

KOPAČKA

Macedonia

PRONUNCIATION KOH-pahtch-kah

TRANSLATION Digging

SOURCE According to Atanas Kolarovski, when village dancers introduced the dance to “Tanec” (the Macedonian State Folk Ensemble), they called it “Sitnata” (“the little one”), but “Tanec” changed the name of the dance to “Kopačka” (“digging”, a movement depicted in the dance). The dance became so famous that the villagers adopted this name for both the dance and the name of their group to remind everyone of its origin.

Versions of this dance have been taught to folk dancers in the United States by:

- Atanas Kolarovski of Macedonia, who toured in 1956 with “Tanec”
- John Filcich of California, who learned the dance from Atanas
- Elsie Ivancich Dunin of California, who learned the dance from members of “Tanec” in Skopje
- Dick Crum, who learned the dance in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia
- Pece Atanasovski of Macedonia
- Stanimir Visinski of Macedonia
- George Tomov of Macedonia

In the various versions, the small differences in footwork are significant enough to prevent different versions from being done by dancers in the same line, both in the slow part and the fast part. In particular, there is a version that does the movements in figures 5 and 6 in a different order. The version described below is based upon two almost identical descriptions of the dance as taught by Atanas Kolarovski and as introduced in Austin, Texas in 1965 by Elliot Zais, who learned it in California.

BACKGROUND Kopačka is from the Delčevo-Berovo region of eastern Macedonia. It is a dance in two parts, slow and fast, that take their names from the first lines of their respective songs – “Dimna Juda, Mamo” and “Derviško Viško, Mome”. The slow part has a walking figure and a variation. The fast part has six figures (three sets of two figures; the two figures in each set are very similar). Originally for men only, the fast dance mimics tasks of the farmer, such as digging, threshing and hoeing the ground. With its village-style steps and technique, it is quite popular in eastern Macedonia and is widely used by exhibition groups there. In Serbia, Kopačka is danced as a version of the Bulgarian dance Kopanica.

According to an old folk tale from the Maleševija area of Macedonia, Dimna Juda was the name of a samovila, or fairy-witch, who built a palace on Vlaina Mountain. She went to the village of Kratevo and demanded to be given three bachelors, three maidens and three children. For this small tribute, she promised never to put a curse on the village. But the villagers tried to bargain with the witch and offered gold for the bachelors, silver for the maidens and pearls for the children. In a fit of anger for their impudence, she took instead 100 bachelors, 100 maidens and 100 children. The bachelors were forced to build her palace while the maidens danced the oro and the children picked xeranthemums (wild flowers native to southern Europe that are a symbol of eternity and immortality). The verses in the dance recordings tell only part

of the story. The entire folk tale appears in Maleševski Narodni Pesni by Stanko Kostić, Skopje 1959.

RECORDINGS (tempo for fast part) Songs & Dances of Yugoslavia, Atanas Kolarovski LP AK-008 (very fast); Festival Records LP AMAN-106 (medium); Reflections of Yugoslavia – Folksongs and Dances, Fiesta LP FLP-1362 (very fast); Festival 45rpm F-4001 (very fast); Joego Slavie Zingt En Danst, Nevofoon LP 15016 (medium-fast); Jugoton 45EP EPY-3009 (very fast); Folkraft 1565A; Makedonski Narodni Ora - Pece Atanasovski - Vol #2, Radio Televizija Beograd LP RTB LP-1394 (slow to very fast) (no slow dance); Macedonian Folk Dances with Pece Atanasovski Vol 1, BMA-1007.

FORMATION Originally lines of eight to ten men; now done recreationally by men and women in mixed lines (slow part sometimes done in separate lines). Dancers grasp neighbors' belts, R arms under. The leader often flourishes a handkerchief in his right hand. The end dancer may tuck his thumb in his belt or hold his free hand behind his back.

STEPS/STYLE In the slow part, the steps are deliberate with no shuffling. In the fast part, the steps are tiny and precise. The bearing is proudly erect, yet relaxed.

METER/RHYTHM 2/4

Meas Ct

INTRODUCTION

Varies - no introduction, one or more measures of music or an extended "gajda" solo.

SLOW MUSIC and SONG – “Dimna Juda, Mamo”

Instrumental

1-16 Facing slightly R and moving R, 32 walking steps, beginning with R
17 1 Turning to face center, balance to R
2 Slight bounce on R
18 Repeat meas. 17 with opposite footwork
19-20 Repeat meas. 17-18

Singing

21-22 Facing slightly R and moving R, 4 walking steps, beginning with R
23 1 Turning to face center, step on R
2 Lift L in front of R
24 Repeat meas. 23 with opposite footwork
25 Repeat meas. 23
26 Facing slightly L and moving L, 2 walking steps, beginning with L
27 1 Facing center, Step to L on L
2 Step behind L on R
28-29 Repeat meas. 23-24 with opposite footwork
30 1 Step slightly forward on L
2 Hook R back toward L ankle

Repeat meas. 1-30 until end of slow music

FAST MUSIC and SONG – “Derviško Viško, Mome”

Step 1

1 Facing center and moving R, hop-step-step, hopping on L
2 Repeat meas. 1
3 Scissors step R-L-R in place
4 Scissors step L-R-L in place

- 5 1 Leap onto R in place, kicking L foot out sharply to L
 2 Hop on R, bringing L across in front of R knee
- 6 Facing center and moving L, hop-step-step, hopping on R
- 7 Repeat meas. 6
- 8 1 Step to L on L, bringing R foot up behind
 2 Hop on L, swinging R foot forward
- 9 Scissors step R-L-R in place
- 10 Scissors step L-R-L in place
- Step 2**
- 1-8 Repeat meas. 1-8 of Step 1 (moving slightly backward as necessary)
- 9 Three running steps (R,L,R) forward and slightly R, bending slightly at the waist
- 10 Repeat meas. 9 with opposite footwork
- Step 3**
- 1-5 Repeat meas. 1-5 of Step 1
- 6 1 Hop on R, Touching L toe to L with heel turned out
 2 Hop on R, raise L foot to behind R calf, with slight lift on R
- 7 1 Step back onto L, twisting R heel across in front
 2 Step back onto R, twisting L heel across in front
- 8 1 Turning to face slightly L, Leap to L in place, bringing R foot up behind
 2 Hop on L, swinging R foot forcefully forward and slightly L
- 9 Bending slightly from waist, continue movement forward and slightly L with three
 quick steps R,L,R (1,&2), taking full weight on R on ct. 2
- 10 1 Hop on R, swinging L foot low around in front to face slightly R
 2 Step on L in front of and slightly R of R foot
- Step 4**
- 1-2 Repeat meas. 1-2 of Step 1
- 3-4 Jump onto both feet to R and pause for two measures (Shout "ee-ah" on meas. 4)
- 5-10 Repeat meas. 5-10 of Step 3
- Step 5**
- 1-3 Repeat meas. 1-3 of Step 4 (2 hop-step-steps and one pause step)
- 4-7 Repeat meas. 5-8 of Step 3 (note: sequence shifted back one measure from Steps 3-4)
- 8 1 Step slightly forward on R, in place on L (1,&)
 2 Step slightly forward on R with full weight, thrusting L foot forward and slightly L in
 preparation for the next movement
- 9 1 Hop on R, continuing the L foot forward, up, back and down (reverse bicycle motion)
 2 Brush L forward
- 10 1 Hop on R again, repeating the bicycle movement
 2 Step on L behind R
- Step 6**
- 1-8 Repeat meas. 1-8 of Step 5
- 9 1 Hop on R, swing L foot high around in front of R, L leg straight
 2 Slap floor with L just in front of R foot, then slide L back
- 10 1 Hop on R, bringing L around and close behind R
 2 Step on L behind R

KOPACKA SONGS

Dimna Juda, Mamo

/// Dimna Juda, mamo, grad gradila ///	Dimna Juda built a city
// Na planina, mamo, na Vlaina //	in the mountain, on Vlaina.
// Što je kolje, mamo, pobivala	The posts she drove
Se ergeni, mamo, za glavenje //	were all youths ready to be engaged,
Se ergeni, mamo, za glavenje	were all youths ready to be engaged.
// Što je pliče, mamo, zapličala*	The wands she plaited
Sve devojke, mamo, za mažene //	were all maidens ready for marriage,
Sve devojke, mamo, za mažene	were all maidens ready for marriage.
/// Dimna Juda, mamo, grad gradila ///	Dimna Juda built a city
// Na planina, mamo, na Vlaina //	in the mountain, on Vlaina.

*In the dialect of the region, this line (with the same translation) should be:
Što je prak'e, mamo, zaplik'ala

Derviško Viško, Mome

///Derviško viško, mome,	Derviška, my (one),
Derviško dušo ///	Derviška, my sweetheart
Rob ke ti bidam, mome,	I will be your slave, my (one),
Rob ke ti bidam	I will be your slave
//Rob ke ti bidam, mome,	I will be your slave, my (one),
vremi tri godini //	for three years.
Samo da ti vidam, mome,	Just to see you, my (one),
Samo da ti vidam	Just to see you,
//Samo da ti vidam, mome,	Just to see you, my (one),
Beloto liko //	your (fair) (face).
I da go vidiš, ludo,	And if you see it, crazy (one),
I da go vidiš	And if you see it,
//I da go vidiš, ludo,	And if you see it, crazy (one),
Fajda si nema //	It will do you no good.

Note: In Macedonian, the "k" is pronounced like a soft aspirated K, not like the hard English K.