

Kocharee

Armenia

Source: This dance is called "Halay" by original Armenian immigrants from western Armenia, which today takes up much of the eastern part of Turkey. It is one of the most popular Armenian dances and is done throughout Armenia and by the Armenians dispersed throughout the world. There are many regional styles and figures. This particular "Kocharee" was researched in several northwestern regions of Armenia-Leninakan, Speetak, Arteek, Taleen- but has spread throughout the republic. In the higher mountain areas where the shepherds, "Hoveev", are grazing their herds during the hot summer, Kocharee is the most popular dance. The orchestra consists of two Zurna-a double-reeded, conical pipe with one producing the melody and the other holding the main drone or "Dam" and one double-skinned drum called "Duhol." Some of the more complex movements are called "Ghoch", from the butting of the mountain ram and the "Khachadzev," from the jumping style of the same animal. The dance was learned by Tom Bozigian as a youngster in Los Angeles during the early 1950's.

CD: Best of Tom Bozigian Songs & Dances of the Armenian People Vol. 1

Formation: Mixed line dance with the dancers facing center and drawn closely side by side with palms grasped and fingers interlocked plus arms straight down at sides. Leader, called "Paree-Glookh," is at R and waves a handkerchief with free hand over the head throughout the dance.

Music: 2/4 changing to 6/8 Pattern

Measure Figure I

- 1 Moving sdwd, step R to R (ct 1) step L behind (ct 2)
- 2 Step R to R with slight plie (ct 1) hop in place with R as L lifts behind (ct 2)
- 3 Leap to both with slight plie (ct 1) double-bounce (ct 2&)
- 4 Switch weight again to L with slight plie (ct 1) slight hop on L in place as R lifts behind (ct 2)

Variation Figure I

Meas. 3 cts 2&-Scissor kick R & L with heels touching floor

Figure 11 (6/8)

- 1 Quickly switching arm hold to grasp shoulders of adjoining dancers, hop on L to R as R knee raises in front and R heel is pulled sharply behind to calf level (ct &) step R to R with slight plie (cts 1-3) leap L across R still in slight plie (cts 4-6)
- 2 Leap R to R as ball of L touches beside R (cts 1-3) hop R in place as L ft kicks in front above floor (cts 4-6)
- 3 Leap L in place as R ft Kick fwd with heel touching floor in front of L (cts 1-3) repeat this Meas. 3 of Figure 11 with opposite ftwk (cts 4-6)
- 4 Leap L in place as R touches beside L (cts 1-3) Hop L in place as R kicks ahead above floor (cts 4-6)

Presented by Tom Bozigian