

Popular Hungarian Dance Tunes from Moldva for Whistle and Bagpipe

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What is this all about?

This short document is a collection of Hungarian dance tunes from Moldva (Eastern side of the Carpathian Mountains in Northern-Rumania) for whistle and bagpipe. With the exception of the “embellished” versions, these tunes are quite easy to learn and play.

The four dances are: Drumul dracului (in Hungarian Ördöd útja, in English Devil’s road), Pálmácska (Palm’s dance), Keresel (Searching), Hojna. All the four dances are easy to learn and big fun for the dancers. Keresel and Hojna are couple dances; the other two are line dances. The term “Moldvai” is a Hungarian technical term for Hungarian tunes, people and dances from the region Moldva. I intentionally avoided the use of the adjectives Moldavian or Muldavian; they refer to totally different things.

The sheet music is written in C mixolydian, which is very easy to transpose in any other mixolydian keys; therefore all of them can be played on any bagpipe or penny/tin whistle. Keep in mind that the fingering of the traditional Hungarian six-holed wood whistles is exactly the same as the Irish/English/Scottish penny or tin whistle. Keep in mind though, that you will not be able to play these tunes the same traditional village way on a tin whistle because on a Hungarian whistle the fipple (the sharp edge and hole cut into the mouthpiece) is on the other (lower, thumb) side of the barrel, and the player can alter the sound of the whistle with placing his/her lower lip to the fipple. Nevertheless, you can add these tunes anyway to your band’s repertoire.

You can play these tunes (except Hojna embellished) on a bagpipe as well. Celtic bagpipes (Great Highland Bagpipe, Gibson Fireside, Walsh smallpipes, practically any Ceilidh bagpipes) will do. If you are interested in playing them on a traditional bagpipe, contact Ferenc Tobak (Mendocino, CA USA). Of course, you can play them on a fiddle as well.

If you want to learn the traditional way of playing, you should listen to these tunes a lot; they are available on many great CDs with whistle virtuosos like István Legedi and András Hodorog, both from Moldva. A good start could be the web-site of PRO FOLK (see the reference section for more info). There is great book in Hungarian about Moldvai music with an accompanying CD “Sandor Balogh: Moldvai hangszeres dallamok” (Moldvai instrument tunes).

Traditionally these dances are accompanied by a two sided drum (a.k.a. tupan, davul) often with a cowbell on top. You can get this instrument from Lark-In-The-Morning An additional accompanying instrument is a special lute called “koboz”. In modern environment, though, you can use a regular guitar, mandolin, tenor banjo, bouzouki or accordion to accompany these tunes, in my opinion, without the loss of real power of these tunes and corresponding dances. Keep in mind that the dances are very lively, and can only be found among the Eastern European and Near-East Asian peoples.

This document is meant to the Pirkadat website maintained by Peter Ostapenko (San Diego, CA); you can always find the most updated copy here. Many thanks to my friends with whom I started learning playing “Moldvai” dance tunes: Zoltán Veres (Helsinki, Finland), Peter Ostapenko (San Diego, CA).

The tunes

The sheet music and the ABC notation of the tunes are given. You can copy the ABC block of text into a tool like AbcMus and you can listen the tune on your computer.

Drumul dracului

This is nearly always the very first tune a beginning whistler starts with when learning “Moldvai” (the Hungarian technical term for tunes and dances from Moldva).

There are many variations of the parts of the tune. The one presented here is an easy one and well known by all “Moldvai tanchaz” (a technical term for a club, pub or house where Moldavi dance music is played and danced for fun not for performace)

Drumul dracului

Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva



T:Drumul dracului
 C:Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva
 M:4/4
 L:1/8
 Q:1/4=140
 K:Cmix

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D>EF>E D>EF>E | D>EF>G A2 A2 | G>AB>A G>AB>A | G>FE>F D4 |
D>EF>E D>EF>C | D>EF>G A2 A2 | A>BG>A F>GE>F | D2 C2 D4 ||
A>DD>D E>FE>D | A>DD>D E>FE>D | A>DD>D E>FE>D | F2 G2 A4 |
A>DD>D E>FE>D | A>DD>D E>FE>D | G2 G2 F2 F2 | E>DE>F D4 ||
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Pálmácska

Pálmácska [pronounced palmatszka] is a very very easy dance and fun especially for the children and adults as well.

Palmacska

Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva



T:Palmacska

C:Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva

M:2/4

L:1/8

Q:1/4=102

K:Cmix

|: G<A G<F | G<A c2 | G<A G<F | E/D/E/F/ D2 ☹

|: CCF2 | E/D/E/F/ G2 |1 CCF2 | E/D/E/F/ D2

☹2 A2 GF | E/D/E/F/ D2 ||

Keresel

Keresel is one of the most popular “Moldvai” couple dance. The first tune is quite simple and has lyrics as well.

Keresel (Simple)

Hungarian Dance Song from Moldva



Here is a possible version of the lyrics to this tune:

||: Keresel, keresel masule, csordás-bordás kosule.:||

||: Ha elérem, megfogom, én öt mingyá megcsapom.:||

||: Dittáj purgyi vaskondi, mé' nem mise mondani :||

||: Nem tud keresztet vetni, culi bé sutu mellé :||

||: Ez a legény kicsike, szökik mint egy görice :||

||: De a legény nagyocska, szökik mint egy lovacska :||

||: Fejér végü kendöbe menjünk ki az erdőbe :||

||: Veres végü kendöbe menjünk menyeközöbe :||

Here is the ABC notation of the tune:

T:Keresel (Simple)

C:Hungarian Dance Song from Moldva

M:2/4

L:1/8

Q:1/4=120

K:Cmix

AFAF | AB A2 | GEGE | GA F2 :|

CF D2 | EG F2 | CF/E/ D2 | E/F/G/E/ F2 :|

The second tune is an embellished version of the first one and quite difficult to play in speed. However, it sound much better and professional than the first one.

Keresel (Embellished)

Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva



T:Keresel (Embellished)
 C:Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva
 M:2/4
 L:1/8
 Q:1/4=110
 K:Cmix
 |: A/F/C/F/ A/F/C/F/ | G/A/B/G/ A2 | G/E/C/E/ G/E/c/B/ | AG/E/ F2 :|
 |: CF/E/ D2 | E/F/G/E/ F/G/A | CF/E/ D2 | E/F/G/E/ F2 :|

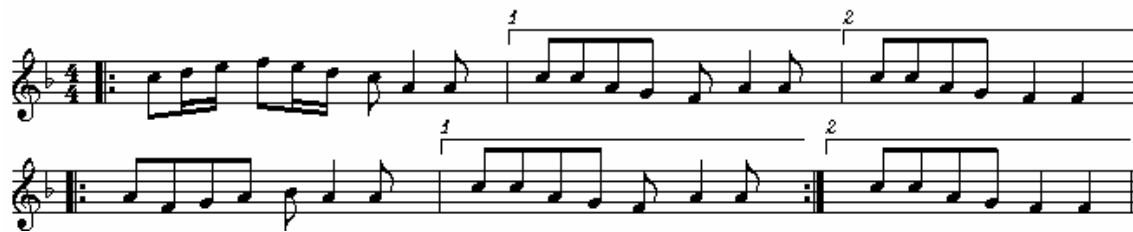
Hojna

Hojna is the most beloved couple dance and favorite of many “Moldvai táncház” visitors. The dance is really simple, and as with all Moldvai couple dances can be danced by to females together.

The first (simplest) version of the tune cannot be played in a bagpipe. I was wondering why this tune starts with an A and ends with an F on a C whistle; and I found that this higher pitch is louder and may sound better.

Hojna (Simplest)

Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva



T:Hojna (Simplest)
 C:Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva
 M:4/4
 L:1/8
 Q:1/4=120
 K:Cmix
 |: cd/e/ fe/d/ cA2 A |1 ccAG FA2 A |
 :|2 ccAG F2 F2 ||
 |: AFGA BA2 A |1 ccAG FA2 A :|2 ccAG F2 F2 ||

The following version is exactly the same tune but for bagpipe fingering (on C whistle, of course). I believe this may the (older) more natural fingering for this tune:

Hojna (Bagpipe Fingering)

Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva

Musical notation for the Hojna (Bagpipe Fingering) version of the Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva. It consists of two staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written in eighth notes. The second staff continues the melody, also in eighth notes. There are two first endings marked with '1' and two second endings marked with '2'.

T:Hojna (Bagpipe Fingering)

C:Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva

M:4/4

L:1/8

Q:1/4=120

K:Cmix

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|: GA/B/ cB/A/ GE2 E |1 GGED CE2 E |  
:2 GGED C2 C2 ||  
|: ECDE FE2 E |1 GGED CE2 E  
:2 GGED C2 C2 ||
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The following version is for advanced whistlers or fiddlers; it cannot be played on a bagpipe. However, if you are a determined bagpiper you can create a variation of this that can be played on your beloved instrument.

Hojna (Embellished)

Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva

Musical notation for the Hojna (Embellished) version of the Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva. It consists of two staves of music in 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written in eighth notes and includes many ornaments and grace notes. The second staff continues the melody, also in eighth notes.

T:Hojna (Embellished)

C:Hungarian Dance Tune from Moldva

M:4/4

L:1/8

Q:1/4=120

K:Cmix

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|: cd/e/ fe/d/ cA2 c | =B/c/d/c/ _B/A/G/E/ FA2 A |  
cd/e/ fe/d/ cA2 A | =B/c/d/c/ _B/A/G/E/ F2 F2 :|  
|: CFGA BG2 G | cc B/A/G/E/ FA2 F |  
CFGa BG2 G | cc B/A/G/E/ F2 F2 :|
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The following tune is a well-known song for “Moldvai táncház” guests: “Szederinda-rinda” (or “reverinda-rinda”) and I first heard this played as a “hojna” tune by Dániel Bolya in Nagykálló Folk Camp 2003. I liked it immediately: the tune is great has text very and easy to learn.

Szederinda-rinda (hojna)

Hungarian Dance Song from Moldva



T:Reverinda-rinda (hojna)
C:Hungarian Dance Song from Moldva
M:4/4
L:1/8
Q:1/4=120
K:Cmix
GGFF E<C D2 | E<C CE G2 G2 ||
BBAA G<E F2 | G<E CD C2 C2 ||

References

1. Sándor Balogh: Moldvai hangszeres dallamok. ETNOFON, Budapest 2001
2. Pirkadat website: www.pirkadat.org
3. Pro Folk website: www.datanet.hu/profolk-bt/ (phone: 011 36 13512241)
4. Lark-In-The-Morning website: www.larkinam.com
5. Ferenc Tobak's website: www.baratsag.com