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LAMENTS AND TEARS IN MEDIAEVAL LITERATURE

*(On the Basis of Balkan Orthodox Literature)*

*(Summary)*

The article consists of three parts. In the first “Do not weep exceedingly for the dead” the authoress sets forth the views of the official Church on mourning for the dead in accordance with the precept of Damascenus Studies on this subject. The Church regards excessive weeping as a pagan manifestation and allows quiet sorrow and moderate tears which should not annoy God and the people. The second part is dedicated to “Laments in literature”. Lamentation as a literary genre, lamentation in funeral orations and the sermons of mourning in hagiographic literature are all considered. A comparison is made between the Serbian and Bulgarian hagiographic traditions. The third part deals with the question: “When is it the most appropriate to weep”. Based on statements by different authors, emphasis is laid on the view that one should weep the most for sins. Tears possess a purifying force, weeping is a means of spiritual healing. Throughout the article attention is paid to the passages in which lamentation is expressed.