

LIČKO KOLO

Croatian

PRONUNCIATION: LEECH-koh KOH-loh

TRANSLATION: Dance from Lika

SOURCE: Dick Oakes learned Ličko kolo from Dick Crum who researched the silent dances of Lika in Croatia during his 1952 and 1954 research trips. The three figures below are only a few of the many available to the native dancer and are the ones first presented by Mr. Crum along with the song (see below), which is sung by the dancers as they amble around the floor during the first figure. Actually, according to Mr. Crum, the first figure is not part of the dance in the minds of the Ličani. It is simply stylized walking while the singing is going on. Elsie Dunin also learned other figures and cues from Professor I. Ivančan at a seminar on Dinaric Mountain Dances in Yugoslavia in 1967. Atanas Kolarovski subsequently taught the dance in 1969 as did Anatol Joukowsky.

BACKGROUND: Ličko kolo is one of the "nijemo" (silent) dances found in the Dinaric Mountain area of Croatia. They are termed silent dances because they are danced without instrumental accompaniment; the only sounds being when the feet make contact with the floor, the rhythmic "chink, chink, chink" of the women's coin necklaces, the dancers' voices as they sing, and the leader's calls. Though not often danced these days, these silent dances are well remembered by the older Ličani and are perpetuated by folk dance performing groups. After the slow, singing part (Fig I), the leader signals figure changes for the faster tempo by means of shouted cues. These figures vary from village to village and from leader to leader as do their cues. The cues are not ritualized commands but rather are usually simple verb forms that vary according to the leader, the occasion, tradition, etc. The cues given below were selected by Mr. Crum for use by non-native dancers. (Mr. Crum subsequently taught several other steps and cues.)

MUSIC: A capella singing by the dancers during the stroll (see below).

FORMATION: Open cir of mixed M and W linked arm-in-arm in "Q" pos, as if being escorted, with leader (kolovoda) at left. If the dancers prefer, hands may be joined and held down in "V" pos. In the "old days," dancers sometimes used a front-basket hold ("F" pos) or belt-hold ("X" pos), with the L arm under. When M only danced, a shldr hold ("T" pos) was used.

METER/RHYTHM: 2/4

STEPS/STYLE: During the first Fig, the steps are a simple casual walk. During Fig II and III, the ftwk is generally heavy, or "rugged," and the movement of the ft and leg are often sharp and angular.

MEAS

MOVEMENT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION - None.

Movement begins when the leader starts to stroll to the L, gathering dancers into an open cir.

I. ŠETNJA (SHET-nyah) "stroll"

- 1 Facing diag L and moving in RLOD, step L (ct 1); step R in same dir (ct 2);
- 2 Step L (ct 1); turning to face ctr, step R bwd away from ctr (ct 2).

Leader continues the action of meas 1-2 and begins singing at the repetition of the Fig when dancers are in unison, leaving two meas between each verse.

TRANSITION

Leader continues to dance Fig I for a while in silence, gradually increasing tempo and joining hands down in "V" pos. At leader's shout of "OP!" (OHP) or "OTSKČI," the dancers begin Fig II.

II. OTSKOČI (oht-SKOH-chee) "Get hopping"

- 1 Facing to L and moving in RLOD, run L (ct 1); run R (ct 2);
- 2 Leap onto L (ct 1); hop L, swinging R fwd (ct 2);
- 3 Leap onto R (ct 1); hop R, swinging L fwd (ct 2).

Leader continues action of Fig II, zig-zagging and serpentineing the line al over the dance area. At leader's shout of "OP" or "PUSHKA!," the dancers begin Fig III.

III. PUŠKA (POOSH-kah) "Like a gun"

- 1 Continuing to move in RLOD, step L (ct 1); step R in same dir (ct 2);
- 2 Run L,R,L (cts 1,&,2);
- 3 Run R,L,R (cts 1,&,2).

Note: Leader continues action of Fig III, zig-zagging and serpentineing the line all over the dance area. Leader may alternate between Fig I and Fig II until all dancers seem to have had enough, whereupon the leader either calls out "Stoj" (pronounced "stoy," meaning "stop") or leads the line off of the dance area.

LIČKO KOLO

Croatia

/ Pjevaj mi, pjevaj, sokole, / Šalaj sokole.	Sing to me, sing, oh falcon.
/ K'o što si sinoć pjevao, / Šalaj pjevao.	Sing the way you sang last night
/ Pod moje drage pendžerom, / Šalaj pendžerom.	Underneath my sweetheart's window.
/ Moja je draga zaspala, / Šalaj zaspala.	My sweetheart fell asleep.
/ Studan joj kamen pod glavom, / Šalaj pod glavom.	The stone under her head was cold.
/ Ja sam joj kamen izmak'o, / Šalaj izmak'o.	I removed the stone
/ A svoju ruku podmak'o, / Šalaj podmak'o.	And replaced it with my hand.

Copyright © 2021 by Dick Oakes