

Uzicka Carlama

By Dennis Boxell

Čarlama, (to strike), also known as Užička Čarlama (named after the town of Užice in Western Serbia) is yet another Balkan dance whose origins remain somewhat unclear .

Its name is derived from Turkish and means “to strike someone”. While part A (a kind of Malo kolo in place with a step fwd on count one) is common to the area “Heel-Clicks” are not usually found in Western Serbian dances .

From Dick Crum's Nama notes: "In the opinion of Mme. Maga Magazinović, Serbian dance historian, Čarlama could easily have been a novelty dance created by Serbian soldiers who had seen dances of other nationalities during World War I and emulated some of the foreign movements that were fun to do in boots ".

In Volume I of their Narodne Igre (1934) Serbian Dance Authorities Ljubica and Danica Janković give a description of Čarlama as taught to them by Veselin Vičić from Čajetina near Užice. The dance can be seen on film performed by an amateur dance group from Užice in the classic 1948 Jadran film (now DVD) made available by Dennis Boxell .