

LA BAMBA

A Huapango from Vera Cruz, Mexico

Source: Mexican Dances by Riveroll's Art Gallery, Mexico City.

Record: Imperial 1083, Columbia 12274-F

Formation: Dances stand in two lines partners facing each other. According to the whim of the couples they may change places, dance in place, or the M follows his partner. When dancing each in his place they always face each other. The dance is usually done upon a wooden platform in order to increase the volume and the clarity of the stamping steps.

Steps: Description of 4 La Bamba steps follows the order and length of each being determined purely by the preference of the individual dancer. The dancers stand erect, the movement of the hips is almost imperceptible in contrast to the rapid and precise movement of the feet. W's steps are nearly always the same as the M's. M may have his hands in his pants pockets so that he may thus lift his trousers enough to show off the expert movement of his ft.

Step I - RF crossed over L in front lifting it slightly (ct 1-2). Take 3 steps starting with R and finish by lifting the L ft & crossing it in front of R (ct 3-4).

Step II- El Picado - Jump on L ft, lifting R ft and bending R knee slightly (ct 1). Strike floor with R heel (ct 2) and immediately move fwd with same foot to alternate the step.

Step III El Taconeo - Counts 1-2 same as El Picado. Strike heel 3 times in succession moving fwd to alternate the movement. (ct 3-4)

Step IV- With feet together and knees slightly bent give a small jump obliquely fwd to R then back to place (ct 1). Alternate obliquely fwd to L and back to place (ct 2). Repeat cts 1-2 (cts 3-4). In place alternately place feet in back of each other close to the floor, wt on toes, similar to a skip(5678).

Tying a bow with the feet - After having performed a few of the above steps, the M unwinds his long narrow faja or sash and without missing a step he gives one end of the sash out full length and lay it upon the floor. Then W dances the length of the sash hopping back and forth across it, while the M dances in place. Then M takes his turn in hopping over the sash. Immediately each dancer using his toes while continuing the various dance steps pushes and pulls the sash into position as diagrammed.

To tighten the knot loops A and B are pulled with the feet. The girl then kicks the sash so that her partner catches it, and together they hold it up in their hands while dancing to exhibit the bow successfully tied. The dance ends with untying the bow which is done by pulling out the ends of the sash.

