

Sheikhani

(Assyrian/Chaldean/Armenian)

I have taken an interest in different forms of the popular dance Sheikhani as it's enjoyed in Assyrian, Chaldean, and Armenian communities in North America. The following represent versions popular in the Detroit, Michigan area. I'd like to thank Shawn Donaldson for sharing his research with me.

Music: Festival 2008 CD

Formation: Short Lines or open circle with arms down and fingers interlocked. Often, the arms change positions and dancers are close enough to place their own L hand at their lower back (elbow bent) and their own R hand extended Fwd into their neighbors lower back. Armenians often join little fingers.

METER: 2/4

PATTERN

Meas

Assyrian I

- 1 Facing R of center, Step Rft fwd (ct 1); Step Lft fwd beside Rft (ct 2); Step Rft Slightly fwd (ct &);
- 2 Still moving fwd in LOD, reverse ftwk of meas 1.
- 3 Step Rft fwd and sway slightly to R and twist shoulders to R (ct 1); Step Lft fwd and sway slightly L and twist shoulders to L (ct 2).
- 4 Turning 90° to the R to face away from the center of the circle, Step Rft to R (ct 1); Step Lft beside Rft (ct &); Step Rft slightly fwd (ct 2);
- 5 Bending slightly fwd, Stamp L Heel beside Rft (ct 1); Stamp L Heel again beside Rft and prepare to turn 180° to L to face center (ct &); Step Lft fwd to face center (ct 2);
- 6 Facing center, Step Rft fwd (ct 1); Step Lft fwd (ct &); Step Rft fwd (ct 2);
- 7 Touch L Heel fwd (ct 1); Step Lft back (ct 2);
- 8 Step Rft back (ct 1); turning to face R of center, Step Lft across and in front of Rft.

Chaldean I

- 1 Facing R of center, Step and lean to R (ct 1); bounce twice on both feet apart (weight is more on the Rft and R knee bends slightly) (cts 2, &);
- 2 Sway onto Lft leaving Rft in place (ct 1); bounce twice on both feet or close Rft beside Lft (cts 2,&);
- 3 Fall onto Rft with accent in place and swing L leg fwd with a straight leg (ct 1); Step Lft fwd (ct 2);
- 4 Step Rft fwd (ct 1); turning to face center, touch Lft beside Rft (ct 2);
- 5 Facing center, Step Lft fwd (ct 1); Step Rft fwd (ct &); Step Lft fwd (ct 2);
- 6 Stamp Rft slightly fwd (ct 1); Stamp or scuff Rft again (ct 2).

Armenian I

- 1 Join little fingers and facing R of center, Step Rft fwd (ct 1); Step Lft fwd (ct 2).
- 2 Step Rft fwd (ct 1); Step Lft fwd (ct &); Step Rft fwd (ct 2);
- 3 Step Lft fwd (ct 1); Step Rft fwd (ct &); Step Lft fwd (ct 2);
- 4 Step Rft fwd (ct 1); turning to face center, close Lft to Rft (ct 2);
- 5 Facing center, Step Lft fwd (ct 1); Step Rft fwd (ct &); Step Lft fwd (ct 2);
- 6 Touch Rft fwd (ct 1); Step Rft back (ct 2);
- 7 Step Lft back (ct 1); Step Rft back (ct 2)
- 8 Turning to face R of center, lean to R and touch Lft to L side (ct 1); Step Lft Fwd (ct 2).

Presented by Stephen Kotansky at the Laguna Folkdancers Festival 2008