

Łusy (Poland)

From the town of Biłgoraj (beehw-GOH-righ) in the southeastern part of Poland comes the dance Łusy (WEE-see), which means “bald-headed.” A strange name indeed, but the name is derived from the lyrics of the song that accompanies the melody. This dance is also found in the Ukraine under the name “Marysiu.” The lyrics of the song and the melody have a strong Jewish influence.

Biłgoraj folklore has only recently become popular in the Polish Folk world due to the passion of one instructor who teaches this region at the “Instructors’ Course” given in Poland each year to young students from around the world. I learned this dance in 2010 from one of my students, Matt Malacha, who took the course and returned with an abundance of notes in hand, full of eagerness to choreograph a Biłgoraj suite.



Pronunciation: WEE-see

Music: 2/4 meter

*Folk Dances of Poland by Richard Schmidt,
Stockton 2012, Track 7*

Formation: Couples in a circle.

Steps& Styling: Hold A: Standing side-by-side, M’s R arm is around W’s waist; W’s L hand is on M’s R shldr; the other hands are joined and extended parallel to the floor in front.

Hold B: M’s R arm is around W’s waist; W’s L hand is on M’s R shldr; free hand makes a fist on hip.

Walk and Slide steps: Use Hold A, above. M’s L and W’s R arms are extended in front parallel to the floor throughout. M’s ftwk is noted; W use opp ftwk. This step is used entirely in Fig I.

1 Facing CCW, M step L fwd while bending R knee slightly to create a small dip (ct 1); bring R ft fwd (ct &); step R fwd (ct 2), turning 90 degrees R to face W (ct &).

2 M step sdwd L (ct 1); slide R ft along the floor twd L (ct &); step R next to the L (ct 2); turn 90 degrees L to face CCW on (ct &)

Od się/Do się (meaning “Away from and towards”): Use Hold B, above. M’s ftwk is noted; W use opp ftwk. Like a hinge, dancers open slightly and turn head to look away from ptr on meas 1, close slightly and turn head back to look directly at ptr on meas 2, open again and look away on meas 3, and close again and look at ptr on meas 4.

1 3 small steps in place, L, R, L (cts 1&2); hold (ct &).

2 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk.

Łysy — continued

Walk and Stamp: Use Hold A, above. M's ftwk is noted; W use opp ftwk.

1 3 steps fwd, L, R, L, (cts 1, &, 2); stamp R next to L (ct &).

2 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk.

Revolve: Use Hold A, above. M's ftwk is noted; W use opp ftwk.

1 Beg L, 4 steps bkwd (L, R, L, R), pulling the W fwd, creating a CCW rotation as a couple.

Meas 2/4 meter

Pattern

4 meas INTRODUCTION. Cpls begin facing each other with fists on hips, M with backs to ctr. M and W use same ftwk. On meas 4 use opp ftwk in opp direction (L).

1-2 Hold opening position.

3 Slightly bend knees and step R to R (ct 1). Touch L next to R (ct 2).

4 Repeat meas 3 with opp ftwk and direction.

I. FIGURE I. VOCAL

1 *Men sing!* (Lyrics on next page) Beg R, EVERYONE walk two steps R, L (cts 1-2).

2 Step R fwd (ct 1); touch L next to R (ct 2)

3-4 Repeat meas 1-2 with opp ftwk and direction. On meas 5 and 6, repeat meas 1 and 2. On meas 7 and 8, go to the L with same ftwk as meas 3 and 4, but rotate one revolution CCW.

5-6 Repeat meas 1-2.

7-8 Repeat meas 3-4, but full turn L in place.

9-14 *Women sing!* (Lyrics on next page) M remain standing in place while W walk 6 steps CCW around ptr beg R, finishing facing M.

15-16 Turn L in place using 4 steps (R, L, R, L), and end facing CCW, with W on M's R. M turn about $1\frac{1}{4}$; W turn $\frac{3}{4}$.

II. FIGURE II. Traveling CCW and CW

1-8 Travel CCW using 4 Walk and Slide Steps.

9-12 One Od Się/Do Się.

13-14 One Walk and Stamp step moving CCW.

15-16 One Revolve step, but turn only $\frac{1}{2}$ to end facing CW.

17-32 Repeat meas 1-16 moving CW, and end facing ctr.

- III FIGURE III. In and out.
- 1-4 2 Walk and Slide steps. On meas 5 to 8 they reverse the Walk and Slide step using opp ftwk but not changing hold, away from the ctr.
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4, with opp ftwk and direction, moving away from ctr. Do not change the handhold.
- 9-12 One Od Się/Do Się step in place.
- 13-14 One Revolve step to finish facing CCW.
- 15-16 Each take four small steps, turning individually. M turn L; W turn R. End facing CCW, standing side by side, W on M's R.

Sequence: Introduction, Fig I once
Fig II, Fig III, Fig II, Fig III, Fig II, Fig III

Presented by Richard Schmidt

Lyrics

Men sing:

Moja ty Marysiu coś tak bardzo zbladła,
Dałbym ci jabłuszko to byś się najadła.

My Mary, you look so pale
I give you an apple for you to eat

Women respond:

Jeszcze ja się jeszcze w Biłgoraju zmieszczę,
Choć majątku nie mam ciebie łysy nie chcę.

Although I still don't fit in Biłgoraj,
And I have no dowry, I do not want you, Baldhead!