

## 蘇六娘 ( 選 ) • sou-lag-niê (Selection)

The story of sou-lag-niê (Sixth Lady Sou) is one of the earliest known indigenous Teochew operas, set in the Teochew region and using the local language. This transcription is based on the 1957 film version produced by the 香港鴻圖影業公司 (Hong Kong Great Prospect Film Company), and adapted from Chinese subtitles by 王曉班 uploaded to [YouTube](#), with some characters changed to fit the usage in the rest of this website. Lines that are sung are indicated with a • character at the beginning.

### 桃花伶渡公鬥歌 • to-huê and the Boatman compete in song

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

cên-suan lêg-zui puan ua liêng

青山 綠水 伴 我 臉

Green hills and blue water keep me company.

cian-hi [siu?]-bing ru seng-bêh

且喜 x 鬢 如 霜 白

Even if I were to be glad about my snowy-white whiskers,

iu dig e-nang gian huang-biêng

又 得 與 人 行 方 便

I still have to be at the disposal of others.

(桃花) • to-huê

bêh-a, kuai-sê bê guê-lai, ua ain guê-dou a

伯啊，快些扒過來，我愛過渡啊

Uncle, paddle over here quickly, I want to cross the river.

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

o? nguêng-lai si a-to-huê

哦？原來是阿桃花

Oh? It's To-hue.

le cig-za boih-za, ain ke di-go han?

汝七早八早，愛去底塊～？

Where do you want to go so early in the morning?

(桃花) • to-huê

uêng-ghua u sing huê-lai, suêh-dao da-ian guan-si

員外有信回來，說道打贏官司

My master received a letter, saying that he has won the suit in court,

ziu ain huê-gê, ing-ce ang-ring mêng ua zoin-uang sai-lou, zih-huê niê-gian

就愛回家，因此安人命我前往西蘆，接回娘囡

and wants to go home. So my mistress instructed me to go to Sai-lou and fetch our young miss.

bêh-a, dan kuai-sê bê guê-lai!

伯啊，旦快些過來！

Uncle, come quickly!

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

ho! ua lai!

好！我來！

Right! I'm coming!

bhuê, hê hê hê, zui-lao zian do pu, zung gou-bug-geng ngai

未，～～～，水流正在浮，船靠不近岸

Wait a moment, the current is strong and the boat can't come close to the shore.

to-huê a, gah oi-gian teng-diou, liou ê-loh-lai, ê-loh-lai a

桃花啊，甲鞋囤褪掉，了下落來，下落來啊

to-huê, take off your shoes and get in the water, get in.

（桃花）•to-huê

ho, lai zih bao-hog

好，來接包袱

Alright then, catch my bag.

（渡公）•dou-gong • Boatman

ho, gag-lai!

好，掬來！

Throw it over!

（桃花）•to-huê

a-bêh, zih a!

阿伯，接啊！

Uncle, catch!

（渡公）•dou-gong • Boatman

e? a? o? le zia gui-gian, sang-mag li bho toin-zung, dan bao-hog [mo?] bung-zui lao-ke liou

噫？啊？哦？汝者鬼罔，雙目哩無睇准，旦包袱〔麼〕分水流去了

Huh? You little devil... you didn't look where you were throwing, and now the bag has been carried away by the water.

“mo” (transcribed here as 麼) meaning “then”, “on the other hand”. This is probably the same word written as 𠂇 in the Ming-era edition of 蘇六娘, which has a similar meaning (inferred from context).

(桃花) • to-huê

bêh a, mo mo mo, do zi-go

伯啊，～～～，在只塊

Uncle, look it's still right here.

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

ha ha ha ha ha! ua zai ua lao-nang mag-huê, (?) -lai bhu-long ua?

哈哈哈哈哈！我知我老人目花，x-來誣弄我？

Ha ha! I know that my eyes are old and long-sighted, and you still want to tease me like this?

(桃花) • to-huê

bêh a, dan lai-zih

伯啊，旦來接

Uncle, now catch it for real.

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

ai-ia, gang-gang si le-gai ba-hi

哎呀，剛剛是汝個把戲

Aiyah, this was all just your game.

dan mê-mê ê-loh-lai

旦 猛猛 下落來

Now come down quickly.

(桃花) • to-huê

ho!

好！

Alright!

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

a!

啊！

Ah!

le zia gui-gian, bho-gao-bho-dai

汝 者 鬼罔，無交無代

You little devil, without giving any warning,

ziê-sên ziu bian-loh-lai, ua ziah zung hiêm-hiêm boi, hiêm-hiêm boi

照生 就 拚落來，我 隻船 險險 擺，險險 擺

you jumped down so suddenly that my boat almost capsized!

“boi” also pronounced “bai”

險險 - “almost”

(桃花) • to-huê

bhoi no, bhoi no. bêh a, le [mo] ho ziên-ciu, zung bhoi boi

𨋖𨋖𨋖, 𨋖𨋖𨋖, 伯啊, 汝 [麼] 好 槳手, 船 𨋖 擺

No, no, Uncle, you have good control of your oars, the boat will not capsize.

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

hê hê hê, dan kia-ho, kia-ho

~~~~, 旦 倚好, 倚好

Heh, then stand fast, stand fast.

ê? to-huê a, gao dui-ngai huêng-liou hng

耶? 桃花啊, 到 對岸 還了 遠

To-hue, it will be some time before we reach the other bank.

le ho-m ciang diou-gua lai gib a-bêh tian-tian zêg-ê

汝 好唔 唱 條歌 來 給 阿伯 聽聽 一下

Come sing some songs for Uncle to listen.

(桃花) • to-huê

bêh a, le mo ia-si (?) ciu ciang-gua-gian, ain li ziu-lai dao-gua

伯啊, 汝 [麼] 也是 x 手 唱歌 㗎, 愛 哩 就來 鬥歌

Uncle, you are also a good singer, if you want we could have a singing competition.

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

dao gua? ai-ia ain ziu lai!

鬥歌? 哎呀 愛 就 來!

A song duel? If you want to, bring it on!

he, le mai toin ua lao-nang bhoi ciang-gua

許，汝勿睇我老人 耆唱歌

Don't think that this old man can't sing.

ua-gai gua-gian gao dua-lua

我個歌囤到大X

My songs are [...]

zêg-coin boih-bêh gang-le dao, dao-gao le u-kao m-gan kua

一千八百共汝鬥，鬥到汝有口唔敢誇

I have a thousand eight hundred songs to compete with yours, we'll compete until you have nothing to say.

lai, ua zêg-ming ko, zêg-ming ciang, a le soin, le soin

來，我一面舸，一面唱，啊汝先，汝先

Come, I'll row and sing at the same time. You go first.

（桃花）• to-huê

mai, le soin

勿，汝先

No, you first.

（渡公）• dou-gong • Boatman

huan ain ua soin? ia ho, le lai tian

還愛我先？也好，汝來聽

You even want me to go first? That's just as well. Listen:

• zian-guêh bêh-huê kai, bêh-ia bêh-huê kai

正月百花開，百呀百花開

In the first month, a hundred flowers bloom, a hundred o hundred flowers bloom.

• bēh-huê kai lai (?) - diēb kuang

百花開來 x 蝶狂

A hundred flowers bloom and the butterflies go into a frenzy.

• za-mê gai hng-mung bho ziên-so

昨暝 個園門無上鎖

Last night, the gate to the garden was not locked.

• to-huê tao-zao lai dou-gang, loi-ia loi lai dou-gang

桃花偷走來渡江，～呀～來渡江

To-hue sneaked off to cross the river, loi-ia-loi to cross the river.

(桃花) • to-huê

o, piêng mê ua, tai ua lai

哦，騙罵我，待我來

Oh, so you are pretending to scold me. Just wait for my turn.

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

diēh le ia

着汝也

It's your turn.

(桃花) • to-huê

• ri-ghuêh bhag-mi-huê, bhag-a bhag-mi-huê

二月木棉花，木呀木棉花

In the second month, the kapok flowers bloom, the kapok o kapok flowers bloom.



• ang-huê kui-liou kui bêh-huê, bêh-huê huê-loh e sing-ziên

紅花開了開白花，白花花落與身上

After the red flowers come the white ones, the white flowers fall on one's body.

• dung-bin hiah-gag ho ang-gê, loi-ia loi ho ang-gê

脣邊額角好安家，～呀～好安家

Cheeks and forehead show that it's good to settle down, loi-ia-loi good to settle down.

loi-ia-loi - onomatopoeic expression

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

o, (?)-lai bai-cai ua lao-nang

哦，X 來擺踩我老人

So, you've come to make fun of an old man.

ê-rig bho-nang lai to-zo le ziu zai ia hng!

下日無人來討坐汝就知呀哼！

If no one wants to come on board tomorrow, you'll have to answer for it!

• san-ghuêh in sang-buê, in-ia in sang-buê

三月燕雙飛，燕呀燕雙飛

In the third month, the swallows fly in pairs, the swallows o the swallows fly in pairs.

• sang-buê in-ze liang-tao-gê, le bi in-ze m-sêng-dui

雙飛燕子兩頭家，汝比燕子唔成對

A pair of flying swallows make a couple, unlike the swallows you don't have a partner.

• sai-lou le-pou ke iu-huê, loi-ia loi ke iu-huê

西蘆呂浦去又回，～呀～去又回

From sai-lou to le-pou you go to and fro, loi-ia-loi you go to and fro.

sai-lou 西蘆 is the hometown of guêh gi-cung 郭繼春, the lover of sou lag-niê, whereas le-pou 呂浦 is the hometown of sou lag-niê.

The place name le-pou is written as 呂浦 in the Ming-era edition, but also given as li-pou 荔浦 in some publications.

(桃花) • to-huê

• si-guêh hou-miêng-miêng, hou-a hou-miêng-miêng

四月雨綿綿，雨啊雨綿綿

In the fourth month, the rain is continuously falling, the rain o the rain is continuously falling.

• [lou-ze?] guan-zui ziên gig-iêng, le bi [lou-ze?] do gi ziên

鷗鷺趕水上揭陽，汝比鷗鷺多枝槳

The cormorants race across the water to gig-iêng, unlike the cormorants you have an oar.

揭陽 gig-iêng, one of the counties of 潮州 diê-ziu subprefecture, is usually pronounced today as gig-iên.

• zêg-ni si-kui siu gang-biêng, loi-ia loi siu gang-biêng

一年四季守江邊，～呀～守江邊

Through the four seasons in a year you keep watch at the river bank, loi-ia-loi keep watch at the river bank.

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

zê, ru-bi ru-mo-tian, zê nai oi-dig ke a?

這，愈比愈孬聽，這奈會得去啊？

As this goes on it sounds even worse on the ear, how can I let this slide?

• ngou-ghuêh bê lêng-zung, ang-lam lêg-neng ru gian-hung

五月扒龍船，紅男綠女如行雲

In the fifth month, the dragon boats come out to race. The youth turn out as if walking on clouds.

• na-gai neng-gung hah le i?

哪個郎君合汝意？

Which young gentleman will catch your fancy?

• a-bêh zo bhuê lai dian-hung, loi-ia loi lai dian-hung

阿伯做媒來定婚，～呀～來定婚

Uncle will play matchmaker and find you a match, loi-ia-loi find you a match.

(桃花) • to-huê

• lag-ghuêh su tin-si, su-a su tin-si

六月署天時，署啊署天時

In the sixth month, the weather is hot, hot o hot is the weather.

• ngou-niê lao-ziên gag li-gi, ng u li-gi ze-gi gag

五娘樓上掬荔枝，阮有荔枝自己掬

Fifth Lady casts down a lychee branch from the tower. We can cast down a lychee branch by ourselves.

An allusion to the story of 陳三五娘 dang-san-ngou-niê, where 黃五娘 ng ngou-niê tossed a lychee branch from her balcony to 陳三 dang-san as a sign of her love.

• miêng-êng a-bêh le hui sim-gi, loi-ia loi hui sim-gi

免用阿伯汝費心機，～呀～費心機

We don't need you, Uncle, to waste your effort, loi-ia-loi to waste your effort.

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

cig-ghuêh si...

七月時.....

In the seventh month...

(桃花) • to-huê

cig-ghuêh zo-ni? zo m-ciang?

七月做呢？做唔唱？

What happens in the seventh month? Why did you stop singing?

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

ai-ia, m-dui ia, bho siên zui-lao do dua

哎呀，唔對呀，無想水流在大

Aiyah, something's wrong, I did not expect the current to be so strong.

ziah-zung hiêm-hiêm bung-i pu-gao sang-goi cui

隻船險險分伊浮到雙溪嘴

The boat was almost carried away to the mouth of the river.

雙溪 - This could be a “false cognate” loan word from Malay *sungai* (“river”)

(桃花) • to-huê

ai-ia, bêh a, mê-mê cug-lag, zung bê huê-lai ke a

哎呀，伯啊，猛猛出力，船扒回來去啊

Aiyah, Uncle, put more effort into it, row the boat back on course.

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

ho ho, le do kia-ho, kia-ho a

好好，汝在倚好，倚好啊

Alright, alright, stand fast where you are, stand fast!

(桃花) • to-huê

bêh a, le mêng-ki za sê, lai zi-dou-tao dêng ua

伯啊，汝明起早些，來只渡頭等我

Uncle, do come somewhat earlier tomorrow, and wait for me at the river bank.

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

zi-gai ze-riêng oi, ha ha ha ha ha

只個自然～，哈哈哈哈哈

Of course, haha!

• ua lao-nang ia cong hao-sên lai, hao-sên gai sim-se ua oi zai

我老人也從後生來，後生個心事我會知

This old man was young once; I know how young people think.

(桃花) • to-huê

• nang gao-lao lai [su?]-hog lao, guêng-nang oin-se ia bug-gai

儂到老來[舒?]服老，管人閒事也不該

When one is old, [one should be comfortable in one's old age?] and not bother about other people's business.

cug-lag a!

出力啊！

Row hard!

(渡公) • dou-gong • Boatman

ho, le kia ho, tai a-bêh lai loh hiang ziên. kia ho a!

好，汝倚好，待阿伯來落向槳。倚好啊！

Alright, you stand fast, and wait for me to row. Stand fast!

This version of the opera cuts off this scene at the seventh month. In other versions, to-huê and the boatman continue taking turns until the boatman begins with the “thirteenth month” and loses the competition because there is no thirteenth month (see Helga Werle, “**Notes on Chiuchow Opera**”, *J. Royal Asiatic Soc. Hong Kong Branch* (1975) vol. 15, pp. 71-87).

Werle writes of this scene: “This is a most delightful scene, a fully choreographed dance with the music based on Chiuchow [Teochew] folk tunes. The music and the dance are fresh and cheerful. This opening shows characteristic features of Chiuchow opera; it is beautiful, lighthearted and full of songs and dances.”