

THE DANCE HORRA AGADATI

THE HISTORY

AT the top of a sand dune in Tel-Aviv, in a large wooden hut, the young players of the new workers' theatre, "Ohel", are dancing. A tall, good-looking fellow, lithe and graceful, is teaching them a new dance which he has created himself. It is a new Horra, and all the players are working hard and making every effort to perfect the series of jumps and skips, the bows and stampings. Gradually arms are linked and a chain is formed. The circle closes in. The stamping and springing feet are united by the rhythm, and the individuals merge together into a single dancing unit. Their teacher joins in, and inspires the dancers to ever increasing beauty of movement, a quickening of the rhythm, and a mounting excitement and exaltation.

He is such Agadati, the dancer, born in Rumania. He had studied ballet in Russia, and is now portraying Jewish and Arab-Palestinian types in his solo dances. His newly created group dance, is influenced by the Rumanian dances as well as by certain features of the Russian dances. The melody is a Moldavian folk tune.

That was in the year 1924. And that was how the Horra Agadati found its way into Palestine. The "Ohel" players introduced it into the Plain of Esdraelon and in Galilee and it spread throughout all the villages and settlements. In the course of the years the melody and form changed and developed.

The summer of 1944. In the hills of Ephraim, in the kibbutz of Dalia, on a hill overlooking the land as far as Mount Carmel and the foothills of Galilee, thousands of spectators who have come from all over the country are seated in an amphitheatre built up of bales of straw. They are facing a pergola of white columns outlined against the darkening evening sky. On an open wooden stage they see groups of dancers, men and girls, members of kibbutzim from all parts of Palestine. It is the first Palestinian folk dance festival. Now a young group from a kibbutz in the Emek is performing the Horra

Agadati in its present Palestinian form. Agadati himself, sitting in the audience, hardly recognizes his creation, though he says with deep pleasure: "Now it has become a real folk dance, with a life of its own!"

The tune given here is not the original one, but a new and more Palestinian melody, recently composed by the Palestinian composer Uri Boskovitz.

ON THE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

It is good to dance to the accompaniment of musical instruments. If the dancers sing themselves, the beauty of both dance and song suffer, especially with increasing speed and vigour. Instruments especially suitable for accompaniment are flutes, violins and drums. If you cannot manage these, you may use a piano or a harmonica, but do not accompany oriental tunes with European full accords.

HOW TO LEARN IT

- 1) Learn the tune and words by heart. Know them exactly and freely! Pay attention from the beginning to the metronomical figure (M.M.) which is to be found printed on the top of the tune and which indicates the tempo of tune and dance.
- 2) Read slowly and carefully the whole description of the dance. Then concentrate on the first part only, (i.e. steps 1 to 4). Read it again until you comprehend it perfectly, try to perform it, slowly first, then in the above mentioned tempo (see M.M.) After that start to learn the second part. Thus study and work through each part until you master it.
- 3) Compare carefully the numbered drawings with the corresponding descriptive notes, and the numbers above the music.
- 4) Start the work with patience and concentration, never in a hurry.
- 5) Study the dance in the company of 2, 3 or more friends. Help one another and try it together.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DANCE

Round for any number of persons, moving in a closed circle counter-clockwise; hands on shoulders of nearest partners. The dance starts slowly, tempo and vigour gradually increasing. The choreographical form is the same throughout the dance.

THE ORIGINAL VERSION:

PART A.

1. Jump backwards, to the right, landing on the right foot, with body extending obliquely. see cover page 4.
2. Drop left foot with heel touching floor.
- 3-4. 3 steps left-right-left—and pause—on the spot, body bent slightly forward.
- 5-8. Repeat 1—4.
9. 1 "Debka" jump ("Debka" step of the Arab dance). Jump with feet together on the spot, turning to the left, body erect.
10. The same to the right.
11. Jump on left foot.
12. Stamp with right foot forward towards middle of the circle. Body bent forwards.

13. Step on left foot on the spot, body erect.
14. Turn body to your right and step counter-clockwise with right foot.
- 15-16 Step left-right-left—3 quick stamping steps and pause, body bent slightly forward.

PART B.

- 1-16 Repetition of Part A.

VARIATION:

PART A. All the dancers join hands.

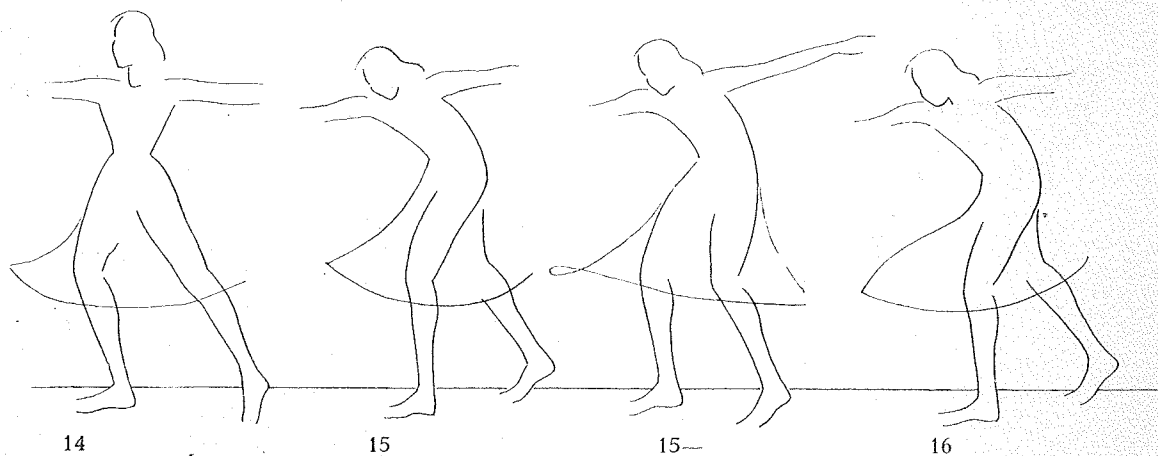
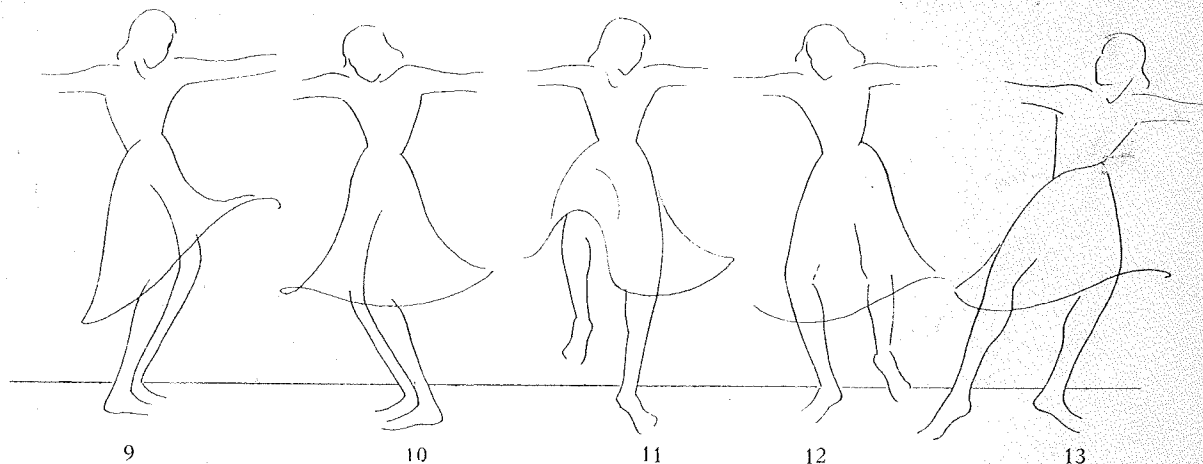
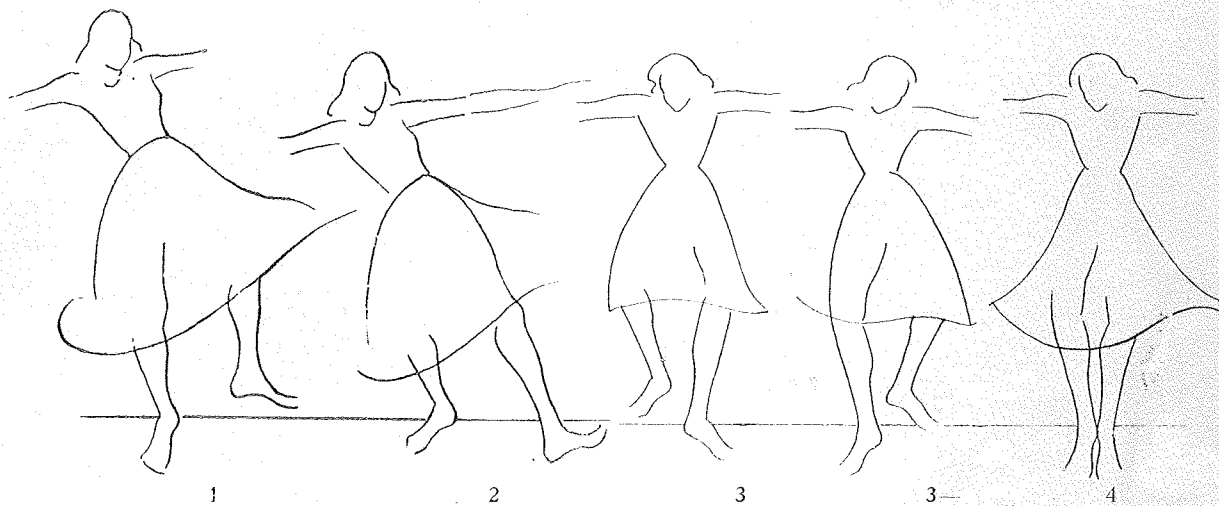
- 1-4. 4 running steps counter-clockwise, beginning with right foot (see part A of the tune).
- 5-8. 4 "Debka" jumps.
- 9-12 4 running steps.
- 13-16 4 "Debka" jumps.

PART B. Hands on shoulders.

- 1-16 Repetition of the steps in The Original Version.

DESIGNS OF THE STEPS

THE FIGURES REFER TO THE CORRESPONDING FIGURES OF THE DESCRIPTION



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HORRA AGADATI



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