

The Story Behind the Song*

**Dancing is divine in origin . . . and necessary for the well-being of the soul.
Plato**

Dear Reader,

Long before there were therapists, self-help books, or TV talk shows like Dr. Phil, people expressed themselves through dance and song. And in the past, they did so communally, thereby cementing the social and family bonds that helped them celebrate the good times and get through the bad ones.

As is true of many folk traditions, Greek folk songs and dances have a story to tell. In the following pages, I've tried to summarize what I know or have read about the stories behind some of the Greek dances taught in our class. But my descriptions should not be viewed as authoritative.

In the first place, the research I did was far from exhaustive. Secondly, some Greek dances go back to ancient times. Hence their "true" origins and steps are obscure and sometimes, highly debatable. So I'm sure that many corrections are needed. Also, some of my translations may be incorrect because I either couldn't understand the word or couldn't find it in the dictionary. So I made my best guess.

But you don't need to worry about all that. Just keep on dancing.

Sincerely, Aphrodite Matsakis Oct., 2018

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Overview

Ancient Origins In ancient Greece, dance was part community celebrations, religious festivals, and military training. The Pyrrhic dance, a kind of “war game” involving weapons, began in Crete and was used to train Spartan and other Greek warriors.

Village vs. City Folk Dances. There are two kinds of Greek folk dances: village and city ones. Most of the dances taught in this class are village dances because until the 1900’s, most Greeks lived in villages.

Numerous variations. There are different names for and different versions of the same dance. Sometimes different dances are danced to the same beat, depending on the locality

The Strength of Local Identity. Even today, Greeks who no longer live in their ancestral village often have a strong sense of regional identity. In the past, each region/village/island developed their own unique dances and took pride in them. E.g., the kalamatiano is named after the village of Kalamata; the Kritiko (or Cretan) syrto, after the island of Crete.

4000 Dances. According to some sources, there are approximately 4000 Greek folk dances. Here are some reasons why:

1. Geography

- (a) Greek villages and regions are often separated by large mountains; and Greek islands, from mainland Greece (and from each other) by the Mediterranean Sea. Consequently, until the advent of modern transportation, many Greek villages and islands remained relatively insular.
- (b) Dances from parts of Greece that are (or were) near Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, etc., sometimes have elements of these other countries’ dances.
- (c) Dances from islands to the west of mainland Greece (i.e., between Greece and Italy) sometimes have Italian elements; dances from islands close to the Middle East, some Middle-Eastern elements.
- (d) Greece is a relatively barren country. Hence, from ancient times on, Greeks have migrated to Asia Minor/Turkey, and upwards towards the Black Sea. Homer was born in Turkey, as were several branches of my family.

As the result, the dances of Greeks who made Asia Minor (or Egypt) their permanent home often evidence Middle Eastern influences.

Over time, Asia Minor Greeks developed new allegedly “Greek” dances that stemmed directly from Middle Eastern dances.

2. History

- (a) At various points in time, different parts of Greece were conquered by different invaders and, hence, were influenced by different non-Greek musical traditions.
- (b) Due to these invasions, sometimes Greek village had to relocate. Over time, the native dances of these Greek villages were influenced by the dances of their new homeland.

- (c) Two of today's most popular Greek dances became widespread in Greece only after the arrival of millions of refugees from Asia Minor/Turkey in the 1920's.

Comedy, Tragedy, and Everything In-between

Greek dance songs can be about anything: the beautiful, the sad, and the ridiculous. Many Greek dance songs are about the joyful topics such as love, going on a carriage ride, a pretty woman, nature, one's village, etc.

Others, like the "pepper dance" are quite funny, if not silly. In contrast, any number of Greek dance songs and certain specific dances are about sad events and feelings.

(Note to the Reader: Quite understandably, you may not want to read about these unhappy sad dances & songs. If so, just skip the rest of this section and go straight to the dance descriptions on p. 6.)

The sad Greek dance songs and dances reflect Greece's many centuries of foreign occupation. First came the Romans, then the Crusaders, then the Ottomans/Turks.

At its height, the Ottoman/Turkish Empire included most of southeast Europe and today's Middle East. During the four hundred years of Turkish occupation (1453 to 1821), many Greeks were subject to heavy taxes, forced labor, random massacres, and a "child tax" where Greek children were raised as Turkish soldiers, put in harems, or used as slaves.

In the 1900's, Greece was ravaged by civil war and World War I. During World War, the Nazis destroyed 80% of Greek industry, 90% of the roads and bridges, and 25% of Greece's forests. Greece also had one of the highest rates of civilian casualties. Hence any number of Greek folk songs are about loss and surviving adversity. Other songs are philosophical in nature. Still others are political commentaries or dialogues with God. Yet at Greek festivities, these heavy songs and dances are usually balanced out by songs about the importance of enjoying life through love, music, dance, and simple things, like a flower.

Code songs. As a child, I couldn't understand why one of most well-known, peppy Greek dance songs was about something as unimportant as a pot. And why did this song have such a variety of refrains, most of which were totally unrelated to pots?

Apparently this song was one of many "code songs" that evolved during the Turkish occupation. The seemingly inconsequential topics and irrelevant refrains of these joyful sounding songs were codes for:

- the location, size, and movements of Turkish/Ottoman military forces;
- how many and what type of weapons the Ottomans had;
- where the villagers had hidden supplies for the guerilla warriors who were trying to oust the Turks; and
- when it was or wasn't safe for the guerillas to come out of hiding to get the food, clothing, and weapons that villagers had hidden for them, etc.

Greeks couldn't share such information openly with other Greeks because they were all under the watchful eye of Turkish authorities. But villagers could update each other without fear of reprisal by means of various innocent sounding refrains.

Villagers were also afraid to transmit such information to Greek guerilla warriors who were in hiding. But if a code song was sung at a festive event, the combined voices of all the dancers would be loud enough for the guerrillas to get the message.

Dance Descriptions (arranged alphabetically)

Dance 1: Ballos is an island dance.

Ballos derives from the ancient Greek verb *ballio* (to dance or jump about) and *ballo* (to throw, i.e., to throw yourself around). There are many different versions of this dance, which, traditionally was for couples.

Dance 2: Ena Karavi Apo Tin Chio: A Ship from Chios [an island]

A ship from Chios with its two small rowboats docked on Samos (another island)
Then [just] sat there, trying to figure out the price of a kiss (from the East to the West)

[Answer] The married woman's kiss costs four; the widow's, fourteen.
The single woman's kiss is cheap; you can get one just by joking with her.
But if you kiss her only once, she'll leave you
And search for happiness elsewhere

This a very old folk song. But it remains popular because ships from Chios symbolize both luxury and survival. E.g., in modern city songs where a singer begs his beloved to take him back, he might promise to arrive with boats from Chios (i.e., to endure all hardships for the beloved's sake and to shower the beloved with luxurious gifts).

(Note to the reader: If you prefer not to read about the traumatic events that Chios experienced and how the survivors overcame them, skip to the description of the next dance.)

Historically the island of Chios was one of the wealthiest Greek islands. It had a large shipping fleet and a wealth of cotton, silk, sweet smelling fruits, and mastic (used for making chewing gum, ouzo, and various wines). Hence during the Turkish occupation, Chios was treated relatively well.

But in 1822, when Chios joined the Greece's War of Independence, the Turks burnt Chios to the ground and killed or enslaved $\frac{3}{4}$ of its people. Afterwards the survivors slowly rebuilt Chios. So even today, Chios produces luxurious, perfumed soaps, mastic, etc.; and its people still sing about love.

Dance 3: Fast Hasapiko/Hasaposerviko *Hasapi* (Greek) & *Kasapi* (Turkish) mean butcher.

According to my mother, this dance originated with butchers who danced after work to relieve their stress. As it turns out, she was right: this dance was originally a sword dance performed by Greek butchers in Constantinople (today's Istanbul) during the Middle Ages.

There are two versions: fast and slow. The fast version is referred to as fast hasapiko and/or hasaposerviko; the slow version, as the "sailors dance," sirtaki, or Zorba's dance. (See slow hasapiko.)

Fast Hasapiko basic steps: 1, 2, 3, kick, kick. Or, instead of a kick, hop on one foot while lifting the other leg towards the knee. This can be followed by a kick, hopping on the other leg, or a cross step.

Dance 4: Gerakina *Gerakina* means hawk or falcon, but is also a female name.

Gerakina went to get some cold water
Then she fell into the well
And let out a loud scream

Everyone ran over
And I, poor soul that I am, ran over too
Gerakina, I'll get you out and make you my wife

Refrain: Droom, droom, etc. Her bracelets thunder [because she's shaking them so hard].

Dance 5: Haniotikos/Chaniotikos is named after the Cretan city of Hania/Chania and is similar to the Kritiko Syrto, the Messeritiko, and the Rhoditiko.

Here's two theories about the origins of this dance:

1. The back and forth movements of this dance imitate the back and forth movements of the ocean surrounding Crete.
2. Some researchers have traced this dance back to an ancient Greek rite involving the goddess Adrianna (or Andrianna). According to this controversial theory, at some point in time, Adrianna was worshipped on Crete as a mother goddess; and the mythical labyrinth supposedly built by King Minos to house the Minotaur (a beast) was originally a temple to Adrianna and a sanctuary for those who were stressed.

Spiritual/Emotional Death and Renewal. People entered Adrianna's temple to renew themselves after experiencing some kind of undesirable event. But the temple is a labyrinth because, according to this theory, the process of healing or coping with a loss or other negative event is a confusing maze.

Also, not everyone who starts the recovery process, comes out okay. Some people get stuck in the middle or go under. In the ancient rite, however, faith in Adrianna and the rite embodied in the Cretan syrto supposedly strengthened people.

Group Support and the Golden Thread of Reason. Holding hands, the dancers entered the labyrinth and danced through the meandering hallways in hopes of getting to the center of the temple, where the goddess resided. As they danced, they sang songs about their problem and how they felt about it; and the other dancers sang back to them. [I've seen this done in Karpathos.]

While dancing, the dancers also held onto a golden thread that was tied to a rock outside the temple. That way, they could find their way out. According to this theory, this golden thread was what Plato referred to as "the golden thread of reason." (Cognitive therapy?)

Upon reaching the center of the temple, people were so overwhelmed and/or exhausted by dealing with their problem and their intense grief, anger, guilt, or confusion about it, that they felt some form of emotional or spiritual death. They then participated in a ritual in the presence of the goddess.

Afterwards, their negative emotions did not disappear. But they did lessen in intensity, which allowed the worshippers of Adrianna to think more clearly about their situation. Consequently, as they retraced their steps on the way out of the labyrinth, with the help of the golden thread of logic, they could view their situation more logically and, hence emerged from the temple spiritually/emotionally renewed.

“Three steps forward, two steps backwards” That this Cretan dance involves going forward, then backwards, with the dance line slowly moving forward, has been viewed as mirroring the fact that healing/coping with a problem is not straightforward. I.e., it can be so difficult that one can't go forward without sometimes going backwards.

Dance 6: Hasaposerviko (see Fast Hasapiko)

Dance 7: Ikariotiko From the island of Icarus, named after the mythological Icarus.

Do you remember the Greek myth about a father and son who were imprisoned in a high tower? They managed to escape by catching birds that flew into their window, making wings of feathers and wax, then flying out of the window.

The father warned his son not to fly too high, lest the sun melt the wax. But the son, Icarus, was so thrilled to be flying, he headed towards the sun. When his wings fell apart, he plunged into the sea near a small island which was then named after him.

Translation of the *Ikariotiko* song often danced to:

For years and years I've been wandering
Like a stray bird
In emigration, in loneliness

I can't take it anymore!
I'm homesick and crave my love and (my) village

And my love in Ikaria--without company, without an embrace
without my sweet kisses--has a black pain in her heart
She feels for me and loves me, so it's a shame that she's alone

I want to decide to go to the beautiful island, tell her that I love her,
And that one day I'll marry her.

One sweet night in Ikaria we'll celebrate with violins.
We'll dance together to the Ikariotiko rhythm/song
Forget the sorrows and . . . like birds
The two of us will have a warm nest.

Dance 8: Kalamatiano

In some areas, the steps to the kalamatiano and the syrto are identical. Both dances stem back to ancient times and were referred to by Homer. Ancient Greek historians describe the men as dancing vigorously and the women, sedately.

The kalamatiano is named after Kalamata, a village in southern Greece which used to produce silk, especially silk kerchiefs. In the past, holding hands was seen as scandalous or as a sign of betrothal. So men offered silk kerchiefs from Kalamata to their partners to hold while dancing. In addition, the lead dancer and second dancer were (and often still are) linked by a handkerchief, which allows the leader to twirl, jump, or perform various acrobatic moves.

The kalamatiano is danced for celebrations (like weddings, baptisms, Easter, etc.); and the themes of the songs are usually happy. Sometimes, however, a song might sound happy, yet be about something negative. This has been explained as reflecting the impact of the unhappy parts of Greece's history.

Jazz composer, Dave Brubeck, incorporated a variation of the kalamatiano beat in his Unisquare Dance. Cat Stevens's song "Ruby Love" also has a kalamatiano flavor.

Dance 9: Karagouna Karagouna is the name of a girl.

The dance and song comes from Thessaly and Epirus, northern parts of Greece where single women maintained their reputation by "hiding" from men. There are different versions of the song. Here's one of them:

Karagouna, I looked for you here, I looked for you there,
Then I saw you standing in your window
Sweeter than a song

Hey, little bird, *
I'm going to sell my goat to buy you earrings
I'll sell my pig to buy you a seggouni (a traditional, tight cotton dress)
I'll even sell my ____ (stable?) to buy you rings

Karagouna, Karagouna,
I'm going to buy you silk dresses
[The traditional tight cotton dresses] don't fit the real you
[i.e., you need to loosen up a little and respond to me]

- Greeks often refer to a woman as some type of bird, usually as a term of endearment.

Dance 10: Karpathian Sousta and Zervgos

Sousta means "spring," referring to the bouncing movements of the dancers.

Some believe that the *sousta* was originally a Greek pyrrhic danced in full armor for military training purposes. E.g., Spartan warriors learned to dance so they could be in step with the movements of their comrades. Today the *sousta* is danced in the Balkans, Cyprus, Crete, and other islands as either (a) a courtship dance or (b) a line of dancers.

Almost every Aegean island has its own *sousta* dance. But the dancers are always linked by crossed arms; and the dance always involves a lyre, mandolin or violin, and/or a laouto and/or a bagpipe. Since the *sousta* involves moving right, then left, then right again, left again, etc., it's been likened to the back and forth motion of the waves of the ocean.

On the island of Karpathos, the Karpathian *sousta* is the main dance. Traditionally it's preceded by a warm up similar to the *tsiagnio* (described under *pentozali*) or the uniquely Karpathian *zervgos*.

The *zervgos* is basically a backwards *sousta* danced slowly as a warm up. Sometimes, however, it's danced fast as a variation of the basic Karpathian *sousta*.

Mandinathes During parts of the warm-up or slow *zervgos*, traditionally the musicians and/or dancers sing poems called *mandinathes*. *Mandinathes* are two lines of rhymed poems about one's feelings about one's self, another person (dead or alive), life, human nature, Karpathos, the specific event being celebrated, a political or historical event and, most recently, about changing times, computers, etc.

At weddings, traditionally the bride's side of the family forms one dance line; and the groom's, another line. As the two lines face each other and dance a slow *zervgo*, persons from both lines sing wishes to one another, grieve for those not present due to death or migration; bring up past grievances towards someone in the other line, then vow to set aside their grudges for the sake of the new couple. Since these words of forgiveness are made publically, they have extra power.

Dance 11: Karsilamas Karsilamas means "welcoming, greeting, face to face encounter."

Traditionally this was a couple's dance where the pair stood about three feet apart. (No hand-holding allowed.) At times the dance can become so lively that during arguments, one person might threaten to make the other person "dance the *karsilamas*." In slang, the *karsimalas* refers to a common tactic used by pickpockets: knocking someone over to steal their wallet.

This dance originated in Northwest Turkey. It was carried to Greece by Greek refugees in the 1900's and, according to the internet, is still popular in Turkey, Syria, and other parts of the former Ottoman Empire, as well as in parts of northern Greece.

Dance 12: Kavontortiko (from Southern Evia, a peninsula located on mainland Greece)

According to some, the southeastern point of Evia is where the boats of the Greek warriors returning from the Trojan War were shipwrecked.

Dance 13: Kinigos (The Hunter)

Dance 14: Kritiko (Cretan) Syrto (Similar to Messaritiko, Rhoditiko. See description for Haniotiko.)

Dance 15: Laziko (Pontian Dance)

Dance 16: Messaritiko (from the island of Kythira, similar to the Cretan or Kritiko syrto)

Dance 17: Naxos Syrto (from the island of Naxos)

Dance 18: Paraliakos (Paralia means by the seaside)

The lyrics describe fishermen's longing to return to their home island of Leros and the difficulties they encounter.

Dance 19: Pentozali *Pente* means five; *zale* means strings, steps, and/or jumping and is a pun on the word for dizzy.

Traditionally pentozali is preceded by a warm up, called *tsiganio*, involving 2-4 slow steps forward, followed by slow steps backwards. Villages/regions differ in the number of forward/ backward steps and whether some steps involve bending 1-2 knees towards the ground.

The pentozali, the trademark dance of Crete, is frequently danced to the following song about Cretan pride: *In The Fragrance of May's Blossoming Cherry Trees*

In the midst of the fragrances of May, look at how Crete's cherries [youth] dance with
So much dignity and honor.

Look, Crete, at your children who learned the dances of their ancestors, and rejoice.

Look at the grace and beauty of this dance and rejoice

Be sure to tell everyone in the world about our Cretan dances and urge them to learn to learn how to dance them proudly and with dignity. (Numerous other stanzas not included.)

Dance 20 Podaraki ("small foot")

This Pontic dance involves a lot of foot stamping. In a well-known song accompanying this dance, a girl warns her women friends to go dancing before they marriage. Then she rails against her husband and in-laws for not allowing her to go dancing and describes how she'll get back at them for preventing her from having fun.

Dance 21: Rhoditiko (see Haniotikos/Chaniotikos)

Dance 22: Slow Hasapiko or Sailor's Dance/Sirtaki/Zorba's Dance

A taunt, precise dance with many variations. Can be done solo or with others. Some claim that the slow hasapiko originated with lonely Greek sailors who danced on deck or in port cafes. Hence it's often referred to as the "sailor's dance." Since there were many sailors, there are many versions of this dance.

The slow hasapiko is also referred to as the sirtaki or as Zorba's Dance. However, the sirtaki is a slow hasapiko especially choreographed for the movie, *Zorba the Greek*.

Dance 23: Sta Dio (In Two) from Epirus in northern Greece.

Danced to a regular, even beat (slow, quick, quick). As the dance proceeds, it's not unusual for the first two dancers to break away from the circle and continue dancing the basic steps in the middle, facing each other, and holding hands or a handkerchief.

Dance 24: Syrto. Syrto means "dragging" and to Greek line and circle dances done in a curving line, holding hands.

The syrto goes back to ancient times. It is considered the oldest of Greek dances. Each region and island has their own version.

Dance 25: Syrto-Ionian Islands from the Ionian islands. See Syrto above.

Dance 26: Syrto Politico

Polis (or city) refers to Constantinople (today's Istanbul), the former capital of the Eastern Roman/Byzantine Empire. This dance comes from Greeks who lived in Egypt, Turkey, Syria, and other parts of the Middle East that were once part of the Ottoman Empire. See Syrto.

Dance 27: Sylviriano or Silivrianos Sytros See Syrto and Syrto Politico above.

Dance 28: Tik (Pontic Dance)

Tik means “support” in Turkish and “upright” in Pontic Greek. This refers to the upright position of the dancers who hold hands to form an inverted V. Dance incorporates knees bends, shoulder tremors, and shaking the upper body by turning the back on its axis. There are fast *tiks* and slow ones.

The *Tik* comes from the Pontic region of Turkey on the eastern Black Sea and surrounding mountain areas that go in to Russia. Pontian music has elements of ancient Greek and Byzantine music, as well as music from the Caucasus. Due to mountain ranges, however, the music of the eastern and western Pontic areas differ.

Dance 29: Trata

The trata is danced by the women of Megara (in mainland Greece) every other year on the Tuesday after Easter in front of a church/chapel called St. John the Dancer. According to some, this dance celebrates the fact that during the Turkish occupation, it only took one day to build this church.

But trata is also danced in the Aegean Islands; and the movements of the dance seem to be similar to the hauling of fishing nets. Hence some claim that this dance originated long before the Turkish occupation and was danced to celebrate a successful fishing venture or as a way of praying for one

Dance 30: Trava Trava means pull or keep on going forward towards a destination.

The song used in our class is about a carriage ride. The singer instructs the horse to keeping on going towards a certain café for ouzo and then, to another café for some good wine [and cucumbers?].

Dance 31: Tsamiko This dance is associated with the Greek guerilla warriors who came down from the mountains to fight the Ottomans/Turks during the Greek War of Independence.

Some claim that the steps to this dance reflect the big rocks the warriors sometimes had to dance around and that the tsamiko was danced at the funerals of comrades. These warriors wore the traditional *foustanella* (pleated skirt) with four hundred pleats, one pleat for each year of Turkish occupation.

Traditionally, only men danced this dance; the leader displayed his bravery and physical skills by stomping his feet, leaping high, turning mid-air somersaults, and other acrobatic feats; and the themes of the songs were usually about injustice, struggles, losses, old age, death, and other heavy topics.

Today, women dance the tsamiko; and themes of the songs, like the steps themselves, can vary from region to region.

Variations. Some leaders twist and turn their way to the floor, then hit the floor or slap their legs or arms. Others in the circle may do likewise or simply tap their feet while waiting for the leader to and others to finish gyrating to the floor.

Also, during many tsamika, there comes a time when the clarinet becomes dominant and sort of “shrills,” indicating intensity of emotion. At that time, leaders often do their own thing. Meanwhile the other dancers stand still or just tap one foot in front of the other.

A common move is for leaders (and other dancers) to lean backwards (as if overwhelmed with feeling) or bend their knees and circle down to the floor and then lean backwards, and rotate their torsos to the right and to the left (as long as they want) to the rhythm of the song.

Dance 32: Tsifteteli (from the Turkish, chifteteli, which originally meant “double strings).

Some archeologists claim that this dance goes back to the fertility rites of primitive people of the Eastern Aegean and that it was danced by ancient Greek women as a form of worship for Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty. Around 300 A.D., however, Greece became Christianized. So this dance was frowned upon by most Greeks. The tsifteteli did not become widespread in Greece again until the 1920’s when Greeks living in Asia Minor/Turkey were forced to flee due to the ethnic cleansing efforts of a pro-nationalist militaristic Islamic movement. Those Asia Minor Greeks who managed to make it to Greece brought with them two of today’s most widely danced Greek folk dances: the *tsifteteli* and the *zembekiko*. However, unlike today’s tsifteteli songs, which are about love and sex, the tsifteteli songs brought by the refugees were sad.

Today, two forms of tsifteteli exist: (a) the art of professional belly-dancing and (b) the more sedate, but still sensual, city dance, danced alone or with others.

The steps are walk-like (no running or jumping) and are performed almost in place or within a 3 or 4 ft. circle. If done in a pair, one or both partners can circle around each other, facing each other or not facing each other. When danced by a man and a woman, the couple communicates (and sometimes flirt) by improvising to the music. Consequently, the tsifteteli is popular among today’s Greek and Greek-American young people.

Lower Body Moves

- a. **Figure 8** Rotate hips in the figure 8 in a controlled manner. (No bumps and grinds.)
- b. **Shake Hips Right to Left (not back and forth)** Chest/head upright, still.
- c. **Vertical Lean Backwards**, slowly, deliberately, to the beat. Snap your fingers if you want. (Some dancers bend down, then lean backwards, as far as possible.)
- d. **Lean Backwards and Wave Torso**, back and forth, right to left (to the beat).
- e. **Washing Machine Move** (Women only) Point one toe or foot, then put the weight of your body on the ball of that foot. Then rotate your hips and lower body (only) round and round in a steady manner, as if your lower body is a washing machine. The moves are not supposed to be jerky or erratic, but controlled.
- f. **Rotating Washing Machine Move** (Women only) Do the washing machine move slowly as you shift the forward foot around in a circle.
- g. **Circle with one foot forward** (Both sexes) Point one toe or foot in front of you. Then using that toe or foot as an anchor, make a circle (without moving hips like a washing machine)
- h. **Hip lift** to the front

Upper Body Moves

- a. **Arms up** For both men and women, arms can be held up to the side or over the head, or one arm can be to the side and the other arm, overhead. Fingers can be snapped to the beat too.
- b. **Champagne Move** Women can make what’s called the “champagne” move with their hands (as if emptying a glass of champagne) or the “almond eye” move, where the thumb and a finger make the shape of an eye. These moves can be done at any time.
- c. **Shoulder Rolls** Women also do shoulder rolls (small or large, one shoulder at a time, or both shoulders).
- d. **Butterfly Moves.** Women can also do what some call “butterfly moves,” where arms go up and down like a butterfly. Movements can be short (involving only the hand or forearm) or long (involving the entire arm).

e. One or Both Hands behind the Head

Sometimes women who have taken belly dance classes, incorporate additional belly dance moves, such as hip and chest shimmies, into the dance. But these are not used in Greek tsifeteli.

Dance 33: Zakynthos Syrtos Zakynthos, an island located between Greece and Italy, managed to save its entire Jewish population during World War 2.

Dance 34: Zembekiko or Zeybekiko

Traditionally a solo dance expressing deep emotions, now the zembekiko can be danced with others. Although there are several basic step patterns, the dance is highly individualistic, and the dancer is free to make impromptu moves based on his or her emotions.

The steps are slow and deliberate, and dancers seem to be concentrating intensely on every movement of the dance. Yet there are often brief explosions of passion expressed in sudden spins, squats, or leaps or by smacking one's foot, legs, or the floor.

This dance is associated with Greeks from Asia Minor who had to flee their historic homeland in order to escape ethnic cleansing. Since these refugees arrived right after WW1, Greece was ill-equipped to provide for them. Most lived in shanty towns, or were homeless. Some became addicts. Hence there are zembekika songs about poverty, unemployment, feeling lost or betrayed by another person, a particular government, or life itself, etc.

This is a good dance (and great therapy) for people who are hurting, want to express their pain (without revealing any specific), and have their pain respected by others.

Dance 35 Zonaradiko

Zonee means belt.

This dance originated in Thrace (in northern Greece). But it is danced in one form or another throughout Greece. Sometimes dancers hold onto each other's belts or make a belt like circle around the leader.

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