

Hasapiko

Probably the easiest of the Greek dances to teach to groups that have had little or no experience with Balkan or Near-Eastern dances, this usually ranks about third in popularity at Greek gatherings in this country where Greeks of different sections mingle socially. A number of broken circles usually fill the floor, each with a leader who either sets a pattern for the other dancers in his "set" or shows off his repertoire of fancy variations while the others continue with the basic step. At many of the affairs, if the music is a very popular number the dancers sing as they dance. You will note the difference between this and the Jewish Hora in the smoother-flowing steps and the "stepping in front."

MUSIC: Recommended records: Standard F9051, Galatas (the reverse side is also a Hasapiko). Standard F9001, Zella. Victor 28-8020, Glendi. Attikon 439, O Ganotis (a slow number with vocals). Columbia 12202-F, Glorious Morning Sunrise. It is very difficult for the average non-Greek musician to do justice to this type of music, and I don't advise the attempt at folk dance classes; it is all too easy to lose the spirit of both the music and the dance.

FORMATION: Broken circle of dancers. Hands joined, or, depending on the gathering, hands on shoulders of adjacent person. No partners required; in fact the dance is often done groups of men only (as in military organizations) or by girls only.

STEPS: Step to the right (and slightly to the rear) on the right foot.

Step to the right on the left foot, placing the left in front of the right.

Step to the right with the right foot.

Swing the left leg across in front of the right. Most Greek dancers have their own little ornamentation for this; the most usual one being to give the swing a somewhat forward kicking effect by straightening the relaxed knee and bringing the toe up at the end of the swing.

Step to the left on the left foot.

Swing the right leg across in front of the left. If you have "ornamented" the right swing, repeat the motion here.

The entire dance should be relaxed and smooth. Weight on balls of feet.

Variation (usually favored by the girls)

With feet together, weight on toes, hop (on both toes), turning toes to the right.

Feet together, weight on toes, hop, turning heels to the right.

Hop, coming down with both toes, but with weight shifted to right.

Hop, swinging left leg in front of right.

Step left with the left foot.

Hop on left foot, swing right leg in front of left.

Variation (Boisterous, usually by men.)

Three gallop steps to the right, feet kept apart on first two, closing together on third.

Hop, swinging left leg in front of right. (This at the more boisterous affairs is sometimes done with a brush-kick of the left heel on the floor as it passes in front of the right foot, somewhat on the order of the New England kick balance.)

Leap to the left on the left foot.

Hop, swinging the right leg in front of the left. (Again a noisy kick if it's that kind of a party.)

La Vinca

Music: Columbia (English Columbia) record DB1653

This is a version from the Italian province of Lombardy, of the "clap dance" that is found in all the countries of Europe. This particular version we have from Miss Rose Conti who comes from Monza, Lombardia, Italy. It differs from the published versions that I have in my collection.

Formation: Couple side by side facing the line of dance, man's right arm around lady's waist, left arm leading forward at an upward angle. Lady's left hand on man's right shoulder, right hand holds skirt out to side.

Chassez forward in line of dance (16 steps) Bar 1-8

Releasing holds face partner, hands on hips and pause Bar 9

Stamp 3 times (R-L-R) Bar 10

Pause, count 3 Bar 11

Clap hands (own) 3 times Bar 12

Turning right side of body toward partner, shake right index finger at partner 3 times Bar 13

Turn left side to partner shake left index finger Bar 14

With left hand still upraised both turn once around (counter-clockwise) with 6 walking steps, the man at the same time moving forward in the line of dance, the woman backwards; in this manner new partners are secured, the man claiming the next lady ahead as his partner for the repetition of the dance which is continued at pleasure Bar 15-16