

Zagorisios

(Greece)

This dance is proudly danced in the Zagori villages situated on the foothills of the Pindus mountains, a region known as “Zagorohoria.” This rather deliberate undulating dance is peculiar for it clearly indicates the rhythmic punctuation and clearly signifies the counts for the steps so that all dancers must be in unison with the step in progress. There are indications that a leader can have freedom in doing turns, squats, and slapping the heels (men only). There are several different styles and tempos accorded to certain villages, but all adhere to the stern and denoted 5/4 beat with four measures in each phrase in common musical pattern in most of the dances in Epirus. This northwestern province of Greece bordering Albania presents one of the oldest forms of music and polyphonic singing found in Greece which has aroused great interest among ethnomusicologists internationally.

Pronunciation: zah-goh-REE-see-ohs

CD: The Spirit of Greek Dance with Athan Karras AK2001

5/4 meter

Formation: Line of dancers in hands joined in V-pos.

Meas

Pattern

- A. TO ZAGORITIKO
- 1 Wt on R, M raise L leg across in front of R and W point L toe to R (ct 1); M swing R leg to L, knee high and W point L toe to L (ct 2); M and W both step on L across in front of R (ct 3); M raise R ft to knee level and W raise R ft to ankle level (ct 4); pause (ct 5).
 - 2 Take 4 walking steps in LOD (R,L,R,L) (cts 1-4); pause (ct 5).
 - 3 Step on R ft in front of L (ct 1); shift wt onto L in place (ct 2); step on R directly bkwd (ct 3); bring L ft to R, no wt (ct 4); pause (ct 5).
 - 4 Step on L in RLOD (ct 1); step on R across in front of L (ct 2); step on L to L (ct 3); slight stamp on R next to L (ct 4); pause (ct 5).
- B. GYRO DEXIA/ARISTERA (turn right and left)
- 1 Repeat Fig A, meas 1.
 - 2 With 4 steps, turn to LOD (R,L,R,L) (cts 1,2,3,4); pause (ct 5).
 - 3 Repeat Fig A, meas 3.
 - 4 Repeat meas 2 with opp ftwk and direction.
 - 5-16 Repeat meas 1-4 three times (4 total).
- C. VIMA ARISTERA (stepping left)
- 1 Facing ctr, step on L to L (ct 1); step on R in place (ct 2); step on L across in front of R (ct 3); bring R ft behind L leg (ct 4); pause (ct 5).
 - 2 Repeat Fig A, meas 2.
 - 3 Swing R ft fwd in air twd ctr (M high, W low) (cts 1-2); large step bkwd on R (ct 3); bring L toe across in front of R (ct 4); pause (ct 5).
 - 4 Repeat Fig A, meas 4.

Zagorisios—continued

D. TO PALIO ZAGORISIO (old style)

- 1 Facing ctr, swing L leg fwd to ctr (ct 1); step on R in place (ct 2); step on L across in front of R (ct 3); bring R ft behind L leg (ct 4); pause (ct 5).
- 2 Repeat Fig A, meas 2.
- 3 Swing R leg in front of L (ct 1); swing R leg out to R (ct 2); swing R leg behind L leg (ct 3); step on R behind L (ct 4); pause (ct 5).
- 4 Take 4 walking steps in RLOD (L,R,L,R) (cts 1-4); bring both ft together (ct 5).

The Basic Vary Hasapiko steps are the mainstay of the dance. Variations are introduced, but between each variation, always return to a few sequences of the Basic step.

VARIATIONS

- a. For W, lines are sometimes segregated. Take smaller steps, with touch-toe steps, and body movement in direction of ft. Leading W may wave a handkerchief.
- b. For M, In Fig D, meas 1, ct 4, M can execute a squat, or bring R leg front of L leg, and rest it on the knee on the pause ct.
- c. On meas 4 of any figure, M can release handhold, and on ct 1 and ct 3, raise R let to R and slap R heel.
- d. During meas 3 of any figure, M and W may leap onto R ft in front of L, then leap back onto L, and again leap bkwd onto R, and pause on ct 4.

Presented by Athan Karras