

## Notes - *Gau Shan Ching*

Fang-Chich Chen<sup>1</sup> presented *Gau Shan Ching* to the 2010 Stockton Folk Dance Camp. The syllabus can be found in “Syllabus of Dance Descriptions,” *Stockton folk Dance Camp – 2010 – Final*, pp.8-9A or <http://folkdancecamp.org/10syllabus/Gau%20Shan%20Ching%20%282010SFDC%29.pdf>. This short article provides additional information regarding the dance.

The original Chinese name of the Taiwanese dance *Gau Shan Ching* is 高山青, which is pronounced as “Gao Shan Qing” in the Hanyu Pinyin system of Romanizing Chinese characters. “Gau” means high; “Shan” means mountain; and “Ching” indicates sky blue when describing the sky or a kind of green when describing hills or mountains. The name can be translated into “The High Mountain is Green.”

This Taiwanese aboriginal dance<sup>2</sup> was choreographed by YANG Chang Shong<sup>3</sup> in 1973<sup>4</sup>. The music, with the famous song “*Gau Shan Ching*” or “*Gao Shan Qing*,” has three historical versions. The first version choreographed by Yang lasted for a long time. In 2007 or 2008, Yang felt the original music was unsatisfactory and adopted the music with the song sang by late Teresa Deng<sup>5</sup>. The dance sequence was slightly revised to fit the new music. Then, probably in 2009, he used the third version of the music, which can be fit with the original dance steps. This third version was used in Stockton Folk Dance Camp 2010. Fang-Chich Chen introduced it to the campers.

The formation can be in circle, open circle, or short lines, with men and women either mixed or separated. Hand holding is in V-position. The ending part could either in V-position or front basket position. The choreographer, Yang, preferred using the front basket holding throughout the whole dance in order to have an intimate feeling.

The schottische step used in Figures I and III<sup>6</sup> was originally choreographed as having dancers facing the center and do side-way schottische steps. After many stage performances, mostly by female dancers, many dancers adopted the way taught in Stockton Folk Dance Camp 2010. Dancers face either the reverse line of direction or the line of direction, take three steps backward, and then hop and turn to the reverse direction. This kind of step is called “backward schottische” by some dancers in Taiwan. The original choreographer said<sup>7</sup> that this step was too feminine.

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<sup>1</sup> 陳芳枝.

<sup>2</sup> The lyrics talk about people in Ali Mountain (阿里山), where northern Tsou (鄒族 or 曹族, also transliterated as Zou) tribe reside.

<sup>3</sup> 楊昌雄.

<sup>4</sup> Not 1989.

<sup>5</sup> 鄧麗君.

<sup>6</sup> The way of figure arrangements is referred to that in the syllabus published by Stockton Folk Dance Camp 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Personal communication.

In the second half of Figures I and II, hands are flicked upward twice. The original choreographed steps, after clapping hands twice, have hands touched shoulders and then flicked upwards once.

The ending can be divided into three sections. The first section contains Measures 1-4 in the original syllabus. The second section, without music, has a length of two counts to change the position of lifting hands to either V-hand or front basket position. The third section, as Figures I, II, or III, has nine measures with thirty-six counts. The first two counts are described in the original syllabus as ct 1 and ct &. These two counts are repeated for another seventeen times. Only the first section is associated with the original song of *Gau Shan Ching*.

The lyrics, transliteration, and their translation are given in the following table.



(Continue)

**Gau Shan Ching**  
Lyrics, Transliteration, and Translation

<p>高山青, Gao shan qing, 澗水藍; Jian shui lan; 阿里山的姑娘美如水呀, A li shan de gu niang mei ru shui ya, 阿里山的少年壯如山。 A li shan de shao nian zhuang ru shan.</p> <p>啊 - - - 啊 - - - 啊, A - - - A - - - A, 啊 - 啊 - - - 啊; A - A - - - A. 阿里山的姑娘美如水呀, A li shan de gu niang mei ru shui ya, 阿里山的少年壯如山。 A li shan de shao nian zhuang ru shan.</p> <p>高山常青, Gao shan chang qing, 澗水常藍; Jian shui chang lan; 姑娘和那少年是永不分呀, Gu niang han na shao nian shi yong bu fen ya, 碧水常圍著青山轉。 Bi shui chang wei zhe qing shan zhuan.</p>	<p>The high mountain is green, The gully water clean; The girl on Ali Mountain is as beautiful as the water, The boy on Ali Mountain is as strong as the mountain.</p> <p>Ah - - - Ah - - - Ah, Ah - Ah - - - Ah; The girl on Ali Mountain is as beautiful as the water, The boy on Ali Mountain is as strong as the mountain.</p> <p>The high mountain is always green, The gully water always clean, The girl and the boy will never part; The clean water will flow around the green mountain forever.</p>
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Note: The verse has three sections. The second half of Section two is identical to that of Section one. The first half of Section three is almost the same as that of Section one.

The verse in the table is the original song of *Gau shan Ching*. The music for both the original version of the dance and the one presented in Stockton Folk Dance Camp 2010 has the interlude with the following lyrics, which is not a part of the original song of *Gau Shan Ching*.

Na Lu Wan Duo Yi Ya Na Ya Hei,  
Yi Ya Hei, Na Lu Wan,  
An Duo Yi Ya Na Ya Hou Hai Ya,  
Hou Yi Na Lu Wan Duo Yi Ya Na Ya Hou Ha Ya.

**Note:** The dance notes are written by Wen-Li Chiang<sup>8</sup>. Copyright ©2010. Anyone is welcome to make copies for references or for non-commercial teaching or studying purposes.

<sup>8</sup> 江文里.