

SĂRĂCIA Romanian

Notes by Dick Crum for Aman Institute 94

Sărăcia (suh-ruh-chee' -ah, 'poverty') is a folk dance popular in Romanian communities in the U.S. I learned it during my childhood among the Romanians in St. Paul, Minnesota. It was danced by young and old, but was a particular favorite of the community's children. The Serbs and Croats in the eastern part of the U.S. also do variants of *Sărăcia* under the name *Rumunjsko kolo* (roo'-moon-skoh koh'-loh, 'Romanian kolo'), having learned it from the Romanian immigrant community in eastern Pennsylvania and adapted it to kolo style.

I have searched in vain for information on *Sărăcia* during trips to Romania and through exhaustive inquiries and correspondence with folklore institutions and individual experts in that country. So far, no trace of this dance has been found (although, curiously, its "B" music appears as a brief motif in the score of Russian choreographer Igor Moiseyev's *Moldavian Suite*!).

I suspect that *Sărăcia* was an urban dance that enjoyed brief popularity in Romania at the time of immigration to the U.S., was brought here, and subsequently disappeared in the homeland. It may also have been one of the so-called Romanian "national" dances that were taught at one time in schools and occasionally entered local folk-dance repertoires. Structurally, it belongs to the pan-Romanian *sârba* family.

It is described here as done in the St. Paul Romanian community in the 40s and 50s at all dance events.

Recordings Tape cassette #941, Romanian Folk Dances (re-issue of vintage 78 rpm recording).
Meter 2/4
Formation Closed circle, mixed men, women and children. Hands are joined and held down at sides ("V" position).

MEAS	ACTION
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Part 1 - Rocking steps with stamps

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| Meas 1 | Facing ctr, step Rft in place of Lft, displacing Lft back in air (1); step Lft in place of Rft, displacing Rft forward in air (2). |
| Meas 2 | Still facing ctr, step Rft again in place of Lft, displacing Lft back in air (1); hop in place on Rft, bringing Lft around in front in air (2). |
| Meas 3 | Still facing ctr, step Lft in place of Rft, displacing Rft back in air (1); step Rft in place of Lft, displacing Lft forward in air (2). |
| Meas 4 | Still facing ctr, step Lft again in place of Rft, displacing Rft back in air (1); |

hop in place on Lft, bringing Rft around in front in air (2).

Meas 5-6 Repeat movements of meas 1-2.

Meas 7-8 Stamp Lft in place 3 times beside Rft (without taking weight on Lft) (1,2; 1, pause).

Meas 9-16 Reverse footwork of meas 1-8.

Part 2 - Sârba steps traveling to R

Meas 17-18 Facing directly to R (in LOD), take 2 step-hops : R-hop, L-hop (1,2; 1,2).

Meas 19 Turning briefly to face ctr, step Rft to R (1); step Lft in back of Rft (2).

Meas 20-22 Repeat movements of meas 17-19, continuing to travel in LOD.

Meas 23-24 Repeat movements of meas 17-18, continuing to travel in LOD. Then turn to face ctr and bring Rft around in front in preparation for return to Part 1.