

DJEBEL AISSA

(Morocco)

Djebel Aissa (JEH-bell Eye-SHAH) is a women's dance from the region of Metarka and Tendara, two cities near the eastern border of Morocco close to Algeria. It was usually done at weddings.

**Music:** Express 255A 4/4 meter Each 8 meas phrase has 4 meas instrumental and 4 meas vocal.

**Formation:** Each W dances in her own area but all start facing the M who are seated watching them.

**Steps and Styling:** Basic Step Sdwd: Step to R side on R (ct 1). Close L to R (ct 2). Step to R side on R (ct 3). Bending R knee close L to R, no wt (ct 4). Repeat of step would start to L side on L ft.

Basic Step Fwd: Step fwd R, L, R (cts 1, 2, 3). Bending R knee close L to R, no wt (ct 4). Repeat of step would start with L ft.

Basic Step Bkwd: Same as Basic Step Fwd but move bkwd.

Hand Pos I: Touch tips of middle fingers together and tips of thumbs together. Fingers are straight and a little separated. Turn palms away from the face. Hands are about at chest height and a little away from the body. Elbows are bent and raised comfortably.

Hand Pos II: Fingers are as described above. Palms are parallel to floor about hip height and a little away from body.

Meas      Pattern

Part I

- 1-4 Introduction. No action. Palms are flat on hips. Fingers are pointing diag fwd and down.
- 5-8 Starting to R side dance Basic Step Sdwd 4 times.

Part II

- 1-4 Dance 1 Basic Step Fwd beginning R. Dance 1 Basic Step Bkwd beginning L. Make a 1/4 turn R and dance 1 Basic Step Fwd. Make 1/2 turn L and dance 1 Basic Step Fwd. End in original place.

Hands in Pos I.

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## DJEBEL AISSA (continued)

5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Part II).

Hands start in Pos I. Extend hands fwd, fingers still touching during meas 5. Bring hands back to starting pos on meas 6. Extend hands again on meas 7 and keep them there until the end of meas 8.

Part III

1-4 Step to R side on R (ct 1). Close L to R (ct 2). On each step knees flex a little. Repeat action 7 more times (8 step-closes in all). Put no wt on last step on L.

Hands are separated just enough so that the tip of each middle finger can touch the tip of its own thumb. Other fingers are gently curved. Hands look as if they were playing finger cymbals. Palms are still fwd. R hand inscribes a CW circle at the same time L hand inscribes a CCW circle.

Each circle takes 2 meas so do it twice.  
5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Part III) but start L and move to L side.

Hands are the same as for meas 1-4 (Part III).



Part IV  
1 Beginning R walk 4 steps fwd.  
2 Make 1/4 turn R and walk 4 steps.  
3-4 Walk 8 steps inscribing a 3/4 CCW circle to end in orig place but with back to original direction.

Audience



5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Part IV).

Because back is to audience at the start, pattern will take different floor area. End in original place, facing audience.

Hands are in Pos I. When turning L, L elbow is raised a little. When turning R, R elbow is raised a little. Look into raised elbow.

Audience

Part V

1-4 Knees are bent and heels are on the floor. Beginning R lift heels alternately in time to music (16 lifts).

Hands have only the two thumbs touching. Hands are at face level with palms turned away from face. All 8 fingers are straight and are wiggled individually.

5-8 In place buzz 16 cts to R. R ft takes the full ct and on L toe on the "and" ct. Ball of R ft remains almost in place and only heel of R ft moves. Very little up and down motion.

Hands are same as for meas 1-4 (Part V).

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## DJEBEL AISSA (continued)

Part VI

- 1-8 Repeat action of Part IV with same hand movement.

Part VII

- 1 Ft are close together and knees slightly bent. Step in place R, L, R (cts 1, 2, 3). Touch L toe next to R (ct 4). On cts 3, 4 turn body slightly to L. R shoulder comes fwd a little.
- 2 Repeat action of meas 1 (Part VII) but start L and turn slightly to R.
- 3-4 Repeat action of meas 1-2 (Part VII).  
Hands are with the palms flat on hips and fingers pointing down and fwd.
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Part VII) but turn body more. Hands are in Pos II. On meas 5 move them to L side. On meas 6 move hands to R side. Repeat action of meas 5-6 for meas 7-8.

Part VIII

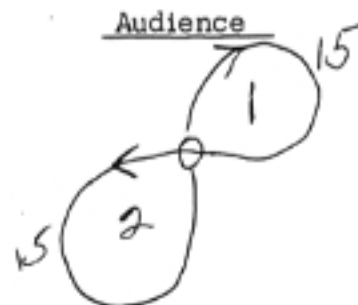
- 1-3 Step to R side on R (ct 1). Close L to R (ct 2). Bend knees swinging them to L (ct 3). Start repeat of action immediately on ct 4. Repeat action twice again. This will take 12 cts (4 x 3) which equals 3 meas of music.
- 4 Step R, L, R (cts 1, 2, 3). Hold (ct 4).
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Part VIII) but beginning L to L side.  
Hands are in Pos I but at shoulder level. Elbows are also raised to shoulder level.

Part IX

- 1-8 Ftwrk is same as Part VIII. On meas 1-3 move diag fwd R. Turn CW in place on meas 4. On meas 5-7 move diag fwd L. Turn CCW in place on meas 8.  
Hands same as in Part VIII.

Part X

- 1-8 With 30 walking steps beginning R inscribe a diag Figure 8. Start at the middle or the waist of the Fig. 8. See diagram.  
On cts 31, 32 kneel on both knees facing audience.  
Hands are as in Part III (Finger cymbals).



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## JEBEL AISSA (continued)

Part XI

- 1 Almost sit on heels but don't quite as hips must be free to move. Hands are in Pos II at hip level. Swing hands to R side (L hip moves fwd a little) (ct 1). Swing hands to L side (R hip moves fwd a little) (ct 2). Swing hands to R side (L hip moves fwd a little) (ct 3). Hold for ct 4.
- 2 Repeat action of meas 1 (Part XI) but swing hands to L side first.
- 3-4 Repeat action of meas 1-2 (Part XI).
- 5-7 Change hands so tips of thumbs are touching and palms are fwd. Fingers are straight and close together. Hands move with a slight tremble. Starting at the L side, hip level, inscribe a large arc that goes overhead and down to the R side. On the last 2 cts of meas 7 bring the hands to the ctr of the body, waist level.
- 8 With the hands in the same pos as meas 5-7 but not trembling, inscribe an arc in the air that travels up close to the body, fwd and down to the floor. Dance ends with hands on knees, finger tips on the floor. Head is bowed down.

Presented by Anatol Joukowsky

Notes by Ruth Ruling

