

### STARO TIKVEŠKO

This is a dance from the Štip area of Ovčepole; it is not from the Tikveš region. The dance is perhaps a craft dance: one which was done by the makers of plaited straw mats ("rogaža") which were formerly used for sleeping. The dance involves motions connected with making and trying out these mats.

**Rhythm:** The dance begins with an introductory walking section, in a slow, more-or-less free rhythm. The slow part of the dance is in a slow four, while the fast part of the dance is in a fast four. In the fast part of the dance, we will count up to eight in a "measure", which is once through the musical phrase which begins the fast part.

The dance begins with men in an open circle. Face RLOD. Hands are free. Men are spaced about an arm's length apart.

### INTRODUCTION

The dance begins with a series of slow walking steps forward, normally governed by the leader, with the musicians following him. When dancing to a record, one must get a feeling for the timing of the musicians' playing, so as to begin figure I on time.

About six steps are done, after which the upper body turns slightly towards center to allow each man to put his hands on his neighbors' shoulders. Four more steps are taken in this position. Then figure I begins.

During the first six steps, the arms are allowed to swing freely in opposition to the feet, so that the R arm is forward when the left foot is free. The shift of arms occurs approximately with the full shift of weight.

For those who want it, here is an elaborate description of the walking steps:

Begin by placing ball of foot forward on ground and then slowly shifting weight onto the whole foot, while flexing knee until you are in a deep flex, all the weight is on that foot, and the free leg is held in the air in such a position that the knees are near each other and the free lower leg is almost parallel to the ground, crossing somewhat behind the other's calf.

Now begin unflexing the knee, forcing the body up and finally raising the heel from the ground. Meanwhile the free foot is moved forward and raised higher. Finally it is extended forward and the knee is straightened somewhat for the next step.

### FIGURE I (Count "one and two and three and four and")

Face right of center. Weight on left foot. Step (no weight) on the ball of the right foot to the right.

|         |      |                          |
|---------|------|--------------------------|
| Measure | Beat |                          |
| I       | 1    | Shift weight onto R foot |

[ Whole foot comes into contact with the floor as knee is deeply flexed. L knee is bent and L foot is in the air behind R calf. ]

*Count*

*Pec*

STARO TIKVEŠKO, CONTINUED

|         |          |  |
|---------|----------|--|
| Measure | Beat     |  |
|         | and      | Slowly straighten R leg until weight is on ball of foot only   |
|         | 2        | Hold   |
|         | 3        | Lower R heel and flex R knee   |
|         | and      | Straighten R knee and lift R heel  |
|         | 4        | Repeat 3   |
|         | 5-7 or 8 | Hold position, but slowly pivot on R towards center and move L leg to L and somewhat forward in preparation for a step |
|         | and      | Step (no weight) on ball of L foot to L  |
| II      |          | Repeat I, reversing footwork and beginning with a step (no weight) onto left foot, a little before the first beat      |
| III-IV  |          | Repeat I-II  |

FIGURE II

Begin a little before the first beat by stepping (no weight) onto the ball of the R foot, to the R.

|   |     |  |   |
|---|-----|--|---|
| I | 1   | Shift weight onto R foot   | R knee is flexed and the whole foot touches ground. L knee is bent and L foot is by R calf. |
|   | and | Straighten R knee until weight is on ball of foot only           | Free L is moved forward. L knee is bent and L heel is placed on front of R shin.            |
|   | 2   | Hold   |   |
|   | 3   | Flex R knee and lower R heel, and twist body somewhat to left    |   |
|   | and | Straighten knee, lift heel, and return body to natural position  |   |
|   | 4   | Flex R knee, lower R heel and twist body somewhat to left        |   |
|   | and | Lower L leg across in front of R to R, and step on L (no weight) | Straighten knee, lift heel, and return body to natural body position.                       |

*Cont*

STARO TIKVEŠKO, CONTINUED

Measure : Beat  
 II Reverse footwork of I. On 4-and, right leg is prepared for step to R.

III-IV Repeat I and II

FIGURE III

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| I | 1 | Step or leap to R onto full R foot                                   | [ L is raised high behind, L knee is somewhat bent. Body is bent forward from the waist. Head down.  |
|   | 2 | Bending R knee, lower weight onto L knee and lower-leg               |  |
|   | 3 | Place R knee and lower-leg on ground and transfer weight to it       | [ L leg is turned so that outside of L foot is on the ground and the toes point to right. Right foot is on the floor near L knee, R knee is bent. Head up. |
|   | 4 | Step full L foot near R knee, shift weight onto it and begin to rise |  |

II-III Repeat I twice

Now repeat figures II and III

FIGURE IV (Fast music)

- |   |     |   |  |
|---|-----|---|--|
| I | 1   | Weight is on L foot. Rise up while hopping on L | [ Free R is raised high in front, bent at the knee.  |
|   | 2   | Step R by L                                     |  |
|   | 3   | Hop on R  | [ L is raised forward, bent at the knee. L thigh is rotated somewhat in hip socket so that L lower leg is raised across in front of R leg. |
|   | 3++ | Step onto ball of L, somewhat to L of R foot    |  |
|   | 4   | Step onto R in place                            | [ Bloop-bloop  |
|   | 5   | Hop on R in place                               |  |
- Raise L high forward, bent at knee.

*Cont*



STARO TIKVEŠKO, CONTINUED

|         |      |   |  |
|---------|------|---|--|
| Measure | Beat |   |  |
|         | 6    | Step L to L and somewhat back of R  |  |
|         | 7    | Step R in place   |  |
|         | 7++  | Step forward onto ball of L foot  | } Bloop-bloop  |
|         | 8    | Step onto full R foot in place  |  |
| II      |      | Repeat I (but you must <u>step</u> onto L foot on count 1, since you are not already on it.)      |  |
| III-IV  |      | Repeat II two more times, but with hands not joined and moving freely in opposition to free feet. |  |
| V       | 1    | Step L by R   | Free R is raised forward, bent at knee.  |
|         | 2    | Step R by L   |  |
|         | 3    | Hop on R  | Turn slightly to R of center. Free L is raised forward, bent at knee and hooked or crossed in front of R even more than usual. |
|         | 3++  | Leap forward and to L on ball of L foot   | Body turns to L of center, free R is bent at knee, and held slightly off ground near L.  |
|         | 4    | Step forward on R into circle   | Face center or R of center. Free L is raised, bent at knee and held near R.  |
| VI      | 1    | Leap forward on L   |  |
|         | 2    | Step R forward across in front of left  | Body faces slightly L of center.   |
|         | 3    | Hop forward on R  | Face center, L is raised forward, bent at knee.  |
|         | 4    | Step forward on L, across in front of R   | Face slightly R of center.   |
|         | 5    | Hop forward on L  | Face center, R is raised forward, bent at knee.  |
|         | 6    | Step forward on R, across in front of L   | Face slightly L of center.   |

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STARO TIKVEŠKO, CONTINUED

| Measure | Beat |  |
|---------|------|--|
|         | 7    | Leap forward onto L, somewhat to R of where R foot was. R foot is simultaneously moved                           |
|         |      | Turn to face R of center. R knee is bent and R foot is raised behind.  |
|         | 8    | Step R somewhat to the R of L foot, Weight is evenly distributed   |
|         | 9    | (Extra beat in music) Squat on both feet.  |
|         |      | Body is tilted forward somewhat as both hands are placed on the ground.  |
| VII     | 1    | Using hands for support, leap into "push-up" position, but facing to L and with R leg under                      |
|         |      | Outside of R foot is on ground, and inside of L foot is behind it. Body faces L and head is pointed into center. |
|         | 3    | Leap into opposite position, facing R with L leg under   |
|         |      | Outside of L foot is on ground. Inside of R foot is behind it.   |
|         | 5    | Leap into the position of beat 1 again   |
|         | 7    | Leap into a squat position with hands on floor   |

Next: Repeat all of figure IV, but in doing measures I-IV, you move backwards as you do the steps, so as to reform the original large circle or line, but don't join hands.

FIGURE V

|       |     |                                |
|-------|-----|--------------------------------|
| I-III |     | Same as in figure IV           |
| IV    | 1-4 | Same as in figure IV           |
|       | 5   | Step L forward                 |
|       | 6   | Step R forward                 |
|       | 7   | Step L forward                 |
|       | 7++ | Step forward on toes of R foot |
|       | 8   | Close L behind R               |
|       |     | Bloop-bloop                    |

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STARO TIKVEŠKO, CONTINUED

|              |           |   |   |
|--------------|-----------|---|---|
| Measure<br>V | Beat<br>1 | Step R forward                                |   |
|              | 2         | Step L forward                                |   |
|              | 3         | Step R slightly<br>behind and to R of L       | [ R foot is placed so that it is pointing<br>to L of center. Arms are brought up and<br>out to sides. |
|              | 4         | Turn 360 degrees<br>CCW while hopping<br>on R |   |
|              | 5-8       | As in IV                                      | Hands are forced down and into body. Free<br>L foot is bent at knee and held near R leg.              |
| VI-VIII      |           | Repeat V three times, or until music ends     |   |

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These notes have been written on the basis of my own experience in learning most of these dances from Pece at his summer institute at Oteševu in 1971 and 1972, and on the basis of many hours of discussion between us. However, Sitna Lisa, Zetovskoto, and Kavadarka are dances which I have never done, nor seen done to music, and are written up on the basis of demonstrations by Pece. For this reason, inaccuracies are particularly likely to exist in these dances.

I have attempted to make these notes conform as much as possible to the way in which Pece has danced and taught these dances, but of course there is bound to be some personal interpretation on my part as well.

Although I have attempted to make these notes quite complete, it must be remembered that THESE NOTES ARE INTENDED ONLY TO REFRESH THE MEMORY OF SOMEONE WHO HAS ALREADY LEARNED THE DANCE. It is near impossible to make the notes so complete that a person may read them and do the dance correctly without ever having seen it done, and I strongly advise against any attempt to use them this way.

As to their accuracy: If you see Pece do a dance slightly differently from what is written here, it may be that there is a mistake in the notes. But it may also be that Pece has done it differently that time. This is not to say that Pece makes many changes in the dance each time he does it. He is, in fact, very consistent in his dancing. However, there are some folk dancers who worry about precisely how many inches a foot is lifted from the ground, and so on. The actual truth is that given ten villagers from a village, all of whom know the dance well, each would dance slightly differently, and the differences among them would be quite considerable and quite visible. It should be no wonder if Pece dances slightly differently from some other person you meet who knows the dance, or even if he dances the same dance differently at different times. His style will vary slightly with his mood: for instance, faster music and exuberance may tend to produce a slight "čukče" as a grace note to a step on the other foot.

Despite the above warnings, I have gone into great detail in these dance descriptions, and in order to make for easier reading, I have often written the basic step on the left, with the details in brackets to the right. It should thus be equally possible to just skim through the basic steps or to recall a fine point.

I hope that the notes will be useful, and will gladly receive your comments, corrections or criticisms.

ROBERT LEIBMAN  
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DEFINITIONS OF SOME TERMS

A "čukče" on the R foot: with weight on the R foot, lift the R heel off the ground before the beat. Then, on the beat, come down on this heel.

"RLOD" means "right line of direction" - i.e.: around the circumference of the circle towards the right. "LLOD" means the same to the left.

In contrast, "forward" or "backward" makes reference to the direction you are facing, not the line of direction.

A notation such as "3+" means halfway between beat 3 and beat 4. Similarly, "3++" means three-quarters of the way from beat 3 to beat 4.

"Bloop-bloop" (accent on the second "bloop") applied to two steps indicates that the first step takes place just before the beat, and the second step on the beat. For instance, on beats 3++ and 4.

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OVČEPOLE

Ovče Pole (Sheep's field) is a small plain running from Štip on the east to Sv. Nikole on the north and almost, but not quite, to Veles on the west. The Ovčepole dance region also includes some of the surrounding mountains. Dances from this area include Teško Krstačko, Osogovsko (formerly called Arnaut or Arnautsko) and Zaečko Oro, as well as the four dances in this syllabus: Staro Tikveško, Ovčepolska Potrčulka, Ovčepolsko, and Kavadarka. Dances of this region seem to be characterized by great physical difficulty. For instance: in Teško Krstačko, the dancer must leap from high onto both knees. (We lose more folk dancers that way...)