

ARGO HASAPIKO

(Greece)

The Hasapiko was originally danced by the butchers of Constantinople and has always been a dance of the cities rather than the mountains or rural areas. Argo Hasapiko (slow Hasapiko) is also known as Vari Hasapiko (heavy Hasapiko), Peiraiotiko Hasapiko (Hasapiko from Peiraius, the seaport of Athens), Naftiko Hasapiko (sailor's Hasapiko), or just Hasapiko. Argo Hasapiko (Ahr-GOH Hah-SAH-pee-koh) is a slow form of the Hasapiko family of dances. The Syrtaki starts with Argo Hasapiko and then speeds up to Hasaposerviko or a fast tempo Hasapiko.

Traditionally the dance is a very "personal" one -- not social in nature. In a Greek taverna it would be done only by close friends in a very small group. A stranger would never join such a line. The background, styling and variations included in this description were presented at the University of the Pacific Folk Dance Camp, Stockton, California, in 1969, by John Pappas, who had observed and performed the dance both in California and in Greece and found no difference in the style.

MUSIC: Records: Nina 4510-A, Odyssey 1101, Alootor 5004. There are numerous melodies in Slow Hasapiko style and many good recordings other than the ones listed.

FORMATION: Short lines of dancers facing the ctr of the dancing area - usually from 3 to 5 in a line - with the leader at the R end. Although originally danced by M only, W now join in the dance and mixed lines are permissible. Leader and dancer at L end of line extend free hand to side at shoulder height, arm fairly straight. Emphasize rhythm by snapping fingers. Free hand may be at waist instead with fingers fwd. A shoulder hold is always used, even if only one M and one W are dancing. Extend arms out to side and rest hands on near shoulder of dancer at each side. Avoid allowing the hands to slip down to the upper arm. An alternate position is to allow the extended arms to reach across in back of neighbors, resting hands on the far shoulder of dancer at each side.

STEPS AND STYLING: A few basic step patterns are included in this description, and various combinations and modifications of these will give the average folk dancer a background for leading or following. There are many other variations. The dance has no set pattern. The figures are danced as selected by the leader. He leads by contact and not by calls. For this reason the lines must be short. Do not join a line that already has 4 dancers. Several types of styling are appropriate to the dance, depending upon the leader. Some dance with very erect posture and a slight flex of the knees. Others dance bent slightly fwd from the waist and with more flex in the knees. This is one of the few Greek dances in which the dancers look down at the floor. The feeling is cat-like and sinewy.

MUSIC 2/4 or 4/4 (slow tempo)

PATTERN

Measures

2/4 I. "BASIC" VARIATION "A"

- 1 Lunge fwd on L ft (ct 1), bring R ft around to the front of L, keeping it close to L leg as you move it (ct &), touch R ft to floor directly in front of and close to L (no wt) (ct 2), bring R ft around to back of L, keeping it close to L leg as you move it (ct &).
- 2 Step on R ft directly behind L, R toe touching L heel (ct 1), bring L ft around behind R (ct &), step on L ft directly behind R, L toe touching R heel (ct 2), bring R ft sdwd to the R (ct &).
- 3 Step on R (ct 1), step fwd on L (ct &), step bkwd on R (ct 2), draw L ft back in front of R, outside of L ankle across R instep (ct &).
- 4 Touch L heel to floor diag fwd and L, knee straight (ct 1), lift L heel a little from the floor, bending L knee (ct &), repeat action of cts 1-&, meas 4 (cts 2-&) OR touch L toe to floor to R of R toe, L knee bent (ct 2), hold (ct &).

NOTE: This variation may also be danced as a 6-ct pattern, in which case meas 1, 2 and 3 are danced twice in succession, followed by any 4-ct pattern to coincide with the usual 8-ct musical phrase. The good leader evolves patterns which fit the phrasing of the music used.

II. VARIATION "B"

- 1-3 Repeat action of Basic Variation "A" meas 1-3 through ct 2 of meas 3, bring L ft around

ARGO HASAPIKO (continued)

behind R ft (ct &).

- 4 Step on L directly behind R ft (ct 1), bring R around behind L ft (ct &), step on R behind L (ct 2), slightly lift L ft from ground across in front of R ankle (ct &).

III. VARIATION "C"

- 1 Step on L ft across in front of R (ct 1), step on R sdwd to the R (ct &), step on L across in front of R (ct 2), bring R all the way around to the front and across L ft, keeping R ft close to L leg (ct &).
- 2 Step on R across in front of L (ct 1), step on L sdwd to the L (ct &), step on R across in front of L (ct 2), pause slightly, lifting L leg, which is close behind R (ct &).
- 3 Step on L directly behind R and close to it (ct 1), bring R ft around and behind L (ct &), step on R behind L (ct 2), draw L ft back in front of R, outside of L ankle across R instep (ct &).
- 4 Repeat action of meas 4, Variation "A".

IV. VARIATION "D"

- 1 Step sdwd to L on L (ct 1), draw R ft to L (ct &), touch R to floor next to L (no wt) (ct 2), move R ft sdwd to the R (ct &).
- 2 Step on R (ct 1), draw L ft to R (ct &), touch L ft to floor next to R (no wt) (ct 2), pause (ct &).

NOTE: This variation may be repeated to make an 8-ct figure, or it may be used as meas 1-2 or as meas 3-4 in other variations.

V. VARIATION "E"

- 1 Step on L across in front of R (ct 1), step on R sdwd to R (ct &), step on L in back of R (ct 2), step on R sdwd to R (ct &).
- 2 Step on L across in front of R (ct 1), bring R ft fwd in a small, low arc and across in front of L (ct &), step on R across in front of L (ct 2), step on L sdwd to L (ct &).
- 3 Step on R in back of L (ct 1), step on L sdwd to L (ct &), step on R across in front of L (ct 2), move L ft to L (ct &).
- 4 Step on L (ct 1), bring R ft to L (ct &), step on R next to L (ct 2), pause (ct &).

VI. VARIATION "F"

- 1-2 Repeat action of meas 1-2, Basic Variation "A".
- 3 Step on R across in front of L (ct 1), step sdwd to L on L (ct &), step on R across in front of L (ct 2), bring L ft fwd in a small arc and across in front of R (ct &).
- 4 Step on L in front of R, bending fwd at the waist and lifting the straight R leg behind you (cts 1-&), straighten body and step on R behind and to L of L ft (ct 2), pause (ct &).

VII. VARIATION "G"

- 1 From a pos with ft together and parallel move toes apart (heels pivot, remaining together) (ct 1-&), move heels apart so that ft are parallel (not pigeon-toed) as toes pivot in place (cts 2-&).
- 2 Move heels together as toes pivot in place (cts 1-&), move toes together as heels pivot (cts 2-&). Ft are now together and parallel.

VIII. VARIATION "H"

- 1 Lunge fwd on L (ct 1), close R ft to L, bringing it behind and to L of L ft (ct &),

ARGO HASAPIKO (continued)

step fwd on L, bending body slightly fwd at waist (ct 2), slight pause (ct &).

2-4

Repeat action of meas 2-4, Variation "A" or "B".

