

## **Abstract**

This thesis deals with the transformation of identity caused by entering and leaving a non-traditional religious community. The aim of the work was to determine how identity is changed by conversion and deconversion within the religious community of Jehovah's Witnesses. The theoretical part is divided into three main chapters. The first is essentially devoted to religious conversion, where major psychological approaches to the study, the motifs and the process of conversion are presented. The second chapter focuses on identity, where attention is mainly on process-oriented theory, with emphasis on narrative representation. The last part of the theoretical section is devoted to the particular religious group Jehovah's Witnesses and new religious movements in general, with emphasis on the psychological aspects of their effect on the identity of the individual. The practical part is done in the form of semi-structured interviews with former members of the religious community of Jehovah's Witnesses, where the aim was to see how and in what way the identity of the respondents has been altered by accepting membership in this religious group and then terminating it. The research results indicate that membership in the religious community of Jehovah's Witnesses has deeply affected the life stories of my respondents. Their identity with its characteristic areas had been modified by both conversion and subsequent deconversion from this religious group. This work simultaneously addresses the effects of former membership on the later life of the individual.