

KARSILAMAS (ANTIKRYSTOS)
(Greece)

Source: This is a dance which is done in the villages of Macedonia, and it is also done in the city taverns. It is a cpl dance and the name means "face to face." (Karsilamas is the Turkish word, Antikrystos is the Greek word.) "Face to face" refers to the starting pos of the dance.

Pronunciation: kar-see-lah-MAHS

Bibliography: Greek Folk Dances, M. Vouras and R. Holden
(New Jersey, 1965)
Folk Dances of the Greeks, T. and E. Petrides
(New York, 1961)

Music: 9/8 time. Any good Karsilamas melody can be used. Some of the popular tunes are:
Folkraft LP3, side A, band 5;
Festival F3001, side 1, band 4.

Formation: M and W facing each other. The arms can be stretched out at shldr height; the W can have her hands on her hips. The M can have one arm out and one hand behind his back. Both the M and W can have one hand on hip and one hand waving a handkerchief. The W may hold a handkerchief in both hands (holding opp corners) and move the handkerchief in front of her face teasingly. *(IF TWO W DANCE TOGETHER THEY NEVER DO ANY OF THE M VARIATIONS)*

Characteristics: This is a flirtatious, fun dance. The steps are small and smooth. You should not be too far from your ptr. It is also improvisional. There is no set pattern. The rhythm is 9/8 and is broken down into four counts:

9/8  (1, 2, 3, 4+)

9/8 

9/8 quick, quick, quick, slow

9/8 short, short, short, long

I will describe the dance steps in terms of the four counts.

Meas cts

9/8 rhythm

Basic Step Right

I

1

Step sdwd to the R on the R ft.

2

Step across in front of R ft on L ft.

3

Step sdwd to the R on R ft.

4+

Hop twice on the R ft, swinging L ft in front of R.

Continued...

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KARSILAMAS (ANTIKRYSTOS) (continued)Basic Step Left

- II 1 Step sdwd to the L on L ft.
 2 Step across in front of the L ft on R ft.
 3 Step sdwd to the L on L ft.
 4+ Hop twice on the L ft, swinging the R ft
 in front of L.

These steps should be small, and the two ptrs should never be far apart. The Basic Step can also be done fwd or bkwd. It is not necessary to dance only one meas fwd and one meas bkwd; you may dance as many meas fwd or bkwd as pleases you.

The Karsilamas is an improvisational dance and so there should be no choreography except for exhibition purposes, perhaps. Each cpl dances the steps and variations as their mood tells them. I will, therefore, describe some of the most common types of variations and leave it to the dancers to do them as the Greeks do them: Creatively and Improvisationally.

Variation (Turn).

Do the Basic step to the R, doing one complete turn to the R as you step R, L, R, ending with the L ft swinging across in front of the R. (You should end facing your ptr.) The turn can then be done in reverse, moving to the L.

Variation (Forward and Back)

Do one Basic step fwd twd your ptr, and then one Basic step bkwd away from your ptr. If you wish, you may do two Basic steps fwd and bkwd. (NO CROSS ON CT 2 - JUST 3 STEPS AHEAD # 2 HOPE)

Variation (Cross Over and Back).

Do two Basic steps fwd, passing R shldrs with your ptr. You end with your backs facing. Do two Basic steps bkwd, again passing R shldrs to end in a face-to-face pos once more.

If you wish, you may make this a "do-sa-do" and return by passing L shldrs as you do the two Basic steps bkwd.

Variation (M on Squat).

M do the Basic step as described, except on ct 4 (the long ct) do a deep knee bend with back straight and knees together. You may clap as you do the squat.

Variation (M slap foot).

M do Basic step described above, but instead of swinging the L leg low in front of R ft, lift the L leg straight with the L ft high in front of you and slap the inside of L ft with the R hand. When you do this step to the L, kick R ft high and slap it with the L hand.

Continued...

KARSILAMÁS (ANTIKRYSTÓS) (continued)

Variation (M follow W).

This is a flirtatious step. The W do the Basic step bkwd several times following a serpentine pattern. The men do the Basic step fwd, following (or chasing) their ptrs.

I have described seven variations of the Basic step for Karsilamás. I have not numbered them on purpose. Numbering implies a numerical progression. There is no progression meant here. There is no pattern, no choreography, and except for exhibition purposes, there should be no set pattern. Since this dance is improvisational, there are many more variations that may be done. As you can see, all variations evolve from the Basic step. There is no floor pattern: that is, cpls should not be in a circle or in contra formation. Cpls should be scattered around the floor -- all cpls should be dancing freely -- it is not necessary that all cpls be doing the same variations at the same time. Ideally, everyone should be dancing their own steps without reference to other cpls on the floor.

The important thing is to dance with your ptr in close communication so that you can together improvise within the framework of the dance. And this is a flirtatious love dance ---

Notes and description by John Pappas. Abbreviations added to fit U.O.P. syllabus format.

Presented by John Pappas