

Arcanul Bătrînesc

(Romania)

Arcanul Bătrînesc (ahr-kah-NOOL BUH-trehn-ehsk) 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 (“bătrînesc” 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 Trottmann and other members of the Baden, Switzerland folkdance group, January 1988, and Bianca de Jong (video), from whom the others learned it. Notes by Bianca de Jong, rearranged a little by Erik Bendix and presented by him at the 2006 Stockton Folk Dance Camp.

- CD: *Gospodix en de Helvetiers*, Side A/15; Stockton Folk Dance Camp 2006,
Track 4. 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.

Measure	4/4 meter	PATTERN
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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 Repeat meas 1, cts 3-4 (cts 1-2); repeat meas 2, cts 1-2 (cts 3-4).
- 4 Lightly stamp R heel without weight in front, bending upper body a little fwd (ct 1); lightly stamp R heel diag to R in front, turning a little to face that way (ct 2); lightly stamp 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.

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 2); 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 (lightly stamp R heel without weight in front, to the diag, in front, and then lift).

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