

From the Bitola-Prilep area. In 12/16 rhythm, which we will indicate as follows:



Open circle of dancers, men and women. Hands are joined, held forwards at shoulder level. Face center.

Wait any number of measures before beginning
Pickup to 1st time through figure I.

Measure Beat

1-7 Wait

8 Step forward on R foot, diagonally to the L
 [Body bends slightly forward from the waist & is twisted slightly L. R foot is not quite in front of L]
 11 Step back onto L in place
 [Body is straightened.]

Figure I (Slow)

I 1 Small čukče on L [Free R is bent at knee & raised low forward.]
 4 Small čukče on L [Optionally, R may step (no weight) by L.]
 6 Step or shift weight onto R by L
 [Raise L foot from ground on beat 7]
 8 Step forward on L foot diagonally to R
 [As in 8 above, but reverse R & L]
 11 Step back onto R in place
 [Body is straightened.]

II Reverse footwork of I

III 1 High hop on L [Body faces R of center. Free R leg is bent at knee, and hooked across in front of the L leg.]
 3 Step on R moving forward in RLOD
 [Step on ball of R foot. R leg is almost straight.]
 4 Step on L moving forward in RLOD
 [Step onto whole foot, slightly forwards of R, L knee is somewhat bent.]
 6 Step R forward in RLOD
 8 Step L forward in RLOD
 [Immediately before 8, L hip twists slightly forward, returning to a natural position as the L foot comes down on beat 8)]
 11 Step R forward in RLOD
 [Steps are "soft", due to small flexing of knees in receiving weight.]

Cont

Kucano continued

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- IV 1 High hop forward on R (RLOD) [Free L is bent at knee & held up behind. Lower leg is parallel to ground, and points a bit left of straight back.]
- 3 Step on L forward (RLOD) [Step onto ball of foot - leg almost straight.]
- 4 Step on R forward (RLOD) [Step onto whole foot, forward of L]
- 6 Step on L forward (RLOD) [Prepare to turn sharply towards center.]
- 8-11 Turn sharply on L to face center, and do 8-11 of pickup to figure I.

Figure II (Fast)

Transition should be made during measures III-IV. Hands are held down still joined, facing center.

- I 1 Hop on L in place [Free R is raised in front, bent at knee, and somewhat crossed in front of L]
- 3 Step R by L [Step onto ball of R foot. R leg is straightened.]
- 4 Step onto L in place [L knee somewhat flexed.]
- 6 Step R by L
- 8 Step L in front of R
- 11 Step R in place [Just before 11, slight cuckee on L - on beat 10½, so to speak.]

II Reverse footwork of I

III-IV Repeat I-II

V-VI Same as III-IV of figure I, but bouncier - bigger hops, etc.

When the music again becomes slow, you may return to the slow figure by making the transition to the introduction to figure I at measure VI, beat 8.

Cont

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.

Pelagonia

The Pelagonia area, from which the next five dances come, is a large plain in southern Macedonia, including the towns of Bitola, Prilep, and Lerin (Florina). In a broader sense, it also includes areas of Aegean Macedonia from Kostur (Kastoria) to Voden (Edessa). Within this region, the differences in types of dances and movements, musical styles, and traditional folk costume are relatively minor. Dances from this region include Maškoto, Beranče, Čifte Camče, Krivoto, Pušteno, Prilepsko Nevestinsko, Kucano, etc. Common rhythms include 7/8, 4/4, 8/8, 2/4, and 12/16. 11/16 is a rhythm rarely found in dances of this region, although a number of songs in this rhythm do exist. The few examples of this rhythm in this region's dances are primarily in a few old dances in complex rhythms such as 11/16+7/16.

The traditional costumes worn throughout the plains of Pelagonia are fairly similar, but differ somewhat from those worn in the surrounding mountain areas. The most important reason for this is the much colder climate in the mountains. A second cause of differences in costume is the degree of contact with the outside world, and financial ability to adopt newer models of dress. Where contact was great with the outside world, either directly or due to a large number of men traveling "na pečalba" to foreign places to find work, many innovations were introduced. For instance, in the Prilep area where Pece grew up, the predominantly red embroidery has recently been augmented or replaced by white, and sequins have been added.