

displayed extreme and condensed autoexoticism (as Sheriff had also shown), it also distorted a national musical icon (indeed, an onomatopoeia)—the *hora*, which has become a national icon in Israeli art music from the years immediately preceding and following statehood. Aware of his teachers' achievements and their need for autoexoticism, Avni was one of the first composers to breach local national signifiers with melodic (linear) musical vocabulary. To understand Avni's rearticulation of the *hora*, we need to examine the model that had been perceived as indigenous folk music in mandatory Palestine. Modeled after the Romanian *Doina* and absorbing exotic musical and choreographic gestures, the *hora* became one of the most salient national symbols, portraying the nation with its "energetic, quick rhythms symbolizing the country's youthful revival." Paul Nixon writes that

Instrumental *doina* [*hora*] extemporization was shared between stigmatized groups, as attested by the long-run practice of *klezmorim* providing music together with Gypsies for Christian weddings across the territories of central and Eastern Europe.³⁷

Mazor and Seroussi identify the *hora* as a *niggun rikkud* (dance tune) with defined musical characteristics such as duple meter, fast tempi (♩ = 120–168), and fixed bisectional, trisectional, or ABCB forms.³⁸ The *hora* reflected the preference of the Eastern European political and cultural elite in Palestine and their need for tribal roots, as it drew on four different sources: "folk dances, mainly from Eastern Europe, Hasidic dance, Yemenite dance, and Arab *debka* dance."³⁹ In the mid-1930s, the *hora* migrated into Israeli art music with its first orchestral formulation, appearing in *Emek* (Valley) 1937, Marc Lavry's symphonic poem. Lavry, an immigrant of Latvian birth who had arrived in mandatory Palestine in 1935, advocated the popularization of art music through melodiousness while deliberately attempting to blur the line of demarcation between art and folk music.⁴⁰ His *hora* showcased the main musical features of what was then perceived as *the* national folk dance. In 1938, Hans Nathan characterized the performance of the *hora* as "a crescendo in tempo and tone volume from beginning to end, with provoking syncopations and virile accents."⁴¹ Jehoash Hirshberg eloquently describes the *hora* section in Lavry's *Emek* as

Short symmetrical phrases in common time, regularly repeated syncopated rhythms, square phrases, short melodic motives in small range, avoidance of leading tones, and a simple diatonic harmony with open fifths substituting the major-minor triads (ex. 4).⁴²