

VARI'S HASAPIKOS  
(ARGOS HASAPIKOS)  
(Greece - Panhellenic)

- Source:** The Hasapiko was originally danced by the butchers of Constantinópoli in Byzantine times. At that time it was called Makellarikós, or dance of the Butchers' guild. After the Turkish nomads invaded and conquered Asia Minor and the Byzantine Empire, this dance came to be known by the Turkish word for butcher, or "hasapis." Argó Hasapiko means a "slow hasapiko." The dance is also known as Vari Hasapiko (heavy hasapiko), Peiratótiko Hasapiko (hasapiko from Peiraios, the seaport of Athens), Naftikó Hasapiko (sailor's hasapiko), or just Hasapiko. It is danced mainly in the taverns of the seaport towns and cities. The Argó Hasapiko is a slow form of the hasapiko or hasaposerviko (fast tempo hasapiko). Often musicians will move from an Argó Hasapiko directly into a fast hasapiko.
- Bibliography:** Greek Folk Dances, M. Vouras and R. Holden (N.J., 1965). Folk Dances of the Greeks, T. Petrides (N.Y., 1961).
- Music:** 2/4 or 4/4 time in a slow tempo.  
Folk Dancer 4052 -A; Féz 702; Féz 704;  
Nina 4510-A
- Formation:** The dancers are in a short line, three to five men. Usually the dance is done by men only, but women dance it sometimes. The hands are on the shoulders of the person on either side in a shoulder hold pos. The leader is at the right end of the line; the free hand of the leader should be out at shoulder height, arm fairly straight.
- Characteristics:** This dance is a very personal one. That is, it is very individualistic. It is not social in nature. One does not go to a taverna, see someone doing Argó Hasapiko, and then joyfully join the line. It is done only by friends in a small group. It is completely alien to the dance to have a large circle of people. You do this dance with one or two close friends -- you would be highly insulted if some "stranger" intruded by trying to join your line. In recreational folk dancing, however, we have a different situation. In order to keep the feeling of the dance, we will have many lines instead of having one short line on the small dance floor of a taverna. Therefore it is up to each

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ARGÓ HASÁPIKOS (continued)

individual to refrain from joining a line which is already large enough (3 - 5 people). Do not join a line if there are already enough people. Because this dance is improvisational, it does not lend itself well to a large line. There are more or less "basic" steps, but there is no set pattern. The leader makes up his own pattern as he dances; often he creates his own new steps. Some steps are common to all dancers, but often individuals have their own special steps and styles. You can see, then, that where it is easy for three or four people to follow the leader (especially if they are old, close friends and dance together often), it would be impossible to coordinate a line of 25 or 30 dancers. If you don't feel competent to lead, form a new, short line behind the line you wanted to join and follow that leader.

The steps as described here, then, should not be followed as a pattern, but should be danced according to the mood of the leader. In order to create your own steps, however, you must be familiar with the musical and dance idioms. Until one has acquired a feel for this type of dancing, it would be difficult to dance with the correct style and feeling as well as to create within this idiom.

Please note that while W now do this dance, it is not a ballroom dance or couple dance. There is no such thing as a "couple hasápiko." Skaters' position should not be used at any time. It is not unusual for a man and woman to do this dance in a line of their own (2 dancers), but it is still Argó Hasápiko with the shoulder hold position. This is a beautiful, living dance of the Greeks; why water it down and lose that which makes it beautiful?

There are different styles for this dance. Some dance standing straight with a slight flex of the knees. Others dance slightly bent over with more flex in the knees. This is one of few Greek dances where the dancers look down at the floor.

The most basic variation for the Argó Hasápiko is the following:

cont

ARGOS HASAPIKOS (continued)

VARIATION "A"

| <u>Meas</u> | <u>cts</u> | <u>2/4 or 4/4 time</u>   | <u>Wt on R ft</u> |
|-------------|------------|--|-------------------|
| I           | 1          | Lunge fwd on L ft.   |                   |
|             | &          | Bring R ft around to the front of L (keeping it close to the L leg as you move it).            |                   |
|             | 2          | Touch R ft in front of L (no wt).  |                   |
|             | &          | Bring R ft around to the back of L (keeping it close to L leg as you move it).                 |                   |
| II          | 1          | Step on R ft (behind L).   |                   |
|             | &          | Bring L ft around behind R.  |                   |
|             | 2          | Step on L ft behind R.   |                   |
|             | &          | Bring R ft sdwd to the R.  |                   |
| III         | (Quick) 1  | Step on R ft.  |                   |
|             | (Quick) &  | Step fwd on L ft   |                   |
|             | (Slow) 2   | Step bkwd on R ft and draw L ft back in front of R ft (outside of L ankle is across R instep). |                   |
|             |            | Optional:  |                   |
| IV          | 1          | Pause  |                   |
|             | 2          | Pause  |                   |

The above variation may be done as a six ct step (3 meas), or as an eight ct step (4 meas). The eight ct step usually fits the phrasing of the music better, but both are correct. You may use one once and the other the second time, or whatever you wish.

VARIATION "B"

|     |      |   |  |
|-----|------|---|--|
| I   | 1, & | ) |  |
|     | 2, & | ) |  |
| II  | 1, & | ) | Repeat VARIATION "A"                                       |
|     | 2, & | ) |  |
| III | 1, & | ) |  |
|     | 2    | ) |  |
|     | &    | ) | Bring L ft around behind the R ft.                         |
| IV  | 1    | ) | Step on L ft (directly behind R ft).                       |
|     | &    | ) | Bring R ft around behind the L.                            |
|     | 2    | ) | Step on R ft (behind L).                                   |
|     | &    | ) | Slightly lift L ft from ground across in front of R ankle. |

COMET

ARGOS HASAPIKOS (continued)

VARIATION "C"

- I 1 Step on L ft across to the R and in front of R.  
& Step on R ft sdwd to the R.  
2 Step on L across to the R and in front of R.  
& Bring R ft all the way around to the front and across L (keeping R ft close to L leg).
- II 1 Step on R ft across to the L and in front of L.  
& Step on L ft sdwd to the L.  
2 Step on R ft across to the L and in front of L.  
& Pause slightly lifting L ft (which is close behind R).
- Optional:  
III 1 Step on L ft (behind R).  
& Bring R ft around and behind L.  
2 Step on R ft behind L.  
& )
- IV 1, & ) Repeat same cts from VARIATION "A."  
2, & )

VARIATION "D"

- I 1 Step sdwd to the L on L.  
& Draw R ft to L.  
2 Touch R ft next to L (no wt).  
& Move R ft sdwd to the R.
- II 1 Step on R ft.  
& Draw L ft to R.  
2 Touch L ft next to R (no wt).  
& Pause.

VARIATION "E"

- I 1 Step across in front of R ft on the L.  
& Step sdwd to the R on the R.  
2 Step behind the R ft on the L.  
& Step sdwd to the R on the R.
- II 1 Step across in front of R ft on the L.  
& Bring R ft all the way around to the front and across L.  
2 Step on R ft across to the L and in front of L.  
& Step sdwd to the L on the L.
- III 1 Step behind the L ft on the R.  
& Step sdwd to the L on the L.  
2 Step across in front of L on the R.  
& Move L ft to L.
- IV 1 Step on L ft.  
& Bring R ft to L.  
2 Step on L ft.  
& Pause.

Cont

ARGOS HASAPIKOS (continued)VARIATION "F"

- I 1, & )  
2, & ) Repeat VARIATION "A."
- II 1, & )  
2 )  
& Pause.
- III 1 Step across in front of L ft on R.  
& Step sdwd to L on the L.  
2 Step across in front of L ft on R.  
& Turning to face fwd, bring the L ft around in front of R.
- IV 1, & Step on L ft in front of the R; bend at the waist lifting the  
straight R leg behind you.  
2 Straighten body and step on R ft behind and to L of L.  
& Pause.

VARIATION "G"

With ft together.

- I 1 Move toes apart (heels pivot, remaining together).  
2 Move heels apart so that ft are parallel (toes pivot in place).
- II 1 Move heels together (toes pivot in place).  
2 Move toes together so that ft are once more together (heels  
pivot, remaining together).

VARIATION "H"

- I(Quick) 1 Lunge fwd on L ft.  
(Quick) & Step fwd on R ft (behind and to L of L).  
(Slow) 2 Step fwd on L ft bending body slightly at waist.  
& Slight pause.
- II-IV ) Repeat from VARIATION "A" or "B."  
)

VARIATIONS FOR MEN (W may do them without the squats, but  
with only a slight dip.)1. In Variation "A."

In meas I, pause and fall fwd onto the L ft (L knee slightly bent) (ct 1);  
touch the R toe behind and to the L of the L ft (ct &).

2. Before Variation "A."

- I 1 Fall fwd onto L ft (L knee slightly bent).  
& Touch R toe behind and to the L of the L ft.  
2 Fall fwd onto R ft (R knee slightly bent).  
& Touch L toe behind and to the R of the R ft.  
Go immediately into #1 above.

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ARGÓS HASÁPIKOS(continued)

3. Before Variation "A."

- I 1 With wt on L ft, extend R leg diag fwd to R and then go down into a squat, crossing R ft in front of L ankle.  
& Straighten up.  
2 Extend R leg diag fwd to R and then go down into a squat crossing R ft in back of L.  
& Straighten up.
- II 1, & Repeat Meas I, cts 1, &.   
2 Step on R ft behind L.   
& Bring L ft around behind R.
- III 1 Step on L ft behind R.   
& Bring R ft swd to the R.
- (Quick) 2 Step on R ft.   
(Quick) & Step fwd on L ft.
- IV(Slow) 1 Step bkwd on R ft and draw L ft bkwd in front of R (outside of L ankle across R instep).   
'(Slow) 2 Touch L ft in front of R.

4. In Variation "E."

In Meas III, ct 2, bend R leg until L knee touches floor; straighten and do meas III and IV of Variation "C."

5. In Variation "H."

In meas I, ct 2, bend L leg until R knee touches floor. Straighten and complete as written.

- I have described several variations. They should not follow any particular order. You will probably notice that parts of particular steps are similar to other variations. This is how the dance works: certain step sequences are interchangeable, and it is the leader who molds the dance from the variations he knows. In this way, the dance may never be the same, no matter how many times it is done. These variations may be cut in the middle and spliced onto all or part of any other variation. There are obviously many more variations than those I have described; these are some of the most common, and they include some of my favorites. When you have mastered these variations, try some new ones that you have created.

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KF 185

