

Bucimis

(Bulgaria)

Source: Bucimis (boo-chee-MEESH, "hemlock") is a dance from around the town of Pazardjik in western Thrace, Bulgaria. The origin of its name is unknown; the melody of Bucimis is undoubtedly that of a now-forgotten folk song which made mention of hemlock in its first line. Villagers today, however, know no such song. The movements of Bucimis are similar to those of other west Thracian dances such as Gankino (Krivo) Horo; its uniqueness lies in its unusual 15/16 meter, with 7 dancer's beats in a quick-quick-quick-quick-slow-quick-quick rhythm pattern. Bucimis is less popular now in Bulgaria than it was a generation or two ago, when it was often done at village dance gatherings, in long lines with the men concentrated at both ends and the women in the middle. The belt hold was used. Nowadays, Bucimis is preserved primarily by performing groups, and numerous choreographed figures have been added to it. Of the 5 variations described below, #1, #2 and #3 are original folk variations; #4 and #5 are examples of later exhibition-type elaborations.

Music: Nama #1, Side A, Band 1.

Formation: Belt hold, grasp neighbor's belt, R arm in back, L arm in front. End dancers have free hands on hip or flourish a kerchief.

Introduction

1-2 2 meas drum solo; dancers wait.

Variation I - Basic Step

- 1 Facing ctr, step R ft sdwd R (ct 1), step L ft behind R ft (ct 2), step R ft sdwd R (ct 3), step L ft behind R ft (ct 4), step R ft sdwd R (ct 5), close L ft beside R ft and bounce on both ft together (ct 6), bounce again on both ft together (ct 7).
- 2 Reverse ftwk and direction of meas 1 of this variation.

Variation II - Basic Step With Stamps

- 1 Facing ctr, step R ft sdwd R (ct 1), step L ft behind R ft (ct 2), step R ft sdwd R (ct 3), step L ft behind R ft (ct 4), step R ft sdwd R (ct 5), hop on R ft in place, turning to faceslightly R of ctr, raising L knee high and bending fwd from waist (ct 6), stamp L heel (no wt) beside R toe, straightening body abruptly and turning to face ctr (ct 7).
- 2 Reverse ftwk and direction of meas 1, this variation.

Variation III - Heel Taps

- 1 Facing ctr, step R ft sdwd R (ct 1), step L ft behind R ft (ct 2), step R ft sdwd R (ct 3), step L ft behind R ft

(ct 4), with wt on L ft and L knee bent, lean fwd and tap R heel diag fwd R, R knee straight (ct 5), tap R heel directly fwd (twd ctr - no wt)(ct 6), slide R ft along R ft along floor lightly back to its place beside L ft and take wt on R ft in place (ct 7).

Reverse ftwk and direction of meas 1, this variation.

Variation IV - Double Heel Taps

Same movements as in meas 1 of Variation III above.

Still facing ctr, tap L heel directly fwd (no wt), L knee straight (ct 1), slide L ft along floor lightly back to its place beside R ft and take wt on L ft in place (ct 2), tap R heel directly fwd (no wt), R knee straight (ct 3), lightly slide R ft along floor back to its place beside L ft and take wt on R ft in place (ct 4), tap L heel diag fwd L (no wt), L knee straight (ct 5), tap L heel directly fwd, L knee straight (ct 6), hold, wt still on R ft (ct 7).

Reverse ftwk and direction of meas 1-2, this variation.

Variation V - Reel Steps With Taps

Facing ctr, hop on L ft in place, bringing R ft around in a small arc to a position behind L ankle (ct 1), step on R ft behind and very close to L heel (ct 2), hop on R ft in place, bringing L ft around in a small arc to a position behind and very close to R heel (ct 3), step on L ft behind and very close to R heel (ct 4), close R ft beside L ft and chug bkwd with both ft together sharing wt (ct 5), hop fwd on L ft to original place, raising R knee fwd and bending fwd from waist (ct 6), stamp R heel (no wt) beside L toe, straightening body abruptly (ct 7).

Rock fwd onto R ft "on its own track" (i.e., not crossing in front of L ft)(ct 1), rock back onto L ft in its place (ct 2), rock fwd again onto R ft (ct 3), rock back onto L ft again (ct 4), stamp R heel (no wt) beside L toe (ct 5), leap onto R ft in place beside L ft (ct 6), stamp L heel (no wt) beside R toe (ct 7).

Reverse ftwk of meas 1-2, this variation.

Sequence:

The order and number of times each figure is done is up to the leader. Twice through each figure as written above has proven to be a comfortable sequence for learning purposes (i.e., each figure to R-L-R-L before proceeding to next).