

ŠOKUC

Serbian

PRONUNCIATION: SHOH-kts

TRANSLATION: Šokuc means "a Catholic man." It is a corruption of the Serbian word "Šokac.

SOURCE: Dick Oakes learned this Vlach dance from Dennis Boxell who learned it in the Homolje Mountains region of northeast Serbia.

BACKGROUND: The Šokci are Catholic inhabitants of Bačka, Srem, and Slavonia who are originally from Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Dalmatia. Šokuc, sometimes spelled Šok'c, is related to the Romanian dance Șobolanul, and comes from the village of Neresnica, Serbia. Every year on Pentecost (the seventh Sunday after Easter), in the villages of Duboka and Neresnica (East Serbia), women pass into trance. It's believed that they are possessed by Rusallias (mythical beings resembling nymphs). The entire ritual from the beginning till the end of the trance state is accompanied by music and dance. They are the most important parts of the ritual. In fact, for women, it is enough to hear sacred Rusallia's melody to fall into a trance. Neresnica is a small town in the municipality of Kučevo, Serbia. Šokci are considered to be the descendants of the pre-Ottoman indigenous Croatian population of Slavonia and Vojvodina, while the majority of the present-day population of these regions are descendants of later settlers. It is worth noting that the Ottoman invasion caused much of the Christian population of Bosnia, Herzegovina, and other adjacent regions either to convert or to move, so the population again moved from the more southern areas (today's Bosnia) toward the north.

MUSIC: Festival (7"EP) KF-EP-107, side A, band 2

FORMATION: Lines of mixed M and W holding neighbors' belts in "X" pos, R arm under.

METER/RHYTHM: 9/16 (Fig I) and 13/16 (Fig II). The rhythm of Fig I is quick-quick-quick-slow (2-2-2-3) and is counted below in 4 dancer's counts. The rhythm of Fig II is quick-quick-quick-quick-slow (2-2-2-2-2-3) and is counted below in 6 dancer's counts.

STEPS/STYLE: Steps are light and quick.

MEAS

MOVEMENT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION (13/16)

1-4

No action.

I. FIGURE I (9/16)

- 1 Small leap R across in front of L, twisting body to L (ct 1); turning to face ctr, step in place L (ct 2); turning to face diag R, step R to R (ct 3); step L across in front of R (ct 4).
- 2-8 Repeat action of meas 1 seven more times.

II. FIGURE II (13/16)

- 1 Facing and moving slightly twd ctr, small leap R (ct 1); step L (ct 2); step R (ct 3) step L (ct 4); step R, bending R knee slightly (ct 5); stamp L next to R without wt (ct 6).
- 2 Repeat action of meas 1 bwd with opp ftwk.
- 3-4 Repeat action of meas 1-2.

III. FIGURE III (9/16)

- 1-8 Repeat action of Fig I, meas 1-8.

IV. FIGURE IV (13/16)

- 1 Facing ctr, hop L, bringing R slightly across in front of L (ct 1); step fwd R (ct 2); step bwd L (ct 3); step bwd R (ct 4); step bwd L (ct 5); step bwd R (ct 6).
- 2 Repeat action of meas 1 with opp ftwk.
- 3-4 Repeat action of meas 1-2.
- Repeat entire dance from beg.