

Arcanul Bătrânesc

(Romania)

This dance belongs to a family of dances that go under the name *Arkan* or *Arcanul* (the “ul” at the end of the latter name is just the definite article “the” in Romanian), and that can be found in Moldavia and the Carpathian Ukraine. The word “Arkan” means “lassoo,” and these dances typically display a lot of virtuosity and masculine bravado. This particular Arcanul is for old men (“bătrânesc” means “of the old men”), and is a proud and wistful song recalling the days when these men could still dance the fast Arcanul, and showing with pride and honor their ability to still stamp and kneel. Learned from Annemarie Trotzman and other members of the Baden, Switzerland folkdance group, January 1988, and Bianca de Jong (video), from whom the others learned it.

Pronunciation: ahr-kah-NOOL BUH-trehn-ehsk

CD: *Stockton Folk Dance Camp 2006*, Band 4 or *Camp Hess Kramer 2006 CD* 4/4 meter

Formation: Open circle, dancers face center with their hands resting on their neighbor’s shoulders (T-pos).

Styling: Walks (Fig I, meas 6-8 and Fig II, meas 7-8) are danced with sliding, smooth steps. Heel clicks in Fig II should be delayed as long as possible and then done sharply.

Meas _____ Pattern

8 meas INTRODUCTION. No action.

FIGURE I

- 1 Step on R to R side (ct 1); step on L across behind R (ct 2); step on R to R side (ct 3); lift L knee in front of R (ct 4).
- 2 Step on L across in front of R (ct 1); lift R knee up twd ctr (ct 2); repeat meas 1, cts 1-2 (cts 3-4).
- 3 Repeats meas 1, cts 3-4 (cts 1-2); repeat meas 2, cts 1-2 (cts 3-4).
- 4 Light stamp of R without wt, bending upper body a little fwd (ct 1); touch R heel diag to R in front, turning a little to face that way (ct 2); touch R heel in front again (ct 3); lift R knee (ct 4).
- 5 Repeat meas 1.
- 6 Repeat meas 2, cts 1-2 (cts 1-2); facing more to the L, step on R across in front of L (ct 3); step on L to L side (ct 4).
- 7-8 Repeat meas 6, cts 3-4 four more times, except that on the last beat (ct 4 of meas 8), instead of stepping on L to L side, lift L knee twd ctr and stop moving to the L.

Arcantul Bătrânesc—continued

FIGURE II

- 1 Step on L across in front of R (ct 1); hop low on L to R, barely lifting off the floor, and clicking R heel against L heel (ct 2); step on R to R side (ct 3); step on L across behind R (ct 4).
- 2 Step on R to R side (ct 1); lift L knee (ct 2);
- 2 1/2-6 Repeat meas 1 and the first two cts of meas 2 three more times (so there are 4 click-steps in all).
- 7 Step on L across in front of R (ct 1); step on R to R side (ct 2); repeat cts 1-2 (cts 3-4).
- 8 Repeat meas 7, except that on the last beat (ct 4), instead of stepping on R to R side, lift R knee twd ctr and stop moving to the R.

FIGURE III

- 1 Stamp R next to L (no wt), facing somewhat L (ct 1); step on R in place, facing ctr (ct 3); repeat cts 1-2 with opp ftwk and direction (cts 3-4).
- 2 Stamp R next to L (no wt) (ct 1); stamp R diag to R (no wt) (ct 2); stamp R next to L (no wt) (ct 3); step on R in place (ct 4).
- 3-4 Repeat meas 1-2 with opp ftwk.
- 5 Repeat meas 1.
- 6 Repeat meas 2, cts 1-3 (cts 1-3); swing R leg in a wide CW arc to the rear (ct 4).
- 7 Bend L knee and kneel to the floor on R knee (ct 1); hold (ct 2); rise up on a still flexed L leg, lifting R knee sharply up in front to where thigh is horizontal (ct 3); hold (ct 4).
- 8 Repeat Fig I, meas 4 (light stamp of R without wt in front, and then lift).

Dance repeats twice more from the beginning (3 times total).

Notes by Bianca de Jong, rearranged a little by Erik Bendix

Presented by Loui Tucker

Camp Hess Kramer Institute

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Arcanul Bătrânesc—continued

Song Lyrics:

Frunzulitî verdi busuioc
Hajdeti, la arcan, cî pît haidit, la joc
Sî rasuni sati, munti, si vâi
Batucind pamîntul, pocnind din calcâi
Prinditî-vă, di cureli tât,
Cum cî jaocî pi la Iaslovât,
Pi la Stupca, pi la Ilisesti,,
Undi lumea jaocî Trii Iisesti,,
Pi batuti dati, cu pintenu
Sî rasuni sî, Fratātu,

Arcanelu-i din străbuni lăsat
De la mosli, nostri, noi l-am învătat,
S-uite-asa, chisior, după chisior,
Sî rasuni lunca sub pas di fisior,
Jos jenuchiul datii, drumu mîi
Sî s-audî pisti, septi vâi
Mai, usor flăcâi cu-nvîrtitu
Cî, si mos, Calistru joac-acu
Saltă, mosul, nu sa di batut
Cum juca arcanul di dimult

Drag mi-i codrul cu frunzîsul, des
Sî, mosnegii, sprinteni cînd la horî ies
Uitî omul tîti boalîi
Cî la batrînetî, vin ponoasîli
Arcaneaua-i leac vindecător
Bate mosul, cu foc din chisior,
Si-o, muirară la olalta tîti,
Flăcâi si batrîni, tineri nepoti,
Prinditîvî, în pas leganat
Ca la Fratauti, la noi în sat
Iar-un pinten, una două mîi
Sî rasuni sati, munti, si, vai