

Dum dum diddily dum dum

Exploring Balkan Rhythms and Dance

Mandy de Winter



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This work is by Mandy de Winter and is the fruit of her love and passion for and dedication to Balkan dances. Please do not copy it or pass it on.

All proceeds from the sale of this work are being sent to the Severn Hospice in Mandy's memory.



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When I began teaching, much of what I knew had been learnt experientially. I thought I knew how to dance a Bulgarian or Macedonian dance - well I could dance in time to the music and mostly I got the steps right. It wasn't long however before I realised there was a bit more to it! I often heard phrases like "Makedonsko, Pravo, Les Noto"- but I had no idea what they meant.

Fast forward many years and I decide to offer a Teacher Training Course. Of course, one aspect that simply **had** to be included was *Teaching in Rhythm*. I knew immediately there was only one teacher who could deliver that aspect of the course, and that was Mandy de Winter. Why? Several reasons: she had an innate sense of rhythm; she was a wonderful musician and a superb teacher, but that's not all. Perhaps even more importantly, Mandy was an **intuitive** musician with an amazing theoretical knowledge: she also knew how to teach these rhythms to people who had very little or no musical background. She could demystify what was a huge mystery to many of us.

Mandy's *Teaching in Rhythm* developed into sessions on *Traditional Dance Families* which in turn led her to develop an off-shoot course that she called *Exploring Balkan Rhythms and Dance (Dum dum diddily dum dum)*. Here, participants not only learnt about the difference between a Makedonsko and a Racenitsa in a 7/8 metre but they also learnt how to **teach** these dances (and more).

Mandy always produced incredibly detailed dance notations, but one of the course participants, Kathryn Louhichi, realising that the learning and value of the workshops would be greater if there were videos to aid recall and practice at home, asked her to produce such a resource. Kathryn said, "I could dance most of the dances with Mandy leading but found some of the trickier rhythms hard to capture at home with just the notes for guidance ..." Mandy responded!

Until now these resources have only been available to people who attended her trainings. However, I think that this is a quite extra-ordinary body of work and shouldn't die with her. I think it is a part of her legacy that many people haven't been able to access and so I would like to rectify that.

So that is what you will find here. For each dance you will find the DVD clip of Mandy as described above, the track of music, Mandy's detailed dance notation and the key to her notation. (PLEASE make sure you download this page too as this is so important and will enable you to read Mandy's notes correctly.)

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Thank you

Judy King

KEY TO DANCE NOTATION

The top line \rightarrow indicates the direction of the movement of the dancers in the Circle or Line and the symbol \leftarrow indicates the direction you are facing:

e.g. \leftarrow - towards centre \cup - away from centre \leftarrow - facing left \rightarrow - facing right etc. \curvearrowright - turn

The second line indicates which foot to use e.g. R = right; L = left. The vertical lines in front of or after the footwork indicate a bar of the music. The number of lines directly underneath the footwork indicate the number of beats per step within the bar / measure. (N.B. 'measure' is the American word for 'bar'). e.g:

2/4 | R L | = one beat per step in 2 time. | R | = two beats per step in 2 time.
 4/4: | R L R L | = one beat per step in 4 time. | R L | = two beats per step in 4 time
 | R L R | = a quick quick slow rhythm in 4 time | R L R | = a slow quick quick rhythm in 4 time
 3/4 | R L R | = one beat per step in 3 time. *The Waltz rhythm* gives a strong emphasis to the 1st beat of the bar. *The Tsamikos rhythm* typically emphasises the 1st and 3rd beat of the bar
 | R L | = two beats and one beat per step in 3 time – giving a distinctive *slow quick* rhythm.....and embellishes the steps, (described as a 'tsamikos' step or a 'he-si-tate' step) by using the spaces in between the main beats. This means that musically, a whole beat is divided into e.g. two quaver beats which are worth half the value of the whole beat giving the rhythm Q Q SL SL within one bar.

e.g. 3/4 | ^{*}R₁ L R L |

N.B. The symbol \cup indicates a divided beat with 2 steps that are twice as fast as those for the other whole beats

Uneven Balkan rhythms:

7/8: | R L R | or | R L ^{*}| *Makedonsko* This rhythm groups the 7 quaver beats into 3 groups per bar / measure. The *triplet* comes at the beginning – giving a SL Q Q or long short short rhythm.
 7/8: | R L R | or | R ^{*} L | *Râčenica* – turns the rhythm the other way around – 3 groups with the *triplet* at the end – giving a Q Q SL or short short long rhythm.
 9/8: | R L R L | *Devetorka / Sbornato* - groups the 9 quaver beats into 4 groups to the bar / measure giving a Q Q Q SL or short short short long rhythm.
 11/8: | R L R L R | *Kopanica* - groups the 9 quaver beats into 5 groups to the bar / measure giving a Q Q SL Q Q rhythm or short short long short short.

N.B. the grouped beats given in *brackets is a practical way to indicate that these beats are counted but not 'stepped' on.

The third line indicates the type of foot movement abbreviated as follows:-

b.....backwards	rk.....rk (rk.f = rk forward etc.)
xb.....cross behind	s.....side
bo.....bounce	sm.....small
br.....brush (br.f = brush forward etc.)	st.....stamp (st.cl etc.)
cl.....close	sw.....sway
ctr.....centre	swv.....swivel
d.....diagonal (d.f = diagonal forward etc.)	t.....turn
f.....forwards	to.....touch (to.f = touch forward etc.)
xf.....cross in front	tog.....together
h.....hop (h.f = hop forwards etc.)	rep.....replace
hl / he....heel (hl.f = heel forward etc.)	rel.....release
in.pl.....in place	pt.....point (pt.f = point forward etc.)
o.....in place/ on the spot	Čukče = a Bulgarian term to describe a small
k.....kick (ki.f = kick forward etc.)	rise up and down on heel keeping ball of foot
li.....lift (lix.f = lift across front of other foot etc.)	on ground.
LOD.....line of dance	

Further directions/details about style, arm movements, etc. are given under the third line.

Hand Holds:

V hold = hands joined with arms down at hip height with thumbs to the right.

W hold = hands joined with arms bent at elbows, at shoulder height with thumbs to the right.

T hold or Shoulder hold = arms to shoulder height and with arms straight, lightly resting on your neighbour's nearest shoulder.

Front basket weave hold = with left arm over and right arm under take hold of next but one person's hand either side

Additional notes:

In the full step sheet, Mandy adds the following information at the relevant point of the notation. I add it as extra sheets here.

Dances in 2 time, 3 time & 4 time.

These time signatures imply a regular even pulse in the music with 2, 3 or 4 beats for each bar/measure. There are hundreds of simple dances in these rhythms danced in a variety of styles throughout the Balkans.

PRAVO HORO

The *Pravo Horo* is Bulgaria's national dance and is the most popular line or circle dance in the country. The word *pravo* means *straight* and implies *basic or simple* village dance - *horo* means *dance* (N.B. You may also see 'oro' - the Macedonian word for dance).

It typically has a 3 bar/measure pattern danced in many different regional styles and with many variations. It may also be danced to countless different songs and melodies in each region.

About dances in 3 time

Although 3 is an uneven number it does not mean that it is uneven in the same sense as the asymmetrical *Makedonsko*, *Racenica*, *Devetorka*, *Kopanitsa* rhythms:

i.e. in this timing the 3 beats are not grouped together as they are in the above rhythms but are simply counted in a regular way. However, there are many different ways of expressing 3 time in music and dance e.g.

1. **Waltz rhythm** - with a strong emphasis on the first beat of the bar - gives a lilting feeling to the music and to the steps. It is the rhythm in this metre that, nowadays, we're most familiar with in the West. e.g. see *Oj Devojče Piročanče* in 3/4
2. **A regular 3 count** - not expressed with a lilting feeling to it like the waltz but with more earthy, small and deliberate steps - e.g. see *Večeraj Sino* and also
3. *Glava li ta boli*.
4. **Tsamikos** rhythm – is a regular count of 1, 2, 3 but characteristically has a basic *slow, quick* step pattern giving an 'uneven' feeling to the music/dance by not stepping on the 2nd beat of each bar. *N.B. some 'tsamika' e.g. Tsamikos Kharditsa (a woman's tsamikos), unusually has a step pattern that does step on each beat, which gives the dance a smooth and flowing feeling. However, the characteristic slow quick rhythm is still expressed in the way the music is played and felt in the dance.*

7, 9 & 11 time etc

These time signatures imply an uneven feeling to the pulse of the music and are particularly popular throughout Bulgaria, Macedonia, Northern Greece.

N.B. The Greek 'Kalamatianos' is also in this time signature. This name distinguishes it from the 'Syrtos' - which is danced throughout Greece and which typically has the same basic dance pattern but usually in an even 2/4 or 4/4 metre.

Dances in 7/8

This time signature indicated that there are 7 quaver beats (or 8th notes) in one bar/measure.

The quaver beats are grouped into 3 groups - 2 groups with 2 quavers each and one group with 3 quavers with the first quaver beat in each group being given the most importance.

N.B. The group of 3 quaver beats is described as a *triplet*.

The *triplet* in this time signature can be:

a) at the beginning of the bar/measure - giving the rhythm: **sl, q, q** - counted 123, 12, 12 or 1&a **2, 3**

b) at the end of the bar/measure - giving the rhythm: **q, q, sl** - counted 12, 12, 123 or **1, 2, 3&a**

These two ways of expressing these groupings of beats in 7 time are given particular names in Bulgaria and Macedonia.

When the *triplet* is at the beginning of a bar/measure, the rhythm is called **Makedonsko**

When the *triplet* is at the end of a bar/measure, the rhythm is called **Račenica**

These two rhythms in this time signature are expressed in traditional step patterns.

Dances in 9/8

This metre is very popular throughout Bulgaria and Greece/Macedonia and refers to 9 quaver beats (or 8th notes) in a bar/measure. You simply extend the principle of how to count 7 time and group the quaver beats into 4 groups - 3 groups with 2 quavers each and one group with 3 quavers.

The *triplet* (i.e. the group of 3 quavers) commonly occurs at the end of the bar/measure in this timing giving the rhythm:

Q Q Q **SL** - counted 12, 12, 12, 123 (adding up to 9) or **1, 2, 3, 4 &a** (counting the grouped beats only)

There is a very widespread 3 measure step pattern in this rhythm - given many different names depending on which region/country the music comes from.

In Bulgaria/Macedonia you may see it called by the following names:

Daichovo (named after a person and particular variation) Northern Bulgaria.

Devetorka or *Devetka* - Macedonian word meaning a dance in 9 counts or beats.

Notarcheno (= running) - Western Bulgaria/Macedonia

Samkovsko Horo - originating from the village of Samokov - South Western Bulgaria - the Pirin region.

Svornato or *Sukanato* (= turning) - Southern Bulgaria - the Rhodopes region.

"Šareni Čarapi" or *"Curapia"* (= colourful socks) - after popular song from Western

Bulgaria/Macedonia

And in Greece/Macedonia:

"Tsourapia" - the Greek name for the same popular song derived from the Bulgarian name.

Karsilama - a name originating from Asia Minor (Turkey) meaning 'face to face'.

A couples or solo improvisational dance in this rhythm using a combination of the steps of Devetorka (given in the full stepsheet) plus embellishments of lifts and touches.

Dances in 11 time

A very popular Bulgarian and Macedonian rhythm usually referred to as a **Kopanitsa** in Bulgaria. The name **kopanitsa** means 'uneven' and is also derived from the word for **digging** - a characteristic step typically found in these dances.

Osogovka Oro is a well-known dance in this rhythm and is a classic in the Circle Dance repertoire.

It is a 3 measure dance that has a similar step/dance pattern to **Devetorka or Tsourapia** but feels subtly different as the 11 quaver beats are grouped into 5 groups with the **triplet** placed in the middle of the groupings instead of at the end.

This arrangement gives the rhythm:

Q Q SL Q Q - counted: 12, 12, 123, 12, 12 (adding up to 11) or **1, 2,3 &a, 4, 5**

*Additional notes: Mandy de Winter
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DEVOJČE, DEVOJČE

This is a Macedonian tune to which you can also do the above dance. However, the traditional 3 measure dance called *Devetorka etc.* may also be done to this tune but because the triplet comes on the 2nd stressed beat instead of the 4th the dance has a different feeling and emphasis.

Music Source: Yves Moreau on CD Izvor 2 available from judy@judyking.co.uk

Formation: open circle in a V hold

Style: contained earthy steps.

Metre: 9/8 – q, sl, q, q rhythm counted: 12, 123, 12, 12 or 1 2&a 3 4

Introduction: 9 bars – start with the singing and to finish in a nice place with this recording start the dance with an introductory bar /measure followed by the usual 3 measure dance pattern.

Intro: $\left| \begin{array}{c} \overleftarrow{\text{L}} \\ \text{s} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overrightarrow{\text{R}} \\ \text{cl} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overrightarrow{\text{R}} \\ \text{f} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overleftarrow{\text{L}} \\ \text{f} \end{array} \right| \text{ then } \left| \begin{array}{c} \overrightarrow{\text{R}} \\ \text{f} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overrightarrow{\text{L}} \\ \text{f} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overrightarrow{\text{R}} \\ \text{f} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overrightarrow{\text{L}} \\ \text{f} \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \overrightarrow{\text{R}} \\ \text{f} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overrightarrow{\text{L}} \\ \text{f} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overrightarrow{\text{R}} \\ \text{s} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overrightarrow{\text{L}} \\ \text{*to.cl} \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \overleftarrow{\text{L}} \\ \text{f} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overleftarrow{\text{R}} \\ \text{f} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overleftarrow{\text{L}} \\ \text{s} \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} \overleftarrow{\text{R}} \\ \text{to.cl} \end{array} \right|$

*N.B.*to.cl - is without weight but with flat foot.*

Notation: © Mandy de Winter 2014 © Judy King 2020