

HAIRE MAMOUGEH
(Armenia)

HAIRE MAMOUGEH is a delightful Armenian wedding dance for the "khanamee" (in-laws), from Rustoon, in the province of Van. The name probably derives from "Hayr ou Mamoug eh" (This is the father and the grandmother). These two roles were quite influential in the traditional family structure

In many areas of Armenia, the newly married bride and groom traditionally were not permitted to dance at their own wedding. As the "King and Queen of the day," they were required to sit on "thrones" and watch the festivities, rather than actively participate. They were never addressed by their actual names at the wedding, instead being referred to as "Takavour ou Takouhie" (the King and Queen), or as Yergou Dzaghig" (the two flowers). These customs probably were vestigial practices from pre-Christian times.

In this dance, the bride's family and the groom's family form two separate lines facing each other. The lines advance towards each other, and then back away, as the dancers sing. The lyrics of the song praise the new in-laws in the opposite line, and each side alternates praising the other. (We have not been able to locate the lyrics for this song at this time). The dance vividly illustrates several important principles of Armenian family life. The separate lines for each family recognize the solidarity and cohesiveness of the members of each family. The cooperation of the families needed for the dance formation, and reciprocity exhibited in the singing reflects between the two families. (Note: the term "khanamee" (in-laws) in Armenian culture does not have the negative connotations often associated with the English word. It is a very positive, cherished relationship).

Pronunciation:

Source: Arsen Anoushian, Hourig Sahagian, Eddie Keosian, Sossy Kadian.

Record: Traditional Armenian Dances Vol 1 - FACONE 1001 2/4 meter

Style: Typical "Vanetzi" style. The carriage is erect, but the knees maintain a slight flex throughout the dance, giving the steps a strong solid quality. The steps themselves are comparatively small and restrained, but one dances using the entire torso due to the knee flexion, rather than simply with the feet alone.

Formation: Two lines of people facing each other, about six feet apart, using "Armenian hold" (little fingers interlocked with hands at shoulder height). Traditionally, one line was comprised of the family and friends of the pesa (groom); the other line was the family and friends of the hars (bride).

HAIRE MAMOUGEH (Continued)

- | <u>Meas</u> | <u>Cts</u> | <u>Pattern</u> |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 1-2 | 1-4 | Facing the opp line, point L toe to the rear while leaning fwd slightly (ct 1); close L beside R, no wt, while straightening torso (ct 2). Repeat (cts 3-4). |
| | | <u>Note:</u> The leaning fwd on ct 1 and ct 3 is quite subtle, and can easily be over-exaggerated. |
| 3-6 | 5-12 | Step fwd on L to L diag front, as body turns slightly to face R (ct 5). Close/slide R beside L, no wt (ct 6). Step fwd on R to R diag front, as body turns slightly to face L (ct 7). Close/slide L beside R, no wt (ct 8). Repeat (cts 9-12). |
| | | <u>Note:</u> Although the torso faces the diag, the head remains facing the front. One's attention is focused on the person directly opp in the other line. |
| 7-8 | 13-16 | Back up with four <u>small</u> steps: step back with L as torso turns slightly to face L diag (ct 13); step back with R as torso turns slightly to face R diag (ct 14). Repeat (cts 15-16). |
| | | <u>Note:</u> As in the previous step, the torso and shldrs turn to face the diag, but the head does not. Continue to look at the person in the opp line. The style of walking fwd (cts 5-12) and bkwd (cts 13-16) is typical of the Van region. Steps are strong and solid, but "sink" slightly by flexing the knee as one steps. |

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Presented by Gary and Susan
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- 113 HAIRE MAMOUGEH
Pronunciation: HIGH-ruh mah-MOO-gay
- 114 Introduction: 12 meas. Begin with dumbeg (drum).
Meas 1, ct 1:....point L toe straight back to the rear.....
Throughout the dance the closing or close/slide steps are taken on the ball of the ft, without wt.
Meas 7:....four small sinking steps, toes are turned out.
Note, line 6: And at end backward.