

NUNU MINDADZE

RELIGION SINCRETISM IN GEORGIAN FOLK MEDICINE

Ancient cult of children's infectious diseases called in Georgia "Batonebi" [masters, rulers], angelozebi [angels]... was based on the astral religion, worship of nature, earth etc. But during the centuries, under the influence of Christianity, the system of beliefs of children's infectious diseases was reinterpreted in terms of Christian religion. The scheme of the Christian version of this cult can be represented in the following way: the illness is sent by God. These diseases are caused by the angels: St. Barbara is considered to be the patroness of these diseases. In the case of death the sick child is taken to paradise by the angels and therefore mourning over the dead child is forbidden. It is evident that in this cult the customs connected with such diseases are more conservative than the system of beliefs