

Polska efter Blank Anders

An old Swedish polska with an unexpected flash of sunlight.

Polska efter Gössa Anders Andersson d.ä. & Bleckå Anders Olsson

Orsa

Efter Gössa Anders Andersson 5/2005

Fiddle Tunes from Orsa (Swedish Folk Music 1) HURV-KRCD-24

Printed by Karen Myers



Polska efter Bleckå Anders

Illustration 1: Learned from an early recording by Gössa Anders, from his family tradition.

The recording is from Fiddle Tunes from Orsa on the HURV label (<http://www.hurv.com/>).

This polska is from Orsa, in Dalarna. Like all traditional tunes, it exists in numerous variants, of which the written music and recorded music referenced here are but snapshots. Some of the notable variations include C vs. C# for much of the B part, and in some cases the note played is ambiguously inbetween.

The tune begins in A aeolian. Aeolian is a form of Minor, with both a lowered 6th and 7th note. (See [Mode Overview](http://www.onelang.com/encyclopedia/index.php/Musical_mode) (http://www.onelang.com/encyclopedia/index.php/Musical_mode) for a general discussion of modes and [Scale Overview](http://www.onelang.com/encyclopedia/index.php/Scale_(music)) ([http://www.onelang.com/encyclopedia/index.php/Scale_\(music\)](http://www.onelang.com/encyclopedia/index.php/Scale_(music))) for a general discussion of scale terminology.) There are other ways of thinking of this scale in part A (perhaps D hypodorian), but the emphatic G in measure 2 is characteristic of many modes with a lowered 7th, such as Mixolydian, and sets the perceptual tonic to a scale in A.

The second part of the tune is in some version of D minor or D dorian, depending on the status of the C/C# 7th tone. Note the significant impact this has on the harmonic underpinnings: a choice of "C" encourages A dorian as the alternate chord, while "C#" encourages A or A7 - a significant difference. When the tune is played without second fiddle accompaniment, the 7th tone can remain ambiguous, but adding a harmony part forces some sort of choice.

The striking contrast presented by the D major ending for the B part acts like a flash of sunlight through the dark trees and sets us up for a return into the forest. As the B part cycles back for the repeat, we see the D major/D minor contrast that is a common juxtaposition in modal tunes. And when we return to the A part, we see that the melodic contour of the first phrase's first 5 notes could also be interpreted as D hypodorian, knitting the two parts together nicely.
