

Abstract (in English)

The main topic of this thesis is both analysis and interpretation of the relationship between funeral rites, political power and society. Funeral rites are understood as a complex of performative, symbolic social acts, which are themselves comprised of various distinctive phases and signs. The meaning of these acts and signs is important because it can change the features and practice of the collective it is assigned to. The main purpose of this thesis is not only to perform a thick description of different kinds of communist funeral rite in the given time period but to interpret it in the wider social and cultural context as well.

The concept of political religion as a heuristic tool was used in the thesis in order to distinguish an ambivalent nature of communist ideology which manifested itself in funeral rites. Funeral rites are analyzed as models for human behavior, which represent key values and norms of communist ideology. At the same time, funeral rites are analyzed as forms of cultural management. That is the reason, why are put under scrutiny not only the rites which are significant for society as a whole but also the funeral rites of individual actors.