

MEU MENIÑO É PEQUENIÑO

A typical lullaby.

ORIGIN: this kind of song was born in the Early Middle Ages. In the same way as most of the countries usually have a song for each job or activity, the task of getting a baby off to sleep is another one. There are songs to do it, as most of the times it is not an easy job but rather tiring, due to the fact that it is necessary a lot of patience. Some children need a lot of singing and even of rocking.

CLASIFICACION; secular. In some traditional song books there are lullabies, but most of them are compositions on highbrow poems.

ACCOMPANIMENT: there is no accompaniment, neither musical nor instrumental. It is sometimes the mother who la-la-la the lullaby instead of singing it.

DANCE: it is not for dancing. The only movement produced is the one the mother does while singing, rocking the baby on the cradle or in her arms.

WOMAN/ MAN: Since the man exists, the mother always had to sing the baby while she rocked her to sleep. Almost all the lullabies are made to be sung by a soloist woman. In the song we are analyzing, we also find the characteristic distribution of sexes with regard to feminine and masculine tasks. The care of children was traditionally a "women's duty".

DESCRIPTION: It generally has a monotone music suitable for getting the children off to sleep. The rocking requires a cradle and the hushaby is sung with the baby in arms, moving lightly the upper part of the body. They are simply *alalás* with appropriate lyrics for this target. These lyrics usually come from a parish or village, which are passed on through the generations not taking into account the poetic deformation in the oral transmission. The texts of these lyrics do not have a poetic content. They only advise the child to sleep. If they don't do it, the bogeyman will come and take them.

PRESENT TIMES: Years ago these songs were heard in every home, as it was something usual. Nowadays they are hardly heard, but you can still enter a home and listen to a mother singing a lullaby to her child - sometimes the same ones that were sung to her - sometimes they just la-la-la. There are quite a lot of them and we think that some of them are very beautiful, as the one shown here, and we should not forget them because they are part of our culture and of our ancestors.