

# ~ G a c o k ~

Pronunciation: gah-tsohk

Record: Folk Dancer MH 45-4001. Music by Stanisław Szabat's Folk Orchestra from Rzeszów.

This is a couple dance in 2/4 time from the Rzeszów region in southeastern Poland. The name of the dance derives either from the name of the village Gać, where it originated, or from the verb gacić which is the Rzeszów dialect for the action of whitewashing the walls of a house in Spring, a common custom in Poland. The dance is very popular with folk dancing groups in Rzeszów region. The music is composed of two melodies, each 8 measures long, and a special step is done to each one.

Basic Step A: During melody A (with the exception of Part I-A) one does 8 polka steps in a flat footed manner, with knees quite bent. Styling point: the first step of the polka is long, the second smaller, and the third is the longest of all and slightly accented. There are usually 2 stamps instead of the 8th polka step, with which one gets into the position of the next figure.

Basic Step B: During melody B one does 4 sets of the following step: standing on Lft and leaning slightly to R, with knees bent, one does 2 weightless stamps with Rft, followed by a polka step starting on Rft and moving sideways to R; during the polka step the body straightens. Same pattern is repeated to L and R and L again. Again there are usually 2 stamps instead of the last polka step, with which one gets into the position of the next figure. The 4 sets are sometimes done starting with Lft by the Men. During the 2 weightless stamps Men shout "hop siup" [hohp shyoop] while the Women answer "tra la la" during the polka part.

There are 6 parts of the dance and each part contains a slight variation of these basic steps.

Starting position: Couples in a circle, partners face each other standing about 5 feet apart. Women are on the inside, Men are on the outside.

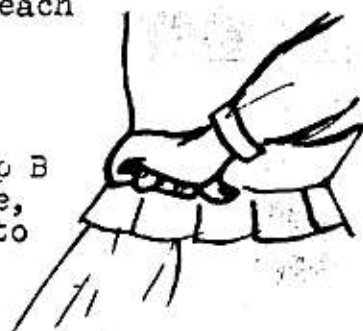
## PART I-A

Man's part: Man has his L fist on own L hip and R arm straight up in air slightly to R. He moves to R with 3 step-closes and a stamp. Before each step he bends his knees and straightens them as he steps. At the same time he shakes his R hand. This gesture, common in other Rzeszów dances, is supposed to have originated at the village markets. The onion sellers were holding a bunch of onions high in the air, shaking them and shouting "onions for sale!" During the remaining 4 measures Man repeats the same pattern with opposite hand motion, footwork and direction.

Woman's part: Woman places fists on own waist in front (near navel), with thumbs and knuckles pressing into waist, elbows forward. In this position she moves the hands and arms up and down quickly in a shaking motion. Starting with Rft with 16 walking steps she approaches the Man. Note: there are several shakes to each step. At the end of Part I-A partners are close, facing each other.

## PART I-B

With both fists on own waist (as described in Woman's Part I-A) both Man and Woman do Basic Step B and finish with 2 stamps (LR); Man stays in place, Woman does half a CW turn and the couple gets into Varsovienne position, called the okienko [oh-kyehn-koh] - a little window.



(cont.)

PART II-A

Both facing center, starting with Lft, with 7 polka steps (Basic Step A) couple moves RLOD and finishes with 2 stamps (RL).

PART II-B

Still in the Varsovienné position and facing center, couple does Basic Step B and with the final 2 stamps (LR Man, however, does not put weight on his Rft) gets into social dance position, Man facing LOD.

PART III-A

Man starting Rft forward, Woman Lft backward, with 7 turning polka steps (Basic Step A) couple moves LOD around the ring, turning CW and finishes with 2 stamps (Man LR, Woman RL) facing the center of the ring.

PART III-B

Still in social dance position, pointing joined hands toward center, couple does Basic Step B (Man starting Lft Woman Rft) moving towards and away from the center of the ring. Note: there are no stamps at the end of this Part.

PART IV-A

Retaining the same position, starting with outside ft, with 3 polka steps couple moves towards center; with 2 stamps (Man RL, Woman LR) they do a couple turn with the Man backing up, Woman moving forward and end facing away from the center. They repeat same pattern with opposite footwork and direction, return to place and with the 2 final stamps (Man LR, Woman RL) end still in social dance position, Man facing out.

PART IV-B

Man starting Lft, Woman Rft, couple does a variation of Basic Step B: after the 2 weightless stamps instead of the polka step couple does a full CW pivot turn with 2 steps moving in LOD (as always there will be 4 sets of this combination). Helpful hint: knees and body bend during the stamps, knees and body straighten during the pivot which is done on the balls of the ft. After the last pivot Man switches his weight to Lft.

PART V-A

All join hands in single circle, and starting Rft with 8 polka steps all move LOD; with the last polka step Women step forward to make an inside circle without joining hands.

PART V-B

Man does Basic Step B, shaking his R hand in the onion seller fashion; he finishes with 2 stamps (LR). Woman does another variation of Basic Step B: instead of the polka step after the 2 weightless stamps she does a solo turn with 3 steps; this turn is CW when the stamps are with Rft and CCW when the stamps are with Lft. No final 2 stamps for her.

PART VI-A

All the Women join hands in an inside ring, Men stretch their arms to sides as if to form an outside circle. With 3 polka steps (Men starting Lft, Women Rft) ending with 2 stamps Men move RLOD and Women LOD; the pattern is repeated with opposite footwork and direction.

(cont.)

PART VI-B

Another variation of Basic Step B: All do the 2 weightless stamps (Men L Women Rft); with the polka step Men move forward under the arches formed by Women's joined hands as Women move backward, hands over the Men's heads. The pattern is repeated: Men make arches and move backward as Women duck under and move forward. As always the pattern is done 4 times in all.

The dance is now repeated from the beginning noting that in Part I-A the Women make an extra little loop in order to get into the proper position to face the Men. At the very end, after ducking under the arches for the last time, Women make half a CW turn and face their partners.

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Dance introduced at the Maine Folk Dance Camp, 1970, by Ada and Jaś Dzielanowski, who learned it in Rzeszów, Poland, from Leokadia Magdziarz, a noted authority of Rzeszów folklore. Directions prepared with assistance of Mary Ann Herman. Please do not reproduce them without Ada's permission: 41 Katherine Road, Watertown, Mass. 02172, tel. (617)223-9061.

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CHILDREN'S VERSION: An even number of people but not necessarily couples of boys and girls.

PART I-A

All join hands in single circle, and starting Rft with 7 polka steps (Basic Step A - see p. 1) all move LOD and finish with 2 stamps (LR) facing the center of the ring.

PART I-B

All do Basic Step B (see p. 1) starting Lft, singing "hop siup tra la la."

PART II-A & B

Repeat pattern of Part I-A & B with opposite footwork and direction.

PART III-A

Starting Rft with 3 polka steps (Basic Step A) and 2 stamps (LR) done in place all move towards the center of the ring; then with 3 polka steps all move backward away from the center of the ring; with the final 2 stamps (RL) the R-hand person in every couple step in, join hands and form an inside circle, while the L-hand person stamps twice in place.

PART III-B

All starting Rft same pattern as in Part VI-B in the Adults' version (see p. 3).

Repeat the entire dance from the beginning three more times.

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