

NESTINARSKO HORO

(Bulgaria)

This dance is part of the *Nestinarsko* fire-walking ritual connected with the feast of St. Constantine and St. Helen. This ritual died out in 1956 but is being somewhat revived today in certain villages of the Strandja mountains in S.E. Bulgaria. This dance is related to the *Pravo Horo* and was danced around the fire before the hot coals were spread and certain initiated women (*nestinarki*) carrying sacred icons would dance barefoot on the hot embers in a trance-like state. Similar forms of this ritual are still being performed in Northern Greece (*Anastenaria*). Source: Documentary film, Institute of Music, Sofia, Raina Katzarova, 1966.

PRONUNCIATION: Ness-tee-NAHR-skoh ho-ROH

MUSIC: Yves Moreau workshop cassette

RHYTHM: 7/16 counted here as 2-2-3 or 1,2,3 or quick-quick-**slow**, followed by a melody in 2/4 meter

FORMATION: Open circle or line, hands joined in "W" pos. (shldr height). Face R of ctr, wt on L.

STYLE: Bent knees. Proud and smooth

METER: 7/8 and 2/4

PATTERN

Meas

1-8 Introduction. No action.

1. Basic step (7/8)

- 1 Large step on R ft with marked knee flexion (1) pause (2) slight elevation of R ft lifting L ft behind (3) Arms: in "W" pos
- 2 Repeat pattern of meas 1, but starting with L ft, arms: in "W" pos
- 3 Facing ctr, small hop on L (1) step on R to R (2) cross L behind R (3) Arms: move down and bkwd
- 4 Step on R to R (1) pause (2) small hop on R lifting L (3) Arms: go back to "W" pos
- 5-6 Repeat pattern of meas 3-4, with opp direction and ftwk (same arm movements).

2. Pravo Horo (2/4)

Note: At certain point, rhythm changes from 7/8 to 2/4. Leader waits for convenient phrase to start "Pravo" sequence

- 1 Step on R to R (1) step on L in front of R (2)
- 2 Facing ctr, step on R to R (1) step on L behind R (&) step on R to R (2)
- 3 Repeat pattern of meas. 2 in reverse
Note: in some villages, arms may move in specific ways in meas 2-3 (i.e. slight "rolls" or arms swinging back and forth etc.)

Repeat dance from beginning.

Presented by Yves Moreau at the Laguna Folkdancers Festival 1995