



Yiddish Dance Workshop  
Dances of the Jews of Eastern Europe  
with  
Helen Winkler  
Edmonton International Folk Dancers  
February 8, 2003



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For Additional information about these dances please visit my web page:

[www.angelfire.com/ns/helenwinkler](http://www.angelfire.com/ns/helenwinkler)

## Broiges Dance—The Dance of Anger and Reconciliation

This is a pantomime dance, that was danced at weddings in Eastern Europe and later in America and elsewhere. The dance involved two people, often (but not always) the two new mothers-in-law. The rest of the guests watched as the two acted out a disagreement where one gave the other the silent treatment; then eventually they made up and danced off happily. The version below was presented by Steve Weintraub at MIFDA workshop in Winnipeg November 2001. It is followed by two other recollections of the dance. Since the dance was improvised, there was no one correct way to do it, and no special step was required.

### Melody #1

**A)** Begin with one dancer standing behind the other in a file formation.

Both dancers move forward (one is following the other) to a count of 8—taking 8 walking steps. The dancer in front acts angry, sulky and not listening.

The dancer who follows is imploring forgiveness with gestures.

On the eighth count, turn to face the other way, so that the follower is now the sulky leader, and the former leader is now the one imploring forgiveness.

**B)** Again to a count of eight one follows the other as above but now their roles are reversed. Turn as above on count 8 and reverse roles again. *(Note from HW—a variation might be to have the dancers dance away from and back towards each other—a fight—the first time through the music and later do the chasing routine as above.)*

Repeat A & B

### Melody #2

Dancers are now right shoulder to right shoulder and progress around in a circle (like spokes on a wheel), to a count of 16, continuing to make angry/imploring gestures at will. On counts 13, 14 and 15 dancers stamp or clap or slap their own thigh 3 times, and use counts 13-16 to turn the other way. Now left shoulder to left shoulder.

Repeat this sequence, for another 16 counts, in the new position.

Melody #1 and #2 alternate. Towards the end of the piece, the music slows and the dancers begin to soften, ending in an embrace while slow chords are played. Then a freylekhs is played and the whole group joins in and dances a freylekhs together.

Notated by Helen Winkler

Other comments and recollections:

“It started out by the male courting the female and that developed into a disagreement followed by the male seeking forgiveness while she was very indignant. I seem to remember a reverse switch somewhere during the dance when the female pursued the offended male, after which they got together and then the freylekhs celebration came in as they danced off.

My mom died in 1966 at the age of 76. She came from Musnik, Lithuania in 1912 (via Riga) on the S.S. Pennsylvania and was a typical Jewish girl from a large family. Her maiden name was Lenzner. I'm most positive that she learned this tanz in Europe, although I remember that she performed it most frequently at simchas held for my father's family, mostly during the late 30's - early 40's. After Wolfe passed away, some time around the mid-forties, my cousin Mildred took his place and did it with my mother. I am currently 78 and I can still see them traipsing around the floor while everyone clapped in unison. “--Milton Blackstone, USA

one danced, joyful over the Torah scroll that Milke had donated to the Stepiner synagogue.

And the "mother-in-law," the Bobe Milke, went about glowing with pride and filled with joy at having lived to lead her own Torah scroll under the wedding canopy.

*Broiges dance info begins here:*

## The Angry Dance

YOM-TOV LEVINSKY  
Sefer Zembrove (Zambrow)

It was in Zembrove, in the year 1908. My grandmother, Rivke-Gitl, was angry with her old in-law Khaye Tukravitch. She considered her youngest son Berl's match to Khaye's granddaughter Nekhama below his station. The fact that Nekhama was also *her* granddaughter didn't help. During Berl and Nekhama's wedding the two grandmothers had to apologize to each other, which they did by dancing an angry-dance\* just before the bride's face was covered with the veil. My grandmother Rivke-Gitl, a portly lady, held herself proudly. My other grandmother, Khaye, was tall, thin, and had a light step. The crowd stands around in a circle. Rivke-Gitl stands off to a side, sulking, her head lowered. Khaye dances, glides toward her, with a smile on her lips. The guests sing along with the music:

Why are you so angry, without a reason why?  
Stop sulking, smile at me, lift your head to the sky.

Rivke-Gitl doesn't raise her head, but moves a little further off, goes over to the other side. But Khaye chases after her, gliding like a butterfly toward Rivke-Gitl, with the little smile. The crowd keeps singing. Khaye stretches out her hands. Grandmother Rivke-Gitl withdraws her hands; she doesn't want to make up. Khaye dances around again, from the other side. Rivke-Gitl grows a bit softer, lays her hands on her heart, and dances along, opposite Khaye. Khaye stretches her hand out again, Grandmother Rivke-Gitl shakes her head "No," and dances backward. The crowd grows more cheerful, and sings to the accompaniment of the musicians:

Let's make up, the world is like a dream  
Let's make up, let us be at peace.

\*One of several ritual dances traditionally done at Eastern European Jewish weddings. The purpose of the dance is to underscore the conflict, thereby turning private resentment public and generating communal pressure to resolve the conflict.

Grandmother Rivke-Gitl keeps dancing, forward, toward Khaye, and Khaye toward her. Each stretches her hands out toward the other: the crowd sings, "Make up, make up," the musicians let loose, "Make up, make up," the two pairs of hands lock together, one embraces the other, and they kiss each other. The guests do not restrain themselves and sing forcefully, clapping their hands: "Let's make up, make up!" The fiddle of a musician from Tiktin blends in with a thin little sigh, "make up, make up," as Goldetshke's son with the bass fiddle joins in. Khayele's husband's fiddle squeaks and Shimen Poyker keeps the beat: "Make up, make up . . ." The two women enter a dance, hand on shoulder, until the rest of the wedding party arrives. The bridegroom covers the bride's face and Sonye Batkhn from Bialystok stands on a chair to serenade the bride, accompanied by the musicians.

## A Disrupted Seder Night

YITSKHOK GURVITS

Pinkas Navaredok (Nowogrodek)

What I am about to relate happened not very long ago, about thirty-five years ago at most, in the days when Reb Yosl's yeshiva was filled with the finest young men from the yeshivas of Kovno and Slobodke, genuine Talmud scholars, many of whom were ordained to judge questions of law. Many were so diligent that their voices could be heard chanting the holy texts as they studied all night long in the large study house and in all the buildings that surrounded the synagogue courtyard. The people of Navaredok, especially the women, showed the greatest respect and friendliness to these youngsters. Not only did they provide them with the best food they could, but desiring to avoid humiliating the young men by forcing them to come to the women's houses to eat, they brought the dishes to the students' own quarters.

I remember one fellow by the name of Reb Yoysef, a young man from Galicia. He was tall, with a bright, round face, and a little black beard. He learned quickly and with deep insight. He was fully at home in an entire half of the Talmud; he was intellectually gifted and persistent. It was a pleasure to discuss scholarly matters with him, which I frequently had the opportunity to do, since he stayed at the home of my father-in-law. The residents of the neighborhood kept him well-fed. As I remember, my mother brought food on Sundays, my mother-in-law on Mondays, and Tsivye, Yisroel Vilner's wife, on Tuesdays. When Tsivye Yisroel's brought the pot of stew and put it into the oven so that it wouldn't, God forbid, grow cool before Reb Yoysef was ready to eat, the smell wafted through the entire room.

**Broiges Dance—Some Useful Gestures** These are based partially on my imagination, and partially on demonstrations I've seen and upon readings. They are intended as a launching point for your own improvisations.



*ikh vil zayn aleyh.*

I want to be alone.



*ikh makh zikh nisht visendik.*

I'm ignoring you.



*azoy hostu dos letzte mol gezogt.*

That's what you said the last time.



*ven du zogst es azoy.....*

When you put it that way....



*efsher kenen mir nokhamol zayn fraynt.*

Maybe we could be friends again.



*ober ikh hob nokh tanes, ernste tanes.*

But I still have issues, serious issues.



*hak mir nit in kop!*

Stop banging on my head.



ikh hob shoy'n genug, ikh hob shoy'n genug mit dir un dayn mishegas.

I give up, I just give up with you and your mishegas.



The "Inlaws-Dance" at the Wedding Festivities, late 19<sup>th</sup> century, anonymous folk artist from Galicia, from Jewish Folk Songs in Yiddish and English compiled and edited by Ruth Rubin.





The Broiges Dance from Nathan Vizonsky's Ten Jewish Folk Dances, Chicago, American-Hebrew Theatrical League, 1942

## Bulgar

The steps of the Bulgar will be familiar to anyone who has experience with Balkan dance, as the steps appear under different names in different Balkan countries; e.g. sarba step in Romania. The basic step is also the same footwork pattern as the Israeli Hora.

According to Feldman's article (reference below), the bulgar became the predominant Jewish dance in the American Jewish community. He attributes this to the perception that the bulgar was a secular dance that the European Jews picked up from the surrounding community in Moldova (bulgareasca in Moldva); it did not have a strong association with orthodox Jewish weddings. This made it more appealing to the American Jewish community, since orthodoxy was something many were now rejecting. However, even the bulgar did not survive in subsequent generations due to the overall decline of klezmer music and dance in the US. In the book "Klezmer Music A Marriage of Heaven and Earth", the bulgar music is said to be named after the Bulgarian inhabitants of Bessarabia. See reference below by Zev Feldman for a more complete analysis of the origin of this dance and the music.

Instructions by Helen Winkler as taught by Zev Feldman at Neskaya, October 2002 with additional information from Jacob Bloom, as taught by Michael Alpert 1994, KlezKamp, & Mame Loshn session.

Reference: Feldman, Walter Zev. "Bulgareasca/Bulgarish/Bulgar: The Transformation of a Klezmer Dance Genre," *Ethnomusicology* 38:1 (1994), 1-35.

Formation: Shoulder hold, circle formation or open circle

Music: A 2/4 bulgar of your choice--listen to a few as the tempo varies a great deal. The bulgar can be danced either slowly or more quickly or with increasing speed.

### Basic Step

#### Meas Steps

- A Right foot steps to right (1)  
Left foot crosses in front (or behind) (2)
- B Right foot steps to right(1), left foot swings across (2)
- C Left foot steps to left (1), right foot swings across (2)

A natural bounce in the shoulders occurs throughout this dance. It is most easily achieved by allowing the weight to come down on a very flat foot when taking steps, and by relaxing the shoulder area while dancing.

### Variations

The designated leader whether in a circle or line if the circle happens to break, determines which variation everyone does. The steps are not called; everyone just watches and imitates the leader).

Variation	Description
1	Vary size of steps
2	A & B- same as variation 1 C- Jump onto both feet with feet spread apart, hop onto left foot with right foot swinging across
3	A-unchanged B-Step to right, stamp the left in place, body turned slightly to right C- step left, stamp right beside left, body turned slightly to left If desired, you may stamp on only C and maintain B as in the basic step.
4	A & B - unchanged C- Step left, right, left (3 small quick steps in place, count as 1&2)
5	A is unchanged (B) leap onto R, LR (in place) (C) leap onto L, R L (in place)
6	A & B-unchanged C- step on both feet with feet spread apart, step on both feet with legs crossed, or just bring both feet together
7	A-unchanged B- step on both feet with feet spread apart, step on both feet with legs crossed, right leg crossed in front, C- step on both feet with feet spread apart, step on both feet with legs crossed, right leg crossed behind
8	Same as basic figure but instead of swinging the free leg across, kick it straight forward with a bit of a lift, somewhat similar to peddling a bicycle.
9	A -unchanged, B-Sway to right, C-Sway to left. You may choose to include 2 small bounces on each sway. You may also lift the leg as you sway; i.e., when swaying to the right, lift the left leg to the side, knee bent and reverse this when swaying to the right
10	A-Step R and L as in basic step but keep the knees almost straight, B-pas de basque to the right with straight knees—almost like a scissors step C-reverse B
11	A & B-unchanged, C-step on left while twirling right leg in the air, from the knee down. Right leg is lifted to about hip level to facilitate this movement; the leg dangles from the knee down while twirling.
12	A & B-unchanged, C-Step left swinging right almost across left (1&2), stamp on R (&)—there is effectively some hesitation before the stamp. If you wish you can also do a regular step-stamp for B, followed by the step, hesitate-stamp for C
13	A-unchanged, B-Step right, Slap left foot diagonally forward and across right C-Reverse B
14	A & B unchanged, C-with weight on both feet, spread slightly apart, do 2 small bounces in place
15	First step in A is a stamp with the right foot (towards the outside of the circle), followed by the rest of any of the other variations

## Country Hora

Region: Moldova, danced by Non-Jews and Jews

Music: Brisk tempo, 2/4 klezmer freylekhs

Formation: Open circle/line, arms joined in W position, bounce from shoulder area throughout dance.

Anyone who has danced Setnja (Serbia) or Odeno Oro (Macedonia) will be familiar with the footwork used in this dance. Steps are taken on a flat foot, facing diagonally right of centre to start.

Measure    Steps

- 1            Walk in LOD stepping on right (1), left (2)
- 2            Continue walking in LOD: right (1), left (&), right(2), pivot on right foot to face centre (&)
- 3            Take steps backward on left (1), right (2)
- 4            Pas de basque: Step back on left (1) ,step right in place (&), step on left in place (2)

Variations:

Measure 1 add stamps: step right (1), stamp left beside right (&), step left (2), stamp right beside L (&)

Measure 3 add stamps: Take steps backward on left (1), stamp right in place (&), step back on right (2), stamp left beside right in place (&)

Measure 4 add stamps: Pas de basque: Step back on left (1) ,step right in place (&), step on left in place (2), stamp right in place (&)

Sprinkle in stamps as demonstrated by leader. The leader can choose to do all or only some of the stamps.

Notes by Helen Winkler as taught by Zev Feldman, New Hampshire, October 2002.

## **Czardas (Jewish version)**

Learned from Steve Weintraub at Winnipeg Klezmer Dance Workshop November 2001.

Notes by Helen Winkler with assistance from Steve Weintraub.

Steve learned this dance within his own family of Hungarian Jews. This dance was also done by non-religious Romanian Jews (personal communication Bob Cohen Di Naye Kapelye). Mixed dancing was not allowed in observant Chasidic communities.

**Formation:** Couples facing—man's hands on woman's upper back. Woman's hands on man's shoulders.

This is an improvised dance in the sense that although there are typical figures done to it, each couple does whichever figures they chose at any given time throughout the dance.

**Music:** Any Jewish style Czardas 4/4 or 2/4 time (my personal favourite, Track 4 of Di Naye Kapeleye's cd Mazeldiker Yid).

### **Czardas Step:**

(all steps 1 beat per step unless otherwise noted)

The step is starting with man's right foot, (woman uses opposite footwork):

Step R foot to R, bring L foot to the right and step on L

Step R foot to R, and close the left to it, no weight on L

Then repeat this sequence beginning with the L foot this time

There is a slight dip/lean on the 4th count into the direction of the step, R when moving R, L when moving L. The weight bearing leg does a small kneebend on the 4th count.

### **Rida Step**

Both partners begin on R foot.

Step sideward with R to R, Step left across R

Repeat this as many times as desired. Then reverse the footwork.

It's easy to change directions if you finish with 3 stamps

A buzz step may be substituted.

### **Chugs**

Each member of the couple makes a small jump forward diagonally to their own right, knees bent.

Then they each take a small jump backwards so as to face each other again.

Then they jump forward to the left and back to place.

Repeat as desired, usually an even number of times, usually 4 or 8, to fill a phrase of music.

### **In Place**

This step is done as a mirror image.

Man starts on R foot, woman on L foot

Do three quick little runs in place (counts: 1 & 2), and hold for the (&) beat.

The free leg is extended to the side slightly. The knees stay close on the 2nd beat, but the lifted heel is extended outward, sort of like a Charleston step- the knee of the gesture leg must bend slightly to accomplish this. The accent is very much on 2. In terms of the "quick runs" the first 2 are done lightly toward the ball of the foot, and the last count -2- on a firm, flat foot.

## **Locomotion in the Freylekhs**

**Stance:** flat footed, weight anchored at back of foot, upper body light, lower body heavy

**Arms:** variable. Possibilities include V position, W position (either the usual way or higher than usual) with or without a bounce, Moldovan Arms (see Slow Hora instructions). Not everyone in the line needs to use the same handhold except if you want to have your arms in the “thread the needle position.” The leader may choose to go through the actual process of threading the needle or may elect simply to have everyone get into that position at once (raise both arms in air, wrap your own left arm around your own neck while keeping right arm extended forward).

### **Steps**

It is up to the individual dancer to choose which steps to use. The constraint is that the steps must not interfere with the overall direction or movement of the other dancers. If the individual wishes to do what the leader is doing, that is also acceptable.

### **Here are some steps that work with slower freylekhs music:**

Small walking steps facing forward or facing centre but moving sideward.

Walking with a brush where the brushing foot/feet just skim the floor

Accented steps where knee is bent in a slightly or more pronounced fashion before taking a step while the foot is still in the air. This may be done on every step or on alternate steps. In the case of doing this on alternate steps, the other foot can be slightly dragged/skim along the floor.

Tiny two-steps moving straight or diagonally forward.

Two steps forward , alternated with two steps backward (but still moving in LOD).

Bedroom slipper walking—shuffling gait (as taught by Steve Weintraub, Winnipeg 2001).

Facing centre take several small steps in place (everyone must do this together or it won't work)

### **With faster music:**

Accented march-like steps

Heavy steps where each step is a sort of stomp

More bounce in the walk, larger steps

Step and kick either moving forwards or backwards(backwards but still travelling in LOD), can hop on the supporting leg

Alternating step-kicks with step-stamps

Circling to the right for 14 steps, followed by 3 stamps (count 1,&,2) to change direction and repeat on opposite side. Number of actual steps could vary with musical phrase.

All walk to centre and back out. Arms can come part way up or all the way up.

Notes by Helen Winkler as demonstrated by Zev Feldman, Neskaya Workshop, October 2002, unless otherwise noted.

For additional freylekhs information, see Michael Alpert's notation in this syllabus.

## **The Grand March** Learned from Steve Weintraub, 2001

**The grand march is a useful way to begin a freylekhs. It was originally part of the Polonaise.**

1. Form a circle and dance around until leader determines it is time to begin the grand march.
2. At midpoint at the top of the circle, leader begins to lead slowly, down the centre of the circle. Everyone else follows behind the leader, continuing with usual freylekhs steps. Leader brings the group to the very bottom of the room.



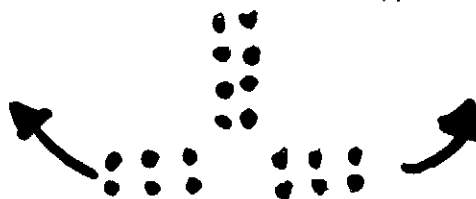
3. Upon reaching the bottom the individual dancers cast off in alternate directions, and follow the leaders (there are now 2 leaders) around up to the top of the room again. If there is a tail of people who still have not gone down the middle to cast off, make sure the leaders lead around outside the tail.



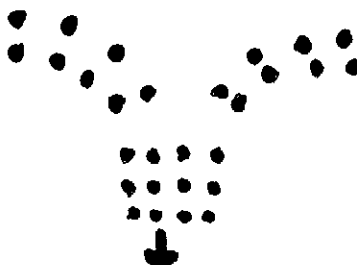
4. Upon reaching the top of the room, dancers pair up with successive members from the opposite line and proceed down the middle again in pairs.



5. Upon reaching the bottom of the room, the pairs then cast off in opposite directions as in no. 3.



6. Upon reaching the top, the pairs of dancers join up with successive pairs of dancers from the opposite line (you now have groups of 4 dancers).



7. Continue the process of proceeding down the centre, casting off and joining with another group at the top, until the desired group size is reached. Then go off and dance the freylekhs in small groups.

## **Freestyle Honga**

**Region:** Moldova

**Formation:** Scattered in a circle facing counter clockwise

**Music:** Honga melody 2/4 time signature (counted as 1&, 2&)

**Stance/movement style:** It is important to have the correct stance in order to achieve the styling in this dance.

**Feet:** steps are taken with a flat foot. The weight of the body is anchored at the heel and very little of the body weight distribution is on the toes/ball of the foot.

**Knees:** bent, relaxed

**Body:** Lean slightly forward from the hip, back is straight. The body remains fairly still throughout the dance—no hip swinging, or bouncing in the chest area. Body weight remains centred over the feet as you move. Do not lead with the hip when moving side to side or on the diagonal.

**Arms:** Left hand on back of left hip, right arm extended forward above shoulder level, elbow relaxed. There is a subtle bouncing of the shoulders, led by the right shoulder as you move in this dance. The right arm appears to wave; this movement emanates from the shoulder, not the elbow or wrist. You can rest your right arm by placing it on your hip when you feel like it. Change arm position every so often as the “wave” position can be uncomfortable if held for an extended period of time.

**Basic travelling:** Small steps taken on a flat foot, each step is counted as 1&, moving directly forward.

**Variations:**

**Step Stamps:** Step R (1)-stamp L(&), Step L(2)-stamp R(&)

A scuff may be substituted for the stamp

Every so often a few backwards steps can be interspersed.

## **Other Variations**

### **Two-Step**

Moving forward(small steps):

Right (1)- Left(&)-Right (2) pause (&)

Left (1)-Right (&)-Left (2)pause (&)

Two-Step with brush: substitute a brush or a stamp for the 2<sup>nd</sup> “&” instead of pausing.

Two-steps may also be done side to side, or moving backwards, or on a diagonal (either moving forward or backwards).

### **Kicks**

Every so often, the right or left leg can be kicked forward, then go on to other movements.

### **Rocking**

With one foot a little forward of the other, rock forward and back a few times, then go on to other movements—this can be a little exaggerated or on a more subtle scale.

### **Sideways Stamping patterns**

Continue to face CCW



#### 4 Beat Stamps:

Usually beginning to the right take 3 quick steps R(1) L (&) R (2) and stamp L (&)  
Then repeat this pattern to the left.  
Repeat sequence as desired.

#### 6 Beat Stamps

Moving to the right, take 5 quick sideways steps,  
R(1) L (&) R(2) L(&) R(3) then stamp the L foot beside the Right (&)  
Reverse the sequence. Each sequence covers 1.5 bars of music, so together cover 3 bars of music

#### **Other Stamping Patterns:**

In place, Step on R (1), Stamp L beside it (&), Step L (2), Stamp R beside it (&)  
Step R in place (1), Step L in place (&), Stamp R in place(2) and hold (&)

In addition to doing the sequence in place, the steps can be used to move forwards or backwards.

This step can be varied by:

- a) doing a double stamp in place of the stamp-hold
- b) doing a stamp-scuff in place of the stamp-hold
- c) doing a toe-stamp in place of stamp-hold (this means you touch the ball of the foot a bit forward and then stamp on a flat foot)

This type of stamping variation can be used as a transition/closing from one set of improvisations to the next at the discretion of the dancer.

#### **Body Movement**

Occasionally bend a little bit further forward and then straighten up a bit.

These and other movements (within this style of movement) are improvised by individual dancers. An element of surprise should be maintained, by including non-symmetrical movements; eg, sometimes doing a stamping sequence to the right but not repeating it to the left and going on to other movements. When moving forward/backward you can sprinkle in different travelling steps and two-steps as desired.

If your group is uncomfortable with improvising at first, it may be useful to do the dance in file form; i.e., form a single file line, facing counter clockwise, with hands on the shoulders of the person in front of each dancer. The leader can then lead the dancers through a number of the steps and gradually work towards improvising individually.

Notes by Helen Winkler as taught by Zev Feldman, Neskaya Workshop, New Hampshire October, 2002.

## Sirba

Region: Moldova, this variation was danced by Jews

Music: klezmer sirba, 2/4

Formation: line/open circle, hands joined in V position

Facing LOD moving to the right.

Measure	Steps
1	Bouncey walk/small almost run in LOD stepping on right (1), left (2)
2	Continue walking/running in LOD: right (1), left (&), right(2)
3	Continuing in LOD: left (1), right (&), left (2)

Variation: add stamps (follow the leader who may choose to include all or some of these stamps).

Measure	Steps
1	Step on right moving in LOD as in basic step (1), stamp left in place beside right (&), step on left (2), stamp on right beside left (&)
2	Continue walking/running in LOD: right (1), left (&), right(2), stamp left in place beside right (&)
3	Continuing in LOD: left (1), right (&), left (2), stamp right in place beside left (&)

Notes by Helen Winkler as taught by Zev Feldman, New Hampshire, Neskaya Workshop, October 2002.

## Slow Hora

Also called Zhok

Region: Moldova and Bucovina (see below)

Formation: Open circle or line

Music: Slow Hora (3/8 rhythm, sometimes described as 5.5 /8 rhythm),

Slow-Quick dance rhythm in each measure

In general, women's movements less exaggerated than men's.

### Jewish Version

Arms in W position, facing LOD a little on the diagonal

The symmetrical nature of this step differentiates it from the non-Jewish versions described below.

Measure	Steps
1	Step on R fwd
2	Step on L fwd
3	Step on R fwd
4	Touch L foot FWD, slight upward pulse through body and arms
5	Facing Centre, small step L to left, (small lilt/lift of L leg while swinging L foot over to take this step)
6	R Crosses in front of L (small step), slight rock fwd in body
7	Step L to L (small step)
8	Facing mostly centre but slightly diagonally to R, touch R FWD, slight upward pulse through body and arms, slight backward tilt to body

Movements are bearlike, grounded stance—use flat-footed gait.

**Moldovan Version**, created by Non-Jewish aristocracy, Jews also did this dance.

Holding hands, forearms extended towards centre, facing diagonally LOD. Note there is some autonomy in the hand hold and it would be not exactly uniform with that of the leader as one moved down the line of dancers.

This dance can be done with more gentle or more vigorous arm movements (*italicized version*)

Measure	Steps
1	R fwd moving in LOD, arms swing to the right on the horizontal plane
2	L fwd moving in LOD, arms swing to the Left on the horizontal plane
3	R fwd (slow beat) while arms follow as in meas 1, L fwd (quick beat) while arms follow as in measure 2
4	R fwd and arms follow as above
5	Facing centre, step in with L foot, arms pulse up slightly <i>or more vigorously</i>
6	Step out from centre by stepping back on R foot, arms pulse back a bit <i>or swing right down to sides</i>
7	Step back on L foot, arms come forward a bit, <i>or begin to come up again</i>
8	Facing centre, Touch R slightly FWD, with slight upward pulse through body and arms, <i>or a more vigorous upward pulse straightening elbows</i> , slight backward tilt to body

### Bucovina Version

Hold hands, arms extended forward towards centre, at shoulder level with straight elbows, somewhat stiff erect posture, facing diagonally LOD

## Danced by Jews and Non-Jews in Bucovina

Measure	Steps
1	R fwd moving in LOD
2	L fwd moving in LOD
3	R fwd (slow beat), L fwd (quick beat)
4	R fwd
5	Facing centre, step in with L foot
6	Step out from centre by stepping back on R foot
7	Step back on L foot (slow beat), bring R foot back to L and step on it (quick beat)
8	Step back on L

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Variation

Facing Centre

Measure	Steps
1	Beginning on L foot step fwd diagonally to R towards centre (slow beat), Bring R foot to L along same path (quick beat)
2	Step fwd along same path with L foot
3	Swivel to back out creating a “sawtooth” pattern, step diagonally to the right Back on R foot (slow beat), bring L foot back to the R foot (quick beat)
4	Step back on R foot

Because this variation begins on the Left foot, you must fudge a step to keep the weight off the left foot at the end of the previous variation. Similarly, to move to a new variation you must fudge a step to free the right foot.

Optional: During Measures 1& 2 arms swing up to shoulder level,  
During Measures 3&4, arms swing down to sides

Notes by Helen Winkler, as taught by Zev Feldman, Neskaya Workshop, October 2002

## Terkisher

Music: klezmer Terkisher or Grikisher (syrto rhythm). For a discussion of the music of Terkishers, see liner notes to Khevrisa by Zev Feldman (CD available at A&B Sound). Many Terkishers are new world creations that arose when klezmer and Greek musicians met and mixed in America. There are a few Terkishers that originated in Europe.

Note the dance rhythm: slow-quick-quick

Formation: Open line, shoulder hold

Dance: The dance notated is a modern Hassidic/Orthodox men's dance known as Yerushalimer Hora. Steve Weintraub first saw it done at his brother's wedding in Jerusalem by a group of yeshiva boys and rabbis. Jill Gellerman teaches several variations in her Hassidic dance classes at KlezKamp. She observed and collected them in Brooklyn. According to Steve Weintraub, the dance seems to be pretty universal in the Orthodox and Hassidic communities. There are also choreographies danced to the Terkisher rhythm, that are similar to the Greek syrtos but I haven't yet had the opportunity to learn any of them. Dancers follow the movements of the leader.

### Meas Steps

- A Right foot steps to right (slow)  
Left foot steps across in front of right (quick, quick)
- B Right foot steps to right with a swaying motion (slow), hold (quick, quick)
- C Left foot steps to left with a swaying motion (slow), hold (quick, quick)

### Variation #1

- A Right foot steps to right (slow)  
Step left foot across in front of right (quick, quick)
- B Right foot steps to right (slow), left foot swings across (quick, quick)
- C Left foot steps to left (slow), right foot swings across (quick, quick)

### Variation #2

- A Arrange dancers in single file facing to the right behind the leader, forearms are now crossed in the small of the back  
Right foot steps forward (slow)  
Left foot steps forward (quick, quick)
- B Right foot steps forward (slow), left foot swings forward as you make a small hop/lift on supporting leg (quick), hold (quick)—lean slightly backward while hopping
- C Left foot steps forward (slow), right foot swings back while you make a small hop or lift on supporting leg (quick), hold (quick)—lean slightly forward while hopping

**Variation #3**

Same as variation #2 except that dancers take a partner, right shoulder to right shoulder, using shoulder hold and perform A, B, C while moving around one another in the shoulder hold. Left arm is extended at shoulder level to left.

Notes by Helen Winkler as taught by Steve Weintraub, MIFDA workshop, Winnipeg, November 2001.

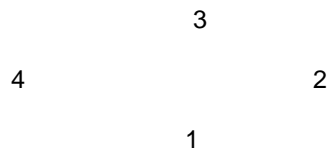
## Sher

There are many versions of the sher depending on the community from which the dance arose. The overall concept is that of partners visiting others and then returning to their own partner. The traditional version of this dance is quite lengthy, and involved more exchanges of partners, and more chorus repetitions. You may want to do the dance in the traditional way or you may use the version below which has fewer repetitions.

**Music:** According to Joshua Horowitz of the band Budowitz (thanks Joshua), 2 versions of the sher became standard due to their being recorded on 78's: the Philadelphia Sher and the Russian Sher; however, other music was also used, as long as the tempo, style and length of the piece fit the dance. I have found different shers on different cd's. Once again listen to a few and pick the one that suits your needs.

(Arrangement by Teme Kernerman of Toronto, with additional information from the video Dancing Into Marriage. Based on the original version of the sher)

Formation: Square, 4 couples, woman on the right of the man (numbers represent which couple is which), all facing centre. Couple 1 has their back to the music:



(A) All join hands, circle to the left for 16 counts  
circle to the right for 16 counts (back to original places)

(B) Couples 1 & 3, advance towards each other for 4 counts  
retire, back to place with 4 counts

Couples 1 & 3, exchange places (8 counts), see below for details of how to change places

Couples 2 & 4 advance, retire and exchange places as described for 1 & 3

Everyone now has exchanged places, it's time to go back! The sequence is repeated exactly as above which will return everyone to their original positions.

C) Men 1 & 3 exchange places, 8 counts

Now man 1 is with woman 3, and man 3 is with woman 1

The couples turn with the new partner for 8 counts. Position for the turn is hands on partner's shoulders, turn to the left, using small walking steps.

The whole process is repeated, including the turn, returning men to their original positions

This exchange process is now done using man 2 & 4 (exchange, turn, return, turn)

The dance can be repeated 2 or 3 times from the beginning.

All join hands, circle to left for 16 counts

In the movie, Dancing into Marriage, LeeEllen Friedland states that people can go into the middle and shine (show off) after the circle. According to Zev Feldman, those couples who are not shining can nonetheless continue improvising on the sidelines, rather than simply watching those who are shining in the centre of the circle (personal communication Zev Feldman, Neskaya, 2002).

Now proceed to the thread the needle figure described in Michael Alpert's freylekhs instructions or as described below and snake around the room. It is wise to decide ahead of time, who in the group will lead the threading. You can unwind as described in the "Thread the Needle" instructions or if the group requires a simpler method, have everyone raise their arms and then turn to the right part-way, which automatically unwinds everyone at once. According to Joyce Molloy, in the movie *Dancing into Marriage*, the Thread the Needle represents the backstitch and the unwinding represents removing the stitches without breaking the thread.

### **How to exchange places (couples)**

One method you can use is to have one of the couples raise their arms to produce an arch, and have the other couple pass through the arch. Then, each couple must turn as a couple, with the man backing up and the lady moving forward, positioning themselves in their new spots, with the lady on the right.

Another method is to have the couples slip past each other as follows:

The couples advance towards each other, then each couple moves a bit to their own right. The couples then move past each other with the men passing left shoulders. The couples then take the exchanged position in the square.

One way to teach this technique is to have the 2 couples advance towards each other and join hands, forming their own little circle. Circle 1/2 way round to the right. The two couples separate from one another and each backs in to the new position on the square. Eventually they can form an imaginary circle and slip past each other.

### **How to exchange places (individuals—simplified method)**

The two men advance towards each other with 4 steps (RLRL) taking a little dip on the fourth step, meeting in the middle, almost right shoulder to right shoulder.

Each man moves a bit backward and to his own right. They pass left shoulders and use the remaining 2 steps to meet the opposite lady.

The path that is traced by the men going back and forth is supposed to represent the blades of the scissors; the rotation around each other in my mind, may represent the pivot point of the scissors (does anyone know?).

**Alternatively the sher step** can be used (note there are numerous versions of the sher step).

The two men advance towards each other with 4 steps (RLRL) taking a little dip on the fourth step, meeting in the middle, almost but not quite, right shoulder to right shoulder.

Each man moves to his own right while making a complete 2-step turn clockwise (the men are thus moving sideward in front of each other).

They pass left shoulders and use the remaining 2 steps to meet the opposite lady.

In some versions of the sher step the men jump on the spot instead of taking the dipping step with the left foot. In others they stamp the foot before turning. Sometimes the turn is done as the men move past each other instead of laterally in front of each other (Steve Weintraub, Winnipeg 2001).

In many versions of the sher, ladies also exchange places. There are numerous possibilities.

### **Threading the Needle—alternate method**

Instead of the method described in the Freylekhs instructions, you may also thread the needle as follows. The leader (in position 1) leads the line between dancers 7 & 8, then between dancers 6 & 7 etc., under the arch between successive dancers, finally winding themselves up. To unwind, begin at position 1 (the leader) as follows: dancer #2 makes an arch with his arm and pulls the leader under the arch thus unwinding the leader. Dancer 3 now makes an arch and pulls through dancers 1 & 2. Dancer 4 does the same, and on down the line until everyone is unwound.

Threading the needle can begin at either end of the line and can use any of the methods described for winding/unwinding. They are all correct. *Revised December 13, 2002*



## Patsh Tanz

The following arrangement of Patsh Tanz was given to me by Jacob Bloom. He learned it from Michael Alpert at Mame Loshn, May 30, 1999. Several other arrangements of steps to this dance can be found in many folk dance books.

Formation: Circle of couples facing centre, hands joined, woman on the right of man

Music: Patsh Tanz 2/4 melody—again there are many recorded versions and not all have the same musical arrangement. You can modify the dance a bit to suit the musical arrangement.

All circle left for 8 steps, one beat per step, then circle right for 8  
Repeat circling left and right

Take two steps to centre, 1 beat per step, and clap 3 times (count 1,&,2 pause)—saying han-tell-leh while clapping

Take two steps back, 1 beat per step and stamp 3 times (1&2 pause), saying fee-sell-leh while stamping

Repeat this clapping and stamping sequence.

It is customary to turn slightly to face your partner when doing the stamps.

Give right hand to partner, (hands held at shoulder height) and turn taking eight steps, 1 beat per step, with partner, making a complete circle. Turn goes clockwise

Give left hand to corner and turn  $\frac{1}{2}$  way around, counter clockwise, in 4 steps, 1 beat per step. Woman is now facing centre, man facing out.

Raise joined hands in an arch. Woman turns under the arch in 4 steps, counter clockwise ending to face centre, while man takes 4 small steps, making a quarter turn, counter clockwise to face centre.

Women have thus progressed to a new partner.

Drop and rejoin hands in circle as dance begins again.

In some musical arrangements of this dance, the clapping and stamping sequence is repeated with the new partner before the dance begins again.

Notes by Helen Winkler, Dec, 2002.

## Mitzvah Dance

Based on Nathan Vizonsky's Choreography

Background: The mitzvah dance fulfilled the religious commandment to dance before the bride. Due to the requirement that males and females not touch, either a handkerchief, a belt, or the train of the bride's dress was used to replace holding hands. The master of ceremonies (badkhn) traditionally called up male wedding guests to dance with the bride, one at a time. The dance was also called the kosher dance indicating the bride had undergone ritual purification prior to the wedding, and also sometimes called the Shabbes Dance.

Rivkind differentiates the term mitzvah dance as meaning dancing with the bride and groom, whereas the kosher dance referred specifically to dancing with the kosher (ritually pure) bride. The bride's eyes would be downcast; i.e., she would not make eye contact with the men she danced with. In addition, the kosher dance might also refer to the rabbi dancing with his followers, the Hasidim.

For a more complete discussion of this dance, please see the articles written by Zvi Friehaber and Judith Brin Ingber listed below.

Modifications for the recreational setting: In a dance class, everyone wants to dance and would be unhappy sitting on the sidelines watching others dance with a fictitious bride, one at a time. Therefore, the dance has been modified to be a couple/mixer dance. In the shtetl, everyone would have improvised their own steps and that would have worked as each person took a turn dancing with the bride. In a recreational dance couple/mixer setting, it is necessary to choreograph the dance or the result would be chaos. For another example of a choreographed mitzvah dance, see Fred Berk's version in 100 Israeli Dances.

Formation: partners facing in a circle, man facing out (back to centre of circle), woman facing the man. Each partner holds a diagonal corner of the handkerchief fairly high, about head level, in their right hand. Men and women do the same footwork.

Music: a 4/4 or 2/4 piece of klezmer music freylekhs or bulgar will work.

If using faster music, I prefer to use 2 beats per step.

If using a slower piece of music I use one beat per step.

(Vizonsky choreographed the dance to 4/4 allegretto music, using 2 beats per step, but in the shtetl the tempo probably varied.)

Beregovski notes that the preferred music for the Kosher Tanz in some regions was a Polonaise.

Notation below is for 2/4 music, one beat per step.

Measure	Steps
1	Step to right with right foot (1), place left foot behind the right foot without weight (2)
2	reverse of measure 1
3	Step forward towards partner with right foot (1), touch left foot behind the right (2)

- 4 Bow or curtsey (1), straighten up (2)
- 5 while making a quarter turn to the left so the partners are now standing side by side with the handkerchief still held high, step forward with left foot(1), forward with right foot (2)
- 6 continue to step forward with left foot (1), touch the right foot forward (2)
- 7 Back up by stepping back on right (1), back on left (2)
- 8 step back on right(1), touch left forward (2), back to original positions, facing each other again.
  
- 9 touch left heel beside right foot (1), touch left toe beside right foot (2), man lets go of handkerchief
- 10 each partner now moves to their own left, men's circle will move counter clockwise, women's circle moves clockwise step sideward to left (1), bring the right foot to the left foot (2) (step, together)
- 11 step sideward to left (1), kick the right foot forward (2)
- 12 each person now moves to his/her own right, step right foot sideways to right (1), bring the left foot to the right foot (2)
- 13 touch right heel beside left (1), touch right toe beside left (2), man picks up the hankie again.
- 14 & 15 With hankie held high, both partners make a full turn clockwise under the hankie, beginning with the right foot (1), left (2), right (1), left (2)
- 16 man lets go of hankie, each person then takes 2 steps to their own right: step right (1), step left (2) moving one place over, now facing a new partner, and man picks up the hankie. Dance begins again

## References

- Beregovski, M. Old Jewish Folk Music: the Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski. Ed. and Trans. Mark Slobin. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982.
- Friedhaber, Zvi. 1985-86. "The Dance with the Separating Kerchief," Dance Research Journal 17/2 & 18/1:65-69.
- Ingber, Judith Brin. "Jewish Dance in Poland Between World War I and World War II," in proceedings of Society of Dance History Scholars (US) Conference, University of Minnesota, 1996.
- Rivkind, Isaac. Klezmerim Jewish Folk Musicians A Study in Cultural History. New York: Futuro Press, 1960

## RUSSIA

## PAS D'ESPAN

**SOURCE:** Pas d'Espan is an old fashioned Russian ballroom dance, popular throughout Europe. The name is French and means "Spanish Step". There are several possible figures, not necessarily danced in a certain order. The routine given here is one of many possibilities.

**MUSIC:** FolkDancer MH-1061 Measure 3/4  
(for this workshop we are using a Dave Tarras Recording circa 1925)

**FORMATION:** Couples, inside hands held, *free hand on hip*<sup>1</sup>, facing counterclockwise

**STEPS:** \*Waltz, step-draw, balance. Steps are described for man; woman uses opposite hand or foot.

\*Description for steps to be found in Introduction.

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MEASURES	TEMPO	DESCRIPTION
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Intro.: 4 Mes. of 3 t.

FIGURE 1  
(Pas d'Espan step)

- |     |     |   |
|-----|-----|---|
| 1   | 1-3 | Facing partner, stamp( <i>other versions just step not stamp</i> ) diagonally fwd on outside foot, swing inside foot and joined inside hands fwd ( <i>lean slightly away from LOD to give the Spanish styling</i> <sup>2</sup> ). Small hop on the outside foot after you pivot on count 3. Counts: step(1), pivot (2) hop(3) |
| 2   | 1-3 | Turning back to back, rise slightly on inside foot, close outside foot to inside  |
| 3-4 |     | Keeping inside hands fwd and remaining back to back step bwd( <i>reverse LOD</i> ) on outside foot, draw inside to closed position. Step-close bwd( <i>reverse LOD</i> ) again.   |
| 5-8 |     | Repeat fwd starting on inside foot ( <i>Step on inside foot in LOD, swing outside foot around to end facing partner</i> ), swinging joined hands back and facing partner for 2 step-draws bwd ( <i>reverse LOD</i> ) on in-side foot.   |

FIGURE 2—omit this —see below HW  
***In place of the chorus as notated here, please substitute the version noted in motifs 3-6 from the Bottallo version that follows this dance description.***

(Chorus : Cross Over)

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 1-2 | Face partner, (hands not joined). Balance to L. then to R. as follows: Step on L. to the side, touch R. foot on back of L. foot, step again on L. foot. Repeat |
|-----|--|

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<sup>1</sup> Footnote from Helen Winkler, *This arm position is shown in the Russian dance manual—photos and cover page are included later in this syllabus.*

<sup>2</sup> Footnote from Helen Winkler—the lean is stated in the Russian dance manual as above.

starting to the R.

- 3-4 With 2 waltz steps exchange places with partner, passing L shoulders, and turning to face each other.
- 5-8 Repeat balances and Waltz steps to return to own places.  
*(The first and third time through the dance, the first figure and chorus are repeated in our musical arrangement)*

FIGURE 3  
(Waltz Turn)

- 1-2 Drop hands, starting with outside foot, take 2 waltz steps fwd (*in LOD*) and turning completely around away from partner. End facing partner.
- 3-4 Take 2 step-draws in line of direction.
- 5-8 Repeat waltz turns and~step-draws in opposite direction.
- 9-16 Chorus

FIGURE 3  
(Pas d'Espan step)

- 1-3 Same as for meas.1-3 of Figure 1. (Note only 1 step-draw.)
- 4 Step bwd (*reverse LOD*) on outside foot, pivot on that foot while swinging the inside foot back and thru so as to face in opposite direction Drop hands and join other hands.
- 5-8 Repeat whole Pas d'Espan step facing in new direction (*but again only doing 1 step draw in LOD, followed by 1 step in LOD, pivoting on that supporting leg towards partner, to face partner again.*)
- 9-16 Chorus

Repeat from beginning.

Dance notation: Greg Marcil and © Michel Landry  
[eduspe@videotron.ca](mailto:eduspe@videotron.ca)  
<http://www.cvm.qc.ca/mlandry/folklore>

*-italicized notation by Helen Winkler*

*-I wish to thank Mike Aylward and Dick Crum for translating the Pas D’Espagne from several historic dance manuals as this has enhanced my understanding of this dance.*

## PAS D'ESPAGNE

From: Barthélemy G. Bottallo, *Guide du bon danseur*, par le professeur B. -G. Bottallo [The Good Dancer's Guide, by Professor B.G. Bottallo]. Paris: Imp. Jouve & cie, 1912, p. 114. Translated and recast in conventional American terminology by Dick Crum.

Although the name of this dance might lead one to believe that it is Spanish, it is actually Russian, and is very popular in that country, though it is not danced exactly the same way as here in France, where it is performed according to the French version promulgated by the International Academy of Masters and Teachers of Dance, Deportment and Grooming. I shall give the Russian version in my next publication; for now I shall present only the French variant. I wish to warn my readers that preservation of this dance's original character requires great agility and full mastery of its movements.

Gentleman takes lady's left hand in his right hand and they position themselves almost face-to-face, but slightly angled and oriented forward in line of direction (counterclockwise around the floor). Every figure in this dance begins with gentleman's left foot, lady's right foot.

### MOTIF 1 [4 meas of $\frac{3}{4}$ time]

- ct 1 Stamp onto Lft forward (in line of direction) about 50 centimeters.
- ct 2 Immediately bring Rft in air forward of Lft.
- ct 3 Hop on L toe, pivoting a  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn L, bringing R arm forward straight. The Rft is in the air during cts 2 and 3. At this point partners are back-to back, arms extended, and they remain in this position for the 9 counts that follow.
- ct 4 Glide R toe forward (in line of direction) a few centimeters and step onto R toe.
- ct 5 Close L toe to R heel without taking weight on L toe, rising slightly on R toe.
- ct 6 Lower R heel to floor, maintaining weight on Rft.
- ct 7 Glide L toe backwards (against line of direction) a large distance and step onto L toe.
- cts 8-9 Close R toe to Lft, taking weight on Rft.
- ct 10 Repeat the movements of ct 7.
- cts 11-12 Close R toe to Lft without taking weight on Rft.

### MOTIF 2 [4 meas of $\frac{3}{4}$ time] Repeat the entire figure beginning with Rft.

- ct 1 Stamp onto Rft forward (in line of direction).
- ct 2 Immediately bring Lft in air forward of Rft.
- ct 3 Hop on R toe, pivoting a  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn R. From this point partners are face-to-face for the 9 counts that follow.
- ct 4 Glide L toe forward (in line of direction) a few centimeters and step onto L toe.
- ct 5 Close R toe to L heel without taking weight on R toe, rising slightly on L toe.
- ct 6 Lower L heel to floor, maintaining weight on Lft.
- ct 7 Glide R toe backwards (against line of direction) and step onto R toe, the arms rounded.
- cts 8-9 Close L toe to R heel, taking weight on Lft.
- cts 10-11-12 Repeat the movements of cts 7-8-9, without taking weight on Lft.

**MOTIF 3** [2 meas of  $\frac{3}{4}$  time]

Gentleman and lady join R hands, facing each other.

ct 1 Glide Lft sideward L in line of direction, taking weight on it.

cts 2-3 Bring R toe, with leg straight and heel raised, to L heel, and lower R heel, taking weight on it.

cts 4-5-6 Repeat the movements of cts 1-2-3, again taking weight on Rft.

**MOTIF 4** [2 meas of  $\frac{3}{4}$  time]

With R hands still joined, gentleman and lady cross over and change places using two “American Boston” steps,\* he starting the first with Lft, and passing R shoulders. The last Boston step must be “rounded out” by pivoting a  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn to R to ensure partners are face-to-face.

**MOTIF 5** [2 meas of  $\frac{3}{4}$  time]

Gentleman and lady release hands and do two balance steps in place during the following 6 counts.

ct 1 Stamp onto Lft sideward L.

ct 2 Step with R toe across in front of Lft, knee straight, and rising on both toes; at the same time gentleman raises curved L arm in air and curves his R arm across his chest.

ct 3 Lower heels and take weight on Lft.

cts 4-5-6 Repeat movements of cts 1-2-3 to the R with opposite footwork and reversing arm positions.

During the above balance steps lady grasps both sides of her skirt and holds them out, elbows flexed.

**MOTIF 6** [2 meas of  $\frac{3}{4}$  time]

Gentleman and lady return to home positions with two Boston steps, [he] beginning with Lft, passing R shoulders.

Gentleman takes lady’s L hand in his R hand to resume the dance from the beginning, doing it four more times unless the orchestra plays it longer.

The lady does the same counts and movements as the gentleman, but with opposite footwork.

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\* *American Boston step*: ct 1 Step fwd on Lft; ct 2 Rise slightly on L toe; ct 3 Lower L heel to floor. Repeat with Rft, etc. Cues: “Lft-up-down,” “Rft-up-down,” etc.



Рис. 34.

# САМОУЧИТЕЛЬ МОДНЫХЪ БАЛЬНЫХЪ И ХАРАКТЕРНЫХЪ ТАНЦЕВЪ.

СОСТАВИЛЪ

АРТИСТЪ ИМПЕРАТОРСКИХЪ ТЕАТРОВЪ

*А. Д. Тихомировъ.*

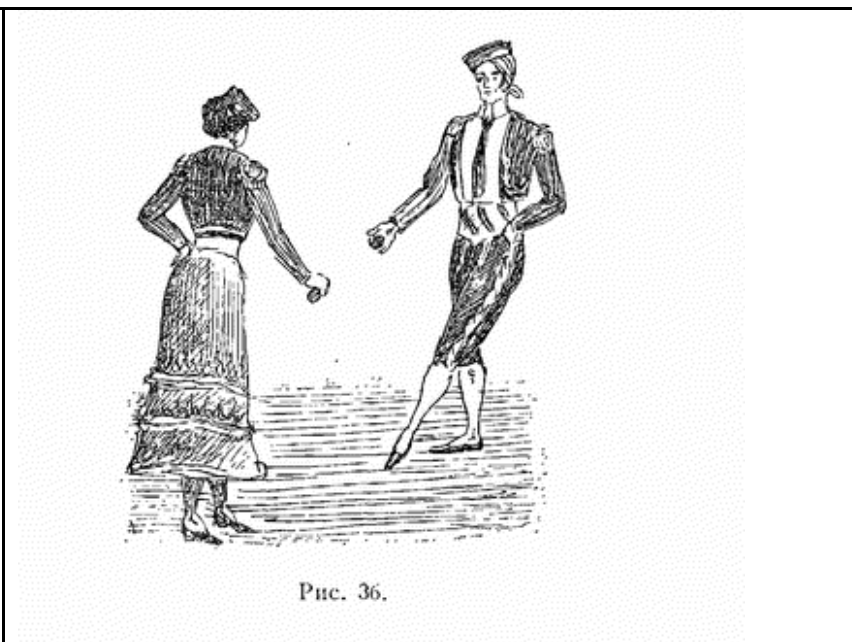
МОСКВА.

Издание книгопродавца С. Кашинцева.

Бол. Пикитская, д. кн. Шаховской.

1901.





Images of Pas D'Espan

From: Samouchitel modnykh bal' nykh I kharakternykh tantsev,  
<http://memory.loc.gov/annem/dihtml/dicatlg.html>

Moskova, 1901, Library of Congress Web Site

## HORA

by Michael Alpert

*I'm including these notes for additional info HW*

The term *hora* describes an indigenous Romanian dance and musical genre of great diversity. It comprises brisk tunes in 2/4 time as well as medium-tempo tunes in triple meter. Triple meter horas, the primary form of the the genre among East European Jews, are typical of the northeastern Romanian area. This dance and musical form is also common among Ukrainians of the Bukovina region.

Among Yiddish-speaking Jews, hora is also known as *londre* or *landre*,<sup>1</sup> *zhok*, *kruimer tants* [crooked dance, cf. Bulg. *krivo horo*], et al. American-Jewish professional musicians often refer to it as "slow hora."

Jews from Moldavia and Bukovina generally perform hora as a closed or open circle dance with occasional couple figures, in keeping with co-territorial non-Jewish practice. Jews from adjacent areas of the Ukraine probably acquired the circle-formation hora through contact with Romanian Jews and refer to it by such names as *rumeyner freylekhs* [Romanian Jewish dance] or the generic name *vulekhl* [Wallachian, i.e. Romanian]. They sometimes dance an improvised solo dance to hora tunes as well. In a much wider area of Eastern Europe, horas and related melodies in treble meter were frequently used as processional tunes at Jewish weddings and other celebrations. These often went by the name *gasn-nign* or *gas-nign* [Street-tune, i.e. processional]. Examples on currently available reissue recordings are *Firn di mekhutonim aheym* [Escorting The In-laws Back Home], rendered by clarinetist Naftule Brandwine in a 1920s recording, reissued on *Klezmer Music 1910-1942*, Global Village Music C 107/ Folkways FSS 34021, and *Der Gasn Nign*, a 1923 recording by xylophonist Jacob Hoffman with Harry Kandel's Orchestra, reissued on *Jakie Jazz 'em Up*, Global Village C 101.

For the musicologically inclined: the East European Jewish hora has been variously notated in 3/8, 3/4, and 6/8 time. It is rhythmically and choreographically distinct both from the lively Israeli dance in duple meter bearing the same designation, and from the contemporary hora popular in Orthodox and Hasidic communities in the U.S. and Israel, which employs the syncopated 4/4 rhythm of Greek/Turkish *tsifteteli/cifteteli* and Arab *binti baladi*. The accentuation on beats 1 and 3 of the 3/8 measure, as well as the rhythmic pattern "1...and-3-and, 1...and-3-and" are characteristic of the East European Jewish hora, differentiating it rhythmically from the waltz and other treble-meter European dance tunes. Metric ambiguity is often apparent in the performance of both Jewish and non-Jewish horas, especially those from Moldavia and Bukovina. Some renditions seem to hover between treble and duple time, while others tend more towards a 5/8 or 10/16 rhythm suggestive of Bulgarian *paidushkoto*.

**FORMATION:** A circle, hands shoulder

**BASIC STEP:** R-L-R-and, L-R-L-and. . . (Long-short-long-and)

<sup>1</sup> From Romanian *Oleandra*, a dance and musical genre. The Soviet Jewish ethnomusicologist M.A. Beregovski notates several tunes *Olyandra/Londre* in *Evreiskaya Narodnaya Instrumental'naya Muzyka*, Moscow, 1987. The terms *londre*, *landre* or *olyandre* in reference to this particular dance and musical form seem to be widespread only among Jews from Bessarabia and the extreme southwestern Ukraine, including the city of Odessa, although I have heard it used by Jews from as far away as Warsaw.

**TRAVELING:** Basic step, done facing slightly right along line of direction.

**IN PLACE:** Facing center, do basic step side to side in place.

**SWIVEL:** As in traveling step, except that at the conclusion of one complete dance "unit" (R-L-R-and, L-R-L-and) all swivel backwards (to right) on "and," to perform the next "unit" backwards in line of direction, swiveling again forwards on L foot on "and," etc.

**INTO CENTER:** All travel into center with "R-L-R-and, L-R-L-and, R-L-R-and, Stamp-Stamp-Stamp-and." Return backwards with same pattern.

## FREYLEKHS by Michael Alpert

*Freylekhs* ["a merry one" or "lively one," also called *freylekh*] is the most common, basic and widespread East European Jewish traditional social dance form. Also known as *redl*, *redele*, *karahod*, *hopke*, *in kon*, *khusidl*, et al., it is most often performed as a circle dance in moderate to lively 2/4 time, with occasional line, solo and couple variations. While the Yiddish word *freylekhs* is sometimes used generically to designate any East European Jewish folk dance or tune with a celebratory feeling, the specific version of the dance described here includes many of the best-known steps, figures and "moves" distinctly known as *freylekhs* among East European Jewish communities throughout the world. Rather than a strict, reverent codification of "the dance," it is meant as a guide to a repertoire of *kuntsn* [tricks, moves] that one can employ in dancing *freylekhs*.

As with most traditional dance forms, there is a high degree of regional, social and individual variation in all East European Jewish folk dancing. The dispersion of Jews from Eastern Europe throughout the world has tended to obscure many specifically regional characteristics, especially in North America where the Ashkenazic community is so diverse. Nonetheless, as with the variety of dialects of the Yiddish language, in the dancing of members of the immigrant generation and even the second generation it is possible to both distinguish regional differences in pattern and style, and to note common elements. The version of *freylekhs* presented here is a composite of versions and moves learned from the following fine traditional dancers:

Bronya Sakina, b. Golovanyevsk, S.W. Ukraine  
 Ben Bazyler, b. Warsaw, Poland  
 Rae Shapiro, b. Shchedrin, Belorussia  
 Lee Ellen Friedland, b. New York  
 Alexander Alpert, b. Malat, Lithuania  
 Mikhail Rabransky, b. Orla, Belorussia  
 Tsunye Reimer, b. Krasna, S.W. Ukraine  
 and many others happily too numerous to mention.

**Formation:** A circle, hands joined at shoulder height or slightly below. Best if circle is not too big (10-15), especially for the Winding Up figure (below).

**Circling [A *karahod*, In a *redl*, In *kon*]:** Starting with left foot, circle left with a flexible but proud, earthbound walking step *approximately* 32 steps. Return to right with *approximately* the same number of steps. Remember, the step can be 1-2, 1-2 or 1-2-3, 1-2-3 or step-drag or step-stamp, etc., or any combination thereof.

**Into Center [A *rayn in mit*]:** All wheel to face center (can be done with scooping motion, hands/arms leading) and converge toward center of circle. Hands can rise forward, but not higher than eye level, or you risk banishment to Israeli Folk Dancing class. Open circle by returning with backwards walking step, optionally going into "scoop" position, and repeat the move to center and back. If you're a real *akshn* [stubborn person] you can go into the center and back a third time. If you're quite finished, resume circling left and right.

**Winding Up, Threading the Needle, The Snake** [*Ufviklen zikh, Nodl un Fodem, Geshlengt*]: At any given point when circling is completed, one dancer, a *de facto* [you know what that means] leader, drops right hands with neighbor and "winds up" counterclockwise into his/her own left elbow, ending up with left arm around neck and left hand (still attached to neighbor's right hand) on own right shoulder. Leader then proceeds counterclockwise (to left) between dancers 2 and 3, under arch formed by their joined hands, causing dancer 2 to "wind up" into his/her left elbow in same manner as leader. Leader proceeds thus between dancers 3 and 4, and so on until the entire circle is wound up with left arms around necks and left hands on own right shoulders. **Remember: let your arm/elbow go around your neck, not over your head!** As Winding Up figure is taking place, forward motion stops and all dance in place.

Leader then leads the circle, which has become a line, around in a snaking pattern, optionally reforming a complete circle, before initiating unwinding. To unwind, leader unwinds self first (clockwise), then dancer 2 pulls leader with right hand through arch formed by dancers 2 and 3; dancer 3 uses right hand to pull dancer 2 and leader through arch between dancers 3 and 4, and so forth, each dancer successively using right hand to pull all previous dancers through arch. When circle is unwound, all join hands and dance resumes from beginning (Circling), or goes into Solo Figures/Going into the Circle [*Arayn in kon*] (below)

**Going into the Circle/Solo Steps and Figures** [*Arayn in kon*/"*Farshidene kuntsn*"]: One of the best-known aspects of dancing *Freylekhs* is the opportunity afforded to individual dancers or couples to enter the middle of the circle and "strut their stuff" to the rhythmic clapping and shouted encouragement of the other dancers. In Yiddish, the terms *arayn in kon* [into the circle] or *shaynen* [to shine] are sometimes used to describe this phenomenon. The following are some of the steps and figures which can be used at this point:

### INDIVIDUAL FIGURES

**Step-place:** Step R in place, place L foot to side of and slightly in front of left. Step L, place R to side of and slightly in front of L, etc. Arms can follow motion of feet at waist level, or be held aloft one at a time, etc. Women can hold skirt with both hands at mid-thigh level.

**Pas de deux (1-2-3's):** Step R in place, step onto L foot slightly in front of R, step back onto R. Repeat starting with L, etc. Can develop into scissors-like motion with legs held straight and raised high. Arms can be used as above or, in many of the more energetic of these figures, hand can come in back of the ear, arms can be held out to the side at shoulder height and slightly forward, or akimbo, etc.

**Traveling Solo:** Travel about floor with 1-2-3 or 1-2 traveling step, twirling occasionally (but not quickly). Use your hand and arm moves!

**Scissors:** Jump up and land on both feet with R thigh crossed in front of left, jump again and land with both feet apart, jump again and land with L thigh crossed in front of R, jump again, landing with both feet apart, etc.

XX03

"Falling behind, 1-2-3": Step R, fall onto L behind R, step R-L-R in place. Repeat to left.

**Forward and Back:** Travel forward and back with any traveling step 4-8 beats; can be done with a partner, moving towards and away from each other, or passing first right, then left shoulders (not a do-si-do). Hands can be in above positions, or thumbs can be hooked into *shleykes* [suspenders], real or imaginary, on upper chest. Make sure palms face forward or outward: avoid the "small animal" look (Wee paws now. . .).

## **COUPLE FIGURES**

### **Women and Men**

1) Partners take hands at chest level, arms to sides, and circle around each other to R, with R shoulders almost adjacent. Reverse to L, etc.

2) Partners take hands, move forward and back with bicycle-pump motion of arms.

3) Partners take R hands at shoulder level, circle each other to R, reverse to left with L hands. Can be done with handkerchief (see below).

4) With woman on man's R, both facing forward, she takes man's R hand with her L, and both move forward and back, or sashay about with any traveling step. A great way to take the floor or enter the circle as a couple!

5) *Di Tikhele* : Man invites woman to dance by walking up to her with a *tikhele* [handkerchief] in R hand, bowing slightly and shaking out kerchief in front of her **smartly**. Remember, this should be done with dignity! Woman accepts by taking kerchief in R hand, refuses by declining. Holding one end of kerchief in R hand at above-head level, each partner turns self to L (counterclockwise) with any step, causing kerchief to wind up. When taut, reverse direction and unwind.

### **Men**

**One-Arm Circling:** Partners circle counterclockwise around an axis with R arms on each other's R shoulder. Can drop arms, wheel around and reverse, using L arms.

**Two-Arm Kicks:** Partners face; each places both hands on other's upper arms/shoulders. Stamp on both feet, bicycle-kick L across R diagonally. Stamp both, bicycle-kick R across L diagonally, etc.

**Kazatske [Russian, "Cossack" Style]:** Squats, duck-walk, squat-kicks, etc. Can be individual, duo, trio, etc.

Presented by Michael Alpert, Buffalo Gap International Folk Dance Camp, Labor Day 1991.

## BULGAR

by Michael Alpert

This version of a bulgar was learned from Isaac "Tsunye" Reimer, who was born in the shtetl Krosne (Krasna) in the region of the southwestern Ukraine formerly known as Podolia. A figure dance similar to the sher, it is danced by only two couples per set (perfect for double dating). Asked about the two-couple format of this bulgar, Reimer remarked: "If we were more than two couples, we probably would have danced a sher." The various forms of bulgar are danced mainly by Jews from the northeastern part of the Romanian cultural area, namely Bessarabia, western Moldavia and the Bukovina, and the adjacent regions of the southern Ukraine. The name is often applied to circle dances from this area which resemble the Israeli/American-Jewish hora (Hava Nagila). Traditional Jewish violinist Leon Schwartz, a native of the Bukovina, recalls a circle/mixer version of the bulgar in the late 1910s (to the melody of Abe Schwartz's *Oriental Hora* in 2/4 time), taught by a local dance teacher who specialized in leading social dancing at weddings. Such dance teachers were often responsible for introducing social, i.e. couple dancing into Jewish communities at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, which may shed light on the origin of the couple bulgar.

Bulgar appears to have been popular among Romanian and south Ukrainian Jews precisely during the the time of large scale East European Jewish immigration to the Americas (1881-1924). The preponderance of klezmer musicians from this region who achieved prominence in the U.S. at that time may account for the large segment of the American klezmer music repertoire that bears the name bulgar. Thus, most later Jewish immigrants to the U.S. are not natively familiar with the term, whereas many second-generation American-Jewish wedding musicians refer to the entire old-time East European Jewish dance repertoire as "the bulgars."

Both name and dance appear to be related to the Moldavian-Bessarabian line dances *bulgaresti* or *bulgareasca*. There is much speculation as to the relationship of bulgar, as a musical and dance genre, to "Bulgarian." Possible connections are a sizable ethnic Bulgarian population in Bessarabia and the Odessa region from the mid-19th century, as well as the apparent sustained contact with northern Bulgaria on the part of Moldavian Gypsy musicians, who were an important source of the repertoire and style that we associate with klezmer music today.

A bit of context: Tsunye Reimer, who died in July, 1989, still youthful at 90+ years, was a quintessential *folksmentsh* — an extraordinary treasure-chest of Jewish folklore and folkways. A marvelous singer of Yiddish, Ukrainian and Russian songs in the traditional unaccompanied style, he was also considered the finest folk reciter of the works of Sholem Aleichem in the U.S. He was a true *bon vivant* and carouser to the end — with a song, story or quip never far from his lips, he imparted a great deal of *yidishkayt* and heart to all who knew him.

Formation: 2 couples, facing each other, woman on man's right.

Figure 1: Couples form a circle, holding hands at waist level, and circle left 14 steps/beats starting with L foot, then end circling with a quick 1-2-3 (L-R-L) on counts 15 and 16 as all turn to face right and return to R with 14 steps + 1-2-3. Repeat circling, L and R, but end final circling R by going a full 16 steps without the 1-2-3. Couples should end facing each

other, dropping hands with corner and assuming shoulder-hold position ("Zorba the Greek") with partner.

Figure 2: Facing opposite couple (forward), each couple moves 8 steps to its own R starting with R foot, using grapevine step (R, L behind; R, L behind; etc.), as if on parallel track with opposite couple (but moving in opposite direction). Return 8 steps L with step variation (R cross in front, L; R cross in front, L; etc) until couples face each other again. Don't overshoot on return: couples should diverge, then return home directly opposite each other. Repeat entire figure.

Figure 3: Men "lead out" (*firn aroys*), moving towards each other with R-L-R-acknowledge (4 counts). Acknowledge = a short nick of the head or bow, accompanied by a flex of both knees or stamp. Passing R shoulders, men continue across to opp. woman with 4 steps, then turn R elbows with her for 8 steps. Men return home exactly as they crossed -- with R-L-R-acknowledge, etc. -- and turn partner w/ R elbow 8 steps.

Figure 4: Couples promenade counterclockwise around circle 2X, using 16 steps per revolution. As you pass home, maintaining, of course, that sense of constant motion for which Yiddish dancing is famous, women can turn counterclockwise under man's right hand (*oyzdreyen zikh*), as they can again upon returning home at end of figure.

Dance then begins again from top. In Figure 3, women cross this time instead of men, passing L shoulders. Men and women alternate thus throughout the entire dance, which is repeated ad lib.

*GIT AKHTUNG!* Remember that traditionally -- or at least the way most *yidlekhs* dance -- the dance phrase doesn't have to follow the musical phrase; the important thing is that you follow the steady 1-2 beat of the music. It's quintessentially pre-industrial, yet deconstructivist... On the other hand, taking a post-modern, yet cheerfully neo-conservative approach, it's always nice when your figures and moves correspond at least occasionally to the dimensions of the music, so that you're not just performing dance-like exercises while music happens to be playing in the same room. Thus, once you know the dance, you don't have to pay slavish attention to the number of steps indicated here, but can let the spirit move you and then catch up or mark a little time to get back in step with the music.

Music: Per the previous paragraph, you can use any moderate-tempo bulgar or *freylekhs* in 2/4 time, but good ones to use are Kammen #2 or Naftule's *Freylekh* as played by Naftule Brandwine. Just ask your musicians to play any 3-part tune in the sequence AABC if you want dance and music to match. *Zol zayn mit mazl!*

Concerning figure three of the bulgar - Erik taught it slightly differently, in a manner that fits the number of counts more easily:

Men towards each other: R-L-R-Acknowledge, then back to place in 4 steps, then, in 8 steps, straight across and 3/4 turn with the opposite woman using R elbows, so that this woman is now to the man's right.

— ENJOY, Matt



# HONGA

by Michael Alpert

*I'm including these for additional info Helen*

About the dance and the music: *Honga* is a line dance done by both Romanians and Jews from the east Romanian region of Bessarabia (contemporary Moldova) and adjacent regions of southern Ukraine. It is also known in Yiddish as *onga*, *ange*, and other similar variant names. The most common Romanian name is *hangu* or *hangul*, from Turkish *hangi* ("row" or "file"). I learned this version from musician, ethnomusicologist and turkologist Dr. Walter Zev Feldman, who learned it both from his father, a native of Edinca (Yedinets), Bessarabia, and from premier Jewish-American clarinetist Dave Tarras, born near the south Ukrainian town of Uman'. *Honga* tunes, in moderate 2/4 time, often sound typically Romanian, and display a busy or "notey" quality rendered by the many sixteenth-note runs and arpeggios.

**Formation:** Form a single-file line facing forward, placing your right hand on the right shoulder of the person in front of you (hang on tight!). Person at head of line is the "leader."

**Basic Step:** (Measure 1) Move forward with R-and, L-and. Knees can flex downward slightly on each "and," but don't strut! (Measure 2) Continue moving forward with R, L, R, L. You can shuffle somewhat, as if you're almost falling forward, but make sure your foot leaves the floor (albeit barely) with each step. Repeat ad infinitum, with "leader" snaking the line around the room, doubling line back on itself, and from time to time joining up with end of line to form a full circle, and you're doing the *honga*. If you like - especially given the current global obsession with self-determination - after you've joined up as a full circle, a new "leader" can emerge (but only after a full financial disclosure according to strict ethics guidelines).

**Hands:** "Leader" can hold R hand aloft, slightly forward, and/or wave it in air, place it behind ear ("Russian" style), do shadow tricks, recite *tilim* (psalms) in American Sign Language, or perform other appropriate motions. During intense moments of participatory ecstasy both hands can be held aloft and/or waved. End of line can perform similar hand jive, but with L hand, as R hand should be firmly planted on R shoulder of person in front, in order to obtain maximum therapeutic benefit of dance. As a variation, once dance has "hit a groove," dancers can place both hands on both shoulders of person in front (for a while).

Variations on basic step

Stamps: R-stamp, L-stamp, R, L, R, L, etc.

Jumps: (both feet) Apart (to the side), together, R, L, R, L, etc.

Presented by Michael Alpert, University of Toronto, November 1992

<http://www.schapiro-wine.com/yiddish.html>

excerpted from:

**Glossary of Yiddish and Hebrew Terms**

by Michael Alpert

additional comments from Helen Winkler italicized.

**Broiges Tanz** *Pantomime dance acting out an argument and reconciliation, done at weddings, usually (but not always) danced by the new mothers-in-law. There is a quadrille version of this dance that was popular among recreational folk dance groups at one time. It can be found in the book:*

*Lapson, Dvora. Dances of the Jewish People. New York: Board of Jewish Education, 1954*

**Bulgar** (BOOL-GAR): One of the most common dance and tune genres of the American-Jewish repertoire, popular in parts of Eastern Europe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Also known as bulgarish, it is a circle, line, or couple dance deriving from the Bessarabian (East Romanian) dance bulgareasca, literally "Bulgarian dance," referring to the large Bulgarian population in Bessarabia. Its best known step is similar to the Israeli dance hora (see "Hora").

**Freylekhs** (FREY-LAKHS): A lively circle or line dance, the most common in East European Jewish wedding dance repertoire, in 4/4 rhythm.  
*note from HW: sometimes also called karahod, reydl or Hopkele (Sapoznik, Klezmer Music from Old World to Our World)*

**Honga, Hongu, Hangu** (HON-GAH, HON-GOO): A Moldavian line dance in 2/4 time. Also called honge and ange.

**Hora** (HO-RAH): A popular Romanian Jewish dance in a limping, duple meter, often notated in 3/8 time. Also known as hoira, londre, zhok, vulekhl krimer tants ("crooked dance"), or "slow hora." Not to be confused with the brisk Israeli dance of the same name.

**Khusidl, Khosidl, or Khosid** (KHU-SI-DL, KHO-SID): A slow circle or line dance in Hasidic style, in a stately 2/4 rhythm. In some regions of Eastern Europe, synonymous with freylekhs (see "Freylekhs").

**Sher** (SHEHR): One of the most common dance forms in the Jewish repertoire, similar to a square dance or a Russian quadrille.

**Sirba** (SER-BAH): Romanian-Jewish dance tune typified by triplets in the melody over a 2/4 rhythm.

**Vulekhl**: (VOO-LEKH-UL): Literally, "a Wallachian one," i.e., a dance or tune in Romanian-Jewish style (see also "Doina" and "Hora.")

**Zhok**: See "Hora."

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