

# NOJKATOLIŠ

Slovenian couple dance from Gorenjsko

Notes by Dick Crum, revised 10/88.

*Nojkatoliš* (noy-kah-TOH-leesh, from German *Neukatholisch*, 'new Catholic'), sometimes pronounced and spelled *Najkatoliš* (nigh-kah-TOH-leesh), is a 2-part dance extremely popular throughout Central Europe and in Scandinavia during the late 19th century. In Slovenia it is found in many local variants, all of which differ from other European versions in terms of steps and movements, although the melody has remained pretty much intact.

The exact origins of this dance are obscure, though it can be traced as far back as the mid-19th century. Its unusual name has been the subject of much conjecture. Based on certain widespread Central European variants in which dancers move toward the center for 4 measures, then quickly "retreat" with gallop steps (not in the Gorenjsko version presented here), some scholars have suggested that the name 'New Catholic' might have somehow become attached to the dance by analogy with the regions that had become Protestant during the Reformation and later returned to Catholicism during the Counter Reformation!

The dance was known everywhere in Slovenia, under this and other names, and with many variants. Dancers often sang the following nonsense ditty to the first part:

*Joj, joj, joj,  
repa in frižov,  
kislo zelje in polenta,  
to je živež moj!*

*Oh my, oh my,  
turnips and beans,  
sauerkraut and porridge,  
that's my daily fare!*

**Recordings:** Slovenian Traditional Dances 104 (cassette), *Nojkatoliš*.

**Meter:** 2/4

**Initial formation and position:** Couples in semi-open ballroom position facing in LOD around the floor. M's Lft free, W's Rft free.

MEAS	COUNT	ACTION
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**Note:** M's and W's footwork is opposite throughout.

## PART I

- |     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
| 1   | 1 | Dancers stamp once in place (M's Lft, W's Rft, no weight).   |
|     | 2 | Pause.   |
| 2   |   | Repeat stamp and pause exactly as in meas 1.   |
| 3-4 |   | With 4 walking steps, 2 per meas (M: LRLR, W: RLRL), couple makes 1 full turn clockwise, to again face in LOD.   |
| 5-8 |   | Smoothly, like a continuation of the walkaround in meas 3-4, couple moves forward in LOD with 8 walking steps, M beg. Lft, W beg. Rft, 2 steps per measure; on steps 7 and 8 (M: LR, W: RL) couple makes a 1/2 turn clockwise to face opposite direction (RLOD). |

9-16

Repeat meas 1-8, but in RLOD; after the 1/2 turn clockwise, couple ends up in the place and position in which they started the dance.

**Variation on Part I:** In measures 5-8, instead of 8 walking steps forward in LOD, dancers may take closed ballroom position and dance in LOD 6 "sashays" (M: LrLr LrLr LrLr, W: RlRl RlRl RlRl) plus 2 walking steps (M: LR, W: RL). If you do this variation, you end up facing in LOD, and begin meas 9 in this position (the 2 stamps); in the 4 walkaround steps that follow, *do only 1/2 turn clockwise*, so that the next sashay steps return you (in RLOD) to home position.

## PART II

17-32 Polka, pivot or step-hops (*trpljan*) for 16 measures around the floor in LOD.