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The Funerary Song: Ritual Expression and Communication

Summary

Ritual communication in a group, or, generally, at the level of a well-defined community is realized through words, gestures and action. Nevertheless, we should not draw the conclusion that by communication we will just mean words, as there are certain rituals which have as main interdiction the very use of words. This paper will take into consideration a form of ritual communication that uses word, that is, we will specifically deal with the funerary songs, which are an important component of the funerary ceremonial performed in Maramureş county. Funerary songs transmit suffering, anger and crying in the ritualistic form of a series of rhythmical sequences, thus synchronizing complex verbal structures with specific gestures. Focussing on these complex verbal structures, our goal is to identify, from a stylistic perspective, certain constants of expression which may be encountered in the Maramureş funerary songs.