

ASHTARAKEE
Armenian

SOURCE: Learned by Tom Bozigian first in the late 1960's from Jora Makarian, Dir. Armenian Folkloric Ensemble of Calif. for whom he danced and recently observed by Tom on his 2nd research trip in the region of Ashtarak, North of Yerevan - capital of Soviet Armenia. The dance has 2 parts, and although the 2nd part is a male dance, females were observed dancing it but with less aggressive movements.

RECORD: "Songs and Dances of the Armenian People", GT 3001 - LP, Side 1, Band 6.

FORMATION: First part: 2/4 - Line dance with leader at R, little fingers grasped at shoulder height. Second part: 6/8 - hands on neighbors' shoulders. Men and women in separate lines.

PATTERN

<u>Measure</u>	FIG I (Intro 2 meas) 2/4
1	Facing diag & moving R, do 2-step starting R (ct 1, and, 2).
2	Step L over R (ct 1); pivot on L to face ctr as R closes to L (ct 2)
3	Step L to ctr (ct 1); touch R (bent leg) over L as arms are lowered to side (ct 2); kick R frwd (ct and).
4	Step bk on R as hands raise to orig pos (ct 1); touch L slightly behind R (ct 2).
5	Step L to L with plie as body turns LOD while R lifts behind L and arms bend from elbow to L (ct 1); turning to face ctr step R in pl as L kicks frwd and arms go to orig pos (ct 2).
6	Turning to RLOD, step L to L (ct 1); touch R on fl across L (ct 2).
	FIG II 6/8 (4 meas drum intro)
1	Changing to shoulder hold and facing ctr, chug slightly ctr with plie on L as R executes reverse bicycle motion (out, up and down) to touch fl beside L (ct 1); chug bk on L as R kicks frwd (straight leg) (ct and); leap R beside L as L kicks frwd (straight leg) (ct 2). Note: This very old and popular folk step has 2 names: "Vot Nazark" or "Seella". It is especially popular in Leninakan region.
2	Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwrk (cts 1, and, 2).
3-4	Repeat meas 1 and 2.
5	Turning to face diag RLOD, step R over L as L pivots (cts 1, 2).

(Continued)

Measure

- 6 Repeat meas 5 with opp ftwrk and dir (cts 1, 2).
- 7-8 Do 2 two-steps starting on R moving LOD.
- 1-6 FIG III--Repeat meas 1-6 of FIG I.
- 7 Moving LOD, kick R (straight leg) frwd above fl and leap to R as L kicks straight frwd above fl (ct 1); leap L across R as R heel lifts behind (ct 2).
- 8 Leap to full squat on both ft facing ctr (knees slightly apart) (ct 1); return from squat with leap on L as R begins kicking frwd to start "Seella" step once again (ct 2). Note: Women slight plie instead of full squat.

Notes by Tom Bozigian