

## DOBRUDŽANSKI OPAS

TRANSLATION : This dance derives its name from the way the people hold each other in the line w.i., *na lesa za pojas* ("at the belt on the waistband") or, like they say in Dobrudžian dialect, *za opas*.

BACKGROUND AND ORIGIN : Another dance of this same area got its name in a similar way: *Râka* which comes from *za roce* ("hand hold").

*Opas* is from Dobrudža, the area of North Eastern Bulgaria. From the end of the 17th century until the beginning of the 19th century, a huge migration took place of Bulgarians coming from Thrace (*Trakia*) to Dobrudža. They tried to escape from the Turkish oppression which was at its worst in their homeland at that time. So a considerable part of the population of present Dobrudža has Thracian ancestors. This explains the similarity we often find in traditions, songs and dances of Thrace and Dobrudža.

Actually we could consider *Opas* as the *Pravo Horo* of Dobrudža.

Other dances that reflect the historical relationship between the two regions are:

- *Triti Pâti* from Thrace and *Djortajak*, *Ljavata* and *Dvata Pâti* from Dobrudža
- *Trakiiska Râčenica* and *Dobrudžanski Râčenik*
- *Buenek* and *Danec*

There is no other region in Bulgaria where the body as a whole is so much involved in the movements of the dance as in Dobrudža.

The dependence and strong bond of the *Dobrudžanie* with their property, the ground, becomes visible in the performance, styling and motives of the dances. A merely technical description of the dancestyle of this region therefore is hard to give, since it also has a strong emotional impact.

The dance usually begins very gently, slowly and very relaxed with rocking movements. Almost like a meditation, the dancer opens himself for the energy that comes from the earth. In this way we could speak from some similarities with more Eastern dance cultures. As the dance progresses energetic and vivid movements of the body and shoulders come in.

It is interesting to know that the flowing movement of Part 1 is sometimes called *Zaspi* (go to sleep) by the local dancers.

DOBRUDŽANSKI OPAS (continued)

MUSIC : LP "Folk Dances from Bulgaria - 3"  
by Jaap Leegwater JL 1985.01 Side B, Band 5.

SOURCE : This variation of *Opas* were learned by Jaap Leegwater from the Bulgarian choreographer and danceinstructor Dimitâr Dojčinov at the State choreographer School in Plovdiv in 1975 and during his guest teachings in Holland in 1978.

STYLE : *Dobrudžanski*  
- Heavy, weight on both feet and a slight knee bend position  
- Hips are slightly turned fwd  
- Upper part of the body erect and proud  
- Every stamp is accompanied by a slight knee bending or dipping  
- A kind of peasant- or earthy quality

METER : 2/4  or 

FORMATION : Medium lenght lines. Hands belt hold

INTRODUCTION : 8 measures

<u>MEAS</u>	<u>PATTERN</u>	<u>Part 1 Ljuš</u>
1	facing ctr, moving sdwd R, step on R ft sdwd R (ct 1), step on L ft across in front of R ft (ct 2)	
2	step on R ft sdwd R (ct 1) alance R (ct 2)	
3	shift wt onto L ft, keeping ft apart (ct 1), balance L (ct 2)	
4-12	repeat action of meas 1-3 three more times note: lift and move R knee sharply bend from diag R across in front on the last ct & of meas 12	
13	facing ctr, moving sdwd L, step on R ft across in front of L ft in 4th position (ct 1), step on L ft sdwd L (ct 2), move R knee across in front of L ft (ct &)	
14	step on R ft across in front of L ft in 4th position (ct 1), lift and move L knee in an arc across in front of R ft (ct )	
15-16	repeat action of meas 13-14 with opp ftwk and directions	

<u>MEAS</u>	<u>PATTERN</u>	<u>Part 1 (continued)</u>
17	facing & moving twd ctr, step on R ft across in front of L ft (ct 1) lift L knee sharply across in front of R ft, raising on ball of R ft (ct 2)	
18	repeat action of meas 17 with opp ftwk	
19	step on R ft diag R bkwd to the R, turning body diag R, keep L toe on the floor with the heel turned out (ct 1) repeat action of ct 1 with opp ftwk & directions (ct 2)	
20	repeat action of ct 1 of meas 19 (ct 1), bounce on R ft, lifting L heel turned out (ct 2).	
21	facing ctr, moving sdwd L, move L heel from turned out in an arc straight fwd (ct & before ct 1), step on L heel straightening both knees (ct 1), step on R ft across behind L ft, slightly bending both knees (ct 2)	
22	step on L ft sdwd (ct 1), move R heel in an arc first turned out, then straight fwd (ct 2)	
23-24	repeat action of meas 21-22 with opp ftwk and directions	

Part 2 Dobrudžanska nabivanè  
("Dobrudzian stamps")

1	turning face diag L, step on L ft (ct 1), stamp and close R ft next to L ft, bending both knees (ct 2),
2	turning face ctr, step on R ft in place (ct 1), step on L ft next to R toes, bending both knees, wt equally divided on both ft (ct 2)
3	stamp ("fall") successively with R and L ft in place (ct 1), repeat action of ct 1 (ct 2)
4-6	repeat action of meas 1-3
7	repeat action of meas 1
8	stamp R ft next to L ft (ct 1), stamp R ft next to L ft (ct 2)
9	facing ctr, step on R ft diag R fwd (ct 1), lift L knee sharply in front, raising on ball of R ft (ct 2).
10	repeat action of meas with opp ftwk
11-16	repeat action of meas 19-24 of Part 1

MEAS      PATTERN      Part 3 Trakijka

- 1-6      repeat action of meas 1-6 of Part 2
- 7      facing ctr, moving fwd,  
step on L ft through L heel (ct 1),  
step on R ft (ct 2)
- 8      step on L ft (ct 1),  
lift on L ft, moving R ft in a little arc close  
along the floor fwd (ct 2)
- 9      step on R ft (ct 1),  
lift on R ft, lifting L ft off the floor (ct 2)
- 10      facing ctr, moving bkwd, step on L ft (ct 1),  
step on R ft (ct 2)
- 11      step on L ft (ct 1),  
lift on L ft (ct 2)
- 12      step on R ft (ct 1),  
lift on R ft (ct 2)

Part 4 Dvojna ("Double")

- 1-6      repeat action of meas 1-6 of Part 2
- 7      facing ctr, big step on L ft fwd (ct 1),  
turning face RLOD on ball of L ft, swinging  
R knee turned out sdwd (ct 2),
- 8      stamp R ft followed by a stamp on L ft, ft apart (ct 1),  
repeat action of ct 1 (ct 2)
- 9-10      repeat action of meas 9-10 of Part 2
- 11      step on R ft bkwd to the R, turning body diag R,  
keep L toe on the floor with the heel turned out (ct 1)  
repeat action of ct 1 with opp ftwj & direction (ct 2)
- 12      facing ctr, big step on R ft twd ctr (ct 1),  
lift on ball of R toe, lifting L ft, heel turned out,  
off the floor (ct 2)
- 13-14      repeat action of meas 7-8 of Part 4
- 15      turning face ctr, step on R ft twd ctr (ct 1),  
hold (ct 2)
- 16      leap onto L ft, lifting R knee in front,  
bending body fwd at waist (ct 1),  
stamp and close R ft next to L ft and straighten up (ct 2)

Repeat the whole dance one more time from the beginning

The above sequence is based on the accompanying recording