

Trata

(Greece)

The little fishing fleets of the Greek islands are called “Trata.” It is comprised of a dozen or so row boats tied to a trawler (caique) pulling them out to sea for about a month, till the next full moon. As they bid farewell, they circle on the bay like a dance, and the women to honor their men, gather at the seashore and dance the “Trata” usually led by one man symbolizing the trawler, to a song “I Trata Mas I Kourelou” (our poor little rag-patched-up trata). The dance imitates movements of heaving fishnets. Trata is believed to be an ancient dance by a description found on a tomb in Apouli, an ancient colony around 400 BC. The fresco there depicts women dressed alike holding hands in a basket hold with L foot pointing, and leaning the opposite direction. The music is 2/4 and resembles an island (nesiotiko) Syrto. The song and the tune have become most popular and it is often played and danced as a Syrto in most places in Greece.

Pronunciation: TRAH-tah

CD: The Spirit of Greek Dance with Athan Karras AK2001

2/4 meter

Formation: Open circle of dancers, hands joined in basket hold, R hand over L.

Styling: The Leader (man) during Fig A and Fig C may stay alone and dance the same step or improvise, and then in Fig B, come to join and lead the dancers in the Syrto sequence. It is common for dancers to sing while dancing.

Meas

Pattern

A. BASIC TRATA (vocal)

- 1 Step on R to R (ct 1); step on L across in front of R, bending knees and leaning to L (ct 2).
- 2 Step on R to R (ct 1); point L toe and lean away twd LOD (ct 2).
- 3 Bend knees (ct 1); shift wt to L, pointing R toe and leaning twd L (ct 2).
- 4-18 Repeat meas 1-3 five times (6 total).

B. SYRTO SEQUENCE (instrumental)

- 1 Step on R to R (ct 1); step on L in front of R (ct 2); step on R to R (ct &).
- 2 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk and direction.
- 3 Step on R to R (ct 1); step on L across in front of R (ct 2); change wt onto R in place (ct &).
- 4 Turning to face RLOD, step on L to L (ct 1); step on R across in front of L (ct 2); change wt onto L in place (ct &).
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4 (2 total).

C. TRATA VARIATION

- 1 Step on R to R (ct 1); step on L behind R (ct 2).
- 2 Step on R across behind L (ct 1); step on L crossing behind R (ct 2);
- 3 Step on R to R (ct 1); step on L across in front of R while bending knees and leaning body to RLOD (ct 2)
- 4-18 Repeat meas 1-3 five times (6 total)

Trata—continued

SONG WORDS:

EE TRATA MAHS EE KOURELOU,
EE HILIO-BALOMENI,
OLLO TIN EMBALONAME,
KI' OLLO ITAN XILOMENI,

Our raggedy fishing fleet
the thousand patched over
we keep on patching up
and still is all torn apart

Refrain:

EVEERA MIA—STA PANEEA
EVEERA DYU—STO HORYO,
EVEERA TREES—STO SPEETIN TIS

heave-ho, once! on the sales,
heave-ho, twice! to our village
heave-ho thrice! to her house

PEEGHAME KE KALLARAME,
KATO STO FILOPOTHI,
PSARYA POLLA EPIASAME,
MAZEE KI' ENA HTAPODI

we went and anchored
down to Filopodi beach
caught plenty fish
and an octopus

Refrain

AN TOXERE I MANA MOU,
POSS THOULEVA STEEN TRATA,
THA MOU'STELNE TA ROUHA MOU,
KE TIN PALIA MOU VRAKA,

if my mother only knew
that I had joined the Trata
she would have sent gear
and with it my baggy pants

Refrain

TEEN TRAT MOU TEE POULISSA,
ISS TEEN THESSALONEEKI,
KE YEERISSA STEEN MANNA MOU
ME DEEHOS METALLEEKI.

I sold the fleet at last
In Thessaloniki
returned back home to mother
without a penny to my name

Refrain

Presented by Athan Karras