

TERRORIST THREAT IN RUSSIA: TRANSFORMATION OF CONFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

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A B S T R A C T

Political dynamism and the rapidly developing informational and communicative Russian environment have pushed to the forefront the political linguo-communicative technologies, which are increasingly and actively being used to control the communicative field in society, as well as the need for continuing the study of these technologies. They strongly affect the building up, organizing and orienting of political activities of people and do impose on them certain political preferences. This means that they can be and are repeatedly used to address certain political tasks.

The fast changes underway in Russia, the economic, political and social transformations presuppose that mass consciousness and political behavior of its population should change accordingly: people should adapt themselves to new conditions; they should abandon the old and embrace new values and behavior patterns.¹ As part of a political process, the religious factor becomes a social "siccative" of sorts: it may stabilize or destabilize a political situation.

¹ See: I. Karabulatova, I. Mkrtumova, Z. Polivara, B. Akhmetova, S. Galiullina, E. Loskutova, E. Abylkasymov, "Protest Behavior of Present-Day Russian Youth as Ethnosocial Deviation in an Ethnopolitical Conflict-Prone Situation," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, Issue 2, 2016, pp. 94-103.

The subject we have discussed here is fairly urgent: the mechanisms and practices, used to politicize religion, should be identified for the sake of social stability and national security. Today, national security is further threatened by terrorism, proliferation of WMD, ethnic and religious conflicts, all sorts of pandemics, international crime, drug trafficking, etc. Having developed into a complicated, multifaceted and open system, national security has already spread to domestic policies, geopolitics and the economic, military, ethnic, regional, informational and other spheres. The current religious situation in Russia—new religious movements, the growing number of followers of traditional religions, as well as the radical Islam and religious terrorism, as new factors—added urgency to the need for understanding the fast and non-normative transformations of the religious scene. Terrorist ideology and terror, as its instrument, transform legal consciousness, lead to ideological and psychological distortions of legal values and the rule of law in general, and give rise to a new subculture, based on destruction and negation of the basic human values (legal thinking and ideology, legal institutions, economic order and business), rather than on protection of rights and freedoms, while ensuring adequate living standards.

KEYWORDS: *transformation, inter-confessional dialog, changing identities, terrorist threats.*

Introduction

Extremist feelings spread rapidly in unfavorable social and economic conditions, inefficient legal forms of political competition, the absence of social mobility and a wide and widening gap between the rich and poor.

Today, modernization, unfolding against the background of demographic problems and the rapidly aging population, deepens social differentiation, changes confessional attitudes in today's

youth and leads to a crisis of its identity with predictable results: less social stability and security. On the whole, there is a direct correlation between the spatial dimensions of terrorist ideas in any state and the degree of political stability in it.²

Transformation of confessional attitudes, as a phenomenon, becomes especially important amid the rapidly unfolding religious changes and the resultant psychological changes of personality³ and the changes in the social and political context of the country as a whole.⁴

Terrorist activities might be pursued with different aims and satisfy different requirements. This means that in view of the far from simple definition of terrorism as a term, we will rely on the following definition: terrorism is violence, used to intimidate and to consolidate certain social and political values.

Informational upheavals, an inevitable follow-up of tragic events, caused by confessional interaction and confrontation, affect the entire communicative field and the mechanisms of social dynamics.⁵ It has become highly important to arrive at an acceptable and scientifically substantiated conclusion, related to the discourses of terrorist acts and reconstruction of social and cultural genesis of terrorism through its representations. Studies of terrorism, in the context of its emergence and its repercussions, give us a clearer idea about the prospects of the current changes and the ways and means by which the problems can be resolved. A highly contradictory phenomenon, globalization, creates very different, or even opposing, trends of integration and differentiation that can be regarded as two civilizational trends: the trend toward unification, on the one hand, and toward preservation of cultural specifics (including religious), on the other.

This makes our study of the non-normative changes of self-awareness, under the pressure of religious conversion in the context of terrorist threats, highly important.

Methods and Materials

Transformations, underway in Russian society, have already suggested a new field of studies that so far lacks a language of its own and a set of categories, and also requires adequate approaches and methods. We have relied on the general scientific methods, used by the humanities—factual, systemic and structural-functional analysis—as well as the provisions and an analysis of the structure of state policies, and interaction of its components, found in the scholarly studies of Russian and foreign political scientists.

It is hard to arrive at a unified definition, because, unlike the politically unbiased scholars, state statistics demonstrate much more political biases in everything they convey. Not infrequently, the

² See: I. Mkrtumova, I. Karabulatova, A. Zinchenko, "Political Extremism of the Youth as an Ethnosocial Deviation in the Post-Soviet Electronic Information Society," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, Issue 4, 2016, pp. 79-86.

³ See: V. Poletaev, "Opasnye sviazi. Prigovor Karaulovoy priznan zakonny," 22 March, 2017, available at [<https://rg.ru/2017/03/22/verhovnyj-sud-ostavil-v-sile-prigovor-varvare-karaulovoj.html>], 3 June, 2017; G.V. Osipov, I.S. Karabulatova, A.S. Karabulatova, "Matrimonialnye strategii v polittekhnologiiakh IGIL," *Nauchnoe obozrenie*, Series 2: Humanitarian Sciences, No. 6, 2016, pp. 69-79.

⁴ See: I. Karabulatova, B. Akhmetova, K. Shagbanova, E. Loskutova, F. Sayfulina, L. Zamalieva, I. Dyukov, M. Vykhristyuk, "Shaping Positive Identity in the Context of Ethnocultural Information Security in the Struggle against the Islamic State," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, Issue 1, 2016, pp. 84-92.

⁵ See: "Napadenie v Notre Dame de Paris kvalifitsirovanno kak terakt," 6 June, 2017, available at [<http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=2896333>], 6 June 2017.

term “terrorism” is used not only to qualify certain actions, but also to express negative attitudes or even indignation.

Foreign researchers of terrorism, P. Jenkins, W. Laquer, M. Kronnenwetter, G. Martin, and B. Hoffman, rely on definitions that suit the language of their discussions: as a rule, laws of different countries support definitions that differ from the definitions used by foreign students of terrorism.

Dutch scholars, A.P. Schmid and A.J. Jongman, offered a pioneering, sober and well-justified definition of terror, based on 109 definitions of various scholars and official definitions, used at the state level. They analyzed all of them and identified their main components and features. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

**Definition of the Main Components of the Term “Terrorism”
(according to A.P. Schmid and A.J. Jongman)**

Element	Frequency (in %)
Violence, force	84
Political aims	65
Fear, terror emphasized; intimidation	51
Arbitrariness, impersonal, random character of victims	21
Civilians, noncombatants, neutrals, outsiders as victims	18

Source: A.P. Schmid, A.J. Jongman, *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Databases, Theories and Literature*, Amsterdam, 1988.

This means that “violence, used for political purposes,” as well as “violence, used for intimidation,” can be described as inalienable elements of terrorism (or of its perception). At the same time, fear has become a convertible currency in a situation, in which security is at stake. This is best illustrated by the situation around Qatar.⁶

An analysis of the predetermined nature of the outcrops of terrorism at the individual level has led us to social and psychological conceptions that see the roots of terrorism in the behavior of individuals, who respond in this way to their marginal places in society.⁷ L. Butovskaia, Th. Hobbes, G. Simmel, K. Lorenz, D. Myers, S. Freud, and E. Fromm have helped us to better understand the phenomenon of aggression.

The structural and functional prospects of the analysis of terrorism point to the importance of the postulates of functionalism (B. Malinovskiy, A. Radcliffe-Brown), Robert Merton’s conception

⁶ See: “Okhota na milliard,” 6 July, 2017, available at [https://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2017/06/06_a_10709579.shtml#page2], 7 July, 2017.

⁷ See: M. Abrahms, “Deterring Terrorism: A New Strategy,” *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2014, available at [<http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/344/html>], 6 July, 2017.

of manifest functions and dysfunctions and Émile Durkheim's paradigm of social facts. At the same time, albeit absolutely necessary when it comes to the studies of terrorism and its manifestation, the above cannot fully explain the phenomenon and its repercussions.⁸

This article is based on the authors' analysis of changed behavior, the results of the polls conducted in Moscow and Ufa (sampling 300 people), analytical works of our Russian and foreign colleagues on political science, culturology, history, economics, political psycho-linguistics, anti-terrorist laws, publications in the media, documentary video materials, interviews of members of terrorist groups and their victims, who have avoided execution.

Results

The ideology of terrorism can be defined as a distorted picture of reality, in which reality is turned upside down and which makes violence politically legal. Organized chaos and the systemic nature of acts of violence⁹ are the most typical features of terrorism, pushing society into the quagmire of destabilization, despondency and fear. In April 2017, the Secretary of Russia's Security Council, Nikolai Patrushev, said that nearly 2.7 thousand Russian citizens from the Northern Caucasus are fighting in Syria and Iraq in the terrorist ranks. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, in June 2017, only five people joined the ISIS.¹⁰

From the behavioral point of view, it should be said that Islamists and ethnoreligious terrorist groups use methods of harsh personality coding. After the Taliban has been defeated, most of the Islamist groups limited their activities purely to terrorism, while groups, engaged in ethnic guerrilla struggle, rely on a much wider spectrum of methods of political struggle.¹¹

In our analysis, we relied on the results, obtained through psychometric methodology that relied on quantitative indices to reveal the degrees of changes (from +3 to -3 where 0 is the absence of measurements) in the psychological state that described the meaning of life; self-assessments were used of the psychological state of the polled that relied on the degree to which this state corresponds (or does not correspond) to some or other characteristics. The state was described by adjectives related to the degree to which life can be described as meaningful. The results were processed statistically, according to the religiosity level (RL), to define an average index for the low, average and high RL. We then arrived at average values for the believers with the low, average and high RL. The results are shown in Table 2.

We relied on the paired version of Student's *t*-test to identify the level of the value of the differences between average figures of changes for the samplings with the low, average and high level of religiosity. The results are shown in Table 3.

⁸ G.G. Pocheptsov, *Propaganda i kontropaganda*, Tsentr Publishers, Moscow, 2004.

⁹ See: E. Ermakova, M. Jilkisheva, G. Fayzullina, I. Karabulatova, Kh. Shagbanova, "The Media and Fiction: Postmodernist Discourse of Contemporary Terrorism in the Context of Apocalyptic Rhetoric", *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Issue 2, Vol. 17, 2016, pp. 61-69.

¹⁰ See: "V Siriu s nachala 2017 goda uekhali piat chelovek," 7 June, 2017, available at [<https://www.gazeta.ru/army/news/10145261.shtml>], 7 June, 2017.

¹¹ See: I. Karabulatova, "The Islamic Factor and the Political Processes in Tajikistan," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 18, Issue 1, 2017, pp. 118-123; M. Seidina, I. Karabulatova, Z. Polivara, A. Zinchenko, "A Publicist Discourse of the Islamic Organizations of the Central Federal District of Russia and the Issue of Tolerance," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 18, Issue 1, 2017, pp. 109-117.

Table 2

Average Values of Changes for the Low, Average and High Religiosity Levels

	No.	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard (acceptable) deviation
Average values of changes for the high RL	50	1.56	2.76	2.0419	0.27630
Average values of changes for the average RL	52	1.33	2.28	1.7298	0.21787
Average values of changes for the low RL	50	1.29	2.21	1.5998	0.20602

Table 3

Results of Comparison of Average Values of the Indices of Changes

		<i>t</i> (Time Used for Analysis)	The Degree of Interconnection of the Changes of Indices of Meaningfulness of Life	Value (Two-Tailed)
Pair 1	Average for the high RL-average for the average RL	8.555	32	0.005
Pair 2	Average for the high RL-average for the low RL	15.632	32	0.000
Pair 3	Average for the average RL-average for the low RL	7.966	32	0.013

The paired version of the Student's *t*-test demonstrated that there were considerably different average values of the degree of changes in life perception for the low, average and high level of religiosity ($p = 0.000$).

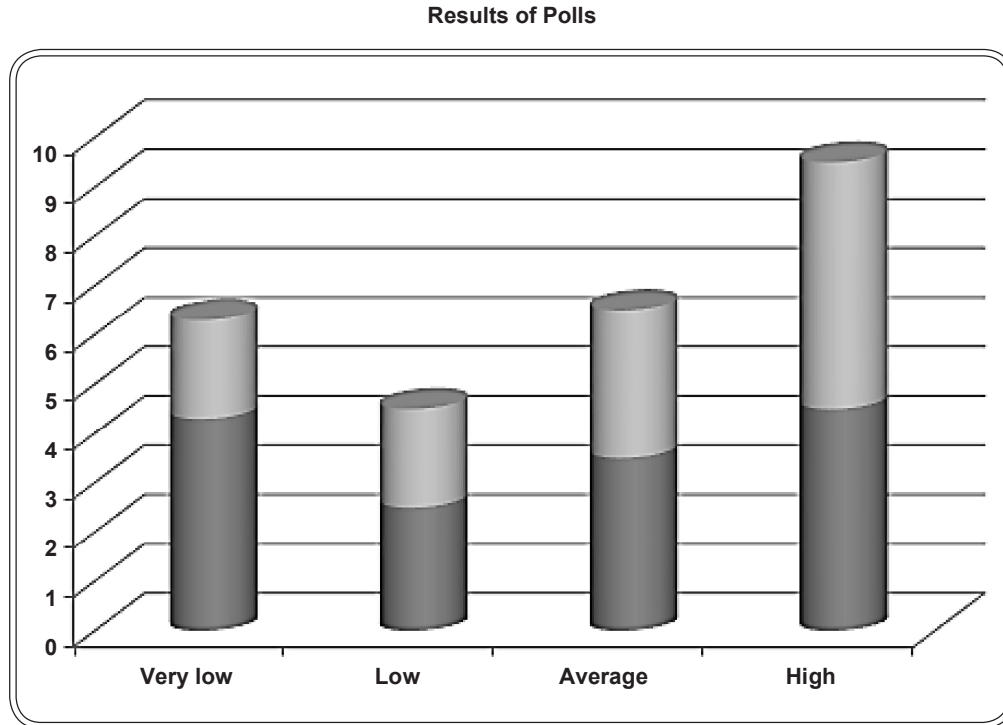
The poll, conducted among the citizens of Russia to establish whether they were prepared to defend their faith and nationality, revealed that the absolute majority was determined to take up arms, if need be. The results correlate with the data, obtained by other scholars. While in 2014, it was forecasted that the ethnoconfessional tension would decline,¹² today it is gradually growing.

In Russia, analytical studies of ethnoconfessional terrorism are spontaneous, while their theoretical and methodological problems remain unresolved. Despite the fairly wide range of studies of this phenomenon, within the interdisciplinary discourse in Russia and abroad, religious terrorism and its repercussions are still waiting for conceptualization from the positions of the integral sociological paradigm through the prism of social and political changes and global risks.

¹² See: G.V. Matkarimova, *Etnokonfessionalnaia napriazhennost v stolichnom megapolise: sostoianie i dinamika*, MGLU Press, Moscow, 2015.

The identified interdependence between the levels of confessional tension (expressed in relative units) and religiosity is shown in Fig. 1. Darker shades show the corresponding levels for women; lighter, for men.

Figure 1



The “Very low” level of tension corresponds to 3.81% of the polled; the “Low” level, 29% of the polled in Ufa and Moscow; the “Average” level of confessional tension is present in 42% of those living in these two cities, the “High” level, in 26.1%. We are convinced that the figures are caused by the war in Donbass and Syria and numerous Islamist terrorist acts in Europe and Asia.

Xenophobia is rising, together with protest sentiments, accompanied by a deliberate change of confessions. An analysis of interviews of those, who were subjected to psychological pressure from the ISIS recruiters, helped us identify the following categories among the victims of psychological violence.

1. *The ascetic type (29% of the believers)*

The ascetic type of change of self-awareness: the conversion is accompanied by the impoverished meaningful side in all aspects of life. The changes caused by conversion are negative. This is the smallest group.

In this case, a conversion leads to what is called ministry, confirmed by the following statements of the faithful: “My relationships with God serve as the cornerstone of my life and of everything I do in it. I serve God”; “I do not merely know there is God, I want to establish deep-rooted relationships with God, which means permanent and direct contact with Him.”

Humility and the feeling of guilt are other features of this type of believers. When talking about negative changes in the meaningful sphere, the believer perceives them as a blessing. Contradictory at first sight, this can be explained as follows: any religion elevates its ideal and points to the gap between the mortal man and the ideal. Converted, the faithful learn to assess their lives in the context of these relationships with God, their only reality.

2. *The crisis type of change (43% of the believers)*

The crisis type of change can be described as a religious conversion that is accompanied by an increase in the degree of the meaning of life in some aspects and its lowering in others. This is the dominant type with 43% of the believers.

At this stage, it has become clear that despite the small share of these people among the total number of believers, this type of change is the most complicated and highly ambiguous. This group of believers point to their changed attitude toward illnesses, in which guilt predominates. The meaningful sphere of potential proselytes is crumbling and changes, because of great everyday problems, caused by marriages, love or health. This is confirmed by a very big share of the faithful, squeezed into this category by the ISIS recruiters.

3. *The positive type (14% of the believers)*

The positive type of change of self-awareness, in the process of conversion, demonstrates comparatively low positive changes in all the components of the meaningful sphere. This is typical of the sphere of achievement (successful, hardworking, productive and self-sacrificing); the sphere of spirituality (unique, struggling and searching for answers to the eternal problems); the sphere of coping with hardships (flexible, optimistic, strong); the sphere of social relationships (straightforward, altruistic, fair).

This means that from the point of view of the effects of conversion, the ascetic and positive types can be described as two opposites. The ascetic type loses the social world and acquires spiritual transcendental world. As distinct from the ascetic type of conversion, the positive type acquires something new in the social world and increases its role and importance in social interaction.

4. *The catharsis type (55% of believers)*

The catharsis type of change of self-awareness means that the believer assesses the changes, caused by his or her conversion, as maximally meaningful in all spheres of life. This is the most frequent type of change.

The high positive assessment of the entire meaningful sphere of personality is very typical of the catharsis type: acute or protracted negative feelings, transformed into positive emotions at the highest point. Dmitri Leontiev has pointed out that "catharsis is a reflection of profound meaningful restructuring, the dialectical resolution at a new level of inner contradiction in the meaningful sphere of personality."¹³ From this it follows that the specifics of the catharsis type of change can be described as a sudden resolution of a high emotional tension, seen in the protest behavior of contemporary youth.¹⁴

This means that religious conversion is accompanied by qualitative changes of self-awareness.¹⁵ These changes may move toward a bigger or smaller meaningful context in all spheres of life. There are four types of such changes: ascetic (lowering the meaningful content of all spheres of life);

¹³ D.A. Leontiev, *Psikhologia smysla*, Smysl, Moscow, 1999, 487 pp.

¹⁴ See: I. Mkrtumova, A. Dosanova, I. Karabulatova, V. Nifontov, "The Use of Communication Technologies to Oppose Political-Religious Terrorism as an Ethnosocial Deviation in the Contemporary Information-Digital Society," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol. 17, Issue 2, 2016, pp. 54-61.

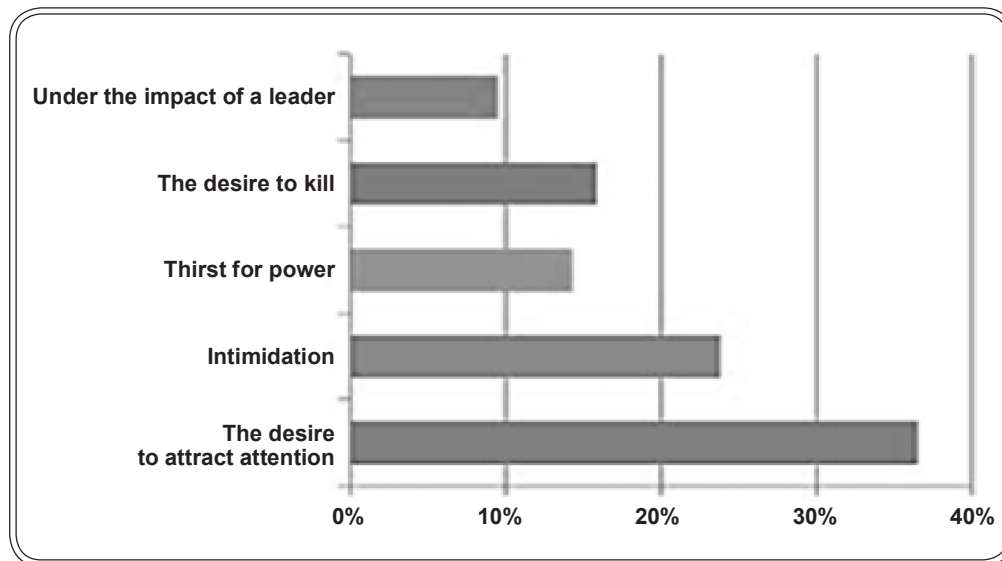
¹⁵ See: G.V. Osipov, I.S. Karabulatova, A.S. Karabulatova, op. cit.

crisis (changes toward increasing the meaningful content in some aspects and its lowering in others); positive (comparatively small increase in meaningful content in all spheres); catharsis (maximal increase in meaningful content in all spheres of life), the most frequent among them being positive and catharsis types of change (95%). Positive changes in the degree of the meaning of life are going on in such spheres as social self-realization (the sphere of achievements), the sphere of spirituality, that of coping with problems and challenges (survivability), and of personal and public relationships.

The catharsis and positive types differ from each other by the types of changes: the positive type is marked by very soft changes in the meaningful sphere; the catharsis type, by more radical changes.

Figure 2

Distribution of the Opinions about the Causes of Terrorist Acts



The degree of religiosity is determined by the types of changes of self-awareness caused by the growing religiosity level. The catharsis type is caused by the affective component of religiosity. Religiosity of such believers is dominated by an emotional contact with the transcendental world; permanent awareness of the presence of higher forces, direct contacts with super-natural reality. The ascetic type is connected with the irrational component of religiosity and might become a prerequisite of destructive forms of religiosity.

Discussion

Today, those who study religiosity in the context of activity, describe it as a complex, multi-faceted psychological phenomenon, defined as a measure of realization by a subject in the real world of his transcendental theistic-religious intentions, designed to establish ties between the subject and

Teos, expressed in the faith in the supernatural, as well as specific numinous sentiments, cultic actions, deeds and behavior as a whole.¹⁶

Any act of terror creates the following risk groups: primary and secondary victims of terrorist acts and those who had suffered in counterterrorist operations. This adds urgency to a comparative analysis of the declared forms and practices of state policies in the sphere of social protection, designed to lower the social risks for these categories of citizens.¹⁷ At a meeting with the speaker of the State Duma, Viacheslav Volodin, the President of the RF, Vladimir Putin, supported the idea that those, convicted of terrorism, should be deprived of the Russian citizenship or that the earlier decision to grant them Russian citizenship should be annulled.¹⁸

When talking about their aims and purposes, terrorists speak about themselves as fighters for the rights and interests of the people and their homeland, and explain that they have to use force to wage a national-liberation struggle, fight for the lofty ideas of Light, Justice and the Universal Good, against state power and Russians as a nation, guilty of xenophobia and hatred. The examined literature used is primarily based on apologetic rhetoric: the authors of such works justify terrorist actions and insult Russia in extremely derogatory terms.

In the context of terrorist threats and actions, the practices of ensuring everyday security of the people have changed quite a lot.¹⁹ Madrudin Magomed-Eminov speaks of the term “extreme” as a factor that changes religious self-awareness. He writes about extreme situations as existing outside the daily experience of man and transcending the limits of everyday existence.²⁰

On the other hand, the far from simple situations are created by the way an individual understands his or her life and interprets the events in full correspondence with one’s own attitudes and individual characteristics, which gets exploited by those determined to transform the inter-confessional relationships.²¹

Edgar Schein divides the process of manipulation into three stages: “defrosting” (at which a person is persuaded that his previous life was a mistake), change (acquiring confidence by putting one’s faith in a leader and interacting with a group), “freezing” (cementing the attitudes, planted in the mind, while the object believes that he or she has stumbled across these conclusions independently).²² Information supplied by the newly converted Islamists suggests that this process, even if described in different terms, is going on in terrorist organizations of the ISIS type.²³

Practically anybody might fall into the trap of recruiters, the fact amply confirmed by the sad fate of a university student, Varvara Karaulova, or actor, Vadim Dorofeev, even if recruiters and

¹⁶ D.O. Smirnov, *Religioznaia aktivnost v strukture integralnoy individualnosti*, Ph.D. thesis: 19.00.01. Perm, 2001, 186 pp.

¹⁷ See: M.Iu. Zelenkov, *Religioznye konflikty: problemy i puti ikh reshenia v nachale XXI veka (politiko-pravovoy aspekta)*, VGU Press, Voronezh, 2007, 244 pp.

¹⁸ See: “Takie grazhdane nam ne nuzhny: terroristov mogut lishat pasporta RF,” 6 June, 2017, available at [<http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=2896357>], 6 June, 2017.

¹⁹ See: V.I. Chizhin, *Dukhovnaia bezopasnost rossiiskogo obshchestva kak faktor voennoy bezopasnosti gosudarstva*, Author’s abstract of doctorate thesis, Moscow, 2000, 36 pp.

²⁰ See: M.Sh. Magomed-Eminov, *Deiatel’nostno-smyslovoy podkhod k psikhologicheskoy transformatsii lichnosti*, MGU Press, Moscow, 2009, 53 pp.

²¹ See: I.N. Chuev, T.M. Panchenko, V.S. Novikov, O.A. Konnova, N.G. Iraeva, I.S. Karabulatova, “Innovation and Integrated Structures of the Innovations in Modern Russia,” *International Review of Management and Marketing*, Vol. 6, No. 1S, 2016, pp. 239-244.

²² See: E.H. Schein, “Organizational Culture and Leadership,” 2004, available at [http://www.untag-smd.ac.id/files/Perpustakaan_Digital_2/ORGANIZATIONAL%20CULTURE%20Organizational%20Culture%20and%20Leadership,%203rd%20Edition.pdf], 7 June, 2017.

²³ See: A. Kabil, “Tekhnologiya verbovki: Kak IGIL popolnaet svoi riady,” 11 October, 2014, available at [<http://islam-review.ru/v-mire/tehnologia-verbovki-kak-igil-popolnaet-svoi-rady/>], 7 June, 2017; A. Grishin, “Ostorozhno! IGIL trebuiusia spiaschie agenty,” 31 October, 2016, available at [<https://www.pravda.ru/society/family/pbringing/31-10-2016/1317115-grishin-0/>], 7 June, 2017.

manipulators prefer to deal with children and lonely women, rather than men. Women are more active in social nets and forums; the danger of being lured into the nets of Islamists is especially high at the sites, where women, who lost the near and dear ones or were raped, share their grief and hatred.²⁴

Robert J. Lifton has identified several methods used in totalitarian societies to influence the psychology of a man:

- (1) milieu control;
- (2) mystical manipulation (very often, leaders declare that they have direct contacts with God);
- (3) the demand for purity (religious purity in the ISIS case);
- (4) the cult of confession;
- (5) sacred science;
- (6) loading of the language (thought-terminating clichés);
- (7) doctrine over person;
- (8) dispensing of existence [the agents “chosen”].²⁵

Later, the theories of Lifton and Schein were criticized for their very limited samplings.²⁶ If we push certain factors aside (certain people are more predisposed to suggestion than others or are ready to accept these suggestions on their own free will), then the conclusions about the possibility of manipulating are not completely waterproof. People analyze their experience through a system of cognitive symbols, meanings, on the basis of which man correlates his aims and possibilities, arranges the events of his live according to their importance at every given moment. This means that the attempts to influence religious self-awareness can be referred to as the instruments of political application of ethnoconfessional terrorism.

Conclusion

The meaning of life is a dynamic structure; the axiological and meaningful sphere, and the meaning of life, as a goal, reflect the social, economic, political and ideological changes in society. The means of interpreting the gender specifics of transformation of confessional attitudes in the context of terrorist threats are conveyed by ideology, scholarly conclusions, paradoxes of public opinion, judicial practice and mass culture. The printed media explain women’s involvement in ethnoconfessional terrorism by the very specific features of female participants in the acts of terror: they are irrational, extremely aggressive, fanatic and, therefore, more dangerous than men.²⁷ According to these representations, the gender and ethnic identity in the newly converted female terrorists malfunctioned and detracted them from confessional norms.

It should be said that the structure of the analyzed discourses is fairly flexible: there are rational explanations of what is going on in terms of war that are less emotional and emphasize the fact that terrorist acts by female shahids are no longer treated as something out of the ordinary.

²⁴ See: “Kak terroristy iz IGIL verbuiut zhenshchin v Internete,” available at [<https://lady.mail.ru/article/488295-kak-terroristy-iz-igil-verbujut-zhenshchin-v-internete/>], 7 June, 2017.

²⁵ See: R.J. Lifton, *The Future of Immortality and Other Essays for a Nuclear Age*, Basic Books, New York, 1987, pp. 420-425.

²⁶ See: J.T. Richardson, *Regulating Religion: Case Studies from Around the Globe*, Kluwer, New York, 2004.

²⁷ See: “Kak terroristy IGIL verbuiut zhenshchin v Seti?” *Cosmopolitan*, 25 November, 2015, available at [<https://www.cosmo.ru/lifestyle/society/kak-terroristy-igil-verbuyut-zhenshchin-v-seti/>], 7 June, 2017.

To conclude, it should be said that the media, which covers the informational space in the Russian regions, should furnish objective reports and supply truthful information about events; familiarize their audiences with the life-building ideas about religious faiths, honor, the norms and rules, the discursive nature of communication and life in our polyconfessional world. Ethnoconfessional harmony within the law enforcement structures and their concerted efforts, in the army and in the regions depends, on the whole, on the concentrated and united efforts of a political authority, the responsible and adequate media, professional level of journalists, military psychologists, the energy of public organizations and all other structures responsible for ethnoconfessional relations, and on responsible citizens. This will allow us to avoid new extremist acts, prevent transformation of cautious attitude toward Muslims into hatred and will lower the level of ethnic intolerance in the army and society as a whole.
