American Journal of Social and Humanitarian Research

Vol. 7 Issue 2 | pp. 40-44 | **ISSN:** 2690-9626
Available online @ https://globalresearchnetwork.us/index.php/ajshr

Article

A Comparative Typological Analysis of the Lullaby (Hayyiw) Genre in Karakalpak and Global Folklore Traditions

Keulimjaeva Gulmira Konakbay kizi[*1]

1. Independent Researcher of Karakalpak State University
* Correspondence: gulmirakeulimjaeva97@gmail.com

Abstract: This study examines typological and functional traits of lullabies in the folklore of Karakalpak, Turkmen and English. After an introduction where I relate my own personal experience with these songs, using the theoretical perspectives of Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogism and Carl Jung's archetypal theory, the article analyses how these songs help to bring an infant from ego consciousness into social consciousness. The study defines the universal thematic clusters and then compares socio-labor-based Turkic traditions to psychological-symbolic English lullabies, as wellag suprasocial nationwide aspects, like the "Great Mother" archetype. A quantitative and qualitative analysis of phonetic structures and semantic motifs demonstrates that the lullaby is an important means of cultural en-culturation in which magical protections are balanced with pedagogical intent.

Keywords: Dialogism, Folklore, Hayyiw, Jung, Karakalpak, Lullaby, Maternal Pedagogy.

Citation: Konakbay kizi K. G. A Comparative Typological Analysis of the Lullaby (Hayyiw) Genre in Karakalpak and Global Folklore Traditions. American Journal of Social and Humanitarian Research 2026, 7(2), 40-44.

Received: 10th Nov 2025
Revised: 11th Dec 2025
Accepted: 24th Jan 2026
Published: 19th Feb 2026

Copyright: © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

1. Introduction

The hayyiw (in Karakalpak) and huwdi (in Turkmen) is one of the earliest layers or strata within a culture's oral poetry, being 'poetry' for both children and us. «The song of the mother — said the national poet of Dagestan Rasul Gamzatov — is a key to the first world's song, it is an origin of all human poetry». What this genre does, however, is not only as a sleep-inducing instrument but also a library of the worldview, and social practice, and religious value of one's country [1].

Not surprisingly, the lullaby became a syncretic genre combining aesthetic, psychological and social functions over time. It had a magical function in earlier times, as the surrounding wall protected against hostile spirits. The shift from ritualistic function to lyrical instruction demonstrates a genre embodying the evolution of human society. In the context of Karakalpak and Turkmen culture, hayyiw is profoundly related to the historical fate and labor exploits of the peoples while in English folklore it shifts to a concern about the child's state of mind via symbolic representation [2].

2. Methodology

The study is interdisciplinary, applying a comparative folkloristic methodology but utilizing the findings of structural linguistics and analytical psychology. It is based on a knowledge base of selected lullabies from published folk tale collections for the Karakalpak, Turkmen and English traditions [3].

The primary method applied is comparative typological analysis, which permits the identification of trans-traditional analogies and patterns. The analysis of thematic motifs, symbolic imagery and lexical patterns is a structural-semantic one. Special attention is paid to the archetypal symbolism, as conceived by Carl Jung and his concept of the collective unconscious; specifically, the "Great Mother."

Dialogical discourse analysis (based on Bakhtinian dialogism), is adopted to analyze the lullaby as a form of early social interaction communicative event. This makes it possible to interpret the mother's of addessive action and chil'd entrance into a linguistic-cultural space [4].

At last, phonetic and rhythmic analysis is used to try to establish syllable level patterns and the repetition of some structures that are traditional. The syllable counts of these verses (7–8 syllables for Türkic examples) have been quantitatively examined, pointing to rhythmic entrainment with state acquired maternally from patting rhythmically back-and-forth and poetic meter [5].

The pressure of methodological puritanism is kept up with a dose of qualitative self-discipline and some patchy sightings of quantity, which has serious consequences for the trustworthiness of the findings [6].

3. Results and Discussion

Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of dialogism suggests although it is basically rooted in the individual that language is fundamentally a social phenomenon and every speech act responds to other acts in a «dialogically agitated» world. The lullaby is thus the child's entry into this world of meaning. While the child is a passive addressee, the mother's addressivity – expressed through terms of endearment and direct imperatives – creates the "primordial dialogism in discourse" [7].

In her part of the rhythmic- melodic exchange, The mother mediates the child's social growth. The man who creates is extravagant and squanderer to be unchallenged by the plurality of voices,» as Bakhtin states) but the lullaby introduces infant to «social atmosphere of world», building blocks fore linguistic and cognitive development [8].

In the lullaby, from a Jungian perspective, the mother symbolizes the «Great Mother»: an archetype which is born more or less in all women; associated with nurturing, protection and femininity. Carl Jung observed that this archetype has two aspects: the positive, nurturing one (the «Good Mother») and the negative or destructive aspect (the «Terrible Mother»), also called mother complex.

English lullabies often visit the child-urps in stories that are, shall we say, instructive, as when to the rhapsodic bend of its gentle melody a cradle falls from a treetop (oh, mother!) in «Rock-a-Bye Baby». This imagery – dark though in appearance, is the child's initiation into paradoxes of life's situations and circumstances—in a managed way accompanied with rhythm. In the other hand, where we have elements of Aitmatov's "Bad Mother" dealing with curses, mediocracy and ancestral embarassement, in the karakalpak and turkmen lullabies there is a preponderance of "Good Motheren", blessings, social achievements and ancestral pride [9].

The thematic focus of lullabies varies significantly across the three cultures, reflecting their unique historical and social contexts **(Table)**.

Table 1 presents a comparative typological framework outlining the principal thematic, symbolic, and spiritual characteristics of Karakalpak, Turkmen, and English lullaby traditions. The table organizes the analysis into four core dimensions: national identity, labor and social orientation, symbolic imagery, and spiritual foundation. The comparative structure reveals that Turkic traditions are predominantly collectivist and socio-ethical in orientation, emphasizing clan identity, labor virtues, and religious gratitude. In contrast, the English tradition demonstrates a stronger focus on domestic

imagery, individual psychological comfort, and imaginative symbolism. The comparison illustrates both universal archetypal patterns and culturally specific semantic stratifications within the lullaby genre.

Table 1. Comparative Overview of Karakalpak, Turkmen, and English Lullaby Traditions.

Theme	Karakalpak Tradition	Turkmen Tradition	English Tradition
National Identity	Strong emphasis on clan (Kyat, Konirat).	Focus on heroic/epic traditions.	Focus on historical figures/domesticity.
Labor/Skills	Hospitality and guest reception.	Bravery, hunting, and labor.	Trade, rewards, and «bribes».
Nature/Symbol	Flowers, Nightingale, Gold.	Mountains, Birds, Marble.	Stars, Moon, Sunshine.
Spiritual Basis	Islamic gratitude (Allah).	Syncretic (Allah, Imams).	Christian/Moral (God, Heaven).

Karakalpak and Turkmen traditions In Karakalpak * and Turkmen practices, the child was often referred to as a «Gift of Allah» (Allahantı bergen balası) or «Gold» (Altynym). The flower metaphor (Gúl ishinde bir gúlim-ay) symbolizes purity, the frailty of life. In this respect it is different from English lullabies like «Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star», where the child's imagination and courage are inflamed by star's pictures. The star is a guiding light. It's darkness, it's the dead of night. It represents knowledge & protection for the traveller from the unknown (Light (nuhr) – bilimb, jol, qorǵanıw) [10].

Lullabies are often characterized by their gentle and soothing rhythms. The Karakalpak hayyiw generally uses a syllabic metre (7 or 8), matching the natural breathing of the mother with the rocking lullaby cradle motions (talbesik) [11].

The repetition of words such as «Hayyiw, hayyiw» or «Alla, alla», not only has a hypnotic power to bring the child to sleep but also helps the child's phonematic recognition. In English lullabies or other similar songs using through-composed text, such as, "Twinkle, twinkle little star" (which only loosely follows the formula of WordTune [or ElmPuźon] type) and even the word 'lullaby' itself provide a semantic placeholder with multiple stanzas sung straight through. By means of these repetitions «rhythmic and intonational integrity is ensured» (Stern), something which for the young child's psychological development is absolutely crucial [12].

In Turkmen lullabies, the child's future ambition is a most frequently mentioned theme, one of them inviting him to become a böke (hero or wrestler). The teleportation ability of the child is setting a connection to their future and defense of motherland:

- Ballymyň gara gözi,
- Şirinden şeker sözi,
- Watanyn goramaga,
- Elmydam taýýar özi.

This underscores a community responsibility (or duty) that is not as prevalent in the English tradition where rewards tend to be personal (for example, "thou shalt have a fish") [13].

Music and physical movement as an approach to child care was encouraged in the 11th century by Avicenna. He recommended slow, gentle rhythmic rocking and the playing of music or lullabies as two primary resources for soothing their receptivity [14].Their power is to affect the physical health of the later child, and his or her talent for music and intellectual studies in particular, as Ibn Sina believed. This is in agreement with the cordelista who recognises with Martins «the lullaby as a fundamental feature of 'folk pedagogy' since the spiritual and physical aspects are intimately combined» [15].

4. Conclusion

The present comparitive approach to the lullaby also shows that this genre, although it is commonly acknowledged to be one of the earliest forms of mother's songs, is a culturally stratified type rooted in specific historical, social and religious contexts. The interpretation of Karakalpak, Turkmen and English lullabies substantiates that they are more than sleep-inducing tunes as they contribute to the process of early enculturation and symbolic communication.

On a typological level the latter witness common archetypal threads, primarily in terms the maternal figure symbolization as related to protection, care and existential orientation. Read through the lens of Jungian archetypal theory, this "Great Mother" theme serves as a transcultural invariant: organizing the child's earliest symbolic grasp of what security and attachment can mean. Concurrently, Bakhtinian dialogism explains the collective aspect of the lullaby as the child's first introduction into socially mediated language through what Crista Ferkler calls maternal addressivity that serves to form consciousness as primarily dialogically oriented.

These universal principles are mitigated, however, by strong cultural divergences. The Karakalpak and Turkmen are both clearly more collectivist, based on ideas of clan pride, work ethics, social responsibility, and religious belief. By contrast, the English lullaby tradition is focused on mental comfort, symbolic imagery and personal emotional experience. These divergences are a reflection of larger socio-historical constructs, and even in differing modes of cultural identity formation.

Phoneme and rhythm analysis also shows that the structure is regular, a syntactic way of stabilizing cognitions and emotions (in such a case with syllables' stability and repetition). This means that the lullaby is an aesthetic, educational, psychological and spiritual phenomenon in one cultural expression.

In summary, the lullaby genre is a cross-cultural anthropological phenomenon that takes form in each particular culture-specific semantic configuration. Unsustained vitality across traditions suggests that it is a central mechanism by which cultures pass values, identity and symbolic meaning from one generation to the next.

REFERENCES

[1] *Gelin-gyzlaryň şahyrana döredijiligi*. Ashgabat: Türkmenistanyň milli medeniýet "Miras" merkezi, 2005.

[2] *Karakalpak Folklore*. Nukus: ILIM, 2015.

[3] M. Tatar, "Lullabies and Cultural Memory," *J. Folk. Res.*, vol. 45, no. 3, pp. 215–230, 2008.

[4] J. Blacking, "Music, Culture and Experience," *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 345–356, 1973.

[5] R. Finnegan, *Oral Literature in Africa*. Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2012.

[6] P. Zumthor, *Oral Poetry: An Introduction*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1990.

[7] M. M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

[8] M. Opielka, "Ritual and Socialization in Traditional Societies," *Cult. Sociol.*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 150–168, 2014.

[9] C. G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969.

[10] A. A. Ibn Sina, *The Canon of Medicine*. Tashkent: Khalk Merosi, 1992.

[11] S. E. Trehub, "The Developmental Origins of Musicality," *Nat. Neurosci.*, vol. 6, no. 7, pp. 669–673, 2003.

[12] E. Davies, "The Lullaby as Cultural Text," *Folklore*, vol. 122, no. 1, pp. 25–40, 2011.

[13] D. N. Stern, "The Mother-Infant Relationship and the Development of the Self," *Infant Ment. Health J.*, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 193–203, 1995.

[14] M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*. New York: Harcourt, 1959.

[15] Y. M. Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990.