is one whose scale-degree structure instigates an association with dominant-type harmonies built on its first scale-degree. Thus, the presence of $\hat{3}$ and $\flat\hat{7}$ is a precondition for V-quality status. Note that V-quality does not necessarily imply dominant function. See Anthony Pople, 'Using Complex Set Theory for Tonal Analysis: An Introduction to the "Tonality" Project', *Music Analysis*, 23/2–3 (2004), 153–94, especially 177.

Example 4c. *Doron Exagnismou*, Section B, last 4 bars.



Bearing in mind the distinction created by the pairing of sections A and C as tonally relaxed versus the more tonally animated B section, we may proceed with an assessment of formal structure and formal function in *Doron Exagnismou*. The structure of the piece is a five-part arch form (ABCBA) whose general formal-functional attributes may be described succinctly as follows (see also Figure 2):⁸

1. The chorus (section A) has a tonally relaxed character, assuming an expository function during its initial articulation and a closing function during its final statement. Thus, the temporal position of the A section determines its formal function.
2. The intervening episode (section B) may be either tonally relaxed or animated, depending on whether it contains transitional and/or developmental passages. While its primary formal function is to provide contrast, it may also serve a transitional/developmental function if it contains a modulatory passage.
3. Section C may also be either tonally relaxed or animated, but composers usually prefer the former. Contrary to the rondo (ABACA), which alternates memory with change (A recurs every time after the intervention of a contrasting section), the arch form extends the change; and because section C appears in the place of A, it needs to be more thematic than episodic.

Figure 2. Arch Form, Formal Functions.

	A	B	C	B	A
Descriptor	refrain	episode	episode*	episode	refrain
Categorical Character	TR	TR or TA	TR	TR or TA	TR
Formal Function	expository	contrasting transitional/ developmental	expository	contrasting transitional/ developmental	closing

* Music theory recognizes a qualitative distinction between refrains and episodes. However, with respect to arch form, the qualitative characteristics of section C are often more similar to those of section A than to section B.

⁸ *Doron Exagnismou* is comprised of seven sections. However, for reasons that will be presented later, I read the work's structure as a five-part arch form (|:AB|CBA).

Doron Exagnismou follows this model in a somewhat altered form (Figure 3). The momentary denial of the realization of melodic expectation within section A has a dual effect. First, because the melodic implication of section A is not realized until the beginning of section B, the two sections are linked. This, in turn, diminishes the autonomy of section A to the effect that it must be repeated – and interlocked with B – to accomplish its expository function fully. (And this is the reason why a truly five-part arch form can be misleadingly perceived as a seven-part design.) On the other hand, section B is tonally animated, albeit with a grammatic peculiarity: while it is strongly chromatic, it contains no transitional passage.

Figure 3. *Doron Exagnismou*, Formal Functions.

	Interlocked				
	: A 1(2)	B1(2) :	C	B3	A3
Descriptor	refrain	episode	episode	episode	refrain
Categorical Character	TR	TA	TR	TA	TR
Formal Function	expository	contrasting without transition	expository	contrasting without transition	closing
Parallel Narrativie	exposition	intensification	relief	intensification	closure
Modal Quality	darker (Aeolian)	cells	brighter (Myxolydian)	cells	darker (Aeolian)

Thus, the formal functions of the sections of *Doron Exagnismou* may be configured as follows:

1. A takes up the role of the refrain. A1 supports expository function, but only upon its immediate repetition.
2. B contrasts with A primarily by a difference in character.
3. C is functionally more similar to A than to B, in that its character is more thematic than episodic (a fact that serves the needs of the form). It also contrasts with B by way of its character.
4. The unresolved melodic implication of section A, which links it to section B, obviously cannot be used to end the entire piece. Thus, to achieve closing function, Georgiou alters the final statement of the A section that for the first time concludes on the central pitch of C# (Example 5).

In terms of categorical character and formal function, the various sections of *Doron Exagnismou* ‘behave’ rather normatively; they generally align with the corresponding sections of the arch form. Additionally, we may note a supplementary narrative counterpointed with the general form. A1(2) exposes, B1(2) intensifies, C provides a strong sense of relief with its bright

modal quality, B3 re-intensifies, and A3 concludes (Figure 3).⁹ This particular parallel narrative sometimes supports and sometimes antagonizes the delineation of expected formal functions of arch form. While the brighter quality and relief of C and the closure of A3 correspond to the normative formal functions of their respective positions in the arch form, the role of B as an intensifier renders its contrasting function somewhat ambiguous.

Style as Integration

As sonic substances, the various indigenous structures that form the pitch vocabulary in *Doron Exagnismou* engender a sense of aural familiarity. Yet, at the same time, the music sounds idiosyncratic. Indeed, Georgiou's pitch organisation routines resemble the practices of Eastern European composers, such as Bartok and Kodaly, for whom the features of traditional music were a resource in their efforts to create a distinctly modern style of composition. Thus, it is not Georgiou's pitch vocabulary *per se* that is of primary interest. The interweaving of distinct pitch cells (tetrachords/pentachords) and diatonic modes is abundant in the traditional and popular music of Greece and the Greek Diaspora. Rather, it is through a *characteristic approach to pitch grammar* and a sense for global thinking, especially with respect to form, that Georgiou achieves individuality in *Doron Exagnismou*.

We could note, for example, the chromatic density of the introduction and section B. These sections each accumulate ten of the twelve pitches of the chromatic octave. And if we also include the pitch content of the introduction and of the first bar of section A we have the complete chromatic scale, save B#. (The omission of B# is surely intentional; it would be heard as the leading tone to a tonic C#, and thus would erode the prevailing modal atmosphere by imposing syntactic elements of functional tonality.) Additionally, C# runs throughout the Introduction as a pedal tone in the guitar, colliding with the central pitches of cells *b*, *c*, and *d*; only cell *a* is centred on C#. Such chromatic density in conjunction with the rapid shifts between pitch centres and a dissonant sustained pedal tone is uncommon in Greek and Cypriot traditional music; it is more characteristic of early twentieth-century avant-garde music.

Georgiou's imaginative organisation of pitch has a parallel in his treatment of rhythm. While we encounter meter subdivisions that refer to Greek and Cypriot music (eg., 7/4 and 8/8), the primary A section of *Doron Exagnismou* emphasizes continuous changes in meter accompanied with calculated shifts of rhythmic accents. Taken together with the meter changes between sections, *Doron Exagnismou* exhibits a highly elaborate and unconventional metrical character.

The use of pitch resources of folk music is not foreign to the Greek musical scene. As a matter of fact, no few Greek composers of art music have integrated folk music pitch resources into their pitch syntactic routines, or have exploited melodies from their homeland's traditional music depository. In this respect one cannot describe *Doron Exagnismou* as groundbreaking. Nevertheless, I consider the pitch organisation of *Doron Exagnismou* sufficiently intricate to be worthy of analytical focus. Georgiou manages, via the usage of indigenous music pitch cells, to create an individualised style. Without compromising the aural integrity of its pitch material, he arrives at uniqueness; the music sounds familiar and 'new' at the same time. That is made possible by three compositional choices: (1) the insistence on pitch centrality, which allows the cells to retain their modal character, (2) the approach to harmonisation, which supports the aural integrity of the pitch cells, and (3) a carefully regulated usage of chromaticism. It is precisely this

⁹ I am adapting the terms used by Charles Rosen in reference to the sonata-form exposition, development, and recapitulation: 'opposition', 'intensification', and 'resolution'; see Charles Rosen *Sonata Forms* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), 16–27. Vincent Persichetti provides a linear graph of the modal qualities of the seven diatonic modes. Reading from left to right (darker to brighter), he classifies the seven diatonic modes as follows: locrian, phrygian, aeolian, dorian, mixolydian, ionian, lydian. See Vincent Persichetti, *Twentieth-Century Harmony: Creative Aspects and Practice* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1961), pp. 35–6.

kind of mediation, as compositional choice between (indigenous) musical material and individual style, that imbues *Doron Exagnismou* with its appealing quality.

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Abstract

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About the Author

Vasilis Kallis has a PhD in Music Theory and Analysis from the University of Nottingham and an MA in Music Theory from Queens College of the City University of New York. He has taught theory, analysis, and composition courses at the University of Nottingham and the University of Macedonia. He is currently Associate Professor of Music Theory and Analysis at the University of Nicosia. His research interests include methods of pitch organization in early twentieth-century music, form and *Formenlehre*, and the music of Scriabin, Debussy, and Ravel. He has published in journals such as *Music Analysis*, *Music Theory Online*, and *Rivista di analisi e teoria musicale*. He is also an active jazz-rock guitarist.