

Vasil'arhontissa

Metsovo – Epirus, Greece

Presented by Dennis Boxell

This is a Vlach version of the dance “Sta Dio” from Metsovo, Epirus near the Macedonian border. The dance is alive today and is performed regularly at most dance events in Metsovo, a well-known and prosperous Vlach community.

Music: “Dances of Northern Greece” Folklore Adventures CD FA-2
Formation: Open circle, men and women mixed, “G” position.
Meter: 5/4
Dancer’s Rhythm: Slow, Quick, Slow

Measure	Count	
1	1	Facing center and moving R, cross and step on Lft in front of Rft (Slow).
	2	Step sideward R and slightly back on Rft (Quick).
	3	Repeat Ct 1 (Slow).
2	1	Step sideward R on Rft (Slow).
	2	A rocking step sideward L and slightly back onto Lft, (Quick).
	3	Step sideward R and slightly back onto Rft (Slow).

On the present recording, eventually the music changes rhythm to 4/4 (Slow, Quick, Quick) and dancers proceed to dance the same steps but in “W” position and in 4/4 rhythm, to the transition dance called “Pogonissios” or “Sta Dio”.

Especially in the slow music, the joy of this dance comes from the Epirot way of changing weight only at the last moment, flexing the supporting knee and rolling onto the foot as it steps.

1. *Ore then ine i krima ki athiko, Vasila arhontissa,
Then ine ki amartia na 'ne Vasilo, Vaso, se erimia.*

2. *Ore na 'ne Vasilo se erimia, Vasila arhontissa,
Se kleftika limeria na stroni pevka, Vaso, stromata.*

3. *Ore na stroni pevka stromata, Vasila arhontissa,
Ki' oxies proskefalakia, ki' o Themios Gakis Vaso fonaxe.*

1. Is it not sad, is it not wrong, Vasila *arhontissa*,
Is it not a sin, that Vasila, Vasa, went to the wilderness?

2. In the wilderness, Vasila *arhontissa*,
In the hideout of the *kleftes*, laying out pine needles for a bed.

3. Laying out pine needles for a bed, Vasila *arhontissa*,
And beech leaves for a pillow. Themios Gakis called Vasa.

Vasila is a woman’s name; the *kleftes* were more or less romantic brigands. The song refers to the *kleft* Themios Gakis’ abduction of the daughter of Nicholas Averof, a notable (*arhon*) of Metsovo.

Presented by Dennis Boxell, winter 2001