

Das Țighele (Romania)

Das Țighele (dahs TSIH-geh-leh) is a non-partner dance from the Yiddish culture. It was collected by Nicholaas Hilferink who reported discovering quite by chance a group of women doing this dance in an old synagogue. The title means "little goat." The song relates a story about children who release a goat that was bought by their father with two coins to slaughter for the Passover meal. Some scholars believe that freedom for the goat is a symbol for freedom of the Jews. The origin of the song ("Dus Ladl Funem Tzigale" in Yiddish) can be traced back to the 16th century. The lyrics are in Yiddish with some German slang expressions, and the refrain (chorus) consists of an Aramaic word ("Hagdadyu") that means "an only kid" referring to the imprisoned goat; it can also mean "prison." Some interpret this word as a metaphorical reference to Israel which was ruled by the Turks when the song was written (Encyclopaedia Judaica). The music was likely performed by the orchestra of the Barasheum Theater of Bucharest with the singer being one of this theater's soloists. Hilferink taught this dance on two occasions in southern California in September 1996 (using the name "Das Lidfunen Țighele" -- Song of the little goat), and at the University of the Pacific Stockton Folk Dance Camp in 1998. This description is based on the original in the Stockton camp syllabus by Machi and Nico Hilferink.

Cassette: Romanian Dances by N. Hilferink -- Stockton 1998, Band A/7.

2/4 meter

Formation: Mixed lines with hands joined in W-position, facing right of center.

Steps and Styling: The walking steps are danced in a relaxed manner.

Styling:

Stamps: The stamps in Figs I and II are done on the full foot and with minimal noise. However, when the dance was taught in southern California, the stamps were done with more emphasis, so some variation here is apparently acceptable. When stamping bend the knee of the supporting foot on the upbeat and then on the beat straighten that leg and bring the stamping foot down.

Measures 2/4 meter

PATTERN

6 meas INTRODUCTION No action (start with vocal).

I. TRAVELLING WITH STAMPS

1 Travelling in LOD, step on R (ct 1); step on L (ct 2).

2 Step on R while turning to face ctr (ct 1); quietly stamp L on full ft, no wt (ct 2).

3 Quietly stamp L again, no wt (ct 1); step back on L (ct 2); step on R beside L (ct &).

4 Step fwd and slightly to R on L (ct 1); quietly stamp R, no wt (ct 2).

5-16 Repeat meas 1-4 three times.

II. TRAVELLING SIDEWARDS

- 1-2 Facing ctr and travelling in LOD, step on R to R (ct 1); step on L across in front of R with slight knee bend (ct 2). Repeat.
- 3 Repeat meas 1-2 at double speed (cts 1,&2,&).
- 4 Step on R to R with slight knee bend (ct 1); quietly double stamp with L, no wt (cts &, 2).
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4 with opp ftwk and direction.

III. TURNING (instrumental)

- 1 Still facing ctr and travelling R (LOD), step on R to R turning one half CW to face out (ct 1); touch ball of L to the side (ct 2).
- 2 Step on L to L, turning CCW one half to face ctr (ct 1); touch ball of R to the side (ct 2).
- 3 Moving in LOD, make one complete turn CW, stepping R, L (cts 1, 2).
- 4 Facing ctr, step to R on R (ct 1); touch ball of L beside R (ct 2).
- 5-6 Repeat meas 3-4 with opp ftwk and direction.

Sequence: Figs I, II, I, II, III;
repeat all;
I, I (meas 1-8 only), II.