

The Power of Tropes in the Laments of Death¹

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ABSTRACT At the center of the researcher's analysis will be the interaction or play between the tropes of mother, sister and daughter using examples of Azerbaijan laments of death (*dillar*). The play is particularly revealed in the dynamic relation between the dimension of contiguity and similarity, through which semantic differences between these female social categories are transformed and finally abandoned. This achievement of tropes' interplay, being described as a linguistic process of transformation which is realized through different rites of gift giving, equalizing mother and married daughter to one another. Both linguistic and ritual context express the value of the "milk" or *süd* in contrast to the value of the "bone" or *sümük*, which is explicitly recognised in patrilineal descent tracing and agnatic groups. As basic ideas of procreation and relatedness *süd* and *sümük* refer to the core of Azerbaijan kinship, which is to be identified with cross siblingship, the status of brother and sister.