

Abstract

Death is an ever-present fact in human life and it affects its life course. Stable form of funeral ritual is developed from the need for reconciliation with one's own mortality and loss of loved ones. Traditional funeral ceremony based on combination of lore and Christian ritual had changed due to changes in political and social life during the 20th century. Probably the biggest effect had the administration of communist party which lasted for 40 years and which used funeral ceremony as propaganda of its regime. The struggle with traditional Christian funeral was connected with an open fight with church as such and was caused by communist effort to dominate social life. Instead of traditional Christian funeral communism proclaimed cremation as an anticlerical burial option. Effects of communism then developed new funeral rituals. This text is motivated by the effort to identify perception of death and its changes in Czech republic in the second half of the 20th century, using literary and oral sources. It searches for an answer to the question of whether communist regime changed funeral ritual and tries to identify it in taped oral sources.