

## Grad Se Beli

(Croatia)

Grad Se Beli (grahd seh BEHL-ee) means “The City Is White.” It is from Međimurje, located between the Drava and Mura rivers and the Hungarian border. There are relatively few facts concerning the dances from that area dating from the 19th century, whether by Croatian or Hungarian ethno-musicologists. During the Austro-Hungarian occupation of this area, people were prohibited from maintaining their customs and dances. For this reason, solo singing became the only outlet for preserving the culture.

Following WWI, those songs were used as a foundation for the creation of many new national dances, rooted in the peasant dances of other bordering cultures, such as csárdás. Dances are often accompanied by singing and an orchestra comprised of cymbal, violin, clarinet, and bass, and sometimes a tamburitza orchestra.

Željko Jergan first researched the Međimurje region in 1971, and that research continues to this day.

This dance was presented by Željko at the 2024 Stockton Folk Dance Camp. It was also taught at the 2019 Heritage Festival in California, and 2018 June Camp in Illinois.

Music: 4/4 meter CD: *Ajde cure u kolo/Come on girls, let's dance!*, Band #17

Video: Contact an SFDC participant who received access to the videos. You can also search on YouTube for “Grad Se Beli Burnaby.” Be aware there is another choreography to the same music and some of the videos on YouTube show the other version.

Formation: Closed mixed circle; hands joined in W-pos.

Steps & Styling: Flat-footed, with knees slightly bent throughout. M and W have the same heavy styling and dance with energy.

Two-step: Step R (ct 1); step L next to R (ct &); step R (ct 2). Can be beginning with L and can be danced in any direction.

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Meas	4/4 meter	PATTERN
6 meas	<u>INTRODUCTION</u> . Facing ctr, small bounces on each ct.	
	I. <u>FIGURE I</u> . Singing part. Facing diag L, hands in W-pos.	
1	Three steps fwd, L-R-L (cts 1, 2, 3); lift on L and turn to face diag R (ct 4).	
2	Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk and direction.	
3	Repeat meas 1, but use the steps make a half-turn CCW in place to face out.	
4	Repeat meas 2, but move bkwd twd ctr.	
5	Facing out, heavy step L fwd (ct 1); heavy step or R beside L (cts &, 2); heavy step L fwd (ct &); two small heavy steps fwd, R-L (cts 3, &); heavy step R fwd (cts 4, &).	
6	Repeat meas 5.	
7	Step L to L (ct 1); step R beside L (ct 2); step L to L (ct 3); touch R beside L (ct 4).	
8	Repeat meas 7 with opp ftwk and direction.	
	II. <u>FIGURE II</u> . Instrumental part. Release hands and turn CW to face CW. Rejoin hands in V-pos.	
1-2	Bending slightly fwd, repeat the heavy steps as described in Fig I meas 5-6.	
3-4	Facing moving CW, beg L, four two-steps.	

Grad Se Beli – continued

INTERLUDE 1.

Beg L, eight two-steps.

INTERLUDE 2.

Facing ctr, with ft together, bounce twice (cts 1, 2).

INTERLUDE 3.

INTERLUDE 1 plus INTERLUDE 2. A total of 12 two-steps, plus two bounces.

ENDING.

Beg L, one two-step, stamp R next to L.

Sequence:

Fig I, Fig II (twice)  
Fig I only, Interlude 1  
Fig I, Fig II, Interlude 2  
Fig I, Fig II, Interlude 3  
Fig I, Fig II, Ending

Lyrics

Grad se beli preko Balatina  
Grad se beli preko Balatina  
Su-naj-naj, su-naj-naj, su-naj-naj, su-naj-naj  
Grad se beli preko Balatina  
Kre grada se sive ovce pasu...  
Nje mi zvrća mlada devojčica...  
Nje mi zvrća, veselo popeva...  
Imam braca, imam i dragoga...

The town shines white across Lake Balaton  
The town shines white across Lake Balaton  
La la la la la ...  
The town shines white across Lake Balaton  
....

Same structure as above, but substitute these phrases for “The town looks white across Lake Balaton”

Around the town, gray sheep graze ...  
The young girl keeps calling me back ...  
She calls me back, singing happily ...  
I have brothers and I also have a sweetheart ...



Željko Jergan at Stockton Folk Dance Camp, where he taught Grad Se Beli. *Photo by L. Tucker.*