

## Ovčepolsko (Macedonia)

Ovčepolsko (ohv-cheh-POHL-skoh), or Ovčepolsko Oro, is a dance form of the northern Ovčepole (sheep's field) dance region, centered east of the Vardar River approximately 50 kilometers southeast of Skopje. Coinciding roughly with the Ovčepole plain, this is bounded on the northwest by Sveti Nicole, on the northeast by Kratovo, on the southeast by Štip, and on the southwest by Veles. Dances of the region usually involve physically difficult movements. The four figure version of Ovčepolsko that is most popular here was introduced at the 1971 Institute at Oteševo on Lake Prespa by Pece Atanasovski, who taught it at the 1972 San Francisco Kolo Festival. It was presented in 1972 at the AMAN Dance Institute by David Shochat, at the Mendocino Folklore Camp by Barry Glass, and again at the Kolo Festival in 1979 by Dennis Boxell and in 1985 by Billy Burke. Primarily we follow Bob Liebman's notes (Dept of Folklore, UCLA), which were prepared for Atanasovski's 1972 tour.

RECORD: Jugoton LPY-50985 Side A/3; AMAN 103 Side A/1; Folklorist 104-45-A.

RHYTHM: 11/16 meter: 1-2,1-2,1-2-3,1-2,1-2 = Q, Q, s, Q, Q; counted here as 1,2,3,4,5.

FORMATION: Mixed lines with hands joined down in V-pos.

STEPS and STYLING: Čukče: Heel is raised ahead of the beat, returning to the floor on the beat.  
Steps are of moderate length; movement is controlled at all times.

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MUSIC 11/16 meter PATTERN

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Measures

INTRODUCTION Dance begins at discretion of leader, often starting with the drum, which enters on measure 5, 3, or 2, respectively, of the Jugoton, AMAN, or Folklorist recording.

### I. WARM-UP

- 1 Facing LOD (CCW), step fwd on R, but delay transferring full weight (ct 1); take full wt on R, as L ft begins to move fwd (ct 2); step fwd on L (ct 3); Čukče on L (ct 4); step fwd on R (ct 5).
- 2 Raising L leg fwd low and bent at knee, Čukče on R (ct 1); step fwd on L (ct 2); raising R leg fwd low and bent at knee, pivot to face ctr and Čukče on L while pushing R ft fwd and down (ct 3); Čukče on L as R begins to move back (ct 4); step slightly back out of circle on R (ct 5).  
Note: On ct 3 the pivot comes before the beat; the R leg moves slowly fwd during the pivot. The pushing motion is initiated by the supporting ft; it is not a kick.
- 3 Step on L beside R (ct 1); step fwd on R into circle, raising L leg fwd low and bent at knee (ct 2); Čukče on R, while pushing L ft fwd and down (ct 3); moving back slightly out of circle, Čukče on R (ct 4); beginning turn to face LOD, step on L beside R (ct 5).

### II. LIVELY VARIATION OF FIGURE I.

- 1 Facing LOD, step fwd on R (ct 1); step fwd on L (ct 2); step fwd on R (ct 3); with bent L knee fwd and L ft raised behind, hop fwd low on R (ct 4); step fwd on L (ct 5).
- 2 Leap fwd onto R (ct 1); repeat cts 2,3,4,5 of Figure I, meas 2 (cts 2,3,4,5).
- 3 Repeat Figure I, meas 3.

III. MOVEMENT EXTENDED IN RLOD

- 1-2 Repeat Figure II, meas 1-2.
- 3 Turning to face L of ctr, step on L beside R (ct 1); facing almost in RLOD, step fwd on R (ct 2); with L leg raised low fwd and bent at the knee, hop on R moving slightly fwd (ct 3); hop on R moving more fwd (ct 4); step fwd on L (ct 5).
- 4 With R leg raised low fwd and bent at the knee, hop on L moving fwd (ct 1); step fwd on R (ct 2); pivoting CW to face R of ctr, hop on R as L is pushed fwd low (ct 3); hop backwards on R (ct 4); step back on L (ct 5).

IV. TURNING VARIATION OF FIGURE III.

Release hands, placing them on own hips with palms out and fingers pointing backwards.

- 1 Repeat Figure II, meas 1.
- 2 Step in LOD on R, stopping fwd motion in preparation for a 1½ CCW turn (ct 1); step on L in RLOD, turning CCW to face diag L of ctr (ct 2); with bent R knee raised fwd and R ft raised behind, hop on L in place, turning ½ CCW (ct 3); hop again on L, turning ½ CCW (ct 4); step on R beside L, turning slightly CCW to end facing almost in RLOD (ct 5).
- 3-4 Repeat Figure III, meas 3-4.

V. "STAGE" FIGURES

These figures, which were taught later, can be used for getting off stage during a performance.

A. Taught by Pece Atanasovski at a 1982 Wednesday Workshop in Sacramento.

- 1-2 Repeat Figure IV, meas 1-2; end facing ctr.
- 3 Repeat Figure I, meas 3.

B. Taught by Dennis Boxell in 1979 at the San Francisco Kolo Festival.

- 1-.... Repeat Figure II, meas 1 as often as necessary.

DANCE SEQUENCE: Figure changes are called by the leader, usually cycling in order once through Figs I-IV.

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