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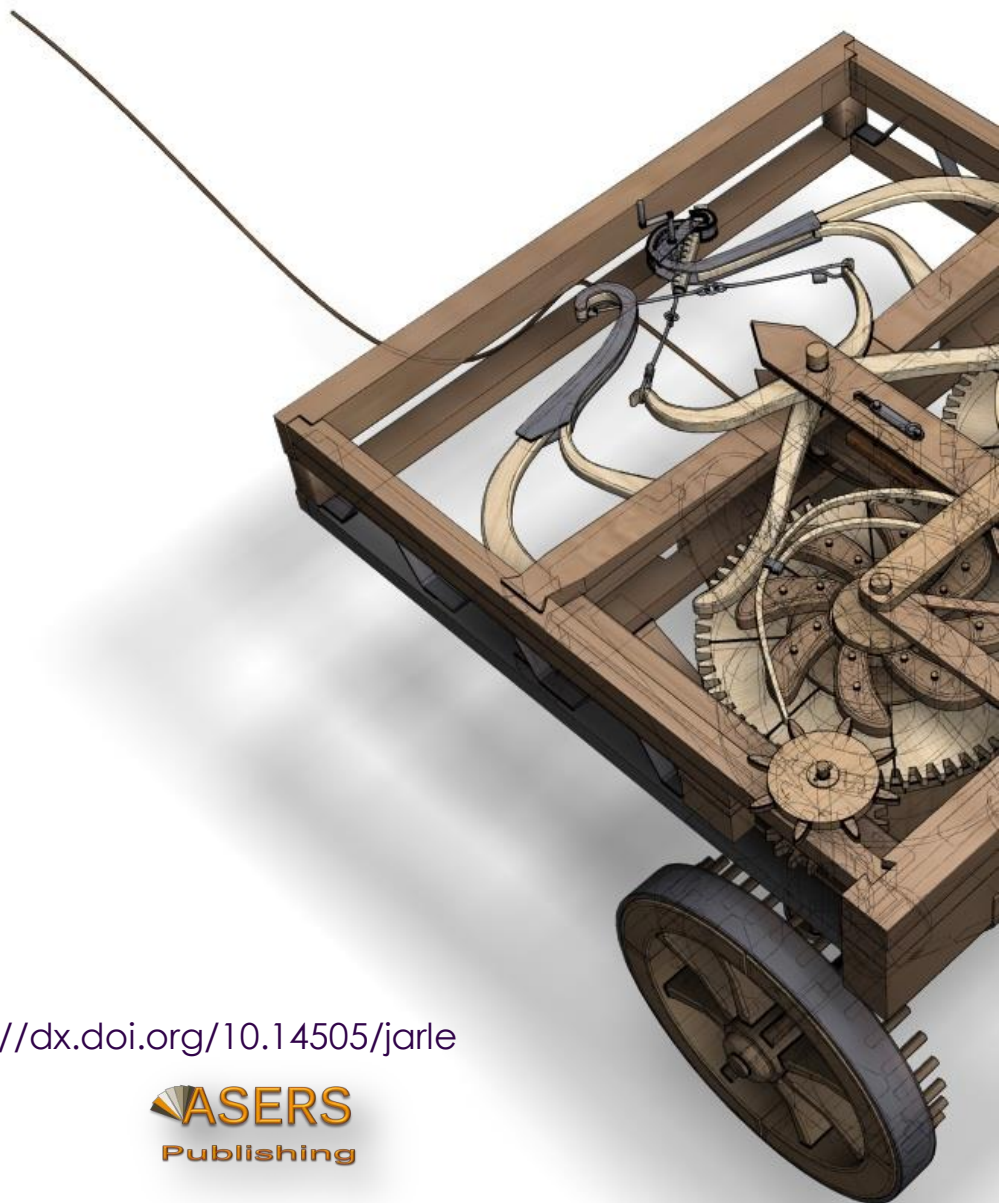
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The State Policy of the Russian Federation against Religious and Political Extremism and Urgent Tasks for Mass Media

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Abstract: *The purpose of the article is to study phenomena, processes and rules of objective reality related to activity (of before, criminal and post criminal period) of crime committers and post criminal behavior of other persons concerned with criminal activities: on reasoning, submission and assertion of a false alibi during inquest and assize, as well as law enforcement agencies activity aimed at disclosure, prevention and revelation of the false alibi. System and comparative approaches and such methods as synthesis and analysis became methodology of the research. In conclusion the final for conducted research notion of the false alibi as a component of the activity of the crime committer and post criminal behavior of persons connected with the crime activities was formulated.*

Keywords: public policy, national security, religious and political extremism, media, radical Islam, terrorism, information standard, media propaganda.

JEL Classification: K40, K42.

1. Introduction

The general state policy of the Russian Federation concerning terrorism and extremism is a system of political, legal and institutional norms and principles. This policy was created over a decade ago. It should be noted that, on the whole, this Russia's policy yields some considerable results. Particularly, it reduces the terrorist tension in the RF, namely in the North Caucasus which is long not only a 'hot point' but a seat of opposition to the constitutional bases of the country.

It is still an undeniable fact that the positive trend in the state policy against terrorism and extremism is a result of cooperation between two main lines: a tight law enforcement policy aimed at suppressing and eliminating the armed terrorist groups; and an ideological work and preventive measures performed by executive bodies (the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Federal Security Service and the National Counter-Terrorism Committee of Russia) together with other federal and local bodies, committees and civic society institutions.

Such very important civic society institution as mass media occupies a special place in the above-named state political program. It is the ideological function of mass media that helps the state bodies performing a preventive work against terrorist and extremist activity.

2. Methods

The methods and methodology of this research are based on the principles of system, comparative and structural-functional analysis. Besides, the complex character of the research is very important. The typological approach was mainly used to analyze the work of state institutions and mass media in the context of religious and political extremism. At the same time, the qualitative analysis of statutory instruments and journalist materials was used to study the state policy against religious and political extremism and the work of federal and local mass media.

The principles of scientific objectivity and the methods of external sample survey are of special importance for the methodology of the research.

3. The study of the issue and the results

3.1. The state policy of the Russian Federation against religious and political extremism

The potential of mass media, including the ability to influence the opinion of audience in general and a certain person, allow bringing some information to society promptly and with a large scale. This can be necessary for the goals of the government. The population of the RF is very heterogeneous and complex. It has various traditions, views, religions and ideological stands which differ millions of Russian people from each other. Thus specific demands are placed on mass media; and the subjects of media space cannot but take into account these demands.

The fact that the Russian society is constantly in a terrorist danger is caused by the active distribution of extremist and terrorist ideology based on the ideas of religious and political extremism. Armed gangs became active in the North Caucasus, particularly in Dagestan, with the support of a number of foreign countries (such international organizations as 'al-Qaeda', 'The Caucasus Emirate', 'Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami' and some others) as a result of Russia's tough and uncompromising struggle against the manifestations of terrorism and extremism. This struggle caused a too tangible loss for terrorist groups.

So the extremist ideologists who are the main instrument of recruiting new people (called 'cannon fodder' by mass media) to terrorism began even fiercer struggle which distorts Islam unprecedentedly. If one listens attentively to the extremist propaganda, he will make a conclusion that Islam is a radical religious and political platform which calls for the violent change of state structure and for terrorist counteraction (this word combination suits well to interpret the term 'jihad' by the words of extremist leaders) for the sake of 'common good for all Muslims'. They mean the establishment of a big Muslim country – 'Islam caliphate' based apparently on the same terrorist form of government.

Unfortunately, we have to state the fact that those Russians who are not Muslims begin to form (or even already have) a contradictory, diverse and often negative attitude to Islam. This is the fault of people who develop clandestine activities aimed at making Muslim youth radical and transforming young people into 'live bombs' for terrorist acts.

The policy that Russia pursue against terrorism and extremism begins to 'stumble' and often becomes ineffective in the ideological and information war not only with extremist Islam ideologists but also with those who demand to separate the Caucasus from Russia and to exclude the North Caucasian republics from the RF as an infected organ from a body.

Unfortunately, the state policy appears to be weak when there are mass protest actions against the representatives of the North Caucasian republics as the source of extremism and terrorism. For example, such actions took place in Pugachev (Saratov Region) and in Western Biryulyovo (Moscow) in 2013. These events showed that the state policy against extremism and terrorism was almost not covered by mass media, while the actions in Pugachev and Biryulyovo were in top news on TV and in leading federal newspapers during a week.

It should be added that various extremist ideas and investigative reporting of terrorist acts are often supplemented with invented or wrenched facts and details in mass media. Events are distorted to such an extent that a viewer or reader forgets the origin of the conflict. This is skillfully used by the ideologists of religious and political extremism in Islam. They manage to influence negatively the social consciousness, first of all the world-view of young people, referring to the primary sources of Muslim canons.

Today, the executive bodies of the Russian Federation that implement all state programs against terrorism and extremism try to pursue a preemptive tactic, to create obstacles for all kinds of terrorist and extremist ideology and to prevent this ideology from spreading among young people. The law enforcement officials noted repeatedly that it is nearly impossible to carry out an ideological battle not using the tools of mass information influence.

Ye.P. Ilyin, the First Deputy of the Chief of the Russian National Counter-Terrorism Committee, note that 'according to the social study performed by the National Counter-Terrorism Committee in 2014, about 40% of respondents polled in the North Caucasian, Southern, Privolzhskiy and Central Federal Districts, consider the advocacy of violence, cruelty and vulgarity in mass media as the problems that arouse a serious concern in society (Ilyin, 2013).

This point is hard to argue with: mass media (first of all the central ones) are full of materials where the North Caucasus (mostly Dagestan) is shown as an epicenter of radical confrontation, terrorism and extremism. It should be noted that regular reports about explosions, acts of terrorism, counter-terrorism operations and militants who live in forests and terrorize local population made federal mass media be interested solely in such kind of news from Dagestan while news about cultural, sporting and social events which take place every day in the republic.

So 'hot' news that attract audience and make people sit glued to the TV 'programmed' central mass media to react to just negative news from the Caucasus. In the mind of Russians, the Republic of Dagestan began to be associated with something dangerous, mortal and above all strange. Hence there is a reasonable question whether all this is the main goal of those who deliberately destabilize the situation in Dagestan.

The religious factor worsens the situation. It determines the subversive activities of extremist gangs. In Dagestan, the extremist ideologists propagandize false theological dogmas supposedly taken from the primary sources of the Muslim confession. This way, they managed not only to set the layers of Dagestan society against each other but also to split Russian civil society into 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. This split, fierce confrontation and the destruction of Russia's constitutional and legal foundations are the goals of people whom we call militants, terrorists, extremists, radicals, etc. The most terrible thing is that Muslim religion became a weapon in this fight. It is compromised in the eyes of representatives of other confessions and the whole Russian civil society.

3.2. The constitutional and legal foundations of the state policy against religious and political extremism in the Russian Federation

The state policy of the Russian Federation against terrorism and extremism is aimed at preserving the principles of constitutional lawfulness in civil society and thereby Russian statehood. That is why the Russian state policy against international terrorism and religious and political extremism was based and is still based on law. None of the government bodies regardless of its goals and forms of activity can go beyond the framework of law.

The most important aspect of Russia's ideological counteraction against terrorism and extremism is the fact that any struggle with any dangerous and harmful phenomena cannot exceed the limits of the Constitution and laws. At the same time, extremism unfortunately appeared to be connected with Muslim religion. It means that the struggle against extremism and terrorism should not in any way turn into the fight against the religion. This inference follows from Part 1 Clause 13 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation which recognizes the ideological diversity in the Russian Federation due to the freedom of conscience, speech and belief.

However, the Constitution of the RF contains norms that just untie the hands of authorities for tough measures against terrorist gangs. Particularly, Part 5 Clause 13 forbids using constitutional rights and liberties (first of all the freedom of speech and belief) for the forcible change of constitutional foundations, the violation of the territorial integrity of the RF, the threat to security and the formation of illegal armed groups.

Today the authorities use this principle to adopt and implement state programs against terrorism and extremism in Russia. Mass media assist the government in implementing the policy against terrorism and extremism in field. They become an intermediary between the authorities and the civil society.

The fundamental points of the state policy against international terrorism and religious and political extremism are put into 'The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020' adopted by the Presidential Decree May 12, 2009. This Strategy (P. 40, Cl. 4) states that '...for public security: to improve the structure and work of federal executive bodies; to implement the National plan against corruption; to develop a system of measures to detect and fight global challenges and crises of today including national and international terrorism, political and religious extremism, nationalism and ethnic separatism; to create the mechanisms for the

prevention and neutralization of social and interethnic...» (The Presidential Decree 'On the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020', 2009).

The President of Russia D.A. Medvedev emphasized the state importance of the struggle against terrorism and extremism in the program document for national security. Thus he gave the executive bodies a blank check to adopt and implement measures against terrorism and extremism based on the Strategy. So, one of the lines of the national security policy is to improve the efficiency of the struggle against terrorism and extremism that can sharpen a number of serious problems. For instance, V.P. Galitskiy sees the following problems:

- The real threat for the constitutional system;
- Small and big social groups destabilize the government of the state;
- Significant moral, physical and material expenses;
- The destabilization of society (this is especially threatening during elections, referenda, social and political conflicts on the religious and ethnic ground, the deterioration of relationships with neighbour countries and other important event which have a serious influence on the global order);
- The prerequisites for social and interethnic conflicts etc. (Galitskiy 2010).

It is very important that the authorities consider terrorism and extremism as the two components of one danger which should not be separated from each other. As a rule, the reason of terrorism is extremist views (i.e. extreme ideas and positions). In its turn, today's terrorism becomes the consequence of sharpened religious and political extremism.

In 2008, the President of the Russian Federation stated in his Message to the Federal Assembly that Russia had successfully demonstrated its capabilities in the struggle against religious and political extremism and international terrorism. Besides, he stated the line of national policy against these problems.

This line consists in creating and constant improving a high-quality fundamental statutory framework concerning the processes that threaten Russia's national security. At the same time it is necessary to take into account that terrorists and extremists constantly consciously change their tactics and strategy, recruit new people and increase the number of terrorist acts and acts of sabotage. Besides it is important to consider the peculiarities of regions where the state programs against terrorism and extremism are implemented.

The above mentioned 'line of Russian counter-terrorism policy' consists of several directions:

- (1) The improvement of statutory and ideological base (the instruments of influence and prevention) according to the real situation in the country;
- (2) The expansion of international cooperation (first of all with neighbour countries);
- (3) The constant and efficient improvement of the work of bodies which coordinate federal executive powers and local counter-terrorism authorities (first of all the National Counter-Terrorism Committee of Russia);
- (4) The improvement of the existing system counter the ideology of religious and political extremism and terrorism;
- (5) The non-stop monitoring and expert analysis of external and internal causes and cause-effect relations of terrorist tension and the distribution of religious and political extremism in the North Caucasian Federal District, etc.

3.3. The role of the National Counter-Terrorism Committee of Russia in the struggle against religious and political extremism

The National Counter-Terrorism Committee plays a leading role in the implementation of state programs and concepts against terrorism and extremism in Russia. The Committee constantly controls, analyses and generalizes the activities of illegal armed groups, extremist and terrorist gangs throughout the country.

V.P. Zhuravel' tried to make a conclusion about the terrorist threat according to the data of the NCTC:

- Today's terrorism is perfecting itself all the time; it conforms to new conditions and creates new threats, challenges and risks;
- Terrorism has a stable trend to unite with international crime and drug pushers (terrorists use means which have a criminal origin, and the criminals draw them in to reach their unlawful goals);
- Terrorists want to get hold of nuclear weapon, other means of mass destruction and the methods for their fabrication;
- Due to the development of information and network technologies, the terrorist organization improved their equipment capability; this brought to life cyberterrorism (Zhuravel' 2013).

The above problems and possible ways to solve them made the Russian government develop an up-to-date and timely concept of Russian counter-terrorism policy. However it is still cannot be called quite efficient today because the problem of terrorism and extremism is still almost not solved and even not well-controlled now.

This is confirmed by events that took place not long ago in different southern regions of Russia: the act of terrorism when the Press House was occupied in Grozny, the capital of Chechnya; the self-explosions of suicide bombers in Dagestan and Chechnya; the terrorist acts at the station and in the trolleybus in Volgograd; the attempted murders of authoritative spiritual leaders of the North Caucasus and people who struggle against terrorism (particularly, the workers of the Republican Center against Extremism in Makhachkala). All this shows that neither law-enforcement agencies nor executive bodies can reach serious success in protecting the national security of the Russian Federation.

This was the thing that the official representative of the National Counter-Terrorism Committee Nikolay Svintsov spoke about at the round table on the problems concerning terrorist and extremist ideology in Nizhny Novgorod in late 2012:

'Today neither federal nor regional level of ideological and information confrontation with terrorism meet the requirements fully', said Nikolay Svintsov. Besides he emphasized that none of the regions is fully protected against terrorism: 'It will manifest itself in places where the counter-terrorism measures are weak', thinks the representative of the NCTC. Svintsov said that a big part of the Federal Targeted Program 'Antiterror' for 2014-2018 will cover the counteraction against the extremist and terrorist ideology (terroru.net, 2014).

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the Russian state policy against terrorism and extremism reflected in the Concept against Terrorism in the RF is based first of all on the fundamental goals of the Russian Federation. For each of these goals, the law-enforcement bodies have tactics based on Russian statutory framework.

This Concept pays a special attention on the information counteraction against terrorism and extremism. Here mass media play one of the most important roles. Particularly, mass media should help the government 'to prevent the distribution of terrorist ideology and to stir up the information support of counter-terrorism measures' (The Concept against Terrorism in the Russian Federation 2009).

3.4. The role, place and functions of mass media in the state policy against religious and political extremism

It should be explained that today's efficient methods for preventing extremist acts include the experience accumulated in the age of the Soviet Union when anti-state crimes were counteracted not only special competent authorities but also labour collectives, youth organizations, spiritual leaders (including Jamaats and various Muslim communities in the North Caucasus) and other layers of society. A special role belonged to mass media.

In this connection, academician V.N. Kudryavtsev reasonable notes: 'The global experience testifies to the fact that the preventive work is not only the concern of public authorities. Many countries, as well as our country, have an idle reserve of social, amateur and charitable organizations which can undertake a part of work' (Political Science 1993). Hence there is a necessity to create a brand new system of measures aimed at preventing extremism. This system should consider today's reality and situation particularly in Dagestan.

B.B. Bulatov and M.A. Kurbanov have their own position about such prevention. They write that the regulatory requirements to the state system of measures against terrorism and extremism should include:

- (1) The strictly preemptive character;
- (2) The integration of preventive measures with the help of all possible leverages of positive impact on the situation;
- (3) The unified federal control based on the general strategy against extremism in the Russian Federation (Bulatov and Kurbanov 2008).

However the practice turns out to be much more complicated than the theory. The preventive measures that are taken every year at federal and regional level are powerless by 80% against religious and political extremism. Besides, mass media constantly add fuel to the fire by blaming the authorities quite righteously for the inability to give an adequate rebuff to radical and extremist ideas.

Regional mass media, such as the socio-political newspapers of Dagestan, attack the authorities more pointedly. They emphasized repeatedly that there is still no dialogue between Islam and the government. For example, some years ago, newspaper 'The Novoe Delo' published an interview with a well-known Dagestan lawyer Ziyautdin Uvaisov who was a member of association 'The Ahlu Sunna of Dagestan'. Journalist Ahmednabi Ahmednabiyev was later murdered in 2013. (According to one version he was murdered by 'the forest brothers', but the other version says he suffered for his political convictions because he had criticized the government and

law-enforcement authorities for the inability to resist the extremist and terrorist gangs – *author's note*). In the interview, Ahmednabiyev emphasizes again that the attempts of the government to change its attitude to Islam are made only verbally:

‘...in recent years, the republican authorities (so far verbally) try to find a common ground with those Muslims who identify themselves as Salaphites. There is an impression that the bureaucracy does not look deeply into the problem still being enthralled by stereotypes, superstitions and incompetent opinions. That is why the authorities swing from one extreme to another and put forward proposals that are not fully carried out’ (Ahmednabiyev 2010).

Lawyer Ziyautdin Uvaisov was repeatedly accused of having relations with Wahhabis because he often advocates people who are suspected of the membership in illegal armed groups or who are charged under Art. 317 of the Criminal Code of the RF ‘an attempt against law enforcement officials’. Interviewing him, Ahmednabiyev tries to get down to bed-lock by simple direct questions which are connected first of all with the contradiction in Dagestan Muslim community. Particularly, the journalist asks about the reasons of tough confrontation between different Islam groups. In the opinion of Uvaisov, this is connected first of all with serious gaps Muslims have in their knowledge about their religion:

‘We lost moral bases and compasses that our pious ancestors had been famed for. Today the Muslims do not understand that they have to unite and find a single position based on the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad. Above all, we should realize that no one can impose his interpretation of Islam on anyone, though it takes place unfortunately. Such behaviour promotes the separation of the Muslim Ummah (community). If the Muslims discuss problems relying on the spirit of brotherhood and mutual understanding, all the problems will be solved’ (Ahmednabiyev 2010).

As for the association ‘The Ahlu Sunna of Dagestan’ Uvaisov is a member of, the lawyer treats its representatives as people who rejected any novelties to Islam. They propagate the religion that their ancestors propagated in the days of Prophet Muhammad:

‘We understand Islam the way our ancestor understood it. No Muslim has any doubt in their devoutness and righteousness. We are not against novelties in mundane questions; we are not against new technologies, machinery, television and the Internet (if they are used for the benefit of society and according to the norms of sharia)... The one thing we want is to stick to Islam the way Allah and his envoy told... There are plenty of us, and more and more people enroll everyday’ (Ahmednabiyev 2010).

It is interesting how the journalist tries to some way provoke the hero of the interview to make an emotional sharp attack connected with the relations of ‘non-traditional’ Muslims with the official authorities of Dagestan. Journalist Ahmednabiyev discusses the initiative of the Dagestan President to get in contact with the members of ‘The Ahlu Sunna of Dagestan’ and urge the interlocutor on a thought that such an initiative may turn out to be an attempt to find out the potential of the association in order to bring it to the notice of the security service ‘with all the ensuing consequences’ (here the journalist hints at the persecution of radicals based on their religion which became a commonplace).

The journalist does not voice these facts, though the interviewee took up the thought and continues it:

‘Unfortunately, the label pinning and persecution of people only because they profess the wrong version of Islam has long been going on. The new initiative of the government will hardly change in this situation’ (Ahmednabiyev 2010).

The position of Ziyautdin Uvaisov about the amnesty of militants is interesting and objective in its way. For this purpose they even created a special committee in the Republic. However, according to the idea of the officials, the opportunity to return to peaceful life will be given only to those militants who ‘have no blood on their hands’. In this connection, Ahmednabiyev asks: ‘What is the sense of this amnesty if all the militants in Chechnya were amnestied regardless of the quantity of blood on their hands because this question seems tricky?’ (Ahmednabiyev 2010).

Uvaisov thinks that the problem is not in the conditions and the order of the amnesty but in the fact that the republican authorities (who are Dagestani) treat those who went to the forest not as fellow-countrymen but as ‘aliens’:

‘It is necessary to take a complex of measures that we named in our letter to the President of Dagestan. They include the freedom of adhan to all the groups of the Islam community, inter alia through mass media. Besides, they include the opportunity to create religious, public and charitable organizations and educational institutions without the endorsement with other religious bodies. Moreover, they include the suppression of unlawful activity against Salaphi followers especially the graduates of foreign religious universities; the preclusion

of extrajudicial reprisals of active Muslims; the termination of forming notorious lists of Wahhabis, and so on' (Ahmednabiyev 2010).

Here it should be noted that Uvaisov goes too far because the graduates of foreign universities who study in doubtful universities then may return to Russia and start propagate non-traditional and unusual forms of Muslim religion aimed more at political than religious goals. As a result, the North Caucasus may turn to a real hotbed of anti-constitutional and anti-state ideas.

This was said many times from political rostrum and in mass media. Today in Russia, one can see articles taken from foreign periodicals that write in black and white about 'the civil war' between the official Moscow and the Caucasian Muslims. For example, the article 'In Russia's Dagestan, Salafi Muslims clash with government authorities' published in 'Washington Post'. The article says that a struggle between the government authorities and rebellious Muslims flare up in Russia:

'The authorities blame Islam extremists for stirring up disturbances. Conservative Muslims blame the authorities for persecution. The struggle sometimes bears a strong resemblance to a civil war. Attacks are being committed, imams are being murdered and some people blow up shops which sell spirits. Angry young people take up arms and go underground' (Kathy Lally 2011).

People see the reason why the radical Islam is spreading in southern areas of the Russian Federation in the consequences of the USSR's break-up. In independent Russia, they promised democracy and general equality. Twenty years have passed but people still do not have a better life:

'Twenty years have passed. The small minority accumulated an enormous wealth, while ordinary citizens are dissatisfied by the lack of opportunities, more and more authoritarian power and the wild outburst of corruption lawlessness. The interethnic tension increases. In these conditions, few people protest. Chechnya is suppressed, but Dagestan boils up because of religious controversies and the indignation towards Moscow. These feelings are quietly being mixed with tough commercial and political struggle' (Kathy Lally 2011).

3.5. The reasons why Islam becomes radical: the scientific view and the positions of mass media

There are plenty of views and positions concerning the reasons why Islam becomes radical and enters various life spheres. Semed Semedov, an authoritative Russian scientist who studies radical Islam and religious and political extremism, thinks that it is possible to ascertain general and specific reasons:

'The general reasons of Islam radicalization in Russia:

- (1) Islam aspires to regulate the life of society;
- (2) Every Muslim society express its dissatisfaction in religious form;
- (3) The situation in Russia and the North Caucasus is unstable. 'One should not absolutize the influence of situation in the region on all Russian Muslims. Although, it should be admitted that the struggle of Islamists there echoes over the whole Muslim Russia' (Dobayev 2003).
- (4) The weakness of the government authorities especially law-enforcement bodies. The power in general is criminalized as a result of the attempt of ruling clans to find a common ground with local ethnic and tribal leaders (Semedov 2009).

As for the external factors that sped up the radicalization of Islam and its distribution in almost all republics of the North Caucasus, Semedov detects three main reasons:

- (1) The boundaries opened and caused free movement;
- (2) It became possible to study at foreign Muslim educational centers;
- (3) It became possible to get financial aid from various governmental and non-governmental Islam organizations for charitable, educational and political activities (Semedov 2009).

The majority of scientists base their opinions on the historical background of radical Islam. Some western researchers put forward concepts according to which Islam primordially contains some aggressive, intolerant and extremist principles (Lewis 2007). At the same time, journalists connect the distribution of radical Islam with the insufficiently considered state policy and the fact that ideas, alien for Russian Muslims, infiltrate into the country. These ideas are aimed at destabilizing the situation in Russia.

Besides, the term 'radical Islam' arises many arguments and wrangling. Because of the all-round use of this term people began to associate the Muslim confession with a radical and extremist phenomenon. At a round table in the Russian Institute of Strategic Research, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Syria in Russia Riad Haddad made an observation for journalists and politicians who elevate the term 'radical Islam' to the rank of synonym of the Muslim religion:

'Here it must be noted – the Ambassador said – that the term 'radical Islam' is unscientific because Islam as well as the main world religions is far from radicalism which cannot be a part of some certain religion, confession or ethnos. Radicalism is an abnormal behaviour which contradicts religious principles and tolerance built in the human nature' (Monomenova 2013).

Nevertheless, researches connected with state policy against Islam radicalization and religious and political extremism directly denote the necessity to search for the initial cause in archives. Documents show for certainty that the British special services made tremendous efforts to train agent and send them to the Ottoman Empire. The agents were to study the peculiarities of this country and people's moods to find ways to destroy the social and governmental system of this country and countries influenced by it. They did it by distorting Islam dogmata and radicalizing some trends in the Muslim community.

One of the British agents alias Lawrence of Arabia (according to some data, his second name was Hamfer) managed to get on the right side of young and ambitious Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab who is considered a founder of the Wahhabism. He distorted one of the most important Muslim principles which is the tolerance. The agent gained the trust of Abd al-Wahhab and started the next stage of his mission. He directly used the religious convictions of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab for the benefit of the British Crown. In his turn, Abd al-Wahhab had ambitious plans to tower above the Muslim community. Besides, the emir of the ad-Diriyya city Muhammad ibn Saud who was an associate of Abd al-Wahhab longed for power and totalitarian methods. The British had a goal to form an easily controlled religious state built on terror, feuds and murder. The special services of the British Empire were sure that it will be easier to rule a religious government as its influence on the society is stronger and more efficient.

That was the time from which the western special services continue their work for the politicization and radicalization of Islam. Today we can see how this work develops. For example, the association 'The Muslim Brotherhood' got the patronage of the British counter-intelligence and then continued its activity with the support of American special services. The founder of the movement is an Egyptian politician, Islam preacher and reformer Hassan Ahmed al-Banna. He and his associates propagated the idea of building an Islam state as opposed to western secular states. This idea seemed very radical that time (gazeta.ru 2012).

The information of that kind often appears in mass media. Journalists who cover the problems of radical Islam and Wahhabism in the country turn to history and the origin of the phenomenon. Journalists always search for the information about the subject. This information is wide and specific. G.V. Lazutina writes: 'We need information which characterizes both the features of the studied situation and the traits that unite it with the general problem. We need both its retrospection and its perspective. We need both the essence of the event (i.e. its side that can only be perceived mentally) and the phenomenon (i.e. its side that can be seen, heard and reproduced in details)' (Lazutina 2010).

In this case, the problem of radical Islam and Wahhabism which is a typical for Russian North Caucasus became very large-scale and developed into religious and political extremism and terrorism. In this connection, one of the major components of state counter-terrorism programs and concepts is the work of mass media at the governmental and intergovernmental level. Some scientists think that the principle of social responsibility of mass media becomes especially important today in the context of counteraction against extremism and terrorism (Dibirov *et al.* 2009). In situation when extremists and terrorists take the advantage of information weapon, traditional power measures of counteraction seem not only insufficient but also useless. The need for information counter-terrorism strategy is of no doubt (Shishkina 2009).

The existing state programs and concepts against terrorism should be undoubtedly implemented by all governmental bodies and the whole society. But it is the mass media that should be promoters and propagandists of the counter-terrorism policy. At the same time, the authorities should abstain from a direct influence on journalists. Journalists themselves should take the initiative to report about everything that government does against religious extremism and terrorism. This will be an enormous work for the information counteraction against religious and political extremism and terrorism.

One of the main tasks for mass media is to suppress strictly any attempts of glorifying the members of illegal armed gangs and to debunk myths about so called 'soldiers of Allah' who treated as heroes and true sons of Allah protecting their religion. Visa versa, they use religion to make grave crimes and bring death to people.

For example, in October 2013, on behalf of the Head of the Republic of Dagestan R.G. Abdulatipov, the republican mass media expressed the claim of the President not to glorify suicide bombers (one of the most popular ways of terrorist acts in the south of Russia):

'To avoid the glorification of self-blasting terrorist method of struggling with the government, we ask you to use term 'suicide terrorist' or simply 'a suicide' instead of 'shahid' and 'suicide bomber' – is said in the message

distributed in republican and federal mass media by the press service President and the government' (Chernovik 2013).

V.P. Zhuravel' gives an interesting example in his article 'The Russian Vector against Extremism':

'For example, the analysis shows that the articles of Viskhan Halidov on Kavkaz.ge arouse a big interest among people and are often reprinted in local and republican mass media. In his articles, the author convincingly shows the mistaken character of views and behaviour motives of young members of armed gangs' (Zhuravel' 2013).

The author concludes that such anti-propagandist activity should be widened and intensified. However, not everybody is able to write on these subjects, even professional journalists. It is often quite difficult for the workers of mass media to sort out the events and phenomena and to make a right assessment.

In situation when it is necessary to facilitate the state policy against terrorism and extremism, journalists should take into account the importance of honest and responsible fulfillment of their behavioural function together with the informational function of mass media. Formerly, journalists gave readers facts describing them and adding details. Today the fact itself does not have its past value because it is easy to get facts today. A sense-forming function comes forward. Journalist information, in the opinion of A.N. Chumikov, transforms into 'metadata' i.e. into the 'information about information' (Chumikov 2010).

Thus today's scientists suggest a notion of 'information standard' based on real situation in civil society and on the methods of national programs and concepts. Then they suggest giving this standard to mass media as an alternative source of information policy. This source will be used for future journalist materials.

From the viewpoint of state counteraction against religious and political extremism and terrorism, the information standard can have the following definition: this is a special guide for the expert assessment of mass media texts which influence the mass consciousness and attract the civil society to the joint information activities for the benefit of governmental policy in some sphere (in this case, in the sphere of state counteraction against terrorism and extremism).

In the opinion of A.N. Chumikov, the information standard should be based on laws. In terms of this opinion, such laws are the Law of the RF 'On the counteraction against Terrorism', the Law of the RF 'On the counteraction against Extremism' and the Law of the RF 'On Mass Media'. First of all, the question is how a journalist shall prepare information the distribution of which is ruled by relevant statutory.

'For example, Art. 2 of the Law 'On the Counteraction against Terrorism' is based on the principle of unavoidability of punishment. It means, the journalist shall show in his publications that the punishment is unavoidable. Then there is an idea about the confidentiality of information. Journalist shall be aware of responsibility. Then there is an idea that a compromise with terrorists is inadmissible. It means that the journalist shall write that no compromise with terrorists is possible' (Chumikov 2010).

4. Discussion

The state policy against extremism and terrorism in the Russian Federation is not only a number of general governmental measures but also a wide range of governmental bodies which detect, prevent and counteract extremism in the Russian Federation within the boundaries of their powers specified in regulatory legal acts. These bodies play an important role in the development and implementation of preventive measures against terrorist threats which are an ever-present 'concomitant' of extremism, namely the religious and political extremism.

In Russian society, there are long-standing discussions about extremism and terrorism as the main threats of constitutional, legal, spiritual, cultural and moral integrity of the Russian Federation. Russia struggles against religious and political extremism simultaneously with the fight against terrorism. In the opinion of many scientists and experts, one of the main lines of this struggle is to provide an efficient and organized influence on the information resource of extremist underground and terrorist groups. This research showed that the strongest information counteraction and the counterpropaganda are needed.

The conclusion is obvious: the role of mass media in popularizing governmental measures against religious and political extremism and terrorism in the Russian Federation is very important. Unfortunately, there are antithetic examples in reality when mass media become the agitators and disseminators of extremist ideas of criminal groups. Mass media are an efficient weapon of mass intimidation. This fact helps terrorists and extremists in their activities.

In fact, mass media have different functions. The society and authorities set different tasks before mass media: first of all, the leaders and journalist must stop using mass media as a means of manipulation and rude

psychological influence on the society. The owners of mass media must be aware of serious responsibility including the criminal one that they bear for publishing and broadcasting anti-state, extremist or other unlawful materials. However, it is more important to appeal to the conscience of the journalist community which is accountable for their every word before every citizen.

Besides, it is usually said that journalists should follow professional moral standards reflected in the Code of Professional Ethics of Russian Journalist 1994.

This research confirmed one more time that mass media should keep a balance when presenting information which has a dangerous potential and can induce the audience to negative activities. They should use the help of experts and specialists but not trust only themselves. One more important aspect in the work of journalist is to prevent the glorification of extremists, militants, terrorists and various pseudo-preachers who spread discord first of all among young people. Consequently, the society should get a firm opinion that mass media are aimed at promoting the state policy against religious and political extremism and terrorism and at the ideological counteraction of terrorism and extremism.

5. Findings

So, we can make a conclusion that the main goal of mass media within the framework of the state policy against terrorism and extremism is to help the government. In other words, the following functions of mass media are the main:

- (1) informational;
- (2) ideological;
- (3) the function of correlation (the interpretation of facts, events and their meaning together with the purposeful help for the state policy against religious and political extremism and terrorism).

However, the above functions are possible only if mass media display the maximum responsibility in covering problem questions connected with terrorism, religious radicalism and extremism especially and in choosing specialists who comment almost all journalist materials. It would be logical to entrust reports connected with religious problems those journalists who already have experience in this theme or who are specialized in it (Abdullaev 2014).

At the same time, it seems necessary to recommend local mass media (both printed and electronic) to cover the program policy of the country against terrorism and extremism. Besides, it is important to monitor the efficient and honest implementation of this policy without any violations of Russian laws and human rights including the constitutional freedom of belief, etc.

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