

TURSKI  
ČOČEK

Yugoslavia (South Serbia and Macedonia)

Since World War II, a rather simple 3-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. U.S. and Canadian folk dancers have been exposed to variants of it under the names *Sa* (or *Sa, sa*), *Skopsko cigansko oro*, *Kupurlika*, *Coço*, *Coko*, etc. As an overall, generic name for this dance, I have arbitrarily chosen *Čoček*, which, while it also has a variety of interpretations, is the term generally used by musicians when referring to it.\*

**Pronunciation:** CHOH-check

**Recordings:** The dance is done to any good 2/4-meter melody called *Čoček*; a good one is *Coček* on Kolo Party 3 (cassette). Another is *Ramo, Ramo* on Paprika Press PP 8601, A-2.

**Meter:** 2/4; there are *čoćeci* in 9/8, but I have never seen this dance done to them.

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

**NOTE:** The description given here is *schematic*, i.e., gives the basic structure of the dance; there are infinite variations in styling and footwork, however, depending on region, momentary mood, and individual ethnic tradition (the dance is popular among Serbs, Gypsies, Albanians and Macedonians).

- Meas 1 Facing slightly R of ctr, step Lft in LOD, passing Rft (1); close Rft to Lft (&); step Lft in LOD (2); turn to face ctr (&).
- Meas 2 Facing ctr, small step backward on Rft (1); small step backward on Lft (2).
- Meas 3 Still facing ctr, step Rft beside Lft (1); step Lft in place (&); step Rft near Lft (2); turn to face slightly R (&).

\* The word *čoček* derives from the Turkish *köçek* (literally "camel foal"), a name which came to be applied during Ottoman Turkish times to dancing boys who performed for money on street corners and at private gatherings. These boys were rarely Turks -- usually Gypsies or Armenians. In the Balkans the word eventually became attached both to a kind of "oriental" music (usually in 9/8 time, sometimes in 2/4) and the dance performed to that music; it is associated with Gypsies and Turks. The dance described here might well be defined as "line *čoček* in 2/4 time." There are other *čoćeci* performed as solos and partner dances, much like the Greek *karsilamas* or *tsifte telli*, in both 9/8 and 2/4 meters.

LAGUNA FOLKDANCERS FESTIVAL  
FEBURARY 10-12, 1989