

GÓRALSKI
(Poland)

Pronunciation: goo-RAHL-skee

Translation: "Góralski" means (dance) of the mountaineers ("góralski" is an adjective from the noun "góral" - a mountaineer). It could signify a dance of any mountaineer people in Poland, for instance, from Żywiec, Spisz, Beskid, or Bieszczady regions. In Poland, however, "góralski" usually means the dance of the mountaineers from Podhale, as this region has the richest folk art and the most intricate dances, and therefore is the best known.

Introduction: The dance, music, and folklore of the Podhale region in the Tatra Mountains in southern Poland is drastically different from the rest of Poland. Podhale is extremely mountainous, the people there have a very different life style from the other regions of Poland, where the land is mostly flat. For instance, the main occupation in Podhale is husbandry, while in the countryside of the rest of Poland it is agriculture. Also, the mountaineers of Podhale (called Górale, plural of Góral) have been exposed to a different set of cultural influences, the Slovaks and the Magyars are one example of this, but by far the most important influence to reach Podhale from the outside of Poland was during the XV and XVI centuries when a nomadic people, the Wallachian shepherds, wandered through the Carpathian Mountains. Their culture and folklore were very strong and left a profound imprint on the cultures throughout the Carpathian Mountains. The folklore of Podhale has more similarities to other areas in the Carpathian Mountains outside of Poland than it does to Poland proper.

Góralski is the couple dance of the Górale. There is also a men's dance, the Zbójnicki, which originated from the brigands who roamed the Tatra Mountains in the XVII and XVIII centuries. These are the only two folk dances that have been preserved until today in Podhale. Nowadays many dance types have, of course, become popular throughout Poland, like polkas, waltzes, and rock and roll. This is also true in this region, but Podhale is unique in that the folklore there is still alive on an everyday basis.

Many Górale continue to hand-build wood houses in the old style. They continue their form of high altitude shepherding, which the Wallachian nomads brought to this region. The men still work the fields and walk the streets in their traditional costume, and at a wedding or christening celebration, or a party, musicians will play Góralski music and people will dance. This dancing is a natural process, something people learned as children through observation and started doing when they became of age, without thinking: "Now I am going to do figure No. 1, then I am going to dance variation No. 3." For folk dancers in this country this is not the case. When a real folk dance is transplanted to the folk dance world here, it loses its spontaneity. We cannot improvise naturally as the Górale do. We have to learn a set pattern which is authentic only because it could theoretically be the same as a sequence done by a Góral.

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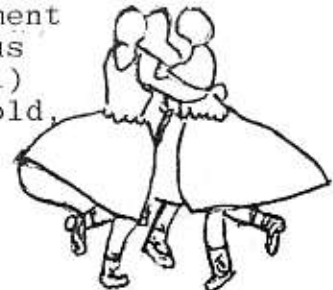
GÓRALSKI (continued)

The GóralSKI is not an easy dance to learn. The basic technical execution of the steps is one problem. The style is another, even greater, problem. It is hard to imitate and impossible to perfect (unless you happen to have been born and raised in Podhale). The breakdown of the movements intellectually appears simple enough, but somehow our bodies refuse to accept these unusual steps. This is part of the mystique of the GóralSKI.

The GóralSKI varies in content and style from one village to another and from one dancer to another. The steps in this arrangement are from the area around the main city in Podhale, Zakapone. GóralSKI steps can be categorized as follows: the Ozwodny step (the basic GóralSKI step); Drobny steps; Krzesany steps (similar to Drobny but characterized by a hitting of the feet together in the air at the end of each step sequence); special steps; the Zwyrt step (used for turning); the basic woman's step. All but the last two steps are done only by men, the Zwyrt step is done by both men and women. There are also steps created by men and kept as their personal secret steps. They are used only occasionally and very briefly so that no one will be able to imitate them. Of course, there are as many of these as there are mountaineers.

The music for GóralSKI is all in 2/4 time. A GóralSKI band is composed of two or more fiddles and a three-string cello that the Górale call a bass. There are also numerous pipes played, including a bagpipe called Koza -- a goat, although these are all very rare. GóralSKI harmonies, melodies, phrasing and style of playing is rather unusual and the result is music that sounds very strange to our western ears. Only certain steps can be done to certain types of music. Basically, the Ozwodny step is done only to Ozwodny music, Drobny and Krzesany steps are done interchangeably to Drobny and Krzesany music. Special Steps have their own music. The Zwyrt is done to Zielona music (Zielona means green and is derived from the first word of the song most popular in dancing the Zwyrt) and Basic Women's Step is done to any music except Zielona. These are just general rules, guidelines for us, folk dancers, as to what would usually be done.

Although GóralSKI is a couple dance, partners touch during only one of the dance's many steps, the turning step, the Zwyrt. The man plays the leading role in the GóralSKI as all of the most intricate steps are performed only by him. The woman has only two or three steps, and which one she does is traditionally guided by what her partner is doing. Generally, only one couple will dance at a time. (This is not true in this arrangement prepared for American folk dancers, for obvious reasons.) Sometimes a group of women (GóralKI) will dance together in a circle in a basket hold, doing the Zwyrt step.

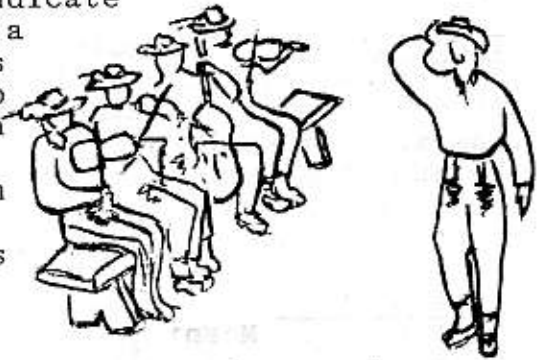


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31 ← NOTE
NOT 30!

GÓRALSKI (continued)

Coordination between dancer and musician is accomplished only because they have probably known each other since childhood. An accepted step, a certain movement by the dancer, or a shout will indicate a change of music. The usual sequence of a dance of one couple would run more or less as follows: As soon as the musicians stop to play the preceding dance, the first man to run up to the band, by rights, has the next dance. He will indicate a tempo with his feet and start to sing a song which the musicians will play; this will always be an Ozwodny tune. Then a friend of the man about to dance will take the man's partner onto the floor and will turn with her. When he lets go of the woman and stops dancing, her partner, (eagerly waiting next to the band) will run onto the floor and begin to dance. He will always begin with the Ozwodny step. She will do the Woman's Step and her small variations until almost the end of the dance. Her direction of movement and variations will depend almost entirely on what the man is doing. In dancing, the man is showing off in front of the woman but seems to pay very little attention to her. At some point the music will change and likewise the male dancer's step, probably to a Drobny or Krzesany. The music and steps may change any number of times until the dance ends with the couple turning together. Of course, in a folk dance situation, the record plays a set amount of each melody and we must dance accordingly. This arrangement of the basic traditional pattern of GóralSKI, prepared by Jaś Dziewanowski, includes Ozwodny, Drobny Po Dwa, and the Zwyrt. The matching music was selected from a tape of numerous GóralSKI tunes played by three Górale from Zakopane.



STEPS:

Ozwodny (oh-ZVOHD-nih) -- M's step done in place or moving fwd (takes 1-1/2 meas): Do a very small leap onto ball of R ft (ct 1); touch ball of L ft to floor ahead and slightly to L of R ft, without wt, as you do a very small hop on R ft (ct 2); step onto ball of L ft in front of R ft, lifting R ft slightly (ct &); step onto ball of R ft (ct 1 of next meas). Repeat of Step is done with opp ftwk (to cts 2,1,&,2).

Drobny Po Dwa (Drobny in Two - DROHB-nih poh DVAH) -- M's step done moving bkwd or in place: Do a small jump landing on the balls of both feet with a slight accent, feet about 6" apart, R ft 6" ahead of L ft, R ft slightly turned in (see diagram on L) (ct 1); step on ball of R ft in front of L ft, raising L ft slightly (ct &); step on L ft in place and bring R ft in back of L ft (ct 2); hold (ct &). Repeat of Step is done with opp ftwk.



GÓRALSKI (continued)

Basic W's Step (from now on will be referred to as Basic Step) -- done in place or moving in any direction: Do three very small steps, lifting free ft slightly off floor (cts 1,&,2); hold (ct &).

Zwyr (zvihrt) - done turning with ptr: Step fwd on ball of R ft (ct 1); do a very small hop on R ft, L ft about 6" to side and almost touching floor (ct &); step fwd lightly on ball of L ft (ct 2); hold (ct &). Repeat of Step is done with same ftwk. Zwyr is also done in opp direction with opp ftwk.



Stamp (Przycup - PSHIH-tsoop): a weighted stamp, done on flat feet with a slight increase in the bend of the knees.

Zwyr Position: Ptrs face each other, about 10" apart, make 1/4 CCW turn, place R hand on ptr's L waist and L hand on ptr's R elbow. This pos is also used L shldr to L shldr with opp handwork.

STYLING:

Góralski styling is subtle. The most important concept for both men and women is that you should not have any movement from the hips upward, especially up and down motion. All movements of the legs should be absorbed by the knees which are always bent. All steps are done on the balls of the feet. The feet should be slightly turned in, or at least completely parallel, never turned out at all. All movements of the feet should remain near the floor. Hops should be done without leaving the floor. As you execute the quick, almost staccato movements of your legs, you should feel the upper body calm and still.

Posture is also very important. For the men, the back should be completely straight as you lean forward from the waist approximately 10°. This posture remains unchanged except when turning with a partner where you will come to a fully erect pos. Women simply dance with a straight back.

Men will usually keep their arms free during Ozwodny. During Ozwodny starting with the R ft, the L forearm, L elbow bent, will swing in front of torso; during Ozwodny starting with the L ft, armwork is opp. Otherwise, men either hold fists or the back of their hands, fingers back, on their hips, elbows to side. It is very characteristic to let one arm drop down to your side for a while, as you dance. Women hold hands on hips, fingers fwd, thumbs back, elbows to the side.



GÓRALSKI (continued)

Record: ZM-40591 "Tańce ludowe z Polski" (Folk Dances from Poland), side B, band 1.

Formation: Cpls around the room, ptrs facing each other, three to five feet apart. M face LOD.

MeasPattern

There is no action during the Koza (bagpipe) music.

INTRODUCTION.

1-4 No action.

I. OZWODNY (one 10-meas phrase, two 15-meas phrases, and an ending six-meas phrase).

1-45 M: beginning on R ft, dance 30 Ozwodny Steps moving around the room in LOD. W: beginning on R ft, dance 45 Basic Steps keeping in front of ptr, facing him and maintaining the spacing from him.

46 M: dance three Stamps in place (R,L,R, cts 1,&,2); hold (ct &): W: dance one more Basic Step in place.
VARIATION I. (for meas 31-45)



M: instead of the last ten Ozwodny Steps, stay in place, maintain posture, keep knees and elbows bent, and arms below shldr level.

31-32 Standing on L ft, slap R ft to R side with R hand (ct 1 of meas 31); in front with L hand (ct 2 of meas 31); repeat to side (ct 1 of meas 32); then back with L hand (ct 2 of meas 32); hop on L ft on each ct.

33-34 Stepping on R ft, slap L ft in front with R hand (ct 1 of meas 33); hopping on R ft on each ct, slap L ft to side with L hand (ct 2 of meas 33); to back with R hand (ct 1 of meas 34); repeat to side with L hand (ct 2 of meas 34).

35-42 Repeat action of meas 31-34 twice, except step on L ft (ct 1 of meas 35).

43-45 Repeat action of meas 31-33, except step on L ft (ct 1 of meas 43).

31-45 W: do 15 Basic Steps as you would in the regular pattern, but make 1/2 to 3/4 CW turns in place with each one.

GÓRALSKI (continued)

- II. DROBNY PO DWA: (one 24-meas phrase and one 24-1/2 meas phrase)
- 1 M: no action. W: repeat M's action of meas 46, Fig. I).
- 2 M: no action. W: beginning L ft, dance one Basic Step in place.
- 3-24 M: beginning R ft fwd, dance 22 Drobny Po Dwa Steps, moving bkwd in RLOD. W: beginning R ft, dance 22 Basic Steps keeping in front of ptr, facing him and maintaining spacing for him.
- 25-46 Repeat action of meas 3-24 (Fig. II).
- 47 M: dance one more Drobny Po Dwa Step. W: dance one more Basic Step.
- 48 M: dance two Stamps (L,R) in place (cts 1,2). W: dance one more Basic Step to move up to ptr.
- 48-1/2 M: dance one more Stamp (L) in place (ct 1). W: hold (ct 1).

VARIATION II. (for meas 25-47, Fig. II)

M: maintaining movement of regular pattern, clap hands vertically on ct 1 of each meas, elbows bent, starting with R hand above shldr level and L hand below waist level on meas 25, and reversing a arm pos with each clap.

W: dance 22 Basic Steps as you would in the regular pattern, but make 1/2 - 3/4 CW turns with each one.



- III. ZWYRT: (one 22-meas phrase)
- 1 Acquire Zwyrt Pos and beginning R ft, dance one Zwyrt Step and begin to turn CW.
- 2-6 Dance five more Zwyrt Steps, making 1/2 - 3/4 CW turns with each meas.
- 7 M: releasing ptr's waist, make 1/2 CW turn with three Stamps (R,L,R) and turn her CW 1-1/2 revolution under the joined arms (cts 1,&,2); hold (ct &). W: releasing ptr's waist and elbow, make 1-1/2 CW turn under the joined arms with three small steps (R,L,R - cts 1,&,2). (NOTE: M is still holding ptr's R elbow with his L hand); hold (ct &).
- 8-14 Repeat action of meas 1-7 (Fig. III) with opp ftwork, direction, and pos.
- 15-20 Repeat action of meas 1-6, (Fig. III).
- 21 M: releasing ptr's waist, make 1/4 CW turn with two Stamps (R,L - cts 1,2), while turning ptr 1-1/4 CW turn under the joined arms. W: releasing ptr's waist and elbow, dance three small steps (R,L,R) to make 1-1/4 CW turn under the joined arms (cts 1,&,2); hold (ct &).
- 22 Dance one Stamp (M R, W L - ct 1); hold (cts &, 2,&).

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GÓRALSKI (continued)

- VARIATION III: (for M, meas 21-22, Fig. III).
- 21 Releasing ptr's waist and making 1/4 CW turn, jump up and pull legs up underneath you, knees fully bent, while you turn ptr as in regular pattern.
- 22 Land on both ft with an accent (ct 1); hold (cts &,2,&).

Presented by Jaś Dziewanowski

Dance introduced at 1976 Stockton Folk Dance Camp, University of the Pacific, California, by Jaś Dziewanowski, who learned the steps and style in Poland from Bolesław Karpiel, a carpenter, dancer, and musician from Zakopane. Do not reproduce this text without Jaś' permission: 41 Katherine Road, Watertown, Massachusetts 02172, telephone (617) 923-9061.

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MAP OF POLAND

