

BUNJEVAČKO MOMAČKO KOLO

Bačka (Yugoslavia)



The *Bunjevci* (BOON-yef-tsee) are an ethnic group living in the Bačka district of Vojvodina, northeast Yugoslavia. Their ancestors migrated to the area (then part of Hungary) in the 17th century from Turkish-occupied Hercegovina and Dalmatia. Through the intervening years the Bunjevci have maintained a distinct sense of identity vis-à-vis the Serbs, Hungarians and other ethnic groups among whom they live. This is reflected in their dialect (they speak a variety of Serbo-Croatian, unrelated to Hungarian), religion (they are Roman Catholic, whereas the Serbs are Eastern Orthodox), customs, and, to a certain extent, their music and dance.

While the Bunjevci do the same regional dances as the other inhabitants of Bačka, they also have several dances exclusively their own. One of these is a trio dance they call *Momačko kolo* (MOH-motch-koh), meaning *Lad's Dance*. Sometimes the adjective *Bunjevačko* (BOON-

yeh-votch-koh) is added to this and other dance names to point up the dance's ethnic origin. The name *Lad's Dance*, according to natives, emphasizes the role of the single male in the trio; he is expected to lead his two female partners through various graceful figures, all the while lacing his footwork with rapid-fire heel-clicks, tiny kicks and stamps accompanied by the furious jingling of his spurs. In the words of a popular Bunjevac song:

"Kolo igra, svaki mu se divi,
Nek se znade, da Bunjevac živi!"

("He dances the kolo -- all admire him;
Let it be known that the Bunjevac lives!")

(continued)

BUNJEVAČKO MOMAČKO KOLO (continued)

Momačko kolo is reported to be a 19th-century dance that died out and was revived in the 1930's through the efforts of a group of Bunjevac dance enthusiasts. In its formation and figures it has much in common with other trio dances of northeast Yugoslavia such as *Logovac*, *Jabučice*, *Čupanica*, etc.

Recording: AMAN 102

Meter: 2/4

Formation: One M with hands around waists of two women, one on either side of him. Women rest inside hands on M's shoulders. M holds women's outside hands behind their backs. Trios stand facing into a circle.

MEASURE

ACTION

NOTE: The description that follows is from the AMAN Institute syllabus for 1972. It is a fixed arrangement of figures presented at that time and drawn from material learned by AMAN members at the Badija Seminar on Yugoslav Dance, as well as Vol. V of the Janković sisters' *Narodne igre*, and details learned from members of the LADO Ensemble.

STEP PATTERNS

Step 1

- 1-2 Step Rft in place (1); step Lft in place (&); step Rft in place (2); bounce or slight hop on Rft (&). Repeat with opp. ftwk.

Step 2

- 1-2 Step Rft in place (1); bounce or slight hop on Rft (&); repeat on opposite feet (2&); step Rft in place (1); step Lft in place (&); step Rft in place (2); bounce or slight hop on Rft (&). In the course of the dance, this step will be repeated with opposite footwork.

Step 3 ("SINK-HOP")

- 1 Before beat, rise on ball of Lft, then on the beat "sink" onto Rft, bending knee gradually (&1); rise "at the last minute" on Rft before beat and then on the beat "sink" onto Lft, bending L knee gradually (&2); rise "at the last minute" on Lft (&).
- 2 Step Rft in place (1); step Lft in place (&); step Rft in place (2).

Step 4

- 1 Same as measure 1 of Step 3, repeated as appropriate.

Men's Solo Step 1

- 1 Bouncing on Lft, touch Rft to side, slightly turned in (1); again bouncing on Lft, bring Rft to touch almost across in front of Lft, this time Rft turned slightly out (&); repeat (2&). May be done with opposite footwork.

(continued)

BUNJEVAČKO MOMAČKO KOLO (continued)

MEASURE	ACTION
<u>STEP PATTERNS (continued)</u>	
<u>Men's Solo Step 2</u>	
1	Step Lft in place (1); bounce or slight hop on Lft, bringing R heel across L instep (&); repeat with opp. ftwk. (2,&).
2	Four scissors steps in place beginning with Lft coming back. Toes touch floor at all times.
<u>Men's Solo Step 3 (count "&-uh-one, &-uh-two")</u>	
1	Hopping on Rft, click Lft to Rft (&); land on Lft (uh); step on Rft (1); repeat (count &-uh-two).
<u>SEQUENCE</u>	
8 measures introduction.	
<u>Figure I</u>	
1-8	Trios dance 4 complete Step 1 in place.
<u>Figure II - "Windmill"</u>	
1-8	Using 4 of Step 1, trios pivot slowly CW to make one revolution
<u>Figure III - "Exchange"</u>	
1-4	Women change places with each other, passing in front of M: L W passes "on the outside", R W passes "on the inside", i.e. closest to M, using 2 of Step 2. Man does 2 complete Step 1.
5-8	Women return to place, W now on L passing on the outside. M continues Step 1.
<u>Figure IV - "Solo"</u>	
1-8	Man moves twd center of circle using 16 of Men's Solo Step 1. Women repeat Figure III in place.
<u>Figure V - "Solo"</u>	
1-8	Men dance 4 of Men's Solo Step 2 back to place. Women dance 4 of Step 3 in place.
<u>Figure VI</u>	
1-8	Using Step 1, M makes 1 complete circle CW around R W who turns with him in place. L W turns once CCW.
9-16	M moves to L W and they make one CCW circle while R W makes another turn CW in place.
Note: Each W makes 2 turns while M does a figure-8 around them.	

(continued)

BUNJEVAČKO MOMAČKO KOLO (concluded)MEASUREACTIONSEQUENCE (continued)Figure VII

- 1-2 All three step fwd on Rft, making a slight dip (1&); step back on Lft (2&); step Rft in place (1); step Lft in place (&); step Rft in place (2); bounce or slight hop on Rft (&).
- 3-4 Repeat with opposite footwork.
- 5-8 Repeat measures 1-4.

REPEAT DANCE FROM THE BEGINNING AND ADD:

Ending Figure

- 1-8 M dances 8 complete (i.e. 16) of his Solo Step 3. Women dance 16 of Step 4.

NOTE ON SEQUENCE: The above sequence is useful as a fixed, convenient form for exhibition groups or groups requiring a memorable routine. Once the individual steps and figures have been learned, however, the improvised feeling of the dance (i.e. sequence governed by man) can best be approximated by "mixing and matching" the various movements.

*Presented by John Gibson
Background notes by Dick Crum*