Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to search for contact points between the two socioreligious phenomena, in which we expect continuity on the basis of their own intensive historical ethnic relations. By analyzing hagiographic legends and historical texts, we try to identify changes that the Byzantine phenomenon of foolishness for Christ undergoes after its introduction to cultural environment of Kievan Rus and its changes in the successor states, and we view these phenomena that emerged in this new environment and all together constitute the phenomenon of Russian foolishness for Christ in detail for the purpose of comparison by analogy with shamanism of Central Asian and Siberian ethnic communities.

At the beginning of the work I deal with the nature of the sources and roots that represent foolishness for Christ that can be found in the Byzantine Empire but are linked to the Asia Minor and Mediterranean cultural environment. First, I present the various legends of individual saints. I put the Russian foolishness for Christ phenomenon into a broader historical and religious context to which phenomena that can be seen on the border of foolishness for Christ belong, and I briefly deal with Central Asian and Siberian shamanism. On this basis the analysis of possible cultural exchange and comparison of similar features of the social and religious institutions stands alone.