

SLAVJANKA

Serbian

PRONUNCIATION: slav-YAHN-kah

TRANSLATION: A hilly district in Belgrade

SOURCE: Dick Oakes learned this dance from Dick Crum who learned it from folkdancers in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, in 1954. Al Bahr taught it at the 1958 California Kolo Festival.

BACKGROUND: Slavjanka is one of many elegant "old town" dances composed around the turn of the 19th to the 20th century and danced in the ballrooms of Belgrade (Beograd) and other cities. Slavjankas were danced by the middle and upper classes, with royalty often present. As was true of many others, Slavjanka filtered down to the villages by way of the orchestras, becoming livelier as the musicians sped up the music. It was brought to the United States, where it is now a vigorous dance.

The Yanković sisters described the dance in detail as it was originally done, elegantly with walking steps in the first part (four step-closes to the right and four left); the second part exactly as done now.

The music appears without any words in several very old (WWI era?) folios under the name Slavjanka, which by the way does not have a "Slav" connotation nor dedicated to a Slavic girl; it refers to a hilly district in Belgrade by that name, just south of the main railroad station. The same printed music is on the only known recording, and the one used by folk dancers, RCA Victor 3025 by the Milan Verni Tamburitza Orchestra. It is a vocal recording of the song "Malo ja, malo ti" (A little from me, a little from you.)

Kolos (circle dances), such as Slavjanka, may still be seen in the villages on Sundays, Saint's Days, and National Days, while in the larger cities, such as Belgrade, they are still danced at events celebrating a birth, a courtship or betrothal, a wedding, or a Slava (family Saint's Day feast). Belgrade, the "white city," is the largest city of Serbia and lies at the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers, where the Pannonian Plain meets the Balkans. Belgrade is home to many ethnicities from all over the former Yugoslavia. Many people came to the city as economic migrants from smaller towns and the countryside, while thousands arrived as refugees from Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo as a result of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s.

MUSIC: RCA Victor (45rpm) 3025
National (45rpm) 454-B

FORMATION: Open or closed circle of dancers, hands joined and held at shoulder height in "W" pos.

METER/RHYTHM: 2/4

STEPS/STYLE: Steps are small but lively.

MEAS

MOVEMENT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

None.

I. PART ONE

- 1 With ft together, rise on balls of both ft (ct & of previous meas), come down onto both heels with gentle flex of knees (ct 1), rise onto balls of ft (ct &), bounce heels (ct 2), bounce heels (ct &),
- 2 Step R swd, flexing knees (ct 1), closing L to R, rise onto balls of both ft (ct &), bounce heels (ct 2); bounce heels (ct &),
- 3-8 Repeat action of meas 2 six times,
- 9 Repeat action of meas 1,
- 10-16 Reverse action of meas 2-8, beginning L and moving L (CW).

II. PART TWO

- 17 Lower joined hands to sides and step R in front of L (ct 1), step L in place (ct 2),
- 18 Step R next to L (ct 1), hop R (ct 2),
- 19-20 Reverse action of meas 17-18, beginning L and moving L (CW),
- 21-32 Repeat action of meas 17-20 three times.

NOTE: With no introduction it is difficult to start on the first beat of the music. Therefore, follow the leader.

Repeat entire dance from beg.

SLAVJANKA
(Malo Ja, Malo Ti)
Serbia

*Malo Ja, Malo Ti has many verses that
are "off color," not something you'd want
your grandmother hear you sing.*

/ Haj, malo ja, malo ti, malo ja,
pa čemo se frajlice, opet voleti. /
/ Haj, uba, uba, uba, uba, ubava,
uba, uba, ubava, curo garava. /

/ Haj, grli me, ljubi me, grli me,
i u bari vodi me gde mi sve. /
/ Haj, neka, neka, neka, neka, nek se zna,
neka, neka, nek se zna, da te ljubim ja. /

/ Haj, grli me, ljubi me, grli me,
i u krevet baci me, pa radi sto znaš. /
/ Haj, uba, uba, uba, uba, ubava,
uba, uba, ubava, curo garava. /

Oh, a little from me, a little from you,
That way, frölein, we will like each other again.

Oh, . . . , brunette girl.

Oh, caress me, kiss me, hug me,
take me to the bar for everything.

Oh, . . . , let it be known that I love you.

Oh, hug me, kiss me, hug me,
throw me in bed, and do what you know best.

Oh, . . . , brunette girl.