

Čoček

(Yugoslavia)

Since World War II, a rather simple three-measure line dance of Gypsy origin has spread throughout Southern Serbia and Macedonia. It goes under a variety of local names and is found with a great deal of local and personal variation. United States and Canadian folk dancers have been exposed to variations of it under the names Sa (or Sa, sa), Skopsko cigansko oro, Kupurlika, Coko, Coko etc. The name Čoček (CHOH-check), while it also has a variety of interpretations*, has been arbitrarily chosen by Dick Crum, since it is the term generally used by musicians when referring to it.

*The name itself is derived from the Turkish word köçek, a term applied during the Ottoman Empire to a class of young dancing boys. These boys, usually Gypsies, Armenians, Jews or other non-Turks, used to perform for hand-outs in the streets or at private gatherings, and their dances are reputed to have been quite bawdy. The word köçek assumed the forms čoček, kjuček etc., in the Balkan languages, and came to be associated with Gypsy-style, solo, couple and group dances in 2/4 and 9/8 meters. Today such dances are done by Gypsies as well as non-Gypsies in Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey.

The Čoček described here might best be defined as the "2/4-time line Čoček popular today in Southern Serbia and Macedonia." North American folk dancers are advised to limit themselves to the basic form given here; the many variations done by different native dancers include hesitations (stepping just after the beat), hip movements, shoulder shakes and other erotic gestures. Knowing when these movements are appropriate is a very tricky matter, however, and comes only after a long time dancing and observing čoček among native dancers. Čoček was presented by Dick Crum at the 1987 University of the Pacific Folk Dance Camp.

RECORD: Paprika Press PP 8601 Side A/2 "Ramo, Ramo;" 2/4 meter
Any ood 2/4-meter melody called "Čoček."

CASSETTE: Kolo Party 3 Side A/3.

FORMATION: Open circle, leader on R end. Hands are joined at shoulder level ("W" pos). Leader in some areas flourishes a handkerchief in his/her R hand.

MUSIC 2/4

PATTERN

Measures

INTRODUCTION None required. Leader decides when to begin.

- 1 Facing slightly R of ctr, step on L ft in LOD, passing R ft (ct 1); close R to L, taking wt (ct &); step on L ft in LOD (ct 2); pause, turning to face ctr (ct &).
- 2 Facing ctr, dance a small step bkwd on R ft (ct 1); dance a small step bkwd on L (ct 2).
- 3 Still facing ctr, step on R ft beside L (ct 1); step on L in place (ct &); step on R near L (ct 2); pause, turning to face slightly R of ctr (ct &).

DANCE SEQUENCE: Dance pattern as written until music ends.