Let's Dance with Yaffa Yarkoni
THERE ARE HEBREW TANGOS
AND CALYPSO TOO!!

There was a time in Tel Aviv when the "Horah" was like Dance. Those were the days of the famous pioneers (Halutzim) who drained the swamps, fought malaria, and constructed the road from Tiberias to Zemakh whilst at the same time beating off gangs of Arab marauders. If we are to believe the tales they relate today, and the documentary films of the Keren Kayemet, it appears that every evening, on their return from their labours in the swamps and on the roads, these pioneers danced a roaring "Horah" which continued well into the small hours, and then went out again to their toil in the swamps and on the roads, which lasted until the evening, when they again danced the "Horah" into the early hours of the morning, and again repeated the performance of toiling throughout the day and dancing throughout the night. And so it continued, day after day. Where did they get the strength to work through the day, and dance throughout the night? The parole was: "Are we pioneers or not?!"

This was followed by the period of the "Underground". At this time, the Horah and the Kakhoshim, the Horah and the Waltz were coming into their own. The August and Youth Movements decreed these "Salon Dances", and created a number of original Israeli dances performed in Biblical Costumes, Sheheds' Sticks, and the "Ho, Ho". But these folk dances are more difficult to execute even than the Rumba and the Cha-Cha-Cha.

Today the Horah is danced mainly in Keren Hayesod News Reels, and it is only the ten years old, who form a circle on the streets, on Independence Day. However, even khitzim of the Shomer Hatzair Movement have recognised the Tango and Waltz as legitimate Israeli dances, and in the "Underground" the khitzanimsh (Members of Khita) also try their skill at the Calypso, the Mambo, and even at a little... "Swing". And who knows, maybe tomorrow, we shall see a dash of "Rock-n-Roll" at Mizra and Mishmar Hamakom.

And in the fullness of our hearts we thought: "In any case, Israel's economy suffers from a surplus of imports over exports. Why therefore, should we add to the burden by importing foreign dances?" We export abroad citrus, tyres, cardboard cartons and, principally, Shalichim of the Jewish Agency. Why then, should we not export also a little Israeli dance music, written and arranged by composers resident in this country, and by this means, help the national economy?"

About ten years ago, during the War of Independence, a young, dark complexioned girl, serving with the Armed Forces, became famous throughout the country on account of her singing in a sweet voice, that popular tango "Shkarhachor" (Dark-haired), and another tango, "Al Tomri Li Shalom" (Don't tell me Goodbye). This young girl was YAFFA YARKONI, afterwards the popular singer of recorded music. YAFFA gave up singing dance music, and during the ten years since the creation of the State, has recorded hundreds of songs of various kinds. Now she reverts to her "Shkarhachor" again, the song with which she commenced her career as a popular singer. We now present a recording of 12 dances of different periods, in different rhythms, and written by different composers. In this record you will find the "Horah" of Jewish Brigade times, the Waltz of Palms times, the Tango of the period of the War of Independence, and even the latest and newest Calypso.

So now, let's get on with the dance, but please do not tread on each other's toes. Please dance gracefully and with care, even though these are ISRAELI DANCES!!!

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