DEBKA

(Kurdish Communities)

I learned this dance from Katherine St. John, an international folk dancer who is a specialist in Middle Eastern dance and culture. She said this dance is done throughout the Kurdish communities in the various Middle Eastern countries where Kurds reside – Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Syria and elsewhere, including some European countries and the United States. While lines are typically segregated in the Middle East, men and women are more likely to dance together in Europe and the U.S.

Pronunciation: DEHB-kah

Formation: Open circle. Hands are joined, with upper arms touching or nearly touching, arms bent at the elbow, and lower arms linked.

Meas 2/4 meter Pattern

Introduction Dancers starts at will, as they join the line.

1 Facing center, rock fwd on L slightly in front of R (ct 1); bend the L knee slightly (ct 2).
2 Facing center, rock bkwd on R slightly to R (ct 1); bounce in place on R (ct 2).

These foot movements are accompanied by a slightly undulation of the body from hips to shoulders, bending slightly forward in meas 1 and becoming erect on meas 2. Shoulders rise and fall slightly with the steps.

This introductory section is done while the dancers gather and join the line on the left end. At the leader's signal, the dance begins.

Take one prepartory step in place on L on meas 2, ct 2 so that the R foot is free to begin the dance. Leader faces CCW, bringing his/her L hand into the small of the back while continuing to hold the hand of the dancer next in line. R arm is straight and held diagonally forward and down.

1 Facing and moving CCW, step fwd on R (ct 1); bend R knee slightly while bending the L knee and bringing the L heel up and behind (ct 2).
2 Repeat meas 1 with opposite footwork, continuing to move CCW.
3 Repeat meas 1
4 Face center and place the L foot fwd without weight (ct 1); and hold (ct 2). Arms are brought in front of the body, parallel or nearly-parallel to the ground.
5 Step on L in place (ct 1); kick the R fwd while bouncing on L in place (ct 2).
6 Bounce on L in place (ct 1) while swinging the R across in front of L (touching toe to ground or near to ground); kick the R fwd while bouncing on L in place (ct 2).
7 Repeat meas 6.
8 Repeat meas 6. L arm bends and tucks to small of back to begin dance.

Presented by Loui Tucker
Camp Hess Kramer Institute
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