CHAPTER THREE

ODOLO, SHANGLAI LO AND OKRO-KOLU

3.1 ODOLO

Odolo consists of two varieties that can be categorized as Odolo and Do kochu lo. The first variety Odolo is the more common one today as the second variety is hardly known to the younger generation as the very practice is dying today. Odolo literally means songs of pleasantries whereas Do kochu lo literally means songs of choice. Here the phrase does not mean the choice of songs but it means the songs are used to choose someone or group for the purpose of dueling, as these songs are practically for dueling alone.

3.1.1 Odolo

The Memai are very fond of singing, and the songs form part of their daily life, that is in their social as well as cultural life. Therefore one can truly say that songs are ingrained in their life for all purposes. Composing of songs comes in different thematic genres. As far as the Odolo compositions are concerned, the two most common themes are ‘recapitulation of the past’ and ‘imagining of the present or future’. The composition of songs is based more on the life of a person or two or group and others. Often the past or the bygone days or era is relived in the form of those songs.

The older folks of the community often remind the younger generations that, in the past Odolo have sub-titles such as Vehu phizü and
Chihro-e chithu kayi liri nhopra. Under these sub-titles, the songs would have a common beginning but words change in the middle or concluding parts. But today these songs are hardly heard or sung and hardly even remembered and the unfortunate thing is that today’s generations hardly know any of these songs.

Today, new and different composed texts have come into the domain of this category of song. In the composition of this genre of folksong the composer is creative and innovative but often misses the warmth of the songs that the antiquated ones of this genre often generate. The theme of the composition of these songs could be contextual in many ways and the language is more colloquial and easily understood by the listeners. The tune is the same as old, the songs are well structured but today the singers seems to sing the songs in mere mechanical fashion, which differs from the ways the older generation singers use them. They would sing the songs with passion and conviction and the warmth are generated in the hearts of the listeners.

The types of songs that make up Odolo can be seen in the text that is provided as part of this research. The songs are presented in three text forms: The first is in the vernacular language Mao; the second in the English language, that is a line by line rendering of free translation and the third is the analysis of the text. This can be seen in the form of the following four songs of Odolo:
Oramai no Ojiphe Sopi-e
Oramai no ojiphe sopi-e (2)
Ojiphe hi kani koho bue (2)
Ho-e lobvü kani koho bue

He-e he-en

Kaini tisho, Hesha-a tishuo (2)
Ninhie lemai adai ko bvü-e (2)
Ihru kalai ilo kalai le (2)
Hi mocho lo ne leshi homoe (2)
Hi mocho lo a leshi kochue (2)
Ho-e lobvü Kaini Hesha-a

He-e he-en

Besa tisho Pfuz a tishu-o (2)
Ninhie lemai adai mocho-e (2)
Izho deni khronü khrana khro (2)
Hi mocho lo ole shi shu-e (2)
Ho-e lobvü Besa Chopfuza

He-e he-en

Athia tishuo Boni tishu-o (2)
Ninhie lemai adai leshi-e (2)
Izho deni propali prawe (2)
Kolai pfuthu ole shi shu-e (2)

Ho-e lobvü Athi-a Boni

He-e he-en

Nisa tishuo Heshaa tishu-o (2)

Ninhie lemai adai mochowe (2)

Izho deni ruhu li vu-e (2)

Okhuli so arali so-e (2)

Chakri pfuthu ole arishue (2)

Ho-e lobvü Nisa Hesha-a (2)

He-e he-en

Rahu koli ozhe azhule (2)

Rahu komo ozhe azhu hrae (2)

Ho-e lobvü ozhe azhu hrae (2)

He-e he-en

Ichi lomai tamara ni moe (2)

Marani moe mara tati le (2)

Ho-e lobvü mara tati le

He-e he-en

Olo bvü hi ohrü koso moe (2)

Hi mocho lo ole shi shu-e (2)
Ho-e lobvü ole shi shu-e

He-e he-en

Translation

God created the earth (2)

On earth there are the haves and the have nots (2)

Singers/Maidens there are the haves and the have nots

He-e he-en

Let it not be Kaini, let it not be Hesha-a (2)

The two of you how are you? (2)

When you were bachelor and maiden (2)

Thinking of that do you love it? (2)

Thinking of that I really love that (2)

Singers/Maidens Kaini Hesha-a

He-e he-en

Let it not be Besa, let it not be Pfuza (2)

The two of you what are you thinking? (2)

These days it is the month of ‘khronü khrana (spring)’ (2)

Thinking of it we really love it (2)

Singers/Maidens Besa and Chopfuza

He-e he-en

Let it not be Athia, let it not be Boni (2)
The two of you what do you love? (2)

These days lots of different flowers bloom (2)

Looking at it we really love it (2)

Singers/Maidens Athi-a and Boni

He-e he-en

Let it not be Nisa, let it not be Hesha-a (2)

The two of you what are you thinking? (2)

These days different birds have come (2)

Chirping in different sounds and different ways (2)

Hearing this makes you nostalgic (2)

Singers/Maidens Nisa and Hesha-a (2)

He-e he-en

If we are birds we will fly together (2)

We are not birds we can’t fly together (2)

Singers/Maidens we can’t fly together (2)

He-e he-en

Our female friends we don’t want to part (2)

Even if we don’t want to part we will be parting (2)

Singers/Maidens we will be parting

He-e he-en
Singers/Maidens life is not long (2)

Thinking of this we really love it (2)

Singers/Maidens we really love it

He-e he-en

**Analysis of the Text**

The first song is titled *Oramai no Ojiphe Sopi-e* which can be translated as ‘God Created the World’. This song is about a group of friends of whom, one of the friends recapitulate about the good times they had in their younger days, bringing back the good old memories of those times.

The Maos have strong faith in the existence of the Supreme God, they also believe in the divine creation or the creation of the Universe by God the Almighty. In good times as well as in bad times, the people are inclined to call on the Supreme God for thanksgiving, for supplication and for solace. Life is always simple and honest for the Mao people. There is nothing more than the simple truth of day to day living. Life for them is beautiful till times of trials and difficulties stares right in the face. This is the time when one ruminates of the good bygone days. And this is the time when the emotional feelings are best brought out in the folksong composition. This particular folksong *Oramai no Ojiphe Sopi-e* is a song composed by a woman from within a circle of singing friends. The song begins by calling on the Supreme God whom they trust for everything. The song says that the world was created by God and that everything in it is his, as these lines from the song amplify:
‘Ojiphe hi kani koho bue

Ho-e lobvü kani koho bue’

Translation

‘In this world there are the haves and the have nots

Singers, there are the haves and the have nots

The lines mean that whatever and whoever is in this world, is part of the creation of the Supreme God. The rich and the poor all alike are created by God and put into this world. Therefore there are the rich and the poor in this world.

The song continues by calling on the friends in twos. The first to be called out is Kaini and Hesha-a. They are asked how they are doing, if they ever recollect the past of the days when they were still bachelor or maiden. The sentence indicates that the friends are not young anymore and which means they are either married or have aged with the passage of time. The songster continues her query whether they recollect their maiden days and if they love those days, and for her she really loved their maiden days.

The next friends to be called into the song are Besa and Pfuza⁷⁶. The songster says let it not be either Besa or Pfuza but the two of them. What are you thinking, she questioned and says that these are the Khronü khrana, literally meaning the days of spring season. It is the most beautiful season of the year, where everything is so fresh and refreshing to the eyes and the...
human spirit. Thinking about it, it is so lovable, meaning that everything is so lovely, is what is said by the songster to her friends.

The songster calls upon her two other friends Athia and Boni. She asks them what they love and also tells them that different varieties of flower are blooming as it is the season of spring. Seeing the many blooming flowers makes them relive their younger maiden days and makes everything lovely.

The songster asks her two friends Nisa and Hesha-a, what they are thinking as it is the season of spring and birds of different hues are appearing and chirping merrily in different sounds. Hearing the birds chirping makes her remember the days of old and she is seized with nostalgia.

The most poignant moment in the song comes in the last three stanzas of the song. The songster continues:

‘Rahu koli ozhe azhule
Rahu komo ozhe azhu hrae’

Translation

‘If we are birds we would be on the same flight
But we are not birds and so we would not be on the same flight’.

Here the above lines can be understood through the use of a folk symbolism characterized by the bird. In most cases birds are hardly seen
flying alone. They fly in pairs or in a flock. Therefore it is in this reference that the songster laments that had the friends been birds they could be flying along on the same flight. But as they are human and not birds they could not be flying together, on the same flight, they have to chart out their own course of life for their own future. This also relates that their friendship too has to come to an end in the course of their life at some point of time.

The songster continues to lament that their female friends, though they do not want to part, must face the eventuality of parting. They will have to part as life has to go on the full course in their own terms, that is, to settle down, have a family and continue with their lives. Friendship cannot hold on together for life but family priorities and concerns must be taken care of at all costs. This is the implied message of the song.

The song is all about friendship of the younger days of a group of friends. The experience of life is brought out in the form of a song of a group of friends. It relates to their various experiences in their younger days and what emotional expression is articulated when they recollect those moments. The song concludes by saying that ‘Life is not long therefore one should love and cherish it, life is lovely and beautiful, thinking about it is lovelier’. One should really love the life that one had.

_Ikhru Apro-o_

_Ale kashi Ikhru apro-oi (2)_

_Adzü kappa ale kashi-oi (2)_
Mocho laiho mocho mo lai tie (2)
Ni mocho lo-o anhiedzü kro-e (2)
Ni mazhe li mazhe azhule (2)
Ni chovo li chovo azhule (2)
Ni tati shu-o ayia bushi-e (2)
Ni tati li ayia buni moe (2)
Ni kata ta ni kovu vule (2)
Ni tati shu-o ayia khulu-o (2)
Anhie akua kathe sü tuule (2)
Katthe kotuu-a anhie akua hrüle (2)
Katthe tthesü kosü ko mo-e (2)
Katthe thesü kanü ko mo-e (2)
Kahrü le no okre yi-o hrü-o (2)
Sübvü moli kohrü mu mo-e (2)
Ho-e lobvü kohrü mu mo-e
He-e he-en

Translation
My beloved bachelor brother (2)
The person I like, the person I love (2)
Do you still think or you stopped thinking (2)
I cried thinking about you (2)
If you are sad, I will be sad with you (2)
If you are happy, I will be happy with you (2)
You don’t leave, I will be lonely (2)
If you leave, I don’t want to stay (2)

I will go where you go, I will be where you will be (2)

You don’t leave, wait for me (2)

We will be together till death (2)

Even in death we will live together (2)

After death we will not know (2)

After death we will not see (2)

When you are alive live on good terms (2)

There is no point of living if not like that (2)

Ho-e singers/maidens, there is no point of living (2)

He-e he-en

**Analysis of the Text**

The second song is titled *Ikhru Apro-o* literally translated as ‘Bachelor Brother’. The song is about a bachelor who had left his beloved for another place. The woman laments for her man in this song.

One feature of this genre of Mao folksong is the love theme which most of the composers indulge in (if it is not a duel song). Many of these compositions are dedications to their loved ones or lovers or friends, living or dead. The engagement of emotional attachment is very personal in these songs that make them different from the other genres of Mao folksongs.
This song is about a man who leaves his lady love and goes away. The woman wants her man back to be with her, she uses all the calmly loving words to express her deepest feelings for she wants to be always together with him. The songster begins the song by calling on her man as ‘beloved bachelor brother’. The person whom she really loved, she misses him as he had left her and gone away from her. She expresses her thoughts and asks if he still thinks of her or he had stopped thinking about her. As for her she thinks about him often and breaks down and cries over and over again for him.

The songster’s continuous infatuation with the man she loves brings out the deepest emotional concern she has for the man who had left her. This is sung in her expression of love in the following lines:

‘Ni mazhe li mazhe azhule
Ni chovo li chovo azhule’

Translation

‘If you are sad and weary, I will be sad and weary likewise
If you are happy, I will be happy likewise

The sentences clearly indicate the emotional attachment the songster has for her man. She is concerned for his well being, she want to share his burden, his joy and sorrow, his good days as well as bad days wherever he might be. She wants to be there for him no matter what the situation is, to share with him everything that he goes through.
She asks him not to leave, for if he leaves she would be lonely and if he leaves she will not want to stay either. She says that she would go wherever he goes and be wherever he will be. Therefore she pleads with him to stay, but if he has to go, then to wait for her so that she could be where he would be. She pledges that they will be together until separated by death.

The Maos believe in life after death or lifeafter. Life on earth is the first life that is lived and when the body undergoes a physical death the spirit gets separated from the body and travels to the land of the dead or world of the spirit. There in the land of the dead, life begins afresh for a second time. Death will bring to an end the first life which is the earthly or temporal life. And once this is over and as one enters the second life or the lifeafter in the land of the dead, life begins anew once again.

In this song the songster continues by saying that life does not end in this earthly world, and expresses her wish to live with him even in the next life. It is at this stage that the songster reveals another aspect of her feelings in the song. Her longing for the man she love all through and the desperation that is overtaking her. She brings in into the song the theme of death. And now it is clear that the man she loves and longed to be with is dead and therefore her earnest wish is to be with him:

‘Katthe thesū kosū ko mo-e
Katthe thesū kanū ko mo-e’
Translation

‘One will not know after death
One will not see after death’

She is left alone in this world, and now that she is alone she wishes for his company and to join him in the next world, the land of the dead. Therefore she says ‘after death the dead will not know, nor will the dead see after death’. So it is pertinent to live a well-meaning life and on good terms with other people. The songster brings to an end the song with lines that indicates a life that may not have been well lived, so the songster wishes and emphasizes ‘a well-meaning life is worth living’, the absence of which would be futile.

Imai Hrü Hi

Nichi ikrumai (2) ikhru kalai le

Achilomai (2) ilo kalai le

Ho-e lobjü (2) ilo kalai le

He-e he-en

Ikhru kalai (2) ilo mokru-o

Ilo kalai (2) ikhru mokru-o

Ho-e lobjü (2) ikhru mokrule

He-e he-en

Khrulo hrü hi (2) ohrü koso mo-e
Hi mocholo (2) ole mazhe shue
Ho-e lobvü (2) ole mazhe shue
He-e he-en

Lopfu ni mo-e (2) lopfu tati le
Napfù ni mo-e (2) napfù tati le
Ho-e lobvü (2) napfù tatile
He-e he-en

Lopfu tili (2) oputto sa-a
Napfù tili (2) ozütto sa-a
Ho-e lobvü (2) ozütto sa-a
He-e he-en

Oputto no (2) apfu tto kule
Ozü tto no (2) apfù tto shale
Ho-e lobvü (2) apfù tto shale
He-e he-en

Lopfu tili (2) mai kata tahra
Napfù tili (2) mai kovu vu hra
Ho-e lobvü (2) mai kovu vu hra
He-e he-en
Lopfu tili (2) mahe momü le
Napfü tili (2) mahe itsü le
Ho-e lobvü (2) mahe itsü le
He-e he-en

Khrulo hrü hi (2) motuta ni mo-e
Motu ni mo-e (2) chilu no vu tie
Ho-e lobvü (2) chilu no vu tie
He-e he-en

Opropa ti (2) akrü tati-e
Pra ikri lo-a (2) mü ikri lowe
Ho-e lobvü (2) mü ikri lowe
He-e he-en

Imai hrü hi (2) the tati lisü
Hrithu lohro (2) the ta kochu ti-e
Ho-e lobvü (2) the ta kochu ti-e
He-e he-en

Hi mocho lo (2) ole mazhe shu-e (2)
Hi mocho lo (2) ole mazhe shu-e (2)
Ho-e lobvü (2) ole mazhe shu-e
He-e he-en
Translation

You bachelors (2) when you are still bachelors
We maidens (2) when we are still maidens
Ho-e singers/maidens (2) when we are still maidens
He-e he-en

When you are still bachelors (2) go along with maidens
When we are still maidens (2) go along with bachelors
Ho-e singers/maidens (2) will go along with bachelors
He-e he-e

Life of youth (2) is not a long life
When we think of this (2) we really feel sad
Ho-e singers/maidens (2) we really feel sad
He-e he-e

Even if we don’t want to be a married man (2) have to be a married man
Even if we don’t want to be a married woman (2) have to be a married woman
Ho-e singers/maidens (2) have to be a married woman
He-e he-en

When you are a married man (2) with your dear child
When you are a married woman (2) with your dear child
Ho-e singers/maidens (2) with your dear child
He-e he-en

The dear child (2) will call as daddy
The dear child (2) will call as mummy
Ho-e singers/maidens (2) will call as my mummy
He-e he-en

When you are a married man (2) can’t go where others go
When you are a married woman (2) can’t come where others come
Ho-e singers/maidens (2) can’t come where others come
He-e he-en

When you are a married man (2) will long and want
When you are a married woman (2) will want and become unforgettable
Ho-e singers/maidens (2) will want become unforgettable
He-e he-en

Life of youth (2) don’t want to let it pass
Don’t want to let it pass (2) but time has come
Ho-e singers/maidens (2) but time has come
He-e he-en

The flower (2) though it withers away
It blooms again (2) as it grows again
Analysis of the Text

The third song is about the daily routine of a man’s life. The title of the song, *Imai Hrü hi* meaning ‘Life of Man’ is self explanatory. We see a different form of song, the content of the song is dialogic in nature between males and females. They enquire about each other’s well being, and about the process of life they will undergo from phase to phase and thus sing out the song in the form of a turn-taking conversation between them.

The Maos believe that bachelor’s days are the best part of a man’s life. It is this time when one should enjoy life to the maximum and treasure it for the rest of one’s life. The best phase of a man’s life is his bachelor days, a time when everything is refreshing and beautiful. Once this phase is over, life
changes dramatically and is not the same anymore. The central idea of this song is this. In this it echoes many a universal sentiment found in examples of the kind the world over.

The song begins by calling on the male bachelors and the maidens and encourages them to mix and enjoy each others’ company. This is the only phase when they can go about mixing freely with each other (the Maos have some restrictive rituals in childhood days like ‘Ritual of Initiation’ and after bachelorhood comes family commitments) and thus call on the bachelors to mix and fraternize with the maidens and vice versa. The bachelorhood phase is not very long and transient and therefore when one thinks of it, it inspires some degree of sadness. The bachelor days are the best part of one’s life therefore nobody wants to let it go, therefore it is saddening when one thinks of one’s bachelor days.

A day will come when one has to let go of one’s bachelor days and maiden days. One has to get married and start a family. As a social requirement, there is no choice other than to marry. When a bachelor and a maiden is married they will have offspring, and they will have to take care of their dear young ones. The young ones will call him daddy and the young one will call her mummy. When the once bachelor and maiden are called daddy and mummy respectively by their toddlers, it would be in turn producing the ultimate joy in the life of the parents.
Once offspring become the man or the woman’s responsibility, movements are limited although the craving for travel and mobility becomes overwhelming. The song is also an exhortation to the young man and women to not let go of opportunities that comes their way because those are the very things which will constitute a treasure of memories for them when they are settled. The youthful age is one thing that nobody wants to part with; the beauty of youth is something that you cannot exchange for anything. It is priceless therefore nobody want to let it pass as the following lines in the song will attest;

‘Khrulo hrü hi motuta ni mo-e
Motu ni mo-e chilu no vu tie’

**Translation**

‘Youthful life you don’t want to let it pass
Don’t want to let it pass but time has come’

The bachelor days or maiden days, a time when that side of youthful exuberance comes with no baggage. The precious moments of youth becomes so priceless that people do not want to let them go but as time and age catch up one has to move on to the next phase of life and other responsibilities.

The bachelor days or maiden days are contrasted with that of flowers:

‘Opropa ti akrü tati-e’
The flower though it withers
Blooms again, as it grows again …
The life of man if it dies
Will not come to life again, it really dies’

The song relates that a flower withering but when the seasons revolve and come full circle again, it grows and blooms again. But a man’s life is different from that of a flower. For if a man dies that is the end of it, he does not grow and live again like that of a flower’s life cycle. So, if he dies once, that is the end of his life and he does not come back to life again.

Therefore it is sad that a bachelor or a maiden does not get a second chance to relive the life of a bachelor or a maiden for a second time. So it is important that one enjoys and treasure the days of bachelorette. Make the most of this stage of life, for this will not be repeated in this life again. So it is pertinent to say that bachelorette days are the best in one’s life and on this note the song conclude.

*Ikhrui Ilo Hrü*

*Ilo khrui ti mokru le ho mo-e*

*Ikhrui khrui ti tatu mokru-o*
Sübvü keli ole chovo-e
Ho-e lobvü ole chovo-e
He-e he-en

Nichi khrumai izho buwo nho-e
Ichi lomai ive le khru-e
Ho-e lobvü ive le khru-e
He-e he-en

Ive lekhru adai yi so-e
Ive lekhru opropa hra-e
Ho-e lobvü opropa hra-e
He-e he-en

Propa sü pfo athi yi pile
Propa sü pfo nichilo (yi) pile
Ho-e lobvü nichilo (yi) pile
He-e he-en

Sü sü pfolo ni itsü sole
Chithuni khro adai yi sowe
Ho-e lobvü adai yi sowe
He-e he-en
Mabvü kalai makhe kebu nhū
Sū sū kochu-e sūsū majimo-e
Ho-e lobvū sū sū majimo-e
He-e he-en

Chidu chiko kape tale sa
Pfuzū khro sū kape tati le
Ho-e lobvū kape tati le
He-e he-en

Sale khro sū odo shuti le
Kotu ruhu arali so-e
Ho-e lobvū arali so-e
He-e he-en

Sū sū cholu ochizho kochue
Sū theku sū onhi anole
Ho-e lobvū onhi anole
He-e he-en

Sūbvū keli adai mocho we
Ale kashi alle le buse
Ho-e lobvū alle le buse
He-e he-en
Pfuttonai sū inule bule
Inule bu kathe sū ttule
Ho-e lobvū kathe sū ttule
He-e he-en

Nittomai sū oshuli chita
Inu lemai yi mara ta nimo
Ho-e lobvū mara ta nimo
He-e he-en

Mara nimo-e mara ta tile
Hi mocholo-o ole chovo moe
Ho-e lobvū ole chovo moe
He-e he-en

Translation

Those maidens should we sit together or not
Those bachelors come and sit together
If it is so the heart is warm
Ho-e singers/maidens the heart is warm
He-e he-en

Your bachelor groups were you at home or in the field today
Our maiden group we went up to the forested jungle
Ho-e singers/maidens we went up to the forested jungle
Up in the forested jungle what did you do?
Up in the forested jungle we pluck flowers
Ho-e singers/maidens we pluck flowers

Those flowers to whom will you give?
Those flowers will be given to your maiden group
Ho-e singers/maidens will be given to your maiden group

We go roaming blowing the trumpet and the horn-trumpet
That is true that is not false
Ho-e singers/maidens that is not false

When will the summer season start?
The summer season will start in the month of Pfuzü
Ho-e singers/maidens summer season will start
In the month of Sale we will start the plantation

The cuckoo sings in different ways

Ho-e singers/maidens sing in different ways

Hearing that it is truly heartwarming

The next year proposal will start

Ho-e singers/maidens proposal will start

If it is like that what are you thinking?

My love one is in my heart

Ho-e singers/maidens is in my heart

The man will stay in the village

The man will stays in the village till death

Ho-e singers/maidens in the village till death

The woman goes to different stranger’s villages

Don’t want to part away from fellow villagers
Ho-e singers/maidens don’t want to part
He-e he-en

Have to part even if don’t want to
Thinking of it does not feel good
Ho-e singers/maidens do not feel good
He-e he-en

**Analysis of the Text**

The fourth song is titled *Ikhru Ilo Hrü*, which can be translated as ‘Life of Young Bachelorette’. In this song the young people discuss about the spring season and the summer time, what they do in those times and finally on the difference of the outcome of marriage for the male and female.

This song is based on the life of the youths, the kinds of life they lived and the day to day chores they are engaged in. The social life that is prevalent amongst the Maos of that era is the focus in the song. The lives the male and female youths spend in each other’s company bring out the intimate best of the desire and want in their lives. For the Maos life is always in a sequence, of one stage or phase leading to another. Even their youth days are in a string of sequence paved out to follow one event after the other. The world of the youth before their marriage is the best part of their life and this is one phase that due importance is accorded as it is the most happening phase of their life. This
phase of their life is cherished and treasured for life. This song is a sequence of event of the youthful life of the Maos before their marriage set in.

The best part of the youths’ life is spending time in the company of the opposite sex in their leisure. This particular song is in the form of a dialogic text, exchange of pleasantries and subject of conversation is in the form of the song. The song begins in the form of the male youths calling out to their female friends to ask if they have the time to be in one another’s company;

‘Ilo khrō ti mokru le ho mo-e
Ikhrō khrō ti tavu mokru-o
Sūvbū keli ole chovo-e …’

Translation

‘… maidens should we sit together or not
bachelors come and sit;
If it is said so, the heart will be warm …’

The very courtesy of the male friends calling out to their female friends seeking their time and company is to show the kind of respect and standing the Mao woman enjoy within the community. This is not undue respect but the respect the woman enjoys as sisters and mothers in the society. The male themselves respond to their own request to their female counterpart. This indicates the longing of the male to spend their time together with the female,
saying; “it will be heartwarming if it is positively responded like, bachelors come and sit together in our company”.

The dialogic form of turn-taking conversation in the song begins with the male asking their female friends to invite them to spend their time in each others’ company. This is followed by the females asking their male counterpart, what they did that day, in the following lines;

‘Nichi khrumai izho buwo nho-e
Ichi lomai ive le khru-e’

Translation

‘You bachelor group, today were you at home or in the field
Our maiden group we went to the up forested jungle’

The female group asks their male friends where they were on that day, at home or out in the field and at the same time affirms that their maiden friends were out to the up forested jungle. The dialogue continues with the inter-change of conversation between the two groups. The males ask the females what for were they out in the up forested jungle and to this the females replied that they were out into the up forested jungle to pluck flowers.

The males ask the females as to whom would they give the flowers? The females replied that they would give it to their friends, we will take and
keep it as your representation. This is by way of the females teasing the male friends.

Here in the next stanza the females enquire from their male counterparts as to what they do during the Chithuni month? Chithuni is the month when the Chithuni festival considered as the biggest and the most important of festivals for the Mao community is celebrated. It is a festival of thanksgiving for the bountiful harvest and also a blessing seeking festival in the coming agrarian cycle. The month of Chithuni is often filled with festivities and that youth of the community celebrate it with lots of feast and social get together, especially amongst the youths. During this month the males go from house to house collecting varieties of dishes and rice-beer each evening and bring it to the place of public gathering and the youths feast over it. In the course of making the collection of food and drinks they go blowing trumpets and thus enjoy themselves. This one reason why the male friends replied to their female friends saying that during the Chithuni month they go roaming blowing the makhe trumpet and the horn-trumpet and that is the truth.

The sequence of events is been unfolded one after the other. The friends make enquires of when the plantation season would set in, and in response someone said the plantation season would set in, in the month of Pfuzü. And by the month of Sale paddy plantation will be carried out. During this season the cuckoo bird would be heard singing in different ways, and hearing that is truly heartwarming. To the Maos the coming of the cuckoo
bird is an indication to the change of season and the harbinger of good summer.

The Maos generally practice three types of marriage namely; Love marriage, arrange marriage and love-arrange marriage. Here in the song the event of arranging marriages for the female is brought in. The female in retrospect to the marriage arrangement or proposal says;

‘Ale kashi alle le buse’

Translation

‘My love is in my heart’

The Maos practice the patrilineal form of marriage; that is the girls follow their husband and go to stay in their in-laws home after their marriage. There are girls who are married off to unknown person and far off land without considering the welfare of the girl. Therefore the above line is an indication of the girls longing to be considerate to them and arrange their marriage in consultation with them, arrange at least to someone who is known to them as ‘love is in one’s heart’ and marriage be considered based on love.

The female continues to relate the fact that man will stay in the village as is the tradition of the community. They will continue to stay in the village till death, meaning only death will separate them from their village. But that is not the case with the woman folk, they could be married off to man from
different stranger’s villages. They hate to part away from their fellow villagers but they have to even if they do not want, thinking of these circumstances makes them sad and forlorn. This infers that marriage is not always the best of event for all, it brings no joy but rather it brings pain and sadness.

Thus, the song from a dialogic text goes on to end with a sad soliloquy of pain and sadness in marriage, by the female character in the song.

3.2 Do Kochu Lo or Duel Song

The second category of Odolo is the Do Kochu lo which literally means ‘Songs of Choice’, the phrase does not mean the choice of songs but that songs are use to choose someone or group for the purpose of dueling. Therefore these songs are ‘Duel Songs’ for the purpose of dueling in the form of conversational exchange of pleasantries, insults or duels through songs in place of verbal debates and it is known as Kodo chu. Kodo chu is sung during agrarian works or on fishing trips but chiefly in the dormitory. These songs are usually sung in two groups or in the ratio of 1:1, 2:2 or 4:4 persons each on two sides. The uniqueness’ of Kodo chu is that, if group ‘A’ sing in appreciation of group ‘B’, group ‘B’ humbles themselves and more praise is heaped on group ‘A’. In the same manner if group ‘A’ sing in insulting or demeaning lyrics, then group ‘B’ would choose a more heated or intense lyrics to outdo the other group. In most times Duel Songs are used to flatter, cajole and tempt the others, even if the song is not true it is sung as though it is true
in order to create a congenial atmosphere which would further lead to the singer’s own well being.

The duel songs can be in the form of one line, or two lines, a stanza or a number of verses that would be the source for different types of message that is communicated to the hearer. There are other means of conveying a message through ululation, verbally conveying, hollers that spread messages in and outside the community or village but the difference is that folksong brings forth altogether a different form and a different expression, it is not just the melody or the rhyme, which are common feature for all songs but also the content of the lyrics that often than not gives us a message. Songs brings in the fascination to learn, unlike words that are heard and forgotten soon after. This is how folksongs play the role of the media to communicate messages across, in the Memai world in earlier times.

The duel songs are also not just songs but they are a medium that conveys messages in a different form. Exchanges through songs are surely more romantic then verbal communication. Often mild teasing of one another through songs develops into lovelorn exchanges between young man and woman. It is said that on most occasion love is never expressed in words but it is expressed best through a song. And that is what the Memai of the past did. Herein we see the folksongs as a medium of expression and exchange. This is a case where a song is used to express the innermost feeling of a person. The pain and the desire that one feels is thus best expressed through a song text.
There was a time when youngsters gather in maidens’ dormitories and do engaged in song singing sessions, this is in the form of singing duel between two groups, usually it is between the sexes and this is where and how folksong singing was practiced and preserved in the past. Often male bachelors sit on one side and the maidens on the other side. It is not speeches that take the form of communication but songs form the basis of communication. The song could be a single sentence, a stanza or a song of several stanzas. The thematic content of the songs will depend in accordance with the mood or preparedness of the group or the context or the setting. Often the male bachelors of one dormitory come to one of the girls’ dormitory. From the outside the male bachelors ask if they would be allowed to come in and this could be in the form of speech or a single sentence song. The girls from the inside would respond in the same manner in the form of speech or song. Once inside conversation start through speech or through a song from either of the groups.

The dormitory is the best place where songs play as the main catalyst for the boys to be with the girls in the girl’s dormitory. On their visitation the boys come prepared with songs to sing with the girls. And at other times there are song duels between the boys and the girls. This brings out the best of expression in the form of songs in the groups, their feelings for each other. Is it love, hate, like or dislike? The message is clearly communicated through the content of a song sung in the course of their meeting and not words of expression.
The starting part of song dueling session is cordial and in praise and often flattery of the other group. They would sing to please, in the same vain the other group too would sing in consonance with the theme of their counterpart. Often the singing session would end cordially and the bachelors go back to their dormitory to rest for the night. But at times all does not end in cordiality. The song singing sessions are often long and in due course flattery and flirtation becomes part of the long song singing duels. This is when the atmosphere inside the dormitory gets charged up and what started as a cordial singing becomes a game of heated debate and choicest of abuse, but all this in the form of singing and never in verbal speech. When this happens the night ends in acrimony for the two groups and the song exchanges are taken over to the next night or the next meeting of the groups. The next meeting would begin afresh in the least of tension of the previous meeting, but the debate or duels of the previous meeting often takes over and goes on and on till the debate is resolve or till one group gives in to the other.

Often there are not pre set lyrics in this form of singing, it is the spur of the moment to meet the demand of the situation, to retort or rebate the dueling opponent. It is in this form of singing that helps in preserving the tradition of singing folksong. The skill of the singer/s, the aptitude and the attitude is tested to the fullest. The singers’ verbal repertoire of rustic intelligence appears in its purest form in this song singing duels. This is something what William Wordsworth calls ‘spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings’.
The dueling songs of the Mao can be seen in the provided song texts that are likely to differ from one to another.

**Ikhru-Ilo Rashi**

*Chohro-e chitthu kayi liri nhopra*

*Nhopra lehi Khridzü no rashi hra koto nisü*

*Ikhru rashi ttho no mazhe*

*Iloa rashi ttho no khriedzü*

**Translation**

On the good summer morn we ventured to the country side

On the day we ventured out onto Khredzü mountain

The bachelor’s fruit was (spitefully) bitter

And the maiden’s fruit was tastily sour

**Analysis of the Text**

This prosaic of a song is a reflection of the kind of seasonal activity that is part of the life of the Mao community. Maos have two seasons; *Chaka* and *Chohro*. Spring and summer are clubbed together to form the wet season. Wet season is an activity filled season.

The song text above is a song that is normally sang by the females to their male counterpart to chide them if the things they do is not proper or badly done. The song also could be sang by the males chiding the females in the same manner as the females chiding the males. The words in the song can
be interchange and thus sung. The song is titled as *Ikhru-ilo Rashi* meaning ‘the Fruits of the Bachelors and Maidens’. It is a duel song about male and females venturing out into their workplace on a clear summer morning.

The earth is adorned with new life and it is on one such good and clear summer morn that unmarried youths ventured out on to the *Khredzü* Mountain. The song relates that on that day when they ventured out onto *Khredzü* to pluck and eat fruits, the bachelor’s fruit was *mazhe*, meaning spitefully bitter and the maiden’s fruit was *khriedzü* meaning tastily sour. The song can thus be construed that whatever the bachelors do was bad like the spitefully bitter taste of a fruit, whereas whatever the maidens do was proper and tastily sour in accordance with that beautiful clear summer day. The word *mazhe* is often associated with negativity and dislike whereas the word *khriedzü* could mean something tasteful and nice.

**Ni Phi Yi**

*Achi elo*

*Ni phi yi, ni phi-i to zii mo*

*Ni zhu yi, ni zhu-u to zii mo*

*Osa chikhe ena a-ho*

*Lota de Kochu no*

*To le jii achi elo/chi ekhru*

**Translation**

Fellow Maiden
You may have a beautiful leg, but you can’t eat your leg
You may have a beautiful face, but you can’t eat your face
Put on your sarong
And start doing your agrarian works.
Then only you can eat, fellow Maiden

Analysis of the Text

This song is titled *Ni Phi Yi* meaning ‘your good leg’. The song is a duel song sung by the males to their female counterpart. The Maos are basically an agrarian society and their life revolves around the agricultural cycle of the year. Their concept of life is to work, eat and live till the recent past. For them nothing was more important than the ability to work at all stages of their agricultural cycle and sustain their life. This song basically says exactly that.

The song tells beautiful maidens not to be lazy and the need to do their agrarian work. Beauty may be a good thing to possess, they may have a beautiful leg but that leg cannot be eaten nor will it sustain them. They may have a beautiful face but that beautiful face will not feed them for beauty is not a thing to be eaten but only to be admired. The males thus sing to all those beautiful lazy females that they should put on their sarong and do their agrarian works, for only work will help them with their livelihood and sustain them. Only if you will work can you also eat, and so one cannot be lazy fellow Maiden.
Maino Yire Yire

Maino yire yire ti pi-e
Ahru kani-u, avu kani-u
Avunho niho sheha le jii

Translation

When you are praised
You tend to over-do yourself
You turn and twist, which
Ultimately will throw you down
And you will break your nose

Analysis of the Text

There are duel songs that can be sang by both the male and the female. This song titled as Maino Yire Yire can be translated as ‘Other say it is Good’ is sung to any person irrespective of gender.

This particular song is sang to a person who does not know what he/she is doing and often act on what someone else says and often over-do. The more the person is heap with praise the more he/she gravitate on the praise without reasoning. And ultimately through his/her unreasoning act to over-do lead to his/her downfall. That is why the Mao maxim Onho she Kanha meaning ‘to break the nose’ is largely applicable to anyone who acts unreasoningly as presented in this duel song.
**Chanitto Kayipai**

_Eloro maka no niyi hi ne sii yire_

_Yire onhii kanhii-e sii_

_E-sii takhe piko ti ko so_

_Eloro totu-a siishi koku e-sii_

_E-sii nizhu ti yire_

_Anno ni tthu-e sii ni soku ti-o_

_Ti-o obe rujii ti rai jii_

**Translation**

From afar you look beautiful

But getting closer you look

Like a broad-head keg.

When you sit and pick the chips of wood

You look beautiful

But when you get up, your bum look like a

Broad base barn

**Analysis of the Text**

The song is titled as _Chanitto Kayipai_ meaning ‘the Good Lady’. This duel song is sung by the male to taunt at the female on their looks.

Here in this song the male sings to the females casting aspersion on their looks. The males sing to the females about their looks comparing them to different agricultural based articles depending on the posture whether sitting or
standing. If they females are seated the males sing to them as, ‘when seen from afar they look beautiful but as the draw closer they look like a Keg that is broad-headed’. If the females are seated they are taunted like ‘when you are seated you look beautiful, but the moment you get up your bum look like a Broad base barn’.

As one understand the females may not look like the items they are compared to in the song but it is just to taunt and provoke or belittle the females with the kind of song, like this one.

**Ilo Pai**

*Chanitto! Saba ahra lu-e sii*

*Asii onga no yire, nghii zii no yire*

*No zho ikhru-u alu moe sii*

*Asii zho ilo nghiila kadjii sii-a jii*

**Translation**

O girl! When you dress up,
You look beautiful and soothing to the eye,
Yet when you dislike a male friend
You become the big wide-eyed ugly girl.

**Analysis of the Text**

The song is titled as *Ilopai* meaning ‘bachelorette’. The song is sung by the males to taunt at the females.
The song is sung by the males to the females. This kind of duel song is particularly sang to females who adorn themselves to look beautiful and try to get the attention of the males. The males sing that when she likes a person she is beautiful with all the beautiful clothing. But the males knowing the intention of the females taunt them by calling the female as ‘the big wide-eyed ugly girl’.

This is one duel song which is sung to the girls to shame them at some point of time when they become enamoured with their male counterpart and try to ensnare them by dressing themselves up without being natural.

**Napfii Kochuti**

_Napfii kochuti attheshu-o da_  
_Nopfu kochu ti attheshu-o da_  
_Oda lopfii khru lopfu lu kohro khru, ekhai pfuva leshe_

**Translation**

Do not be envious of a lady’s marital status  
Do not be envious of a man’s marital status  
You who could not get married, come on let us be working mates this year

**Analysis of the Text**

The song is titled *Napfii Chuti* can be translated as ‘that married life’. The man asks his probably lady-love to remain so and not be enamoured by a woman’s married life or a man’s married life.
The duel song is thus sung by the man to the woman desirous of getting married and settling down to a family life. The man is not interested in getting married but is simply happy to continue to have a fun life with no responsibility. That is why the man asks the woman not to envy a person’s married life. And that is how the man tries to dissuade the maiden from getting married. The man thus persuades the woman by saying ‘you who could not get married, let us be working mates’. He encourages the unmarried people to continue to be in that status so that they could continue to be working mates even in the following year.

**Olo hi Soli-e**

Olo hi soli-e itsii hole mo

Olo hi soli-e mozho zii mo

Ziimo lokoso ochu kapemai lephro no jii e-mai

**Translation**

You will not lost your power of thinking, if you learned to sing

Nothing goes in waste, if you learned to sing

Man who sings and speaks are knowledgeable and broad minded

**Analysis of the Text**

This song encourages one to sing or rather encourages one to learn to sing. The song is titled as *Olo hi Soli-e* which literally means ‘If You Sing’. This song is sung in a dueling situation by either of the group or individual.
When a situation arises and in situation when one of the party are lost for words or are not able to conjure up a dueling verse this song is sang to ridicule the other group. The song gives the message that if you learn to sing, you will not lost anything but develop your power of thinking. Nothing goes in waste in learning to sing. People who learn to sing develops their singing repertoire as well as their ability to speak well, which means they become more knowledgeable and intellectually developed. People who sing well can speak well, their reasoning and wit develops thus making them knowledgeable and broad minded.

There are dueling songs interchanges between groups or individuals that goes on and on in a conversational form. Here is on such exchange between a group of male and a group of female;

Male;  
_Ilo atuze nizu ti-o sü monhü oda_  
_Ana onhü koki-i niru ti-o chipho tiku ji_  

**Translation**  
Maiden sister your face is not so ugly  
But when I get near, your bum is like a brewing basket

Female;  
_Apro doji-u ni khomai ti khomai tishu-o da_  
_Opa kalile ko-a shelo komole no khomai ti shu-o da_  

**Translation**  
My brother tricky one, don’t call your pestle a pestle
Before you pound it into even a single mortar

Exchange of feelings, pleasantries or insults or duels through songs in place of verbal conversation is known as Odolo, meaning ‘songs of pleasantries’.

The underlying message is that the boy is teasing the girl about her looks. And the girl rebukes the boy telling him that he is not man enough, as he has not been able to deflower even a single maiden. The kind of dueling can go on and on and it can become vulgar and abusive in every aspects of sexuality as well. The participant teases each other and looks to develop relationship between them. In the long run the acrimony does not remain so forever, and through this kind of harsh exchanges the youths get to know each other better, their likes and dislikes and at the same time develop their skills in song dueling and songs in general. It is said that on most occasion love is never expressed in words but it is expressed best through a song. And that is what the Memai of the past did. Herein we see the folksongs as a medium of expression.

3.3 SHANGAILO

3.3.1 Shangailo

These songs are based on war, acts of bravery and events which took place in the past. They also concern people, places and happenings or calamities caused by nature. Unlike the Lochu In the Shangailo folk song the
1st person character always remain hidden and the singer assumes the place of the 1st person.

These songs are sung on festive occasions. The lyrics of these songs may share common element with that of other songs but the tune employed is a completely different one. The tune of Shangailo does not have free flow in one octave. It rises and falls instantly. Not all singers can adapt to this particular genre of folksong, as it requires a high degree of expertise to render the songs with ease. Yet the literary context and contents are similar to that of the Lochu folksongs.

Here is a Shangailo folksong telling us about the war between two villages, but in reality it turned out to be an exchanged between a warrior and an unsuspecting victim;

**Isho-Izho Maina**

*Isho-izho maina rizho maina amai sori*

*Lu nho ko izho namai lu to bu ke kohu ni*

*Pfuva kali ti hu phro zü,*

*Jü ichu ilona kayi kali hu*

*Rehru le ti mo tthoe shijü amai*

*I-aba mate mosū pfuthu zho*

*Ilo vajü koro heku*

*Apro-o ni ayi zü-u le-u*
Achisamai phrülo oda

Oda tu-e ko zii-e pe-o shuro

Are khumai rolu oda

Omai no robvü ttu phudu-ae i

No mikri chi chanha re-ima ahrii nohulo zho-e

Rumai tsü eno kheko

Khekojü zhe so-vu prale

Translation

The children of Isho-Izho, when we went for the war

The day we went to the Namai land to sit and chase

We chased out one group of join-workers

Now chase one nice maiden

Chase into the gorge my people

When I spit into my palm and rise

And aim at the maiden

Brother you are getting me killed?

Do take out and take my bangle

Do not say you kill your sister

Do face the warrior guards

If people kill the precious bull, and me

‘Mikri’ buffalo bargain and chase

And it will be hairy on the bottom/buttock

And it will come in the manner of the tiger
Analysis of the Text

In the past duels between two warrior individuals or war between warring villages or different communities are common. The war as such is not fought out in the open, but stealthily the warriors also hunt down unsuspecting victims who more or less has little to do with the warring groups. The warriors lay in wait looking for opportunity for a kill not only warriors but also common people. The wars are man’s games but often young maidens or woman becomes the war trophy of the warriors.

This song tells us about a war fought out between the Isho-Izho and the Namai people. The characters in the song are all not warriors, and the victim of the war in this case is a young maiden. The warriors laid in wait for likely victims. The warriors are selective in choosing their victims. Of course the killing is not rampant but the victim is not a warrior but a young maiden. She is hunted out from her group of friends by the warriors and into the deep gorge she falls. The warrior raises his hand to strike down the maiden with his spear, but the maiden confront him saying:

‘Apro-o ni ayi zii-u le-u
Achisamai phruelo oda
Oda tu-e ko zii-e pe-o shuro
A rekhumai rolu oda’

Translation

‘Brother you are getting me killed?"
Do take out and take my bangle
Do not say you kill your sister
Do face the warrior guards’

In the lines above the maiden tries to win over the warrior by playing a mind game first by offering her bangle, having no chance of escape asked the warrior if he is going to kill her and if he is then to take her bangle. This offering of the bangle is a show of love in the context of Mao social life. Items like bangles and necklaces are precious tangible items for the Maos in the bygone past. A girl gifting anything to a man is considered as a ‘love-gift’. She also try to cast doubt and fear into the mind of the warrior by pronouncing the consequences, that if others come to know the manner she was hunted into a gorge and killed, she says that he would have to face almost like the dreadful fury of a ferocious tiger. But if he take the bangle and let her live he would not have to face any of these troubles.

The maiden also advises the warrior not to tell to others that he killed her and be on the lookout and be weary of the warrior-guard. She says that she is referred by others as a well bred bull, but she was hunted down like the mikri buffalo that can be bargain, chased about and be bought. Therefore the maiden tells the warrior that if her folks know how she had been treated and killed they would avenge her death in the manner like that of a bottom-haired ferocious tiger mulling and killing a prey.
The next song is titled *Apfü-apfu* meaning ‘mommy and daddy’. It talks about the life of a man in general, from the time he is conceived to the time he achieve the feast of merit.

*Apfü-apfu*

*Apfü-apfu chithhu*

*Tthu chilo hrolu kazhü lozho pfu*

*Anhi khapi cho-e*

*Apfü-apfu chithhu*

*Tthu chilo hrolu morü mai hu pra*

*Machi mozü cho-e*

*Apfü-apfu ora ka-*

*Jü yi ttholo ayi hrülu cho-e*

*Apfü-apfu no mono mayi pie*

*Apai-ape no dzükhrü mayi pie*

*Apfü-apfu no nhoto sopi*

*Le apai-ape no nhoto shupi*

*Le hudzü romoro pfū li pfuki tu kapra ni*

*Okhe ko chi chi ba pfu ni ba pfulo*

*Ape tokhu-eh apfu tokhu (necklace) nolo*

*Aru solu cho-e*

*Akhra mai-o ozhe mai zhe ottu tthovu mai vu*

*Ayi – a ozhe mai zhe ottu tthovu mai vu*

*Akhra mai-o osa zhojü so inho tuu shu*
Ayi – a okra zhojü so inho tuu shu

Tuu shu amai thina doko chapfude-o so-e solu hro-e

Translation

My parents early morning
Get up open the door’s cross pole and take the good ways
And mustered it for me
My parents early morning
Get up open the door’s cross pole and let out the livestock
Make them shit and urinate
My parents the big god
Worship and beget me
My parents gave me a good birth
My grandparents gave me good bath
My parents made me necklace
And my grandparents added more

That day when I went across that mountain carrying the caged cock
And caught an animal and bring over
My grandfather and my father stone platform
My village folk take the meat
My age-group jump the long jump and threw the shot put
Me too I jump the long jump and threw the shot put
My age-group gives the long feast of merit and erects the stone
Me too I give the proud feast of merit and erects the stone
Erects the stone whose child is it who obstructs but cannot do it
Analysis of the Text

The song tells us how a child is begotten out of god favoured grace and his benevolence. The song also tells us that the good intention of the godly ways of the grandparents and the parents of the boy is an added goodwill in begetting the boy. The song text primarily relates the inter relationship of God and man in this world. This song text gives us a glance into the early life of a Mao male child. The song begins by giving us a peep into the life and daily chores of the people. The song is descriptive with the central character narrating the events that go on around his life.

The song begins with the narrator saying that, the moment his parents get up in the wee hours of the morning and unlock the household gate, they hold unto the good ways and grab it for me. Then they let out the livestock to relieve themselves. The narrator continues by saying;

‘Apfii-apfu ora ka-
Jü yi ttholo ayi hrülu cho-e’

Translation

‘My parents the big god
Worship and beget me’

He was conceived after his parents worshiped and supplicated their will to the supreme God; his parents gave him a decent birth and his
grandparents bathed him dotingly; his parents made for him a necklace and his grandparents added necklaces for him.

The early stage of the narrator’s life is over and the second stage or the bachelorhood begins. It is at this age that the need to proof oneself within the community and among the peers to be counted and recognized arises. He achieved that and so he says;

‘Le hudzü romoro pfū li pfuki tu kapra ni
Okhe ko chi chi ba pfū ni ba pfulo’

Translation
‘That day when I went across that mountain carrying the caged cock
And caught an animal and bring over’

On that eventful day, the protagonist goes across the mountain with a cock caged up, and returned with an animal which was not an easy task and thus proving to be a worthy person among his peers and within the community. And there at the stone platform of his grandfather and his father he made his battle ground. Stone platforms are erected in recognition of one’s lifetime achievements; and here the protagonist making the stone platforms of his grandfather and his father his battleground after capturing the animal is to show that he is a worthy son by his own merit and not by anyone’s approval to the family’s legacy.
The narration in the song continues saying that the protagonist is capable of doing everything that his peers are capable of, he says that his peers jumped the long jump and he jumped too. His peers hurled the shot-put and he did the same. His peers hosted the feast of merit and erected the monolith, and he too hosted the proud feast of merit and erected the monolith. And who is to obstruct what he can do, only a person who cannot do what he does and is jealous of his achievement would only rise to obstruct; what can he do?, is the self assurance that the protagonist gives himself as the song conclude.

This song thus showcases the few stages of man from the time he is conceived in the womb of his mother to the life that he live in the community. It shows some of the things that a Mao male do at different stages in his lifetime.

The song is titled as *Nolu kalaile* meaning ‘When I was Young’. The song tells us about the life of a child at a tender age. The different chores the child performs as is required of a child in the family as a learning process of a growing up life.

**Nolu Kalaile**

*Nalu kattai do ti morü khu*

*Khusü dai phi-eno rashi kopfu*

*Kophro-i khruno phroma-u*

*Zü ilona bo khriso ikhru ko*
Do-e ne chole shi
Lesü ye chilo ottho she
Ye bakho zuiy choye

Le odzü mai pfü loye pfou mo jî chikhrai no nhü
Nonhü kola mapra konü va
Te chohu hudzü no ashu khe

Kobu ti shu sü ere shupo shuna shuli shudzü
Shüna ru ala burê chaka

Lulu dabo ludabo pfulai tai-e
Bure dzü nho khu khu dzüli-eno pfuzhu
Kotoku marai iloro
Dodene cho leshi

Translation

When young and small look after livestock
Look after and collect fruit beneath the green tree
Count and miscount it
Acts like the maidens and bachelors
Those acts are endearing
When comes back and pound the paddy
It is nice to see the pounding momentum
When others go to fetch water the wind blows over
And blows over on to them
And the cock crew over and again
That was known single stranger the single bystander
The stranger is all alone
Don’t want to be with to be with black hearted
Awaits the spring’s mouth awaits for clear water and his name
O lover maiden!
Looks very endearing

Analysis of the Text

The song narrates about a man who recollects about his life as a young child. Fond memories return as he recollects his young days in the family. He says he gets up and goes to tend to the family’s livestock. This he thus is not an exception to his life alone but common to all growing children in families who possesses livestock in the community. Thus children grow up tending to the livestock of the family, which is never considered as a task but as a fun thing and as duty towards the family.

The narrator says that while tending to the family’s livestock he collected fruits beneath the green tree and counted and miscounted them. He also divulged that growing up children play-acted like the maiden and the bachelor or as lovers or as couples or family which was fun and lovely. The following lines reveal this;

‘Zü ilona bo khriso ikhru ko

Do-e ne chole shi’

Translation
‘Acts like the maidens and bachelors

Those acts are endearing’

This in a way reveals that those tending to the family livestock were never alone but with playmates of both the sexes. Kids always love playing the grownups. And so this simulation of life was always very endearing.

Once they returned home with the livestock, they would pound paddy. Pounding paddy was more fun than a chore, the rhythmic paddy pounding was a sight they love watching. And as kids one has to attend to different chores at home and pounding paddy and fetching water were such chores that one attends to at home. Therefore it is not surprising to know that in the rural areas of the Mao community most children by the age of ten are capable of fulfilling all the household chores including cooking meals for the family, even these days.

The narrator continues by saying that when they go to fetch water, they do not splash water on themselves, but the breeze does. The breeze blows it back upon us. The cock repeatedly crows; which is a signal from the animal world that it is getting late and the need to be back home.

There are instances when they would come across stranger all by themselves and not wanting to be with anyone for fear that they may come in contact with some bad intentioned people. The singer refers this to like
‘waiting at a water spring’s mouth to clear up for some clean clear water’. And the narrator says, ‘O lover maiden, it looks very lovely and endearing.

This is another version of the Shangailo folksong by the same title *Nolu Kalaile* meaning ‘When I was Young’. Let us see what this version is about.

**Nolu Kalaile**

_Ayi nolu katai tto le marali_

_Ti pfuni here iko kotsü cho_

_Sü cho kotsü no kre_

_Amü lobo ikobu tikoku_

_Ikotsü ni moe nolu khili zho_

_Apfü kakra toro nivu machini-e_

**Translation**

When I was very small and young different play things

Want to take that and I was older

And does not want to be older

When it does not want to enter my mouth

I don’t want to be older I will be younger today

My white mother I want to kiss your face

**Analysis of the Text**

This version of the folksong by the same title *Nolu Kalaile* meaning ‘When I was Young’ relates to us, ‘life as a young child’ and not wanting to
grow old. The singer narrates that as a child he played different child games. And playing in those different child games he wants to be the older one. But getting older and getting to know the responsibility of the older person, he does not want to get older, which is like an exchange of role-play in the life of that person. He compares this ‘want of getting older, and not wanting to get older’ to like ‘eatables not wanting to enter the mouth’. He continues the narration and says that he do not want to grow old, but want to stay young and be with his mother and kiss her like children often do all through.

The next Shangailo song is the third version by the same titled Nolu Kalaile meaning ‘When I was Young’. This song has very little difference form that of the first version. One variable difference is the length of the song. Let us take a look into this version of the song, by the same titled as the earlier two.

**Nolu Kalaile**

*Ayi nolu katai tto le morü khu*

*Khu südai phi-eno rashi kophro*

*Kophro-i khruno phroma-u*

*Jü esu ilona bo khreso ikhru ka*

*Da-u ne chole shi*

*Osü sü dai phi*

*Luno ada lu-e azhulu orüpfu orüpe*

*Suru suru turu turu*
Hushe de kakhai ni
Dohene chole shi

Translation

When I was small I look after livestock
From beneath the green tree counts the fruits
And I mistake counting
Used to see the maidens been pursued
In love by bachelors
And from beneath the green tree
Used to look out for the warriors
Goes about, run about
When the plough (digging) is less
Used to see the field

Analysis of the Text

This particular song has different versions with slight variations in the lyrics of the song. There are a few changes or variation from that of the earlier two versions. The song is titled Nolu Kalaile meaning ‘When I was Young’ the same as that of the two earlier versions. The content words of this song are almost the same as the first version. Let us take a look into this version of a song.

The song is sung as; when I was young I tended the livestock and played around beneath the green tree. There I counted and miscounted the fruits. And from beneath the green tree we watch young maidens being
pursued by young bachelors as though they are much in love. From beneath the green tree we watch out for warriors who roamed the land. And when the field was not fully ploughed we run about all along the field. Thus this song is almost like the earlier version of the same title, except for a little variation in the content of the song.

The next Shangailo folk song is titled as Chithu Inalo meaning ‘The early morning work’, a song that describes about the shawl worn by supposed to be the lady-love of the man.

**Chithu Inalo**

*Chithu inalo kolo dzü ko pili zhe*

*Lupro vudo molulu*

*Alapra ochi koro va*

*Heno marai ro inho idaie*

*Marai rono zho osa baso*

*Khupfo khutsü eno lele tai*

*Taite taivu lekosho-e saleke ku-e*

*Ti-o ahraye sa hriü cho*

*Hrücho katai sa tto ko sa nho de*

*Lu ororai ttoko no*

*Abammotto mozho pfü-e vato*

*Aji ana aji chayi deku dema deku chayi deku*

*Chayi madeko rai likho*
Translation

Early morning got up and went and washes my head

Wear the Lupro vudo

Goes back and on the village gate

There awaits for my lover

Today my love wears the long shawl

Inside out and from edge to edge everything is black

Very black as black as the bamboo wing scale

That is like living with me

Living ‘black shawl’ weave little edge of it

With a little bit of straw-rope

With my fingers I hold and

And beautiful motifs spread across everywhere

Good motifs hold the likho water container

Eat well carry the bottle gourd mug look anew

Anew and above the house when the sunlight come thro’ the red sorrel plant

Was really there

Analysis of the text

The song is titled as Chitthu Inalo meaning ‘The early morning work’.

The song begins with the man waking up early in the morning and going out
for an early morning work. Here the early morning work was not any labour or work but the morning work is of going and washing his head. Then he put on the *Lupro vudo* a kind of a scented grass, and he returned and is seated on the village gate to watch out for his lady-love.

The central theme of the song start at this point when the man sings;

‘*Marai rono zho osa baso*

*Khupfo khutsü eno lele tai*

**Translation**

‘Today my love wears the long shawl

Inside out and from edge to edge everything is black’

The song is patterned with the look of the shawl worn by the lady-love of the man. And the description of the shawl goes as ‘the shawl being black from edge to edge and inside-out’. The shawl is so black it is compared to the scale of the bamboo patterned with black dust. The shawl clings on to the lady as an inseparable item of her and stays on her. And the black shawl is woven with a little bit of straw-roped cut and pulled into with my finger. The motifs of the shawl are exquisitely designed and the lady wearing the shawl makes it looks all the more beautiful and when the shawl flows to the edge of the *likho* (bottle gourd water container) and touches it, it look as though the *likho* is hanging on the edge of the shawl. The *likho* looks new and as the lady carried
it home walking past by the red sorrel plant the man gets a view of his lady-love through the sunlight that comes in from between the red sorrel plants.

The song text is such it begins on a very personal note of the singer washing his head. But there on the content of the song shift to the ‘shawl of his lady-love’ that makes the song an interesting one.

The *Shangailo* folk song as *Olele Ikanhie Achacho* meaning ‘The Swearing in our Hearts’, relates to us about a couple whose relationship was floundering and the man trying to make it work. The song text can thus be seen as below.

*Olele Ikanhie Achacho*

*Olele ikanhie achacho mozoe*

*Bure eloro tipai*

*Arü luda nepro-o ohe*

*Ho-a arü lu-o ivu krole*

*Le-o lu zü zhomo oshuro*

*Shuro lopai shudzü*

*Lai nhü orai luku kono*

*Khenho kadeleshe ti-a kade le moshi*

*Ezho sü otuu*

*Zhosü otuu no ozho züli-e pfumarako*

*Buti katthe otsü*
Katthe tino zhepi vai

Ojü va mali pfo

Leko kongai kia ko kongai-a ta

Krako buti sü le-u nele-u le mari le-o

Kre kayi ti duro

Dumo ohele saro-o sani-o

Le mai no rai-a azhu ko apfüko

Zü-e Lu tto-e ti lulu hroli

Esü era vulu choe

Translation

Sworn within our hearts are lighter
The seated maiden over there
Turn towards your brother
Do turn it will be fulfilling
O that outsider maiden
Maiden outsider that outsider
And if on the side lines
Even if someone insists to meet, still do not meet
Today wood and stone
Today wood and stone if work is good they separate
Is like death
Death that is above the lake
Walks above the land
Overlap here and overlap there and go
Will you stay crying, will you look forward for it

Nothing better than cordiality

Better the insider Saro-o and Sani-o

Even if others are jealous call one another that are of the same mother

Good or bad if they cannot be got

Then they will be scared of our being.

**Analysis of the text**

The song text relates to us the relationship between a man and a maiden. The song is titled as *Olele Ikanhie Achacho* meaning ‘The Swearing in our Hearts’. In the Mao community or for that matter any community, swearing is never considered as an appropriate etiquette. There are two ways of swearing; swearing at other people and swearing to oneself. Whatever it may be the kind of swearing, a person who is prone to swearing at people or to oneself is never thought of highly by the society at large. This Shangailo folk song text opens with the line;

‘*Olele ikanhie achacho mozoe*’

**Translation**

‘Sworn within our hearts are lighter’

The song begins by saying that swearing is not a good thing to do. It is bad and hurtful when one swears at another person. Therefore swearing should be avoided to have good and cordial relationship with one’s fellowman. The
above line means that swearing is bad at the same time swearing within one’s heart unknown or unheard to the other people is lighter and less hurtful than swearing at people in the face. But the man in no way indicates or condones to say that swearing is good. In the context of the song the lady who is seated is facing the opposite side and not to the side of the man which is again a show of disrespect to the man, and so whatever the lady may be saying or swearing as is the indication ‘swearing is not so hurtful or it is lighter if it is within oneself unknown to the second person.

The man asks the maiden who is seated on the other side to turn over to him, saying that if she does so it would be fulfilling. He calls her an outsider which is an indication that she had not known him and he had not known her and that is one probable reason why she was showing her back to him and him wanting to see her. The man compares the maiden and him as two imageries as seen in the lines below;

‘... sü otuu’

Translation

‘... wood and stone’

‘... katthe otsū’

Translation

‘... like death’
This comparison of the man and the woman to ‘wood and stone’ and then to ‘dead’, the first been animate, tangible object and the second to inanimate intangible abstract makes the comparisons an interesting one. The man compares himself and the maiden to wood and stone, saying that whatsoever it is the two items are different and therefore the two will be taken apart. The man continues by saying that ‘it is like death’; that is the two are different like the dead and the living and therefore the two cannot be together and that they have to be separated. That is the deceased been separated from the living.

These two comparisons bring in another angle to the animosity between the man and the woman. The compatibility angle that crack up the relationship been strain between the couple. Thereby they being together would be more of a problem then they being separated. This sharp compelling imageries thus reveals the possibility of the man and woman been incompatible husband and wife.

The Maos believe in the philosophy of life after death. The man relates that the spirit walks the land and on the water that also means the spirit of the death will roam about and not stay still at a place till his time to depart to the land of the dead arrives. He sings that death wipes the surface of the water as it walks on the water and at the same time walks on land, which means that after a person’s death his spirit moves about everywhere from water to land.
The man chides the woman and asked her to stop crying or if she will stay on crying. He says that there is nothing better than cordiality. The man continues to tell the woman that it is ‘better to be an insider than an outsider’ meaning it is better to be cordial and be on good terms with family and friends so that even in times of needs ‘people of the same womb’ meaning close relatives or clansman can be depended upon. Good or bad it is always ‘better to be with somebody from near’ which means having near relatives and persons who are from geographically nearby place.

The following song text is of two parts, titles as Oshi Otthu Kajü-o meaning ‘Dog the big Pretender’. It begins with the man admonishing the dog in the first part. In the second half of the song text a lady comes into a picture who is also chided by the man for different reasons.

**Oshi Otthu Kajü-o**

*Hu-u oshi otthu kajü*

*Hu-u oshi oru kani oshi*

*Kono phiphi oshi*

*Kono dzü dzü kodzü ko*

*Ashi ochi ozhu rai oda*

*Chithu inalo pithe kosü dzüle ora so*

*Lu okhrai so lu pfu-e nholu chikhrai no nhū*

*Nhū kola mapra-e konū ra*

*No chohu hudzü no ashu khe*
Shu khe ko ochi shu sü nhirai
Shupfu shuna shuli shudzü
Shina roala lore chaka
Lu leda bo lu dabo pfulu tai
Burai dzü nhoku
Ledzülo khru ano pfu zhu
Koto pfu mara iloro
Avazü na mojü

Translation

Hu-u dog great pretender
Hu-u dog you naïve-rich dog
You breathy dog
You alert for a little time
My dog, look after the house first

Early morning planting three stone for cooking and to perform rituals
Lighting the fire by blowing so hard
Blown over and burn the ear
And the house cock crew over and again
And walk into the backyard of the house
Stranger friend stand all alone
Think of being neighbour the following year
Stubborn it is and black hearted
Seated by the water spring’s mouth
Bended keeps on drawing water
The mad maiden from ‘Koto’

Will not be good

Analysis of the text

The song at the beginning tells us about a dog that the man calls a great pretender who is good for nothing and does nothing. The song also brings in the presence of a lady in the end of the second part of the song and seems to be the love-interest of the narrator.

The song is titled as *Oshi Otthu Kajiio* which can literally be translated as ‘Dog the big Pretender’. Dog is believed to be the best friend of man from the animal world and it also could be the first animal to be domesticated by man. Dogs are faithful animals and the companion of our forefathers since time immemorial. They are supposed to be among the most active and loyal animal. Even to these days dogs are commonly domesticated as pets by the Maos at home.

Here in the song the credibility or the utility of the dog is questioned by the man. The song thus begins with the dog been questioned;

‘... oshi otthu kajü

... oshi oru kani oshi’

Translation

‘... dog great pretender
... dog you naïve-rich dog’

The dog is been called ‘a pretender’ and is labeled as ‘very naïve’. The man describes the dog as breathy which happens to be similar to a man’s breathing situation when he does something fast and labourious and the breathing becomes heavy. But the man did not ascribe any quality of the cause of breathiness to the dog as would be to man. Instead the man chides the dog for been lazy and inactive and of being alert only for a short duration of the day and thus tell the dog that the dog should first look after the house. The man continues to admonish the dog by saying that starting from early morning it gets up and straight away go to the furnace where the three stones are erected –which is the furnace- as though it is a daily ritual. The Maos normally erect three stone poles (a foot high) in their hearth for the purpose of cooking. The man says that the fire in the furnace is blown over and thus its ear is burnt.

The second part of the song begins with the cock crowing over and again. And as the man walked into the backyard of the house, in there he found his stranger friend alone, as the lines from the song text indicates;

‘Shupfu shuna shuli shudzü
Shina roala lore chaka’

Translation

‘Stranger friend stand all alone
Think of being neighbour the following year’
The man asks the stranger to think of becoming neighbours the following year. But the stranger did not pay heed to the suggestion of the man. This show of unresponsiveness on the part of the stranger to what the man said show signs of stubbornness and of being black hearted. The stranger seated by the spring water mouth, bended and kept on drawing the water. This made the man to remark that ‘The mad maiden from Koto, will not be good.

The song is about a dog and a wild cat. The first half is on the dog being questioned through the folk song. The second half of the song is on the wild cat who is also questioned through the song.

**Oshi Kohu-o**

*Oshi kohu-o*

*Chi-a ko solu zho ni-o*

*Anhū kopu chore*

*Chore-a io chonho so*

*Lu morai do le*

*Izhoni chiko ki*

*Ohu kokro krai padai ko mache*

*Chonho solu more*

*Ochi ozhongo neo chi-

*Zho ko solu zho nio*

*Anhū kopu chore*
Nhi apai ape no okupai

To ohaipai tolu ore chi ka

Dati azho here

Translation

Dog, you chaser
How much did you do today?
And you are sitting beside me
Me I did nothing
Did not do anything
Today at home
Make around four hundred white chicken crew
Did not do anything
And you wild cat
How much did you do today?
And you are sitting beside me
My grandparents the flesh
And the skin ate, and the bones
Eating that is what my labour.

Analysis of the text

Oshi kohu-o the title of the Shangailo folksong can be translated as ‘The Chaser Dog’ but the meaning of Oshi kohu-o is ‘The Hunting Dog’. The song is titled as Oshi kohu-o translated as ‘The Chaser Dog’ but semantically referred to hunting dog when a dog is termed as Oshi kohu-o meaning a dog
that chases. Like many indigenous communities the Mao’s too are very fond of hunting and it was a common thing that every single group that venture out into the jungle to hunt animal is accompanied by hunting dogs. The song begins with the man questioning the dog:

‘Oshi kohu-o
Chi-a ko solu zho ni-o’

**Translation**

‘Dog, you chaser
How much did you do today?’

The dog is questioned as to how much it achieved that day and thus seated near him. The dog responded by saying;

‘... io chonho so
Lu morai do le
Izhoni chiko ki
Ohu kokro krai padai ko mache
Chonho solu more

**Translation**

‘Me I did nothing
Did not do anything
Today at home
Make around four hundred white chicken crew
Did not do anything’
The dog’s response was a humble submission that it was not able to achieve anything. He continues by saying that he was just able to chase out only four hundred white chickens and so did nothing. Here the number quoted by the dog means that he was busy the entire day chasing after the chicken but humbly claims that he did nothing and therefore tired and breathy.

The second part of the song is on the wild cat who was also questioned. The man questioned the wild cat, asking the wild cat what he did that day and what he achieved and thus seated next to him.

‘... chi ozhongo neo chi-
Zho ko solu zho nio
Anhū kopu chore’

Translation

‘And you wild cat
How much did you do today?
And you are sitting beside me’

The wild cat too responded by saying;

‘... apai ape no okupai
To ohaipai tolu ore chi ka
Dati azho here’

Translation
‘My grandparents the flesh
And the skin ate, and the bones
Eating that is what my labour’.

The wild cat responded in right earnest that the grandparents ate the flesh and the skin and threw the bones to him. Therefore for him the labour for that day was to eat the bones. And that was what the wild cat did the entire day.

3.4 OKRO-KOLU

3.4.1 Okro-Kolu or Dirge

Dirge comes from the Latin word *dirige* meaning ‘direct’. Dirges are songs that are used to lament or mourn the dead of a person. The art of lamentation, singing or chanting of dirges can be found among many communities in different parts of the world.

The art of singing and composing dirges can be found among the Chinese, the Irish, and communities like the Abanyole of Kenya and the Tarao of Venezuela. The dirges or songs of lamentations are always central elements to the death rituals for these people. There are communities like the Taraos and Irish where only women perform the dirge. But there are communities like the Abanoyle where both men and women take part in the singing of the dirges. In this regard Ezekiel Alembi writes, ‘the singing or chanting of dirges serves some important psychological and social functions psychologically,
they provide emotional support to the bereaved family and serve as an outlet for venting grief and emotion which if suppress may lead to some complication on the health of a mourner and socially the mourners or singers express solidarity with the bereaved family in the time of grief’.

A dirge can be sad and mournful in its expression, in other word dirge is the highest and deepest expression of one’s feeling for a deceased person. Dirge is the equivalent term for the words *Okro kolu*. *Okro* is the last month of the Mao lunar calendar and *kolu* means unwinding. The word *Okro* is often associated with death or the month of the dead, it is the last month of the Mao lunar calendar. Here, *Okro kolu* means ‘recollecting or unwinding the memories of the deceased’. This is altogether a different genre of song sung during funeral, and comes at the spur of the moment. Dirge to the Maos is always oral and there are no pre-set lyrics in the Mao dirge. The oral lyrics are spontaneous inner feelings, reflections that are stirred within the cognitive process of the person in relevance to the deceased that is expressed in the form of a dirge, composed at the moment by the singer. As there are no pre-set lyrics, it is always sung solo.

To the Maos death is a phase, the end of life on earth that leads to another life beyond earth. Death is an occasion where the experience is solemn accompanied by lots of wailing by friends, relative and well-wishers irrespective of gender or age. Mourners cry their heart out and it is during this phase that individuals who are adept or persons who are closely attached with
the deceased culls out a dirge. The dirge to the Maos comes from the deepest emotional attachment with the deceased. And it is at this stage that the mourner is able to express his or her feelings in the form of a dirge. The Maos holds a belief that on the death of a person if not a single mourner culls out a dirge, the deceased feels unwanted and comes back to haunt the living. But if a dirge is culled out for the deceased the deceased feels loved and wanted and thus be on good terms with the living. This is so because of the language that is used to express the innermost feelings of the heart. Therefore dirge to the Maos is not just a question of an art or performance alone but something that is associated with their belief system as well as the psychological implications associated with it. Below is a sample of a Mao dirge.

\[
Ni \text{ hi opro } zü \text{ koli aino } khrie \text{ kho pfolo le}
\]
\[
Ni \text{ propa tonü kayi koli aino niyi } khrie \text{ lole}
\]
\[
Alu \text{ hi mangai lo tie}
\]
\[
Alu \text{ hi khramo nhie}
\]
\[
Anhie chidu no vu kade kele.
\]

**Translation**

If you are a young shoot of a plant, I would pluck and cuddle you

If you are flower of sweet fragrance, I would pluck and take you

My heart is wrenching

My heart has not had enough

When will we meet again?
This is the type of dirge that is often culled out at the death of a near and dear person. Symbolism is often used to represent the deepest of expressible feeling. Here the mourner long that had the deceased been a young shoot of a plant, she/he would pluck and cuddle it. Young shoot of plants are the most tender and lovable thing which in this case is a reference to the deceased person. This shows the tender love the mourner had for the deceased. And the used of symbolism of flower of sweet fragrance indicates the long lasting remembrance the mourner wish to cherish, the moments, the time they spent together during their being together when the deceased was still alive. The mourner continues to say that she/he is feeling the pain of the loss at the death of her/his dear one and that the time they spent together is not sufficient and that she/he still wants to be together and thus conclude by asking when they can be together again. This indicates the irreparable loss and separation that the mourner endures and the longing to be together again.

Another sample of a Mao dirge is as follows;

\begin{verbatim}
Ruhu koli, ozhe azhu le
Ruhu komo ozhe azhu hro
Olai koli todzü azhu le
Olai komo todzü azhu hro
Korü le odzü koli akua krü le
Korü le odzü komo krü azhu lo hro
Pfuva leshe onho azhu leshe
\end{verbatim}
Adai amagai ko so
Kaliko azhu lo hro

Translation

If we are birds we will fly together
But we are not birds, we cannot fly together
If we are bees we will collect nectar together
But we are not bees we cannot collect together
If we are water in the river we will flow together
But we are not water we cannot flow together
Let us go and work together in the same place
What heartfelt disappointment
We cannot be together even in anyone

This particular dirge relates to us about the deep regret of loss for the living. The representation of different animate and non-animate symbols from nature to express the heartfelt feelings of wanting to be together is unparallel. The songster brings in the birds saying that if they are together they would fly together on the same flight. Had they been bees they would collect nectar together and if they are water of the river they would flow together. The truth of longing to be together and the pain of separation are obvious. Different symbolisms are used to cull out the deepest feelings of the heart but at the same time nothing can be realized to fulfill the longing to be together as they are two different entities in two different worlds; of the death and the living. In furtherance to the impossibility of being together, it dawns upon the songster
that one has to accept the reality of separation which is of the physical. Emotional stress and pangs continues to linger and so the songster as a matter of acceptability request the deceased to go and work in the same place. Here ‘the place’ is not any geographical location but it is the bonding of emotion between the living and the death, which takes us to a place which is ethereal something that is out of this world.

In the last two lines of the dirge the songster accepts the truth, of the deceased and the living inability to congregate together physically. The anguish and the distressing disappointment of separation, the inability of been together even in one of the symbolism mentioned culled out in the dirge.

3.5 Reference


Galina Misharina; Funeral and Magical Rituals among the Komi [http://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol38/alembi.pdf](http://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol38/alembi.pdf)