

The Feminine Speech and the Ritual of Death in Albania

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Abstract : Death is an inevitable phenomenon in our life, in the same way, are also the ritual of death accompanied by the dirge and the keening performed by men. Keening is a phenomenon common among all peoples, the instances in which the ritual of death and keening coincide, as a special phenomenon of its, are numerous given the fact that keening is an outcome of an extremely special emotional state. However, even during the ritual of death, every people try to display through words its qualities, a multitude of characteristics preserved and transmitted with fanaticism from one generation to the other. The ritual of death constitutes an important element of our tradition and at the same time a material always interesting to be studied in minute details. In this study, we have tried to limit ourselves to the feminine speech, since keening, in general in Albania has been carried out by women. Differences and similarities among keening on the national scale, from the diachronic and synchronic point of view, can be seen clearly if we compare the Albanian creations in different regions. The similarities and differences within the Albanian culture serve as a typical paradigm to study how the ancient elements of outlook that the Albanians have had on death, history, and the social organization in these regions have been preserved and transmitted and above all, in what way these feelings have been clothed from the linguistic point of view, the typologies of keening and of all of the ritual of death, which clearly shows archaic forms as well as new developments. These data have been gathered not only by conducting various surveys but also by observing closely the linguistic behavior of women in Albania during the ritual of death. The study has encompassed the popular lyric poetry as well as new entries, whereas from the geographic point of view we focus mainly in the Southern regions, although examples from other regions where Albanian speaking people live are also present. The main results of the study show that women use much more than men dialect form, peripheral language elements and descriptive elements during their speech in the ritual of death.

Keywords : feminine speech in Albania, linguistic characteristics of the dirge, ritual of death, the typologies of keening

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