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MUSIC: A MELODIC METHODOLOGY INTO TEACHING AND LEARNING

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SCHOOL EXCHANGE PARTNERSHIP



LANDSCAPE AND TRADITIONAL DANCES

1. TSAMIKOS

It is danced in a circle, at a rhythm of $\frac{3}{4}$. The dance follows a strict and slow tempo not emphasising on the steps, but more on the "attitude, style and grace" of the dancer. The dancers hold each other from each other's hands, bent 90 degrees upwards at the elbows.

It takes a sturdy hand, especially if you are supporting the first or last person of the line (or circle) who will lean on you to perform high acrobatic leaps (usually kicking his right leg up as he takes off followed by the left (in a scissor-like motion), hitting the latter with the back of his hand before landing). The steps are relatively easy but have to be precise and strictly on beat. The dancer might even stomp his foot in response to a strong beat.

There is some improvisation involved and many variations of the steps, depending on which area the dancers come from. Over time the dance has taken on many variations. In the past, it was danced exclusively by men, but in modern times both men and women take part. In Central Greece Tsamiko is the most popular folk dance.

The landscape has played a decisive role for the steps of the dance, as the mountainous area did not allow dancers to make big steps, that is the leading dancer made a kind of on-the-spot dance









I f a n i k

2. SIRTAKI

- Sirtaki is a popular Greek dance, choreographed by Giorgos Provias for the 1964 film *Zorba the Greek*. It is a recent Greek folkdance, and a mixture of the slow and fast rhythms of the hasapiko and hasaposerviko dance respectively.
- The dance and the accompanying music by Mikis Theodorakis are also called Zorba's dance.
- The name *sirtáki* comes from the Greek word syrτος – from “σύρω” (τον χορό), which means "drag (or lead the dance)" -, a common name for a group of traditional Greek dances of so-called "dragging" style.
- Sirtaki is danced in a line or circle formation with hands held on neighbours' shoulders. Line formation is more traditional. The rhythm meter is 4/4 tempo increasing, and often the signature is changed to 2/4 in the fastest part. Accordingly, the dance begins with slower, smoother actions, gradually transforming into faster, vivid ones, often including hops and leaps.,
- It was aimed for dancing on a flat area at the beach, therefore the steps are vivid and the rhythm fast.









3. KALAMATIANOS

- The **Kalamatianós** (Καλαματιανός) is one of the best known dances of Greece. It is a popular Greek folkdance throughout Greece, Cyprus and internationally and is often performed at many social gatherings worldwide. As is the case with most Greek folk dances, it is danced in chain with a counterclockwise rotation, the dancers holding hands.
- It is a joyous and festive dance; its musical beat is $7/8$, subdivided into of three parts of 3+2+2 beats, corresponding to 3 steps per bar. There are 12 steps in the dance corresponding to 4 bars of music. These steps include 10 steps counterclockwise ("forward") followed by 2 steps clockwise ("backwards"). Depending on the occasion and the dancers' proficiency, certain steps may be taken as jumps or squats. The lead dancer usually holds the second dancer by a handkerchief, this allowing him or her to perform more elaborate steps and acrobatics. The steps of the Kalamatianós are the same as those of the syrto but the latter is slower and more stately, its beat being an even 4/4
- The roots of Kalamatianos can be found in antiquity. Homer, in the *Iliad* describes three performances made around the spear of Achilles that depict a dance in an open circle. The ancient Spartans had a dance called “ὄρμος” (*hormos*), which was a syrto style dance described in detail by Xenophon where a woman led a male into dance using a handkerchief. Lucian states that the *ormos* dance was performed in an open circle and was done by young men and women. The men would dance vigorously while the women danced with modest movements, which is what happens nowadays too. It is believed to have acquired the name *kalamatianos* from the town of Kalamata in southern Greece.







4. IPIROTIKOS

Ipiros is the western part of Greece, a very mountainous area. The folk dances and music there are really slow and somewhat with “heavy” steps. They danced on their tip toes, because they danced on the mountains and therefore they could not properly step on the land, neither did they have the space to perform dances in long lines and in big areas.







5. KARSILAMAS FROM ASIA MINOR

- **Karsilamas** (Greek: καρσιλαμάς), is a folk dance which was carried out by the Greeks who lived in Northwest Turkey and Asia Minor and carried it to Greece when they fled Turkey in the 1920s. The term "karşılama" means encounter, welcoming, greeting. It is danced face to face.
- Figures of the dance may vary from region to region but main theme is two people face each other, and music rhythmically controls their next moves. Traditionally people dance without any figure on their minds, just figures they have seen from their elders.
- The meter is 9/8 and the basic move is danced in four small steps with durations 2,2,2,3 respectively. The style and mood (bouncy, smooth, lively, etc.) vary depending on the region and the landscape which may or may not allow certain moves and steps.







6. MAKEDONIKOS

In Macedonia, the northern part of Greece, there is a diversity of dances and instruments. The well-being of the people thanks to commerce, promoted a happy and vivid dance pattern. The lead dancer has full responsibility of the dancers, creating various dance patterns. He holds a handkerchief, waving it to the rhythm. In certain cases he forms patterns of labyrinth. These patterns have their roots in ancient rituals, where dancers had to get used to the painless transition from life to death







7. PENTOZALIS AND SOUSTA

- The **Pentozalis** (Greek: Πεντοζάλης) is the trademark folk dance of the island of Crete. It takes its name from the fifth (*pente*) attempt or step (ζάλος *zalos* being a Cretan Greek word for "step") of Cretans to liberate Crete from Ottomans. The name can thus be translated as "*five-steps*". Also in the spirit of wordplay, ζάλη *zali* means dizziness, and the name of the dance can also be understood ("five-dizzy") as one that can make the dancers dizzy five times over. The dance has ten steps.
- The Pentozali is a war dance, vigorous, with high jumping movements and allows for much improvisation. It starts at a moderate pace and accelerates progressively. The dancers hold each other by the shoulders and form an incomplete circle, which rotates counterclockwise very slowly, or sometimes not at all, because most of the lively steps are semistationary. The first dancer is expected to improvise engaging in acrobatics; in this case he and the second dancer hold hands, rather than shoulders, and the second dancer stands still and rigid, so that the first dancer has a stable base on which to perform. Once the first dancer has finished his part, he is expected to break ranks and slowly dance his way to the back of the line, yielding his place to the second, and so on.



- Women also perform the dance, but their steps are more restrained because their dress does not allow for high jumps. Traditional Cretan menswear, on the other hand, facilitates acrobatic dancing as it includes the black βράκα (*vraka*), a variant of breeches that are worn tight around the waist and thighs and extremely baggy and loose around the hips.
- Pentozali music is instrumental: the main tune is played by the pear-shaped, bowed Cretan lyra, to the accompaniment of a laouto, played not in a melodic but in a percussive-like fashion. It is the lyra player who usually directs the flow of the dance: he improvises to signal the first dancer to improvise too, and resumes the main tune when it is time for the first dancer to yield his place to another.





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- **Sousta** (Greek: σούστα) is the name of a folk dance in Cyprus and Crete which is danced in Greece . The music is generally played with a lyre (Cretan and Pontian) (or violin), laouto, and mandolin. Sousta means spring in Greek, and this portrays the way the dancers dance.
 - There are elements of eroticism and courtship acted out in the dance, which is usually performed by pairs of men and women dancing opposite. Another form is where all the dancers in a row follow the first dancer who moves in complex patterns. Almost every island of Aegean has a sousta dance. The origins of sousta come from an ancient martial dance of Greece.
 - The dance tempo is 2/4 and it has 6 steps, in two lines one for men and one for women, dance face to face and match.



8. BALLOS

- The **Ballos** (Greek: Μπάλλος) which derives from the Greek verb "βαλλίζω" (*ballizo*), to dance, to jump is one of the best known Greek folk island dances in Greece. There are also different versions in other Balkan countries. The Ballos is of Greek origin, with ancient Greek elements.
- The melody of a *ballos* is generally joyous and lyrical which is typical of the music of the Aegean Islands. This couples' dance incorporates all the elements of courtship: attraction, flirtation, display of masculine prowess and feminine virtue, pursuit, and rejection followed by eventual capture and surrender.
- Its origin is in the island culture of Greece. Men could not approach women easily, so they created this dance in order to "flirt" with them. There are various forms of the *ballos* around the islands. The simplest is one in which a single couple goes through a series of spontaneous figures.







9. MICHANIKOS KALYMNNOU

This is a very special kind of dance and this is why... Kalymnos is a small island of the Dodecanese. Apart from being beautiful, it is famous for the sponges. The Kalymnian men, since ancient times, have been diving into the deep sea in order to get the precious sponges and sell them. But they did not have the necessary equipment and they suffered from the divers' disease and had brain damage.

This dance was created by them, as they could not fully control their body but the islanders in Greece have always had the will to dance, as being close to the sea has always made them open-minded and cheerful.



