

BATUTA (bah-TOO-tah)  
(Bulgaria)

Learned by Yves Moreau, Fall 1971, from village dance group in Rabrovo, Vidin District, N.W. Bulgaria. In Romanian, Batuta refers to a type of folk dance which involves stamps with the feet. This Batuta is a dance popular among the Vlachs of N.W. Bulgaria. The Vlachs originally came to Bulgaria from Romania. The Vlachs were for a long time nomadic people who settled primarily in Northern Greece, Macedonia, N.E. Serbia, and along the Danube in Bulgaria. Their language and folklore are a mixture of Romanian and local elements.

Record: Worldtone WT-YM-001 A. 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 the line hold a wooden cane in their free hand.

Style: Knees bent slightly, a sharp, rather bouncy feeling, but not airy and light. A solid, heavy quality. Steps are small.

Meas

Pattern

No Introduction 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 STEP (often referred to as "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 slightly 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).

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 &).

BATUTA (continued)

- 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 "hopsha" for a change, or specifically "batuta" for the stamping figure.

Presented by Yves Moreau