

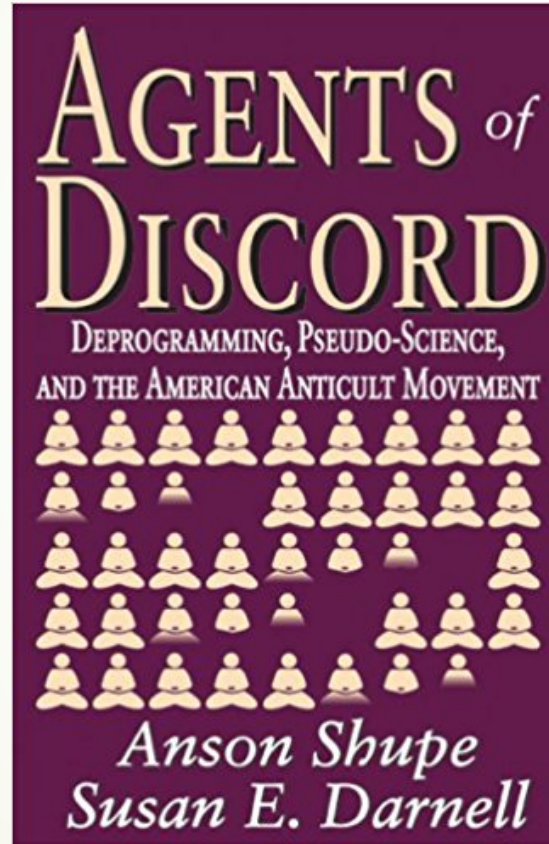
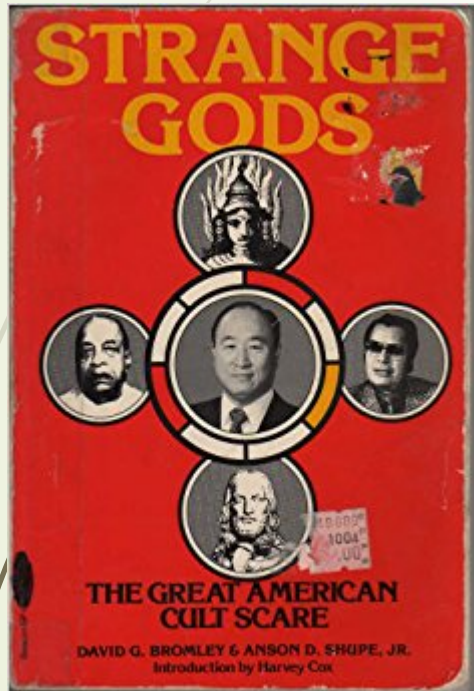


Cult Wars in Odessa

The Applied Sciences Association and the Anti-Cult Movement

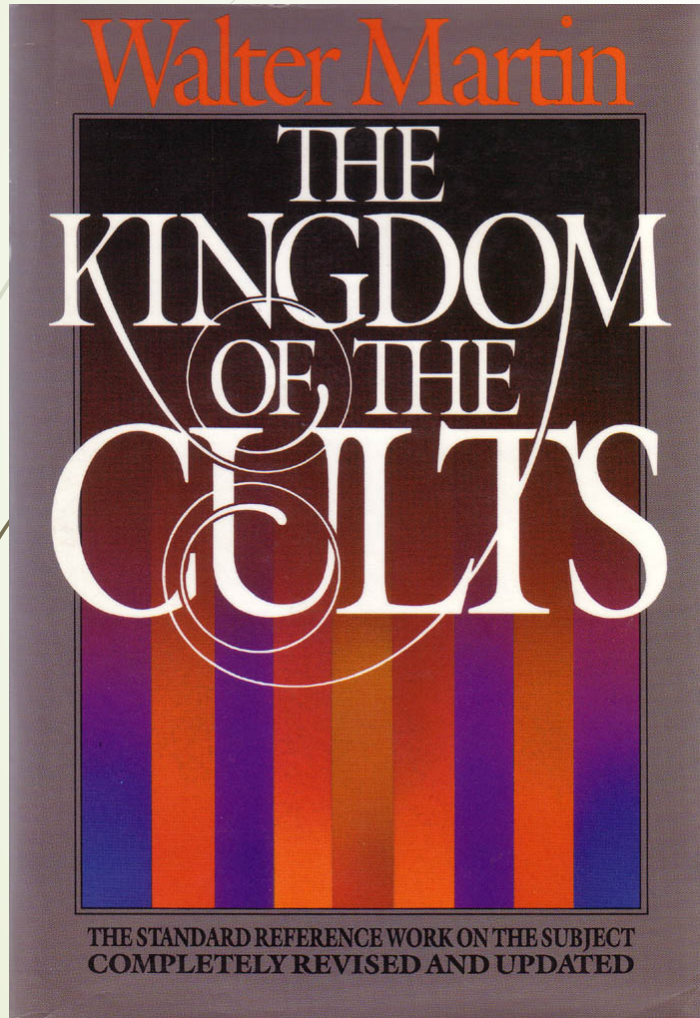
Massimo Introvigne
European Association for the Study of Religion Annual Conference
Leuven – September 19, 2017

The Anti-Cult Movement



- The anti-cult movement is one of the topics most studied by scholars of new religious movements, particularly during the “cult wars” of the 1970s and 1980s. Academics criticized its notion of “cult,” based on what they believed was a pseudo-scientific notion of “brainwashing”

Anti-Cult and Counter-Cult



- In 1993, I suggested that there were in fact *two* different oppositions to “cults.” A Christian *counter-cult* movement criticized cults for their “heretical” doctrines, while a secular (and sometimes openly anti-religious) *anti-cult* movement claimed it was not interested in doctrines but only in the anti-social behavior of “cults.” The distinction was widely adopted by scholars

Left: In 1965, Walter Martin (1928-1989) published one of the first Christian counter-cult books

The Crisis of the Anti-Cult Movement

- In the West, “cult wars” ran out of speed long ago. In recent years, the anti-cult movement (ACM) experienced a crisis for several reasons:
 - after 9/11, many governments focused their interest and resources on radical Islam rather than “cults”;
 - the main targets of the ACM either declined (The Family) and became less visible, at least in the West (Unification Church, ISKCON), or proved very capable of resisting in court to official and ACM action (Scientology);
 - a “judicialization of religious freedom” (as sociologist Jim Richardson called it) led courts to recognize the rights of controversial “cults” in several jurisdictions and, from 1990 on, the ACM lost a number of key court cases

ACM Strategies: 1. Finding New Targets



- As old targets either proved formidable opponents in court, or became less newsworthy because of their reduced visibility, the *anti-cult* movement needed new targets to prove its continuing relevance
- It found a treasure chest in the long lists of “heretics”, prepared in various countries by Christian *counter-cultists*, and quickly extended to them the accusations of brainwashing

2. Playing the “Save the Children” Card

ENSLAVED BY THE CULT OF SEX

Her parents were utterly middle class, yet for 25 years they allowed this girl to be abused by a secretive and bizarre cult. Now, free of its clutches, she reveals

by Celeste Jones

Victim: Celeste, nine, and, above, her parents, Rebecca and Christopher Jones

Found another affidavit which Kristina had written, saying she had been abused from the age of three by grown men including her stepfather. I felt physically sick and I knew instantly that she wasn't lying because I had suffered the same abuse. But I was too scared to leave The Family — it was the only world I knew.

Over the next year and a half, I appeared on a number of television programmes, including Sky News and the BBC, to deny the stories my mother and Kristina were openly talking about.

After a few days, I flew back to the cult. I knew people will find it hard to believe that I wanted to go back to that, but I was so indoctrinated that I knew no other way.

It was to be several years before a life-changing event made me realise I had to escape. I fell pregnant by a

BORN into an evil cult, called the Children of God, sisters Celeste, Kristina and Juliana Jones were abused from the age of three. Torn from their parents, their childhood was dominated by the warped cult leader David Berg. The cult — first exposed by the Daily Mail in 1994 — still exists. While their father, the son of a British Army officer, is still in the cult, the three sisters have escaped its clutches. Here the eldest, CELESTE JONES, 32, a clinical psychologist, who lives in Somerset with her eight-year-old daughter, gives a chilling account of life in the grip of a sinister madness.

THERE is an old, grainy home video from my childhood which I sometimes sit down to watch and which never fails to make me shudder. It starts innocently enough — I am six years old, a small, slim, dark-haired child dancing to pipe music for the camera. But this is no ordinary family movie.

As the camera focuses, you can see that I am naked, dancing behind a white veil.

I remember filming the video as if it was yesterday — and how the man ‘directing’ it asked me to rub my bottom and to wriggle for the camera.

The tragedy is that already at that age I had been thrust to become sexualised. Quite simply, sexual grooming was an everyday part of my life.

I was born to ordinary, middle-class English parents, and by rights I should have enjoyed a perfectly normal childhood. But my parents — a former public schoolboy and rather naive young teenage girl — were members of the sinister Children of God cult, in which adult urges and sex between adults and children were considered the highest expression of love.

Sickeningly, the cult leader David Berg, or ‘Mo’ as he called himself, claimed that God intended everyone to become part of a sexual experience. The result was a childhood of abuse and pain.

It should have been so different. My father, Christopher Jones, was born in December 1951, the son of a British Army officer. Educated at public school in Cheltenham, he studied drama at Rose Bruford College and joined the Children of God in 1973.

My mother Rebecca was born in 1957 and had a secure upbringing in the south of England. Her father was a civil engineer and her mother a devoted housewife. Rebecca was recruited during a visit to her school by the Children of God when she was just 15, and married our father a year later in 1974.

I was born on January 29, 1975, and we were sent to join a commune in Bon-bay which was part of the cult, and where my sister Kristina was born 18 months later.

Months later, Berg decreed that sex was the highest expression of love, and giving it was called ‘sharing’.

Both my parents started sharing their bodies with others — but after the birth of my brother David in April 1978, Mom became increasingly depressed.

When she met another family member, Joshua, she decided to return to England with Kristina and David. But I

him naked in his bedroom. ‘You’re so sexy!’ he would say.

One man, Manuel, helped teach us our dance routines. As I slept in a caravan one night with my friends, he woke me, pulled down my pants and started kissing me.

‘This is how the adult women do it,’ he explained. I was about seven years old and was terrified. I just wanted to scream, but nothing came out. When I watched the adults having sex, they seemed to enjoy it, so why didn’t I?

Once a week, our commune would gather for a dance night, and the adults — all those over the age of 12 — paired off for sex.

Meanwhile, during the day, everything would stop for so-called ‘Cuddle Time’ — a euphemism for group sex.

I remember lying horrified in the clutches of my teacher, Johnny Appleseed (some of the cult members took stupid, folksy names), while other adults were having sex around us. When he finished assaulting me, he said a prayer as I lay in terror.

In June 1981, my half-sister Juliana was born to my father and Serena. We moved to a commune and during one sermon, the leader stripped off his clothes. Everyone, including the children, obediently followed.

Everyone sat together naked, arms around each other then the men were instructed to take a sip from the communal cup and pass it on to the mouth of their female partner. When the wine came round, my adult partner took a gulp and then fixed his mouth on mine. It was disgusting.

In the commune, I was forever scared of being singled out for punishment. Once, when I answered the leader, Paul, he strangled me out for public humiliation — telling me to hold out my hand and

- The ACM also realized that in our society there is a widespread alarm about sexual abuse of both adult and children, and emphasized that “cults” should be fought in order to save their “victims” from being “enslaved by cults of sex”

3. Find New Allies

- Third, while it once despised Christian counter-cultists as bigoted “heresy hunters,” the struggling anti-cult movement now realizes that it should reach out and find allies among Christian counter-cultists, the more so because the latter in some countries have more money and power than the secular anti-cultists ever dreamed of



Above: Russian Orthodox counter-cultists meet anti-cultists, some of them self-styled atheists, in Sakhalin, Russia (2014)

The Russian Connection



- In the 21st century, it became clear to Western anti-cultists that Russia was devoting unprecedented resources to the fight against "cults." In 2017, the Supreme Court in Russia confirmed the "liquidation" of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Steps were taken towards a similar "liquidation" of several other "cults"

Russian Counter-Cultists



- Although the Russian state is allegedly secular, it relies heavily for defining and persecuting “cults” on the counter-cultists of the Saint Irenaeus of Lyons Centre, which represents the Russian Orthodox Church. Its leader, Alexander Dvorkin, became the president of the Justice Ministry's Expert Council for Conducting State Religious Studies Expert Analysis, a key actor in the campaigns aimed at banning “cults”



FECRIS and Dvorkin

- In 2009, Dvorkin became the vice-president of the European anti-cult federation FECRIS. As economic support to FECRIS by other countries is drying out, Russian hegemony on European anti-cultism is a concrete possibility. It is also paradoxical, because most European anti-cult organizations are deeply secular, while Dvorkin represents a radical faction of the Russian Orthodox Church

Political Connections

“ЧЕРНЫЙ” PR

Александр Невеев

кандидат психологических наук
член The American Society for
Training and Development

Черный PR

как целенаправленное распространение
негативной информации, касающейся
какого-либо неодушевленного или
одушевленного объекта.

Целью

такой деятельности может
быть либо уничтожение
бизнеса, либо подрыв
деловых связей.

Площадки для размещения:

- *Сетевые СМИ
- *Форумы
- *Блоги
- *Гостевые книги



- In Russia, counter-cultists have tried to deepen their connection with politics, without hiding their religious background. A leading critic of “cults” and associate of Dvorkin, psychologist Alexander Neveev, is part of a project for an “Academy of Orthodox Politicians”

Finding New “Cults”

- Western anti-cultists, confronted with economic problems and decreasing support by governments, may have a mythical image of Dvorkin's group as almost omnipotent in Russia. This is not the case. Dvorkin has also critics in Russian political and religious milieus, and needs to remind the public opinion of his relevancy by continuously finding new “dangerous cults”





The Applied Sciences Association

- It is this background that explains the belated “cult wars” episode that happened in Odessa in 2014-2016. The group under attack as a “cult” was not a new religious movement. The Applied Sciences Association is an umbrella organization for three research institutes founded by Oleg Maltsev: Fate Analysis, a center for studying and teaching martial arts and weapon handling, and the Memory Institute

Origins of the Movement

- Oleg Maltsev (b. 1975 in Odessa in a Jewish family) graduated in 1992 at Moscow Cadet Corps under Viktor Pavlovič Svetlov (pseud. of Avraam Michelssohn, 1919-2002), whom he regards as the true founder of these associations. In the same year 1992, Maltsev established in Moscow TOROSS (Complex Territorial Analytical Consulting Agency), followed in 1998 in Vienna by an organization called The Russian Science in Europe and in 2009 by The Crimean Research Base in Sevastopol. He moved to Odessa in 2014, with several key disciples, before the Russian occupation of Crimea



The Doctrine of the Pedestal



- The key concept of the Applied Sciences Association is a doctrine Maltsev calls “Pedestal” (постамент) and claims he learned from Svetlov. It teaches: “do what you have to do and control your future.” “Pedestal” offers the tools to implement one’s tasks, achieve results, and determine one’s own future. It is not competitive, Maltsev claims, as “everyone has his or her own way to the top of achievements”

Three Main Areas

- There are three main areas of what Maltsev prefers to call “scientific research” rather than theory or doctrine: psychological, physical, and spiritual. Having left the Russian military, Maltsev traveled throughout Europe and encountered the theories of Leopold Szondi (1893-1986), a Hungarian Jewish psychoanalyst who survived Bergen-Belsen and proposed a third way of deep psychology and memory studies, between Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961)



Maltsev visiting the grave of Szondi in Zurich

1. Psychology: The Szondi Connection

- Szondi, befriended and esteemed by both Freud and Jung, was never as successful as they were, although his "Szondi test" is still used. Pictures of people suffering from mental disorders and "deviants" are shown to the patients and their reactions noted. Szondi became well-known when he tested the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann (1906-1962) with his test



Fate Analysis



- Freud focused on the individual unconscious and Jung on the collective unconscious. Szondi privileged the family unconscious, claiming that the genes of our ancestors of many generations are also present in our unconscious. In a way, our ancestors are there and determine many of our choices. However, when we realize this, we can also change our fate and not be totally determined by our ancestors' presence in our psychical field. For Maltsev, the practical importance of Szondi's "Fate Analysis" lies in the promise that we can change our fate

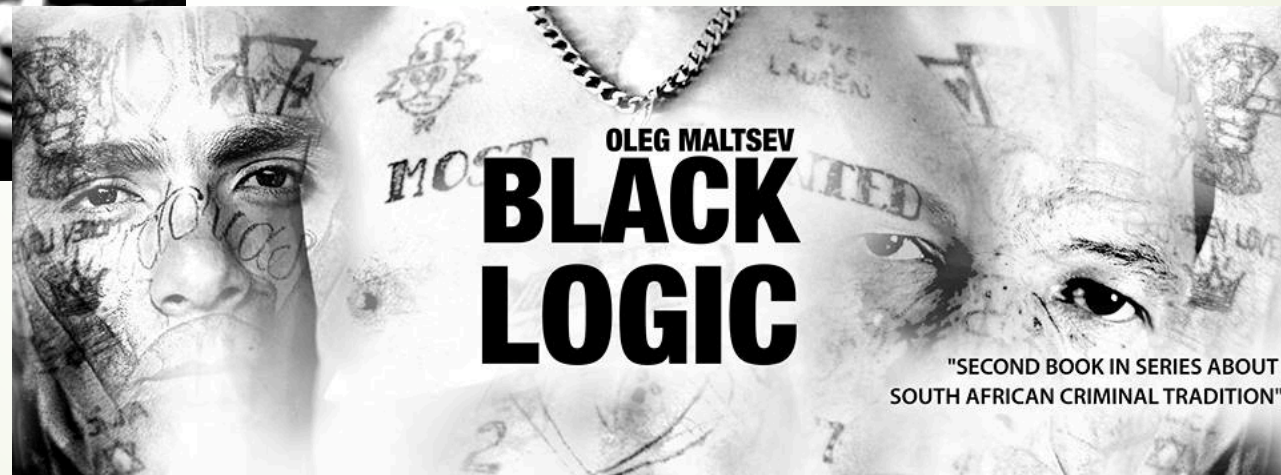
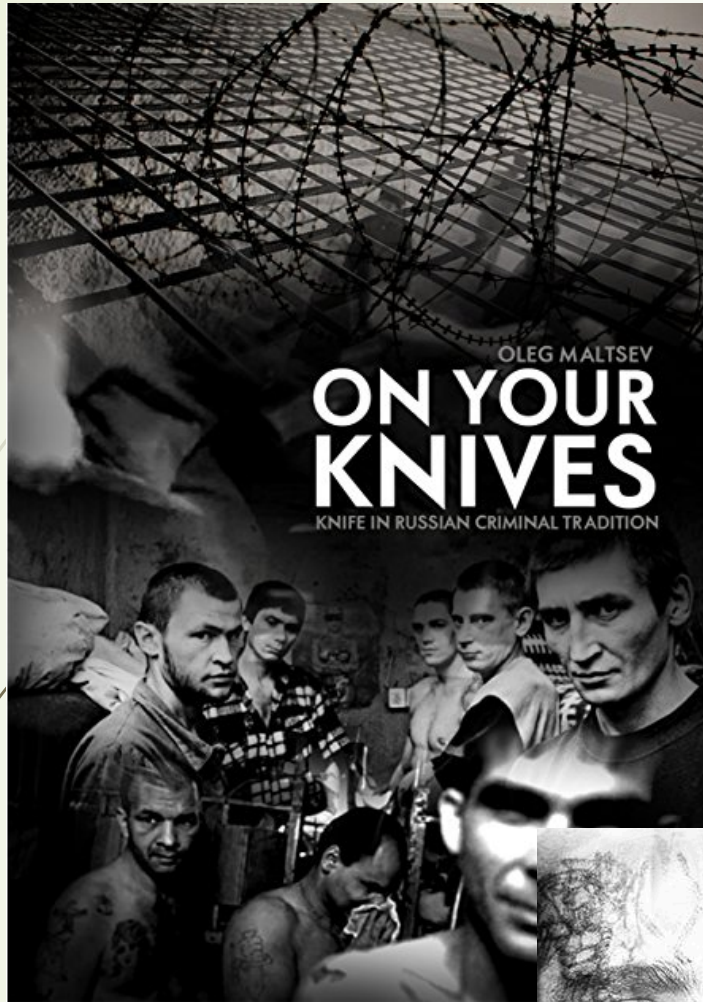
2. The Body: Martial Arts

- The second area where the Applied Sciences Association operates is related to martial arts and weapon handling. Maltsev is particularly interested in certain particular weapons, whose mastery, he believes, is more psychological than a matter of force. Such are the Italian weapons popular in the Renaissance, including the Venetian stiletto



Criminal Traditions

- Maltsev believes that an ancient and lost wisdom about weapon handling survives where it is rarely sought: in the criminal traditions of several countries, from South Africa to Russia, Italy, Spain, Mexico, the Philippines. While obviously not condoning their uses for criminal purposes, Maltsev carries on expeditions all over the world to reconstruct traditions of weapon handlings and use in the criminal underworld



3. Memory and Spirituality

- Techniques for handling some weapons, Maltsev claims, were also developed by certain religious and chivalric orders in the Renaissance and before, and were connected to their secret spirituality. In his later writings, although he had abandoned organized religion, Szondi concluded that faith is necessary for integration and elaborated a theory of spirituality. Maltsev believes that the study of memory may offer a solid theoretical basis for this theory



An Esoteric View of History



- Maltsev's quest for spirituality also includes a hermetic view of history, and the persuasion that a good part of history taught in schools has been lost or fabricated. His search for hidden secrets in history does not make Maltsev popular, particularly because he often exposes the wrongdoings of organized religion, including the support offered by some in the Orthodox Church (such as monks at Mount Athos) to Nazism and anti-Semitism

A Law Firm and a Newspaper



- Maltsev is persuaded that the pedestal doctrine and its tools can offer new insights in a wide variety of human fields, including science, history, business, journalism, and the practice of law. He received a Ph.D. in psychological sciences in 2017 but he is also a law graduate and lawyer, and founded with lawyer Olga Panchenko (left) the Redut law firm. He also inspired the creation of the *Unsolved Crimes* online newspaper, originally devoted to murder cases and now quite active in fighting anti-cultists and other critics of Maltsev

Anti-Cult Attack



- In 2012, a lady called Maria Kapar attended one of Maltsev's courses. She said she was unhappy with the course and its cost, while the Applied Sciences Association claimed she tried to use the group's name for illegal activities in Odessa. As the conflict escalated, in 2014 Kapar contacted Neveev (left – and presumably Dvorkin), who (apparently without having performed any search on the group) confirmed that she had been the victim of a typical “cult”

Standard Accusations

- Happy to be able to add a new “cult” to their list, Neveev and Dvorkin posted Web pages against Maltsev’s “Odessa Templars” (a name he never used). They accused the group, inter alia, of connections with the medieval Order of Knights Templar, setting up a military organization, brainwashing, fraud, and sexual improprieties, all standard accusations they use against dozens of “cults” in Russia



NEVEEV

Neveev

Sapientia est potentia

Сладкая ложь несуществующего академика

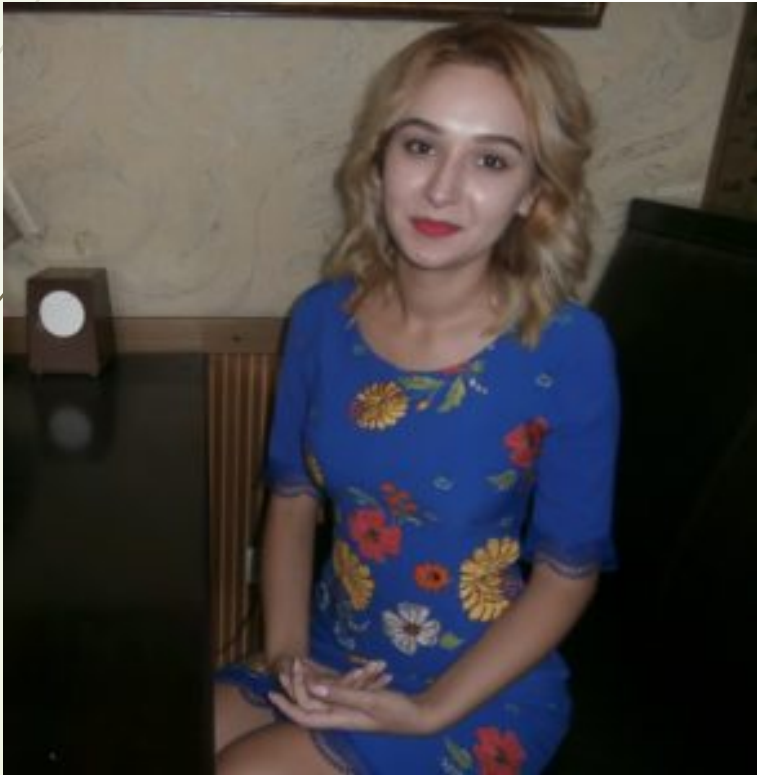


Contacting the Media

- The Russian counter-cultists also suggested that Kapar contact the local media in Odessa. She found some journalists particularly hostile to “cults” and others interested in sensational news, including Maria Kovalyova, Dmitry Bakaev, Vyacheslav Kasim, Evgenii Lysyi, Oksana Podnebesna. Some, such as Oksana Podnebesna, had reasons of hostility against the Redut Law Firm because of criminal cases (unrelated to Maltsev or “cults”) the firm won on behalf of defendants the reporters regarded as guilty



The Yalovaya Case



- The most serious incident involved Yulia Yalovaya, a 20-year old employee of the Redut Law Firm, also working for the *Unsolved Crimes* newspaper. Her mother read the reports against the Applied Sciences Association and got in touch with the Russian counter-cultists who, according to her daughter, had her pay \$ 12,000 for financing Yulia's "rescue"

Confrontation in a Police Station



- The mother then asked policemen to bring Yulia to the police station for questioning, claiming a “cult” was recruiting her into a “prostitution ring”

Resisting Counter-Cultists

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В Одессе тоталитарная секта устроила травлю журналиста - 28.05.15



В Одессе тоталитарная секта имени «шамана» Олега Мальцева выпускает видеоролики клеветнического и оскорбительного характера в отношении журналиста «7 телеканала» Марии Ковалевой.

Представитель СМИ вместе с группой телевизионщиков в своих программах раскрывают преступную деятельность Мальцева, рассказывая, как одесситы по своему неведению попадают в рабство сектантам.

А недавно Мальцев начал заманивать молодых девушек под предлогом кастингов начинающих актрис. Одеситкам с ходу предлагают роли 2-го плана, но с одним условием – чтобы девушка прошла учебу в некоей школе актерского мастерства. Через время несостоявшиеся кинозвезды оказываются под влиянием секты, уходят из семьи и перестают общаться с друзьями.

➤ Dvorkin and Neveev may be powerful in Russia, but their friends in Odessa were less well-known and could receive but a limited help by their Russian counterparts, if not through articles posted on the Internet. Dvorkin himself was forbidden to enter Ukraine since 2014, because of his positions on the Donetsk issue. Yulia Yalovaya was released thanks to the efforts of the Redut Law Firm and the journalists who had spread the anti-cult narratives about the Applied Sciences Association were hit by lawsuits. Some, such as Dmitry Bakaev, lost their jobs

Protect Your Dignity



- *Unsolved Crimes* produced a docudrama movie, *Protect Your Dignity* (left), about the Yalovaya case, who had favorable reviews internationally and further damaged the case and the reputation of the anti-cultists. Their propaganda against the Applied Sciences Association is being kept alive on the web, but does not seem to disturb the progress of the group

Martial Arts Feuds

Why HEMA Should be Concerned



LIQUIFIED IGNORANCE - ALTERNATIVE DESTREZA · DOMENICA 16 LUGLIO 2017

Many of you are aware of the postings in various HEMA forums / groups by Oleg Maltsev

Oleg is part of a group that has been labelled the “Odessa Templars”. The Russian Orthodox Church have accused them of a number of things including fraud, kidnap, sexual assault and threatening behaviour.

- Martial arts are a field not less contentious than spirituality, with groups and masters liberally trading accusations of inauthenticity and forged credentials. It is not surprising that Maltsev has been involved in these controversies. What is more unusual is that Russian counter-cultists have tried to exploit these conflicts, contacting those who have reasons of hostility against Maltsev and trying to export their narrative about “cults”

What Did We Learn?



Sociologist James T. Richardson interviewed
by *Unsolved Crimes*

- During the Odessa cult wars of 2014-2016, the Applied Sciences Association contacted several Ukrainian and international scholars of religions, asking suggestions on how to understand and confront the anti- and counter-cultists. Although it is not a religion, the controversy had the positive effect of attracting the attention of scholars on a group with a unique worldview none of them was familiar with

Anti-Cult Developments



- Scholars also learned something about the current status of anti-cultism. The incident was further evidence of the cavalier approach to the issue of “cults” by Dvorkin, Neveev, and their Russian colleagues. On the surface, they simply suffer, compared to more sophisticated “cult awareness” organizations in the West such as the International Cultic Studies Association (who are also in dialogue with academic scholars), of a lack of understanding and information



No Homework

- ▶ Russian and Ukrainian anti-cultists also failed to study the (admittedly complicated) theories and activities of Maltsev in the fields of history, psychology, and martial arts. Their criticism was reduced to a few isolated quotes, without depth or context

Did You Say “Cult”?

- Less charitably, one can also note that, in order to assert their relevance (and, if one believes Yulia Yalovaja, make some quick money), these counter-cultists were prepared to stretch the use of the word “cult” beyond the limits not only of their knowledge, but of ridicule. Even a law firm, Redut, was called a “cult”!



The Orthodox Connection

документальный фильм
АФОН



- More in depth, I personally believe that criticism by Maltsev about the historical wrongdoings of the Orthodox Church was an important factor in explaining what happened. When, because of martial arts quarrels or other reasons, the Russian Web attacks against the Applied Arts Association were used in other countries, the paradox of contemporary Western anti-cultism became apparent

The Anti-Cult Paradox



- Anti-cultism was born as a *secular* business but, because of the political and financial prominence in its organizations of well-funded Russian Orthodox *religious* opponents of “cults,” many in the anti-cult world today dance to the tune of Russian personalities. But the latter’s agenda protects in the first place the interests of some sectors of the Moscow Patriarchate and Russian politics



➤ For further information: maxintrovigne@gmail.com