

LERIKO (LEH-rih-ko) = lyric

CROSS-INDEX TERMS:

Eba sto karo = get in the car - first line of the song on the Rena Dalia recording

Hasaposerviko - an alleged dance family that *Leriko* allegedly resembles

Issios = **Issos**, and **Kalymnikos** - possible other names for the dance. Other dances with these names do not appear here.

Lerikos - the name for the dance in *katharevousa* (literary or academic) form, in which -s terminates some words. In *demotiki* (vernacular) form, -s disappears.

(The) Smelly Dance - because the words "se meli" appear frequently in the song

BACKGROUND:

Leriko is a version of the 6-count dance pattern found throughout Europe and the Levant and more commonly known in Greece as *hasapiko* (see the 1995 *Problem Solver*). As such, it relates also to the *čoček* family of dances described elsewhere in this book. I have presented this dance under the name *Leriko* because that is the most common name in North America for this dance, although it apparently has other names and accompanying melodies.

The **song**: Theodore [1928-1988] and Elfleida Petrides appear to be the source of this dance in North America, in part through their much-quoted book *Folk Dances of the Greeks* (New York: Exposition Press, 1961) and in part because Ted taught the dance to Oliver "Sonny" Newman, who taught it around America in the early 1960s. Most people quote Petrides:

This dance, as its name indicates, is a popular dance from the island of Leros in the Dodecanese group. The dance is to the sousta as the slow *hasapiko* is to the fast *hasapiko*; i.e., a slow section which gradually accelerated to the fast section and which, in the course of time, became a separate dance unto itself.

Unfortunately, Petrides's interpretation of the name does not make sense. I say this for two reasons:

1) A native Athenian transcribed the song for me from the Worldtone recording sung by a man. She told me without hesitation and in no uncertain terms, even when cross-examined, that *Leriko* means "lyric" and not "of Lyros," and that the places in the original song named popular places around Athens. The second version of the song, sung by Rena Dalia (Renas Ntalia), substituted names of popular places around New York City.

2) I see no apparent reason that people of Lyros would sing a song about popular places in Athens or New York City (see also the original lyrics in the 2005 *Problem Solver*, below). The VIFD Music Book said: "This song originated in a seaport town-hence the words in English." (without citation)

The **dance**: Some folks (e.g. Greek dance teacher David Henry, EEFC listserv postings: 14 April 1997; 28 October 1999) speculate that *Lerikos* might have been created in North America, based on the *Sousta / Kastrinos* dance. Others say that it was made up for the 1950s bouzouki tune sung by Rena Dalia. Greek dance teacher Joe Graziosi rejected both speculations, citing the dance's distribution in the Dodecanese Islands to known folk songs (EEFC posting, 7 September 1998). I would point out that the dance's presence in the Dodecanese Islands does not preclude its adaptation to an Athenian song either in Athens or in North America. Henry et al., however, may have been referring to a different but related dance called *Leriko*, discussed next.

In the 1970s, Ken Spear of Worldtone Music (New York) began to distribute with his *Lerikos* record a 4-bar dance description resembling the 3-bar Petrides *Leriko* but with a doubled first bar for each motif "as done in New York," where Petrides and Newman taught in the early 1960s. Michael and Mary Ann Herman of Folk Dance House (New York) also taught the 4-bar version in the 1970s, mentioning no source and using an unnamed "45 rpm" record, presumably the Nina 2500 (4513b) record, because the Worldtone sequence of 16 bars vocal music plus 16 bars instrumental music does not fit the Herman sequence of 16 bars vocal music plus 8 bars instrumental music. With either recording, the "New York" *Lerikos*, with its 4th bar, resembles much more closely the dance *Trava Trava* (see the 1995 *Problem Solver*), an alleged member of that nebulous *hasaposerviko* dance family.

Many thanks to Frances Young and Sally Jenkins for their help with the research for this dance.

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Leriko (continued)

MUSIC:

Nina 2500 = 4513b: 32 bars vocal plus 8 bars instrumental. A woman, perhaps Rena Dalia, sings.

Worldtone WT 10027b: 32 bars vocal plus 16 bars instrumental. A man sings.

The various Dodecanese islands have their own tunes for their own versions of this first dance. Written descriptions indicate that these tunes occur in 2/4 (2 + 1 + 1, or, slow, quick quick), in 2/4 (1 + 1 + 2, or, quick quick slow), in 7/8 (3 + 2 + 2, or, slow, quick quick), in 2/4 (2 + 2 + 3, or, quick quick slow), in 8/8 (3 + 3 + 2, or, slow, slow, quick), and probably in other meters. This description presents the 2/4 *Leriko* dances to the Rena Dalia recording and similar recordings.

LERIKO - presented by Petrides, to either *Leriko* recording

FORMATION:

Open circle of men and women, hands joined in the "basket" or "basketweave" hold: All face center. Reach out your hands in front of your neighbors and grasp the hand of the persons on the other sides of your neighbors. At the ends of the line, the end person will hold in their free hand their neighbor's hand. Markedly taller people will have their arms on top, but otherwise, left arms will lie on top of right arms.

BARS ACTION

Introduction. Many people wait during the instrumental music and start dancing with the singing.

The Petrides basic motif. Start dancing at the beginning of any musical phrase.

- 1 Step to R onto R foot (ct 1), step behind R foot onto L foot (ct 2).
- 2 Step to R onto R foot (ct 1), dance one of the following movements:
 - (a) close L foot to R foot, no weight (ct 2), or
 - (b) smoothly lift L foot to back of R leg, between calf and knee (ct 2), or
 - (c) touch ball of L foot to floor beside R foot with L knee slightly bent (upbeat to ct 2), pushing slightly with L foot, hop on R foot (ct 2).
- 3 Step forward onto L foot (ct 1), hesitate (ct &), step beside L foot onto R foot (upbeat to ct 2), step forward onto L foot (ct 2).

Note: Option (c) of bar 2 had disappeared by 1963, and the syncopation of bars 2 and 3 had disappeared among some teachers by 1965. By 1976, Chicago had lost options (a) and (c) and the syncopation (see Alsberg, 1976, *Disc-Criptions*. Chicago: Alsberg).

Dance bars 1-3 until the leader of your line decides to do the variation.

The Petrides variation motif.

- 1 = 1, above (step-behind).
- 2 Step to R onto R foot, quickly closing L foot to R lower calf (ct 1), step forward onto L foot (ct 2), step beside L foot onto R foot (ct &).
- 3 Step forward onto L foot (ct 1), hesitate (ct &), step beside L foot onto ball of R foot with R knee slightly bent (upbeat of ct 2), step forward onto L foot (ct 2).

Note: By 1976, Chicago had added a "snappy stamp" to the last step (ct 2 of bar 3), terminating a style for the variation motif that "begins relaxed as above during the first measure, but then begins to tense-up during the second measure, building up intensity like a tightly coiled spring for the snappy stamp on the last ct of meas 3." (Alsberg, 1976)

Dance bars 1-3 until the leader of your line decides to do the basic motif.

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Leriko (concluded)

LERIKOS - "as done in New York" to the Worldtone recording

FORMATION:

Open circle of men and women: join hands with neighbors and bend elbows to raise joined hands shoulder-high. Worldtone instructions say that the basket hold also may be used, but the Hermans omitted that option.

BARS ACTION

Introduction.

1-16 No action.

The New York basic motif. Start when the man starts to sing.

1 Step to R onto R foot (ct 1), step BEHIND R foot onto L foot (ct 2).

2 Step to R onto R foot (ct 1), step in FRONT of R foot onto L foot (ct 2).

3 Step to R onto R foot (ct 1), bend L knee a bit and swing L heel over R foot (ct 2).

4 Step forward onto L foot (ct 1), step beside L foot onto R foot (ct &), step forward onto L foot (ct 2).

Note: In bar 4, you may "displace" L foot by stepping forward and to LEFT of L foot onto R foot (ct &).

5-16 = 1-4, 4 times in all.

The New York variation motif. Start with the instrumental music.

17 = 1, above (step-behind).

18 = 3, above (step-swing).

19-20 Dance the step-cut motif 3 1/2 times (step-cut, step-cut, step-cut, step).

Step-cut motif (2 step-cuts per bar): Step forward toward center onto L foot (ct 1), "displace" L foot by stepping forward and to LEFT of L foot onto R foot (ct &).

Note: The Hermans replaced the "step-cut" with "7 quick little steps" in a step-close pattern.

21-32 = 17-20, 3 more times, or 4 times in all, to the Worldtone record.

OR:

21-24 = 17-20, once more, or 2 times in all, to the Nina record.

Repeat bars 1-32 (Worldtone record) or 1-24 (Nina record) to the end of the music.

Note: In at least one group, all the "step-behind" steps have reversed to "step-in-front" steps, and the "step-in-front" steps have reversed to "step-behind" steps. That group also has replaced all the "step-cut" displacement steps with rocking motifs.

Eba sto karo koukla mou, na pame gia seryiani
Sto sipste bay sto right away o ponosou na yiani
Glendi i zoi mas theli, na glendas ke mi se meli

Get in the car, my doll, let's go for a ride
To Sipste Bay right away, to ease your sorrow.
Celebration our lives need, celebrate, don't worry.

Mia poune pseftik i zoi, prepi na tin glendame
Ki' olo me yielia ke kares mikri mou na pername

Because life is funny, we should amuse ourselves.
We should pass our time with laughter and joy.

Tha pioum' akoma koukla mou, mehri na zalistoume
Ke tharti to ksimeroma na pa na kimithoume

We'll go on drinking, my doll, until we're dizzy.
The morning will come, and we'll go to sleep.

End of **LERIKO**.

LERIKOS (leh-rih-KOS) = lyric. (additional information)

CROSS-INDEX TERMS:

Eba sto karo = Empa sto karro = get in the car - first line of the song

BACKGROUND:

Following publication of the history and description of *Lerikos* in the 2004 *Problem Solver*, Steve Salemsen sent an interesting transcription of the lyrics from the Nina recordings, in which Sheepshead Bay and Rockaway (both places in Brooklyn, New York) appear in the first verse. This caused me to re-examine the Worldtone WT 10027b lyrics with the help of an Athenian, and several interesting corrections appeared. First, *Lerikos* means "lyric," not "from a place named Leros." Second, the bar counts in the 2004 *Problem Solver* dance description for the Worldtone recording are wrong. Dance that first figure for 32 bars of vocal music, not 16 bars. Then dance the second figure for 16 bars of instrumental music, as described. Here are the words, probably still containing some of my minor transliteration errors. To reiterate: the **dance** may be widespread across Greek-speaking regions such as the Dodecanese Islands, Athens, and New York City, but the **song** appears to be Athenian.

First verse in the 2004 *Problem Solver*:

Eba sto karo koukla mou, na pame gia seryiani	Get in the car, my doll, let's go for a spin
Sto sipste bay sto right away o ponosou na yiani	To Sipste Bay right away, to ease your sorrow.

which seems to be a misunderstanding of the first verse on Nina, recorded by Rena Dalia (Renas Ntalia):
Nina 613-b (10" 78 rpm), Nina 4513b (7" 45 rpm), and Nina N-2500, A-5 (12" 33 1/3 rpm):

Eba sto karo koukla mou, na pame gia seryiani	Get in the car, my doll, let's go for a spin
sto Sheepshead Bay, sto Rockaway,	to Sheepshead Bay, to Rockaway,
o ponosou na yiani.	to ease your sorrow.

AND a misunderstanding of the first verse on the Worldtone WT 10027b recording:

Eba sto karo dipla mou, na pame gia seryiani	Get in the car next to me, let's go for a spin
Sta Falera,	to (both the old and the new) Falera
	(coastal cities south and east of Athens)
stis Tzitzifyes,	to Tzitzifyes (a place near Athens)
kei sto Pasalimani,	and to Pasalimani (Pasha's Bay, near Piraeus),
sta Falera stis Tzitzifyes, o ponosou na yiani.	to Falera, to Tzitzifyes, to ease your sorrow.

The rest of the song remains the same between recordings, although some phrases may be reversed:

Chorus:

Glendi i zoi mas theli, na glendas ke mi se meli.	Celebration our lives need, celebrate, don't worry.
Na glendas ke mi se meli, glendi i zoi mas theli.	Celebration our lives need, celebrate, don't worry.

Mia pou'ne pseftik'i zoi, prepi na ti glendame.	Because life is funny, we should amuse ourselves.
Ke olo yielio ke hares mikri mou na pername.	We should pass our time with laughter and joy.

Tha pioum'akoma koukla mou, mechri na zalistoume.	We'll go on drinking, my doll, until we're dizzy.
Ke tha'rti to ksimeroma na pa na kimithoume.	The morning will come, and we'll go to sleep.

End of **LERIKOS** - additional information.