

ZONARADIKOS  
Greek Thrace

This is one of the most characteristic dances of southeast Bulgaria, northeast Greece, and northwest Turkey -- the ethnic region known to folklorists as Thrace. Greek-speakers call the dance Zonaradikos, belt dance. Slavic-speakers call it Pravo, straight or plain dance, of which "prava", sometimes seen, is a Hellenized form. The name Pravo Trakijsko ("PRA-vo tra-KEE-sko"), Thracian pravo, is used by folkdancers, who are aware that other people in the Balkans also have dances called Pravo.

The main forms are (i) short (ii) long (iii) short and long combination (iv) long traveling into and out of the center (v) Tsestos ("TCHES-tos"), a variation with tapping steps done by men to fast music.


PRONUNCIATION. zo-na-RA-thee-kos

MUSIC. Dances of Greek Thrace by Dennis Boxell; side A no. 7 (short form), side B no. 1 (long form), side A no. 3 or side B nos. 3-4 (tsestos).

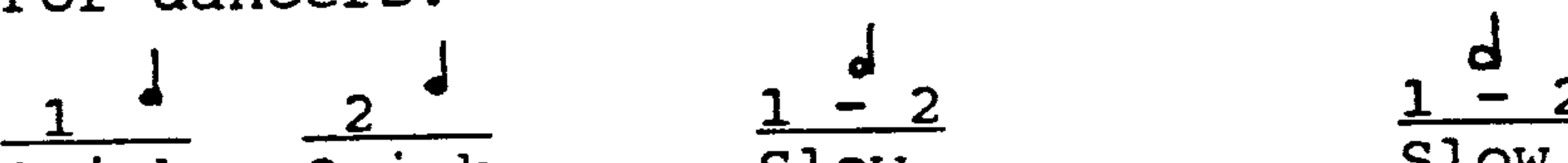
RHYTHM.

2/4

For musicians:

  
DUM-da DUM-da DUM-da da-da-da DUM-da da-da-da

For dancers:

  
Quick Quick Slow Slow

FORMATION.

Line of men and women holding belts. If Tsestos is done, the men come forward to form their own line. When women dance together, hands sometimes in "W" position.

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PATTERN

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(i) SHORT FORM

Measure

Action

1

Facing somewhat R, step sdwd in line of direction (LOD) on R ft (ct 1). Cross L ft in LOD (ct 2).

2

Facing ctr, step sdwd R on R ft, leaving L ft on ground (ct 1-2).

3

Step back L ft (ct 1-2).

This form is commonly done to dance songs, such as "Anamesa se dio vouna" ("a-NA-meh-sa seh thio voo-NA" "thio" one syllable with voiced "th" like "then"), "Between two mountains", on Dances of Greek Thrace, side A no. 7.

(ii) LONG FORM

Measure	Action
1	Facing diagonally R and fwd, step fwd in LOD on R ft (ct 1). Close L ft to R ft (ct 2).
2	Step fwd R ft (cts 1-2).
3	Step fwd L ft (cts 1-2).
4	Turning to face ctr, step back R ft (ct 1). Close L ft to R ft (ct 2).
5	Step back R ft (cts 1-2).
6	Step back, or rock sdwd L, on L ft (cts 1-2).

Feet remain close to ground.

Variation (village of Neo Monastiri)

1-2	As in basic long form.
3	Step fwd L ft (ct 1). Quick step sdwd R on R ft, turning to face ctr, leaving L ft on ground (ct 2).
4	Hold (ct 1). Step back L ft (ct 2).
5	Step back R ft (cts 1-2).
6	Step back, or rock sdwd L, on L ft (cts 1-2).

Variation - jump and stamp (town of Didimotihon)

1	As in basic long form.
2	Jump fwd in LOD on both feet, weight somewhat more on R ft (ct 1). Hop on R ft (ct 2).
3	Step fwd L ft (ct 1). Stamp R ft next to L ft (ct 2).
4-6	As in basic long form.

This is a higher-energy version of the basic Neo Monastiri step above.

Variation - curling the line (two ways)

A. Repeating only Measures 1-3 of the basic long form, the leader curls the entire line into a spiral, then uncurls it repeating only Measure 4-6.

B. Or, either the R-end leader or the L-end leader or both, with their half-dozen or so neighboring people, curl their ends of the line in, using Measures 1-3 of the basic long form, then uncurl, while the remaining dancers do the basic long form.

Variation - fast music

Measure	Action
1	Facing diagonally R, run fwd on R ft in LOD (ct 1). Run fwd on L ft (ct 2).
2	Step fwd R ft (ct 1), hop on R ft (ct 2).
3	Step fwd L ft (ct 1), hop on L ft (ct 2).
4-6	As in Measures 1-3, turning to face ctr, and dancing bkwd.

Variation - with arms

Hands in "W" position

To fast or slow music, footwork as in fast-music variation above (to slow music, walk instead of run in Measures 1 & 4). In Measure 3, extend arms fwd at ct 2; in Measure 4, swing arms down and slightly back at ct 1, swing up to "W" position at ct 2.

This variation is favored by women.

(iii) SHORT AND LONG COMBINATION

When dancing to songs, sometimes the short form is done to the stanzas, and the long form to instrumental interludes. Even if no one is actually singing the song, the tune may be well enough known that the combination form is done anyway.



(v) TSESTOS

Greek-speakers use the Hellenized form Tsestos ("tches-TOS") of a Slavic word meaning "fast" or "dense". The Slavic word Chestoto ("TCHES-toe-toe") means "the fast dance". When music for Zonaradikos speeds up, men sometimes come forward and form their own line to do Tsestos, a higher-energy variation with quick tapping steps, and fancy footwork called by the leader.

The Tsestos figures described here can be seen in Neo Monastiri, about 40 kilometers south of Larissa, and Kilada, about 10 kilometers southeast of Larissa, villages in Thessaly settled by Greek refugees from Bulgarian Thrace during the population exchanges of the 1920's.

Tsestos tapping step

Rhythm    2/4                
                  1-and       2-and

Step R ft in place (ct 1). Step on L toe next to ball of R ft, toe turned in slightly, taking weight (ct 1-and). Step R ft in place (ct 2). Tap L heel next to ball of R ft, taking no weight (ct 2-and).

May also be done with opposite footwork.

Basic Tsestos figure

- | Measure | Action   |
|---------|--|
| 1       | Facing diagonally R, two short running steps fwd R, L (cts 1-2).   |
| OR      |  |
|         | In higher-energy mood, step R ft in place kicking L ft fwd low (ct 1). Step L ft in place kicking R ft fwd low (ct 2). A scissors-like movement. |
| 2       | Short step fwd R ft, leading with heel (ct 1), short step fwd L ft to instep of R ft (ct 1-and). Short step fwd R ft (ct 2).                     |
| OR      |  |
|         | Hop on L ft, touching R ft directly in front of L ft (ct 1). Step R ft a little fwd (ct 2).  |

3 Step fwd L ft (ct 1). Turning to face ctr, jump on both feet, feet parallel and about 9" apart (ct 2).

4 Hop on R ft (ct 1). Step back L ft (ct 2).

OR

Close L ft smartly to R ft, taking wt on R ft (ct 1). Step back L ft (ct 2).

5-6 Two tapping steps in place R, L.

Any dancer may substitute a step-hop for a tapping step in Measure 6, or Measures 5 and 6.

In higher-energy mood, any dancer may sometimes substitute any of these gestures:

2 Extend R ft sdwd R in air just before beat; close R ft smartly to L ft (ct 1). Take wt on R ft (ct 2).

OR

3 Hop on R ft, raising L knee, L ft coming fwd (ct 1). Cut L ft diagonally about 4" toward 4 o'clock, hopping again on R ft (ct 2).

4 Flick L ft slightly fwd, to begin circle CCW with L knee, bringing L ft back, and hopping yet again on R ft (ct 1). Step back L ft (ct 2).

OR

3 Kick L ft fwd low, hopping on R ft (ct 1). Raise L knee (ct 2).

4 Hold (ct 1). Step back L ft (ct 2).

## Extra taps

Dancers may add an extra tap to any traveling step in Measures 1 or 2 by audibly striking heel against ground before stepping.

Measure	Action	<u>Variation</u>
1	As in basic Tsestos figure.	
2	Turning to face ctr, extend R ft sdwd R in air just before beat; close R ft smartly to L ft (ct 1). Take weight on R ft (ct 2).	
3	Extend L ft sdwd L just before the beat; close L ft smartly to R ft without taking weight (ct 1). Kick L ft fwd low (ct 2).	
4	Raise L knee (ct 1). Step back L ft (ct 2).	
5-6	Two tapping steps in place R, L (or step-hops as above).	
Or build on this variation by continuing:		
7	As in Measure 2 but without taking weight on R ft (cts 1-2).	
8	Repeat, taking weight (cts 1-2).	
9-12	Repeat Measures 3-6.	
13-18	Repeat Measures 7-12.	

Variation - "around the corner"

On signal by leader, using the footwork of the basic Tsestos figure, travel in a CCW circle. Start Measure 1 diagonally L of ctr. Cross L ft in front of R ft at Measure 2, ct 2; face somewhat R of ctr by Measure 3, ct 1; retire to place in Measure 4; do Measures 5-6 in place. Return to basic Tsestos figure, or



a line of men in high-energy mood may follow with kneeling, below.

Variation for men - around the corner and kneel

At signal as above. Measures 1-4, as in "around the corner". Measure 5, step R ft in place (ct 1); kick L ft fwd low (ct 2); hop on R ft, raising L knee and bringing L ft up and back in a "backwards bicycle". Measure 6, kneel on L knee near R ft (cts 1-2). Return to basic Tsestos figure.

With live music, the interplay between musicians and dancers, especially lead dancer (who may have asked musicians for Tsestos, and tipped them), shows when low-energy Zonaradikos steps end, and high-energy Tsestos begins. With recorded music, dancers attune to dynamics of recording.

Presented by Dennis Boxell  
Dance notes by Dennis Boxell and John Hertz, October 1990