

Songs from the Cradle: An Analysis of Some Selected Nupe Songs

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Abstract : Lullabies have been broadly defined as songs that are sung to calm and soothe children. While this is true, this paper intends to show that lullabies exceed these functions. The paper, in exploring Nupe lullabies, examines the various functions that lullabies perform in terms of language development, cultural enrichment and also the retelling of history as it relates to the culture of the Nupe people of northern Nigeria. The theoretical framework used is the functionalist theory. This theory postulates that all cultural or social phenomena have a positive function and that all are indispensable. The functionalist theory is based on the premise that all aspects of a society—institutions, roles, norms, etc.—serve a purpose and that all are indispensable for the long-term survival of the society. To this end, this paper dissects the various lullabies in Nupeland with a view to exploring the meaning that these songs generate and why they are even sung at all. The qualitative research methodology has been used to gather materials.

Keywords : Nupe, lullabies, Nigeria, northern

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