

Varnenski Kjuček

Dobrudja, Bulgaria

This dance is from Varna, a large seaport on the Black Sea in the Dobrudja region. A "kjuček" (kjuchek) has many forms and is commonly danced by the Roma (Gypsy) in Bulgaria, Turkey and some areas of Serbia and Greece. The different types of "kjučeј" or "čoček" as it is also called, are extremely varied, the one thing in common is the 9/8 rhythm. The beat is similar to "Daichovo (Daičovo), but much slower and heavier.

TRANSLATION: "Varnenski" refers to the town of Varna; "kjuček" (kjuchek) refers to "kju" as in BEAUtiful. It is also often referred to as a "čoček."

PRONUNCIATION: VAHR-nen-skee CUE-check

RECORD: Special tape by Mitko Manov

RHYTHM: Counted as: 1-2 3-4 5-6 7-8-9
1 2 3 4 (Q,Q,Q,S)

FORMATION: Individuals in a circle facing ctr with fist on hip

STYLE: The styling is very different for M and W. The M dance very heavy, are down to the ground with bent knees, and have strong arm movements. The W movements are mainly concentrated in the arms with beautiful movements and a straight body. W often dance with a kerchief, while both can also dance with wooden spoons.

STEPS: Basic step with R: Lift on L (ct ah); step R (ct 1-2); close L beside R (ct 3); step R (ct 4). This step can be done moving sdwd, fwd, bkwd, etc.

SEQUENCE: The figures below are not in any particular order. The sequence is as presented at Statewide 2001.

METER: 9/8 PATTERN

Meas.

INTRODUCTION: Beg 1 meas after kaval (flute) begins.

FIG. I: Move sdwd R & L

1 Facing ctr with fists on hips - do 1 basic step sdwd R (R to R; close L; R beside L).

2-7 Repeat meas 1, alternating ftwk and direction. (7 times in all)

FIG. II: Moving fwd in LOD (CCW)

Fists on hip throughout fig.

1-8 Facing and moving in LOD (CCW) - do 8 basic, beg L. During meas 1, turn body to face slightly "out" of circle; on meas 2 face slightly "in" twd ctr. Repeat 6 more times. (8 times in all)

FIG. III: Move fwd and bkwd with hand circles & flips

- 1 Facing and moving twd ctr - do 1 basic fwd, beg R.
Hands - at shldr ht and fwd of body with palms fwd and form small circles. Hands circle twd each other then down (cts 1-2); from that pos hands quickly continue to circle twice more (cts 3-4).
- 2-4 Repeat meas 1, alternating ftwk, but with same hand movements. (4 times in all)
- 5-8 Repeat ftwk of meas 1-4, only move bkwd - while leaning slightly fwd.
- 5-7 Hands - With palms twd body, hands move inward and beg to circle down (cts 1-2); then quickly circle (flip) hands up and around twice (cts 3-4).
- 8 Hands - Raise hands high above head - clap (ct 1); hold (ct 2); clap twice (cts 3-4).

FIG. IV: Sdwd movement with hands flips

- 1-4 Repeat ftwk of Fig. I, alternate moving sdwd R and L.
- 1 Hands - With hands at shldr ht and fwd with palms twd body, turn hands from the wrists so that the palms circle in, down and around (cts 1-2); turning palms twd floor, R hands is sdwd at chest ht, L arm across body and slightly lower than R arm - in this pos push arms sdwd R twice (cts 3-4).
- 3-4 Repeat hand movements of meas 1, alternating direction. (4 times in all)

FIG. V: Turn L & R in place

- 1-4 Turn L (CCW) once in place - alternating ftwk, with 4 basic steps, beg R.
Hands - With L fist on hip, raise R hand high above head and rotating (flipping) hand. Beg with palm twd body, then rotate down and flip up with palm away from body (cts 1-2); flip R hand twice more (cts 3-4).
- 5-8 Turn R (CW) once in place - alternating ftwk, with 4 basic steps, beg R.
Hands - Same hand movements as in meas 1-4, except with R hand on hip and L hand high.

FIG. VI: Small CW oval

- 1 Facing diag L - do 1 basic diag L fwd, beg R.
Hands - Hold arms diag fwd and high above head (arms straight).
- 2 Facing diag R - do 1 basic to R, beg L.
Hands - Arms remain raised.
- 3 Facing ctr - do 1 basic bkwd, beg R.
Hands - slowly swing arms to V-pos and slightly bkwd of body (cts 1-3); arms swing slightly fwd (ct 4).

- 4 Do 1 basic in place, beg L.
Hands - slowly swing arms to V-pos and slightly bkwd of body (cts 1-3); arms swing slightly fwd (ct 4).

FIG. VII: Crossover

Hands high above head with straight arms throughout fig.

- 1 Lift on L - turning to face diag L (ct ah); step R across L (ct 1); hold (ct 2); step L back to place (ct 3); step R beside L - turning to face ctr (ct 4).
- 2 Repeat meas 1, with opp ftwk and direction (LxR, R bk, L in pl)
- 3 Facing ctr - lift on L (ct ah); step R fwd (ct 1); hold (ct 2); step L back to place (ct 3); step R in place (ct 4).
- 4 Turning to R (CW) in place - do 1 basic, beg L.

MEN'S VARIATION #1:

- 1 Facing diag L of ctr - hold in place with wt on R with L heel extended fwd on floor.
Hands - extend L hand fwd at chest ht with palm of hand twd body (ct 1); clap R hand twd L hand (ct 2); draw R hand twd body (ct 3); clap R hand twd L hand (ct 4).
- 2 Step L fwd in plié with partial wt, R remains on floor (ct 1); in this pos clap R hands fwd at knee ht (ct 2); put full wt on L as R lifts bkwd - turn to face ctr (ct 3); slap outside of R heel with R hand, L hand remains lifted at head ht (ct 4).
- 3 Facing ctr and beg to turn R (CW) - step R in place - clap hands fwd at chest ht (ct 1); continue to pivot R on R (ct 2); slap outside of L heel with L hand (ct 3); continue to pivot on R - clap hands fwd at chest ht (ct 4).
- 4 Drop into squat pos (cts 1-2); begin to raise (ct 3); land on R - facing diag L - with L heel extended fwd on floor (ct 4).

MEN'S VARIATION #2

- 1 Facing ctr - step L to L with partial wt in plié, leave R toe in place - clap extended hands fwd (ct 1); slowly shift all of wt onto L as R beg to move on floor slightly closer to L - clap hands on ct 3 (cts 2-3); quickly put full wt on L as R lifts bkwd (ct 4).
- 2-4 Repeat meas 1, alternating ftwk and direction.

Dance video provided by Mitko Manov, and transcribed by Dorothy Daw 4-01

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