

CROSS-INDEX TERMS:

Chuchovski Buchimish - a similar *Bučimiš* presented by Marcus Holt Moskoff

Čukurovski Bučimiš - a *Bučimiš* presented by Jaap Leegwater

Bučemiš, bučeniš, bučiniš, bukiniš, bukumuš, bukunuš (*Conium maculatum* and *Cicuta virosa*)

Buchimishko Horo - Richard Unciano's name for the dance

BACKGROUND:

Bučimiš describes a family of dances from the Shope and Western Thracian regions of Bulgaria. Over the years, the published instructions for *Bučimiš* depict a HISTORY of the dance that resembles the dance, itself: dancing one way, then dancing the other way, with each figure outdoing the previous!

First, Rickey Holden and Dennis Boxell went to Bulgaria and, based on their collecting, published a description and recording of *Bučimiš* on Folkraft 26, *Folk Dance of Bulgaria, Volume 1*. That dance, said to be from the Shope region, consisted of what we now would call four introductory steps, followed by four variations similar to Figure 2, below: toe-heel, pas-de-Basque, scissors, and hop-tap or slap forward. Then, in 1966, Dick Crum introduced a much more dynamic, 3-figure *Bučimiš* from the town of Pazardžik in western Thrace. It consisted of figures 1, 2, and 3, below, danced to Folkraft 26. He said in 2004 that he learned the dance from Ilija Rizov, a dancer with the Kutev ensemble, but Gordon Engler wrote in 1968 that Crum learned *Bučimiš* from dancers in Serbia. Boxell then presented a *Bučimiš* at the 1967 Stockton Folk Dance Camp, consisting of his fourth 'introductory' figure (Figure 5, below), figures 1 and 2, below, a 'bokazo'-type figure, and Figure 3, below. Hot stuff! Crum then responded in 1968 with the new, dynamic recording by the Duquesne University Tamburitzans, DuTam 1004a, on which Yves Moreau played *tupan* (bass drum). With his usual gift for choreography, Crum presented the 4-figure dance, below, adding a 'reel-step' as Figure 4. That version, to the DuTam recording, has set the standard for 40 years, now. Crum also presented in 1968 the dance with Boxell's introductory figure, Figure 5, below, but that fifth figure and the Folkraft recording seldom appeared after that. In 1974, the NAMA orchestra issued NAMA #1, with extensive liner notes written by Dick Crum. In those liner notes, Crum presented the 5-figure dance and called figures 3 and 4, below, "exhibition-type elaborations." Over the next 15 years or so, other teachers (Boxell again, Marcus Holt Moskoff, Richard Unciano, Bruce Mitchell, Jaap Leegwater) presented new versions of *Bučimiš* with five, seven, or nine figures, but instructions for Crum's dance outnumber the instructions for all of the others, put together.

In the NAMA notes, Crum speculated that the name *Bučimiš* came from a song that mentioned hemlock in its first line, no one knows that song, now. In 1994, the musical "Riverdance" achieved great popularity. Over the next couple of years, a number of folk dancers recognized the *Bučimiš* rhythm (but not the melody) as part of that production.

MUSIC:

Balkanton BHA 10441, *Folk Dances from Bulgaria*; A-6, *Choukourovski Bouchimish*

DuTam 1004a, *Bučimiš*

DuTam 3001, *Duquesne University Tamburitzans Treasury of Dance, Volume 1*; A-1, *Bučimiš*

Folkraft LP-26, *Folk Dances of Bulgaria, Volume 1*; A-7, *Bučimiš*

NAMA #1, *NAMA Orchestra: Balkan Folk Dances*, A-1, *Bučimiš*

VIT 001, *Folk Dances of Bulgaria, Volume One: Vitosha Folk Orchestra*; B-2, *Bučimiš*

METER:

Native dancers don't count! They simply follow the pattern of **short** and **long** beats. Non-native dancers (us!) need quantifying numbers. *Bučimiš* uses a 15/16 meter of 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 +3 +2 +2, in a pattern of 7 beats: 1 (**short**), 2 (**short**), 3 (**short**), 4 (**short**), 5 (**long**), 6 (**short**), 7 (**short**).

FORMATION:

Originally done in a long line: women in the middle and men on the ends; all using belt hold. More recently in America, done in short mixed lines with front basket hold, because many dancers forget to bring belts to dancing. Tuck thumbs of free hands in belts, or wave kerchiefs.

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Bučimiš (concluded)

BARS ACTION

15/16 Introduction (for the Du-Tam 1004 recording).

1-2 Like the natives, listen to the drums and become restless.

1. Double bounce. (Holden and Boxell described this as figure 4 of their 8-figure dance. Crum then described it as the first figure of his 5-figure dance, and Boxell then described it as the first figure of his slightly different 5-figure dance.)

1 Step to R onto R foot (ct 1), step behind R foot onto L foot (ct 2), repeat (cts 3,4), step to R onto R foot (ct 5), step beside R foot onto L foot so that weight is on the balls of both feet, and then lower heels to floor in a bounce (ct 6), lower and raise heels again (ct 7).
2 = 1 with opposite footwork and direction.

2. Stamps.

1 Step to R onto R foot (ct 1), step behind R foot onto L foot (ct 2), repeat (cts 3,4), step to R onto R foot (ct 5), hop on R foot, lifting L knee in a CW arc so that L upper leg is parallel to floor, L foot and lower leg hanging freely (women use smaller movements), bend upper body forward to counterbalance the leg lift (ct 6), conclude arc to stamp slightly forward with L foot, no weight, as you straighten up (ct 7).
2 = 1 with opposite footwork and direction.
3-4 = 1-2.

3. Heels.

1 Step to R onto R foot (ct 1), step behind R foot onto L foot (ct 2), repeat (cts 3,4), bend forward slightly and touch extended R heel: diagonally forward to R, then directly forward (cts 5,6), straighten, and step beside L foot onto R foot (ct 7).
2 = 1 with opposite footwork and direction.
3-4 = 1-2.
Note: touch heels with straight touching knee & bent supporting knee.

4. Double heels.

1 = 1 of Figure 2.
2 Stamp lightly sole of L heel beside R toe (ct 1), step beside R foot onto L foot (ct 2), stamp lightly soul of R heel beside L toe (ct 3), step beside L foot onto R foot (ct 4), extend and touch L heel: diagonally forward to L, directly forward (cts 5,6), hold (ct 7).
3-4 = 1-2 with opposite footwork and direction.
5-8 = 1-4.

5. Hop behind (Reel back).

1 Hop on L foot, raising R foot (ct 1), step behind L foot onto R foot (ct 2), repeat with opposite footwork (cts 3,4), jump backward onto both feet, bending forward slightly (ct 5), hop forward on L foot, raising R knee so that R upper leg is parallel to floor and R foot and lower leg hang freely (women use smaller movements) (ct 6), straighten up as you stamp beside L toe with R foot, no weight (ct 7).
2 With R foot slightly forward, step onto: R foot, L foot, R foot, L foot (cts 1,2,3,4), stamp beside L toe with R foot, no weight (ct 5), step beside L foot onto R foot (ct 6), stamp beside R toe with L foot, no weight (ct 7).
3-4 = 1-2 with opposite footwork and direction.
5-8 = 1-4.

For the DuTam 1004 recording, you may dance the figures in any number and sequence you like, but the following pattern fits very nicely: 2 bars introduction, each figure twice.

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Bučimiš (concluded)

Additional figures. For the sequence using any of the following figures, you're on your own!

5. 'Bokazo'. Boxell described this as Figure 4 of his 5-figure dance. In other words, he presented at Stockton Folk Dance Camp figures 5 (double bounce), 1 (stamps), 2 (heels), 6 ('bokazo'), and 3 (double heels).

- 1 Step to R onto R foot (ct 1), step behind R foot onto L foot (ct 2), repeat (cts 3,4), bend forward slightly and touch extended R heel: diagonally forward to R, then directly forward (cts 5,6), straighten, and step beside L foot onto R foot (ct 7).
- 2 Leap beside R foot onto L foot (ct 1), touch extended R heel diagonally forward to R (ct 2), touch extended R heel directly forward (cts 3-4), jump onto both feet with R foot crossed over L foot (ct 5), jump in place onto both feet with feet a bit less than shoulder-width apart (ct 6), jump in place onto both feet with feet together (ct 7). Note that this figure travels only to the right.

6. Sideways to right. Holden and Boxell described this as Figure 1 of their 8-figure dance.

- 1 Step to R onto R foot (ct 1), step beside R foot onto L foot (ct 2), repeat (cts 3,4), step to R onto R foot (ct 5), close L foot to R foot, no weight (cts 6-7).
- 2 = 1 with opposite footwork and direction.

7. Forward to right. Holden and Boxell described this as Figure 2 of their 8-figure dance.

- 1 Facing diagonally forward to R, step forward and to R onto R foot (ct 1), step beside R foot onto L foot (ct 2), repeat (cts 3,4), turning to face straight forward again, step to R onto R foot (ct 5), close L foot to R foot, no weight (cts 6-7).
- 2 = 1 with opposite footwork and direction, turning to face diagonally forward to L.

8. Grapevine to right. Holden and Boxell described this as Figure 3 of their 8-figure dance.

- 1 Step to R onto R foot (ct 1), step in front of R foot onto L foot (ct 2), step to R onto R foot (ct 3), step behind R foot onto L foot (ct 4), step to R onto R foot (ct 5), close L foot to R foot, no weight (cts 6-7).
- 2 = 1 with opposite footwork and direction.

9. Sideways to right with double bounce. The Peninsula Folk Dance Council of California and the Totem Folk Dancers of Tacoma, Washington described this as Figure 1 of their 7-figure dance. They follow it with Figure 5 (double bounce), Figure 1 (stamps), Figure 2 (heels), Figure 6 (bokazo), Figure 3 (double heels), and Figure 4 (hop-behind).

- 1 = bar 1 of Figure 7, but with the double bounce of Figure 5 during cts 6 and 7.
- 2 = 1 with opposite footwork and direction.

End of **BUČIMIŠ**. Description © 2008 by Ron Houston.