

TSAMIKOS (KLEFTIKOS, ARVANITIKOS)
(Greece)

Source: This dance is panhellenic. It is done all over Greece. The name Tsamikos comes from the area Tsamouria in Epirus where the dance is said to have originated. The Tsamides, or people from this area are the originators of the dance. It is also called the Kleftikos because it was the dance par excellence of the Kleftes (Greek freedom fighters during the war for liberation from the Turkish domination). It is often called Arvanitikos because much of the area of the dance's origin is now enclosed by the Albanian borders. According to Papahristo, 2/3 of the inhabitants of this area are Greek Christians.

Bibliography: Greek Folk Dances, M. Vouras and R. Holden, (New Jersey, 1965)
Elliniki Hori, V. Papahristo, (Athinai, 1960)
Folk Dances of the Greeks, T. & E. Petrides, (New York, 1961)

Music: The music is in 6/4 or 3/4 time. The dance can be done to any number of Tsamiko tunes. There are literally thousands of songs so I will just list a few of the classic ones.

"Arahova"
"Aetos"
"Golfo"
"Nasan ta Neiata Dyo Fores"
"Sta Salona"

Formation: A broken circle with hands joined at shoulder height, elbows bent and down. The hands should not be pushed fwd into the circle, but should be comfortably back near the shoulders.

Characteristics: Originally danced only by M, the M's styling should reflect this. There can be leaps and large movements with the legs. The dance is heroic in tone. W should dance proudly, but sedately -- their movements must be small. The leader can do variations; slapping the ft and turning, etc. as his mood prompts him.

Meas.	Cts.	Basic Steps	6/4 or 3/4 time
I	1,2	Step sdwd to the R on the R ft.	
	3	Step across in front of the R ft on the L ft.	
II	1,2	Step sdwd to the R on the R ft.	
	3	Step across in front of the R ft on the L ft.	
III	1,2	Step sdwd to the R on the R ft.	
	3	Step across in front of the R ft on the L ft.	
IV.	1,2	Step sdwd to the R on the R ft.	
	3	Hop on the R ft, swinging the L ft behind the R leg (L ft should be about knee height and close to the back of the R knee for the M. For W, the hop is very slight, the L ft. should be behind the R ankle.)	
V	1,2	Step sdwd to L on L ft	
	3	Step across in front of the L ft on the R ft.	
VI	1,2	Step sdwd to the L on L ft	
	3	Hop on the L ft, swinging the R ft in front of and close to L leg.	

Notes and description by John Pappas