

KOKONJEŠTE (KUKUNJEŠĆE)

Notes by Dick Crum for *ŽviLA TAMBURA '93*

A classic kolo, *Kokonješte* or *Kukunješće* (name derived from the Romanian *coconește*, 'in the style of a young noble') was one of the pre-World War I dances that survived in the U.S. into the 1950's, at which time it was regularly being done in South Slavic communities everywhere in the U.S.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DANCE

Formation Open circle, mixed males and females, hands joined down at sides ("V" position).
Meter 2/4

As played in all South Slavic communities in the 1950's, *Kokonješte* had three musical themes (structure A-B-C-B-C). The dance itself had two distinct parts: a rest step and a running step. The rest step was always done when the first musical theme was played (the "A" theme of the tune *Arapsko kokonješte*, total 12 measures including repeat [6 + 6]). The running step was done to all the rest of the music (themes B [4 + 4], C [4 + 4], B, C).

While the running step was done the same way in all communities, the rest step was subject to local variation. For example, in Pittsburgh, western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio, the rest step was done in place, and consisted of a 4-measure pattern: RL / RLR / LR / LRL performed a total of 3 times of fill up the 12 measures of music.

Elsewhere the standard *Kokonješte* pattern, either walking or running, was done throughout both parts. The walking pattern was used during theme "A", while the running pattern was used during themes "B" and "C".

Part 1 - (Theme A) Walking *Kokonješte* pattern (6 + 6 = 12 meas)

Facing slightly right of center and moving to right (counterclockwise around):

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|--------|------|--|
| Meas 1 | ct 1 | Step Rft in this direction. |
| | ct 2 | Step Lft in this direction. |
| Meas 2 | ct 1 | Turning to face center, step Rft sideward to R. |
| | ct 2 | Still facing center, close Lft beside Rft without taking weight on Lft; or bring Lft a bit forward low in air. |
| Meas 3 | ct 1 | Still facing center, step Lft sideward to L. |
| | ct 2 | Still facing center, close Rft beside Lft without taking weight on Rft; or bring Rft a bit forward low in air. |

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|-----------|------|--|
| Meas 4 | ct 1 | Still facing center, step Rft sideward to R. |
| | ct 2 | Still facing center, close Lft beside Rft without taking weight on Lft; or bring Lft a bit forward low in air. |
| Meas 5-8 | | Reverse footwork and direction of meas 1-4. |
| Meas 9-12 | | Repeat movements of meas 1-4. |

Part 2 - (Themes B, C, B, C) Running *Kokonješte* pattern

Facing slightly left of center and moving to left (clockwise around):

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|----------|------|--|
| Meas 1 | ct 1 | Light running step with Lft in this direction.* |
| | ct 2 | Light running step with Rft in this direction. |
| Meas 2 | ct 1 | Turning to face center, step Lft in place or very slightly to L. |
| | ct & | Step Rft in place beside Lft or across in front of Lft. |
| | ct 2 | Step Lft in place. |
| Meas 3 | ct 1 | Still facing center, step Rft sideward to R. |
| | ct & | Step Lft in place beside Rft or across in front of Rft. |
| | ct 2 | Step Rft in place. |
| Meas 4 | ct 1 | Still facing center, step Lft sideward to L. |
| | ct & | Step Rft in place beside Lft or across in front of Lft. |
| | ct 2 | Step Lft in place. |
| Meas 5-8 | | Facing slightly right of center and moving to right (counterclockwise around), reverse footwork and direction of meas 1-4. |

* These light running steps are often done in the zig-zag style described by some dancers as the "Banat" step.

The fact that Part 1's music (theme A) is only 12 measures in total length, while the *Kokonješte* pattern is 4 measures in one given direction, means that, after finishing Part 1 the dancer is ready to begin Part 2 with the opposite foot from that with which he or she began Part 1. In short, the dancer performs the *Kokonješte* pattern throughout the music, changing style from walking to running or vice versa, depending on whether the music is theme "A" (walking) or one of themes "B" or "C" (running). With each full playing of the *Arapsko kokonješte* music the whole dance began with the opposite foot and in the opposite direction from the preceding full playing.