

HEENG OO MEG
(Armenia)

HEENG OO MEG means "Five and One." During the mid-1950s and even before, interest in Armenian folk dance and song increased tremendously among the first and second generation Armenian-Americans. Orchestras were formed throughout the major Armenian communities of the U. S. and an increase in weekend functions (dances, picnics) developed. In reality, the Armenian youth realized the rich culture their immigrant parents had brought. This realization occurred among other ethnic groups also. However, by the mid-50s, as a result of the immigrants growing old, unfortunately many original dances had dissolved. What evolved, then, was the creation of a series of dances using many original steps fitted to older, traditional folk melodies and even songs. HEENG OO MEG was one of those dances. Others were "Sweet Girl," "California Hop," "Armenian Turn," "Detroit Hop," "New York Shuffle," "Guneega," etc. These dances have now become standard at most Armenian gatherings, and done to a wide variety of melodies, even newly-written ones.

Pronunciation:

Record: "Tom Bozigian Presents Songs and Dances of the Armenian People," Vol. II, GT 4001. 6/8 meter

Formation: Mixed line dance with the leader at R and dancers facing ctr with little fingers grasped at above shldr height and away from chest.

Meas

Pattern

VARIATION I. (Sometimes called "California Hop," and can be danced with shldr hold.)

- 1 Facing slightly LOD, step R to R (cts 1-3); step L across R (cts 4-6).
- 2 Facing ctr, step R across L (cts 1-3); hop bkwd on R as L heel lifts behind, knee fwd (cts 4-6).
- 3 Step bkwd on L (cts 1-3); step R to R (cts 4-6).
- 4 Moving LOD, step L across R (cts 1-2); step R beside L (ct 3); step L across R (cts 4-6). Note: Meas 4 is running "Two-step."
- 5 Step R to R (cts 1-3); kick L across R (cts 4-6).
- 6 Step L in place (cts 1-3); kick R across L (cts 4-6).

VARIATION II. (Five and One.)

- 1-4 Facing diag LOD, with little fingers grasped and down at side: Step R ahead (cts 1-2); step L ahead of R (ct 3); step R ahead of L (cts 4-6). Do this Armenian Two-step four times.

HEENG OO MEG (continued)

Note: The Two-step is a very important item in the Armenian dance vocabulary and is present in many line and solo patterns. Several count values are evident as, for example, in the 6/8 meter which is described above and in meas 4. There are also other variations of the Two-step which differ in count value, stress, and style-application. The 2/4 meter also utilizes this step. It is probably one of the first steps an Armenian youngster learns.

- 5 Facing ctr, step R in place, as grasped little fingers raise to shldr height and forearms bend to slightly R (cts 1-2); step L in place (ct 3); step R in place as L kicks in front above floor (cts 4-6).
- 6 Repeat action of meas 5 (Variation II) with opp ftwk, direction, and arm movements.
- 7 Moving slightly fwd, repeat ftwk of meas 5 (Variation II) as grasped fingers are lowered again to side.
- 8 Moving slightly bkwd, repeat ftwk of meas 5 (Variation II) as grasped fingers are raised once again to shldr height.
- 9 Facing ctr, step sdwd R as forearms bend R (cts 1-3); close L to R as forearms bend (cts 4-6).
- 10 Repeat action of cts 1-3 (meas 9); slight hop R in place touching L beside R (cts 4-6).
- 11 Moving bkwd, step on L, pivoting on R heel to turn toes out about 45° while forearms bend L (cts 1-3); repeat this action with opp ftwk and direction of arms (cts 4-6).
- 12 Repeat action of cts 1-3 (meas 11) and cts 4-6 (meas 10).

Presented by Tom Bozigian