

Abstract

Keywords: *ars moriendi*, *castrum doloris*, early modern period, epitaphs, funeral essentials, funeral procession, funeral sermons, Prague, sepulcher essentials, tomb stones

The thesis introduces a specific part of the cultural history of the early modern period – the funeral culture. Considering the extensiveness of the matter, the scope has been limited to the area of Prague, to the cultural sphere of secular nobility and to the time period between the years 1500 and 1700. Naturally, the timeframe is not and cannot be absolute given the nature of this subject matter, which is culture.

In the introductory chapter, the paper seeks to clarify eschatology and religious conditions in the early modern period, depicting death and its grip in the 16th and 17th centuries. Each chapter is devoted to a specific phenomenon of the funeral culture, in the same order in which the succession should logically follow shortly before and after the death of an important person. As such, the thesis specifically discusses the doctrine of “good death” - so called *ars moriendi*, exhibitions of the body, the funeral procession, construction of the *Castrum Doloris*, funeral sermons, and provision of funeral monuments.

At the conclusion, the thesis ventures into the geographically and religiously distant Duchy of Finland, which was part of Lutheran Sweden at that time. The main goal is to trace to what extent funeral culture is specific to a particular region and mentality, and to what degree it transcends cultures and is part of a wider European framework.