

BATUTA
(Bulgaria)

Batuta (bah-T00-tah) was learned by Yves Moreau, Fall 1971, from village dance group in Rabrovo, Vidin District, N.W. Bulgaria. In Romania, "Bătuta" refers to a type of dance which involves stamping with the feet. This Batuta is a popular version among the Vlachs of N.W. Bulgaria.

The term "Vlachs" is used in several ways in the Balkans. Most people agree that Vlachs originally came to Bulgaria from Southern Romania ("Wallachia") and that they were for a long time nomadic people who settled primarily in Northwest Bulgaria, Northeast Serbia, Macedonia, and Northern Greece. The term is also used in North Bulgaria to denote the "Banat Bulgarians" who originally fled Bulgaria to settle in Romania at the time of Ottoman invasion to later return to their homeland. Their language and folklore are a mixture of Romanian and local elements.

This Batuta is similar to many other dances found along the Bulgarian-Serbian border and which are related to the basic "Stara Vlajna" form (Galaona, Juta etc.)

RECORD: Worldtone WT-YM-001 A (45 rpm) 2/4 meter.

FORMATION: Short lines -- about 8 people -- mixed or segregated. Belt hold, L over R. Face ctr. Wt on L ft. Often the two men at both ends of line hold a wooden cane in free hand...

STYLE: Knees bent slightly. A sharp, rather bouncy feeling, but not airy and light. A solid, heavy quality. Small steps.

MUSIC 2/4

PATTERN

Measures

INTRODUCTION: No special intro music. Dance may start at beginning of any musical phrase. Beware also of music which is sometimes played "contra tempo" or "against the beat" !

I. BASIC TRAVELLING STEP "VLAJNA"

- 1 Step to R on R (ct 1). Slide L next to R, almost displacing R, bending knees slightly (ct 2).
- 2 Repeat pattern of meas 1, exactly.
- 3 Step diag fwd to R on R (ct 1); hold (ct 2).
- 4 Step fwd twd ctr on L (ct 1); hold (ct 2).
- 5 Step lightly fwd on R, crossing in front of L (ct 1); Hold (ct 2).
- 6 Moving away from ctr, step diag bkwd L on L (ct 1); slide R ft back and next to L (ct 2).
- 7 Moving straight bkwd, small step on L (ct 1); still moving bkwd, small step on R (ct 2)..
- 8 Still moving bkwd, small step on L (ct 1); hold (ct 2).

.../2

MUSIC 2/4

PATTERN

Measures

II. STAMPING STEP "BATUTA"

- 1-2 Repeat pattern of meas 1-2, FIG. I
- 3 Step on R facing slightly R (ct 1); small hop on R, simultaneously bringing L knee up and slightly across R leg (do not exaggerate) (ct 2). Facing ctr, small sharp stamp with L ft, no wt (ct &).
- 4 Facing ctr, small leap onto L (ct 1); sharp stamp, no wt, with R ft slightly fwd (ct &); small hop in place on L (ct 2); sharp stamp, no wt, with R ft slightly fwd (ct &).
- 5 Facing slightly R, small sharp stamp on R ft with wt (ct 1); small hop on R, simultaneously bringing L knee up and slightly across R leg (do not exaggerate) (ct 2). Sharp stamp, with L next to R, no wt (ct &).
- 6 Facing ctr, small step sdwd L with L (ct 1); bring R to L, almost displacing L, simultaneously bending both knees very sharply (ct 2).
- 7 Small step to L with L (ct 1); close R to L (ct 2). Sometimes meas 7 can be done exactly like meas 6, i.e., sharply.
- 8 Small step to L with L, simultaneously raising R ft slightly across L (ct 1); hold (ct 2).

There is no set sequence for this dance. Leader calls figures at will. He may simply shout "hopa" or "hopša" for a change (or even "hajde") or specifically "batuta" for the stamping figure.

Presented by Yves Moreau