



## THE BIRD

The image of flight has always represented release from the physical restrictions of life on land and the soul's ascent towards the gods, mediators in the relationships between heaven and earth; birds share this symbolic meaning. This role as messengers for higher powers, for good or evil, can also be assumed by birds. A light-coloured bird and another darker bird in the branches of the tree of life represent reality's dual nature: darkness and light, life and death. Birds can be symbols for heaven, fire, purity and the soul, because they presuppose liberation from earthly purity.

Having wings and flying up to heaven are metaphors that express the transcendence of the human condition and spiritualisation. Releasing caged birds on Midsummer's Night Eve (June 23) brings good luck because it sends out the messenger of love; girls used to free them in the belief they would set off in search of a young man to smooth the way for courtship.

Birds (*auzell* in Catalan) are the quintessential image of the phallus in our islands. Different bird names are scattered throughout our traditional folksongs and references to the male sex organ are many and varied: *es pardal* (sparrow), *es gorrionet* (little tree sparrow), *es buscaret* (blackcap), *es xoríc* (kestral), *sa tita* (hen), *es mussol* (owl), *es canari* (canary), *es puput* (hoopoe), *es gall* (rooster), *es gorrió* (tree sparrow), *sa perdiu* (partridge), *sa perdiueta* (little partridge), *s'indiot* (turkey), *es verderol* (yellowhammer), *s'auzell* (bird), *s'aucellet* (birdie), *sa cadernera* (goldfinch) and others. None of these names has pejorative connotations, while the use of the diminutive expresses the esteem and tenderness felt for the referent, regardless of whether the ending is masculine or feminine in Catalan.

Birds are shy; they are covered with plumage and hide their heads in their feathers, almost impossible to see in cold weather. Birds sing when they are happy, when they want to play and when they go from flower to flower. And sex is like a bird in flight, a hope on the human horizon, a breath of life and impassioned ecstasy, certification of being alive. Birds can also be gentle and tender, which is why they need to be played with and caressed until they develop all the potential they contain within. They respond to birdcalls, mating calls, the gesture that implies a push. And despite their apparent freedom and supposedly free flight, they need company, a flock and a mate and live pending this possible, yearned-for landing. Majorcan folksongs abound in references to birds, because ever since human beings have glimpsed what lies beyond their horizons, they have also wished to combine these two aspects, which in fact comprise humanity: body and soul.

The birds in our folksongs are small and humble, like the ones people watched soar over the countryside in their comings and goings. This explains the tendency, the small size notwithstanding, towards exaggeration and desired transformation – if only to keep the subconscious mind content; nevertheless, women's genitalia are viewed as vast, which symbolises domination:

*Ropit, magre i petit, que amb quatre plometxes  
que dus vermeitxes ja dius que estàs ric  
Mèrlera, continflèlrela, continfló:  
sempre 'vies dit que sí i ara dius que no.*

Robin, small and thin, who claims to be fair just for the four feathers he has // Blackbird, *continflèlrela*, *continfló*. You always used to say yes and now you say no.

A robin (*ropit*) – the penis – is small and thin (*magre i petit*), two contemptuous words, yet it believes it is beautiful (*estàs ric*), when in fact it is hideous. In contrast, the blackbird (*mèl·lera*) – female genitalia – is large and black and dominates other birds. The decision lies in her hands, because she has the power to

seduce or reject the male. The blackbird in this *glosa* is described with nonsense words (*continflèlrela, continfló*) because her ever-changing and supposedly arbitrary decisions makes one lose one's head and sight of common sense and due measure in all things.

*Glosadors* (oral improvisers in the Balearics) also have a rich repertoire that confirms man's (and women's) latent desire for a large member as a sign of power, domination and rising above earthly paltriness:

*Vida trista, vida trista vida trista ja ho he dit:  
voldria tenir un xoric per combatre aquesta nit  
tres pics més llarg que sa vista.  
Contesta jo vull donar allà on me preguntau:  
voldria tenir un trau per assaciar aquest brau  
tres pics més gros que la mar.*

Sad life, sad life, sad life, I've already said: I wish I had a kestrel to combat this night, three times longer than any I have seen. I want to answer what you ask me: I wish I had a gash to calm this fierce bull three times bigger than the sea.

Here is an example of the gross exaggeration mentioned previously, although the first stanza is tragic and dramatic. The singer repeats 'sad life' (*vida trista*) three times, since he knows his dreams will never come true. He uses the magic number three to indicate the impossible size of the member he wishes he had. And she, as a result, also wishes her vagina were three times greater than the sea (*tres pics més gros que la mar*).

Birds are used as metaphorical references for both sexes, with all the corresponding connotations. Nature itself offered our ancestors a veritable atlas of symbols with which to face their taboos, fears and worries, as well as the things they yearned for or rejected. Birds fit the attributes of both sexes, which is why our folksongs are so rich and generous in this aspect, since sex has sullied or sorted out human relationships ever since consciousness has existed and even long before that.

*Na Francisca és una al·lota que és bona per fer un ramell, però me té un aucell  
que li pica sa carxofa.*

Francisca is a girl that serves as a branch, because she has a bird that pecks on her artichoke.

Artichokes (*carxofa*) are one of the images used to designate female genitalia. They are leafy when ripe and offer themselves up entirely to a bird's pecking (the male member), which reaches to the hilt. Francisca is one of the most popular girl's names in Majorcan anthroponomy. 'She serves as a branch' (*és bona per fer un ramell*), says the song, which means she is a kind, generous and trusting girl who wants to give her all and here that also includes sex; this is a nice girl who is offering to have sex.

*En arribar ja m'hi pos cama a cama,  
damunt ella, una mà a cada mamella  
i es bergant dins es seu cos.*

I put my two legs on top of her, one hand on each tit and the rascal in her body when I come.

A *bergant* or *bergantell* in Majorca refers to a strong young rascal. And by synecdochal extension, here it is a male member, rebellious as a lad blinded by all his power, which enters the also synecdochal body of the female.

*Jo em pensava que en tombar ja no s'aixecaria pus;  
això és com el Bon Jesús, que torna a ressuscitar.*

I thought that once it had fallen it would not rise again; this is like Jesus, who was resurrected.

This *glosa* is an irreverent comparison between Jesus' resurrection and a phallus'. The song's protagonist thought that once his penis had 'fallen' (*tombat*), it would not get erect again, but he was mistaken, which is when he compares it to Jesus' resurrection. In Majorca, the adjective good (*Bon*) is attached to Jesus to form an anthroponym that helps make him feel closer and more familiar: *Bonjesús*.

*Ets sa més guapa i garrida i molta planta que fas, emperò no trobaràs  
cap penga que et vengui justa, si no la't vols fer de fusta  
de sa mida que voldràs.*

You are the most beautiful, fair and fine-looking, yet you will never find a member your size if you don't make a wooden one yourself the size you want.

As mentioned elsewhere, female genitalia, unlike the male's, is always seen in rural Majorcan folksongs as a terribly large thing, which is nevertheless a way of expressing robust good health, the 'fine-looking appearance' (*molta planta*) to which this song refers. Confronted with this duality, the man has no other choice but to accept this impossible situation and thus, tells the woman that if she wants to find a male member her size, she will have to make one out of wood: *si no la't vols fer de fusta de sa mida que voldràs*.

*Saps què em va dir sa poblera quan l'hi vaig haver enroscat?  
– Re-cap de fotre, estimat!  
tu maneges un soldat  
que per mi m'ets espanyat es pany de sa cartutxera.*

Do you know what the Poblера told me once I had screwed her? Re-cap de fotre, dear! You handle a soldier that has broken the lock on the cartridge.

The protagonist of this song comes from Sa Pobla, a land of strapping men and women known as *Pobleras*, who work from sunrise to sunset in the fields. The women of Sa Pobla are famous for their initiative, domineering temperament and not beating about the bush, in all senses. In this verse, the man's member, as if it were a coil spiralling inside her, brings forth an exclamation of admiration from the woman, who has been completely captivated by him: *Re-cap de fotre!* And she uses two metaphors in reference to copulating: the male's member is a soldier bearing arms and the female's genitals are a cartridge holder into which the soldier inserts the weapon and breaks it (*espanyat*), because of its considerable size.

*Jo me la tirava en terra enmig de dos borratxons  
i amb so sotrac des coions  
li vaig omplir es cul de terra.*

I did it to her on the ground between two kales and I filled her backside with dirt with the lurching of my balls.

Vegetables – peppers, eggplants, cabbages, radishes, etc. – have always been popular metaphors in Majorca for male and female genitalia, as well as intercourse. In this case, two kales (*borratxó*) impassively watch as the scrotum swing on the dusty ground and fill the female's backside with dust while they copulate. Thus, the terrible, brutal force of the male's pushing relegates the female to the background.

*Mestre Llorenç Reboster va caure de s'escalera;  
tropessà amb sa coionera de tan llarga que la té.*

Sr. Llorenç Reboster fell down the stairs; so big were his balls that he tripped over them.

Many songs refer to the length and size of sex organs as a pledge of manhood in a subconscious yearning; the hyperbolic exaggeration here endows *Mestre Llorenç* with testicles (*coioneres*) so long they reached the ground and tripped him up as he was going down the stairs.

*Maria purissimeta! Sant Josep escagassat!  
Un pardal ben abrinat que sigui llarg i gruixat  
eixampla una poma estreta.*

Holy Mary! Sweet St Joseph! A glossy sparrow long and thick hollows out a tight apple.

Religious references are ever-present in the collective thoughts of a pious people like the Majorcans. St Mary and St Joseph (accompanied by an eschatological adjective) bear witness that a long and heavy (*llarg i gruixat*) male member (*pardal*), symbol of the excited male, serves to stretch out a vagina (*poma* or apple), although it is tight by nature.

*Mestre, vós qui posau mudes i amb això vos divertiu, empeltau-me sa perdiu;  
si aferra, en tendré dues.  
De s'arbre que primer esclata ja me'n dureu dos brotons; vos empeltaré es coions;  
si aferren, en tendreu quatre.*

Compañero, you who makes prongs and enjoys yourself doing so, graft a sparrow on me; if it takes, I'll have two. // Bring me two buds from the first tree in bloom; I'll graft you two; if they take, you'll have four.

Grafting a tree (*empeltar*), which is done with prongs (*mudes*), injects new life into it. The tree stands for the male member here, which is why the protagonist of the first verse requests a graft, so as to have two. The other singer responds he will graft testicles (*coions*) onto him and that if the graft works, he will have four instead of two.

*Mumare té una capçana  
de s'amplària d'un garbell i mon pare té un aucell com un batai de campana.*

My mother has a bun the size of a sieve and my father a bird like a bell clapper.

Hyperbolic exaggeration abounds in popular folksongs and even more so when sex is the topic. In this song, a bun (*capçana*) is a metaphor for a vagina, since it is as broad as a sieve (*garbell*), i.e., round and immense. And the man's phallus is a bell clapper (*batai*). The fact that it is a son – or daughter – who is speaking of parental genitals infuses the message with more emotion and affection.

*Quan te vaig veure venir  
per aquell camp de terrossos, es pardal se'm va fer trossos per sortir-te a camí.*

When I saw you coming through the rough patch of field, my sparrow exploded to come out to meet you. The encounter between the pair of lovers narrated here does not take place in a public place, but rather in a rough, rustic patch of land (*terrossos*), supposedly the opposite of what a sexual encounter requires. The man's member starts to explode (*se'm va fer trossos*) when he sees her coming and needily comes out to meet her.

*Sa poma de sa padrina no li pot pervenir mal,  
perquè ha esquinçat es pardal de cent soldats de marina.*

My grandmother's apple can come to no harm, because it has bent the sparrows of one hundred sailors.

The family member in question is the grandmother (*padrina*) in this song and the singer reminds us that her 'apple' (*sa poma*) is strong and healthy; nothing can injure it or do it harm, since it has broken one hundred penises (*pardals*) from one hundred sailors, furthermore conveying the idea that these members were virile ones belonging to young men in their prime.

*Per Ciutat me passejava sense doblers ni jornal  
i sa punta des pardal me servia de fanal,  
es vespre, com me colgava.*

I used to wander around Palma with no money or job and the tip of my sparrow served as a nightlight when I went to bed.

The protagonist of this song is a poor young boy who is lost in the big city. Yet his poverty does not prevent him from having a generous, rosy member that lights up like a beacon (*i sa punta des pardal / me servia de fanal*). So splendid and powerful was it, that at night when he went to bed (*com me colgava*), the tip of his penis served as a nightlight, highlighting the contrast between his ambulatory situation and enormous member.

*Els ous van dir, sense mal:  
estam empenyats tota hora, perquè aquest tros de pardal sempre mos deixa fora.*

Without malice, the testicles said, 'We are cross all the time, because that big old sparrow always leaves us out.'

Testicles (*ous*) are the ugly part; they are merely a hanging nuisance, pure and simple representation during intercourse, since they are ritual companions that provide support. This is why they raise their voices here in protest to the penis, since it also has a soul, to complain that he always leaves them on the outside during copulation and won't let them join in the party.

*Voldria que Déu me das una corterada d'horta, una perdiu llarga i forta com una truja hi té es nas.*

I wish God would give me a cuarterada of orchard and a partridge as long and strong as a sow's snout.

Country folk hold orchards (*horta*) in high esteem for their water, which means wealth in the world of agriculture. This song's protagonist beseeches God to grant him a *corterada* (a typical island measurement equivalent to roughly 7,000 square metres of land) to make an orchard. But this is not enough; he also asks God for a partridge (*perdiu*) as long and strong as a sow's snout as it roots along the ground in search of food.

*Tai de negre, tai de negre és es punt des barrinar.  
Es pardal d'un cristià  
dins sa poma no mossega.*

Black gash, black gash, is the beginning of fucking. A Christian's sparrow never bites inside an apple.

A penis (*pardal*) is boneless and therefore has no bite. It is noble and complies with its Christian duties: it does the work entrusted to it and when it does, i.e., when it enters the vagina (*poma*), it does not bite (*dins sa poma no mossega*). The description of the female genitalia in the first line is only included to help the rhyme along.



## THE FLOWER

As a rule, flowers are a symbol of passivity. A flower's chalice is like a receptacle of celestial activity, symbolised by the rain and dew that moisten and penetrate it. Furthermore, a flower's growth, thanks to the nutrients provided by the water and soil, symbolises its manifestation on the basis on these passive substances. Flowers are considered models of the spontaneous development of an art without artifice that is nonetheless perfect; they are also emblematic of the life cycle and its ephemeral character. The Greeks believed paradise was paved with lilies and the Chinese thought that a flower bloomed in heaven for each woman who lived on earth. These two ancient beliefs are useful in deciphering the flower's most symbolic meanings: paradise and female beauty.

Flowers are also the symbols of spring, youth, beauty, love and even life's fleeting joys, which fade too fast. Their colours and hues have different meanings as well, depending on the case: yellow for lands; red for blood and passion, white for innocence and purity and blue for spirituality and the unattainable. And their fragrance: fine, penetrating, and intoxicating. Flowers have a language that the Romantic movement extended: irises for naiveté, violets for modesty, everlastings for spiritual certainty; white carnations for fidelity, yellow carnations for disdain, red carnations for ardent love, tulips for a declaration of love, orange blossom for purity, maidenhair for falseness, pansies for memory and more. And wilted flowers express a lack of affection.

Yet among the many meanings of the word *flor* in Catalan, what interests us here is when it symbolises a woman's genitals. For her to give or offer her flower or for a man to pluck it or accept it represents the gift of virginity, the act of first love, the deflowering. The Catalan word *poncella* has several different meanings, including a bud before it opens (and therefore symbol of virginity) and a damsel or virgin.

To be in the flower of life is to be at the height of one's creative effervescence; more simply put, to be blooming refers to the moment of greatest perfection or beauty. To go from flower to flower may allude to a man who goes with many women without any lasting relationships. And *flor* can be used to describe a silly, thickheaded woman: 'Don't be such a flower!'

The place on the body where a flower is worn signals different messages: a flower facing front means that a woman is looking for a suitor, to one side, that one has already been found and on the bust, that she is looking for a husband. The Catalan lexicon has an extensive repertoire of derivatives from the word *flor*, generally diminutives or augmentatives, of which the variation of Catalan spoken in Majorca boasts a wide variety: *florassa, floretxa, floreua, floriua, florona, florina, floretina, florinoia, florineua, floretona, floretinoia, florota*. The Catalan expression 'to throw out the flower' means to reject the best part of something. And even so, one or two flowers are never enough; no one is ever completely satiated: 'One flower does not a summer make, nor two, a spring'.

Early figs (*figa flor*), which ripen around St. Peter's day on June 29, are the first figs of the season. They are the symbol par excellence of a vagina since they have all the same attributes: fleshy and soft, with a small sweet drop of moisture. In particular, they are birds' favourite fruit – birds here being a popular euphemism for the penis. Popular folksongs say that bird must sample a fig to find out whether it is any good, as if that would attest to ripeness and readiness for consumption.

As plants, flowers also have a life cycle: the petals separate when they bloom and perfume the air. They deck themselves in their brightest colours to attract insects for pollination, which is not possible when they are faded. Our folksongs contain a warning borrowed from nature: flowers are not attractive all their lives, which is why one needs to enjoy them at the height of their beauty; later they will wither and no one will pay attention to them any more.

Massages with rose or violet water or oils serve to alleviate migraines or the altered vision that results from making love. Sleeping on a bed of roses is synonymous with sleeping soundly and dreaming infinitely beautiful thoughts. There are 'virtuous-less flowers', a flower condemned to lack fragrance and allure, 'honey flowers', 'moon flowers', 'nun flowers', 'butterfly flowers', 'bird flowers', 'bee flowers' and 'flowers of love'. All these expressions serve to designate different species, yet they share the unusual feature of containing sumptuous metaphors in their names.

In popular culture, flowers – in all these senses – have always exerted a special attraction, a type of magic, a spell. A flower is fragile, smooth and tender and must be smelt gently, not roughly. It needs a certain time to acquire its beauty and needs to be allowed to bloom. Majorca has a saying that sums this up aptly: *Lo que no floreix, no pot granar* (What does not bloom cannot bear fruit), i.e., a woman who does not menstruate cannot conceive, thus establishing a parallel between a flower's development and the maturation of female sex organs for procreation.

*Flor* in Catalan also designates the round hole in the centre of a guitar box. The reference is very clear: a deep round, orifice that emits a noise when touched. An ancient song very innocently says:

*A sa guiterra li veig des mànec fins a sa flor;  
però no li veig es cor a s'al·lota que festeig.*

I see the guitar from the handle to the flower, but I don't see the heart of the lass I am courting.

The guitar, the neck, the flower, the heart, the girl – a whole universe of symbols, metaphors and word – play to highlight nature's duality, the male and the female: an element to insert and a receptacle to receive; the imagination is served.

*Al·lotes, voltros teniu enmig de s'enforcadura, una figa flor Madura  
que és bona per sa perdiu.*

Lassies, in the centre of your pitchfork is a ripe fig that appeals to the partridge.

Figs, especially early figs, are a metaphor for female genitals: cracked, somewhat dry, rosy on the inside and oozing a drop of sweetness. For the partridge (the phallus), this fruit is summer's best and provides

strength and energy to survive. This song says that a woman has an early fig (*figa flor*) between her legs that serves to nourish the male member.

*Jo duc sa poma penjada a ses ales des capell  
i no hi ha hagut cap aucell, verderol ni passarell,  
que la m'hagi espipellada.*

I have an apple hanging from my hat brim and no bird, yellowhammer or sparrow has pecked at it.

Virginity, in certain circumstances in the traditional world, was certainly endowed with an exaggerated value. In this *glosa*, a girl announces that no bird (man), regardless of class or whether for a one-time affair or a lasting one, has wanted to approach her vagina (*poma*) to 'peck' it, although her desire to lose her virginity is clear, since her apple is perfectly visible – 'hanging from the hat brim' (*penjada a ses ales des capell*).

*Un general qui va a guerra sap menar un cavall bo.  
S'al·lota me té sa flor com una boca de gerra.*

A general off to war knows how to ride a fine horse. My beloved has a flower like the mouth of a jug.

The flower is the quintessential symbol of female genitalia. The first two lines in this song are not directly related to the last two and have been added just to help the rhyme along. The army is represented here by a general, the highest rank, in order to lend the equivalent flower importance. According to the song, this flower is open and deep, 'like the mouth of a jug' (*com una boca de gerra*). Furthermore, the horse, emblem of military strength, bears witness to this yearned for balance between flowers (softness) and force (pushing).

*Me'n vaig anar a Formentor i vaig conèixer una al·lota,  
i tenia una carxofa  
com un plat de fer trempó.*

I went to Formentor and met a lass who had an artichoke like a salad bowl.

Mentioned elsewhere is the artichoke's symbolic representation of female genitalia: it opens and becomes furry as it ripens. This song explains how a boy went to Formentor, a place in the municipality of Pollença in northern Majorca, to meet a girl who had an artichoke as large as a salad bowl, i.e., round, wide and deep. Trempó is a typical Majorcan salad made of chopped tomato, peppers and onions sprinkled with salt and dressed with oil that is popular in summer.

*Madò Tronca, madò Tronca des terme de Sant Joan,  
vós teniu sa poma gran; per això sempre vos ronca.*

Mistress Tronca, Mistress Tronca in the district of Sant Joan, your apple is huge, which is why it always snores.

Mistress Tronca is a farm worker with no prudish scruples who lives in Sant Joan, a village in the Pla district of Majorca. The song once again exaggerates the size of her vagina (*poma*), which is so big it cannot help making a loud noise, depicted here as snoring. This noise also serves as a decoy to lure the male.

*Madoneta, vós sou poma; bon pomeral que teniu  
poma d'hivern i d'estiu,  
i així tot l'any teniu poma.*

Señorita, you are silly; you have a fine apple orchard, apples in winter and summer, and thus you have apples all the year round.

Here the word *poma* is being used to designate a foolish, thick-headed woman, at times even a woman of easy virtue, who is the real protagonist of this song. Her apple orchard (vagina) bears apples in summer as well as in winter, which is why she is ready for sex all year round.

*Sa berganta de sa Vall, no sa major, sa segona, a cada banda de poma li ha sortit un queixal.*

The young maid from Sa Vall, not the elder, but the younger, has a molar growing on each side of her apple.

A berganta in Catalan can mean a young woman as well as a woman of easy virtue, the latter of which applies here. The song assures us that of the two sisters who live in Sa Vall, one of the largest farms in Majorca, the younger likes sex so much that a tooth (*queixal*) has come out on either side of her vagina for having practiced it so much. Again, we find a terrific exaggeration.

*Sa poma de na Maria està dins un comellar; de sabonera que fa, un barco hi navegaria.*

Maria's apple is in a dale and a ship could sail upon the foam it makes.

The apple (female genitalia) produces juice; it drips, sometimes to the point of lathering. The simile is used here to explain that despite being in the lowest part of a valley – a dry place far from the sea – Maria's vagina produces so much lather (*sabonera*) she could make a boat sail on land. The hyperbole is extraordinary.

*Si per sa cara tenc faltes, això no t'ha de fer por. Que no puc tenir sa flor tan hermosa com ses altres?*

You should not be concerned if my face is not perfect. Can't my flower be as comely as the others?

Where does beauty dwell? Can the defects (*faltes*) we hide be seen? The loved one here is reassuring his beloved, whom he must have reproached for her ugly face. She takes offence and responds that perhaps her face is not perfect, yet her flower (*vagina*) is as comely as a woman's whose face is beautiful.

*Vaig anar an es cirerer*

*i hi vaig trobar na Coloma; redecristo, quina poma! pareixia un sementer.*

I went to the cherry tree and found Coloma there. Sweet Jesus, what an apple! It was like a sown field.

Fruit trees lend themselves to a range of sexual images, male and female alike. Apples and apple orchards are the supreme representation of the vagina. Sex is presented here with an exclamation of surprise (*redecristo*), because when the man goes to the cherry tree and finds Coloma. When he sees her vagina, which seems very large to him, he compares it to the size of a plot of land that has been furrowed and seeded (*sementer*).

*Ses al·lotes de Bunyola i ses de Biniaraix*

*se midaven sa de baix amb una bona garrova. Respon sa més atrevida:*

*De sa meva no me'n queix; tant per llarg com de través té un pam afavorida.*

The lasses from Bunyola and those from Biniaraix measure themselves down there with a fine carob. The boldest one responds, 'I can't complain about mine. It is highly favoured, both long and wide.'

The long, curved shape of the carob bean (*garrova*) symbolises the phallus. The girls in this song are from two neighbouring villages in Majorca (Bunyola and Biniaraix) and are using a carob bean to measure the depth and width of their vaginas. One of them wins and says that hers, which she is not complaining itself, measures a hand in width and depth, which is what a carob bean usually spans.

*Vós teniu ses calentures just davall es davantal.*

*En es vostro pomeràl*

*sempre hi ha pomes madures.*

You have a fever right under your apron. There are always ripe apples in your apple orchard.

Warmth, fever, heating up, fire... are synonymous of love and enthusiastic sex. This song assures us that the woman is very hot between her legs right under the apron (*just davall des davantal*) and that her apple orchard (*vagina*) always contains ripe apples (*pomes madures*), in reference to her permanent willingness for sex, like ripe fruit on the verge of being eaten.





## PUSH, PUSH, FLORIANA

*Empenyar*, the word for push in Catalan, is synonymous with sprinting and both are the product of some kind of impetus, although being pushy accomplishes nothing, since things never turn out well that way. When used in reference to sex, *empenyar* means not to come off very well, as if one were trying to box one's way through. One popular proverb succinctly sums this up: *No es pot arribar i empènyer* (Not everything can be done by simply showing up and shoving), i.e., things are not always as easy as they may seem at first; the groundwork must be laid beforehand sometimes, a warm-up before starting the dance.

*Déu vos guard d'un penyal baix, i de petita sempenta* (God save you from a low cliff and a small push). This saying implies that little things count, things that entail no risk or hazard. *A un penjat, donau-li s'empenta* (Just push by a hanged man) means there is no point in proceeding with caution when confronting a fait accompli, which must be accepted as a consummate fact and all the consequences assumed. And another expression tells us that *Qui dia passa, any empeny* (Whoever pushes through the day pushes through the whole year), which means that solving everyday problems is the way to solve the whole year's.

Pushing brings force to mind and one pushes when one wants to move something from where it is or insert it into another object. The expressions *Empenya-la fort an aquesta!*, *Li faria ses busques endins* and *A un home no li han de dir dues vegades que empenyi*. (Give her a good push, that will shove the rod deep inside / A man doesn't need to be told twice to push) remind us that pushing is a man's job, because he is the one who inserts something inside a woman and she is merely a passive object in this case, who plays no role in receiving; she simply tolerates it. Once again, a trace of misogyny rears its head in our traditional folksongs, sayings and proverbs, the result of repetition down the centuries. It seems that women did not even have the right to enjoy sex – which reminds us that even today, the atrocious practice of ablation is still practiced in certain cultures – and that displaying passion was deplored during several periods in history.

*Glosadors*, traditional folksingers who improvise oral verses, use these expressions often, especially when sparring with a woman in contests of oratory and loquacity. One clever *glosador* from *Cas Concos*, Sebastià Vidal, known as 'Sostre', fired back in response to a woman's attack on the size of his penis:

*Me diguéreu s'altre dia dins un quarto d'amagat si ja m'havia tornat petit com una llentia;  
i trob que vos convendria vos cuidàssiu des forat, que el teniu més bombejat que no té plom escampat  
un cuerpo d'artilleria: a dins sa vostra badia ja no hi duen mercansia  
perquè aquell port que hi havia a sempentes l'han tomat.*

You asked me the other day, in a room alone together, if I had already gone back to being the size of a lentil and I believe it is in your own interest to take care of the hole, that it is more shot through with lead than an artillery corps: in your bay, goods are unloaded no longer, since the port there has crumbled from pushing.

What interests us in this *glosa* is the last line, which includes the word 'pushing' (*sempentes*), the topic of this introduction. The *glosa* says that an entire artillery corps would not be capable of discharging more volleys than the woman's vagina has received. Not only that, it is compared to a harbour, since loaded vessels enter to deposit their merchandise in her port, euphemisms for penises and ejaculating. But the *glosador* goes beyond that and proclaims that no one and nothing can be unloaded there now, i.e., her vagina can no longer provide shelter for anyone or anything, since so many penises, so much pushing and so many discharges have demolished it.

All the songs in this section reflect feeling from a man's point of view. Pushing would be the only foreplay before copulating; there was no playful eroticism or sexual innuendo – everything was resolved in a direct

attack. Who enjoys himself? Are services exchanged? Not in traditional folksongs, decidedly not: only the man counts. When a woman does intervene, she employs neither a man's language nor his abruptness. And even, on many occasions, a man will quote what a woman has said, instead of her speaking directly.

Our traditional folksongs include behaviours, expressions and feelings that are the fruit of the way a certain group of people decided to organise their coexistence. And they reflect values that made some kind of sense at a certain time or at least are understandable in view of the history of humanity. Not everything we have been bequeathed is good, yet it is beneficial to be acquainted with one's tradition, in order to make sense of it and act consequently and critically so that cultural forms that are unfathomable today can be eradicated, e.g., sexual preferences, misogyny, religion and anti-Semitism, among others. In a way, traditional folksongs distil the essence of how people generally behaved and used stereotypes to exaggerate defects and virtues. One must delve deeper, little by little without being pushy; that is the only way to grasp the soul and reach new heights of respectful behaviour and shared feelings.

*Empeny, empeny, Floriana: Floriana, empeny, empeny.  
Com sa barca pren es rem, llavò hi vaig de bona gana.*

Push, push, Floriana: Floriana, push, push. As the boat stretches the oar, then I'll go easily along.

Whether steadily, brusquely or spasmodically, one must push in order to go in and out. The boat (a euphemism for the vagina) must stretch the oar (the penis), which is inserted in the water just as a penis is inserted into a vagina. Once penetration has been achieved, everything goes much more easily, willingly (*vaig de bona gana*).

*A un rellotge de sol posen sa busca en sa nit.  
Qui és casat i té delit,  
la hi posa s'hora que vol.*

The hands of a sundial are set during the night. He who is married and wishes to, sets the clock whenever he feels like it.

One cannot set a sundial and least of all at night, when there is no sun to cast a shadow. A sundial needs a long and thin gnomon (*busca*) like a twig, which stands for a penis here. The play on words is that man can set the gnomon to whatever time he wants to, meaning that he can make love whenever he wants (*té delit*), because the clock – the woman in this case – is in his house and belongs to him, an excellent example of man's power over woman and the misogyny that saturates these songs.

*Avui s'ha acabat sa planta que de fadrina faràs.  
Demà, quan t'aixecaràs, a ses amigues diràs:  
Ja m'ha passat es solpàs per sa meva casa santa.*

Today, your maidenly look will come to an end. Tomorrow when you rise, you'll say to your friends, 'The saint has already been by my house to bless it.'

When a woman gets married, she loses her smiling, carefree, innocent and maidenly appearance. Priests used to bless homes with the *solpàs*, a kind of candelabrum, during Easter week. Here the husband becomes a chaplain carrying the *solpàs* (a penis) in the holy house (his wife's vagina) and has transformed it from its former status.

*Boixem, que Déu mos ho mana; deixem anar ses cançons.  
Jo m'he de buidar es coions dins aqueixa poma sana.*

Let's make love! God orders us to, so let's stop fooling around! I must empty my balls inside that luscious, healthy apple.

*Boixem* means to copulate and since one of God's divine commandments is to procreate, this *glosa* claims that it is time to 'leave off singing', meaning it's time to get down to brass tacks. Since God commands us to make love, the man here expresses his yearning to empty the semen filling his testicles into the 'apple' (*poma*) or vagina, which, furthermore, is healthy and virtuous, since it was being kept especially for that day.

*Com més llarg i gruixat és, sa fadrina més ho ama;  
com l'hi posen no diu res, i com l'hi treuen, reclama.*

The longer and thicker, the more the maiden likes it. Not a word does she say when they put it in and complains when they take it out.

The atavistic belief exists that a long, thick penis is better for procreation and pleasure, which is what this verse echoes: the girl loves it because it is long and thick and says nothing when the boy inserts it, yet complains bitterly when he removes it.

*A devora un ametler  
i a s'ombra d'una prunera una femella em va fer  
sa pell de sa fava enrera.*

Near an almond tree in the shade of a plum tree, a female pulled my foreskin back.

Once again, we find fruit trees in this song (*ametler* and *prunera*, an almond tree and a plum tree, respectively) and another widely accepted metaphor in traditional Majorcan culture: a *fava* (a broad bean) is a penis by antonomasia and more specifically, the glans penis, purportedly because of the more than reasonable similarity between the two. The meaning of the word *fava* in Majorca is unmistakable. Here the girl has 'shucked' the young man's fava, i.e., she has pulled the foreskin back from the glans penis.

*A Pollença, es pollencins, quan la tenen ajaguda,  
no li peguen cap premuda que no l'hi tenguin dedins.*

In Pollença, when the Pollensinos have her lying down, they don't start to push until they have put it inside.

No pushing or shoving takes place in this *glosa* before the man has inserted his member inside the woman's vagina, to prevent anyone or anything from escaping. The man's assumed domination is very clear here: first, he lays her down, then, he inserts his penis and afterwards begins to push. In this case, to facilitate the rhyme, the song attributes this trait to the inhabitants of Pollença, a town in northern Majorca.

*Aquest porcell d'un quintar no farà tant de saïm  
com sa cuca regalim a s'hora des barrinar.*

This hog, which weighs a quintal, shall not give as much lard as the beastie gives juice when it fucks.

Hog slaughtering – still traditional in Majorca in the autumn – contains a whole world of sexual symbolism in its raw and cooked stages and its colours and smells. The viscous, white lard obtained from pork fat is remarkably like semen. Here the *glosa* claims that the enormous pig (*d'un quintar*) will not produce as much lard as the tiny beastie (*cuca* – penis) produces semen when it ejaculates into a woman, a sign of virility.

*Diuen que per pujar al cel han de passar el rosari.  
Es qui li passa a n'Eulari' és es bergant d'En Miquel.*

They say the rosary must be said to get into heaven. It is that rascal Miquel who is saying it to Eulari.

Reciting the rosary, a long litany of monotonous, reiterative words, was a custom that survived until the last quarter of the twentieth century throughout most of rural Majorca. This song asserts that those who say rosaries will go to heaven. The *bergant* (rascal) passes the rosary over to the girl, a euphemism for intercourse. The conclusion is that making love is a different way of reaching heaven.

*Na Mascarona va d'oro com ses moixes de gener.  
En Miquel Groc l'hi va fer dins ses figueres de moro.*

Mascarona struts about like a cat in January. Miquel Groc did it to her among the prickly pears.

*Anar d'oro* (to strut about), *anar alçurada* (to be excited) and *tenir-ne ganas* (to feel like doing something) are expressions that can be applied to animals as well as people, since they deal with primal instincts,

which is why cats feature in this song. When one of them gets aroused, even a dangerous, uncomfortable place such as an orchard of prickly pears (*chumberas*) will do for discharging its instincts.

*Jo me'n vaig anar a sa Pobla per boixar dalt una pell:  
quan li veig es foradell, li pos es pardal en doble.  
Sa fava passà aviat,  
sa poma pegà bramul  
i es coions feren clac-clac per sa regata des cul.*

I went to Sa Pobla to fuck on a skin. When I saw the little hole, I pushed the doubled sparrow in. The tip went in fast, the apple gave a wail and the balls went click-clack as they banged against the crack in her tail.

What stands out above is that the only consideration is the male's point of view: brute force and pushing, a description of one of the most bestial and savage aspects of sexual intercourse. The man says he went to Sa Pobla – a village in the centre of the island famed for its agriculture – to look for a female with whom to copulate. When he saw the girl's vagina, he inserted his 'doubled', i.e., erect and enlarged, penis. He claims his member entered easily, causing the girl to cry out. In the meantime, his testicles smacked up against her buttocks.

*En festeig una de negra  
qui em guanya de dotze graus. Amb sa poma taia claus; considerau es pardals  
de quin modo los roega!*

I am courting a black maiden who is twelve degrees bigger than I. Her apple can split nails; Imagine how it bites sparrows!

This song is unusual in that it mentions a black woman. Traditional folksongs contain few references to race, although references to other cultures can be found. Black woman were infrequent and exotic in the island's traditional world and all their defects and virtues were praised with equal exaggeration. Here the woman is bigger and stronger than the man (*em guanya de dotze graus*), so strong she can split iron nails (*taia claus*) with her 'apple', which 'bites' the male's member in delight.

*Endins, endins la mar brama, endins, endins la mar creix.  
D'aquesta casta de peix només n'agafa una dama.*

Inside, inside, the sea is roaring, inside, inside, the sea is growing. This type of fish can only be caught by a lady.

The sea is great, immense; waves tower during storms as if the sea were growing even larger and it howls and roars. Fishermen do not go out in this weather and cannot catch any fish (the penis in this song). Only a woman – a lady (*dama*) – can catch this kind of fish, in reference to male genitalia, because she knows how to get to them; she knows where they hide.

*Es pardal i sa cotorra,  
res millor que vagin junts. Encara que hi donin punts, es gust que fa mai s'esborra.*

It is best for the sparrow and the parrot to be together. The pleasure it causes shall never fade, although you may need stitches.

The *pardal* (sparrow – a euphemism for a penis) and the *cotorra* (parrot – a vagina) are two birds that belong together. The experience is worth it, despite the problems, explained here as 'she may have to get stitches' (*encara que hi donin punts*) to fix it, because the pleasure is so great she will never forget it (*mai s'esborra*).

*Una fadrina, quan jeu, sa poma elàstic pareix,  
i un bon pardal s'engoleix com si xuclàs un fideu.  
Tant ne xucla vuit com deu;  
tots d'un en un los panseix.*

A maiden's apple when she's sleeping seems elastic and sucks up a fine sparrow as if it were a noodle. She cares not if there are eight or ten; she wilts them all, one by one.

This song refers to the vagina's elasticity, which it claims is like rubber (*elàstic pareix*). Here this girl's vagina is so agile it can devour a penis as easily as sucking a noodle (*com si xuclàs un fideu*) and not only that, its capacity is generous, since it cares not if there are eight or ten. All virile members end up the same way after experiencing this vagina: as dry as raisins.

*I l'hi varen trobar per devers Son Perot  
amb ses comes a l'aire i es pardal ben a prop.*

And they found her close to Son Perot with her legs up in the air and the sparrow nearby.

Language is also sexual innuendo, hints, half-hints. The opening here is a continuation of something that must have started long before, since the verse begins with the word 'and', thus conveying the idea this is not the first time they have found the girl with her legs open on the verge of being penetrated. This time they have found her near a well-known farm known as Son Perot.

*Jo les cui de cap de brot per no castigar ses rames.  
Francina, eixanca ses comes si vols que el t'enfanyi tot.*

I pick them very ripe, so as not to hurt the branches. Francina, open your legs if you want me to push it all the way in.

It is very important to pick fruit carefully, without damaging the tree that produces it, which is why the man in this song is careful not to damage the branches, which resembles a woman in this case, and afterwards tells her to open her legs wide, if she want him to penetrate her all the way, so he will not hurt her. This is one of the few songs that contain any sensitivity or interest in the woman's state.

*Jo tenc l'amo meu fadrí  
i sa madona que és viuda; a ell es pardal li siula;  
ella l'hi deu reblanir.*

My master is a bachelor and the mistress is a widow. His sparrow whistles to him; she should soften it.

People always used to jump to conclusions and spread rumours when a bachelor and a widow spent time together. This song's author is not swearing to anything and is only speculating when he supposes that since the man in question is a bachelor, he is so hungry for sex that his penis whistles at him (*siula*); it makes noise. She, a widow, is also needy, which is why she should soften (*reblanir*) his penis, i.e., help him reach orgasm and ejaculation.

*L'any passat dins es gener eren set qui la'm tocaren, i tant de gust me donaren  
que boixadora em vaig fer.*

Last January, seven touched me there and so much pleasure did I feel, that I became a whore.

The notion that the more one engages in sexual intercourse, the more one likes it is widespread in traditional culture. This song's author tells us that seven men touched her genitals last January, which was so pleasurable she decided to devote herself to the profession.

*Mumare quan me va fer, se va espenyar sa cadufa,  
i mon pare amb sa baldufa la hi va tornar a posar bé.*

My mother broke her jug when she made me and my father fixed it with his top.

A top (*baldufa*) is a round toy with a tip, which players try to make spin on its axis. This image makes the son think his father used his 'top' to repair his mother's 'jug' (*cadufa*), damaged during the childbirth that brought him into the world.

*Na Maria de s'Aubac  
té sa poma amb quatre fuis; quan li vénen, cluca ets uis,  
i es qui està damunt ja ho sap.*

María de s'Aubac's apple has four leaves; she closes her eyes when they come and the one on top knows it.

The woman here is the one lying underneath and is closing her eyes (*cluca ets uis*), although the song does not let on if out of pleasure, pain or rage. We have mentioned elsewhere that what truly matters is for men to enjoy themselves. The fact that the man on top of her already knows she will be closing her eyes makes us think it is not the first time he has made love to Maria. Moreover, it lends the impression that a number of men pass through her bed.

*N'hi dava per sa cotorra amb un pardal llarg, gruixat, que li venia ajustat  
com un grifó a una bóta.*

He gave it to the parrot with a long, thick sparrow that fit her just as tightly as a spigot does a cask.

The comparison is apt. The notion of having a long, fat member is the dream and desire of all males. Here the protagonist explains that he inserted in her vagina (*cotorra*) a member so fat it barely fit, so fat it seemed like the spigot of a cask, which must be inserted into the hole with force and care, so as not to spill one drop of the precious liquid it contains.

*En dia que plou i trona, s'aigua arregussa arreu.  
Com més endins l'hi fareu, més contenta la tendreu; jo ho sé de sa meva dona.*

Water washes all away on days of rain and thunder. The deeper you get, the happier she'll be; I know that thanks to my wife.

The idea of penetrating a woman forcefully, almost violently, to the hilt has been always considered a sign of masculinity, a reminder of how a woman's pleasure was of no consequence in this terribly misogynous traditional culture; the male is the only one who counted. In this song, a man is sharing a piece of advice with the others and assures them he has tried it out and proven it with his wife; he is well familiar with it, because he is married, as if that were a dogma. The advice: the deeper a man drives his penis into a vagina, the happier a woman will be.

*N'Eulària estava d'esquena amb so sergent desbocat  
i li tapava es forat  
perquè no hi entràs arena.*

Eulària was on her back with the sergeant all stretched out and he covered the hole so that sand would not get in.

The martial reference is a macho one, no doubt because instincts are catered to rather than reason in traditional culture. Here the sergeant (penis) is excited (*desbocat*) and covers the hole (vagina) to prevent sand from entering it, as if he needed an excuse for what he was doing.

*Per un pic que l'hi vaig fer, me pensava haver-la morta, i la va tenir més forta  
que s'encreuia d'un ferrer.*

That one time I did it to her, I thought I had killed her; it was harder than a smithy's anvil.

The man in this *glosa* is saying that the one time he copulated with a certain girl, he had feared she wouldn't be able to bear being charged – since he was so virile – and would die. But he was wrong; not only could she take it, he discovered that her vagina was tougher than a smithy's anvil.

*Quan mentre la barrinava sa mare me feia llum;  
vaig prendre per costum de pitjar, quan ella alçava.*

Her mother lit my way when I fucked her. I got into the habit of pushing whenever her legs were raised up.

The complicity of a girl's mother is often mentioned in folksongs, either in recollection of times gone by or because she enjoys watching. The young man says here that when he made love with his sweetheart, her mother held up the light for them (*feia llum*), i.e., their relationships were sanctioned, which is why he used to push (*pitjar*) when she raised up her legs (*quan ella alçava*), since he had the mother's approval in addition to the girl's.

*Saps què em va dir na Parró? Vine dejorn, demà vespre, me rapinyaràs sa nespla  
que em rebenta de picor.*

Do you know what Parró told me? Come tomorrow early in the evening. You'll claw my medlar, which itches to no end.

The girl, *na Parró*, asks the author of this song to meet her the following night because she wants to calm the burning in her genitals, here represented as a medlar (*nespla*). Furthermore, she exaggerates this need to make love, assuring the man that it itches so much it will burst, which is why she asks him to claw at it, a violence request, instead of scratching it, a smoother and more customary remedy for something that stings.

*Sa madona em diu: Tomeu, si l'amo meu se moria,  
amb tu pens que em casaria, tant m'agrada es boixar teu.*

My mistress tells me: Tomeu, I think I would marry you if the master were to die, since I like your way of fucking so much.

The humour in this song is based in the pretended innocence of a fine lady (*madona*), who tells one of her servants that she likes how he makes love (*es boixar teu*) so much, she would marry him if she were to be widowed. She has obviously sampled it before, which makes the woman's infidelity clear.

*S'estimat meu se pensava que es boixar em faria mal, i jo som d'un natural  
que, com més va, més m'agrada.*

My beloved thought fucking would hurt me, but my nature is such that the more I do it, the more I like it.

Mentioned above is the belief that the more one makes love, the more one likes it, which is what the girl expounds on here. Her beloved thought it would hurt her to make love, but she contradicts him and assures him that the more she does it, the more she likes it (*com més va, mes m'agrada*), an almost exceptional case of a woman's pleasure in traditional folksongs.

*Na Cotana té un trauc, En Rotger té un botó i van a embotonar-lo  
a davant Sant Nicolau.*

Cotana has a buttonhole and Rotger has a button and they button up in front of San Nicolau.

*Pegar un botó* (to fasten a button) is a popular euphemism for sexual intercourse. An eyelet (the vagina) is an aperture that can be buttoned, i.e., buttons can be inserted to close them up, which mirrors sexual intercourse. This stanza says the woman has an eyelet and a man a button to fill it with and they do the fastening in front of a church.



## THE BIRD IS DRAWN TO THE CAGE

A cage is a closed receptacle that human beings confine birds in. Cages and birds are metaphors for sex that are still alive and well in colloquial Majorcan speech. Birds can enter and leave cages whenever they want to, if they know how to open the door or have a key. Yet, sometimes a cage can be a trap from which a bird cannot escape, i.e., it has been hunted. Certain trap-cages are set up in such a way that the birds enter innocently enough attracted by the bait or decoys inside and cannot leave. Majorca's traditional folksongs mirror these situations:

*Totes ses dones que hi ha són gàbies enganadores;  
pobres, no vulgheu senyores, ni mai n'heu de festejar.*

All women are trap cages. My poor man, neither desire women, nor court them.

This song cannot make it any clearer: all women are like trap cages that lure birds (men) and trap them forever with their ruses.

Yet, there is another kind of cage with smaller mesh that people used to use to protect meat or other victuals from flies or rodents. In this sense, a cage was an approved device that served a protective purpose, a meaning that also appears in many folksongs.

Popular proverbs are also studded with these connotations: *Segons l'aucell, la gàbia* (The cage should suit the bird), i.e., songbirds, small or large, fluttering their wings or keeping still, will choose or be satisfied with a certain kind of cage. There is another proverb with a similar meaning, but without sexual connotations: *Segons s'al·lot, sa jugueta* (The toy should suit the child). Still another proverb exists for when one thinks 'there is too much woman' for one man and not necessarily in a physical sense: *Massa gàbia per a aquest aucell* (Too large a cage for this bird). And there is one saying that perfectly describes older men who can no longer perform: *Aucell vell no entra en gàbia* (Old birds don't enter cages) and one that reflects the experience that comes with the years and is therefore hard to deceive: *Aucell vell és mal d'engabiar* (Old birds are hard to cage). Yet no one likes to stay in a cage. A long time ago, people would say that those who were in a marriage wanted to get out, while those who were out wanted to get in. And lastly, there is a proverb that says: *Feta la gàbia, se mor l'aucell* (A bird dies once the cage is closed), which is actually tragic.

*Gàbia*, the word for cage in Catalan, has a lexicon semantically applicable to all the above connotations, which, like other terms, expresses size through augmentatives and diminutives: *gabiassa, gabiarra, gabial, gabieta, gabietxa, gabiella, gabieua, gabiona, gabió, gabioia, gabiota, gabiot*.

Birds have always been free animals that fly, yet they usually end up trapped in a cage, although folksongs would have it that they come and go at will. Despite that, the following proverb is unmistakably clear: *Val més esser aucell de bosc que aucell de gàbia* (Better to be a bird in the woods than a bird in a cage). The birds mentioned in *glosas* are usually small animals, although the meaning may vary when one refers strictly to sex. The word for bird – *aucell* – also has a derived lexicon of augmentatives and diminutives: *aucellàs, aucellarro, aucellot, aucellet, aucelleu, aucelletxo, aucellel·lo, aucellei, aucellí, aucelló, aucelloï, aucellingo, aucellengo, aucellinot, aucellinoiet*.

There is a very unusual expression related to birds that is akin to one that warns us not to place two roosters in the same hen house: *Dos aucells a una espiga, no lliga* (Two birds don't fit on one ear of maize). Two birds perched on an ear of maize will break it, which is why each bird should have his own branch.

It is clear that the misogyny that lingers in the collective subconscious mind permeates all these songs. The cage is a negative thing, because it deprives one of freedom; it lures birds and traps them in exchange for a supposed security. However, birds are free spirits that need to fly and discover new horizons; they cannot stay enclosed in cages. These two ways of understanding the male and female essences and the roles each should play in society were determined by customs and norms and shaped by religious beliefs in which women are portrayed as the root of all the world's evils. Woman tempted Adam; it was she who made him sin, which caused expulsion from paradise. This has resulted in a viewpoint that still lodges in the deepest recesses of the subconscious mind and rears its head naturally in popular expressions, folksongs, fables and tales, as well as in the ordinary lives of many couples today.

We are not judging these interpretations; our main interest lies in the artistic and aesthetic aspects of our popular lore, through which to understand our collective soul and deepest way of thinking, so as to overcome the atavistic prejudices of pernicious misogyny, at the very least.

*Na Catalina té rabi' i la té de tu, Mateu,  
de veure s'aucellot teu a lloure, i ella té gabi'.*

Catalina is furious and furious at you, Mateu, about seeing your big bird flying free when she has a cage.

A bird (the penis) must go through the door to get into a cage (the vagina). The woman in this folksong has her cage all ready to keep the animal, but the male member, here expressed with contemptuous



connotations (*aucellot*) to emphasise its size, prefers to remain free and flutter about to and fro in freedom – incomprehensibly to her, which is what causes her rage (*rabi*).

*A damunt es Puig Major s'hi fan carabasses blanques.  
Al·lota, mostrau ses anques, vos mostraré es gorrió.*

Pale pumpkins grow on top of Puig Major. Lass, show me your buttocks and I will show you my sparrow.

Pumpkins and marrows are common euphemisms for male genitals and are pale because they never see the sun (*carabasses blanques*). Here the singer claims a lad with huge genitals lives on Puig Major, Majorca's highest mountain, but he will only show them to the girl in this song on condition she show him her bottom first.

*Al·lota, acosta't un poc davall aquest cirerer.  
Jo tenc un pardal d'acer  
que en tocar poma, treu foc.*

Lass, come a little closer under this cherry tree. I have a steel sparrow that shoots out fire when it touches an apple.

Fruit trees have important sexual connotations. The boy here asks the girl to lie under the cherry tree to situate the context. Not only is his steel member strong, hard and rigid (*d'acer*), it also becomes so red and feverish when it comes into contact with the girl's genitals that fire shoots out of it (*treu foc*).

*Bon dia, Joana Frau;  
que dematí t'has 'xecada! Vols que t'espols sa roada amb sa punta des pardal?*

Good morning, Joana Frau; How early you have arisen! Do you want me to shake off the frost with the tip of my sparrow?

Rising at daybreak used to mean feeling the effects of the frost that blankets the countryside in one's bones. The man here encounters Joana Frau and is astonished to find her out of bed so early. Next, he wants to shake off (*espolsar* – a word with masturbatory connotations in Catalan) the frost in a very unusual manner, by using only the tip of his phallus, a reference to a certain smoothness, like dew.

*Ara he afinat un estel en el cel, i no fa via.  
Al·lota, jo t'ho faria  
dos, tres pics, sense treure'l.*

Now I have discovered a star in the sky and it does not hurry. Lass, I will do it to you two, three times without taking it out.

The idea of entering, inserting and thrusting is the yearning behind everything masculine, a way to secure and ensure procreation. The desire is so great that the man in this song brags he could make love (*t'ho faria*) two and even three times without removing his phallus from inside the woman. We are reminded that the vagina is a cage and a bird can remain as long as he likes...or can! As in many other *glosas*, the first lines here are only used to ensure the rhyme.

*Com te veig tan sandanguera no me cans de mirar-te; al·lota, jo tenc un ble  
per sa teva llumenera.*

When I see you so graceful, I never tire of watching you. Lass, I have a wick to light your candle.

The word '*sandanguera*', which comes from Spanish and means to be graceful, is usually applied to women. Here the man says that he never tires of watching a certain woman move so gracefully, which is why he offers his wick (member) to her to kindle or warm up the small lamp (the vagina) and give off light. Here the operation of an oil lamp is a metaphor for sex.

*Per anar a Binissalem no poden errar es camí.  
Sa fia d'en Massutí  
a tothom mostra es betlem.*

The road to Binissalem cannot be mistaken. Massuti's daughter shows everyone her crèche.

Crèches, which are venerated, admired and beloved, contain shepherds, caves, angels and a representation of Jesus' birth. Here this word represents female genitalia, including all the adjectives attributed to it. A crèche can be considered as a whole or used to designate the bed. In this case, sex is manifested irreverently.

*Som es gall i duc la doma, al-lota des teus endons.  
Jo m'he de rentar es coions amb suc de sa teva poma.*

I am the rooster and am in control, lass with your 'thing'. I must cleanse the eggs in the juice of your apple.

There can only be one rooster in a hen house, since things go wrong when there are two. Here the fact that the man calls himself a rooster implies that he holds the power over the hen house – women. The song goes on to say that the 'apple' (the vagina as mentioned elsewhere) gives off a great deal of juice, which is why the man expresses his wish to bathe his testicles in it.



## FRIARS, PRIESTS, VICARS AND

### SANCTIMONIOUS HYPOCRITES

A religious society forced to comply with a series of ritual precepts and learn a series of practices and prayers emanating from its beliefs always rebels and experiences an anticlerical reaction against the social class that has imposed these duties, rather than against religion per se. Majorcan society was steeped in religion, which explains the many references to it in traditional folksongs.

Friars, priests, vicars and sanctimonious hypocrites became fodder for the popular imagination, since messages like the following thrived in the subconscious mind: *Prediquen allò que no creuen* (They don't practice what they preach); *Molts diuen: fes el que bé dic i no el que mal faig* (Do the very right things I say, not the very wrong things I do); *Els capellans espigolen fora casa, perquè a l'església no cullen blat* (Priest sow their oats outside of the home, since the Church harvests no wheat) and; *Les beates, com que no mullen a ca seva, van a l'església meam si troben* (Sanctimonious hypocrites go to the Church to find pleasure since they do not get any at home). The wordplay, irony and double entendres in Majorca's popular folksongs, proverbs and sayings mirror all these attitudes in one way or another.

There have been several cases (not many, yet there have been a few) of nuns and priests who have revoked their vows and married or priests who visited or were visited by ladies at unconventional times of day. Everyone knows everything in villages and what they don't know, they make up. Comments, snickering and whispering spread like wildfire and no one can contain them. The oral verses known as *glosas* became a way to narrate all the strange things villagers used to see and could not speak openly about. Everyone was familiar with these verses, yet no one knew who authored them and if they did know, they would keep the author's name to themselves. Sometimes a name or word would be changed according to the audience, 'so as not to hurt anyone', of course. These *glosas* have come down to us after passing through all the sieves of orality and tradition.

The *glosadors*, who sparred against each other in duels of improvised verses, found a wellspring of inspiration in this world, since references to the Church and its excesses were always well received. In reference to practicing what one preaches, one *glosador* dedicated the following verses to a priest who had given a sermon at a funeral saying one need not worry about death, since this life of ours was just a temporary passage and the true, worthy life begins once a person has passed away. Bright and early the next day, the *glosador*<sup>1</sup> attacked him by hurling these lines at him:

*Bon dia don Baltasar, bon dia bon dematí:  
vós sabeu molt de llatí perquè el vau estudiar, i no feis que pregonar  
que la glori' és un jardí, que allà no s'ha de sofrir, tot és pau i benestar...  
I per què com a capellà frissau tan poc d'anar-hi?*

Good day, Don Baltasar, good day in the morning. You know a lot of Latin, since you studied it, and do nothing else but preach the glory of the garden where no one suffers and all is peace and well-being...And how is it then, as a priest, that you are in no hurry to get there?

The sentiment expressed in this *glosa* matches the saying: *No és el mateix receptar que prendre* (Prescribing and taking are two very different things).

*Beatas* were a class unto themselves in the ecclesiastical world; the word literally means Blessed and was used sarcastically to refer to the sanctimonious busybodies who spent most of their time in Church, a breed on the verge of extinction, among other reasons, because mass is no longer said daily in our villages and is often only officiated by a chaplain. *Beatas* provided a needed service, yet had a certain bad reputation as indolent, whispering gossipmongers. And not only that, they relentlessly pursued priests. The song says:

*Les beates són qui tenen més coverbos a contar.  
Se'n van al capellà per aquí, per allà  
i el borino li encenen.*

The Blessed are the ones with the most gossip to spread. They chase the priest hither and thither and swell up his head.

*Beatas* always had plenty to say, because they had so much time on their hands to poke their noses into everything and of course, they manage to provoke the priest's penis, his 'bumblebee' (*borino*).

Vicars, rectors and priests were treated in the same way. Friars, however, were depicted as naughtier and craftier. People knew friars were humbler and more sacrificing, since they remained cloistered, not like the others, who had parishes and rectories, and this benevolence was reflected in popular folksongs:

*-Mon pare quan vós no hi sou a ca nostra hi ve un frare:  
a jo me dóna confits  
i fa besades a ma mare.  
Aquest reputa de frare mai vol jeure en es convent; s'al·lot més petit que tenc  
quan el veu, li diu «mon pare».*

Father, a priest comes by when you are not home. He gives me sweets and kisses Mother // That whoreson of a priest never wants to sleep in the convent. The youngest brother calls him 'my father' when he sees him.

Paternity is often attributed to friars and priests in traditional culture and as an excuse or in defence, collective wisdom has found a way to live with this by saying *Tot allò que neix en el corral és de la casa* (Everything born in the barnyard belongs to the house), i.e., that there's no need to complicate life and one should accept everything that happens in a marriage or family. Since there was no turning back, this was an effective way to prevent quarrels and fights that led nowhere.

This whole world, this referent, will eventually become a residue of our popular customs, since our different ways of relating to each other, beliefs and values will make poking this kind of fun incomprehensible to us. If only for that reason, being reminded of the concerns, demons, torments, joys and desires our ancestors harboured in this corner of the universe is a good thing.

*Es rector de Sant Marçal va fer una fantasia:  
se va esqueixar sa camia amb sa punta des pardal.*

The priest of Sant Marçal went off on a fantasy. He shredded his shirt with the tip of his sparrow.

The Church of Sant Marçal, which is very popular with all Majorcans, is located in the municipality of

Marratxí adjacent to Palma and its patron saint's day is June 30. In this *glosa*, the parish priest gets so excited while trying to outdo himself that he gets the tip of his member (*sa punta des pardal*) entangled in his shirt and rips it.

*Es capellà Nicolau  
sempre du ses calces blanques; de tant d'anar de bergantes  
té es cap de sa fava blau.*

Priest Nicolau's stockings are always white. The tip of his turnip is blue from the many women he has been with.

The tip of Priest Nicolau's 'turnip' (*es cap de sa fava*) – an image that conjures up the glans penis – turns blue from the workout its owner has given it with women. In this case, the term *bergantes* (loose women, possibly prostitutes) is used to refer to the party responsible for the priest's problem. However, the verse makes it very clear that her stockings are always white (*sempre du ses calces blanques*), i.e., very clean, in contrast to the dirty act a priest commits when he sleeps with women and the colour of his member.

*Na Joana de Son Estela va dir an el pare Bordoï:  
Si no em tocau es fonoï, no torn pus a sa novena.*

Juana de Son Estela told Father Bordoï: if you don't touch my fennel, I'll not come to the novena.

A novena is a series of devotional prayers asking for special graces. This *glosa's* protagonist warns the priest of her parish church that she will not attend any more novenas if he doesn't touch her 'fennel' (*fonoï*), a clear reference to the pubis.

*Sa mestra Vidala diu:  
Firmau si voleu firmar, que no tornarem tocar an es rector sa perdiu.*

Schoolmistress Vidala says, 'Sign if you will that we shall not touch the priest's member again.'

All the women in this village are being asked to sign a pledge agreeing not to touch the priest's partridge (*perdiu*) or member. The *glosa* mentions this practice as if it were the most natural and ordinary thing in the world, which is why the schoolmistress wants to put an end to it and makes the women sign, swearing they will not touch it again.

*Es rector de Manacor anava a boixar a Maria i llavò ja se'n venia coions buits i fora por.*

The priest from Manacor used to go to fuck in Maria and would come back afterwards fearless with spent balls.

The priest in Manacor, who used to leave his village to look for sex in Maria, a small village located in the centre of Majorca, was criticised by the villagers, who were more critical of where he went than what he did when he got there. Once his work was finished in Maria, the cleric would return to his own town, brave, relaxed, fearless and having 'taken a load off' (*coions buits i fora por*), as they say colloquially.

*Sa beata costitxera 'fectada de capellans s'aferrà amb ses dues mans an es coions de Sant Pere.*

The Blessed from Costitx with a taste for priests grabbed St. Peter's balls with her two hands.

This sanctimonious *beata* is always chasing after priests (*'fectada de capellans*), to the point where she confuses the statue of St Peter with one of them and grabs its testicles with her two hands (*s'aferrà amb ses dues mans an es coions de Sant Pere*).

*A Manacor varen treure un vicari per dolent, perquè volia aigordent, tabac i dones per jeure.*

They expelled a priest in Manacor for being bad, because he loved spirits, smoking and women in bed.

Priests were appointed to serve a parish or a village and would remain there for many years, only changing when force majeure obligated them to. Such a case took place in Manacor, Majorca's second largest city, and the priest was expelled, according to the song, because he liked smoking, drinking, and women (*perquè volia aigordent, tabac i dones per jeure*), ordinary enough pursuits for normal village men.

*Sa criada des rector ella ha tornada venir  
i ha trobat lo seu senyor amb una casta d'inflor  
que per molt de tocar-lo no l'hi podrà reblanir.*

The priest's servant has come home again and found her master with the kind of swelling that cannot be soothed no matter how much she touches it.

Servants also played a role in popular literature, especially those who worked for priests. This song says that this servant has returned to the rectory and found the priest there with a swelling – it does not specify where, but no one needs it spelled out – and there is no way to soothe the inflammation, no matter how much she touches it.

*Na Maria Raconera d'Algaida és sa principal, i es capellà de Cas Brau per davall es davantal  
li vetla sa greixonera. Quan som a la síqui' jo pec un botet.*

*Maria del alma,  
jo vénc per veure't. El banyarriqueret li pica a un peu  
i ella se jeu:*

*Un poc més amuntet. El banyarriqueret  
Li pica al genoi l ella diu: – Oi,  
un poc més amuntet.*

*El banyarriqueret li pica a una cama i ella s'exclama:  
– Un poc més amuntet.*

*El banyarriqueret li pica a una anca i ella s'eixanca:  
– Un poc més amuntet. El banyarriqueret  
li pica a sa guixa  
i ella diu: – Remissa, un poc més avallet.*

*El banyarriqueret li pica a sa flor:  
– Banyarriqueret,*

*pitja tot quant pugues, que ara ve lo bo.*

Maria Raconera de Algaida is the main character and the priest from Cas Brau keeps her casserole under her apron. I give a jump for joy when I get to the ditch, 'Maria mine, I've come to see you.' The beetle tickled her on the leg and she lay down, 'A little bit higher.' It tickled her on the knee and she said, 'Oh, a little bit higher.' It tickled her on the thigh and she exclaimed, 'A little bit higher.' It tickled her on the backside and she opened up her legs, 'A little bit higher.' It tickled her naval and she said, 'Fool! A little bit lower.' It pinched her flower, 'Beetle, push all you can, because here comes the good part.'

This song recounts a series of preliminary activities figuratively carried out by a *banyarriqueret*, a species of beetle with a long black body common all over Spain, which has a sexual connotation denoting a penis here. *Banyarriqueret* also means the conscience in Majorca. The priest here is watching the casserole dish (*greixonera* – the vagina) and then begins to tickle Maria. He starts with her foot, but the woman orders him to go higher and he gets to her knee, thigh, bottom and finally her navel. The woman sees he has gone too far and tells him to tickle her a little further down, until he reaches the flower – the vagina. Then the woman tells him he can begin pushing, that here comes the best part, because he can penetrate her now and the real pleasure can commence.

*Un frare el se remenava a davall un salomó;  
li va caure un cremaió damunt es cap de sa fava.  
Remil-llamps, que espolejava! Era un gust es veure-ló.  
Dones pagau un velló per veure-li sa cremada.*

A priest was jerking off under a candelabrum and a drop of wax fell on the tip. By Jove, how he shook! It was a sight to be seen. Women, pay a vellon to see it!

The friar in this *glosa* is masturbating (*el se remenava*) right under a lit candelabra when a piece of burning wax falls on his glans penis. Obviously, the horrific pain that results makes the cleric tremble all over (*que espolejava*), which makes everyone laugh. Yet the most peculiar part of the tale is that he turns into

sightseeing attraction – any woman who wishes to see the friar's singed member can pay a silver coin (*vellon*) to do so, an example of sarcasm not devoid of malice.

*Una monja se rentava amb so cul dins es ribell i se dava pes revel  
una bona ensabonada.  
Un capellà la mirava  
amb ses mans an es clotell i va dir:  
– Me cago en d'ell! sa brutor se n'és anada!*

A nun was washing her backside in a tub and gave the bush hair a good soaping. A priest was watching, hands behind his neck and said, 'Sweet Jesus! The filth that's come off!'

Nuns are also the target of popular humour and ironic comments, although strangely enough, they were always highly valued and respected for their work. Perhaps their inclusion in folksongs reflects our people's collective subconscious mind. Here a nun is washing her private parts while a priest watches her, apparently relaxed, judging from his posture: hands behind his neck (*amb ses mans an es clotell*). The priest exclaims at the amount of dirt the nun's private parts leave behind, thus indicating she was not very given to washing.



## WHERE THERE'S HAIR, THERE'S JOY

Primitive, hairy men are traditionally described as bears and superhuman strength attributed to them. Being hairy is synonymous with being brave and strong: *Home pelut, valent i agut, home pelat, pardal acabat* (Hairy man, brave and clever / hairless man, spent sparrow). Woods and mountains are haunted by especially hairy beings such as simians and other creatures, even the Devil himself, who specialise in frightening children. One legend about our origins has an explanation for why we humans have hair, the places it grows, men's beards and women's long hair: Adam complained to God that Eve did not respect him and pleaded for a sign of superiority. God gave him a jar with ointment and told him to rub it on the parts of the body he thought best for hair and it would grow there. But Eva found the lotion and began to rub herself with it. When Adam came upon her, he threw the jar at her head<sup>1</sup>.

One time-honoured way of closing a deal consisted of pulling three hairs from one's beard and putting them in the wax that sealed a document, in witness to a party's personal bond. Lions, wolves and horses in popular folktales give children hairs as totems with the power to turn them into animals or help them in some other magical way. And being in possession of one or three hairs of a powerful being conferred power on the holder.

In popular tales, hair is often burnt in magical rites to evoke totemic spirits or cast a spell. Hair, feathers, claws and small bones from animals or ointments were given to neophytes during initiation rites to give them power over totemic spirits: they would be stuffed them into little sacks and worn around their necks like talismans. In the olden days, a special kind of brooch that held hair was a commonplace and symbolised the original owner's life force, especially if the person were already dead. Locks of hair from one's beloved were typically evocative vestiges of love<sup>2</sup>.

Redheads were normally viewed with suspicion and thought to embody evil, treachery and madness: The Devil and Judas are imagined to have had reddish hair. If hair was seen as a manifestation of energy, red hair had a demonic character. Redheaded victims were chosen in ancient Egypt for the annual human sacrifices to Osiris, deity of wheat, and the Romans sacrificed dogs with reddish coats during the rites of spring. Redheaded women have a hard time finding husbands in Arabic cultures.

Hair's symbolic virility is beneficial only if it covers one part of the body, but malevolent if a body is completely covered with it. Abundant hair is construed as a sign of vegetative, instinctive and sensual life. In the *Iliad* (song III), trimming the hair of an animal sacrifice meant consecrating it to death, one of the earliest known purification rituals<sup>3</sup>.

In traditional culture, hair is associated with genitals, especially in women. Women with hair in areas other than under their arms, on the head and on the pubis have never been very successful with men. One terribly misogynous song goes:

*Ets peluda com un ase i guapa com un mussol  
llestà com un caragol  
neta com un porc de casa.*

You are as hairy as an ass and attractive as an owl, clever as a snail and clean as a pig at home.

A boy was deemed to be a grownup once he developed hair, which is why the hairier a man was, the stronger and more skilful he was considered. Of course, this is a question of fashion and values. Nowadays, many men remove all their body hair and are not less masculine in any way for doing so. Many stereotypes are disappearing or changing. The search for new sensations and freedom from repeating our experiences is a normal part of evolving tastes.

Two *glosas* that mention hair resort to metaphors with different herbs. In the first, a woman is lying astride the border between Felanitx and Porreres (two towns in Majorca whose borders are contiguous) when she sees a young man approaching and dispatches him with the following lines:

*Es fanoi de ses voreres se sol fer alt i gruixat:  
jo en tenc un que està sembrat entre Felanitx i Porreres.  
Es fanoi si té saó se sol fer per tot igual;  
si em pensava no fer mal hi ficaria un cimbal enmig de la partió.*

The fennels on the margins usually grows thick and high: I have one planted between Felanitx and Porreres // Fennel when ripe usually grows the same everywhere; if I didn't think it would hurt anything, I would insert a twig in the centre of the border.

*Aquest jove té tossina i no és de refredament.  
Sabeu de què té talent?  
de moradux de fadrina.*

This young lad has a cough, but not a cold. Do you know what he feels like taking? A lass' marjoram.

Marjoram (*moradux*), like fennel, represents hair in on the female pubis because of its similar appearance; marjoram can also be used medicinally. The protagonist of this song has a cough, although not a cold. One good cure is intercourse with the girl and, not only that, the boy is willing.

*Baldament sigui petita, tenc un bon pla de rostoi,  
i quan pix, enverg un roi que una roca escardaria.*

Although it may be small, I have a fine, rough esplanade and when I piss, my stream could split a rock.

The protagonist of this song acknowledges that his penis is small, but boasts of the thicket of hair around it, described here through the metaphor of a rough field. The amount of hair serves to counteract his penis' small size. And he also boasts that his stream of urine is like a compressor that could crack a rock.

*Al·lota, si vols que et boix, has de venir aquí darrera  
i veuràs sa coionera  
que és més peluda que un moix.*

Lass, if you want me to fuck you, come round behind me and you will see my scrotum, hairier than a cat.

The man here is boasting that the hair on his scrotum is as thick as cat's fur. And he asserts that if the girl wants to make love, she will have to go around back (*aquí darrera*) to be able to verify it.

*Diumenge vaig veure es cul a una santanyinera.  
Tenia per sa vorera  
cent quintars de polseguera, set roves de pèl reüll.*

I saw the backside of a woman from Santanyí last Sunday. It had one hundred quintals of dust and seven arrobas of curly hair.

Women's buttocks can also be hairy. Here the exaggeration is pharaonic. The singer tells us he saw the buttocks of a woman from Santanyí (a town in southern Majorca) who had seven arrobas of curly hair in which one hundred quintals of dust and dirt collected, arrobas and quintals being rustic measures of weight.

*Na Paloni tota sola  
no pot fer tant de sarau; en es ball de Son Arnau li tongueren sa mussola.*

Paloni alone cannot cause such a row; they sheared her smooth-hound during the dance at Son Arnau. Ewe-shearing took place in early spring and was one of the most important jobs in a shepherd's year. The parallel in this verse is that Paloni sheared her pubis (in this case represented by a mussola or smoothhound, a fish similar to a small shark), since she was so hairy, wool seemed to be growing there. This took place during a dance at Son Arnau, a name for farmsteads popular all over Majorca.

*Sant Antoni és un sant pobre i de pobre no en té res.  
Saps per on té es pèl espès? Per devers es canalobre.*

St. Anthony is a poor saint, yet not poor at all. Do you know he has thick hair down there on the candelabrum?

St Anthony (in Majorca, references to St. Anthony mean St. Anthony Abbot's saint's day on January 17 and not St. Anthony of Padua in June) intercedes for domesticated animals especially, those with hooves (horses, asses, mules and mares). This song claims St. Anthony cannot be poor because he is so hairy, especially around his penis, here portrayed as a candelabrum.

*Una rosa a cada galta, damunt sa boca un clavell, i una mata ben espessa que enrevolta es foradell.*

A rose on each cheek, a carnation in her mouth and a very thick bush that surrounds a small hole.

Beauty is described here through flowers, specifically roses (roses) and carnations (clavells), yet according to the canon of female beauty, what is truly pretty is the opening of the woman's vagina (foradell), since it is ringed by a thick bush of hair. Once again, we find the notion that beauty lies in having abundant hair on certain parts of the body.

*Saps què em va dir na Llobera quan li vaig demanar es vel?: – Més avall tenc un estel  
tot enrevoltat de pèl  
i randa per sa vorera.*

Do you know what Llobera told me when I asked about her veil? Farther down I have a star completely ringed by hair and embroidery along the edges.

This star (vagina) is never lonely. The woman in the song has assured the singer that her vagina is surrounded by hair (tot enrevoltat de pèl) and, moreover, has embroidery around the edges (i randa per sa vorera), i.e., curls that enhance its beauty.

*Amb so mànec de sa ploma me volies fer dictar;  
si t'agrad per festejar, primer t'hauré de tocar es pèl de sa catxiporra.*

You wanted me to take dictation with the pen's handle; if you want me to court you, I shall have to touch the hair on your club.

This song contains images of the male member, in this case, a pen (ploma) and a handle (mànec). The woman tells her beloved she must touch the hair around his penis (cachiporra or club) as a condition to begin courting, lest the 'pen' or 'handle' not be worth much.





## HUSBAND, BE NOT JEALOUS

Majorcan folksongs make a great show of sympathy for husbands, especially those who are cuckolded. One takes for granted that this never happens in one's own home, but always to a neighbour or acquaintance. A spouse's supposed infidelity is customarily accepted with Christian resignation and often patched up through the intercession of a trusted party or even a priest. Husbands who chased other women than their wives were always viewed as normal, since it was considered logical: males go from female to female to inseminate them in the animal world, an image that has lingered in the subconscious traditional collective mind. However, a woman who ran around with different men was criticised.

Women could not go out at night alone until the 1970s; it caused talk and was censured. People would say, 'That girl goes out at night like a cat' (*aqueixa va de nits, com les moixes*) for example, and then she would be stigmatised, an almost impossible stain to erase, even generations later. Women could not enter taverns without their husbands, nor converse with other men without their husband's permission.

This sad, primitive panorama notwithstanding, we should recall that Majorcan society is matriarchal, although it may not seem so at first glance. Here it was the wife who handled the money the husband had earned during the week; she was the one who took charge of the house and had the final say on any important matter. The wife decided how each part of the pig should be apportioned on slaughtering day, when the family stocked food for the whole year, and nobody dared contradict her.

One paradox sheds light on the female's role in traditional Majorcan culture: two men sealing an oral deal had no need to put it in writing, since they both recognised the sacredness of each other's word and the importance of honouring it, regardless of what might happen. Just one person could undo the deal: a wife, the only one who could make her husband take back his word.

One *glosa* asserts that men often prefer to consent to being cuckolded than be despicably violent:

*Jo som banyut, i ho confés,  
– deia un que ho era, ademés –  
Esser-ho no me pesa gens i me sobren cent arguments  
per convèncer es demés.  
Que ses banyes, com ses dents, fan mal quan surten, és clar.  
Però llavors quan les tens ses banyes són com ses dents:  
te serveixen per menjar.*

'I am a cuckold and I admit it', said one who, in addition, was one. 'This weighs not heavily on me and I have one hundred reasons to convince the others. Horns, like teeth, hurt when they come out, it's true. Yet later, when they're there, horns are like teeth: they help you to eat.'

This is consolation for all save those who would not be consoled. But if we delved a little deeper into this consolation, into this supposed acceptance of infidelity, we would encounter a series of beliefs that infiltrate the collective subconscious. I recall several conversations, also in the 1970s, between married couples and a priest who was explaining Biblical questions. One man asked the priest how it was possible for St. Joseph not to have been jealous about his wife's pregnancy and how he could have believed an angel had got her that way. 'Why he didn't he rebel?' asked the man. 'He was a man and was deceived, yet everyone says he raised Jesus as if he were his own son.' The priest responded, 'Sweet Jesus! That was a mystery and mysteries have no explanation!' If we reflect on these comments, perhaps we would understand a cuckold's consent as an atavistic burden he has no other choice but to bear. The widespread notion that a woman can have intercourse time and time again without a man knowing whether she is

faking, done it before or really wants to helps a man come to terms with this uneasy situation and, in the end, he can be consoled with his work.

Linked to the notion of a matriarchy is the idea that a home, family, household economy or co-existence is successful when a woman wants it to be, a sentiment our grandmothers have already voiced: a wife must know how to run a household and make her husband believe he is the one in charge. They were implying that women were more intelligent and important than men and should bear that in mind, which is why silence was often one of their responses; they would not respond in situations they considered unsuitable or inappropriate. 'Nowadays women do not want to keep quiet', our grandmothers say, not because they are man's inferior, but rather because women are not diligent enough to do now what their ancestors understood so clearly and worked so well.

It is beneficial to see the many ways intelligence has of manifesting itself and how sex has had a subliminal authority that, despite being conscious, has often gone unnoticed.

*Marit no estigueu gelós d'una fruita qui no es gasta;  
no és res si un altre la tasta mentre n'hi hagi per vós.*

Husband, be not jealous of a fruit that never runs out; it doesn't matter if another is sampling it, so long as enough is left over for you.

A piece of fruit can be devoured in just a few bites. Yet there is one fruit, the finest of them all, that can never be polished off no matter how much one eats, which is what the wife here is saying to her husband: he needn't be jealous, because this fruit will be never be finished. It doesn't matter if someone else is eating it too, so long as there's always enough for him.

*Vaig vestida com ses canyes per agradar més a Déu.  
Al·lota, s'estimat teu essent fadrí ja du banyes.*

I am dressed like cane so that God will like me more. Lass, your lover, a bachelor, already sports a pair of horns.

Being cuckolded is not the exclusive domain of married couples; courting couples are also vulnerable to deceit. The narrator in this *glosa* throws in his sweetheart's face the fact that he already has horns (*essent fadrí ja du banyes*), although he is still single i.e., she has deceived him even before marriage.

*Vols me dir, Pare Vicenç  
ses banyes d'on descendeixen?  
De ses dones qui es cobreixen dins es llit d'homos externs.*

Can you tell me, Father Vicente, where do horns come from? From women who get in the beds of strange men.

The narrator is asking a priest (Father Vicente) about the origin of horns, which the priest explains: they come from women who have sexual relationships with men who are not their husbands.

*Sa padrina diu que ho fé més de quinze mil vegades;  
de la mitat de pipades  
es meu padrí no ho sabé.*

Grandmother says she did it more than fifteen thousand times. My grandfather never had a clue about half of the puffs on that pipe.

One of the few joys our ancestors enjoyed was to bed their wives after working from sunrise to sunset in the fields and women were supposed to enjoy themselves, too. Here a granddaughter is saying that her grandmother has made love more than fifteen thousand times and that her grandfather knows nothing about half of those *pipades* (puffs on a pipe), i.e., his wife had been sleeping with others.

*Si ses banyes fessen llum com sa lluna de gener,  
vos assegur que es meu sogre no hauria mester quinquar.*

If horns gave off light like the January moon, I assure you my father-in-law would never need an oil lamp.

When the moon is in the first and last quarters, it resembles a pair of horns. Furthermore, the January moon is the one that gives off the most light. A son-in-law tells us here that if horns gave off light (*si ses banyes fessen llum*), his father-in-law's would give off so much that no other type of illumination would be needed, since his wife, the narrator's mother-in-law, has deceived her husband on so many occasions.



## THE DESIRE FOR SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

To desire implies desiring intensely, a compelling pull towards something one wishes to possess or an act one wishes to commit. A *mal desig* (evil desire in Catalan) is a compelling inclination of the will or something sinful; a *desig carnal* (carnal desire) is an inclination to pander to sexual instincts. The Catalans even use *desig carnal* to refer to the inflamed appetite and cravings typical of pregnant women and the birthmarks or moles on newborns vulgarly attributed to a mother's unsatisfied craving during pregnancy. People say that a 'desire' or birthmark will be the same shape of the fruit or other craving that went unsatisfied. They also claim that birthmarks appear on a baby's body in the spot where the mother first touched herself after feeling a craving, which originated the custom in which a pregnant woman would touch herself on the buttock whenever she felt an unsatisfied craving, so the baby's birthmark would not be in a visible place<sup>1</sup>.

Women are associated with the domain of instinct, feeling and the unconscious. They are assigned reproductive tasks and roles confined to the sphere of home and family and are judged according to a repressive morality based on gender stereotypes. The supposedly 'feminine' values are weakness ('the weaker sex'), submission and allowing feelings to rule over intelligence.

The ancient misogynous ideas that have survived until now would have it that women are inferior to men, an essential inferiority expressed in vice-ridden behaviours, indiscretion and the incapacity to keep sexual desire at bay. Thus, women, who were judged to be inferior to men, ranked below them. A wife took care of the home, but the husband was the head of the family. According to the Bible, man was made in God's image and likeness and woman in man's. Woman was made from Adam's rib in Genesis ('It is not good that man should be alone'), an andocentric derivation of the myth of the original androgyne: Adam and Eve, created back to back or Adam on the right and Eve on the left split by God into two different beings, a male and a female, an act that involves a split between two principles: active, which corresponded to man, and passive, to woman. Thus, according to Genesis, Eve was the first woman and cause of original sin, since it was she who tempted Adam. Mary, however, as the Mother of God and the new Eve – Hail, the antiEve – was regarded by Christianity as a model of both female virginity and motherhood. St Peter had the following to say about this aspect of women's submission: 'The women should be silent in the churches' and veil their heads, 'For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man'<sup>2</sup>.

References to women are pervasive in popular Catalan proverbs, as is a pronounced resentment: *Tres coses fan perdre l'home: el joc, el vi i les dones* (Three things are man's perdition: wagering, wine and women); *Les dones són el diable* (Women are the Devil); *Dona i lluna, cada punt muda* (Women and the moon are always changing); *La dona és l'esca del pecat* (Women are tinder for sinning). Throughout many centuries, the dominant culture has predicated women's inferiority to men. Women were to blame for our forefathers' expulsion from paradise, which is why they were the enemy of intelligent men. Too many arguments exist to doubt the terribly misogynous nature of traditional customs, opposed to any attempt to consider female intelligence and good judgement.

Gender not only highlighted human duality, but also its bipolarity and internal tension. Sexual union symbolises and realises the search for unity, the appeasement of tension and total realisation. Elementary connotations are also classified dualistically as masculine and feminine: strong and sharp is masculine; round, riddled with holes and weak is feminine. Male and female are even endowed with symbolism: conscious and unconscious, reason and feeling, heaven and earth, the sun and the moon, fire and water, action and passion...

Ever since Christianity overrated virginity, everything related to sex has had carnal rather than spiritual, impure rather than pure connotations and was a sin 'of thought, word or deed' against the Sixth Commandment, i.e., vice rather than virtue.

Sexual intercourse was justified when procreating descendants or tolerated as an expression of love between man and woman, although never in homosexual relationships. Displaying one's genitals was therefore referred to as showing one's shame (*ensenyar les vergonyes*), even when obscene intentions were lacking. This view of sexual intercourse was also the source of clerical celibacy and vows of religious chastity, the injunction for two people of the same sex to love as brother and sister (*com germà i germana*) because of the sexual taboo of incest, the belief that the souls of the dead are genderless and that there are no sexual relationships in Heaven (the reason why men in traditional popular culture say they would prefer to go to Hell) and the notorious theological debates over the sex of angels. Society tolerates many expressions or looks upon them favourably when men say them, e.g., when something 'makes a man', as if everything sex-related could be attributed to a man's whim or will; women were to limit themselves to a passive, self-sacrificing role and any sexual expression or initiative by them was suspiciously viewed as viceridden<sup>3</sup>.

Majorca's traditional folksongs contain all the above elements: masculine strength, uncontrolled desire and male crassness, as opposed to female passiveness, silence and repressed emotions. The people reacted to the ecclesiastical commandment to procreate without passionate desire with an overwhelming fury at the attempt to ban the only joy and delight nature had given them. The people are truly sage; traditional folksongs are faithful proof of that.

*Al-lota, me vols guardar aquest bou de bona casta?  
Poca pastura li basta:  
un rodolet com sa mà.*

Lass, would you keep this purebred ox for me? He doesn't need very much pastureland: just a small field as big as my hand.

The man in this improvised oral verse, or *glosa*, is entrusting the girl with his phallus, depicted here as an ox and a purebred one at that (*bona casta*). He assures her that it does not need much to eat, only a space as large as a hand's span (*un rodolet com sa mà*), the only pasture and fodder it needs, a comparison between female pubic hair and a sown field.

*Mumare, casar, casar,  
que es partits no vénen sempre; quan s'escudella és calenta,  
no la deixeu refredar.*

Mother, to marry, to marry! Good matches don't come along every day; don't let the pottage get cool down when it is hot.

Sexual desire can be unceasing and obsessive. But things were different in the olden days. A woman who displayed sexual hunger was censured and branded as vice-ridden, which is why the girl in this song wants to get married, because when the pottage (*escudella*, which is served in a bowl that symbolises female genitalia here) is hot it cannot be cooled down. In other words, desire is to be taken advantage of when it is aroused. The song also warns that good matches – eligible men of a marriageable age – are not easy to find and should be snapped up when they come along.

*Jo tenc un puput crestat tancadet dins una bossa,  
que en sentir miular sa moixa totd'una vol treure es cap.*

I have a hoopoe with a great crest in a sack that pokes its head up right away when it hears the cat meow. On this occasion, the male member is a crested hoopoe (*puput crestat*). The bird lives peacefully inside a sack, but the meowing of the cat, which here stands for female genitalia, makes it peek its head out from the bag, i.e., a woman's mating call makes a penis erect.

*Al·lota, vols que t'ho faça a damunt un cirerer?  
Jo tenc sa perdui d'acer i es coions de carabassa.*

Lass, would you like me to do it to you in a cherry tree? I have a steel partridge and balls like pumpkins.

Once again, we find fruit trees, in this case, cherry trees (*cirerer*) being used as a pretext for surrendering to passion (*vols que t'ho faça?*). Next, the singer describes his genitals and assures the girl that his member (a partridge or *perdui* on this occasion) is as strong and solid as steel. And his pumpkin-like testicles (*coions*) swing to and fro.

*Un homo que no té dona sempre el veuràs mal sofrit,  
perquè quan ve mitjanit s'aucellet no vol fer nona.*

A man without a wife will always wear a frown, since the birdie won't go to sleep when midnight comes.

Men needs women and not just for company. This *glosa* asserts that an unmarried man will always be cross, because when night time comes, his *aucellet* or birdie (penis) does not want to go to sleep and will not leave him be, like a child who stretches out and takes up all the room.

*Sa fia d'en Campins diu:  
Mon pare, me vui casar; ja tenc lloc per amagar un pam i mig de perdui.*

Campins' daughter says, 'Father mine, I wish to marry; I already have room enough to shelter a palm and a half of partridge.

The girl in this *glosa* is asking her father to marry her off and gives him a good reason, an irrefutable one in her opinion: she is ready. She is a grown-up woman, since a penis (*perdui*) a hand and a half long fits in her vagina. Just another example of the exaggeration that permeates popular folksongs, since a man is not normally this size.

*Deixa'm posar sa mà endins, al·lota, que no hi ha espines; tu tens unes mamarrines  
que pareixen dos poncins.*

Lass, let me put my hand inside, there are no thorns. Your little breasts are like two flowers.

The man in this *glosa* is asking the woman to let him touch her vagina, since it has no thorns. The affectionate diminutive for breasts (*mamarrines*) demonstrates the man's interest in touching this part of the female body, which he compares to buds (*poncins*). This is one of the few songs in which a man demonstrates a certain tenderness towards a woman.

*Sa poma d'aquesta al·lota ha de mester beneir  
amb so pardal d'un fadrí que tengui bona cabota.*

That girl's apple needs to be blessed by the sparrow of a bachelor with a fine head.

*Beneir* means to bless something by sprinkling holy water on it. Here the man is saying that the 'apple' (the girl's vagina) needs to be blessed not by customary artefacts, but rather by a male member with one salient feature: a fine head (*que tengui bona cabota*), i.e., a large glans penis.

*L'amo de Son Rancapins me'n contà una de bona:  
que no me fiàs de cap dona fins que l'hi tengués dedins.*

The groundskeeper of Son Rancapins told me a good one: trust no woman until you have had it inside her. We have already commented on men's traditional mistrust of women, however this song goes one step further. Words are worthless; so are promises and love. The singer asserts that a man can only trust a woman once he has penetrated her (*fins que li tengués dedins*) and never before. Yet the narrator does not

dare to put this asseveration in his own mouth and attributes it instead to what the nameless groundskeeper of Son Rancapins told him.

*A sa vorera de mar  
hi ha moltes pedres planes; una dona sense mames  
a mi no em fa enravenar.*

There are many flat stones on the seashore; a flat-chested woman doesn't get me hard.

A man who caresses, kisses and sucks on a woman's breast regresses to the most primitive state of infancy. Large breasts have traditionally been considered a very good thing, since that meant there would be enough milk in them to feed a man's children. This song's protagonist claims that flat-chested women (*sense mames*) do not arouse him sexually (*a mi no em fa enravenar*) and compares them to flat stones on the seashore (*a sa vorera de mar hi ha moltes pedres planes*).

*Saps què va dir el Bon Jesús quan mos va posar s'auzell? – Da-li carn de foradell  
fins que digui «no en vui pus».*

Do you know what Jesus said when he gave us his birdie? Feed it on holemeat until it says it wants no more.

Jesus gave us his body (and soul, although traditional folksongs never mention that) and his member (*s'auzell*). According to traditional folksongs, when Jesus gave man his virile member, he said it was to nourish itself on female flesh (*foradell*) and should eat until sated.

*Tu tens una aufabeguera i jo la te vui regar.  
Dins es teu hort vui entrar per davant, no per darrera.*

You have a basil plant and I want to water it for you. I want to enter your garden from the front, not from the rear.

The garden in this *glosa* stands for female genitalia. A vegetable garden is always moist. The protagonist wants to water the girl's basil (her vagina), so that it grows healthy and proud. The lad wants to come in (*Dins es teu hort vui entrar*) and makes it clear how: from the front, not from behind (*per davant, no per darrera*).