

Part-II

The Wedding Songs of the Konda Reddis

Be it for the savage or the civilized, for all kinds of Hindus Sita and Sri Rama are the supreme role models for man-and-wife relationship. Women-folk bless their juniors invoking the ideal couple. Young friends tease the bridegroom and the bride recollecting the joyful memories, contrasting them with their expectant sufferings after marriage. In a tribal society where it is incumbent on the groom to seek a girl's hand and where the girl's parties are the honoured guests of the groom's people, one cannot really check young women from teasing the members of the groom's party. When these mutual teasings, taunts, games and frolic reach their climax, the scene is one of excitement and ecstasy like the sea on high tide. It is after all a childhood friend, one of their own, with whom their emotional feelings were intertwined for long, is going away to shoulder the burden of another family in far off village. The maidens evoking pity, pickup the song.

O bride! O damsel! O symbol of wealth!

(అచ్చుకోడ లయ్యోకోడ లాలచ్చీరి బాలకోడలా)

O pretty lovely rose of Mupparevu! (జోటజోట లుందుము జోటజోట లెందువీడిపోగా)

Breaking our friendship you are leaving us,

(మంపరేవు ముయ్య జలుక - ముద్దలది ముయ్య చిలుక)

Because you are a bird entrapped by marriage

(వాడె కొమ్మున జగురోడ్డగ - పడ్డదయ్య పచ్చపూలుగా)

The yellow bird, (పచ్చపులుగు), is trapped in a carefully woven net of a wedding vow. This is used as a comparison to a shy maiden (bird)

(మయ్య చిలుక - పచ్చపులుగు) getting trapped in a cleverly woven net.

(వాడె కొమ్మున జగురోడ్డగ)

The hunter birds hunt in a variety of ways. Their bodies are so structured as to suit the conditions. The locals refer to the hunting of eagles and other hunting birds by gliding as *Perem thokkadam*, soaring like a dart without fluttering the wings as *Vala thirigi kottadam* and hunting by lying in wait as *Vaadevasi_kottadam*. The kites (గడ్డలు) hunts over the tree tops and the *giddu* (hawk, owl) bird hunts among branches. These giddu birds are of various kinds. The tree branch where there is an arboreal bird perch upon to pounce upon the prey is *Vaade Komma*. (Tree branches) The wedding Pendal (Shamiana or Canopy) made up of *Vaade Komma* is also called *Vaade Kamma*. Nets are woven with *jeelugu* fibre once and now they are being done with cotton thread. They wind cotton thread around twelve pillar posts and the whole system is called *Pannendu ratala pandhiri* (a canopy of twelve pillar posts). They say that a cotton thread is worth a hundred gold coins. (నూలుపోగు నూరు వరహాలు) According to a local vow, they tie a cotton thread to a grasshopper's leg and believe that the Petara's spirit visits them in this form. Then they promise that they would fulfill the funeral rites of the Petara soon. The vow of the thread wound round vade komma is also used for catching our dear pal from Manparevu. A girl engaged is likened to a mouth washed. (అడిగిన పిల్ల - కడిగిన ముఖం) Once the elders have settled a marriage, there need not be any bar on fun-making. It is just like any person eating freely after a mouth-wash. However, even in a settled match, it requires a gallant to pull the girl into a love-game. Waiting for the opportune moment and arranging a henchman (Bathinagadu) carry the girl away is a bold act of a person no less than a gallant. (తీపలు లాగడం)

Obstacles are many, still, when the gallant lies in wait to carry her secretly away. Be it her sister or one of the pals that come in the way, the game does not end in success.

We heard of wedding but no wedding bells,

(పెళ్ళగా వింటిమి గాని - పెళ్ళి చప్పుడెన్న డెరుగము)

We heard of grinding stones, (Tirigendlu) but no grinding?

(తిరిగెండ్లందుము, మరిగెండ్లందుము - తిరగటి చప్పుడెన్న డెరుగము) Tirugali – grindig stone.

We heard of no pounding, no pestle sounding.

(లోతడందెవు లొవ్వడందెవు - రోకలి చప్పుడెన్న డెరుగము)

A boy of ague cheeks

Marriage requires celebrations. They say, “A wedding or an anniversary of a piteza done without fanfare is as good as not done at all.”

(ఊరురెగని పెండ్లి - వాడ ఎరుగని తద్దినం)

Marriage without fanfare is surely heckled at by others. Denigrating Soma’s simple marriage, they say that no one but a third rate fellow attends it. Even the third rate fellow who lives on stale food may not bother about such marriages where only beating of waist compensates the drum beats.

(సాదలేని సోమడి పెళ్ళికి - మక్కల వాయిద్యం), (సాదల సోమడి పెళ్ళికి కంపు బొక్కు కాతకట్టకొని వెళ్ళాడు). The adage goes “If the well-to-do pounds grain, the monkey has to pound his own chest”. (ఉన్నవాడు పిండి దంచుకుంటే - కోతి గుండె దంచుకుంది) The noise of the running hand mill, the pounding of the pestle and the busy movements of the elderly women are absent in such marriages. No shopping, no canopies with palm leaves and no busy excitement in such

marriages. On the other hand, they poke fun of the marriages saying that it is the marriage of Ganga of loose farth, only a single person from a houses has to attend, he should get from his own house leafy vegetables like *Karubachali* and eat there to his fill!
(బొంగు పిత్తుల గంగు పెండ్లి - కారు బచ్చలికూర తెండి, ఇంటికొక మనిషిరండి, కడుపునిండ తినిపాండి) The bridegroom too is not spared. He is heckled at by the name of a fellow of ague cheeks, not young enough in love play. They wonder when this fellow has grown up to get married.

The bride's party sings songs heckling at the groom:

Your Jadi Desam filled with marshy lands is cold,

(జాడిదేశము జలుబు దేశము)

It is a cursed, sinful land, we know,

(పిల్లకివ్వని పాప దేశము)

Who doesn't give daughters to the boys of our areas?

(పాపకివ్వని బాసదేశం)

The gentleman came for our girl ate all the handful of crabs,

(పిల్లజాడ వచ్చిన పెద్ద - పిడి కెడెరకలు చెల్లతిన్నడు)

The elders who came in the mid munched the meat,

(నడుము వచ్చిన పెళ్ళి పెద్ద - నడుముడుమ్ములు చెల్లతిన్నడు)

The elders who came first relished the joints,

(ముందు వచ్చిన పెళ్ళి పెద్ద - ముడుకుడుమ్ములు చెల్లతిన్నడు)

Those who came late crunched the chicken bones,

(కొసన వచ్చిన పెళ్ళి పెద్ద - కోడి డుమ్ములు చెల్లతిన్నడు)

And some did gulp opium in spoonfuls,

(డొక్కితోని డొక్కెడు మందు - డెక్కి నోట వేసిడు కున్నడు)

The rest of elders licked off the remnants.

(బరిణతోడి నల్లమందు - బరివి నోట వేసిడు కొన్నడు)

The land to the north is called Jadi desam (Jharkhand) which lies beyond the river Sileru in the state of Orissa. It is all damp swamp. It is the manyam around Bejjagiwada. There one finds 30 to 40 Telugu villages. The people speak the local tongue of those parts. They come here only when they cannot find suitable girls from amongst themselves. They do not give their daughters outside their territory. (పిల్లకిప్పని పాపదేశం) It is all thick wood (gadimanyam). People here are very tall and heavy built. They lead pathetic jungle life. However they are clever and sharp. People who went north cannot get on (ఉత్తరానికి వెళ్ళినవాడు విత్తుల మొదలు మారడు). It is called cold country. Crabs are available in plenty there.

The land south of Sileru is no swamp. It is relatively dry, with few crabs available here and there. When the elders of the north visit the south seeking alliances for their boys, the locals take pains to cook crabs for them. They shamelessly gulp the crab-food off, leaving nothing for others. They consume opium in bigger doses. The women tease them citing these greedy habits as the subject matter of their teasing songs.

The boy's party sings songs mocking at the girl's party who have crowded round the pots of toddy offered to initiate discussion on marriage proposal.

On seeing the toddy brought by relatives, clamored they for drinking

(చుట్టాలు తెచ్చిన కల్లు - మనమే తాగుదారి కన్నవార)

They were tempted by the food on the attic,

(అటుకులోని అన్నానికి చూసి - ఆశపడ్డారు బందుగులు)

Looking at the plates in the house,

(కుదుటిలోని కంచాలకు చూసి - కుగిడినారు బందుగులు)

And gathered round the oven for smoked food packs

(పొయ్యిలోని పొట్లానికి చూసి - పోగుబడ్డారు బందుగులు)

It does not end there:

In the songs, they say that they are turning out so utterly shameless just because we are giving them our daughter. Tribes pack the left-over food exposing it to smoke. They relish this smoked food as it is considered highly delicious during rainy season.

Practical jokes mentioning relationships are tolerated on such occasions. But casting snide remarks about one's standing in society and one's property is considered seriously, because it is a problem of status. Elders check such unrestrained behaviour in the songs.

For betrothal of the girl we gathered here,

(కుంకుమేరో బొట్టుపెట్టగ - కూడినాము ఇందరము)

With collyrium we shall her eyes ornate,

(కాటుకేరి కళ్ళు దిద్దగ - కలిగినాము ఇందరము)

We sing and we dance, skilled in all arts,

(ఆటమనదే పాటమనదే - అన్నివిద్యలుగల్గవారము)

We serve and we reign, adept in all arts,

(కొలువు మనదే కొలతమనదే - కోటివిద్యలుగల్గవారము)

We hunt like kings and work like menials

(వేటమనదే వెట్టిమనదే)

As learned we are in innumerable arts:

(వెయ్యి విద్యలుగల్గవారము)

Never mind defeat in sports, never feel shy in singing,

(ఆటకు ఓటెములేదు - పాటకు పట్టులేదు)

One should sing to his best and get rewards

(వేగినింత పాడవాలె - వెండిరూక లేరవాలె)

Sing all the day long and collect old gold;

(పగలింత పాడవాలె - పాతరూక లేరవాలె)

Under the pendal of pearls; measure pearls,

(ముత్యాల పందిరికింద - ముత్యాలే కొలువుడన్న)

Under the pendal of diamonds measure diamonds,

(వజ్రాల పందిరిమీద వజ్రాలె కొలువుడన్న)

The seeds of indica sever them and measure,

(పచ్చ గురిమిందెలు - పాయతీసి కొలువుడన్న)

The sun is born and it's time to brush the teeth,

(బాల బాల పొద్దులాయె - పలుకర్ర వేళలాయివా)

The sun is up and it is time to bathe,

(జాము జాము పొద్దులాయె - జాలుకాల వేళలాయివా)

And wear the turmeric mark on the forehead;

It is time to see the sun face to face

(బొమ్మెత్తు పొద్దులాయె - బొట్టుపెట్టు వేళలాయివా)

It's late in the evening; it's time for arrack,

(చరా చరా పొద్దులాయె - సారతాగే వేళలాయివా)

The sun has set in; it's time to lit lamps,

(దీర దీర పొద్దులాయె - దీపెలెత్తు వేళలాయివా)

Dusk time has come and opium we have to take,

(మసక మసక పొద్దులాయి - మందువేసో వేళలాయివా)

In the hills of bison, letters on pumpkin leaves,

(గురలున్న కొండకాడ - గుమ్మడాకుల ఉత్తరాలు)

In the hills of koumjus letters on papers,

(కణుజులున్న కొండకాడ - కాగితాల ఉత్తరాలు)

For message to send, letters on fig tree leaves.

(రంపరాజు వత్తుడనగ - రావియాకుల ఉత్తరాలు)

When they say “bottuku pothunnamo” (బొట్టుకుపోతునమ్మో), it means that they are going on the errand of engagement. Among the tribes, it is the boy’s relatives who visit the girl’s home and put vermilion dot on the bride’s forehead in the name of all the relatives as ‘katla’ (కట్ల) vari bottu – Matlavari bottu, Karamvari bottu – Vishnu bottu – Easwara bottu – Brahma bottu.” This is the way of their announcement about the girl being so and so’s daughter.

Bottupettadam means preparing the girl as bride.

They spread a measure of grains like pearl millets under a *neredu* tree and seat the girl over it. A barber manicures her toe-nails to ward off any evil eye. Next she is given a bath. A vermilion dot is put on her forehead.

It is then 9 a.m. One should raise one’s head to see the sun at that time. (బొమ్మెత్తు పొద్దు) They then sing songs which relate their daily routine.

“We are all one. If you shrink back, who is there to sing to celebrate our success? Why reservations while singing? Who is a stranger here? It is all our kith and kin. We are the workers and we are the

owners. We are the leaders and we are the servants. We shall sing to our best to win any reward with our songs. Play we must to reap rupees. We shall measure the rupees brought by our singing and dancing.

It is befitting to the bridegroom to send a wild boar to the girl's place when she is being adorned as a bride:

A wild boar we hunt down and make a 'milk feast';

(పందిని కొట్టవాలె - పాలవిందు పెట్టవాలె)

Shell down the price of it, you young bride groom,

(పందికమ్మిన పావలా డబ్బులు - పడవేయు పెండ్లికొడుక)

The price of the fowl should be paid us;

(కోడికమ్మిన కొత్తడబ్బులు - కొంగునవేయు పెండ్లికొడుక)

The elders of both sides stand in a row,

(ఉత్తండాలు పెరుకుదీసో - ముద్దుగాడో పెండ్లికొడుకోయా)

It is a ritual in vogue, hark, o' bridegroom,

A little flower on cheek, you look charming,

(చిప్పపూవు చేరుచుక్క - చిన్నెలవాడు పెండ్లికొడుకు)

Blessed are you by elders, you bridegroom.

Oh, sweet groom! How modest you are to please the elders! Oh groom! May you bow before the elders! It is common practice for a groom to hunt a wild boar and send its meat over to the bride's home when she is being prepared as a bride. In case the groom fails to do so, the women folk say mockingly that as he had failed to provide the wild boar, they gave a country pig to the in-laws for which he must pay.

With a beauty spot like a Chippa flower on his cheek, he looks so graceful and charming that the women-folk appreciate his modesty, press

his cheeks and even bite the cheeks endearingly in approbation of his shy humbleness.

During the wedding, the groom and bride bow before the elders who are ranging before them. Where there are far too many of them, they move on before them, sprinkling water on their feet. This procedure is called “Utthandala peru theyadam.” (ఉత్తండాలపేరు తీయడం) If the bride groom observes all these modest formalities, he is considered a fair and good bride groom. The women who pamper such a groom for money are teased.

Oh aunts! Have “Have you lost the coins you got on the way

(లిక్కులపిన్నమ లివ్వలపిన్నమ - లివ్వాలెందు జల్లుకున్నవా)

By over drinking at kovutalabanda,

(కావురాళ్ళ బందకాడ కల్లుతాగి జల్లుకుంతివా)

In a squirmish at Naradumpaladoddi?

(నారదుంపల దొడ్డికాడ నడుమురాగ జల్లుకుంతివా)

The father’s sister is addressed as *pinnamma*, the brother-in-law as *thamma*, the sister-in-law as *papa* and grand son as *thatha*. This address is a custom among the hill-tribes.

When the bride is being taken away from her birth place, she is given *nivali* (sacred offerings) in the villages on the way. As a part of *nivali*, her feet are washed with water, she is given a shake-hand putting a one or two rupees coin in her hand. The aunty of the occasion collects the money and distribute among the team.

“Did you lose in the Kick (of toddy) (*Kallu thikka*) in the swampy land (*Kavurai banda*)? Or did you scatter the coins in the tuber field? During a squirmish with some friend or in the *Mandekura* flat land
(కావురాళ్ళబండలోన - కల్లుతాగి జల్లుకుంతిరా)

Have you gone mad to lose it at Mandakuralanka?
(మండెకూర లంకలోన - మతిలేక జల్లుకొంతిరా)

Unable to walk, have you lost it at Kathiralla ghat road?
(కత్తిరాళ్ళపూటిలోన - కాళ్ళురాక జల్లుకొంతిరా)

Squirmishing with someone, lost it at Kullikura foot-path?
(కుల్లికూర డొంకలోన - కూడియుండి జల్లుకొంతిరా)

Or bought you with the prize-money, an old hubby?
(ఆడవారు ఆటలడబ్బుతో - వేలుబుంగల వేపినికొన్నరా)
(వేలుబుంగల వేపి - an old dog with hanging testicles)

The bundle of leaves in the above song does not refer to betel leaves, but to *adda* leaves. By selling them, they buy some glingling cheap ornaments and adorn themselves with them. They gather some twigs and small branches of trees to make sweeps, which they sell. Referring to this, the other party mock at them and praise themselves and their wealth in the following song.

The Akuluri people are brothers by marriage,
(ఆకులూరు పెండ్లివారు - అన్నదమ్ముల పెండ్లివారు)

A marriage party of patch-work they worth not a leaf,
(అతుకుల బొతుకుల పెండ్లివారు - ఆకులకట్ట విలువలేదోయా)

A Twig here, a stem there, a reed elsewhere (చితుకుల బొతుకుల పెండ్లివారు)

They pick and sell but hardly worth a broom. (చీపురుకట్ట విలువలేదోయా)

Then the other party makes fun of them to say “vain is your talk as you catch and cook nothing but fog”.

(గాందులు పట్టుడు, గంపనవేయుడు, చెండుడి, వండుడి తెడ్డెడుముక్కలు)

You live on powders made of mirch and tamarind,

(నీరుల్లిపాయ కారాలుచేసి - నిన్న మొన్న తిన్నచెల్లదు)

Or caustic garlic powders your proud breakfast!

(వెల్లుల్లిపాయ కారాలుచేసి - వేగిన పొద్దున తిన్నచెల్లదు)

Then again the women dig up sing about the incompetence of these men in saving their women-folk from the gallant raiders who elope with them.

So proud and fondling are the bridal party,

(చిక్కులయ్యో పెండ్లివారా - శోభెలయ్యో పెండ్లివారా)

These wonderful men hearing much plead poor:

(ఉన్నగాని లేదనె వారోయా)

Between our huts we planted and raised beans,

(నీయింటోయ్ నాయింటినడుమ - చిక్కుడాని వేసినాము)

The parrots of Seekuluru came and ate them;

(సీకులూరు చిలుకలమందా - చిక్కుడాకులు చెల్లమేసిదా)

A flock of Kakamuru kanujus set foot,

(కాకనూరు కణుసులమంద - కాకరాకులు చెల్లమేసిదా)

And grazed away the bitter-gourd leaves green

The bride is a charming sweet pumpkin hidden among the leaves in a millet field. She is like a *bobbara guvva*, a dove running about with her

sweet sounding anklets, with her fine breasts covered under a nice blouse, having designs of *Sama* and tamarind flowers. She is not without her retinue. Her own brothers are near at hand working in fields and her sisters-in-law are on the terrace like leaves on creepers. When the bride slyly and shyly looks up in curiosity, she has around her an aura, which is like the million rays of the sun illumining the universe. When she steadily and slowly raises her eyes in curiosity, she is like the slowly-rising morning sun. The women mock at the men, for the men could not properly accommodate such beauties.

We raised pumpkin creeper between our houses;

(నీయింటోయ్ నాయింటినడుమ - గుమ్మడాని వేసినాము)

Under its shade the marriage parties quarreled,

(గుమ్మడాకు నీడన పడగా - గుబ్బుమన్నరు పెండ్లలవారోయా)

Under the bitter-gourd leaves-shade they gathered,

(కాకరాకు నీడనపడగా - కదలినారు పెండ్లలవారోయా)

The bride behind her parents dances with joy,

As her anklet-bells ring and make sweet sounds,

(బొంతచాటు బొబ్బరగువ్వ - కాలిఅందెల బంగారు గువ్వయా)

Her jacket, flower-designed, her breasts cute,

(సామపూపు రైకదాన చన్ను చక్కని పెండ్లి కూతురా)

Her jacket, tamarind-flowered, she's parrot like,

(చింతపూపు రైకదాన చిలుకు చక్కని పెండ్లికూతురా)

The bride is baked, as the sun by the stars,

(చుక్కలున్న సూరెపుదేవి - సూరె నొక్క బాణపు జాడోయా)

She has her charms besides brothers and servants,

(ఆకులున్నవి తీగల మీద - అన్నలున్నారు బోయులమీదోయా)

She has her brothers, their wives, her kith and kin,

(మరదండ్లు - మిడ్డెలమీదోయా)

But comforts for them you could not provide,

The women mock at the men, for the men could not properly accommodate such beauties.

The relatives come in crowds for the wedding. The bridegroom's party murmurs that they cannot arrange enough plates (for meals) and cots.

(పెండ్లికి కంచాలు, దండుకు మంచాలు సమకూర్చలేం). The bridegroom's party is really helpless with so many people come in procession to the wedding.

Old bride parties have pig's sties to dwell,

(పాతపాత పెండ్లివారు - పంది దొరిన ముర్రెముర్రెలా)

New bridegroom party, hen stalks you have.

(కొత్తకొత్త పెండ్లివారు - కోళ్ల దొరిన ముర్రెముర్రెలా)

No ear studs, no nose ring, no bangles on hands,

(చేపలేదో జెల్లలేదో - చేతనొక్క గాజులేదోయా)

No rice to take, no sketch-sari to wear,

(చుట్టాల బియ్యములేదు - సూటిగల్లకోక లేదోయా)

Nor copper coin on hand, nor colour jacket,

(నయ్యదాపు రాగిలేదు - రంగుగల్ల రవికె లేదోయా)

No silk sari, no costly clothes you have,

(చిలుకుగల్ల చీరలేదు - పట్టుగల్ల బట్టలేదోయా)

No rice, not even a pie is there to tie,

(వడిమూట లేటివప్ప - వడిబాల కొలతల బియ్యం)

A cup of rice I don't have to present,

(కొంగుమూట లేటివప్ప - కొంగుమూట కొలతల బియ్యం)

It is my fate, it is my penury, I'm cursed (బమ్మరాసిన రాతలున్నవా)

It is a testing time for the married sister of the bride, who is leading a life of hand-to-mouth, to attend a wedding at her mother's home with empty hands. No one bothers on other days even if she were to take some common *jeelugu* flour. But if it is a wedding, tradition demands that she should take rice.

A daughter-in-law of the Konda Reddis while visiting her mother's home must always carry her own provisions. Women folk attending the wedding must carry handful rice (*vadibalakolatalabiyam*). As the woman in this context does not have even a copper to take to the wedding, nor flour to make some sweet balls of Bengal gram to please the children with. She enquires her co-sister-in-law about the comb to dress her hair.

With the flowers of flame of the forest, she decked her queue,

(కొండమీది కొల్లెంగిపూలు - కొప్పునిండ గుప్పబోగ)

Not long enough her hair to tie a knot;

(ఇట్టే అందపు అట్టే అందపు - కొనవెంటి కొప్పుకందవా)

Where have you kept the ivory comb you used?

(నీవు దూసిన దువని బన్నె - ఎందు పెడితివి రంబల దేవోయా)

And as the bride wore sari with nice foldings

(కుచ్చులేరి కోకకట్టగ - కుట్రవాడ దండువచ్చె)

A gang of Karuwada youth raided on her;

When she had smoothed her sari folds and wore,

(మడతలేరి కోకకట్టగ - మర్రివాడ దండువచ్చె)

A gang of Marriwada youth outraged her.

Turmeric is available in the woods. Even the Konda Reddis grow turmeric in the wild, but not on such a scale as in the case of the Visakha tribes. The Konda Reddis buy vermilion (Kunkuma), a certain red-coloured fragrant cosmetic, in the fairs. They also use for fashion a substitute for vermilion of pandika nut aanotoe seed and it looks just like vermilion mark.

In the box are kept nose-ring and hair pin,

(పెట్టెకాడ నత్తులున్నవి - బంగారపు బల్లులున్నవి)

Wear them, dear sister, dear daughter-in-law,

(పెట్టుకోవోయ్ బంగారుసెల్లు)

You can't refuse when you are destined to wear, (వల్లనప్ప వడిసెల్లు)

“I take it as my fate, I can't wear them.” (బమ్మరాసిన రాతలున్నవా)

So dressed and so adorned herself, she goes to the neighbouring woman and requests her in the above fashion to lend her a few trinkets. When the neighbour is about to lend her, the woman gives up her wish to take the ornaments saying “borrowed jewels become heavy, (ఎరువుసొమ్ము బరువుచేటు) “borrowed money is sweet but becomes bitter”, (తీయగపెట్టగ తీపికి చేటు) She murmurs such proverbs within herself and withdraws from the neighbour stating “what is destined to me, is my fate, let me suffer it.”

The women untangle the rope to tie it round the rafters of the engagement box (కాత - ప్రధానం).

Bring weavers; bring the yarn that's spun by you, (నూలుతేవో సాలెవాడా)

We shall tie round the pendal the spun yarn; (సావుతామో వడికిన నూలు)

Without a gap and holes we shall arrange the threads, (సందులేకర జాలెతీద్దాం)

We will unlock the yarn and smoothen it first,

The yarn that Moolaguntadu has spun, (మాల గుంటడు వడికిన నూలు)

We shall straighten it from twists and knots, (మలికిలేక జాలెతీద్దాం)

The yarn that Chillom Chikkudu has spun, (చిల్లొం చిక్కుడు వడికిన నూలు)

We shall unmangle it and soften it, (చిక్కులేక జాలెతీద్దాం)

The yarn that Moolaguntadu has spun,

(బొల్లొంబొరికిడి వడికిన నూలు - బొక్కలేక జాలెతీద్దాం)

We shall scratch it to its full length,

The yarn that the amateur koya has spun (కోయగుంటడు వడికిన నూలు)

We shall remove its tangles and its mangles, (కొలికి లేక జాలెతీద్దాం)

It is a kind of provocation to name one after another while singing songs. It is a way to invite people. It may be less work and more pretence. The pretences are the beauty of festivities.

A woman engages a smart youth

Big is the grinder but light is the pestle,

(జాడిదీకటి బూడిరోకటి)

We pounded hard the maize but it's not ground soft;

(ఎంతదంపిన డంగరిజొన్న - పెద్దన్న పెండ్లిజొన్న)

The room is small and dark, we gasp for breath,

(చీకటింట దవనిగొన్నం)

We are tired and thirsty, fetch us cow milk,

(చిట్టియావుల పాలుతెమ్మీ)

We pounded in big houses, we want good milk.

(మలకరింట దవనిగొన్నం - మల్లెటావుల పాలుతెమ్మీ)

The men of Jadi land are hefty. She says in the song. The pestle is too too light to pound jowar in the mortar. It is all dark around. I am getting choked and thirsty. There is in front a spacious house of *malakari* family. They have well-brought-up cows in their house. Go there and get some milk”.

Under the moonlit pendal we placed the grinder,

(వెన్నెలేని పందిరికింద - వేసినామో చోళ్ల తిరుగలి)

And grain by grain when we were grinding maize,

(వాయుపోసో విసర బోగా)

By tickling, teasing and tempting, you asked,

“Whether we are related” (వాయువాయుకు పరసలడిగెవా)

As I we went on grinding little by little,

(చేరుపోసో విసరబోగా)

For every round you pestered me much

(చేరుకు చేరుకు సెలవుడిగెవా)

Dear friend, we belong to the same family, we can't wed,

(వద్దురగుంటడ వరుసలేదు లేదు)

Don't be after me, *bava*, I am very young

(లేదుర బావా లేతపాయమా)

Men and women in these parts are certainly not lustful. There is no joy in sex where age is a bar. Sex between kins does not appeal to the mind. This is the culture which the system has imparted. When the couple is a suitable match, the sex between them appeals to the hearts and the two hearts become one leading both to bliss. We are eternal pilgrims in that blissful path.

The auspicious time for Laxmi's wedding came,

(లచ్చుకల్లెనమో శుభలగ్గెమొ - గౌరికల్లెనమో వైభోగమొ)

It should be done with pomp and grandeur,

The bridegroom's party, O Sita, is rich, (అలవరో సీతమ్మ నీపెండ్లివారు)

Gold ornaments of varied kinds they wore, (కాకరపూవులు కనకడక్కులు)

Pumpkin flower-shaped, umbrella (గుమ్మడిపూవులు గుబ్బగొడుగులు)

They have horses and elephants in plenty,

(గున్న చింతలలోన గుర్రాలవారు - ఎర్రగొప్పలలోన ఏనుగులవారు)

Go and check whether they brought spun yarn sufficient,

(చూచివిప్పు పెద్ద చూచివిప్పయ్యా)

Threads turmeric and cosmetics of all kinds, (కుంకుమ కురివేలి ఉన్నవో లేవో)

Collyrium, sandal wood paste and saris, (కాటిక గంధము ఉన్నవోలేవో)

Our elders are confused to open the box, (పెట్టె విప్పలేక పుసులుతున్నారు)

Such are our elders, most wonderful men! (మాఊరు పెద్దలు బహుపెద్దలట)

The bride is called Seetamma, symbolizing chastity. The groom who comes to marry her is like the flower of the bitter gourd decked all in gold and jewellery. The bride's party comes in fine pumpkin flower like umbrellas made of silk cloth. They are coming on elephants and horses.

Tamarind is the currency here. Tamarind of the Manyam is carried to the weekly markets. He who transports it to the fair getting better margin of profit is considered a smart hero.

The women of the bride's party proudly point at the groom's party, who comes with presents to the bride as the ones who own tamarind groves and transport horses. During the mutiny, it was believed, that the officials used to visit their place, riding elephants. Elephant-riding was a sign of authority.

The presents, the groom's party brings are called *Katha*,. People carry the *Katha* tying it carefully with threads. The thread should be full length. It should not be snapped or unwound. It should be carefully entwined. After the groom's party reach the bride's home, they observe an auspicious procedure to unwind it with due care. It is fun to tease those who do that. Among the thirty three presents of the *Katha* there are sarees for the bride and her mother with blouse pieces and a dhoti and a shirt for the father. There are also vermilion powder, garlic, sweeps, combs, lamp black, sandals, and banana fruit and so on in the *Katha*. Once these are received, the girl is readied as bride, as in the following song:

Fill in the pot with water hot and cold, (వేసీళ్ళు చన్నీళ్ళు వెయ్యరో కడవ)

The bride is sitting under bean-leaves shade, (చిక్కుడు చెట్టుకింద సీతజాలుకము)

O fig tree here, O fig tree there, behold! (ఈరావి ఆరావి మట్టెల్లరావి)

For brothers' weddings with cosmetics, (అన్నదమ్ములపెండ్లి తొగరియ్యరావి)

For sister-in-law's wedding, soon to be done, (తోటికోడలుపెండ్లి తొగరియ్యరావి)

Bless with the cosmetics

When Sakuntala wife of Dushyanta in Mahabharat sets out for her in-law's place, it is said that the forest-nymphs present her with clothes and jewellery. A peepal tree is considered the co-sister-in-law of the bride. She is being asked to provide the bride with toe-rings and perfumes.

In our place we celebrate the marriage between the peepal and the neem. In the manyam, however, there are no neem trees. Here and there, there may be one or two, few and far between. Therefore there is no

question of the marriage between peepal and neem in the tribal areas. The *neredu* is considered sacred among the tribes. The Neredu and peepal together are considered as an ideal couple.

In unlocking her matted hair, dusk has set in, (చిక్కులిప్పంగ చీకటయ్యింది)

In combing her long queue the day has dawned. (కొప్పులిప్పంగ కో తెల్లవారె)

The darkness loomed all around while the bride's dark hair is untangled and it has become dawn at the time when the bun of her long hair is untied.

From south has come the barber to cut her nails,

(దక్షిణుంచి వచ్చిడోయ్ దొడ్డమంగలి - కాలిగోళ్ళు తీయు మంగలి)

The barber's feast is prepared with ram's meat.

(గోరుతీయు మంగలికి ఏమితో విందు - గొర్రెతో విందు)

The bridal make-up is thus completed and the bride's party hides their tears behind, offer milk-feast. (పాలవిందు) They give a send-off to her, saying "not our girl is she, theirs she is." (పోయినంటి బాలగాని, పుట్టినంటి బాలగాదు) Along with the bride, they send a basketful of rice (దూలికూడు) and a jar-full of sweet drink made of jaggery (పానకం) to the groom's party.

Remain here, dear kindred; you have come too far,

(సెలవు సేయుడుకన్నవార - చందురుడు తేలివేళ)

It is moon-rise time, so leave and go,

(We should sing, we should dance, we should enjoy)

(ఆడవాలె పాడవాలె - వేడుకీలు సేయవాలె)

The Pandava's route with sweet smells of flowers,

(పాండుగూలు వెళ్లెదారై - పచ్చపూవుల పరిమళింపు)

The passage of kings, spread with pearls and diamonds,

(రాజులు వెళ్లెదారై - రత్నముల రవ్వదుల్లు)

The path of elephants, a road of red gravel,

(ఎనుగులు వెళ్లెదారై - ఎర్రమన్ను రవ్వదుల్లు)

So we shall sing and dance and bathe in joy.

(ఆడవాలె పాడవాలె - వేడుకీలు సేయవాలె)

The groom's party seeks permission to leave the place along with the daughter-in-law. Righteous is their path, they say, because it is the path which Pandavas had walked. It is a high way where culture has been evolving for generations. This is an occasion for happy festivities. Rishi Kanva bids farewell to Sakuntala on a similar occasion saying "may your path be blessed by heavens!" (శివాస్తే పంధానస్సంతు)

The groom's party receives tributes from their near and dear till they reach the outskirts of the bridegroom's village. There, they are seated on mats and served with tea and tobacco leaves. Their women share the rice brought by the bride and the men enjoy the sweet jaggery drink before settling down at their lodging. (విడివి) They then enquire about their kin who have not attended yet.

The jasmine-white-coloured horse, the tribe's head rides on,

(జాజిపూవువన్నెగుర్రం - జాతిదొర ఎక్కెగుర్రం)

Sing, dance and enjoy (ఆడవాలె పాడవాలె - వేడుకీలు సేయవాలె)

The puny Jeedithota Chitti Reddy, (జీడితోట చిట్టమరెడ్డి - జీడిగుర్రాన ఎక్కిరమ్మి)

He comes on a pink-coloured tiny horse;

(కరిదొర ఎక్కేగుర్రం - కందిపూవువన్నెగుర్రం)

The Bodi Dora's horse, a circled hair wears,

(బోడిదొర ఎక్కేగుర్రం - బొడ్డులోననిట్టగల్గది)

Red-gram-flower-coloured is Karri Dora's horse,

Boduluri Borram Reddy on white horse comes,

(బోదులూరి బొర్రం రెడ్డి - బొల్లి గుర్రాన ఎక్కిరమ్ము)

Kanivada Katam Reddy rides on black horse,

(కానివాడ కాటమరెడ్డి - కరిగుర్రాన ఎక్కిరమ్ము)

The king of kings, rulers of many a land, (రాజరాజలవారు రాజ్యాలవారు)

Has come to bless the young couple, (రాజులు వచ్చిరో అక్షింతలాకి)

Give them the yellow rice to bless the couple:

Our tribesmen have come from forests far off

(మన్నెమన్నెలవారు మన్నేలవారు - మనవారువచ్చిరో అక్షింతలాకి)

To bless the couple with sacred yellow rice,

Men from villages, men from hamlets too have come,

(పల్లెపల్లెలవారు పల్లెలవారు - పడాండ్లు వచ్చిరో అక్షింతలాకి)

To grace the function for a week or ten days,

(ఏడేడురోజులు ఏకలగ్ననం - పదిరోజుల పెండ్లి పాప చినవాడిది)

So let us sing and dance and entertain them.

(ఆడవాలె పాడవాలె - వేడుకీలు సేయవాలె)

Even a commoner among the tribes must cook at least three or four quintals of rice for a wedding feast. Before the advent of fairs, shanties and money lenders, they were procuring the needed provisions by a policy of give-and-take among themselves. Once the fairs came into being, money lenders went door to door to advance loans, thus entrapping the tribes into debt. The result is that the tribe was constrained to sell his

farm and fruit trees to clear of the debts made for the wedding. Thus they were forced to withdraw deeper and deeper into the woods for *podu* cultivation. This is how the barter system gave place to the market system which in turn brought forth the money transactions into the tribal regions.

At the assemblage of masters, elders and women of respect, they sing:

Pick up a handful of clay, (చెక్కు చెక్కున తీయి చేరెడిమన్ను)

Scratch and pick up a pinch of soft red clay. (గోరుతో తీయవోయ్ గోరెడిమన్ను)

While the drummers are leading the way, they dig mud for the platform of wedding under a canopy of blankets held by youth. While doing so, they sing:

(ఇప్పుడే పుట్టింది ఈ లేగదూడ - ఇరవై పుడుకల గడ్డితిన్నది

ఇరవై పుడుకల గడ్డితిన్నది - మళ్ళివచ్చి వాకిట పేడకడివేసె

మునికి వేసిన పేడముత్యమై దుల్లె - జల్లివేసిన పేడ జవ్వాది దుల్లె

పారవేసిన పేడ పవడమై దుల్లె - కూడదోసిన పేడ కుంకుమై దుల్లె)

The cow-dung, that forebodes prosperity, is smeared on the floor. The bride and groom are made to sit on a neredu plank under the canopy. The floor is adorned with patterns of Sama grains. The canopy rests on twelve pillars. The bride and bride groom wear basikam (sacred thread tied round the fore head). Then they swear on morsels (కూటిముద్దలు) of food. They also exchange some of these morsels behind their backs and smear some on each others cheeks. Then they sing.

You rulers of different countries bless them,

(దేశాల పోయిరో దేశాలవచ్చి - దేశపాలకులార మీదెలివ్వాలి)

You deities of hill-tribes, give them your blessings.

(కోననపోయిరో కోననవచ్చి - కోనదేవతలార మీదెలివ్వాలి)

Thus they take leave from the deities and elders. The women folk pronounce that the bride is so-and-so's daughter-in-law. The elders declare that the groom is so-and-so's son-in-law.

Arrange a platform as big as the earth,

(భూదేవి అంత పీనెలు పోసి)

Erect a pendal as big as the sky, (ఆకాశమంత పందిళ్ళు వేసి)

It's auspicious time for Lakshmi's wedding, (లక్ష్మీకళ్యాణమో శుభలగ్నమో)

It's auspicious time for the wedding of Sita (సీతాకళ్యాణమో సాభాగ్యమో)

Then the groom ties the sacred thread round the bride's neck. The thread is called *Satamanam* or *tali*. They then declare that Rama is wedded to Sita and announce their allegiance to the caste. Now is the time for *talambralu*. The groom and bride pour over each other's heads turmeric-smeared rice, which is considered auspicious. This is all a ritual, giving scope to fun and frolic.

Arrange a platform big as the earth,

(భూదేవి అంత పీనెలు పోసి - ఆకాశమంత పందిళ్ళు వేసి)

Earthy as big as the sky,

And *talambral* for the star and *basikam* for the sun

(చుక్కలకు అక్షింతాలు - సూర్యుడికి బాసికమోయా)

Get stars for *talambralu*, sun for *basikam*

(గుచ్చిన ముత్యాలు తోరణాలుగట్టి - గుచ్చని ముత్యాలు తలంబ్రాలుపోసి)

It is said that the foreheads of the bride and bride-groom with sun-like *basikam* in all its splendour, the sacred rice that flows down from

their heads is said to look like the stars from the sky or like jasmines and pearls. The couple then looks like God, the supreme, and his consort 'Adi lakshmi', with the sky as their wedding canopy and the universe, the dais.

Afterwards the star Arundhati is shown at night. Then the evil eye is driven off with the killing of a rid chick. Then the bride and groom are sent to their respective lodgings. While these rituals are being performed by the women who come for the occasion, Kolatam and Gummallu dances are arranged outside. In these dances, the women hold one another's waists and form a semi circle.

The hawk-coloured cock in the dreadful forest crowed,

(అద్దురంతపు అడవిలోన - గిద్దువన్నె కోడికూసె)

For the sharp shrieks of peacocks Nandapuram dawned,

(నెమలిపిట్ట కేకలకు - నందపురము తెల్లవారె)

For pigeon's screams the whole hamlet got up,

(గువ్వపిట్ట కేకలకు - గూడెములో తెల్లవారె)

For chaffincses' cries Pittapuram, village awoke,

(పికిలిపిట్ట కేకలకు - పిట్టపురము తెల్లవారె)

For magpies' screams Thokabandalu woke up.

(తోకపిట్ట కేకలకు - తోకబందలు తెల్లవారె)

With the matins of black birds Scema lands rose up,

(సిక్కుపిట్ట కేకలకు - సీమభూములు తెల్లవారె)

For the sweet notes of cuckoos, the country woke up,

(రాలిపిట్ట కేకలకు - రాజమంతా తెల్లవారె)

For falcon's wild screams Gummirevu got up.

(గుమ్మడిగ కేకలకు - గుమ్మరేపు తెల్లవారె)

In our villages, it is only the cock that crows. But in the forest many a bird sings many a song and it is a music concert in the morning. In the morning, after the marriage day, there are other rituals like a competition between the bride and groom to pick a ring from two large brass vessels full of water mixed with turmeric. Next, all go for ploughing and near the mango and *neredu* trees they send gifts to their deities. Thus the rituals of the wedding are over and the feast is the last:

The best kind of food you should cook for us,

(సర్వీలి నిట్టల సామకూడు - చక్కగ వండుడు పెండ్లివార)

Prepare horse-gram dall, we very much relish,

(ఉడుక నుడుక నులవపప్పు - చక్కగ వండుడు పెండ్లివార)

Make juice with tamarind, sour in taste,

(ముదిరిన వంకాయకూర - ఉత్తైకాయ చింతపులుసు)

The baked ragi flour-cake smells scorched. (చోడిరోబ్బెలు మాడిన కంపొయా)

At the feast, the people shout, “a plate for them who are near at hand, those at a distance should shout for a plate.” The elders of the bride’s party take every care to see whether all attended the party and whether all are receiving the dishes served. In spite of all this checking, some defect some where is pointed out. No matter how careful they are while serving food at wedding feasts, the invitees say “at festivals it is sumptuous feast with dal-rice but at weddings it is adjustment. (పండుగకు పప్పుకూడు పెళ్ళికి పెడతట్టు) In all these matters, the villagers of our parts display a lot of care and organizational skill. But tribes, it is found, that they are adepts in all kinds of works. In such tasks they plan and

work briskly. The experience gained in collective hunting comes of use in these tasks.

The women folk belonging to the different parts of the woods gather, sing songs, and play together. The farewell party is celebrated and with it, the wedding is complete. While women are leading, lovers are wishpering among themselves about the next meet in the back.

With chippa flowers build a rafter white, my dear,

(నేదుకొయ్య నాది మనసు - సిప్పూవు తెప్పేగట్టు)

Coupled we are, as suiters we are to each other;

(నీకినాకి జోటాలైతె - తెప్పమీద తేలిపోదరా)

We shall float on the rafter gently as clouds,

Truly if you love me, wait not but come.

(నయ్యమీద పేమలుంటె - నారుమీద నడచి రమ్మోయా)

The millet field on the way to the weekly market

(సంతల దారిన సామచేను - తొక్కినామో యొక్క రెత్త)

But one step false now may ruin my future (యొప్పినామో నిట్ట పాణమా

నీళ్ళ కెంత దూరమప్పా - సంపెగ దోనెలు దాటి

చారుమన్నెలు పారజూదామా -

కుంభకారుడు తోలినలంక - కోటిమన్నెలు పారజూదామా

ఆలుమానుడు తోలినలంక - ఆరుమన్నెలు పారజూదామా)

Fairs are tempting for young girls. When things get bad, there could be no rescuers. If a man transgresses the limits, the woman concerned asks the man to depute his elders formal marriage talks lest the consequences are dreadful for the girl.

Trampling the sapling in a field is taboo. It is like trampling mother-earth. Metaphorically speaking, it is a symbol for a woman crossing the dead line. Too much familiarity with another man often conspires with the excesses natural to the age leading to the violation of the customs of the community. In such circumstances, if a woman crosses the dead line, the result may be dreadful. A woman transgressing her limits is like the field trod by many.

Soon after trampling the field, they become deadly thirsty and go across the deep and dense woods for water. The woods are as thick as the woods of Kumbhakarna or Hanuman or some great langur. Then they get frightened and cross the border for some help. The help or exploits the helpless. The victims are heckled by their community. They should never cross the border and go to distant lands, staking their modesty. If anything ill happens to them, there will be no one at hand to send a word to their people.

Before fixing a match, there should be at least a semblance of talks between the elders of the two parties. This precaution serves the purpose of letting every one know about who is for whom. If it is rank elopement against the elders' wishes, only the stars should serve the purpose of the sacred rice smeared with turmeric and the sun should be the *basikam* on the foreheads of the groom and the bride.

A lone bison has moved out from the swampy mango meadow,
With passions roused and fancies soared, it started;

(బందమాటి బయలులోన - బయలుదేరిది గేదెపోతు)

It is cute with at broom like tail, a sopt in the forehead

(చుక్కనుదురు అలమతోక - సూటిగల్ల గేదె పోతోయా)

Who can bridle him? The lustful young Lachumanna:

(గేదెకి వేసో బంటెవ్వడు - కారుకోడి లచ్చమయ్య)

As he draws his sharp-tipped arrows from his bow, (రిప్పమంటే తప్పేలేదా)

He is preparing the arrow with the feathers of his eyelashes

(కన్నురెప్పలు గర్రులు గట్టోయా)

(సూరుడు బాణముతోటి - చుక్కబొట్టు దెబ్బతీసో)

He shoots the bison straight on her fore-head with a sun arrow

Her cheek is bruised by his moon arrows;

Its flesh no crows touch, its blood no ants smell,

(కండలు కాకులొల్లవు - దాని రకతము చీమలొల్లవా)

The land that's holed by ants, ruled by ant lords,

(చీమలు దేవిన మన్ను - చీమరాజు లేలుంబడి)

The land furrowed by snakes is ruled by the snake kings

(నాగులు దేవిన మన్ను - నాగరాజులేలుంబడి)

Bisons roam about in herds in the meadows as well as in the river-beds but a fatted bison (or a sambhar deer or a boar) can roam about alone fearlessly. (ఒంటరి గుర, ఒంటరి కణుసు, ఒంటరిపంది) Even tigers dare not openly attack such a bison. Some times a young beauty in all her pretty attire may walk alone fearlessly like the lone bison anywhere and even the gallants among men, except Karukodi Lachumanna, dare not approach her.

This twang of the bow string seldom misses its target. If the target is a bison, Lachumanna may tie the feathers of a Karukodi or a jungle fowl to the arrow-butt and it would do for the dart to strike the bison; but to win over a young beauty, Lachumanna, uses his eyelashes for the feathers. When the bow is fully stretched to bend it into a semi circle, it

looks like the shining disc of the sun. The arrow that darts out from the bow marks a shining dot of a crescent on the fair cheek of the young beauty.

The romance of Karukodi Lachumanna with the bison is not acceptable to the community. The Karukodi people are Reddis. His wedding with bison girl is forbidden. The penalty is nothing less than excommunication. The girls caution each other narrating such incidents.

When we wanted to stay (ఉందాము ఉందామనగా)

We found no place (ఉనికిపుట్టని కాలాలాయె)

When we wanted to venture for far off lands, (పోదాము పోదామనగా)

Its *podu* and huntings time and we cannot stir out, (పోడు వేట కాలాలాయె)

If they want to extend their stay of romance for a few days more, there is hardly any place for them. Besides, they cannot go for outing as they please, as these are the days for work, farming and hunting.

Let us endure the separation for this year, (ఈయేడు ఈలాగుందాం)

We shall meet in the next Kanne month (కన్నెకు కలుసుకుందాం)

And enjoy in the Dasara (దసరాకు దంచుకుందారా)

Thus they console themselves by saying that they would bear this separation for the time being.

Kanne, the forest wagtail, migrates here in this month. In this Kanne month, first harvest of millets is celebrated. August and September; in these two months all living creatures suffer from acute hunger. Therefore these millets are consumed by all kinsmen together. The girl, who is in love, gives appointment for love during this season.

The Dasara birds burst forth in this month. It is the time when the crops are getting ripe. Wild boars trample upon the fields and eat them to their heart's content. Thus the boars are fatted with these grains. The tribes of the regions say that if such a boar is caught and killed and its quills removed, it yields a good measure of fat.

(ఈకతీస్తే వీసెడు కొవ్వు - బూరుతీస్తే బుక్కెడు కొవ్వు)

The wild cat will be eyeing the glistening hares which live upon these crops. (దశమి పోతులు కొరకవాలె) It is the time for the farmers to live in their farm-hunts leaving the comfort of the hamlet to protect the crop from the boar and the hare, the bird or the cat. It is also the time when they do not find time enough to eat, a period between the old and the new crop. It is also the time when the tribes wander about collecting cucumber, jowar, roots, tubers or fish for food. This kind of "small game" offers only "small eats." The lady, herself pining for a long-awaited embrace, consoles her mate by stating that they should spend these winter nights with these small "eats" in a farm-hut or during short strolls.

Whispering thus among themselves, the young girls proceed to their elders who beckon them for a formal handing-over ceremony. There cannot be a feast without a song. (పదంలేక పబ్బంతీరదు)

In child-hood days we used to hunt the cats and kitten,

(పిల్లలము యున్నప్పుడు - పిల్లివేటలాడేవారం)

When grew up, with bulging breasts all games we played,

(గుబ్బుట్లము యున్నప్పుడు - గొట్టిమాటలాడేవారం)

When mahua trees were flowering, (పొక్కపూవు పూసేవేళ)

(రేవువొక్కే బాలలము)

We young and handsome children trample down the ramp,
When our goddess for the festival is brought down (అమ్మవారుయున్నప్పుడు)
We sing and dance (అడేవారం పాడేవారమా)
Attached as twins we lived all these days,
Destined we are to leave each other now,
Red-gram crop is ripe, we are little girls, (కాచిన కందులల్లె - కారుకోడి బాలలము)
All the trees are flowering, we are tiny girls,
(వేసిన కందులల్లె - వెలుగురి బాలలము)
The crop is realised and we are small girls.
(పూసిన కందులల్లె - పూరిపిట్ట బాలలము
పండిన కందులల్లె - పాలివారి బాలలము)

We were like the green seeds in the pod of red gram brought up together; we were also like the red gram fence obliging the elders. We were at our happiest best like the red gram field in full bloom with *puripittalu* (a kind of birds) hovering around. We were all distributed to different places like the harvested crop.



But now I'm married to distant Jota Reddy's,
I have to pass through dense timber forests
To reach the village of Palakajeedi Reddys,
(పదివెలమలు దాటిపోగా - పలకజీడి రెడ్లకిచ్చిరి)
I have to walk through hundred woods,

To reach the land of Nulakamaddi Reddis:

(నూరువెలమలు దాటిపోగా - నులకమద్ది రెడ్లకిచ్చిరి)

Even the bride laments:

When heavy rains strike who is there to help me?

(హోరుమని వానరాగా - ఒరుగనందుకు మానేలేదు)

Elder brothers and none else; (చిన్నన్న వెన్నులోన)

And under their shadow only I'll be safe. (చీమనై చాగుదును)

The bride wails recollecting her past glory. She says that she grew securely like the pupil under the eyelids. She embraces her playmates and sheds tears crying that there, in the groom's house; there may be no one to play with her. Her playmates wipe out her tears and say to the groom:

The girl is brought from a high family,

(అయినింటిపిల్లకు తెచ్చి ఆకులకు పంపకుడన్నా)

So don't send her to pluck adda leaves.

They beg the groom not to entrust all kinds of menial jobs to her.

“Don't give her menial work, just because she was once your niece. Don't send her to fetch leaves and then abuse her if she is late. Don't taunt her, too, digging up bygones, remember!

You bought her for a hefty price, passing through many hurdles.

You hatched many a plot and played dirty tricks till you gained her. The peer-group reminds him of his past disappointments, while courting her.

Went for hunting and brought a joyful mongoose,

(వేటలకువెళ్ళి తెచ్చి - వేడికీల (వేడుకల) ముంగిపిల్ల)

He thought he could please her with food, (కూడుపెట్టి పెంచుదమనగా)

She complained to caste-elders, (కులముతోడి చెప్పుకున్నది)

Tried to feed her with milk (పాలుపోసి పెంచుదమనగా)

She gave him a slip, escaped (పారిపోయింది ముంగిపిల్ల)

Disregarding elders, you chose her with tempting words like “each minute with her is a feast; life with her is verily a heaven.” Dumb as she was, she ran with fear to tell her parents about your advances. When the parents brought this matter before the elders, you claimed her. We believed you and put her into your hands, considering your professed love.

Do not be sad, dear child, for being married

(దూర దేశం మనవారిచ్చిరి - దుఃఖపడకు చెల్లెలమ్మా)

To a man of distant land by our people,

Though you are married to an alien, girl,

Keep up the prestige of your people here.

(మారుదేశం మనవారిచ్చిరి - మాటపడకు చెల్లెలమ్మా)

The girl’s parents return home after counseling patience and admonishing the groom.

The groom ponders within himself: “Are they women or hounds?”

“All wild animals hunt stealthily by crouching and pouncing. Not so is the hound which first urinates in the eyes of its lazy prey and while the latter flees, tears it up after a chase.”

“Alas, excess of fondness towards the girl, while courting, has led me to this fall and to this fate!”

The elders from near and far would gather and sit beneath the tamarind trees to deliberate on the give-and-take of the wedding, disputes about the presents, and the details of who gave what, at what stage of the wedding. Relatives, kinsmen, women and the bride’s friends- in fact, the whole household was full of activity for days together before the wedding and reminiscing these past events for days together, during the wedding.

Chiefs of different lands sat under the tamarind tree,

(ఎంత ఎంత దొరలుకూడి - చింతకింద విచారాలు)

They talked and talked for long on many matters,

(ఎంతదొరలు వీడిపోగా - చింతనీడలు చిమ్మునాయె)

As the marriage is over, they dispersed;

Lo, how desolate the place looks with looming darkness.

The shadow under the tamarind trees looms large like the emptiness that engulfs the hearts of the parents when the girl has left.

Not long after the girl is sent, the return party (మళ్ళుచుట్టాలు) comes back with the bride and groom with a woman for escort. The groom dines at his in-law’s place for the first time.

Maiden’s mind – Married life – his role

The winds o’er citron flowers blow and blow,

(గాలివచ్చె గాలివచ్చె - దబ్బుపూవు గాలివచ్చె)

I long to go and hide somewhere unseen,

As the eastern wind kisses me, (తూరుపు గాలిరాగా - తూలిపోదామన్న మనసు)
I feel as if my foot-steps faltering side-ways,
When wild, tall-flower-smell-loaded winds blow, (పాలపూల గాలిరాగా)
I feel like escaping from the pungent winds; (పారిపోదామన్న మనసు)
When winds from relli flowers blow over me, (రెల్లపూల గాలిరాగా)
I feel my passions roused and spirits raged; (రేగిపోదామన్న మనసు)
When winds from tamme flowers pass touching me, (తుమ్మి పూల గాలిరాగా)
I feel I'm incensed by the fragrant fumes; (తూలిపోదామన్న మనసు)
When the breeze touches the eves of our round huts, (చూరు జల్లు జల్లుమనగా)
It sounds like the music produced by kinneri (కిన్నెరేనికోనగాద)
When I look about, I see no man around.
(గడపజల్లు జల్లుమనగా - గన్నేరేనికోనగాదయా)

Many a breeze passes by the flowers, tickles them and robs them of their fragrance. Likewise, many a breeze touches the body of a maiden and her youthhood is aroused just at the touch of the breeze. Each flower has its own elegance and each wind endows the girl with its own ecstasy. The *rellu* tree grows to its full length in the summer and then it will be in full bloom with its bunches of flowers. When these flowers are tossed by the cool breeze, they look like the jasmines, loosely wound around the hair of a woman. The soft and tender leaves of *billudu* trees, blackened by the fire in the *nallamala* forests toss like this when cool breeze blows over them. They then look like the dark Chenchu beauties. The scene of the *billudu* leaves tossing in the breeze is just similar to that of the *rellu* beauties tossing in the breeze.

The locals do not pluck the *rellu* flowers until the Gangamma festival is behind. The inspiration the tribes get by gazing at the tree in

full bloom inculcates discipline among them, but certain breezes would disturb this discipline, instigating them to run away.

Next, there are citron flowers, tiny and tender – lighter than cotton. They are lifted by the wind, fly around for some time and come down, getting stuck up somewhere like paper boats.

Then there are the shrubs of Pala vegetation, waist high, growing all along the way. They are bunches of white flowers with a sort of smiling beauty. However, when the flower is plucked, its juice gives out a bitter smell. People avoid that odour. In contrast to them there are *thummika* fruit which are sweet and tempting. The *thummika* flowers are golden-coloured and one is tempted to be carried away by the breeze around *thummika* flowers.

There are different kinds of breeze blowing in the forests. Some carry you off some where. Some others are gentle winds. Still some others are just mild breezes. Some times some of them turn into whirl winds.

When the wind blows through the underside of the thatched roof of *Kopiri* straw, it is like the music of citron grass and bamboo. It looks as if the citron blade is inviting. The women-folk sweep the front yard with a kind of thorn-bush called *gannelu*. Often it so happens that a girl sweeping the front yard is startled at some body coming in to the eaves, the underside of the thatched roof. At times it may prove to be a mere hallucination and no gallant is seen near by. A person does come but he is not a gallant. The hubbub, created by him, has no value. The girl discovers that he is not even worth a broom stick. Her imagination about a gallant coming to take her into his grasp ends in a mere hallucination.

The age of the girl is such. She strongly desires to be loved by some one, to love some one and be friendly with him. She craves for intense love and adoration from some one of the opposite sex. The girls who indulge in all naughty pranks against their lovers love their togetherness and detest separation

The gourd-shell hanging o'er your shoulder, (చంకనున్న చిట్టిసిడగలు)

Carrying it for your young love? (గుబ్బట్లాకు దప్పిసిడగలా)

In a corner set up our cot, (గొందిదిక మంచంవేసి)

And mimic the myna bird, (గువ్వపిట్ట పిలుపుతీద్దాం)

Lay our hands as if a couple, (చెయ్యిమీద చెయ్యివేసో చేసుకున్న వాడికిలాగా)

Leg over leg place as if we are one, (కాలుమీద కాలువేసో కలుసున్న వాడికిలాగా)

One jacket with same design we shall wear, (ఒక్కరయిక పెడదమప్పా)

Sing and dance in chorus alike in youth (ఒకతీరే ఉందామోయా)

The hunter makes a neat opening in the bush and installs a *padukodi* (a domesticated bird) at the centre. Then he sets up a trap around it. The hunter makes some sounds like *podukadara*, *podukadara* and *sokuku*, (పొదగదుర, పొదగదుర, సోకుకు) imitating the songs of birds. Then the *padukodi* picks up the tune and starts singing loudly. The other birds in the wild fall for it assuming that the *padukodi* is looking out for a mate. No sooner they come near the *padukodi*, than they are trapped. All this is to say that some smart women hunt men likewise. They hide behind an old or ugly-looking friend and crack jokes to woo men. It may be some unlucky man's turn to be entrapped.

Sharing pleasant memories while bathing in the river, drying clothes on the bank, chasing one another for honey in the woods when

they go for gathering fire wood or tubers, mischief-mongering in unearthing hidden toddy, some naughty games under the moon-lit sky, express the teenage girls desire to come closer to each other. These pranks have the same make-up as the above. It all shows how they pine for sharing one another's experiences – strange demands of love indeed! These excesses may be foolish, but they are sweet in their own way.

The non-telugu tribal women enjoy greater liberties when they grow in groups. The familiar scenes at the fairs are that these women-virgins, newly weds and adolescents – consume toddy together, exchanging gifts and moving about holding each other hand in hand. They make friends easily.

My uncle's son has tied peas to my sari, (చెంగున సెనగలు కట్టి)

And tries to make an amorous approach to me (చేరివచ్చిడి మామయ్య కొడుకు)

Though the maiden boasts thus, she in turn would have certainly gifted him a bundle of *beedis*. It is a matter of prestige among the non-telugu tribal girls to adorn their hair with three or four combs gifted by as many men who court her.

My uncle young and handsome has bought me, (అందానికో మేనమామ)

By giving ornaments gold for my ears; (బొందులిచ్చి నన్నెకొన్నడు)

My merry uncle gave me toys and got me,

(బులుపులకో మేనమామ బొమ్మలిచ్చి నన్నెకొన్నడు)

To please me most he bought me for pelf,

(మెప్పులకో మేనమామ మాడలిచ్చి నన్నెకొన్నడు)

He gave a building and bought me for pleasure.

(దరువులకు మేనమామ డాబాలిచ్చి నన్నెకొన్నడు)

Although thrilled at the reception of the in-laws and their appreciations, the bride has far too many experiences in her new home, which are not to her liking. These unpleasant experiences relate to the fruits of her toil. She sings a doleful ditty:

We vended vegetables and bought red sari,

(కూరలమ్మి నారలమ్మి - కరకవన్నెచీరగొన్నమా)

A green sari without our in-law's knowledge,

(అత్తమామలెరుగకుండ - అంటివన్నెచీరగొన్నమా)

We bought a costly light, blue coloured sari,

Without the knowledge of our neighbours close; (ఇరుగుపొరుగు ఎరుగకుండ)

We bought date-leaf-coloured silk sari; (ఈతవన్నెచీరగొన్నమా)

Keeping in the dark my co-daughter-in-law, (చెల్లలు మరదలెరుగకుండ)

We bought a pea-flower-colour-dyed sari, (సెనగపూవు రైకగొన్నమా)

I wore them not a day but kept them in box,

(కట్టలేదు పెట్టలేదు - పెట్టెలోన వేసిన చీరలు)

But of what use? They were by cockroaches eaten,

(చీడెలెల్ల చెల్లకొరికివి (చీడె-బొద్దింక))

Alas! Alas! O beloved daughter-in-law. (అచ్చుకోడ లయ్యోకోడలా)

She is not in a position to complain loudly. Her co-wife is a tiger cub. Father-in-law should not know nor should her mother-in-law. Mother-in-law is a chameleon and runs with the hare and hunts with the hound.

But ne'er if bought by Kondla boy

(కోండ్లబాలుడు కొన్నచీర - కట్టనివ్వడు పెట్టనివ్వడు)

I did not wear; I did not tear but kept it in box,

(కట్టలేదు పెట్టలేదు - పెట్టెలోన పాడవేసిడా)

But rats in crowds came and nibbled the sari,

(ఎలుకలెలుకలు కూడుకొని - చెంగులన్నీ చెల్లకొరికివా)

Now full of holes and tears, the sari in whole, (చీర చెల్ల చింకులాయె)

It is like tamarind and jaggery, all spoiled. (చింతపండు బెల్లలాయెదా)

A saree is something which can only be bought from a shop. You can't get it from the forest. So if the bride is in possession of a saree given by some one else, other than her husband, she can't show it to any one in the in-law's house. She is too young to weave stories about it. So she cannot wear it, neither can she preserve it for long. Tubers and grain can be stored for years but sarees cannot be stored, they think. They are ignorant as to the methods of preserving sarees.

The house is too crowded with her husband's kin who pounce upon snacks as soon as they see some.

The house filled with relatives is in turmoil,

(అమ్మలమ్మలేమిగోల అరటిపండు పిట్టిగోలోయా)

The guests demand curries made of bananas,

The young ones gather and cat-meat demand,

(పిల్లలు పిల్లలు కూడుకొనో - పిల్లి మాంసం పులుసుగోలోయా)

The old ones gather and fish-dish demand.

(బుడ్డిబుడ్డి కూడుకొని - బుర్ర చేపల పులుసుగోలోయా)

But, what use is it? In the earlier times, my nagging niece used to push forward and come to me the moment my foot steps were heard.

With greedy persons like these,

What can I enjoy to my heart's content?

I'm in advanced stage of pregnancy, you know,

(నెలలు మరిచో నేనుండగ - నేడునూరు పోవోయ్ ఘాట)

So go my hubby, hunt and bring me boar's meat, (నేడు మాంసం తేవోయ్ ఘాట)

But of what avail at one time

When sounds of footsteps were heard?

Like millets sound, does she come through a bajra field termagant sister-in-law?

(చోడికర్ర జొటజొట మనగ - సోకులదో మామకూతురా)

Like chama grain sounds, prattles she and rattles,

(సిప్పకర్ర సిటసిట మనగ - చిన్నెలదో మామకూతురు)

Like ragi fields green lives she in vanities.

(గంటెకర్ర గలగల మనగ - గయ్యాళిదో మామకూతురు)

In the well-ploughed fields of Bonuseema, ganti or bajra flourishes. My nagging niece pushes across that field to meet me. The tender millet plants of the fields grow to knee-high size. Walking softly and seductively through the fields, she comes. Some times she comes through ragi fields. Ragi stalks are lustrous. She would say lamenting "My man used to mark his tongue at seeing me coming across the field. But now I am not getting even a few private moments with him in his in-law's house. She is sarcastic when she describes her husband's house. She says "This is the house of a Reddy, but, see, its rooms are crooked, can hardly find a small brass vessel in the house":

The Reddys' houses are crooked and congested, (రెడ్డిల్లో మెల్లటి గదులు)

Though searched and searched not an ewer is found,

(మెల్లాదిరిగిన చెంబేలేదోయా)

My husband's house on three big pillars stands, (మూడు స్థంబాల మావారిల్లు)

A shame to say, there's no inch of space to move; (ముడ్డితిప్ప వశముకాదు)

My husband's Mansion built on pillars two, (జోడుగంబాల మావారిల్లు)

Is not roomy enough for a couple to live; (జోటలులేక మెసలలేను)

My husband's house is built on pillar one, (ఒంటిస్థంబం మావారిల్లు)

But spacious not enough for single me to dwell, (ఒక్కదానిని మెసలలేను)

On that side stands my parents building big, (అద్దరిన మావారిల్లు)

With beams long and windows wide to look at, (అడ్డుదూలాల బోరుతలుపు)

With doors of iron tegs on the ride (ఇద్దరిన మావారిల్లు - ఇనుపసీలల బోరుతలుపు)

At my parents' house I'll have good food with dal,

(పుట్టింటయున్నప్పుడు - పప్పుకూడు భోజనాలు)

But at my in-laws' house I'll have mere gruel,

(అత్తమామలింటికిపోగ - చల్లలేని పుల్లనంబలి)

At parents' house I would wear woollen saries,

(పుట్టింటయున్నప్పుడు - పట్టుచీర కట్టేదానను)

At in-laws' house torn out saries I wear.

(అత్తమామలింటికిపోగా - ఉల్లిపొర బల్లిబందరం)

As a contrast, she thinks of her parent's home. It does not matter if it is two-pillared or single-pillared. About gruel, we were having both *challa gruel* (the gruel with butter milk) and *pulla gruel* (a stored one). *Challa ambali* (gruel mixed with butter milk) is made out of the *ragi* starch fermented over night, butter milk added to it. The left-over of it, if it is stored for days together and mixed with sour butter milk, becomes

pulla ambali; *Katta kallu* is made in a similar fashion. When she thinks of all these things, she grows nostalgic about her parent's home which contains these delicacies. The hill-folk prefer to consume sour gruel because it is delicious and also because they believe that it quenches thirst. (They say that this sour gruel arrests diabetic-related heat, but it is not good for strength). Dairying is almost absent among Konda Reddis. Eating curd-foods are valued only in the coastal plains.

A wife pesters her husband to set up a separate home for them, away from the joint family, to get more food, better clothing and more marital joy.

Cut down and clear the bamboo growth, (కొండ కొండ వెదురునరికి)

And build for us a house on the wayside of hill, (గండిమీద ఇల్లుకట్టి)

No relations no neighbours we need, we both earn and live;

(ఇత్తువద్దు పొత్తువద్దు)

We shall eat and drink. (ఇద్దరమే కూడితిందాం)

Most hamlets are built on flat land in between hill slopes. The wife desires their house to be built on a piece of flat land between the hill-slopes. The slopes are a foot paths for many a passer-by who look at the house and the cheerful family. A house on the hill slope, a new field that yields daily a few chips like a grocer's shop, new crop, pigeon's meat and jeelugu wine from hills and better clothes and trinkets from the market. These are on her mind when she sets up a separate home. The separateness is good as far as she grows independent from the elder's control. The elder's control is now not there on her man. Naturally he gets lazier later. That, then, is yet another problem.

You don't work; you don't earn but day-long eat,

(పనికొల్లవు పాటుకొల్లవు - పగలు పొద్దున తిందేనందువు)

You don't go for hunting, but go on eating,

(వేటకొల్లవు వెట్టికొల్లవు - వేగిన పొద్దున తిందేనందువు)

You don't go for coolie work but sit and eat.

(కూలికొల్లవు నాలికొల్లవు - కుగుడుండి తిందేనందువు)

Not just that only. He would disappear during the toddy season.

And go for drinking toddy to Potlawada,

(పోటిపిట్టకు పొట్లంవేసో - పొట్లవాడ కల్లుకుపోదాం)

Arrange the meat parcels of the siki birds,

(సీకిపిట్టకి పొట్లంవేసో - సీకలూరు కల్లుకుపోదాం)

And go for toddy to Sikaluru;

The toddy boiled and filtered tastes delicious, (గుమ్మునకాగిన కమ్మనికల్లు)

We shall drink it and eat meat of mouse deer. (కురిడేపిల్లి నంజుకాలోయా)

He goes thrice regularly for palm toddy, morning, noon and afternoon.

The round onions (ఉల్లిపాయ బుంగలు) are cut, the chillies are torn into pieces and together they are put in an *adda* leaf along with meat. Then they turn the pack thoroughly on the fire. With this packing in his hand, the man now looks out for toddy; they don't mind even to steal it then. This packet is a munching to the palm toddy. This packet cooking is of many kinds:

Sikapotlam is a type of packet which contains the meat of birds fried in live coals with a long tip to hold. The packet is convenient to turn upside down.

Madurupotlam is another kind of packet for the meat of heavy game. The meat inside this packet can be fried on live coals. It cooks slowly.

The third packet is called *bongupotlam*. It contains the meat of big game stuffed in hollow bamboo and burn on coals. Another packet is termed *gonepotlam*. It contains cooked rice-food.

Different kinds of toddy are there for variety of relishes. One of them is *gunabobbili*. It is fermented palm-toddy, which looks like sour gruel. It is called so, because it looks like a tiger hidden in a pot. It means that a person who drinks this toddy becomes a tiger and dances in excitement.

Another kind of liquor is called *vetagotaram*. It is a mixture (cock nail) of different kinds of toddy.

The next type is *pittasori*. It is fresh sweet toddy which even birds like to taste. Next type is *ourajnanam*. It is sour and it sharpens the mind.

Here is a man who takes a relish-packet in his hand to the *chevadi basa* (a toddy bar under a tree). He is excited even before the toddy is lowered from the palmyra tree. He sings:

The toddy you tap my young brother, dear,

(కల్లు గీసో చిన్నయతమ్మ - చేపడిన బుక్కెడియ్యవా)

Give me one glass you have in your ale-house,

Before you tap the toddy I may die,

Before you put it in the leaf container, (ఒగ్గు కల్లు వగ్గునుండగ)

I may collapse (ఒరుగు ఒరుగు పాణాలాయె)

While on the tree-top still the toddy pot hangs, (చెట్టుకల్లు చెట్టునుండగ)

The feeble-life in me may leave me and go: (సెమసెమ పాణాలాయె)

When toddy still in the gourd-shell, (దిప్పకల్లు దిప్పనుండగ)

The lingering soul from me may depart. (దిమ దిమ పాణాలాయె)

In the manyam, bottle gourd shells are used to collect toddy as a substitute to earthen pots.

In the toddy parties, they will show you an empty container even if you are late by a moment. They are greedy and misers in sharing toddy with others. (కల్లుపిక్కి)

If one is late by a few minutes the drinkers hide the toddy and disappoint him

The toddy stored in shells they hid in corners,

(దిప్పతోన్ దిప్పెడుకల్లు - దిగగొందిన దాచిడుకున్నడు)

The toddy in vessels they hide behind mats,

(చట్టితోన్ చట్టెడుకల్లు - చాపచాటున దాచిడుకున్నడు)

The toddy in mud pots they hide in nooks.

(ముంతతోడి ముంతెడుకల్లు - మూలగొందిన దాచిడుకున్నడు)

Even if one arrives on time they find some excuse to refuse toddy:

“Well boiled is toddy but the laudle gourd is nowhere”

(కల్లయితే కాగిదిగాని - కంటిదోకి కనపడదు)

Thus, playing tricks for a time, they try to get rid of the visitor. The man who commands resepects in a toddy tree bar (చేపడి బస) is man indeed!

The proud bearing of the man who pours out the toddy, the crazy crowd around, who look for a few drops of toddy, with mouths agape, fickle-tongued as they were, the way they make relations with the toddy-man, their looks – all makes one think that those who missed the nectar once (the demons), when the milky ocean was churned, are all here!

The boiled toddy dense is good in taste. (గుమ్మునకాగిన కమ్మనికల్లు)

The roasted meat of mouse deer the best combination (కురిడెపిల్లి సంజుకాలు)

Jeeluga Kallu needs boiling. Birds, big or small or their excreta could fall in the toddy pot. The boiling of it would kill any biological matter. While boiling it, they add *gesarara*, *rella* etc. barks. This addition makes the toddy bitter and the quantity is sufficient more people. The barks here medicinal value and they are a boon for the sick. For intoxication, more of this wood is added.

With the addition of a new dose of toddy into their stomach , the party gets more and more intoxicated, feeling within them a seventh heaven of bliss. So they feel that they are in a different world. The chat they indulge in is different. The names are different. They are totally transformed and they feel transported to the regions higher than the heavens.

In their language, they call the man who brings an axe as *Godimukku Ramanna*, the short man with a knife as *Surakattula Veeranna*, the man with a bald head like the table land on hill top as *Gummudukondavenam*, the person with serious looks as *Chirruudu*, the squint-eyed person as *Kellidu*, the person with dropping lips as *Velujonda*, the limping person as *Mathukadu* and the the village secretary *Kalludokula munasabu* and lastly the visiting guest who wears spectacles is called *Pedda addalavaadu*.

With proper training, these tribes who coin such figurative phrases would become good cartoonists!

Emptying the toddy pots, they reach climax. There different stages in the kick it is the stage of swiftness with which a kite falls on its prey from heights. (డేగవిసురు పదుసు)

Prose turns into poetry and poetry into song.

“My young tapper brother in-law you know falcon stole him?”

(కల్లుగీసో చిన్నయతమ్మ - వేనపుడేగలెత్తుకుపోయివా)

The toddy-tapper, our brother-in-law, is not to be seen, they say. Did a hawk-like woman carry him off? They wonder. With humour and gusto, they say “Yet another son-in-law eloped with his old mother-in-law.”

The Gulledu, the wretched man, (మయ్యత్తాకి గుల్లెడు మోసో)

Eloped with our aged, helpless mother-in-law;

And hid her in Goggirallu (గొగ్గిరాళ్ళన దాచిడుకున్నడు)

As she was old and blind, wild foxes stole her,

(కండ్లుపోయిన కుండ్లతమ్మ - బద్దికోడికి బొవురడు మోసి)

Before they tore her to pieces and ate,

A cheetah came and drove the foxes away,

And feasted on the helpless skeletal woman

(ఎండిన డుమ్ములు గండికి మోసి - బండలపులులు బాగా తిన్నవా) bandala puli – Cheetah

A man whose surname is *Gulle* eloped with an old blind lady (mother-in-law of one of the young team members in the Chavadi Basa) and asked her to hide behind the boulders waiting for him. (She with many children is described as Kundalathamma), While she was thus waiting for him, jackals (bowradu) carried that blind old woman away. Then some cheetahs threatened the jackals taken away to the hill top and ate away the skeleton (like a woman). The cheetah here is called *bandalapuli* which are fond of langur's monkeys and baboons. (Banda - Langur)

Chatting in this way, they empty the toddy pots until the bottom of the pot (చెక్కలకట్ట పడును) is struck and doze off. They get up next only at the “toddy time”. The drunkards are highly pleased with themselves. While these addicts leave their home and their wives and roam in the jungles, many opportunistic characters eye their women.

A creeper grown upon a banyan tree,

(పుట్టలోనో బుడమరి చెట్టు - భూమికికోసం సాగేయా)

Has born a nut, yet to grow, and become ripe,

(ఆకసానికి కొనసాగు - అద్దురంతన కాయకాసోయా)

But enamoured of it some young man in haste,

(కాయతింటే ఏమి ఫలము - పండుతింటే పాలముంతుదా)

Plucked it off and escaped from the sight of all:

(ఎండునేల పండునేల - పక్షులకోకాని పండ్లయ్యా)

What use is there in eating an unripe fruit?
Even birds won't eat if it's not matured.

The woman who fights to set up a separate home on the slope lives there with her children while her man is given to all vices. Rumours start spreading about her. The field is fertile. The tree can bear fruit. But just as she is unlucky, the ground remains dry. The tree does not bear fruit.

The man who has patiently familiarised her can enter her life.

The chivalrous Nallamayya came jumping,
(దుంపకొమ్ములు విరుచుకుంటూ - దుమికి వచ్చిడి నల్లమయ్య)

Mad of his youth he came swinging and dancing,
(గడకొమ్ములు విరుచుకుంటూ - గతులు వేసిడి నల్లమయ్య)

Tossing his head and tearing through, he came.
(ఈలికొమ్ములు విరుచుకుంటూ - ఈదివచ్చిడి నల్లమయ్య)

Such a man can woo her drawing towards her, snapping with his fingers:

Rapping his fingers he came near,
The gad-fly and the cob-web dry are thirsty,
Give us at once fermented toddy cool,
(చారకణుదురు వర్రెపాప - చలిదికి బుక్కెడు బుర్రెడియ్యవా)

You tapper's girl, fill this empty shell and give,
(పులికణుదురు వర్రెపాప - పూటకు బుక్కెడు బుర్రెడియ్యవా)

O' elder sister-in-law

It is our breakfast time, be quick, don't tarry.
(ఆకుకణుదురు వర్రెపాప - అయినవేళ భోజనాలాయా)

The wasps (కణుదురు) can also sting like the bees. They can build honey combs but there is no honey in them. Such flies are of many kinds. Some of them are called *charakanuduru* (striped flies), *jibbikanuduru* and *guntakanuduru*. There are also *pulikanudurus* which sting like tigers. Different kinds of women are compared to these different types of Kanudurus/ wasps. Some such are called *varrenkanuduru*. They are barren who lost all charm of youth. Some one go to such women, address them as sisters-in-law, call them shrews and say “O my sister-in-law, will you pour some toddy to me? Will you give me some food? How long can you hold out? The winter is not far ahead!”

On the way to the fair he hurls jokes many,
But snail-like she feigns and withdraws herself.

(కిక్కిడి గిడి గిడి సంతలదారో - నత్తగుల్ల వరైపాపయా)

On the way to the fair, you withdraw even like a nail. Your seriousness is after all as hollow as that of a snail's shell.

(కన్నెచెట్టుకు కట్టుతాప - ఉన్న చెట్టుకు ఊగుతాప)

A fully grown palm tree oozes out much toddy. A tapper of the toddy uses a bamboo pole to climb up the tree. He uses the bamboo pole frequently to climb up the full-green tree because the oozings of toddy are frequent. After the use, he hides the pole behind some bush unseen, lest a toddy-thief should come in the night and use the pole for stealing the toddy. As it is much used in frequent tapping, the pole swings whenever it is used for climbing the tree. But in the case of a *kanne* tree or a youngling, which does not yield much toddy, the tapper retains the pole tied to the tree, even after its use, because few thieves go near the *kanne* tree, whose toddy-yield is quite less. The pole used for *kanne* tree is

called *kattuthapa* or tied-pole. It does not rock like the swinging pole or *voogu thapa*.

Comes to no harm if he woos and goes about a *kanne* girl it would be thought that he would marry her and they were left to themselves. At some other times, it would be thought that they were relatives and they would be left to themselves. The man is safe in both cases. But, not so, if he goes with a married woman In this case the man should take blame to himself.

"He who goes to a woman in the absence of He husband or to a place where a tiger Lives, cannot go back without blame or trouble."

(ఇల్లాలులేని ఇల్లు - ఇండిగెలవనం - పురుషుడులేని ఇల్లు పులిఉన్నకోనం)

A man who passes time with a lonely family woman is like the man entering the tiger's den. He cannot emerge without a black mark.

For want of rain, foliage in Sileru withered,

(సీలేటా సిమిలికూర - వానలేక వాడిపోయిదా)

For want of wife, our village young man dried.

(మయ్య ఊరో కన్నెపూటు - ఆలిలేక ఆరుకున్నాడా)

This young fellow seems to have been paining for a wife. He has dried up for want of company, feminine. He yearns for a wife, no matter her age, poor thing; tastes differ from tongue to tongue!

(ఎద్దుతోక్కిన మద్దనిప్పు - ఎంతో దీవిలైకాలె)

The coals of *maddi* wood burn bright when they fall on the cow dung trampled by an ox, it is said. *Maddi* coal burns steadily. The cow

dung which is in a semi-baked stated can catch fire only with the *maddi* coals.

While feeding fire this morn, sister-in-law,
(పోయ్యి పోసో వదినపాప - పొత్తడిరెమ్మలు దాపినట్లోయా)

You look like tender golden twigs of tree
(పీనె పోసో వదినపాప - పిప్పడిరెమ్మలు దాపినట్లోయా)

The lover comes early in the morning and starts chatting as if for pastime: He appreciate her every action, the arrangement of hearth, plot form around etc.,

I say I don't have a cigar to give you (పొద్దునింత పొగాకు లేదు)

Why don't you go to your men, young fellow? (పోవో గుంటడ మీవారింటికి)

He observes her working and praises every movement of hers, every act of hers. He knows that he must pamper her if she must come with him. She says:

A little pot of milk our black cow gave (చిరికొమ్ముల కరియాపు)

When I stir the curds to make butter-milk, (ఇంత ముంతన ముంతెడు పాలోయా)

Who are you, boy, standing hard at the threshold? (గుమ్మానెవ్వడి బాలుడవు)

What she said is true. The women in the Konda Reddi families do not churn butter milk. The negatives in the literal meanings of the dialogues are tempting the lovers to go after an indirect irony. She asks him to go but does not mean it. They keep on talking. In their talk it is made known that all his relations are long since dead and he is alone.

He does not heed her words and says that he has come for butter milk. She sings.

Why leaving your own people you came here,

You Lingathottari mischievous Mala boy

(నింగితొట్టరి మాలగుంటడ - మీవారేమై చచ్చిరి గుంటడ)

I raised with care all kinds of ragi crop,

(సర్వచోళ పిట్టితిని చట్టలారో - చచ్చిరగుంటడ)

Why did you leave them all and come to me?

(బూడెచోళ పిట్టితిన్ బుగ్గలారో - చచ్చిరగుంటడ)

Whether they died eating me ragi crop

(అరవచోళ పిట్టితిన్ అంకుడారో - చచ్చిరగుంటడ)

(పొత్తడాకు పొగచుట్ట - ఇంద పొత్తడ పొగచుట్ట

ఎంగిలందెవు సంగిలందెవు - అందుకొమ్మో నరుసులమ్మ

అందుకొనొ ఆరగించు - ఎండపల్లి పోకచుట్ట, చుట్టెడాకు పోక చుట్ట)

He gets tobacco and she prepares it for his smoke.

This *attchukodalu* song of *Maredumilli manyam* is fairly long like the *Seesa padyam* of Telugu prosody. “*Aaadavale-padavale*” song from Tadepalli and Geddada run in the same style, ending with a single stanza. Although the poem is short, the romantic overtones in it are in excess.

A small cigar half smoked, he gave to smoke,

(సన్నపాటి చుట్టలను - సగముతాగి చేతికిచ్చె)

No love potiors, no opium; (మందువద్దు మాకువద్దు)

When enamoured, I come? (మనసుపుడితె నేనెవద్దు)

No more of nuts and leaves, (చెక్కవద్దు చేమవద్దు - చెప్పకుండ నేనెవద్దు)

They know now the desires of each other. At times he comes to her with a present of some meat.

She likes to eat flesh and bones of wild boars,

(పాతపాత గవ్వలదుడ్డు - పందిగుండెలు తిందేనన్నది)

The precious bones and heart of goats too she likes,

(మేలైన గవ్వలదుడ్డు - మేకగుండెలు తిందేనన్నది)

The heart and jointbones best of fowls she likes most.

(కొత్తకొత్త గవ్వలదుడ్డు - కోడిగుండెలు తిందేనన్నది)

He would refuse to eat if fine rice I cooked,

(వడ్లకూడు వండుదమనగ - వట్టిదని ఒల్లనంతివి)

If millets I cooked, this young bison won't eat,

(సామకూడు వండుదమనగ - సన్నమున్న దొల్లనంతివి)

Ganti grain, if cooked, this youth won't eat.

(గంటెకూడు గర్రమాంసం - గట్టిదని ఒల్లనంతివి)

Lovers say one thing and mean another. It is a mere pretence and a joke to say that she has not eaten any meat while eating the heart of a boar or some other fresh meat. It is also said that rare and fresh honey (*Kanne there*) and turtle meat are enough to draw any woman to one's side. The Chenchus know that the *kanne there* is hard to get and it is highly delicious. Even the meat of the turtle is as soft and as sweet as *halwa* as it is devoid of any bone.

Now and then, she would be providing him with a delicious meal.

If I cooked and served fish and sheep meat curry

(గంటెకూడు గర్రమాంసం - గట్టిదని ఒల్లనంతివి)

He won't eat, he said, as it was hard to munch

If chijja food and dall curry I cooked, (చిప్పకూడు వండుదమనగ)

He did not eat as it was too small to crunch (చిన్నదున్నదొల్లనంతివి)

If maize and horsegram I cooked for him, (జొన్నకూడు వండుదమనగ)

“They won't mix well, I don't eat” he would say (జోడదని ఒల్లనంతివి)

(సామకూడు వండుదమనగ

సన్నమున్న దొల్లనంతివి

వడ్లకూడు ఉలవపప్పు

వట్టిదని ఒల్లనంతివి

గంటెకూడు వండుదమనగ

గట్టిదున్నది ఒల్లనంతివి)

Sama grain is almost as small as the mustard seed. *Chippa* is smaller still in hills *Sama* with red gram is a staple food. Around Chodavaram, it is millet with ragi gruel. Cooked rice plus *ragi* gruel is the common food in the Visakha manyam. (అన్నం-అంబలి)

Sama is soaked in water, dried and fried before it is cooked. Rich in taste because it is cooked, dried and ground. The grains do not break; but if this *Sama* food is mixed with *saru* root, it can be swallowed without munching. (సామన్నం - సారుకూర)

He complains that she served him the Sama food without any side dish. Fine grain and *saya pappu* go well together. (సన్నబియ్యం-సాయపప్పు)

Come near the shade of date tree, you young man,

(ఈరిపేను నొక్కదునోయా - ఈతచెట్టుకిందకు రావో)

I shall keep you on my lap and comb your lice,

(దిక్కుమొక్కులేని వాడవు - దిగిరావో సాదుకుందాం)

Come near the sandalwood tree and embrace me,

(మానుకింద మారేడుగంధం - మళ్ళీరావో సాదుకుందాం)

Hardly you drank palm tree toddy and went, (ఈతకల్లు తాగివో లేవో)

Abrazen face you wear having drunk mad; (నీమొహము ఈరెలాయె)

You hardly drank white toddy and became pale,

(తాటికల్లు తాగివోలేవో - నియ్యమొహము తాబెలాయె)

Arrack you drank and balance of mind you lost

(సారా కల్లు తాగివో లేవో - నియ్యమొహము చారాలాయివా)

“Among the canal-fish, *garre* tastes best.”

(కాలువచేపల్లో గర్రెమాంసం రుచి) But he complains that both *ganti* food and *garre* meat are hard to swallow; so saying he refuses it. When the food of *chippa* millet and *chiru* (small) dall is served, he complains that both the grains and the dall are too small. Similarly, he declines jowar and horse-gram food saying that they do not mix well. He refuses even rice and horse gram food stating that it is tasteless. Finally it is decided that fine grain and *saya* pappu go well together.

After these feasting with the accompanying fun and frolic, they eat one another's left overs and then their emotions reach their peak.

Beyond the slope the ganti crop does stand,

(గండియావల గంటిచేను - కాపుకువెళ్ళు కన్నెగుంటడ)

Go and guard it, you handsome, active youth,

(వాలుగొమ్మున చిలుకలు వాలె - వాలకుండ తేలగొటు)

A parrot has sat on the branch of the tree,

You go and frighten it and drive it way;

The fruits on the tree are for harvest ready, (కాయగోరి కన్నెఘాట),
(ఘాటు - teenager)

Go teenager, with your sling and stones and thwart the birds.
(ఊరినుండ ఒడిసెరాళ్ళు)

She says you are alone with none beside, come down; we shall rear
together our love.

As filthy water in the pond they drank, (బురదగుంట నీళ్ళు తాగి)
They struggled hard for long to cross the hillocks (బూరుగుల మెట్టలెక్కి)

Romance progresses and reaches the heights of fixing an appointed
rendezvous for their meeting.

The small fish in the pond is swallowing air,
(గుంటనున్న గుగ్గిపిల్ల - గుక్కులు మింగుకుంటూ)

The young chameleon while trusting its mustache,
(మెరితెనున్న మిందెపిల్ల - మీసాల గర్లు దువ్వుకుంటూ)

Looking at me and bites its sharp tongue;
(నయ్యకేసి చూసుకుంటు - నాలికలు కొరుకు కుంటూ)

It moves forward first-and moves backward next,
(తెక్కుతరావో తేలుతరావో - గుంకుత రావో గురుతరావో)

Come chummy come, come jumping and come flying
(గుంటనీళ్ళు తాగుతరావో - తేటనీళ్ళు తాగుతరావో వంగుతరావో వాలుతరావో)

There are many sling-stones ready to strike the bird. Strike carefully to carry the parrot away. This is exhortation indeed and the time is ripe for their elopement.

Then their experience is described in the common saying,

“Drink water from the muddy pond

Ascend the uplands of silk cotton.”

(బురదగుంట నీళ్ళు తాగి - బూరుగుల మెట్టలెక్కి)

The woman leads the way and the man is promptly on her trail, smacking his lips.

The word guggi is the name of fish in the canals. It is a lustrous shining bird.

The sky is your abode; you live in the sky,

(ఆకాశానపోయే పక్షి - పిల్లలెందు పెట్టుకొన్నవు)

‘Why then you bird, build your nest on earth?

You build your nest on tree-tops and in bushes,

(ఆకాశాన రతలు వేసి - అద్దురంత గుడ్డుపెట్టి)

Three eggs you lay and hatch three lovely chicks; (ముచ్చటకొ మూడేపిల్లలు)

As they take wings you leave them and disappear;

If parents are caught in net and are killed,

(తల్లిచచ్చి ఆరునెలలు, తలచి రెండు కొమ్ముపట్టె - తల్లిదండ్రీ ధరణిపాలు)

The young ones are shot dead by hunter Bheema; (పిల్లబిడ్డ భీముడిపాలు)

When cows graze on one side of the pasture lands, (ఆవులెల్ల అద్దరి మేసె)

The calves on bushes on the other side; (దూడలెల్ల దుచ్చరి మేసె)

When bulls go panic, the calves go amuck.

(గిత్తలెల్ల బెత్తరిల్లె - పెయ్యలెల్ల పెండెవట్టె)

What would happen to their kids, if they run away like this!

If, for any reason, the mother bird happens to die, the birdies know not where to go. Their fate is only *Pisa vasa* (to be trampled mercilessly).

When the *adda* fruit bursts, the seeds scatter away. (తల్లి ఫెడేలుమంటే - పిల్లలు పిసవసలు) So is a family when it breaks up. Some are babes and some others may be in adolescent stage. The grown up ones graze on the other side of the river. Unable to find fodder, the calves bite weed. Such families are many and may the God Bheema save the family, discorded by parents!

Till the children grow up, some elders should come to their rescue!

(పేమగల్ల పెద్దలైతే - పెండెకట్ల తాపతేరో)

If the condition of the children is so miserable, the state of the old parents depending on her is pathetic indeed! They murmur, “were they to have such a daughter?!” Even the eloped woman feels sorry for such helpless parents and her suffering is more towards the parents than for her offspring. She feels that status quo is better than be ruined thus. (దూరపుచుట్టాలు మేలు - దూలదామపప్పు మేలు; కొడుకు కొడలు మేలు - కొనగందిపప్పు మేలు)

Duladama, a kind of pulse should be washed in water and strained off six or seven times, to remove from it the cause of itching. In spite of its itching nature, it is well worth trying to fill ones belly. Similar is the case with the parents of an eloped woman. Some how they have to adjust living with some distant relatives

If the daughter-in-law of a family elopes, the son has some shelter. Under his shelter the parents can survive eating *parigi* (left overs in the field) if not the finer red gram dal. At least, they are not left in the lurch.

If wife runs away, when he is in her mother in-laws house, the terrible suffering he under goes is beyond imagination. Even then he can get on somehow, because he is a man.

In these tribal societies, women support men with their toil and as such they get for themselves not only sustenance but also respect. If there is conjugal compatibility in the first place, no one need suffer any affliction.

(నగరికి వెళ్ళుదమన్న - జాజివలస నగరిలోన

పుట్టిదయ్యా పూవులపోడు - కూతలేదు మేతలేదోయా

కులముతోడి కూడిలేదు - అమ్మలతోడి ఆటకులేదు

గోవులతోడి గొట్టికిలేదు - గుబ్బుట్లతోడి గుమ్మళ్ళులేదోయా

కోత కోత పండుగ రాగయా)

If roped and pulled, the young girl kicks against the head,

(తాడులేరి పట్టబోగ - తలపాగలెగురదన్నే)

Her brother feigns love to make a gain through her,

(పేమగల్ల పెద్దనగార పేరు - చెప్పిపట్టుకుందారా)

But who is in her mind, none tries to know, (సుక్కనుదురు సూరెపుడేగ)

Her elder brothers too can't, like hawks, act. (వెండికుచ్చుల వేనపుడేగయా)

Some girls are against forced marriages. Others still do not adjust with a step mother. Some more independent girls do not like to be in the care of a brother and his wife. There are some other girls who display their grudge against the parents who want to encash them through marriage by getting oli (oli is the money the bride groom pays to his girl's side).

There was once such a girl at Jajinagari who had quarreled with her people and gave up food and song. Even on the *kotta* festival, she did not budge. She was as lovely as a flower and as dashing as a hawk. Some gallants in the vicinity tried to woo her. But perhaps there must be some one else on her mind. Hence she foiled their advances by kicking their turbans. They consulted her near and dear, but there was no way. She was no longer able to live with her parents or brothers. She was in a double mind as to where to go and whom to believe.

She makes her own enquiries and gets the news that some one is waiting for her, forgetting even to take food. He sends for her.

The damsel in the corner pours forth her woes,

O snake in the roof, tell me the sad routes

(దూలనున్న దుగ్గలనాగు - దుఃఖతోవలు చెప్పగాద)

Tells me love routes, o, fly, living in the dung

(పేడనున్న పేడపురుగు - పేమతోవలు చెప్పగాద)

She makes her own enquiries and gets the new that some one is waiting for her, forgetting even to take food. He sends for her.

The Maddiveeti cock crows forgetting his food,

(మద్దివీటి మయిలపుంజు - కూతవేసి మేతమరచిదా)

She's the mother of seventy villages, you know!

She is the goddess Maveli, the most powerful.

(డెబ్బైయారుతానాలకు - మద్దివీడు మావెలి దుర్గమా)

The word *Mavelii* in the song refers to a fiery goddess worshipped at *Maddeiveeti lanka*. The fortress of this place is the mother-fortress for seventy six villages around.

Maddiveeti lanka is a hamlet village adjoining Tadepalli in Maredumilli Mandal. The popular belief is that a Rampa chieftain lived hereabouts. Maveli is the fiery goddess brought by them to this place. The lover in the above song who is pinning for his beloved is as frighteningly powerful as the goddess of Maveli. He sings to her lady:

We don't want chastisement; we don't want even praise,

(దుడ్డువద్దు దూపంవద్దు - దూరపు దండలందుకుందారా)

Neither a ewer nor a tumbler we want;

(చెంబువద్దు చెల్లంవద్దు - చేతిదండలందుకుందారా)

Go with me, my dear, we shall work hard and live.

“They need not perform our wedding nor need we be subjected to their punishment. So, come, let's go on.”

They would ride boldly on their chariot of matrimonial love,
Your little fingers, dear, she put her little finger as peg to the wheel, when
he drives the love chariot (చిటికెనవేస గోరుకోసి)

Use it as a peg and drive the chariot, (సీలవేసో బండితోలు)

Your thumb, my dear, and use it as a nail, (బొటికెనవేస గోరుకోసి)

And drive the chariot quick to reach our goal. (బొండవేసి బండితోలు)

Hardly had she leaves her parent's home, her man would go after her, unable to bear even a moment's separation. He teaches her how to do farming, stage after stage, and follows her up through all these stages, assuring her his support.

“You blossoming bud haven't you e'er cleared the field

(చేను చెలుపో వాలారుమొగ్గ - ఎప్పుడు సెలపంగ సూడలేదా)

Well daughter in-law well, well sister in-law well;

(మంచిదోయ్ కోడలమ్మ - మంచిదోయ్)

Go and cut the faggots, my lovely lass, (కయ్యలు నరుకో - వాలారుమొగ్గ)

Haven't you e'er seen how logs and wood are cut? (ఎప్పుడునరుకంగ చూడలేదా)

Haven't you seen the food offered by men? (పెంకవంటజల్లో - వాలారుమొగ్గ)

To goddesses and birds in ceremonies

I know you are the best of ladies known,

Go, my dear, and cut down the thorny bushes (రొడ్డకొట్టో వాలారుమొగ్గ)

In her hurry to meet such a loving husband, she stuffs food into her throat event through her nose. She eats in haste even like the Dabbi or Kanchari bird, which eats by inserting its beak into a hole in the tree trunk.

Have you swallowed through mouth and nose in hurry?

(కుడువు కుడువు డబ్బిపిట్ట కో ... కోడలమ్మ ముక్కుమునిగిది కొప్పుజారిదా)

O young wood-pecker?

Your graceful queue side-fallen

The Sannasi Dora of Dorakonda put up a tent and beating the drum

(దారకొండ సన్నాసిదొర కో... కోడలమ్మా డేరావేసి డక్కీకొట్టిడా)

Erected he a tent and sent word to you,

Cook for him tasty dishes he likes most,

He is awaiting you at the scaffold,

Make haste, go and join him, you temptress young.

The singer suggests that she should eat well and eat with the *saaru* curry, without hurry, because the man after her is but a commoner.

To say that the man is after all a commoner, the singer says that he is not like Godugu *Sannasi Dora* of Darakonda (near *Sileru*), a renowned mutineer of the Rampa rebellion. This Dora moved from place to place spreading rebellion and spreading messages with a drum, here, there.

The singer says that our woman's man is *Sannasi Dora* for name's sake. He has just a farm hut to live in. He does not drive soldiers but drives away birds with a sling. The taunt is that she need not be in such haste at the call of this commoner. The singer tauntingly enquires "where do you expect to live with him?"

Practical jokes are cut by comparing or contrasting ordinary men with the legendary mutineers like *Teegala Karri Dora*, *Godugu Sannasi Dora* and *Kaaram Pandu Dora*. These names are symbols for certain things. Eg. The word *Karam* refers to a ripe chilli and the *chama* leaf looks like an umbrella. It is said that the *chama* root is like the navel for the earth and its wide leaf is like an umbrella providing shelter from the sky above. (భూమికి బొడ్డు - ఆకసానికి అడ్డు), *Teegala Karri Dora* in ... (బొబ్బర్లు)

With so many people observing her and poking fun at her, she is perplexed:

How beautiful are your thighs and buttocks, girl!

(దిప్పెదిప్పె మక్కలకొరువ కో ... కోడలమ్మా)

Are you caught by the creepers and entangled? (డిప్పతీగ తుల్లకున్నవా)

Break the hurdles and make your way to him, (పోయంబలో పోయిదిగాని)

Go and ensure the young man and hold him fast. (బాలుడుకు బాగ పట్టోయా)

“With the thighs of a bottle gourd, “you carrying gruel to the boy friend, slipped in the entangled creepers, let the gruel spill, but not your grip on the boy’ (పోయంబలో పోయిదిగాని కో... కోడలమ్మా బాలుడుకు బాగ పట్టోయా)

She is first praised for her beautiful dark eyes, which are like those of a Gyrika bird and the next minute she is mocked at for her nose which is like that of a black pig.

In one breath praised a collyrium rim-eyed, (గైరికపిట్ట కన్నులదాన కో-కోడలా)

You black-rim-eyed bird! You pig-mouthed girl, (కారుపందిముక్కుదానవా)

In another breath mocked at as pig-snouted,

Sing you kunne bird, keeping in throat (కూయుడుకూయుడు కున్నెలాల)

What all you have swallowed in haste while eating? (కుత్తికలమేతలున్నవా)

(గుర్రుడు గుర్రుడు కున్నెలాల - గుండెనిండ వలపులున్నవా)

The *Kunne* bird eats fast. It has food bags around its neck. It pushes the food fast into these while eating. Then it goes on singing till the food in the food-bags is digested. Normally it is the male bird which sings to draw the female. The fact that the female bird sings here is significant and the significance is in its mockery.

She tempted some thieves to rape her last night.

(సిరివిరి, సిరివిరి చిన్నబుల్లి -రాతిరి దొంగల్దెంగిన కొరువా)

“O, you Molested by some rogues last night! I understand! With so many after you, you may think that you are in great demand! It would not be long, before you come down!” says some one in derogatory tone.

Beget one child and look at yourself once, (ఒక్క తల్లి పిల్లవైతే కో... కోడలమ్మా)

Your charms are gone, your glittering glamour lost (బొక్కలోని తట్టల వైములా)

In the song, there is a reference to an edible tuber called *vaimu*. The tubers of the flowering creepers turn into loose cotton-like particles while being cooked. (పువ్వులవైము) But the tuber of seed bearing creeper, ooze out becoming plastic. The inference is that once she has gone through the pangs of delivery, the woman sags like *tattala vaimu*, (తట్టలవైము). The meaning is that her proud prime youth world be is a thing of the past and she sags – thus taunts her aged lover.

When your man beats the drum, you flee from him,

(డోలు డొంగు డొంగు మనగా కో... కోడలమ్మా - డొంకదిక డెంకె దొలువులా)

Like boars in forests do (పూతికల డొంకలోన పులి బొబ్బరించియున్నదా)

You stand by him and prove your faith in him

(పులికాదు ఎలుగుకాదు కోడలా - పూరిపిట్టల వేటలవాడోయా)

He goes beating the drum and she goes after him trampling the bushes. The bear walks in doluvudu gait, as if breaking her thighs; so is she. Her fearlessness in following him vies with his courage, when he goes proudly a – drumming. The sound that comes from the bush is not from the bear but the tiger. “Mind that and go,” says the singer. “The huntsman draws birds towards him with his dancing steps while this man draws the girls with his drumming,” says the singer.

The cucumber in the garden back is ripe, (దొడ్డిలోని దోసపండు కో... కోడలమ్మా)

It's no wrong if you cross the hedge and come out (దూరిరాగ దోసాలోడ్డునా)

In the above song there is a reference to the water-cucumber. The water-cucumber in the manyam grows some times four-fold larger than the common curry-cucumber. The water-cucumber swells as if it would

burst at the seams. “You are such cucumber, O daughter-in-law, no harm comes if the fence is crossed,” says the singer.

The girl thinks that it is no time to hit back at the teasing youngsters. In total unconcern, she readies the gruel for her husband.

Ready is porridge made of mango gruel?

(ఔంకంబలో పిల్లకొరువా - లొల్లోడి గింజలు నంజుకుందారా)

Come you, young lady, we shall both consume.

In the song the word lullodu means “any good-for-nothing thing or fellow.”

“You are now carrying with you the kernel – gruel of mango stones for your husband, but what nasty corn are you adding to it for relish?” says the singer, tauntingly.

They add corn or red gram and the like, which are duly friend and cooked, to the maize-gruel. This serves the purpose of chewing. These chews are called *thorupulu* (తొరుపులు)

Mere liquid gruel does not go well, so the addition of the *thorupulu*. The person who drinks the gruel chews these grains as he slowly sips the gruel. A green vegetable like *gongura* with bamboo-shoot- curry for side dish, serves the purpose of lunch, while the normal food for the evening is the mixture of maize-gruel with corn *thorupulu*. *Saaru* curry goes with the mango-kernel gruel. Once people made light of *saru* curry (సారుకూర) and now they talk light of kernel-gruel (ఔంకంబలి). However, these two go well together.

(సారుకూర సలవచేసి - బడ్డికింద బసవేస్తారా)

A man taunts his ex-love “We are kin though distantly. I had suggested that we should marry and live together eating whatever we could. But now, alas, I see you drinking muddy waters,” bemoans the man, who still has a glimmer of hope.

When I want you to drink with me sour porridge,
You prefer to drink but filthy water in the pond.

(నీ యింటోయ్ నాయింటి నడుమ - గుమ్మడాని వేసినాము
గుమ్మడాకు దొన్నెలు గట్టి - నిన్నటంబలి తాగుదమనగా
లోల్లోడంబలి తాగనంటివి - బురదగుంటనీళ్ళే తాగుతవా
లిల్లిబూచో లిల్లెలేవోయ్ - లల్లకాదు బాలకోడలా)

With such a loving, husband beside her, what need has the woman
for sour gruel or *lollodi* (worthless) gruel?

My black bangle, (నయ్యచేతి నల్లగాజు - నెల్లిపుర మంపినాను)

I’ve sent him for toddy to Nellipuram, the black bangle is shrewd to deal
with Delhi (నెల్లిపురాన కల్లుట్టగా - మళ్ళీ వచ్చిది నల్లగాజు - ఢిల్లీకి డిలకరి మలకరి గాజోయా)

With a wife who praises him so profusely, how fortunate and
singularly lucky the husband is!

I’m carrying and unable to move, (నెలలు మరిచో నేనుండగ)

So go to Nedunur and bring me good meat,

(నేదునూరు పోవోయ్ ఘాట నేదు మాంసం తేవోయ్ ఘాట)

I’m fond of eating wood-berries most sour,

(బూసిపండుకు బూతమయ్యే - కోసిపెట్టో కోమలెరి)

Pluck them and bring, you dimple cheeked young boy;

(ముత్యమంతా కాయకాసె... పగడమంత పండుపండె)

See the ring-sized red flower that blossomed, (ఓ... ఉంగరమంత పూలుపూసి)

It bore the nut to the size of a pearl, (ముత్యమంతా కాయకాసి)

It's ripened into a fruit of coral size, (పగడమంత పండుపండె)

The fruits that were plucked were eaten by monkeys,
(కోసిన పండులకు కోతులపాలుపారె)

The fruits that were brought home were eaten by birds.

(పండిన పండులకు పక్షుల పాలువారె)

When the man and wife love each other so intensely and lead a harmonious and happy life together, theirs is a happy home. The children they beget, are they boys or are they girls, grow up, get married to those whom they loved and leave the parents' home. Old age looms large and falls upon the parents. It is some solace for them to look at the joyful youngsters-sons, daughters-in-law, daughters, sons-in-law and grand children. They are confined to look on and share the joys of the younglings as the evenings shadows wrap up their lives.

The chuppati old man staying the millet field is no more

(చిప్పచేను చుప్పటి బుడ్డడు - చచ్చిడట బాబు)

He used to smear sandal paste, to the maidens.

(నందాలాడే గుబ్బట్లకు - గందాలు పూసేవాడు)

Unable to shuttle between the toddy-bearing palm or the jeelugu, the old couple retire to their farm-hut and spend the last phase of their life quietly. When, for any occasional festival, they do come up to the village, they spend some time with their offspring and get back after giving to their kids what little money they got out of the sale of toddy or vegetables. One such *buddadu* (old man) from *chippa* field used to buy sandalballus and apply the paste to the girls who dance in groups

(సందాలాటలు) “Alas, he will not be seen again” sighed the maidens, on hearing about the sad demise of *buddadu*.



From hill to hill I went in search of water,

(కొండకొండలు తిరిగినగాని - కుండకడుగా నీల్లేలేదోయా)

But failed to fetch a pail of water fresh;

From rock to rock I went in search of water; (రాతిచలమ నీళ్ళకోసం)

But not a copper vessel of water I got; (రాగిచెంబులొడ్డినామోయా)

Bhimavaram Jangam came begging for alms,

(భీమవరపు జంగమయ్య - బిచ్చమడగ బచ్చెమడగ)

But no alms, no curry, save rice to give him;

(బిచ్చములేదు బచ్చెములేదు - పట్టికూడు భోజనాలుయా)

A sudden day-break, the young Jangam woke up,

(బళ్లుబళ్లున తెల్లవార - బాల జంగము సంకుబట్టెయా)

He picked up his conch and began to blow it,

When dawn had set in and it was still dark,

(చిమ్ము చిమ్మునచీకటాయె - చిన్నజంగము సంకుపట్టె)

The Jangam boy began to blow his conch;

For breakfast-sake the Jangam was on streets,

(చలిదికో జంగమయ్య - పట్టినాడు సంకుగంటయా)

The sun had set in and he lighted the hearth,

(పొద్దువోయో జంగమయ్య - పొయ్యిలోన మంటబెట్టె)

When all at once he saw a charming lady,

(నూనెకొప్పుల పొన్నచిలుక - నూతినీళ్లు ముంచబోగ)

And soon he was caught by her furtive looks,

(తలపాగల జంగమయ్య - తగులుకున్నడు నూటొక్క సేపోయా)

The hill-folk rarely drink raw water any where outside. They carry under their armpits a couple of dried bottle-gourd shells –containing one gruel and the other water. As the gruel in the shell becomes less they fill it with water. After a days search for twigs and tubers, lady felt exhausted, she scarcely finds any water left to wash the gruel-pot and quench thirst with the washed water. After his begging rounds, the jangam cooks his food, feels it tasteless and goes about in search of a curry. At sun set, this turbaned *jangamaiah* and the woman with oil silk hair style (నూనెకొప్పుల పొన్న చిలుక) set out to the well to fetch the water. They meet and could not resist the temptation of indulging in “one hundred and one” sexual orgies.

Birds put their beaks in oil glands called *poosari kunte* and draw oil out. They apply the oil to their feathers shining in the sun. The fashionable woman in the song applies oil to her hair and twists it into a lovely bun and so she is called “a *beautiful* parrot with an oily bun.” The beauty of the expression lies in its poetry as well as in the poetic words put so sweetly together. In nature, it is the male bird which resorts to all kinds of styles and fashions to woo the female. Among humans, however, it is otherwise. Make-up is woman’s birth right indeed.

Pulikantha Samabaiah was the mutthadar of Kutrawada. He was a leading participant in the famous Rampa mutiny. Alliances did take place once between some jangams and Konda redds.



Be she housewife or be she a spinster – her character is suspected, if a woman goes out on work. If she takes a companion, the companion is suspected to be spoiling her. If kith and kin are to accompany her, how can the woman pay attention to her work while giving due respect to the kin?

If the person who accompanies her is her husband's younger brother, he has to be shown greater respect. The women think with in her that the fellow is showing signs of impudence, while so young.

She should give due respect to her husband's

(బట్టలన్ని బయటవేయగ - బాలమరిది వెంటవచ్చె)

Younger brother, but he was niggardly,

(చిన్న మరిది వెంటబోయి - చీరలకు గుంజబోగ)

A load of faggots I carry on my head, (చీరల చినుకుదలిగి - చిన్నమరిది చిన్నబోయె)

I have to cross the river and reach the bank;

(ఎత్తుబాల కర్రలమోపో - ఎగవాగున కర్రలున్నవా)

If I go to the other side to bring the fuel;

My brainless, imbecile husband suspects me;

(ఎరినేను కర్రలకు పోగా - ఎరిమొగుడు నాకే నమ్మడా)

Let him follow me if he doubts my fidelity. (నమ్మకుంటే - నావెంట రావోయా)

In the above song the grumbling husband must have got a shock at the snub in the woman's challenge. Still her "friendships" cannot be ignored.

Leave children at home and to Gudem come,

(గుప్పపిట్ట గూటికి వేసి - గూడెములో వెళ్లుడన్నా)

We shall go to the Gudem fair go, my dear,

Unnoticed by others come and join me,

(గూడెములో సంతకు వెళ్లో - గుట్టుచల్లగాడుక రావో)

We shall go to the Madem fair go,

(మాడెము సంతకువెళ్ళో - మాటచక్కగాడుక రావో)

Do you rember words while collecting fire wood

(కర్రలకువెళ్ళినపుడు - కలుసుకున్న మాటలున్నవా)

But I tell you, don't outrage me on the way.

(వెంటవస్తే వచ్చిరిగాని - వెళ్లకిలపడుకున్నరా)

Outings at the fairs encourage newer styles.

How did you get this red jacket, young women?

"I brought it in the Eleswaram fair, why doubt?

(ఎర్ర రైక లెక్కటివమ్మా - ఏలేశ్వరం సంతలకాటివి)

"But what about this green jacket you wear?" (పచ్చరైక లెక్కటివమ్మా)

"I bought it in Pithapuram big fair." (పితాపురం సంతలకాటివి)

Suitors swarm round her.

Roadside Romeos go round her.

That raucous-throated black-beads merchant,

(నయ్యకాసో నల్లటివాడు - నల్లపూసల బేరగాడోయా)

Again and again looks at me amorously,

Behold that red-skinned skeleton-like young man,

He stares at me as if he would devour me;

How parrot-like that lovely young man speaks!

Who's that young man on the river bank (ఏటిగట్టునెవ్వడవు)

That looks so glamouous with his red clothes? (ఎర్రపంచె దోవదులోయా)

Who's that young man standing on the bund, (పాటిగట్టు నెవ్వడవో)

That wears a short dhoti and a small towel? (పొట్టిపంచె దోవదులోయా)

Thus the options are many, with the gramophone people, photographers, lorry drivers, coupe clerks, the unemployed, the petty vendors and the touts who introduce them to her. New suitors go on bringing new presents to woo her.

O hemp-flower Lachumayya below the hill (కొండకింద లచ్చుమయ్య - గోగిపూవు)

Went to the fair; (సంతకు జోగిడి - గోగిపూవు)

Has brought nose rings hemp flower

(నత్తులు తెచ్చిడి - గోగిపూవు - పెట్టుకోమన్నాడు గోగిపూవు)

He brought them and kept in the wooden box, (పెట్టెలో వేసిడి - గోగిపూవు)

(చచ్చిన నయ్యమే - గోగిపూవు)

“Is it not better if he be dead,” thinks she, “when he cannot get her any more presents? This fellow is of no use” and another man, another affair, another gift. That is life!

Men excel in these games and for some of them it is income.
Clapping requires two hands. So goes the man, so the woman; thus goes
the world!

I asked Pappalabulli to come (పప్పులబుల్లికి రమ్మంతినోయా)

I bid her bring a turban and a dhoti, (పంచతలగుడ్డ తెమ్మంతినో)

I asked Siribalabulli to bring me (సిరిబలబుల్లికి రమ్మంతినోయా)

A turban which is as long as sari: (చీరతలగుడ్డ తెమ్మంతినో)

Behind the wattle fence asked her to bring a basket of jaggery

(తక్కెడ బెల్లం తెమ్మంతినోయా - తడకచాటుకు రమ్మంతినో)

The hunger for sex cannot be quenched easily. Each is conscious
of his or her advantage. Expressions and grimaces act like feelers. When
the feelers tell that the time is ripe, one of them make a move first not of
course losing their advantages. This hides and seeks leads to the fair
where the greedy suitor pleases the woman with a timely gift.

You asked me to come and meet you at the well, (నూతిదాక రమ్మంటివి)

But you haven't cared to bring me scented oil; (నూనె కడుగ లేదంటివి)

You asked me to come and meet you at the gorge, (ప్రాయదారికి రమ్మంటివి)

But failed to bring for me a comb, (పన్నెకడుగ లేదంటివి)

You tempted me to come and meet you at the stream, (అల్లదారికి రమ్మంటివి)

But minded not to bring a mirror for me; (అద్దానికడుగ లేదంతివోయా)

Dont rubme with twigs (రోడ్లవేసిరాయకు బావ)

But not e'en a rupee you brought for me; (రూపాయకడుగ లేదంటివి)

You gave me only a tobacco leaf, (ఇచ్చినావు ఇంతపొగాకు)

Dragged me to the bush (తీసినావు తిత్తిరిడొంకకా)

Not e'en a single copper coin you gave me, (రాగుడబ్బులివ్వలేవు)

Neither capable of thinning sex (రంకుదెంగులు దెంగలేవు)

One fourth of a rupee you couldn't give me, (పావలడబ్బులు ఇవ్వలేవు)

Not capable thinning pleasure in the sex (పట్టి పట్టి దెంగలేవోయా)

While women longing as above, men do not lag behind

If the housewife dies in the flames of podu (కయ్యతోనో కాలిన కొరువ)

Bake and fry flesh with ghee and spices pungent, (కయ్యల్లో కాలిపోతే)

We couples young eat them to our hearts content, (నెయ్యితోనో తాలింపులు)

feast to the paramouses with green dal and rice.

But widows, they were served with tasteless bare rice.

(ముసిరిగ పెసరపప్పు-ముండలకు వడ్లకూడోయా)

It is said that the women face the test of fire while their men feel a sense of relief. While the hill side trees burn and slash, if a woman succumbs to such a fire, her man may go for illicit pleasures with another woman of his choosing. The popular saying is that then “a man may go to marry another woman, while his wife elopes with a different man.”

(పెళ్ళి ఒకపక్కజరుగుతుంటే పెళ్ళాం పెడపక్కన పారిపోయిందట)

Plough man, plough deep and straight and plough again,

(దుక్కిదున్నో దక్కం పడలు - మళ్ళాక సాలో మళ్ళా పట్టోయా)

Don't stop, repeat but now and then less deep; (మళ్ళాకసారో మళ్ళాపట్టో)

Plough, puddle, furrow the land well, (మరివేరో తేలదున్నోయా)

The seed that's sown is heroic maize, the best, (విత్తినది వీరజొన్న)

But the crop that is reaped is milk-white breast, (పండినది పాలజొన్న)

While reaping the crop a leaf blade of maize (జోగు జోగు జొన్నకోయ)

Broke the chest in twain (రొమ్ము రెండు బద్దలాయినా)

Even so, their lust is not abated.

A black-horned deer comes and starts grazing here for some time and there for some time. “Play we must, sing we must, rejoice must we!”

As their passions still roused,

A black horned Sambhar came (ఓ... కరికొమ్ముల కనుజువచ్చి)

And grazed him here and there: (ఇందుమేయ అందుమేయ)

“Let us sing and let us dance, (ఆడవాలె పాడవాలె వేడుకలు సేయవాలెయా)

Let us immerse in festive joy”

Some random thoughts start in the unconscious, spring out, take shape and go back, merging in the unconscious. The tribes give shape to such thoughts in their poetic compositions and these compositions go beyond the words. Therefore they are neither fully intelligible nor fully unintelligible. They go mystic in the minds of the listeners. This vagueness reaches its acme in the tribal songs which abound in irony and indirect appeal to the persons concerned, thus adding some literary beauty to the songs.

The offspring, born to the pair who enters into sex in perverted and illegitimate aberrations, remain uncared for, as if they are orphans, in the society. Just as there are no clouds in the sky after the rain, there are no traces of the man and woman, who have given birth to these offspring. The rain-water poured down from the clouds should be caught and preserved in an earthen pot or better, a pot carved out of stone. Or else, it engulfs the world's fate.

Some creative and fragrant fancies of the subconscious-self often burst forth as humming tunes from time to time and they are similar to the roaring and the leaping waves of the ocean dashing against the shore with a sing-song tone. In the rhymes nonsense on such occasions, sounds predominate over sense. In such songs there does exist feeling and this feeling is that of irrationality, fickleness, instability and despair.

In such cases, the semantic changes of the words go scattered in various different directions giving birth to a variety of over tones and undertones. There are a variety of voice-tones too, which contain rhyme and rhythm in their entire splendor. All these tones put together enable the feeling and experience expressed in twice or three – fold intensity.

We convey our thoughts to persons over a distance through gestures and shouts. So also, in the tribal songs, the power of broadcasting a message is intensified and made luminous by the literary devices like repetition, onomatopoeia and suggestion, bringing forth the shades of meaning to the forefront.

When one's mind suddenly becomes blank, experiencing nothingness or when one is in the midst of near and dear getting into a state of unspeakable happiness, one's thoughts tend to become vague, freed from rhyme and reason.

Children speak their language and lovers theirs. Such gossip is beyond words.

Children:

(కురువు కురువు వాన - కూటి ముద్దజత్తుం

ఎండకాయ ఎండకాయ - ఎరిసోతో

తొండలు మెండలు - పాలివట్టె
చారాకల్లు చట్టెడి - పిట్ట ముక్క పిడికెడి
ఎద్దుకొమ్మున మద్దెలకొడితె - వెనక్కిపట్టే డూ డూ
అద్దరి కొండనరికించు - అలుచందలు పండించు
అద్దరికొండ అలమలారా - ఆడుడోయి పాడుడోయి)

(ఈబీయమాబీయం - కలబోసినాదో
కూడొండి పప్పొండి - కుదుటబెట్టిందో
ఇల్లెక్కి కుక్కొచ్చి - కూడుముట్టిందో
కూడుముట్టినచోట - కుంకమైలెగచు
మల్లెలకు మాతాత - కోటకట్టాడో
కోటలో పుట్టింది - చేరింత పూపు
చేరింత పువ్వుకు - చెరువు తోలించు)

There is a taunt in the song to the effect that the food is fit for only monkeys.

It is said that a wife unbridled is a farm devoid of fence.

(అదుపులేని ఆలి, వెలుగు లేని చేను)

The kanne bird wags its tail constantly. If a fickle woman of that type gets holiday from her in-laws, she dances free like the kanne bird and the above song pokes fun at such a woman.

(ఆడుఆడు కన్నెపిట్ట - కడుపు డివ్వు డివ్వు
అత్తమామ సంతకెడితె - చిరలు టివ్వు టివ్వు
బొక్కెత్తెర కన్నెపిట్ట - బోనమిచ్చెనా
కాలిపోయిన బోనం - కడుపు డివ్వు డివ్వు)

The word kaagunda in the song is a copper vessel in which water for bath is heated.

Then follows a nonsensical rhyme, the aim of which is only to release some energy it is sung by a woman addressing her uncle:

She addresses him as the uncle who uses thin hook to fish in the river.

(ఓ... కర్రకొమ్ముల కనుజువచ్చి - ఇందుమేయ అందుమేయ

ఆడవాలె పాడవాలె వేడుకలు సేయవాలెయా

నల్లగొండల నడుమవేయ కనుజుకేసిడి కారకుడు

గురవచ్చె గురవచ్చె - గుండువంపు గురవచ్చె

గుండువంపు దొరకాయ - కాయతింటే ఏమిఫలం

పండుతింటే ఫలముంతాది - తినగ తినగ తీపులాట్టి

తీపికొక్కబాలుడుట్టె - బాలుడొంటిన బట్టలేదు

పాలెవాడు పారిపోగా - పంచిపెట్ట బాలలేదు

పాలెపు కొండలలోన - పడ్డదయ్య పాలవర్షం

కుండలు నిండ గురిసే - కురిసేవాన వెలిసెవాన

మన్నెమంతా చినుకుతగిలే - మట్టికుండలొడ్డుడన్న

రాజమంతా చినుకుతగిలే - రాగికుండలొడ్డుడన్న

ఆకసాన మేగెము లేదు - అగ్గినిప్పుల వానకురిసె

నింగినింత మేగెము లేదు - నీలి కెంపుల వానకురిసె

జాడినింత మేగెము లేదు - జగజెంపుల వానకురిసె)

Realism is blended with artistry in this song, which is typical of folk song.

(ఉసిరిక దొరలోన - పసిరిక పాములున్నావా

ఎక్కివెల్లి లెక్కపెట్టగ - ముప్పైఆరు తుమ్మెదాలోయా

తుమ్మెదాలు తూలినట్లు - తూలగాదుర బొంగరమా
ఆమదాలు అబ్బినట్లు - ఆడుగాదురా బొంగరమా
బొంగరాల సేకుదగిలి - బంగరాల బాలుడుట్టె
బాలుడొంటిన - బట్టలేదోయా
పాలనార విల్లుగట్టి - పారెపాముకు పారనెయ్యి
తూలెపాముకు - తునుకలెయ్యి
బద్దపేరు ఏమిపేరు - బద్దపేరు భద్రాచలం
మిట్టపేరు ఏమిపేరోయా - మిట్టపేరు మిర్తివాడ
అత్తపేరు ఆకుచిలుక - కొడుకుపేరు కోమలింగం
కూతురిపేరు గుబ్బలమ్మ)

The allegory bears reference to the desires which are like green snakes in tree branches.

Even as she admires the spinning top rotating like a bee, she has given birth to a boy, a wonder of wonders. The shouts to apprehend the culprit who runs away after the act, the turning of the spinning top like the buzzing wings of the bee and the very names of the sons and daughters are all symbolic.

(బాలలు లేకను బ్రమలు పడుతుందో - పిల్లలు లేకను ప్రేమపుట్టిందో
సూర్యుడు నీయంత సుఖమీయగలవ - చందురుడు నీవంటి చక్కదనమీయో
ఏరుదాటక ముందు గరిబిడొచ్చిందో - ఇసికదిబ్బలకాడ పుట్టెకుశలన్న
చేనిలో అన్నలకు చెప్ప సిగ్గోను - ఇంటిలో వదినలకు ఇక సిగ్గులొను
తల్లిదండ్రులకు తలవంపులుగాను - అప్పచెల్లెండ్రకు దెప్పడమగును
కుమ్మరి కుమ్మరి మండపము చేసో
పొయ్యిలో నిప్పుల్లో వేసో
ఉయ్యాల బాలుణ్ణి నిప్పుల వేసో
నీల సంద్రం వెళ్ళి నిలిచి జల్లిందో

పాల సంద్రం వెళ్ళి - పారజల్లిందో)

Else where, Kunti prays to the sun-God. Even as she prays, Kuselanna is born to her on the sand beds.

Growing interest in one another – leads to taking the initiative and the woman having to carry the burden of sin. This becomes a problem confronting the society and all such sins put together pile up in a heap.

(బందచేను తువ్వడాలు - బబ్బిరేలు విత్తనాలు

కొండచేను తువ్వడాలు - కొయ్యగూర విత్తనాలు

రావికింద రావడిచెక్క - రాజులకో నల్లమందు

కొట్టుకింద కొరుకుడుచెక్క - కోయలకు నల్లమందు)

Senses are fickle. Commissions and omissions of adolescence, incitement form companions, effects of upbringing, forced marriages and tales there of are the result of the fickle senses. There is however instances of an obedient daughter-in-law just married, getting subjected to severe harassment from her in-laws.

Unable to bear the torture of in-laws, (అత్తమామ మాటలకు - ఈతవేనం తేలిపోయె)

The newly wedded bride escaped into the hills,

When suddenly she heard the cry of a beast,

(ఈతనున్న పోతుమెకం - బూకుమని కేకవేసె)

A lion roared and threatened to swallow her, (నూతినున్న పోతుమెకం)

Hiding in the bush he roared to attack her, (నూకుతనని కేకవేసె)

The phantom sitting on the dead date tree, (కొట్టునున్నకొరివిదెయ్యం)

It cried as if it would tear her to pieces (కొరుకుతనని కేకవేసె)

The will-o-the wisp hovering over bushes, (తీగనున్న తిరుగుదెయ్యం)

Made a dreadful sound to swallow her (తిందునని కేకవేసె)

Vegetation gradually declines as one goes up-hill where the ground is covered with shrubs. These places are known as *venams*. Villages occur in the valleys below the hills, and as such if she has to pass a village, she has to pass through *venams*, flat table-land on the tops of hills. A venam is called so because it is the *vennu* or the back of the body of the hill.

The woman in our context is broken-hearted. Unable to live with the man she has wed, she is floating on the *venam*, when she is startled to hear a male voice calling out for her.

No, it is not a lion's roar I have heard, (పులికాద్ ఎలుగుకాద్ కో - కోడలమ్మ)

It is the cry of a shooter of small birds, (పూరిపిట్టల వేటగాడోయా)

He is the man who catches iguanas, (ఊరికెదురు కొండలోన)

On the high hill against the village here (ఉడుముల వేటగాడోయా)

The man who has been witness to the goings-on has approached her. He knows that she is going away from her house out of her own free will, unable to adjust with her husband or in-laws. She however detests any "row" in the open. There is still a lingering hope that her husband would somehow take her back by pressure or persuasion. When hope gives place to despair in her heart, the new man enters as a good samaritan to dispel the darkness of despair and help her to come out of the muddle. And says he to her:

Don't climb up the hill and look for my people, (మెట్టలెక్కి చూడకులేవో)

They have deserted me and are far off; (మేనవారు దూరమాయె)

Don't look for uncles standing on the mound, (కొండలెక్కి చూడకులేవో)
You have left them long back and they forgot you, (కన్నవారు దూరమాయె)
Don't go into the corner and search for men there, (గొందిదిక్కు చూడకులేవో)
There you will find the snub-nosed Somedu; (గొచ్చముక్కు సోమేడున్నడు)
Don't go to the back of the hill before you, (దొడ్డిదిక్కు చూడకులేవో)
For, you will find the idle Thotakura Bojjadu. (తోటకూర బొజ్జడున్నడు)

They should get out from these on-lookers and remain somewhere till angers are abated. So they decide to move away for a short time. It is no problem if a maid accompanies him. Who would receive him if he is seen eloping with a married woman? All in the neighbourhood might have eaten at her marriage-feast. So, no invitations for the man who elopes with the married woman. Forest therefore is the only refuge for the eloping couple. Then there is the problem of food in the forest.

In Kothapakala, (కొత్తపాకల సిర్లిపూవులు - జొండికుండన వండుకు దెంగిరా)
We shall cook siri flowers is broken piece of pot
Toddy from less yielding, neglected trees, (కొట్టుచెట్టు తీయనికల్లు)
We will be satisfied with (కొండ్రూరు కొనగందులా)

Shrubs in February are full with Sirli flower. This edible flower is cooked in dall in some discarded earthenware. Off-season, a palm tree yields a little toddy, which is enough for one or two. They do not add any wood-chips for intoxication nor do they boil it. Left so, it stays sweet. The leftover edible seeds of red gram in the field have now grown into plants due to the rains (కంది పొట్టు వర్షాలు) of March and they yield some food for the couple. They cook this red gram adding them to toddy for relish. With all these wild foods accompanying wild joys, they spend some time in anonymity. Then they return home and the man pays bridal

price to her in-laws and releases her from the previous bond. They then set up a home, a new home.....



During the Rajula festival, tribes play host to the forest spirits (konda Rajulu). They leave their girls who attain puberty in the forest, (అడవికిపాఠం) lest the spirits in the forest should invade their village taking advantage of the defilement and the evil there of. At the platform for festivities, there are few signs of any deity (excepting trees). Farming at a latter stage brought in its wake Bhoodevi chintalu, Samartha chintalu and village goddesses. Pothuraju is a deity who guards the village frontiers. Gangamma on the village outskirts is a deity who cools the pathways and protects people from chickenpox, small pox etc. Gangamma is welcomed in summer and vows are fulfilled before she is seen off. The festival is performed soon after the burnings of the hill-sides and it is called *boothula sambaram* or a festival of foul language. The farm operations that commence next have their influence on this festival.

After erecting a burnt log on the canal bank, they proclaim that the mango wood is exhausted. (మామిడికర్ర అయిపోయిందయ్యా) Now is the time to cut trees for podu. Gangamma is taken in procession. A clay pot, or in some places, a brass vessel (గరగ) symbolizes Gangamma. Heimendorf believed that this pot-practice was introduced by the *pallala* clan when they came to these parts. This festival is normally celebrated in the areas

where these people inhabit most. Traditionally some villages celebrate the Pothuraju festival, while others, the Gangamma festival.

Pothu festival calls for much devotion and many rituals leaving no scope for revelry or merry-making. But Gangamma festival is an occasion for all to assemble. When that is over, with rainy and winter seasons behind, it is only in the Sankranthi (Desavidi) month again or for the *pindi* (flom) festival that all assemble at the festival lodging. A farewell to Gangamma is also a farewell to all unfulfilled desires and passions. It is a belief that Gangamma does not get pregnant (పైచెంగు వేయదు), unless you abuse.

Youthhood is pleasure in these hard-working communities. Desires are multi-faceted. There may be some who go to any extent to fulfill their desires. They do not mind violating rules and bearing ignominy. While the festive rites help boost one's self confidence and sense of uprightness, they provide scope for the masses to express themselves, their likes and dislikes. Revelry unites all. Disparities are swept aside.

There is joy in giving artistic shape to one's thoughts and there is joy in receiving praise. However, the concepts of division of labour, institution of marriage, and other principles of daily life are not neglected even during this festive time. Yet, no one takes offence, thanks to the sense of understanding they display. If desire is nature's weapon, honour is the weapon of society. Desires are endless no doubt, words cannot describe their extent. Poetry sometimes gives shape to these formless and natural emotions. The loving reactions of those who receive these poetic passions and understand the beauty behind help abate many of our

worries. After seeing Gangamma off, they with relief raise their voices and sing:

Whether our village deity is appeased with (ఓ... మా ఊరి అమ్మవారికి)

The goats we sacrificed to her so far? (మందమేకలు చెల్లివోలేవో)

The number of he-buffallos we sacrificed?

(దురుసుగల అమ్మవారికి దున్నపోతులు చెల్లివో, లేవో)

Whether our steadfast goddess is satisfied with,

The giant oil lamps we arrange for her?

(తిరగముగల్ల అమ్మవారికి - తిలికెదీపము చెల్లివోలేవో)

The food we have propitiated with leaf-cups?

(కల్లుగొట్టాల అమ్మవారికి - కల్లుగొట్టాలు చెల్లివోలేవో)

Whether our mother goddess fond of toddy

Is not our mother goddess pleased with?

Whether our deity who likes the flour-lines drawn

(ముగ్గుముత్తేలమ్మవారికి - ముగ్గుముత్తేలు చెల్లివోలేవో)

Is satisfied with what all we have offered?

(ఘనమైన అమ్మవారికి - గండదీపము చెల్లివోలేవో)

Our goddess great likes much sandal-wood paste,

(గందపుండలమ్మవారికి - గందపుండలు చెల్లివోలేవో)

Feels happy with the colours-powder-lines drawn?

(మేలైన అమ్మవారికి - మేకపోతులు చెల్లివోలేవో)

Whether our powerful goddess is pleased with

(దురుసుగల్ల అమ్మవారికి - దున్నపోతులు చెల్లివోలేవో)

Is she applied with sufficient sandal wood paste?

The goats we have so far sacrificed for her?

Whether the mother goddess is content with

We shall sing and dance and display our joy;

(ఓ... ఆడవాలె పాడవాలె - వేడుకీలు సేయవాలె)

Bedecked with saris green our goddess started,

(పచ్చకోకలు కట్టుకొని - బయలుదేరిదమ్మవారు)

Wearing straight clothes she stood in the back,

(వెల్లకోకలు కట్టుకొని - వెనుకనిలిచిదమ్మవారు)

Kotakoppula Gangamma if comes, millets yield;

(కోటకొప్పుల గంగాలమ్మ - కొర్రలుపండితె నీవురమ్మీ)

Double queued Gangamma with maize yields,

(జోడుకొప్పుల గంగాలమ్మ - జొన్నలుపండితె నీవురమ్మీ)

Our people left the village crying loud; (ఊరువెళ్ళేదమ్మవారు - ఊరునొక్కకేకవేసె)

“Those who wished to go to the city far off,

(నగరివెళ్ళేదమ్మవారు - నగరినొక్కకేకవేసె)

Made a big cry in every village they touched;

(గూడువెళ్ళేదమ్మవారు - గూడునొక్క కేకవేసె)

Those who wished to go to the hamlets near,

Made a huge cry while passing through them,

Why Komara (virgin) Devi won't back to the hills go?

(కొండతేలు తేలుమనగ - కొండతేలదు కొమరదేవి)

They ask the godem to leave to float and imagine that she is not leaving. Then they say that the goddess refuses to go when requested.

We loaded the sacks with gallnuts dry, (కరకకాయగోనెలుకట్టి - తోలినాము తోటపల్లి)

And took them on carts to the market to sell,

But Thotapalli Challama Devi, you know,

(తోటపల్లి చెల్లమదేవి - ఆరుడ్రాముల సారాతాగి)

Played some mischief and got the deal cancelled. (అమ్మకుండ అడ్డుపడ్డదా)

The God is said to be a slave to his devotee. He is with him, laughs and plays with him even when let down by the latter. The Goddess here, however, swoons after drinking six drams of liquor and comes in the way of her devotees selling gallnuts which are carted to the market.

Gangamma is goddess encouraging obscene of advances,

(బూతులది గంగాలమ్మ)

Because she spoiled the young in many ways (పోతులకు పడదెంగిదా)

Enchanted by the charms of Gangamma, a certain king seemed to have tried to molest her. Then she cursed, it seems, that no beautiful woman should ever be born in the manyam. Then she gave away her beauty to the plains, before immolating her self. So she is a virgin turned into a goddess. Curiously enough, she is pampered with foul language and stick-dances.

It is again in another adage, there is a reference to the goddess as Komaradevi of twin buns of hair, fattened by festive food. She fells many men who are called he-buffaloes. The literal meaning of the line, “the he-buffaloes are dying away due to pestilence” is not important. But in these songs, the literal meaning is always secondary and the meaning in figures is the one intended.

Play on the pials of our kind village deity,

(అమ్మవారి అరుగులలోన - ఆడవాలె పాడవాలె)

Let us eat in leaf-plates and drink in leaf-cups;

(దొప్పతోడి భోజనాలు - దిప్పతోడి కట్టకల్లులా)

Fermented toddy we shall drink this night,

And spend our time in joy with new young girls,

(కట్టకల్లు తాగవాలె - కొత్త పిల్లపట్టవాలెయా)

We shall eat the food offered to the goddess, (ఓరెపుకూడు తినవాలె)

And sure, without a break, we do enjoy (ఊడకవాడక దెంగవాలెయా)

Look at the other side of the hill, man, (వీకటికొండన సిగ్గేలేదు)

We need no care, no caution to enjoy life; (అవతల కొండన లజ్జేలేదోయా)

The bright moon slides on through Tenegandi,

(తేనెగండి మోరులోన - తేలివచ్చె చందురూడా)

The moon-light on the Gandi is inciting; (గండిమీదకాయు వెన్నెల)

Behold our rivals who are lurking there, (పగవాడు కాయు వెన్నెలా)

To catch our young girls and with them escape: (పాపదాటు పండువెన్నెల)

In the sweet-mango garden if you fancy, (తియ్యమాటి గండిలోన)

The rival young men are the sweetest mates. (గయ్యూళిది ఆడపిల్లన్నా)

The vigour of the young leadership of Gangamma who is fully drunk and the rising moon, and the youth hood itself provokes everyone to have one's arrangements. Moon light sets them on to their plans. There are far too many dark vales in these dense woods. They are shaded by thick shrubs and creepers. The shameless mind reminisces some past pleasures in those dark bowers. The time when the moon shines on the hill-top is the time for the woman slipping off, crossing the village border. It is also the time when her lover lies in wait beyond the border. She stays silent when the lover catches her in the bower. Then she can be likened to a burglar, who keeps mum, when bitten by a scorpion. The lover is referred to as enemy because he tortures her and loots her chastity, by subjecting her to a kind of pleasant pain.

The boy-friends on the other side of the hill (అద్దరివలసన మిండచేను)
Are waiting like monkeys with bony ribs; (ఎండుడొక్కల బండచేనోయా)
You have worked hard, raised crop, cut it and heaped it,
(పండినపంట గండికిమోసి)
But foolishly you have lost it to monkeys. (బండలకు దెంగబెడితిరా)

Some people get hold of a woman and auction her for pea nuts.

A group of men some how did detain there,
A girl to sell her in auction, alas!
For a pittance of few rupees
Each is well-suited to the other one,

So we shall do their marriage and make them one,
(లాలికి లాలికి లాలిందాము - లక్కున కుదిరిందామోయా)
And build for them a hut and help them live.
(జోలికి జోలికి జోలిందాము - జోలాట పొందిందామోయా)

“Why should I go with the same old husband even on festive occasions?” (పండుగనాడు కూడా పాతమొగుడేనా) Similar is the case with some men about going with the same old wife. But they got old one.

Am I to live with this old, lean buttocked woman?
(పండుగ పారురాగ - పండుమక్కల బొట్టెదొరికిదా)
Even on a happy festive day like this?
Appease the child with a piece of jaggery, (పిల్లచేత బెల్లంపెట్టి)
Try to some how lie with her mother. (తల్లితోటి తంటాలుపడదరా)

Sometimes it may happen that he falls into the sad plight of not being sure of even the old woman.

(అద్దరికొండన గొడ్డుచచ్చె - దద్దుగమానున గద్దలు వాలివా)

They say that kites lie in wait for this beast, half dead and the old hag is no better than a log.

The arrow skillfully discharged from the bow (చిక్కువిల్లు చిల్లలకోల)

Went straight into the body of the bird (లాగివేయ లక్కుమన్నదా)

As skillfully the arrow was aimed at (జొకవిల్లుదడ్డకోల)

It got into the body of the bird: (లాగివేయ లక్కుమన్నదా)

The above two lines are suggestive of a mis-match in sex and the references to bow and arrows are made in meaningful similes.

Is he not that Bachalapanda? (పిల్లలను పెంచనివాడు - బండల్దెంగిన బచ్చల పండడా)

Who ignored to near the children?

The father and the son both on one hand, (తగ్గివారు తండ్రిద్దరు)

The father-in-law and the son-in-law both (మరిగెలవారు మామిద్దరు)

Both of them are skilled in the arts of archery; (మంచిమంచి విండ్లవారు)

On the other hand are well-versed in the art,

The batches two went to Bolakonda for hunting

(జోడువిండ్లు జోడించుకొని - బోలకొండ వేటకువెళ్ళి)

They saw a tiger in the Peepati track;

(పీపిడితొంకన పిల్లున్నాదో - విల్లుతేవో పిల్లికినేద్దాం)

Give me the bow and the arrow, my son, (విల్లుతేవో పిల్లినేద్దాం)

There is a boar in the hedge, shoot it down,

(గుంటుబారు పెట్టవాలె - గుండుకింద పందినేద్దాం)

Has the arrow gone into the ribs of the boar?

Haven't the pillets gone into the tiger's body?

(రవ్వలబారు పెట్టవాలె - రాతికింద కోడినేద్దాం)

Has the arrow missed and the tiger escaped?

Has the arrow been broken and the beast gone? (విల్లు విరిగిది పిల్లి పారిదా)

Let the catridge go we aren't much worried, (పోయి పిక్కుపోయిదిగాని)

It passed through twin trees (జోడు వెలమల నడుమపోయె)

They are not to be found in Edegaddi hill.

(ఎడెగడ్డి కొండలోన - జాడలేదు జవాబు లేదోయా)

The meanings behind this kind of going for hunt are clear indeed.

Instead of two friends of a team going for hunt, the device of father and son going or father-in-law and son-in-law going together is clearly a literary conceit. It is clear that the song is not all about just "hunting". It is better that the song confines itself to this much of meaning without much more obscenity. In some other songs, words are let loose without reason or rhyme giving rise to much foul play.

The handsome mango fruit with thick juice in,

(గొందికోటో, గున్నమామిడి - గుజ్జు గుజ్జో గున్నమామిడి)

Its very name, sweet-mango, no, sweet jelly

(దాని పేరో తియ్యమామిడి - తియ్యనిదో జన్నెలమామిడి)

The Gondikota of the song is a cornermost hamlet between Kaniwada and Gurtedu. The mango trees in Gondikota are soft and fleshy. The young beauty is compared to the young and handsome mango tree of Gondikota.

The mangoes that grow in wild forests do not have much pulp between the mango-stone and the peel, but the Gujjumamidi of Gondikota is soft, sweet and fleshy. It gets sweeter and sweeter as one chews it. It is said it is beautiful though a beautiful woman grows thinner. (చక్కనమ్మ చిక్కినా అందమే) Poetic excellences reach climax in this song.

Both of us, my dear love, are unmarried,(నీవు విడ్డి నేను విడ్డి) (విడ్డి - unmarried)

We shall go to the Korukonda fair (కోరుకొండ కొలువుకు పోదారా)

And sell the tamarind and take the money, (చింతలు చెల్లివి సంతకుపోదాం)

So come with me, I shall buy bangles for you. (చిట్టి చిట్టి గాజులు కొందారా)

Korukonda Narasimhudu, Pattiseema Veerabhadhrudu and Sri Ramachandra of Bhadrachalam are the three celestial guards to the agency region. The chariot festival of Korukonda is called 'Korukonda Koluva'. The month of its celebration is called 'Korukonda month' in the Rampa manyam. At Bhadrachalam, Sri Rama's wedding is celebrated. At Visakha, *gandha amavasya* is celebrated. At Simhachalam, the celebrations are when sandal paste is peeled from the idol of Narasimha Swamy.

The tamarinds in full bloom denote a bumper crop. It is the time when the merchants hesitate to advance money. There is a reason for it: When there is a bumper crop, it has to be brought to the down-hill and on to the market. The returns do not some times tally with even the transportation cost. Much crop demands more labour to shake off the fruit. Shares should be given for those who help. Ironically, therefore, the scantier the crop, the more benefits the tribes get. In other words, it is the basic economics of supply and demand which determines the price. If

the crop is scanty, it is easier to move it across hills, vales, hamlets and finally to the market. The case of mango crop is different. It is not for sale. It is staple food for the tribes. Even the stone is good for gruel which can be preserved for the proverbial rainy day.
(చింతలుకాస్తే చెడ్డకాలం - మామిళ్ళుకాస్తే మంచికాలం)

The lover is coaxing his love promising to take her to Korukonda fair where they buy lovely bangles for her to wear. He is so forward because he is flush with tamarind cash.
(చింతలు చెల్లివి సంతకుపోదాం - చిట్టి చిట్టి గాజులు కొందారా)

Do oil and honey ever mix, my dear? (తేనె తేనె నూనె నూనె)

So do you and I can't mix, I fear. (నీవు నీవె నేను నేనే)

The woman retorts stating that honey and oil never mix, but the man does not give up.

The mullika fruits are sweet to taste, the house wife of Mosapur

(ముల్లికలు మొగ్గలెత్తగ - మోసపూరో మగనాలు)

And the jarika fruits are very sour, (జారికలు జజ్జరిల్లగ - జాడిదేశం మగనాలు) like the housewife of Jadidesam

Mullika fruit which comes for harvest in March is sweet and delicious, but jarika is sour in taste.

Women on festival days get intoxicated fully, eyes betraying their lust, sing as follows.

In the pial of Kathula, people stand

(కత్తులవారి అరుగులమీద దొంతిమల్లెల బంతిచెట్టు)

Marygold and jasmine plants blossoming,

With whom we have enjoyed, the best of all

(మేముదెంగిన కత్తులయ్యా - బంతులేరి దొంతులుగట్టు)

A similar song which expresses the women's high-handedness

Come and live here as a matrilocal husband,

(అల్లుడివైతే గొల్లిగాడివయితే, రారా ఇల్లరికానికి)

Bring me the jacket and wash the undergarments, (జాకెటు తెచ్చి, లంగాలుతికి)

And fold them soon and give, to my mother (మడతలుపెట్టి మాయమ్మకిచ్చే)

Come, as illatam son-in-law

The expression “for the mother” is a clever retort among the tribes and it is a kind of banter to a quick wit.

Having worked the whole day in a red gram field, the woman tells the man “take the gram stalks yourself and put them in the hearth” He then retorts “you take them and make a screen to hide us, so that I can live with your daughter.” Then the woman pushes forward towards him with the stalks in hand threateningly. After all, it is a mock-threat. They like each other. The expression “your daughter” used by the man does not literally refer to her daughter and the expression “his mother” does not actually mean his mother. They are slang expressions referring to an obscence context. Considering their respective ages, “her daughter” and “his mother” cannot fit into the context, taken literally. It is shameless and a bit vulgar when she asks him to “give to mother” and again to order him to wash her “undergarments.” The Sanskrit poet, Magha, gives a formula “be shameless in sex, bidding good bye to all decorum.”(వైయాత్యం సురతేష్వివ) When they settle score in the open, this banter turns out to be a totally unbearable abuse. But in private, the

retorts have their own rugged beauty. In civilized societies, such banter could very well lead to bitter quarrels.

A mystic deer trespassed into our maize field,

(జొన్నచేలో ఓ యత్తా - మాయ లేళ్ళే పడ్డవో - జనకూర జనవిల్లో)

Have you observed it my dear mother-in-law?

(రోకలి విల్లుచేసి - రోలైన అమ్ముచేసి - మాయలేడినేయమ్మో)

The pestle as arrow, the mortar, as bow,

Apply, and pound the deer to pulp and paste.

However, no deers were grazing in the fields, nor is there a real request to carry a pestle and mortar. Literal meaning does not suit the context. The song is actually by an experienced and clever woman counseling an adolescent girl. Inserting the word “mother” and “mother-in-law” in the song is an attempt to side-track from the inner meaning. Bow, arrow, mortar and pestle are sex symbols. Instead of comparing a pestle to a man and a mortar to a woman, the song uses them in reverse roles. In the Telugu classic “Kala purnodayam” Sugatri and Saalina find pleasure in turning themselves into opposite sexes for a change.

Though she is my aunt’s daughter, (అత్తకూతురుచ్చల బాల)

I can’t go to her this night with empty hands. (ఉత్తకిచ్చిన నేనొల్లవా)

Sometimes bridal price is not paid when one marries an aunt’s daughter. One fellow says he will reject the niece though given free.

By lying with that clerk, a wretched man, (గుమస్తావాడితో గుడ్డుకున్న లంజ...)

And bought her costly bangles and became proud.

(రంకుచేసి బొంకుచేసి గాజులు కొన్నదో కిలింగిచ్చి సొంబేరి)

The clerk in the lines above is one who works in bamboo coups.

At the Nallesamala lanka like whores, (నల్లసామలంకలకాడ)

Behold those young unbounded peacocks gathering,

(నెమలిపిట్టలు నెలపుగొన్నవా)

Intending to ensnare my handsome husband

(నీటుగల్ల మాయనగాడు - మాటమీద మాటువేసిడా)

On the other hand, the wife delights to refer to her husband as connoisseur or as a man of style. At the same time, she abuses another woman, if she shows arrogance by addressing her as co-wife. If a woman puts on cheap finery and trails another's husband, she is derisively addressed as a pea-hen. If she does not like a woman whom she confronts, she mocks at her, calling her by the names, elephant-neck, horse-leg, squint-eye etc. Some times she may talk high of a woman who is after her husband.

Jokes between sister-in-law and her husband's younger brother, between a girl and her sister's husband, a son-in-law and his mother-in-law and wedding promises between one's daughter and sister's son regardless of age are all cultural traits common to tribes, rural and urban folk alike. The civilized people consider *mullikathanam* (marital relations between near and dear) as taboo. Rural folk have no such inhibitions. Even the tribes do accept illicit relationships between husband and his wife's sister and man with his younger brother's wife etc. Civilized societies preach restraint in some such relations. Unable to lift itself up from these carnal desires, humanity is still like the lotus which has yet to rise up from the mire. Even in the tribal societies, the

woman's role is secondary. Still they enjoy sometimes in relegating man to play second fiddle.

“Do you carry toddy in the shell of a gourd to quench the thirst of the lass?”

(చంకనున్న చిట్టిసిడగలు - గుబ్బిట్లాకు దప్పిసిడగలా)

Have you come to hunt beautiful birds here?

(పిడెముసాటు పిట్టవేటో - పిట్టకు వేసాచిన్నతమ్మ)

By using all your tricks with a bow and arrow? (విల్లులాగి చూసిఫూట)

If caught, hold fast her shoulders with all your might, (మిట్టవేసి దెబ్బతీతువా)

And her rotund breasts two and quenches your thirst.

There is a word *pidem* in the song which means bamboo bush; likewise *mitta* refers to the arrow used in hunting birds. Tribes hunt birds by standing behind a bamboo clump. A bow symbolizes a woman and the *mitta*, a teenager.

Don't cultivate thorny bushes thick; (ఇండిగల చేసుచేసి)

Don't go for an aged woman near at hand, (పండుదాని నమ్మకుండరా)

For that path's thorny and entails you in risk.

Indiga is a thin thorny bush. It is considered a sound advice not to cultivate a land of thorny bushes. It is like the good advice given to a young boy not to trust a old woman.

In the following lines there is a play on the word “swing”. They arrange a swing on festive occasions; sit on the swing and rock up and down. While swinging, they with words play on “swing”.

Lo, in the tamarind tope there hangs a swing,

(చింతమాను చివటలలోన - చిన్నబాల తూగుటుయ్యలా)

Some damsels dazzling are swinging on it;
One after another they are swinging joy-filled;

(వీరూగ వారూగ వెడ్డిగోవు - విరుగనూగ)

(కన్నెఘాటు కలగ నూగ)

The ideal place for such prattle is the way to the village fair/weekly market

You said we go along the road to the fair;

(సంతలదారి చెప్పంటివి - నీళ్ళదారిన కలుసుకొందమా)

Shall we have toddy, on the way, to drink?

Are there such drinks to intoxicate, my dear?

(బందుగుల చిన్నబుల్లి - మత్తు మత్తు పానాలున్నవా)

We walked a long distance and we are tired, (దార దార దప్పలాయె)

Not even water is there for us to drink, (దారినీళ్ళు దూరమాయివా)

I'm exhausted and I want arrack to drink.

(బందుగుల చిన్నబుల్లి - మత్తు మత్తు పానాలున్నవా)

Unless they have a doze of toddy, they cannot become quick-witted. While wandering on the hill side, they have something to wet their tongue but while on the road of carts they do not have even a drop of water. Life gets on dull. So, they ask for toddy and indulge in gossip.

Even with their friends, they engage in similar banter. The friends in this context are not mere friends but all those who are after a single woman. They are called *jagilellu*.

Grass does not grow in the path trampled by many

(మీరు మేము తిరిగేదారి - పచ్చగడ్డి మాడిపోయెదా)

-Song-

(అమ్మిబోర ఉమ్మగున్నది కో... కోడలమ్మా - బోర-రొమ్ము; ఉమ్మగ-వెచ్చగ)

ఉమ్మడిగింజలు - కమ్మగున్నవా

(అట్టెచూసి అమ్మికిలాగ - కొమ్ములుకోసిన గొర్రెకులాగయా - కొమ్ములుకోసిన గొర్రె: గుబ్బలులేని స్త్రీ)

ఎలుగుచర్మమో చర్మమోగాని - ఎంతగుంజన తెలుపేలేదు

సింగవరపు సంగువలోన తేలగుంజన తెలుపేలేదు.

ఎఱ్ఱటి చండ్లది మా వదిన - ఎందుకో గాని రమ్మన్నాదోయ్

వగలువగలువద్దు గుంటడ - వాగడీక వగ్గడీసిరా)

Bora breasts Vummaga “warm”

-Song-

(అట్టెచూసి అమ్మికిలాగ - కొమ్ములు కోసిన గొర్రెకులాగయా)

In the song, the sheep with cut horns under reference is a woman without bulging breasts.

She is caught after a long wait, but bad luck, she is without breasts.

Whether it's the skin of a wild boar, I didn't know;

(ఎలుగుచర్మమో చర్మమోగాని - ఎంతగుంజన తెలుపేలేదు)

It turns not white though washed again and again, (తేలగుంజన తెలుపేలేదు)

Between the streams of Singavarapu waters (భీమవరపు సంగువలోన)

Sanguva – the meeting place of two streams.

Amorous of me you, my young brother-in-law,

(ఎఱ్ఱటి చండ్లది మా వదిన - ఎందుకో గాని రమ్మన్నాదోయ్)

Don't be in a hurry to come to me;

(వగలువగలువద్దు గుంటడ - వాగడిక వగ్గడీసిరా)

Vagga – a big pit

There is a caution not to go far with eyes closed in lust, just because she called you.

These songs are full of poetry and humour apt to the occasion. They take the form of statements and riders.

The passionate lovers appreciate the gentle but striking tap on the back contained in the songs.

We are good in thought but by night we are thieves;

(మనసుకు మంచివారము - మాపటికి దొంగవారమా)

We are not magicians, we are not acrobats, (వీట్లంకాము విద్దెలంకాము)

But we are children young to make all happy; (వేడుకల బాలలము)

We are not priests, we are not mendicants, (జంగం కాదు జోగుకాదు)

But we are peer girls as twins and pairs; (జోటలుండే బాలలము)

We can sing, we can dance as skilled in all arts:

(ఆటమనదే పాటమనదే - అన్నివిద్యలుగల్గవారము)

We have to move quickly and go round and round,

(సపిరెలు తొక్కవాలె - చాపచుట్టు చుట్టువాలెయా)

Hand in hand with orderly foot-steps, (గుళ్ళచుట్టు చుట్టవాలె)

While singing, we dance and while dancing, sing. (గుంపెనలాడవాలె)

In the above song, they say “we are no street performers who dance for money.” So it is evident that the mind is clean but not one’s age. There should be no clash of interest between the individual’s zest for life and the overall interest of the society in safe-guarding good tradition.

Acknowledging this truth, the rural folk respect institutions. While often allowing the liberties of age, they try to restrain the mind. Old friends come close, new friendships result in matrimony. The ideals of the rural folk are neither too tall as the teak tree, nor are they pygmies either. Their ideals and their conscience are never far apart and they are like the shadows that fallow the self.

The civilized societies are much different in this aspect. They allow prostitution, curb the liberties of women. But the tribal communities are different. They use singing and dancing together as instruments for promoting equality between men and women.

The kingdom of Rampa once (రాజరాజ్యము రంపరాజ్యము)

The king when came and placed his hand, (రాజువచ్చి చేయి వేయ)

The people in the villages tattered. (రాజమంత తొనుకుతొనికె)

Ever since the kings started to lay hands on the tribal culture, stirring their values, there has been a tendency of the erosion of values in the tribal communities. It is but natural that the so-called uncivilized tribes are susceptible to the attractions, charm and comfort of the cultural civilizations. The cultured people from among the civilized take advantage of the tribes' interest in their culture and stoop low, encouraging them towards the commercial values of the moderners. Then finally it is only these outsiders who make a mountain out of a mole hill of the tribes' escapades. An analogy makes the point clear. The tribal culture is like a pot, not full to the brim. So much so, a little shaking of the pot results in the spilling of water. This spilling is caused among the tribes in their haste to catch up with the gingling fashions of the modern civilization. The foregoing song is an explanation of the

problem of erosion of tribal culture due to the kingdoms making inroads in to the tribal habitats.

In spite of these dilutions in culture as a result of the impact of the civilized communities, the tribes have their own revelry demonstrated in many kinds of charming dances. Sapari is one such dance-form, where the performers move in circles. Sapari is a corrupt form of Sabari. The Sapari dance resembles the flash floods and whirlpools of the river Sabari when it joins the Godavari.

There is another dance form Gummallu which is very gentle and friendly. In it the women join hands behind their backs, bend and move back and front and dance, exuding geniality around. When they thus join together, they look like the standing sugar-cane stalks tied together moving in the wind. The Gummallu is one of the most important folk dances in India. There are many types of Gummallu. In Sivaalu Gummallu, the women dance hysterically sitting and rising. In Jogu gummallu, they bend back and forth while dancing. In Chapa gummallu, they fold themselves resembling the folding of a mat. In Kota gummallu, they bend forward dignifiedly. In Theeya gummallu, the mat is opened up. Nandalata is another dance form.

In all these dances, a kind of drum called *dolu* is played. This drumming has own its variety and the different sounds they produced initiate the sense. They are; *Pananuku jamram*, *Pandica dandalu*, *thappithegaragalu*, *Pathatkota*, *Bharatam*, *boddu kinda bokka*, *debbala guntam*, *kasiri debbalu* etc.

The males in the festival of the goddess of earth
Play with clapping-sticks while swiftly moving

In a circle with anklet-bells on and singing

Men perform Kolatam and women Challa Kolatam during Bhoodevi festival. This festival is reminiscent of *itikala* festival of Visakha and the Holi of Telangana.

(చల్లకోలాట వేయవాలె కో... కోడలమ్మ - చల్లకలుపులు కలపవాలెయా)

The land and the crop on it is a combination similar to that of man and nature (purusha and prakruti). All the festivals of tribes are celebrations of this combination which leads to creativity. Therefore fun and frolic and festivities on such occasions have social sanctity. These revels impart harmony to the society. Song and play bring this harmony in beautiful currents and supply the needed ease and rhythm to life styles. The so called civilized people passed many a mile stone in their progress and have lost long since such harmony in their mental make-up. One wonders as to who has taught this harmony to the semi-naked tribes of the hilly regions.

What skillful hand designed the porcupine (అడవిలోన నేదులార)

With such lean, narrow, handsome hornet – waist

(నడుములెవ్వరుదిద్దిరో లేవోయా)

There is a word *nedhu* in the song, which refers to a species of the porcupine. It is a larger version of the bandicoot. It eats everything in the forest except the leaves of bitter gourd. So they sing that he, who carved the beautiful waist line of *nedhu*, has taught us also, the jungle-bread-eaters, as we are, to play our games. It implies that God has taught them this kind of original and natural life style.

And take your partner girl to rapturous heights;

(చెప్పిచెప్పి యీడవాలె - మప్పిమప్పి దెంగవాలెయా)

Let us sing, let us dance and be joyfull,

(ఆడవాలె పాడవాలె - వేడుకీలు సేయవాలెయా)

Throughout the day, engage yourself in the act,

(రోజురోజు తుళ్ళవాలె - ఒక్కరోజు దెంగవాలెయా)

By drinking and dancing in ecstasy,

(నులుపులది నూలిగడ్డ - వలపుతోడి వంగదీడ్దరా)

Pearl-like is the skin of one's faithful wife, (ముత్తైపుకాయ మగనాలికాయ)

But girls in their youth are hard nuts to crack. (తరైపుకాయ తగవుల కాయయా)

Nooligaddi in the above song is an edible tuber, hard to digest.
Water has to be poured off many times while boiling it.

Rain your hot kisses on her rosy cheeks,

(బుగ్గలేరి ముద్దవాలె- మూడుదంపులు దంపవాలెయా)

When a fruit is fully ripe or at least half-ripe, it tastes good; but unripe fruit is sour and bitter. An experienced grown up woman is as a pearl. But an unripe girl between sixteen and seventeen years of age is quarrel-some, and egoistic. She does not offer herself up in love to her husband. In experience, egoistic clash and fool hardiness make her proud.

Where a woman is still persisting to be stubborn, the man could be a rogue and unprincipled towards her.

I shall take your buttocks into my arms,

And plough your virgin land and sow my seeds,

In front of your men and in front of my men; (మీవారు మావారుండగానె)

I shall enjoy you and teach you a lesson; (మీదపడి దెంగితమ్మరియా)

“Weren’t you kicked and sent out from Kullikura Konda?

(కుల్లికూర డొంకలోన - కుల్లగొట్టి మల్లపంపిరా)

Haven’t you gone with that juiceless, tasteless mango?

The tails burnt the huts under the juiceless mango

(బక్కతొక్క మామిడి కింద - తోకలువచ్చి పాకలు కాల్చివా)

On such occasions, her friends ruminates and reminisced their past desires as under:

The charmless bride-groom bid me to follow him,

(దుక్కులమొహం పెండ్లికొడుకు దుక్కుల వెంటరమ్మన్నాడు)

The millet crop, on the road to the fair (సంతలదారి సామచేను)

Is ripe for harvest, for the young to reap;

(సామచేను పండింది మేలు - కదలగోవు పట్టింది మేలు)

The pounded rice is safe like milch cow,

(చెదిరిన బియ్యమే మేలు - చెదలగోవు పట్టిందిమేలు)

The old man tempted had attempted on a old women, (బుడ్డడికి బులుపురాగ)

(బుడ్డిమువ్వలూడదందిడా)

Marks of mating by kanujus were found in

(కాయకూర కట్టువలోన - కణుజు దెంగిన...)

The field in which, vegetables were raised every year

The bontha rice was brought home by the young lady,

(బొక్కు తెంచిన బొంతబియ్యం)

The meat of cat was brought by the young man, (పిచ్చుతెచ్చిన పిల్లి మాంసమో)

Both made a good meal for the simmering youth;

So we shall sing and dance and live in joy,
So we shall sing and dance for others joy.

The village priest is himself the village chief. But, alas, now his wife's name is on the tongue of every one and she becomes a butt of ridicule.

The tiger is symbol to the forest spirits. There is a reference in the above song to the priest's wife being in her menses. In this context, the tiger is referred to as a forest spirit. When the forest spirit touches the priest's wife, in her menses, festivities are to be postponed. There is no reference to the priest in the verse, but it is implied. A festival is never postponed, if any other woman is in her periods.

The naughty fellows however twist the rules even while respecting relationships:

Let us respect our young sisters-in-law,
(మరదలకు మన్నించాము - మక్కలకిందకి పొందించామోయా)

And those by courtesy we need not leave;

A naughty fellow addresses a housewife as elder sister in-law (Vadina) and praises her that he presumed as a newly wedded bride still. And he showers uncalled for mischievous praises on her and escapes by saying "I thought you who sat with the bride through out looked like one her".

(పెండ్లిపొడుగునా మీరురాగ - యుండుగాద వదినగార - పెండ్లికూతురనుకుంటిమా)

He says about another

"She slipped off with her mother while I love been with you"

(మియ్యతోటి నేనుండగ - మీయమ్మతోటి తప్పుకుపోతివా)

In these villages all are closely knit in kinship. As such, their language goes totally out of control when they are drunk.

These youngsters who came from a distance on visit are boastful of calling every one as their girl friends. One can wonder at their pride.

The village below the hill we bought them for saris,

To the girls of Kalarikota down the hill,

(కొండకింద కడారి కోట - కోకలిచ్చి మేమే కొన్నాం)

We gave them costly dresses and bought them;

The girls of Urumulakota Village

(ఊరికింద ఉరుములకోట - ఉమ్మలిచ్చి మనమే కొన్నాం)

We bought for a price and for good money,

The maidens of Guvvalakonda far off,

(గంతవెనుక గవ్వలకొండ - గవ్వలిచ్చి మనమే కొన్నాం)

We bought with meat and bones filled with much marrow,

(కొత్తది తాడేపల్లి - కోవలిచ్చి మనమే కొన్నాం)

There is a word *gavvalu* in the song which means “bones and flesh.”

Again they sing:

And the new young girl with Tadepalli meat;

Now place the pounder under the papal tree, (రావి కిందరోలువేసి)

And bring all millets there and come to me. (రావోయి చాన సామలుదంచనూ)

In the face of such assaults by women, men look miserable indeed.

The men of Tadepalli are like palm civets don't know singing dancing,
(తాడేపల్లిమగవారు - పదమెరుగని పండుపిల్లలా)

Their bellies are full, their buttocks round gourds,
(డివ్విడివ్వి గగ్గలవారు - డిప్పబుర్రల పిర్రలవారోయా)

Gagga "stomach"

They are like sounding breast-bells and dressed bulls,
(గనగన గంటలవారు - గంగిరెడ్డు పొలికలోయా)

And reapers without sickles and cooks without pots
(కత్తిలేని కోతలవారు - కడవలేని వంటలవారోయా)

This song is normally addressed to the deities. Applied to humans, it has a derogatory meaning. It refers to the men who suffer from life-long penury.

The son of Valamuri Reddy is neatly dressed,
(వాలు వాలు కోకలవారు - వాలమూరి రెడ్డికొడుకులా)

By name a big man but wears he a hunch back,
(పేరుకు పెద్దవాడవు - పెదవంపు ముడ్డివాడవా)

An elder in judgment to look at, ugly;
(తీర్పుకు పెద్దవాడవు - తీగవంపు ముడ్డివాడవా)

(పిల్లలను పెంచనివాడు - బండలుదెంగిన బచ్చలపండడా)

Jokes such as these on festive occasions are picturesque and they are fit for the cartoons of our newspapers. The tribes are so democratic in temper that they learn whatever moral there is in such experiences, even while enjoying the humour contained in them.

The women who sing the song as above must be adepts in romantic pranks and if a man earns praise from such demanding damsels, he is extraordinary indeed!

The young fellow adorning Adda flower can hold all the girls.

(అడ్డపూవు అందగాడు - అందరికీ తగ్గవాడురా)

The above line means that this fellow is handsome as the adda flower. He could draw to himself any number of young women and take them into his embrace.

Sandwiched between the hills in the deep, in the dark narrow gorges and vales and on the small islets beside the banks of canals, many trees like *mamidi*, *vegisa*, *bandaru*, *maddhi* and *neredu* grow tall as sentinels. They look as if they are seeking for sun light at that height. These trees are indeed awe-inspiring. Climbers like *gilla*, *adda* and *pippidi* embrace tightly the branches of these trees. They spread around to fasten four or five neighbouring trees together holding their tops tight. These creepers around and those trees in their embrace complete the scenery and provide a formidable canopy to the sylvan glory of the surroundings. The *adda* creepers climb up in plaits spreading thick greenery all around. Set among the green *adda* leaves, blooming snow-white flowers dressed in the pink-coloured leaf-buds of the first rains of the season, look splendid. The whole scene is like a dark beauty that has draped her head in a star-studded dark veil. The leaf-buds in the scene assume the colour of corals on the cheeks of a newly-wed bride who stands enraptured waiting for her lover's caress. There is splendour in the whole scene. It is scenery of green after the first rains of the season. It

reminds one of the domineering lustre of the emerging manhood on the face of a teen-ager.

The damsels Mangi Lakshmi look parrot-like,

(లచ్చిపిల్ల మంగిపిల్ల - అచ్చమైన రామచిలుకలా)

The maize crop now is ripe for cutting, (చింతకింద బొంతచేసు)

The parrots like a battalion have occupied, (చిలుకపిట్టలు రాపమాడివా)

My younger brother-in-law promised to come, (కన్నమరిది వత్తుడని)

Are you looking for him keeping eyes at the window hole?

(కణతబొట్ట కాసి పెట్టిదా)

“*Kanathabotta* “a window hole”

Men of all trades began to descend upon Addateegala of East Godavari district and resettled in the wet lands there. A washer woman approaching *Panduga basa* in the village Duchherti is addressed by a trader thus:

O washer-woman, O young, pretty woman, (చాకిత చాకిత ఓయి చాకిత!)

Don't you know your husband eats the stale food?

(చాకిత నీ మగడు - చలికూటివాడు)

“No, never, he is both a hunter and a hero.”

(చలికూటివాడు కాడు - పులికూటివాడు)

A tiger catches his prey and makes it fall down under him and then sucks warm blood from the victim's throat. As he lacks the jaws to chew the flesh and crush the bones, he uses his foreteeth to separate the meat from bone. Then he spends a couple of hours dressing the meat so that no bones could hurt his throat. Too lazy to repeat the exercise daily, he

stores the dressed meat and eats the stale meat for some days. Such a full meal suffices for a week. Hence there is the saying “It is tiger’s meal if lucky and a snake’s if not.” Snake’s meal means that a person should just live on air without any food. (దొరికితే పులాహారం - దొరక్కపోతే పామాహారం)

Evening at six is toddy time. In order not to be late they would set out early at *pulivela* (tiger-time)

Among these communities, even digging for tubers and fishing come under hunting. (దుంపల వేట) They call even toddy as food and anything that is taken for food from even a mole – hill is food. (పుట్టకూడు)

The trader in the above song made fun of the washerwoman’s husband who eats stale food like a tiger. Now, the washer woman retorts:

“My man does not have to eat left overs. He eats like a tiger in advance party. He may preserve his food and eat it afterwards like the tiger, but he is not the one who eats scraps of leftovers.”

Valmiki rarely enter places of worship. Generally, accompanying a munsab or mutthadar as his peon, he will be on the look out distinguishing the cropped fields from the uncropped. As soon as his master mingles with the crowd, the women confront him:

Why you have love young boy (దుండిగోసి దూరి ఘాట - ఏలవస్తవి ఘాట)

I have come to see life in bones,

The lean, sick, dying cattle on the roads,

(చచ్చిన బక్కలు - పాణపు బక్కలు చూడవస్తినయ్య)

Dragging their feet slowly towards the fair

He says, “Am here to count the cattle – the dead ones and the dying”. Shrewd enough to know his mission, the woman say:

The black bird left its nest and flew away, (ఎంట్రిత ఎగిరిపోయె - తుప్పతూలిపోయె)

The nest destroyed, its traces not to be seen;

The king has gone, so come, you his attendant,

(రారోయి బంట్లోత - రాజు తేలిపోయె)

Rise up, and come, and join these festive chores,

(లేలే లేల లేలమ్మారో - ఓలే లేల లేల)

Let us share these joys and merriments grand.

(లేల లేల లేలయ్యారో - ఓలే లేల లేల)

The king of all birds is *Vetangunji* (owl). *Bingiraju* or *Bhrungaraju* is the priest. *Tithrika* bird is the one who brings disaster into the hill regions. Next the bird *Entreetha* is a servant of Konda Raju (known as Kotwal in Hindi). This *Entreetha* drives away the other birds. Like the Valmiki, it is dark in complexion.

Now, in the song, the women address the Valmiki as *Entreetha* and say that the deer, he is looking for, has fled long since (*Entreetha* builds a bush among the horns of a deer). The women say that the bush is ruined. They remark “the women here are making your master to dance to their tunes. Rescue him, if you can, from their clutches and save his honour.”

Society may loosen its grip. Opportunities for romance may come within one’s reach. Still human body has its limits. The desires in the mind are unlimited. Somewhere in the sub-conscious regions of the mind, there is a vague desire of one body pinning for union with another body. This is a kind of thirst for lust never satiated. The pining of one

body for another often transcends bodies, still desiring union in some unknown regions of the mind.

Dear children of kith and kin, far and near,

(బందుగుల బాలలార - సాగినంత సంబరాలు)

Let us sing, let us dance and in joy live,

Pluck the gottu leaves; throw them in the Godavary,

(గొట్టియాకులు దూయవాలె - గోదారెనుక వేయవాలె)

Pluck karu leaves; throw them in the Kamajarenuka,

(కారుయాకుల దూయవాలె - కమజరెనుక వేయవాలె)

Use katta leaves and put rice in them for gods;

(కట్టెడాకులు వాడవాలె - కాడ ఓరెలు తప్పవాలెయా)

Pick up the mortar big and pound pumpkins,

(పిడికియాకులు వాడవాలె - పిరంగిదెబ్బలు తప్పవాలెయా)

Cut juvvi twigs and remove madj bark,

(గుంపెనరోలు గుమ్ముడురోలు - గుమ్మడిచక్కలు కమ్ముతరోలుయా)

(జువ్వికొమ్మలు జువ్వవాలె - మర్రియూడలు దిగవాలెయా)

The village sleeps after getting tired with singing and dancing. Not so the moon, who flies on in the sky through a few patches of clouds which are like floating loose cotton:

I see in you bright light and I enjoy it,

What whiteness save honey-birds, you see in me?

Move on; move on, O moon across the sky,

(ఓ... తేలు తేలు ఓ చందమామయా - నీతెలుపులు సూత్తును)

Your movement I gaze at and much enjoy:

What do you see in my whiteness, tell me?

(నా తెలుపో ఏమిటి సూత్తురు - నా తెలుపు, తేనేపిట్ట తెలుపులు)

“The whiteness in you is honey-bird whiteness.

Walk on, walk on, lovely queen of night.”

(నడువో నడువో ఓ చందమామయా - నీనడకలే సూత్తును)

I see your graceful gait with great delight:

(నానడకో ఏమిటి సూద్దురో నా నడక - నెమలిపిట్ట నడకలు)

What is there in my walk that pleases you?

(నడువో నడువో ఓ చందమామయా - నీనడకలే సూత్తును)

“Your walk is gentle like a peacock’s walk;”

(నానడకో ఏమిటి సూద్దురో నా నడక - నెమలిపిట్ట నడకలు)

Go on running O traveller of the sky,

(పారు పారు ఓ చందమామయా - నీ పరుగులె సూత్తును)

I see your grandeur while tearing through clouds

(నా పరుగు ఏమిటి సూద్దురో నా పరుగులు - పారుపిట్ట పరుగులు)

What do you see in my galloping speed?

(గుంకో గుంకో ఓ చందమామయా - నీగుంకరై సూత్తును)

You see the green birds flying in my running;

(నా గుంకరై ఏమిటి సూత్తురు నా గుంకర్లు - గువ్వపిట్ట గుంకర్లు)

Go down, O milk-white moon in the horizon,

I shall see and enjoy your dawning beauty;

What do you see in me, while I am sinking?

“You look like a dove that is grey in colour;”

Look at the sari woven in Tadepalli, (అంతటి తాణ్ణేపల్లి - అంటిపువ్వుల నేతకట్టు)

How silver-like it shines in the moon-light!

(వెన్నెల్లో తాణ్ణేపల్లి - వెండిసీలల నేతకట్టు)

We washed it well and wore the lengthy sari,

(ధూళితుడిచి కట్టినాము - దుర్గమంత తాణ్ణేపల్లి)

The green bordered sari shone in the moon-light.

(పచ్చగోడల తాణ్ణేపల్లి - వెన్నెల్లో వెలిగిపోయే)

