

OVČEPOLSKO ORO

Macedonian

PRONUNCIATION: ohv-cheh-POHL-skoh OH-roh

TRANSLATION: Sheep field dance

SOURCE: Dick Oakes learned Ovčepolsko oro from Pece Atanasovski who introduced it to folk dancers in the United States. Dennis Boxell taught it at the 1979 California Kolo Festival.

BACKGROUND: Ovčepolsko oro is from the area around the town of Sveti Nikole in the northern end of the Ovče Pole (literally "sheep's field" or "plain of sheep"), famous for sheep farming, lamb meat, and dairy products of all kinds. The Ovče Pole is a small plain that begins around the town of Sveti Nikole and terminates around the town of Štip at its southeastern end. Strong winds from the north-west, north, south-east are specific for this region and are present for most of the year, this being the reason the area to be called "the windiest place in the Balkans". The Ovče Pole plain is one of the driest areas in Europe and is plagued by frequent drought periods. Both women and men of the area participate in this dance. Pece Atanasovski plays the gajda (bagpipes) on the Jugoton record.

MUSIC: Jugoton (LP) LPY-50985, side A, band 3.
Festival Records (LP) AMAN-103, side 1, band 1
Nevofoon (LP) 15006, side 1, band 1
Folklorist (45rpm) FL-104

FORMATION: Open circle of intermixed men and women with hands joined and held down in "V" position, all facing diagonally to the right with leader at right end.

METER/RHYTHM: 11/8 (and 11/16). The rhythm is quick-quick-slow-quick-quick (2+2+3+2+2 = 11) and is counted below in five dancer's beats with the longest being the third.

STEPS/STYLE: ČUKČE: With weight on one foot, lift the heel of that foot before the beat and lower it on the beat. This action is similar to a low hop except that the ball of the foot does not leave the floor.

PUSH: With weight on one foot, and begin by bending the other knee slightly as it is raised fwd, "place" relaxed free foot low forward extending the knee. The motion is not a kick, but feels as if you are trying to touch something without breaking it.

Each step is repeated until a change is signaled by the leader.

MEAS

MOVEMENT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Because the dance and musical phrases do not always coincide, the dance may start at any meas the leader desires.

I. FIGURE ONE

- 1 Facing diag R and moving in LOD, step R but delay shifting entire wt onto R (ct 1); complete shifting wt onto R (ct 2); step L (ct 3); Čukče L raising bent R knee fwd (ct 4); step R (ct 5).
- 2 Čukče R raising bent L knee fwd (ct 1); step L (ct 2); Čukče L pivoting to face slightly R of ctr and Push R ft fwd (ct 3); Čukče L bringing R bwd beside L (ct 4); step slightly bwd R (ct 5).
- 3 Step L slightly L (ct 1); step R in front of L (ct 2); facing slightly L of ctr, Čukče R and Push L ft fwd (ct 3); Čukče R, bringing L bwd beside R (ct 4); step L slightly bwd (ct 5).

II. FIGURE TWO

- 1 Facing diag R and moving in LOD, step R (ct 1); step L (ct 2); step R (ct 3); low hop R, raising bent L knee with L ft raised slightly in back (ct 4); step L (ct 5).
- 2 Step R (ct 1); step L (ct 2); Čukče L, pivoting to face slightly R of ctr and Push R ft fwd (ct 3); Čukče L, bringing R bwd beside R (ct 4); step R slightly bwd (ct 5).
- 3 Repeat action of Fig 1, meas 3.

III. FIGURE THREE

- 1-2 Repeat action of Fig II, meas 1-2.
- 3 Step L slightly swd, turning to face diag L (ct 1); moving in RLOD, step R (ct 2); low hop R, raising bent L knee fwd (ct 3); low hop R with bent L knee raised fwd (ct 4); step L (ct 5).
- 4 Low hop L (ct 1); step R fwd (ct 2); Čukče R and Push L fwd (ct 3); Čukče R, bringing L bwd beside R (ct 4); step L slightly bwd in LOD (ct 5).

IV. FIGURE FOUR

- 1 Releasing handhold and placing hands on back of own hips, fingers bwd, palms out, repeat action of Fig III, meas 1 (cts 1-5);

2 Step R (ct 1); step L, turning L toe twd ctr in preparation for a CCW turn (ct 2); hop L, pivoting almost 1/2 turn CCW and raising bent R knee with R ft raised slightly in back (ct 3); hop L, pivoting another 1/2 turn CCW (ct 4); step L next to R, turning CCW to complete 1-1/2 turns (ct 5).

3-4 Repeat action of Fig III, meas 3-4.

NOTE: For a performance exit, dance meas 1-2 of Fig IV followed by meas 3 of Fig I until dancers have exited.