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Organizers: The University of Rijeka – Centre for Information on Sects and Cults (CISK) - European Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Sectarianism (FECRIS)

Summary of the Conference presentation

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Influence of Satanic Cults on Young People in Croatia

The counselling office for youth and their parents «Guardian Angels of Varaždin» was opened on February 1st 2006. Since then, it has provided help not only to the youth who had problems characteristic of adolescence, but also to several young people who were under the influence of satanic cults.

Here is a characteristic case:

1st phase – A young person, possibly traumatised as a child, has family problems or some other psychological scar and becomes disappointed in life. He/she finds one or more like-minded youths and they create sub-cultural group. In this phase, things are still relatively normal for adolescence. Such youth require help in the form of attention, talks and unconditional acceptance.

2nd phase – Some of these young people meet slightly older men/women, who pretend holding certain «secrets» which attract the youth. These older people belong to the lower ranks of the black lodges and their duty is to recruit new acolytes.

3rd phase – The next phase consists in binding the youth to the cult. This is done through so-called "initiations" – they involve the young persons in activities which would result in shame if the public learned about them (orgies, black masses, drugs, etc.)

4th phase – After some time the young people are "ready". Some of them accept willingly the system of values of the cult and continue to promote it. Others (who have a feeling of guilt) want to get out; however, they are blackmailed, manipulated and threatened in various ways, so they fall into heavy crises, which end in personality breakdown, mental illness, even suicide.

5th phase – Those youth who continue to belong to the cult, achieve higher positions, learn other techniques of influencing others and live in the illusion of advancement.

However, all of them live in a rigid hierarchical system, and only the "top" leader of the cult holds any authority over their behaviour and their lives.

Here are symptoms which, if combined, may indicate the influence of a cult:

- a) Depressive, dark thoughts;
- b) Suicidal ideas, self-injuries;
- c) Satanic symbols, music and books with satanic contents;
- d) Feeling of alienation from friends and family;
- e) Writing of diaries with morbid contents;
- f) Feeling of paranoia, alien control over one-self;
- g) Meetings with strangers in late hours;
- h) Searching and rejecting help of the community, sudden mood changes;
- i) General loss of interest for all «earthly» things like school, job etc.
- j) Lack of good mood, sometimes in combination with aggressiveness;

We managed to pull almost all young people who asked for help from this problem.

We also cooperate with the parents, which are usually very supportive of our work.

¹'Guardian Angels' --(Andeli čuvari) <http://andjeli-cuvari.com/>

International Conference
DESTRUCTIVE GROUPS AND YOUTH
Friday 26 November 2010 - Rijeka Town Hall – Conference Hall
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