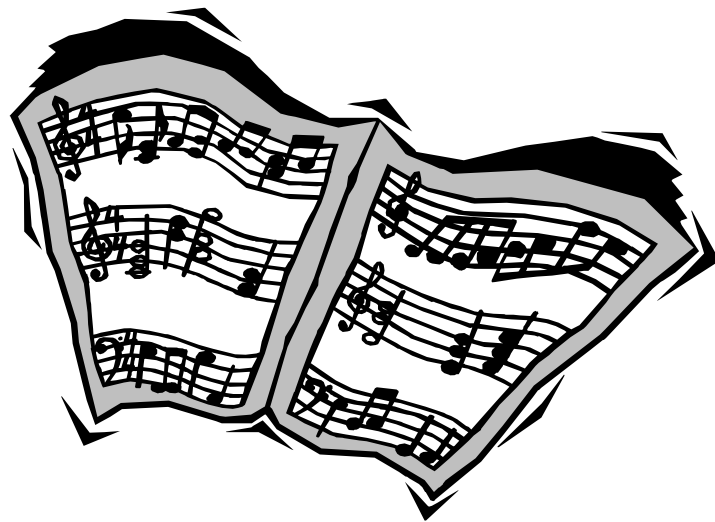


A Greek Folk Medley

For String Quartet or String Ensemble

Based on four Greek traditional folk tunes:

- I. I heard you say, didn't I? (Lullaby from Smyrna)
- II. Yanni, look at your handkerchief (Epirus)
- III. This month [My dark-eyed love] (Crete)
- IV. I am the fisherman's son (Constantinople)



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The piece was commissioned by the 'AllComers Music' to be performed in May 2014 for the annual event "Strings in Greece" on the island of Kythera.

I. I heard you say, didn't I?

Traditional folk lullaby located in Smyrna in the late 19th century. Its melody is in the natural minor mode (no leading-tone) accompanied by the drone-like tonic almost throughout. The meter is 2/4.

II. Yanni, look at your handkerchief (Epirus)

This is among the most popular traditional folk songs from Epirus, one of the poorest regions in Greece, talking about an immigrant named Yianni, whose kerchief has been full of dirt, sweat and tears out there in the foreign land. Upon his coming back home he gets down the river to wash it clean, but he found out that the waters took on the color or the filth. A strong metaphor of the great sorrow and home sickness.

The melody is in the minor pentatonic mode (no prevalent semitones), very common for music from Epirus, accompanied by a sustaining drone on the tonic note. Its meter is 2/4 with the distinctive rhythmic pattern of a crotchet followed by two quavers.

III. This month [My dark-eyed love] (Crete)

Traditional tune from the island of Crete, its lyric being a metaphor according to which a lad in his trying to find a way to meet his sweet heart is paralleled to an eagle heading out for hunting.

The melody is a type of a minor-flavored mode with a flattened supertonic (2nd degree of the scale), a very familiar modal sonority all over Greece and Asia Minor. The ubiquitous drone-like tonic is present, along with a modal harmonic succession.

The rhythmic pattern, in 2/4 time, is consisted of the combination quaver-crotchet-quaver.

IV. I am the fisherman's son (Constantinople)

Traditional dance tune originated from Constantinople, in the natural minor mode, 2/4 time and a polka-like basic rhythmic pattern. Its lyric is a metaphor for a fisherman who fishes maids instead of fish.