

RACHENITSA

55.

RACHENITSA (Bulgarian)

Rachenitsa is the liveliest of the Bulgarian dances and is known and danced throughout Bulgaria. There is no set pattern, the dancer giving rein to his fancy, improvising on the basic steps, being limited only by his endurance. The dance may be done by one man or he may be joined by others. It is essentially a solo dance as the patterns used depend upon the whim of each dancer and dancers do not necessarily do the same step at the same time. There is a feeling of rivalry between dancers. The fact that someone is dancing on the floor with him spurs the dancer on to greater heights. Usually an admiring circle is formed about the dancer or dancers to encourage them with shouts or occasional handclapping. As excitement mounts, a call of "ee-hoo-hoo" is shouted as encouragement. Dancers usually carry a "rachenik" (handkerchief) which is twirled and waved during the dance.

Source: Learned by Anatol Joukowsky in Bulgaria. Described in "Bulgarian Folk Choreography" by S. Jujev, Professor at State Musical Academy, Sophia. Also in "Bulgarian Horos and Rachenitsi" by Boris Tsonev, Science and Art Edition, Sophia, 1950.

Records: XOPO (LP) X-LP-1A Side 1 - Bands 4 and 6. Side 2 - Band 4.

Formation: Danced freely about area.

Rhythm: Music is in 7/16 meter, counted 1-2, 1-2, 1-2-3. This may also be stated as 2/16, 2/16, 3/16. For simplicity's sake the ct will be given: ct 1(2/16), ct 2(2/16), ct 3(3/16). In some of the steps ct 3 is broken into two uneven parts - 2/16, 1/16.

Steps: This is a collection of steps and not a set pattern. They are to be used in any order desired. Steps are written starting with one ft but they can be started by either ft that is free. At start of dance, dancers stand and get the feel of the rhythm before beginning to dance.

Cts. I. Cross Leap Step

1 (2/16) Lifting R knee, leap R across in front of L.

2 (2/16) Lifting knee high, step L next to R.

3 (2/16) Lifting knee high, step R in place.

(1/16) Start lifting L knee in preparation for next step.

Meas. 2 Repeat action of meas 1 but start by leaping L in front of R.

This step can be done in place or in any direction. As a variation when traveling bkwd, the ft would be crossed behind supporting leg.

II. Heel Swinging

Step starts with ball of R ft on floor in front of L. This pos is obtained by assuming it on the last ct of whatever step preceeds it. Both knees are bent. Wt is on L. R heel is off floor. L heel is on floor.

1 (2/16) Swing heels to L.

2 (2/16) Swing heels to R.

3 (3/16) Swing heels to L.

Meas 2 Repeat action of meas 1 but start by swinging heels to R. Step can also be done by putting L ft in front of R. Heels swing R on ct. 1.

RachenitsaIII. Cross Stride Step

- Cts. III. Cross Stride Step
- 1 (2/16) With jump, cross R over L. Ft slide on floor throughout step.
- 2 (2/16) Jump to stride pos.
- 3 (3/16) With jump, cross L over R.
- 1 (2/16) Jump to stride pos.
- 2 (2/16) With jump, cross R over L.
- 3 (3/16) Jump to stride pos.
- 1 (2/16) With jump, cross L over R.
- 2 (2/16) Jump to stride pos.
- 3 (3/16) With jump, cross R over L.
- 1 (2/16) Jump to stride pos.
- 2 (2/16) With jump, cross L over R.
- 3 (3/16) Jump to stride pos.

Takes 4 meas to do 3 complete patterns.

IV. Bulgarian Mazurka

- 1 (2/16) Stepping fwd, cross R over L.
- 2 (2/16) Hop on R, raising L ft up in bk (knee bent).
- 3 (2/16) Hop on R and bring knee fwd, still bent.
- (1/16) Hop on R and start crossing L.
- Meas 2 Repeat action of meas 1 but start by crossing L over R. Step can be done in place or moving fwd. When moving bkwd, whole pattern is reversed with the ft crossing behind the supporting ft.

V. Little Kicks

- 1 (2/16) Step L and kick R fwd.
- 2 (2/16) Step R and kick L fwd.
- 3 (2/16) Step L and kick R fwd.
- (1/16) Step R next to L.
- Meas 2 Repeat action of meas 1

This step is a good traveling step.

VI. Running Step

- 1 (2/16) Step L.
- 2 (2/16) Step R and raise L ft up in bk (knee bent).
- 3 (2/16) Step L and extend R fwd
- (1/16) Leap onto R.
- Meas 2 Repeat action of meas 1.
- Step can be done in place or while traveling.

--presented by Anatol Joukowsky.

--notations prepared with assistance of
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