

Ideology and Brainwashing: Psychological Manipulation in Religious Sects

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Abstract : This work analyses the term sect or religious cult and the general traits of those groups and the people involved so as to better understand this unexpectedly popular reality. Some translations taken from research papers as well as academic articles are likewise taken into consideration. We have carried out an in-depth analysis of the topics presented. Firstly we defined magic related to religion and all the similarities and differences between magical thinking and religious thinking, religion, and superstition. Secondly, the term "sect" was defined, and the phenomenon was dealt with, along with the listing of all kinds of existing groups. Then we studied the recruitment process in general and recruitment according to the brainwashing theory. We then analysed the criminological aspects that entail their harmfulness with a particular focus on the structure of those religious communities and the theories regarding the people involved: leader, members, and the group, as it has its own pattern of behaviour and its conformism. Finally, we studied the ideology and the techniques of manipulation used, such as brainwashing, which got already introduced in previous chapters trying to explain this reality not only in theory but studying and trying to understand some of the most famous religious cults.

Keywords : psychological manipulation, brainwashing, love bombing, magic and religion

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