

## THE BETRAYAL AND LOVE REFLECTION IN SHIMLA'S LAMANAS (FOLK LOVE SONGS)

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**Abstract:** This article examined the themes of love, betrayal, and death found in traditional love ballads known as *Lamanas* in the *Phari* language. Some of these proverbs and folk songs date back hundreds of years, and the majority are timeless. The majority of *the Lamanas* seem to have been written for a lover and his lass to sing back and forth. Even though the lines can be sung quickly, they invariably conclude on a high note that is difficult for a beginner to mimic. When someone removes a lice head from another person's hair while singing, it symbolizes the love and betrayal of lovers. Nonetheless, a group of boys and girls divided based on gender may sing in response and

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Folk love Songs, popularly understood as *Lamans* of Shimla, cover a vast array of human life, often these songs address social and cultural issues such as love, betrayal, death in general, apart from expressing other popular opinions. Therefore, This article is an attempt to research and understand the piquant issues of the treatment of love, betrayal and death in folk love songs- which eternally continue to bother the inquisitive mind of scholars of history and literature of all ages since these purely human tendencies are vital issues of determining both the wild and civilized behaviour of the particular community under reference, which can be considered as a sample for understanding the behaviour of mankind in general such as:

How did rural lovers or men and women behave as social and sexual beings?

Did they act in any way peculiar to them as urban peoples?

Did they operate within parameters dictated by traditional norms and institutions emphasizing control and regulation of their reciprocal interaction?

It is nonetheless possible to investigate these questions and arrive at broad tendencies that seem to stand out in characterizing village based gender behaviour. I propose to do this by exploring a body of *Pahari* oral traditions that have yet to receive the serious and appropriate attention, but which is uniquely endowed for an investigation of the kind I have ventured to undertake. I refer to the folk love songs, defined as *Lamans* as a form of *Pahari* oral tradition, as distinct from poetry, history and prose

Many folk love songs (*Lamanas*) have been around so long that nobody is entirely sure who were their composers. Often these songs are passed down orally from one generation to another. Broadly speaking, *Lamanas* of Shimla may be classified under three categories, (a) tale-oriented, (b) incident-based and (c) free verses.

In the case of tale-oriented *Lamanas* (love songs), *Kuje*, *Greebi*, *Najri* and *Surmi* are the best examples. These are in fact long narrative and combine the characteristics of both the folk tale and love song. These are partly in verses and partly in prose and the narration is manifested through musical tune.

The incident-based songs have no long story to tell. These kinds of love songs only state some events of the life. The tragedy of this type of love song is that the faithful and pure love of a husband and his wife or lover and beloved or vice-versa does not find significant places in the folk songs of the region, whereas only that which is illegitimate, illicit and extra-marital relations is brightly told and sung. Most of these folk songs even though are nonsensical and often ribald, yet are popular for its perverse pleasure which manifests itself through lewdness. The lewdness and eroticism in these folk love songs do have different connotations as these are designed to promote highly pure ideas and values.

Among the *Lamanas* of Shimla, the free verses are, usually, lyrics expressing one's inward feeling and emotions, hence have a variegated variety and difference, because of which these are known as *Zhuri* in Sirmour, *Laman* in Shimla, *Bhournu* in Kullu, *Gangi* in Bilaspur, *Loka* in Solan, etc. These *Lamans* are Lyrical verses, are thus independent from the other and do not have any tale or incident to tell. Love is the main theme, but still these do

express other human feelings of hatred, pain, betrayal, jealousy and such other negative emotions. Most of these are couplets of two lines with a definite rhyme, scheme, which renders it musical sonorous and sweet

The lyrical love songs of Shimla are further classified into two categories such as *Reyahli-nati* (Dance-song) and *Shuke Laman* (non-dance song) *Shuke Laman*, are chanted to console the lonely heart. The deepest and most concealed feelings of locale usually are found in these *Lamans*, which is at times too sacred or too revealing or too dangerous to be expressed in prose.

Dance folk love songs reflect the joyous moods the folk music, usually includes one or more musical instruments such as *Karnal*, *Nagora*, *Dholas* and *Khanjri* to induce the festive moods, where of the singers dance as they sing.

Generally *Lamans* are sung without music in open space like fields, Jungles and during long journey. The couplet may be sung in a slow and high pitch tone but will always end on the high drawn-out note which the novice does not easily imitate.

However, groups of men and women, generally peasants, sing in dialogue form with couplets appropriate to the subject and place. Some of the couplets indicate in a direct reference that they are to be sung only by one sex while others have a hidden allusion or historical reference which applied to but one sex. In group singing, each group may sing but one two line couplet but more may be used if the text permits or the occasion requires it, the singing of these folk love songs will often continue until one group exhaust its repertoire.

The basic meaning of each couplet of *Laman* may be well hidden, especially in the reference to union of the lovers, although the hilly people are more open and frank in public treatment of sexual and love statements. However, the rejection and impossibility of love are the result of fate and previous Karma over which the individual has no ultimate control.

Caste and economic status are often alluded to in tones of regret or in words of praise, which on occasional reference to the lover being able to secure the means of livelihood regardless of his poverty. The white and green oak trees wild peaches (*Khatru*) wild apricot (*Arru*) house sparrow, sheep, goat, bulls, and sky, sun, clouds and moon are the most

frequents references in nature, these are all tied up with lover's tryst and in praise of slander of opposite group. Eating wild peaches and wild apricots and thread and needles denote the union of lovers. Favourite trysting places are water streams, thick jungle, and water ditch; there areas are often in wild and isolated places.

However in the context of the oral folk traditions *Laman* could be an erotic, but the erotic elements in these folk songs may be explained always as purely symbolic representation of high ideal of true love. Many of these *Lamans* reflect true love between husband and wife or between lover and his beloved. One of these may be quoted as an example: "On the riverside the thirsty *Papiha* bird cries *Piu, Piu, Piu*. Those whose beloved ones are cross feel unhappy;

My dear husband has gone far away, when we shall meet again .O Contractor, it is cold weather now, let my husband come home"<sup>1</sup>

Here, the picture of love-loran newly married wife poignantly significant. The songs show the restlessness due to pangs of separation. Each line of this song is replete with fragments of heavy sighs. They describe the agony of lonely wife because of separation. They contain the story of hill tradition when men had always remained out either on service or work to earn living for the family. It shows that sincere love becomes more intense in separation and that the reunion of separated husband and wife brings in greater of happiness.

Message: In one of couplets of *Laman* a beloved says that "I shall not send my message through a crow, one popular *Laman* runs thus:

"He is mischievous and spins tales; I shall send it with the humble black bee. He is patient and recites it well."<sup>2</sup>

The mind of separated beloved is so much upset that the creature kingdom of animal fuses with the human world. So the beloved chose a black bee as her messenger to convey to her separated lover the message of her deep love. It reflects that the goal of human life should be joy and serenity and not the sensual pleasure or carnal happiness. The aim of love is a happy harmony between lover and beloved. Folk love songs occupies, therefore a dominant place in oral tradition of hilly region and attracted the mind of anonymous composer.

In another couplet of *Laman* a young girl asks her lover to listen to *the Laman* carefully as it is as intoxicating as a one k.g. of Hashish, As I sing them at a high pitch, the listeners will fall into a swoon.”<sup>3</sup> The shift is from the transient to the permanent. Benumbing of the sensibilities is a kind of drug addiction through intoxicant where not only pain, but also the body dissolves into nothingness. She further sings; “As green grass does not catch fire, and union of lover without deep love is as tasteless as the dish of pumpkin without salt.” This particular couplet shows that the height of human personality attains its perfection in love. It seems that love is treated an instrument of individual and social re-generation.

Dispossession of the self: Love between lovers is illustrated when lover challenges and rejects the social ethic and value for the sake of his beloved love.

“I will cut down the hood of Cobra into pieces, and I will become a lamp and my love you be its wick”<sup>5</sup>

These folk love songs do not confine to skin-deep beauty and lays great stress on noble and spiritual qualities, but rejects the sensuality or carnal life. According to couplet of a folk love song, the only usefulness of a beloved beauty is to win the heart of her lover, but it is deprecates sensual passion arising from mere physical attraction without mutual love between lover and his beloved. So when a lover (Roofu) came to know about the confession of love for him by his beloved, he feels delighted, and thus sings:

“I see no pleasure in the union of those lovers of whom one is frigid and other is passionate; on the contrary, I prefer to such an insipid union the death of two lovers who are equally in love with each other but are despaired of their union.” Beloved realized the truth that mere physical charm is not enough to win the love of high- minded lover; she sought to achieve her object by cultivating in herself spiritual qualities<sup>6</sup>. In one of the couplet lover says that they have given their heart to one another, you are the good fortune of my mind we have given each other our heart.”<sup>7</sup> Beloved affirms that she has not given herself to another lover since it was through the rare deity that they met,” she further sings that,” I have not gone to lead ditch water, nor to irrigate by a side ditch. By the grace of rare deity we met.” The hilly regions irrigation ditches lead to through wild ravines from mountains stream and are favorite trysting places for lovers. The lover asks that she must not find another lover as he was to go

somewhere.” “As the head source of the water ditch, do no shift but dwell in happiness, yet a time of our union will come”<sup>8</sup> Here beloved herself represented as a field and he is as the water to irrigate it, her lover suspected her fidelity, but his beloved says that “she has been true to him, although she could have many lovers. The water has been soiled although you say the water was stained, if she wished to become polluted she could have dirtied her purity”<sup>9</sup>. It is shown here that passionate love leading to excessive indulgence in sensual pleasure results in miseries and suffering. When lovers were enjoying amorous sex in jungle near stream suspected her fidelity, she left her lover. Then he became almost insane owing to the grief of her separation and roamed about in the jungle like a mad man enquiring about her where about from wind, trees, birds and animals, mountains and river.

Love as a state of mind: The song that describes the mental state of a lover, song runs thus:

“Oh my divine love, it is the night of the full moon somewhere there is a cloud, from which cool shower, brings back memories of old for gotten things,

“Say something O Wind, Mountain, devadar tree dear sparrow and holy Giri Ganga Tell me where is she? How is she? And tell her how I feel. She, for whom I have renounced everything, She, the queen of my heart, has left me in anger, is it all designed by the cruel fate and my previous Karma (Action) “<sup>10</sup>

### **DOUBT V/S FIDELITY V/S COMMITMENT TO SELF**

The following couplet shows that the lover Roofu doubts the commitment and fidelity of his beloved. She explains her lover that, although many lovers crowd around her, but it is of no use unless her heart consents”.

By the side of the one female deer, do the great bucks gather together, if the female heart does not consent? The gathering of bucks is wasted”. She further makes it very clear to her lover that, ‘I have not eaten other orchard Apples’ although the tree is laden with fruit”.<sup>11</sup> But as it is generally understood, love is a sensual passion of human heart which rises by physical liveliness, craves a physical satisfaction and is consummated after satisfaction. So being physical in nature, it can be satisfied even in absence of mutual feeling of each other,

but love and sexuality cannot be separated from each other they are inter connected and interdependence, cannot be treated in isolation.

“Do not eat sour wild peaches, ample delicious Apples are there in orchard, oh my lover, your heart is full of tricks and my heart is as pure as heart of a deity. The Bathu plants flowers that side, my days are spent in your wait, and my nights in shedding tears. Oh my love, I am pure of heart, but you are like the leaf of the yam plant,

Which cannot even hold a drop of water, Oh my love, sun is setting; do not pain my heart, over so small a matter.”<sup>12</sup>

Complete Surrender: In of the *Lamans* lover confesses that the sovereignty of the world is not as sweet and pleasant as the lover's servitude at the feet of the beloved,<sup>12</sup> the world is dark and desolate to the person to whom love is denied, but it is bright and blissful to the person by whom it is gained. The corporal union of the lovers is not consider the emotional union of hearts of lovers and the passionate love does not require the harmony of inner feeling on the contrary, love springs out of human hearts and it cares little of the bodily beauty. In one of the *Laman* beloved says that “love is not love till you give it away and insists her lover to love now, love after death is a mockery, but lover says that death may separate lovers physically but is enable to disjoin them heartily, who are animated by ideals of true love. Thus love is treated an abiding sentiment of heart which paves the way to man's involvement. It eliminates the greater passion and lift lover above common ground. The Folk love songs (*Lamana*) disfavour passionate love, rooted in physical grace. Love based on physical consideration and self-interest ends in grief. Such type of sensuous love never leads to peace and pleasure.

### **Realization and Merging of the Soul with Lover Soul**

So these folk songs favour at first the union of heart rather than the union of body. A young girl returns home from the arms of her lover, she says to her mother, “Oh my dear mother please throw open the door as your young daughter, has come from the heaven” and explains that, “my lover is like a loving deity, his love is much better than any deity, our hearts is one, we need not to fear from anyone” he considers my eyes as beautiful as full moon and my ever glowing face as bright sun light.”<sup>13</sup> Such feeling of true love ensures

divine pleasure for the lovers; therefore, love born of the physical attraction should be transformed into true love, based on penance and restraint. When beloved banishes passion by suffering attain re-union with their lovers. In true love, the two lovers cast their lives, with knowledge that destiny has denied them the consummation of their love. Folk song couplet depict that it is better to die for a lover than wedded to one who is callous, there is no charm in union where one of the lovers is anxious and other is not. On the other hand, even death is preferable where lovers cherish mutual love, but have no hope of union.

### **Procreation: Sex as Biological Necessity**

In another couplet of folk song lover asks his beloved that the raising of a family is a necessary part of life and they are now one and ought not to be reported, “You are cultivator, I am the most fertile field, whether it is well ploughed or not, do not forget that fertile field must not be left un-ploughed.” Lover asks that they do not unite but if she insists and need a child then, I will find a way out.”

Thus love is a happy link between husband and wife which maintain happy harmony and pleasure between them.

### **Adultery and Surrogacy:**

Even illegitimate child is preferable to the curse of barrenness, but the father of the child has obligations in supporting the child. “Do please, sow in the field, I beg you, but if you insist then the field must be sown”. Therefore, its final goal is only in the acquisition of a progeny and not in the fulfilment of sensual joys the birth of a child is treated as the fruition of hymeneal life. The progeny is treated as the silken bond between husband and wife.

However, caste plays very vital and decisive role in love relationship, and lovers seek or want to create a uniquely separate zone where they can freely access each other socially and sexually, something that was denied by the traditional structure of society and its patriarchal-cum –caste ideology. A niche public-private sphere of heterosexual interaction was thereby not conjured in the village where the cultivation of love and sexuality provide the stage for pleasure to play itself out. A couplet of *Laman* reveals that the beloved is from upper caste, he is not accessible to lover.” You are from high caste, and as the fruit of a tall Apple tree,



for only the eyes can behold it, hands will not be able to reach it.<sup>15</sup> Because of the beloved high caste it is impossible for them to continue their relations and each must seek another lover/or beloved from their respective caste. But lover claims that his means not munificent but sufficient, my descent in like that of *Beathi* (forced labour) I have no glorious starts whatever.”<sup>16</sup> Castes being a major hindrance between their love and beloved consider her low caste lover as a heart broker as she has lost her heart to him in spite of his low caste, this couplet runs thus:

“I smoked your fine yellow tobacco, It has not been for your pleasant food, but silver bowl, I lost my heart after I smoked it”<sup>17</sup> “ She further says that, O my dear there is nothing to bother, About society caste and creed; Mind has been made-up to take thou hand, And face all sorts misery I agreed. “Thus we can reduce that love deepened by austerity and suffering, borne for its own sake. It grows in intensity and eternity by social obstacles to realization and revelation as the current of a river blocked on its way by uneven rocks, flows with greater force. Love born of physical attraction is to be sublimated into true love, based on penance and restraint. Lovers may not be sinners; still they love to suffer for crystallizing love.

Betrayal is the most devastating experience anyone can go through and the most horrible experience. It is a trust has been broken a bond torn between two souls that will take for some a life time to heal and for others it will not to think twice before even hunting/or breaking another soul in the manner because you will carry this burden forever. In one of the folk song reflects the pain of a lover who is betrayed by his beloved: thus sings:

“Why did you betray me? Why did you break my heart? Did not you feel the pain of my heart? Better you should poison me, so, that, I could get salvation, I assure you, will not pay for it. I pray to god (Narayan) you be sent to heaven for this act, me to hell”<sup>18</sup>. This song describes the pain and pangs of separation after betrayal in the most pathetic manner and presents a lovely picture of a lover in separation and pain, and presentation of excellent specimen of separated and betrayed lover giving vent to lover feeling and described the anguish of betrayed lover very effectively. However, lover did not blame his beloved for her betrayal rather prayed splendid heaven for her and held fate and *karma* responsible for all sort of miseries and suffering because one’s fate is fixed and accepted whatever fate has in store.

He sings thus: “Neither roasted seed germinates, Nor thinking fulfil desires. What is in fate written will happen at all cost.

The physical presence does not matter much in true love, lover sings that if the paths in the mountains which separate them, forbid contact, they will maintain their love in their heart.<sup>19</sup> when lover realized that a young boy attracted and lured his sweet heart from him. “My sweet heart was captivated by me; but now my sweet heart is appropriated by another hand some youth.” The love mourns the loss of his beloved to another young boy; when a Jewel is in one’s own possession, one measures not the Jewel’s proper value;

But when the jewel is lost to another, one becomes perfect in melancholy praise, “the lover has lost weight and appetite because his beloved has belonged him. He says that “the sweet heart whom I loved more than my own life; Has become the beloved of another; incurable disease has under mind my heart; Also the flesh of my body has dried up”, now he relies that no one is there to whom he can confide his pain and suffering.<sup>20</sup> To him his sweetheart is loveliest creation on the earth. He feels pleasure at the touch of her body. When she goes away with another lover, she seems to carry his heart along with her. His eye sight is impeded with tears. He is unable to enjoy the sight of her face even in the dream. He complains of her unkind heart, and finds no happiness in separation. The folk love songs of Shimla reflect in detail the tender sorrows of suffering hearts. The lover does not get relief with the cool breeze of river Giri Ganga, even the soothing and cool rays of the moon, the gentle breeze etc, torture him. He gives up farming does not attend any social gathering but spends sleepless night in grief. Love between lovers has been displayed in true colour in these *Lamanas*, The love deepens hereby hardship and suffering.

Thus, lovers accept pains of separation and betrayal because their destiny has already been decided and one cannot change fate. Things changes and one cannot do as one wishes but much accept fate. The folk love songs reflect that fate determines everything as to what lovers do. There is even no one, not even deity to help them in their love affairs. It is accepted that however, in the long run fate decided everything, i.e., their love journey and accept the role of fate as a dominating factor in deciding their love journey; and hoping for happy union in another life.<sup>22</sup> In one of the couplets a beloved says that if lover agree to unite and yet cannot it is fate, but one cannot fight fate if recompense is necessary, she further sings that

separation of lover may be necessary to gain merit whatever may be necessary to gain merit whatever may be the cause of separation. But dying lover asks his to close friend to arrange a last meeting with beloved, he thus sings:

“I am suffering from an incurable disease; to get well or heal me, medicine is of no use, and only single touch of my sweet heart is needed.”

But his beloved refuses to meet her dying lover and says that “Roofu should not seek the impossible nor beyond one’s means.” “My love seeks not the star from the sky, now I cannot fly so high.”<sup>23</sup>

Thus these folk love songs contain love passion, based on the physical attraction but elevated to true love, based on moral beauty and spiritual understanding. Passionate love the feels on the physical charm in the beginning has been evaluated from the perishable sphere if earthly beauty and lustful romance to the everlasting, permanent bliss at the juncture of earth and heaven. In some of the folk songs we meet with impulsiveness of blooming youth and physical grace, which attract towards each other.

Love is treated in varying colour delineated love in union as well as in separation or betrayal. These folk songs do appreciate free union of lovers, with the graceful freedom of love, where sex is treated merely lightning. The privacy of love is sacred. Complete dedication implies the exclusive possession on the favourite one. The true love is not treated as pleasurable in the union but it is heightened in separation. The pleasure of love gains immortality in the destruction of lover’s coil. Only that union gives blessing in which the two lover’s one seen equally eager for each other, the lovers are separated in the midst of enjoyment.

In the Mere O. Jaane Ra Beesara and Roofu, it takes place on the hill top village, where the love can really be enjoyed in union and where separation is most painful. It occurs suddenly like a bolt from the blue. At this critical stage, when lovers are separated by betrayal to enhance the pang of bereavement. These folk love songs expresses love in the most touching manner, and makes beloveds surpass troubles to gain the love to their lovers and vice-versa. Thus it is shown that lovers will give up their life in separation. Still they remain alive only in the hope of union in future. After the purification of their hearts in the

mortification (Tapas) they regain the happy bliss of perpetual Union. In these way Folk songs of Shimla presents this instinct of lover very successfully such treatment of love is rare

Certain phrases make it clear that only one sex should sing them, while other lines carry a subliminal message or historical allusion that only pertains to one sex. Both sides of Lamans will be sung by a mountainous, solitary singing along the trail. Each side may only sing one verse, consisting of four or six lines, but if the text allows it or the subject calls for it, more may be employed. The singing will frequently go on until one runs out of verses to sing. The underlying meaning of each line may be concealed, particularly in the references to mating and making love, even though the people from the hills are more forthright than those from the plains when it comes to expressing sexual statements in public.

### References:

1. K.R. Verma and Bal Krishna Thakur Lamana, Thande Panee Re Dhebhu, Shimla, N.D. P. 32 (hereafter T.P.D.)

Nadhi Re Khatlo Maurao Tatwoo Chisha, Jinho re rushe sajano, tinhora Jiuno Kisho.”

Goutam Sharma,(tr) Folk Lore of Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, 2<sup>nd</sup> Rev.ed. Delhi, 2005, p. 189.

2. Kagu Ne Charnu, Kagu Danda Chugli Pai, Patu charhu Bhorna, Beshi Deao Kusharhsi Lai, P. 19. T.P.D. P. 19

3. Gautam Sharma ,Folk Lore, op.cit, pp. 124.T.P.D.op.cit, p. 24.

Sheelea Bolo Ghasnalya, Lagde Na Aago Been payarora Bavanta Jeesha Kodu Ro Sago

5. Ibid. P. 25, Sapo Ri mundke Poru Deyo le Kati,Hanyu Bonu Detu Tu Bonure Bati.

Cobra here represent Society or People and their evil gossip.

Bathyane Jeedi jeeyoua Payar Karna, Morgha gi Foolo ra har Pana; Bathyano Mungthu nenuito Panee, Folrhu Jeehi Holkee, Galede Beinyo Lanee”

7. Bathyane Tu Janee Mere Mathe de Leekhi , Hamy goya ako duje ke Manru ditee.

8. Bathyane pacche murhe na pani re bavourhi

Sukhi Chharhe Manru Appano Aaj laga a melyane na sama

9. Sajana buro n chhare manru do ahyan Nemblo Cchsho Jendo tero munthu desho

10. Gautam Sharma,Foke Lore,op. cit, P. 186.

11. Eranee Pachhe re Erono Goyo Porhi, Eranee teenokho nahi rondhi khore,

Moyhsa nahi chhakhe duje re bago na siayo, siaya ri bago de te siayo hi siayo.

12. Khata-na Khane khatartu Mithe khayee bagi ri siayo tume mino ri kapati hami mano ne deyo. Mera na kori manru dukhee thori bato re tayne.

13. Mukhe ne dhobdi sare Duneya Ro – raja, mukhe to Dbhabo Tere kadam de jago.

14. T.P.D. op.cit, P. 26. ,Chander ma Jehri Akhti teri, surja jehra munthu tera.

15. Uchhati Dali ri falo, Duro d dakhnai parho”

The caste appears as a bar, I have wept so much O my divine love, my eyes have circle around them. How are you?

16. Beathi were lower caste people who worked the field and houses of upper caste people but yet they are usually poor but yet they rarely starve.

17. These lines of Lamans have a hidden meaning in sexual pleasures.

18. Hatho dideeyan Maryei Jahro, ka bighro Ta tera, kohee na molo lago ta tera, pora chuk da ta mera, mukhie hoyee chanyie jimpro Tankha sargo da dera ,Naryana suno chanyhee Tayoe mero”

19. O my love, we two love as one; let's not seek to add up sufferings. If snowfalls block one in the mountains, we will store up treasure in our heat?

20. Kona Naihee mera Apana; Takhei Duneeya Btery; Dukharar Kun Suno ra Mera.

21. My sweet heart, in this life, we cannot be together, but I assure you to meet you in the next life.

22. Meri bolo sargo do Tara chhorda nehi, Tari to Khatree Miera Mordhai Nehi

23. “In the shortened life time of these present days, I have here beseeched only so much from you; In the years of youthfulness in the next life, Life will see whether we shall come together