

RATUKAS (The Little Wheel), Raatiko

Raatiko, or, Radiko, seems to be not a "certain dance," but a "family of dances," like Varsouvienne. Most folk dance lorists concede Raatiko to Finland as the home of origin even though it is also danced in Norway and Sweden. In Denmark and Germany it is known as "Lott is Dead," while the New Mexicans dance it as the Finns do and call it "La Camilla."

The version described here could, perhaps, be called a Lithuanian version, but it is NOT a Lithuanian dance even though it is supplied to us by Kazys Stupuras, the Baltimorean Lith who brought Kojo, Koja, from Lithuania. Kazys says that the "Ratukas" (Little Wheel) tune was played by his father on the violin for a great number of years. The father might have picked it up from a Finnish community. But this version of the dance is a bit different from the regular run of Ratikas and it may prove to be an excellent mixer.

FORMATION: Stand in two's in a regular ballroom dance position anywhere on the floor.

Dance: During music A and for 16 measures polka anywhere on the floor. By the 16th measure, end in a large double circle. During music B (4 measures), partners join inside hands (boy's right hand holds girl's left hand) and march forward eight steps. During music C (next 4 measures), face partner and join both hands and slide back with eight slides to original places.

Repeat Music B and C and also the very same steps. However, boys move up one partner ahead and start the march with a new girl and slide back again to original place.

Start dance from the very beginning, doing the polka with the new girl acquired during the previous marching.

Repeat dance as long as desired.