

ELENE MOME (Helen, Dear Helen) (Bulgarian)

This dance was reputedly the most popular horo in all Bulgaria during the years in between the two world wars: it was brought to this country by the emigrants, with whom it is still one of the favorites. The Bulgarian's like for brass band instruments might have been influenced by the long military period of the last century, the Balkan Wars and the First World War. The "heel-click" variation is said to be of military origin, done by soldiers returning home. Eleno Mome is typical of many Bulgarian horos having three measures to the dance: the first "traveling" to the right, the second also to the right, but in effect a change-step to the left: the third a step to the left, in effect a change-step to the right. Other examples of this category are "Narodno Horo" and "Sharani Chorapi" - each of the three having a different rhythm.

Record: XOPD #303-A

Source: Macedonian-Bulgarian Colony, San Francisco Area.

Formation: Typical horo, hands held down at sides, slightly extended. Leader at right end makes profuse use of knotted handkerchief, waving it in circular motion as he leads the movements.

Steps are earthy and deliberate. Unlike the small and close-to-the-earth steps of the kolos, here large steps, runs, kicks and swings are common. Sometimes the knee is lifted high enough for the upper part of the leg to be parallel with the floor. Steps are, nevertheless, clear-cut and in unison with other dancers. The music is in 7/8 time counted: "one-two-three-and" or for descriptive purposes: "slow,slow,quick,slow" (s-s-q-s). The dance may start at any point of the record, so long as the leader catches the correct beat: some may prefer to start at meas 2 or 3 instead of 1.

Count Meas I

- 1 (s) Facing diag R, step on R ft to R.
- 2 (s) Continuing, step on L ft in front of R ft.
- 3 (q) Step on R ft to R, turning body to face center.
- & (s) Step on L ft in back of R ft.

Meas II

- 1 (s) Step on R ft to the side (near L ft).
- 2 (s) Hop on R ft in place, at the same time kicking L ft fwd.
The joined hands are swung up overhead.
- 3 (q) Step on L ft to L.
- & (s) Step on R ft in back of L ft.

Meas III

- 1 (s) Step on L ft to the side (near R ft).
- 2 (s) Hop on L ft in place, at the same time kicking R ft fwd.
The joined hands are swung up overhead.
- 3 (q) Step on R ft to R.
- & (s) Step on L ft in back of R ft.

Heel-click variation:

On meas 3 end the step-hop (cts 1&2) so that the heels will be apart on ct 3 (q) about 6-8 inches. Click the heels together on the next count "and" (s).

Presented by John Filcich
Folk Dance Camp, 1956