

Ordinary ANTI-CULTISM

Sergey Ivanenko
Doctor of Philosophical Sciences

Paris
2013

UDC 298.9

Original title: Обыкновенный антикультизм.

First published by
Drevo Zhizni Publishing House,
Saint Petersburg, Russia.
print@drevolife.ru

Design and typeset by Drevo Zhizni.

© 2012 Sergey Ivanenko

© 2013 éditions les 3 génies for the English edition

ISBN 978-2-917952-11-5

Annotation

The brochure explains what anti-cultism is and how it affects state-confessional relations in modern Russia and the life of believers belonging to religious minorities. The author analyzes the reasons for the rise of anti-cultism in recent years. He shows the sad consequences for society and the state and the position of the country in the international arena, and he proposes ways to improve the situation.

About the Author

Sergey Ivanenko is a well-known Russian religious expert and doctor of philosophical sciences. He has studied religion professionally for more than 35 years. He compiled the first index in the country on religious organizations of the Russian Federation and has written 16 books and more than 140 articles on problems of religious studies. His work stands out as accurate, clear, and easy to read.

Address for feedback: *ivasin53@mail.ru*

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
1. What Did “Witch Hunters” Accomplish in the Early 1990’s and What Methods Did They Use?	7
2. The “Cornerstone” of Russian Anti-cultism: the Concept “Totalitarian Sect”	18
3. The Transformation of Anti-cultism Into a Common, Ordinary Occurrence	23
4. One of the Primary Targets of Anti-cultists – Pentecostals	30
5. Jehovah’s Witnesses: One of the Main Targets in the “Battle Against Extremist Activity”	36
6. Is Extremism Found in the Church of Scientology and the Works of L. Ron Hubbard?	39
7. Scientology: Dynamic Growth Despite Attacks. Interview With Vladimir Kuropyatnik (Moscow)	45
8. Interview With Jurist Aydar Sultanov (city of Nizhnekamsk of the Republic of Tatarstan)	56
9. The Search for Extremism in Religious Texts of Vaishnavism – a Threat to Russian-Indian Relations (the court proceedings in the city of Tomsk to declare extremist the book <i>Bhagavad-Gītā As It Is</i> , and the negative impact of the proceedings on Russian-Indian relations)	66

10. Interview With Mikhail Frolov (Moscow) – jurist of the Central Religious Organization, “Center for Societies of Krishna Consciousness in Russia,” and defense representative in court proceedings in the city of Tomsk to declare extremist the book <i>Bhagavad-Gītā As It Is</i>	70
11. “Unlawful Anti-extremism” as a Means of Limitation of Rights of Religious Minorities. Interview with Alexander Verkhovskiy, the director of the SOVA Center for Information and Analysis (Moscow)	81
Conclusion. What Russian society and the state can do to be immune to anti-cultism	97
Appendix. Konstantin Nikitin, correspondent for Religious Freedom Watch. Information about FECRIS (European Federation of Centres for Research and Information on Sectarianism).....	101

Introduction

Definition of Anti-cultism. Anti-cultism or the anti-cult movement is a general name for associations, groups, or individual enthusiasts who oppose new religious movements and derogatorily refer to them as cults or sects¹. While anti-cultism is losing its influence in the United States and Western Europe, in modern Russia it is gaining “strength”, becoming an integral part of state-confessional relations.

Religious Experts Study Anti-cultism. Currently there are many books, articles, and other materials that describe the fundamental ideas of anti-cultism² and the effect of anti-cult myths on state-church relations³. Religious experts hold conferences to discuss the problem of anti-cultism as a new challenge to freedom of conscience⁴. Internet sites have appeared that are dedicated to criticizing anti-cultism and its most odious representatives⁵.

Why Is This Brochure Entitled “Ordinary Anti-cultism” and why is the adjective “ordinary” used in its title? There are two reasons.

¹ See I. Ya. Kanterov. Anti-cult movement; *Religiovedeniye. Entsiklopedicheskiy slovar*. [Religious Studies – An Encyclopedic Dictionary] – Moscow: Academic Project, 2006 – page 48.

² Bertil Persson. *The Fight Against Sects: A Summarized Ideo-historical Study*. Moscow, 2012 – 189 pages.

³ Sergey Ivanenko. *Vtorzheniye antikultizma v gosudarstvenno-konfessionalniye otnosheniya v sovremennoy Rossii*. [Encroachment of Anti-cultism on State-confessional Relations in Modern Russia.] Saint-Petersburg: published by *Tree of Life*, 2012 – 52 pages.

⁴ *Noviye vyzovy svobode sovesti v sovremennoy Rossii*. [New Challenges to Freedom of Conscience in Modern Russia.] Materials from the International Practical-science Conference. Moscow, Central House of Journalists, 26 June 2012 Moscow: published by *Tree of Life*, 2012 – 168 pages.

⁵ Since 2010 the Internet site Religious Freedom Watch, <http://religiousfreedomwatch-ru.org/> has studied and exposed the activity of the most active domestic and foreign anti-cult-ists.

The first reason is that in Russia, in the early 1990's, anti-cultism was a marginal and rare occurrence. Then it gained strength and became common and ordinary. To me, as a religious expert concerned with problems related to freedom of conscience, anti-cultism became a sort of addition to the two main problems in Russia – idiots and roads¹. In my point of view, today anti-cultists are enthusiasts who suggest the most harmful and foolish ways of solving problems concerning religious life.

The second reason – I like the documentary film by Mikhail Romm *Obyknoveniy fashizm* [Ordinary Fascism]. For me, the combination of documentation and logic is the key to solving problems, but we will talk about this later.

First, let us think about why anti-cultism became a strong force damaging state-confessional relations, and, for that matter, poisoning relations between people with different religious convictions.

¹ “Russia has two problems –idiots and roads.” This phrase is attributed to different historical persons: writers N. V. Gogol (1809–1852) and M. Ye. Saltykov-Schedrin (1826–1889), historian N. M. Karmazin (1766–1826), and emperor Nikolay I (1796–1855). It is true what one of the most famous authors of aphorisms, Boris Krutiyyer (born in 1940), noted: “Besides idiots and roads, there is one more problem in Russia: idiots telling you which road to take.”

What Did "Witch Hunters" Accomplish in the Early 1990's and What Methods Did They Use?

There was a time when anti-cultism and anti-cultists seemed to me like something exotic and strange, causing astonishment. If I had written a similar work in the early 1990's, most likely it would have been entitled "Exotic Anti-cultism."

In the early 1990's, I wrote about this perception in the essay, "Notes of a Religious Expert". This essay was part of the introduction to the book by German professor Konrad Löw: *Von "Hexen" und Hexenjägern* [Of "Witches" and Witch Hunters] (published by "Gumanitariy", Moscow, 1995 – 90 pages)¹. The professor unexpectedly found himself a "victim" of German anti-cultists. All that K. Löw (a Catholic) had to do was speak as an expert at a seminar organized by one of the new religious movements (the Unification Church), and he was considered to be an "accomplice of sectarians." His reputation and business interests have been significantly damaged.

In 1994 a similar thing happened in Russia with a prominent scientific-scholar and religious expert, Professor Pavel Gurevich². As soon as he had published an article in *Literaturnaya gazeta*

¹ Professor of Political Science, Konrad Löw (born 1931), has a reputation of being a prominent expert on and analyst of Karl Marx. See, for example: "Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels – Fathers of Terror," <http://www.epochtimes.ru/content/view/47249/54/>

² Pavel Semenovich Gurevich (born 1933) – Russian Philosopher, Candidate of Historical Science, Doctor of Philological Science, Doctor of Philosophical Science, and Professor; a specialist in philosophical anthropology, modern western philosophy, philosophy of culture, and personality psychology. Many of P. S. Gurevich's works deal with the study of mysticism. They discuss signs of a mystical experience, which is inherent to all religions. Gurevich convincingly proved that mysticism is an intrinsic part of human culture.

[Literary Newspaper], encouraging the objective study of confessions, including those that seem eccentric or unique, anti-cultists organized a defamation campaign against the professor in response. This prominent scientist was groundlessly accused of supposedly “selling out to sects.”¹

A similar accusation is leveled against religious experts who objectively study new and non-traditional religious movements in our country as well as abroad. It is appropriate to respond to the overly mercantile² anti-cultists with the words of Jesus Christ from the Sermon on the Mount:

Stop judging that you may not be judged; for with what judgment you are judging, you will be judged; and with the measure that you are measuring out, they will measure out to you. Why, then, do you look at the straw in your brother's eye, but do not consider the rafter in your own eye?³

“He Who Pays the Piper Calls the Tune.” This brings to mind one simple fact that shows the “unselfishness” and “patriotism” of some of the leading Russian anti-cultists who are part of the “European Federation of Centres for Research and Information on Sectarianism” (FECRIS) – a leading international anti-cultist organization⁴. The Russian anti-cultists in FECRIS are represented by Alexander Dvorkin (vice president), Alexander Novopashin (Orthodox priest from Novosibirsk), and Alexander Kuzmin (anti-cultist from Saratov and member of the Expert Council on Conducting State Religious Expert Studies under the Russian Ministry of Justice).

¹ Slandorous accusations against P. S. Gurevich had been made at the international seminar “Totalitarian Sects in Russia” (1994, Moscow).

² Mercantile (word borrowed in the XIX century from the French language, “mercantile” – “commercial,” derived from “mercante” – “merchant”) unduly calculating, seeking personal gain.

³ Matthew 7:1–3 [all Bible quotations are taken from the *New World Translation* – trsnl.]

⁴ This association was formed in Paris on 30 June 1994. It operates in accordance with French legislation.

It is evident from the financial information of this organization that between 2001 and 2010 more than 90 percent of the money came from the Government of France, while deposits from members and contributions made up a small percentage of the proceeds. Thus, in 2010 the prime minister of France allocated 35,000 euros for the annual conference of FECRIS in London¹.

If the old adage “he who pays the piper calls the tune” is true, then anti-cultists in FECRIS faithfully serve the interests of the French Government.

My Personal Feelings Toward New Religious Movements.

I was compiling material on new religious movements in the early 1990's. During this research process I became acquainted with Russian anti-cultists and their views.

At that time I was the director of the Department for Ethnic and Religious Conflicts of the Parliamentary Center under the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation. Much effort and time went into the first Russian reference book, *Religioznye organizatsii Rossii* [Religious Organizations in Russia] (I was the director of the writing staff; the first two editions came out in 1993 and the next four between 1994 and 1996).

While collecting and verifying information for the reference work, I met directors from various religious organizations, both traditional and new, as well as civil servants and experts, including those with religious affiliation.

I would like to clearly and concretely express my personal attitude toward new religious movements as a phenomenon, which was, is, and will be a part of religious life.

The general approach to new religious teachings, which I also support, can be found in the Bible. The Acts of Apostles (chapter

¹ Information on FECRIS, including information on how the association is financed, is included in the appendix.

5) relates how the Sanhedrin¹ was intending to sentence Peter and other apostles to death. However Gamaliel², a Pharisee respected by all, stood up in their defense.

He saved the apostles from death by appealing to the Sanhedrin with the following words:

For instance, before these days Theudas³ rose, saying he himself was somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined his party. But he was done away with, and all those who were obeying him were dispersed and came to nothing. After him Judas the Galilean⁴ rose in the days of the registration, and he drew off people after him. And yet that man perished, and all those who were obeying him were scattered abroad. And so, under the present circumstances, I say to you, Do not meddle with these men, but let them alone; (because, if this scheme or this work is from men, it will be overthrown; but if it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them;) otherwise, you may perhaps be found fighters actually against God. – Acts 5:36–39.

¹ Sanhedrin (Greek word meaning “council”) –from the first century B.C.E until the first century C.E., a higher collegiate judicial agency in Judah, convening at the temple in Jerusalem under the chairmanship of the high priest.

² Rabban Gamaliel Hazaken (the Elder) –in Christian tradition Gamaliel (lived in the first half of the first century), a rabbinical teacher, one of the founders of Talmudical Judaism, as well as a Christian saint (righteous man), honored together with his son Aviv (their memorial is celebrated by the Orthodox Church on August 15th according to the Gregorian calendar). As testified to by the book of the Acts of Apostles, Gamaliel was the teacher of the Apostle Paul (Acts 22:3).

³ Theudas (from ancient Hebrew, meaning “appreciation, thankfulness”) –leader of a band of 400 Jewish rebels, fighting against the Roman Empire. He claimed to be the Messiah and in 44 C.E. he drew a crowd after himself to the Jordan, claiming that the waters would disperse before him. The cavalry of the Roman procurator, Cuspius Fadus (44–46 C. E.) scattered the crowd and seized and beheaded Theudas.

⁴ Judas the Galilean (Yehuda ben Hezkiyahu) –led a large anti-Roman revolt in 6 (or 7) C.E. The reason for this revolt was a census (appraisal of property) in Judah carried out by the legate Quirinius. Judas died in battle.

By relating the examples of Theudas and Judas the Galilean, who claimed to be messiahs, messengers from God, Gamaliel wanted the Sanhedrin to understand that if any religious movement was based only on human endeavors, than it would fail. But if God supported that movement, it could not be overthrown. And he convinced the Sanhedrin he was right.

As it says in the Acts of Apostles,

At this they gave heed to him, and they summoned the apostles, flogged them, and ordered them to stop speaking upon the basis of Jesus' name, and let them go.

These, therefore, went their way from before the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of his name. And every day in the temple and from house to house they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus. – Acts 5:40–42.

I am convinced that as a religious expert I do not have the right to act as judge and decide which new religious teaching has the spark of truth and corresponds to God's will, which teaching is purely man's invention, or which doctrines originates with the Devil in order to lead people away from the truth. The one who takes it upon himself to judge in these matters takes on an enormous responsibility and, ideally, must possess tremendous spiritual wisdom and discernment (or he must be a thoughtless person who does not recognize the difficult matter that he is taking on).

The task of a religious expert is far more modest – to study only the earthly and humanly-generated aspects of a religious organization's activity.

The First Impression Is the Strongest. In 1993 I became acquainted with some from the Department of Catechesis and Religious Education of the Moscow Patriarchate, including

Alexander Dvorkin, who was considered in the Department as a leading specialist in the fight against sects. We had a lengthy conversation, as a result of which I came to the conclusion that the “anti-sect” activity of the Department of Catechesis poses a considerable threat to freedom of conscience in Russia.

It is true when people say that the first impression of a person is the strongest. Fiery eyes, aggressive speech, unrestrained demagoguery, and a weak knowledge of the subject of debate – it seemed to me that Khlestakov¹ himself was before me. A. Dvorkin did not intend to study any religious movements or sects new to Russia. In his opinion, as an Orthodox believer working for the Moscow Patriarchate, he does not have the right to associate with “heretics and sectarians.” He was proud of his knowledge and fanatically convinced that he knows more about sects than anyone else. I asked him, “Where do you get information about new religious movements in Russia?” and he said, “Everything that is needed to know is already published by anti-cultist organizations in the West.”²

A. Dvorkin and his associates consider that, above all, their objective is to impel state agencies either to prohibit new religious movements (designated as sects) or substantially limit the rights of those sects that cannot be outlawed by introducing annual reregistration of sectarian organizations, prohibiting their use of mass media, and involving law-enforcement agencies and psychiatrists in the fight against them.

According to these anti-cultists, new religious movements are pseudo-religions and we must fight against them, not with a missionary’s approach, but with police tactics.

¹ Ivan Alexandrovich Khlestakov –character from N. V. Gogol’s comedy *Revizor* [The Inspector General] (1836), an inspired and shameless liar and braggart (here is where the term *klestakovshchina* [bragging] is derived). In the Dictionary of the Russian Language by S. I. Ozhegov, *klestakovshchina* [bragging] is defined as “shameless bragging.”

² Sergey Ivanenko. “Notes of a religious expert.” Introduction to the book by Konrad Löw: *Von „Hexen“ und Hexenjägern*. [Of “Witches” and Witch Hunters](M. published by Gommunitarij, 1995 –pages 20–24).

After talking with A. Dvorkin and other anti-cultists, I appreciated how correct the poet Alexander Galich was¹. In his *Poem About Stalin* there are some notable lines:

Have no fear, you my people!
No fear of prison, no fear of poverty,
No fear of sickness, no fear of hunger,
But only have fear, you my people,
For the one who says: "I know what is best"
The one who says "Follow me,
I will teach you, what is best!"
...Get rid of him, have no trust in him
He's lying! He doesn't know what is best!

It became clear to me that if it was up to enthusiasts of the fight against sects, then bans and limitations would affect not only new religious movements. A few, less severe, but substantial limitations and prohibitions would affect Catholics, Protestants, and all non-Orthodox. The Russian Orthodox Church itself would go through a "cleansing" in order to rid itself of all who seemed, in the opinion of anti-cult activists, to be excessively tolerant.

When I contemplate why anti-cultism has, from a marginal mindset of radical anti-sect activists, turned into a reasonably influential and popular trend, I think back to the 1990's.

The First, Unsuccessful Attempt to Legally Restrict Freedom of Religion (1992–1993). The RSFSR Law on Freedom of Religion (No. 267-I dated 25 October 1990) guaranteed freedom of conscience for all, including followers of new religious movements, as well as foreign missionaries.

This situation was new and unusual for politicians and bureaucrats, as well as for religious leaders educated in the USSR where they were securely protected by the "Iron Curtain" from

¹ Alexander Galich (Ginsburg, 1918–1977) – Actor, poet, playwright.

new religious movements and foreign preachers. Some felt that a catastrophe was imminent in the realm of religious life and that a wave of foreign missionaries and exotic religions was about to flood Russia.

In honor of such attitudes, Mikhail Odintsov wrote:

The growth of newly formed confessions, which Russia has never seen in the past, exploded – an uncontrolled influx of thousands and thousands of missionaries and preachers of various religious orientations into the Russian Federation. The number of missions quickly increased, operating in almost all the subjects of the Russian Federation. There were 37 at the start of 1992 but by 1993 there were 182, and then by 1994, there were 250. In addition, many of them operated without registering with justice agencies, using the protection afforded by Article 44 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation. In a number of areas (Khabarovsk Territory, Primorskiy Territory, Sakhalin Region, Amur Region, and others) the number of the above mentioned organizations has reached 50 to 60 percent of the number of registered religious organizations in the region.¹

One could dispute how serious the supposed threat was in the 1990's of an "invasion" of new religious organizations and foreign missionaries of traditional religious organizations. As regards the Far East, Protestant churches were the majority among registered religious organizations even in Soviet times; therefore, Mikhail Odintsov's example is not applicable.

It is clear that 250 missions in such an enormous country as Russia are just a "drop in the bucket." Moreover, many foreign missions and missionaries represented Protestant movements that

¹ Mikhail Odintsov. *Veroispovedniye reformy v Rossii: idei, praktika, itogi (1985–1997)* [Religious Reforms in the Soviet Union and Russia: Ideas, Practices, and Results 1985–1997], <http://www.rusoir.ru/president/works/116/>

were fairly traditional in Russia and strived to assist their Russian fellow believers. They did not rival Russian Protestants and did not pose any threat to the interreligious world. In my opinion, the further development of events has proved that the competition of foreign missionaries has not in any way undermined the position of mainstream religious organizations, and if you look at things objectively, it could not.

In itself, religion is an extraordinarily stable and conservative phenomenon. Religion preserves and passes down to future generations spiritual values, beliefs, rituals, and traditions, many of which originated hundreds, or even thousands, of years ago. It is impossible for the efforts of visiting preachers to weaken traditional religion that is rooted in a nation or society. At the start of the 1990's, foreign missionaries in Russia could create only a small "ripple" on the surface of the deep ocean of religious and spiritual culture of the peoples of Russia.

However, the theme of the "expansion" of foreign preachers and of new religions was used to raise the issue of the need to legislatively secure privileges for traditional religious organizations.

In 1992, the RSFSR Supreme Council started to prepare amendments to the Law on Freedom of Religion. The amendments were based on the following proposals made by deputies:

- to restrict the activity of foreign missionaries, missions, and religious organizations;

- to regulate (that is, restrict) the activity of non-traditional religions; and

- to grant certain privileges to traditional churches and religions.

On 14 July 1993 the Supreme Council of Russia adopted the Law on Introducing Amendments and Additions to the Law on Freedom of Religion. Article 14 of the new edition of the Law stated:

Representatives of foreign religious organizations and individual religious leaders who are not citizens of the Russian Federation, as well as directors and ministers of Russian religious organizations, appointed (approved) to their position by foreign religious organizations, have the right to carry out their activity after state accreditation. Foreign religious organizations, their representative offices, and their representatives, as well as individuals who do not have citizenship in the Russian Federation, do not enjoy the right to carry out religious-missionary, publishing, or religious propaganda activity.

This new norm evoked contradictory reactions from Russian religious leaders. The representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and Islamic centers approved of it, whereas leaders from Protestant associations considered it anti-democratic. Political, social, and religious leaders from more than 120 countries sent their protests to the Russian administration. Through diplomatic channels, leaders of some foreign states expressed dissatisfaction with the Law that was adopted, and urged the President of Russia not to sign this "anti-democratic law."

The President of Russia, Boris Yeltsin, twice refused to sign the Law that was adopted by the Supreme Council. He considered that it violated the principle of equality of religious associations before the law, as well as significantly restricted the rights of individuals who are not citizens of Russia to engage in public religious activity, and this would contradict the RF Constitution and generally accepted international legal pacts on freedom of conscience signed by Russia.

At the end of September and beginning of October 1993, during the standoff between the President of Russia and the Supreme Council, amendments to the Law on Freedom of Religion were adopted by the Supreme Council and the Congress of People's

Deputies¹ and signed² by the “acting President of Russia,” Alexander Rutskoy. Since this occurred after the Decree dated 21 September 1993 from the President of Russia, Boris Yeltsin, to dissolve the Supreme Council and the Congress of People’s Deputies, in reality, this law did not have legal force.

However, the idea itself to grant privileges to traditional religions and religious organizations and to restrict the rights of non-traditional religions continued to grow in popularity. Anti-cultism became the ideological basis for the rightfulness of such a selective approach, giving reasons to validate the idea of the “spiritual danger,” destructiveness, and criminal nature of new religions.

¹ The Law of the Russian Federation on Amendments and Additions to the RSFSR Law on Freedom of Religion (voted for on 26 September 1993).

² This Law was signed by candlelight, the building of the Supreme Council was blocked by soldiers who were loyal to the President of Russia, Boris Yeltsin, and the electricity was turned off.

The “Cornerstone”¹ of Russian Anti-cultism: the Concept “Totalitarian Sect”

It was in this period that the concept “totalitarian sect” became more widespread. It became its own sort of “black mark,” to label those religious associations whose position the anti-sect activists were intent on undermining.

The term “totalitarian sect” may also be called the “ace of trumps” or joker², giving anti-cultists additional opportunities to influence officials, journalists, and mass media audiences. This sinister term served anti-cultists well, helping them to gain ground on those who protected the principles of freedom of conscience.

Who devised this concept? In his usual ostentatious manner, A. Dvorkin credits himself with this. The official biography of A. L. Dvorkin, which is posted on the site of “The Information and Consultation Center of St. Irenaeus of Lyon,” asserts the following: “In March 1993 Alexander Dvorkin held the first conference on the problem of a cult that was wide-spread at the time, ‘The Mother of God Center,’ in which he used the term ‘totalitarian sect.’ He stated: ‘I had no idea that the term did not yet exist, since it seemed obvious to me. But the expression momentarily caught on.’”³

¹ A cornerstone is the first stone laid of a structure's foundation. It bears the main load and determines the position of the building. Currently, “cornerstone” is a concept meaning foundation, beginning, or essence of something. It is widely known due to the Bible, where it is used mainly as a metaphor.

² The joker (literally, one who jokes) is a special card included in a standard 54 card French deck. In most card games, the joker may play the role of any of the other cards when played by itself or when played with other cards, and often gives a skilled player the advantage.

³ Yevgeniy Mukhtarov. Biography of Alexander Dvorkin / *Alexander Dvorkin. Uchitelya i uroki: Vospominaniya, rasskazy, razmyshleniya*. [Alexander Dvorkin. Teachers and Lessons: Memories, Stories, and Reflections.] –Nizhniy Novgorod: Christian Library, 2009 –pages 9–60, <http://www.iriney.ru/about/index-biog.htm>.

A conference dedicated to the problems of religious sects appearing in Russia (in particular, "The Mother of God Center"), in actuality, was held in Moscow on 16 March 1993 by the Department of Religious Education and Catechization of the Moscow Patriarchate in the building of the Faculty of Journalism of the Moscow State University. However, the term "totalitarian sect" did not appear in the title of this event¹.

If we look at the history of the concept "totalitarian sect," we can note that the term "totalitarian sect" and the closely related term "totalitarian cult" have been actively used since the 1930's to criticize Communism and Fascism. The concepts "totalitarian sect" and "totalitarian cult" have been used in English and French literature since the 1970's in connection with new religious organizations that anti-cultists accused of "brainwashing."

Having researched Russian publications, I became convinced that the first person in our country to use the term "totalitarian sect" in regard to new religious organizations, thoroughly explaining its meaning, was the famous journalist Alexander Shchipkov². On 21 October 1993 he published the article *Uchitelya i raby* [Teachers and Slaves] in the *Nezavisimaya gazeta* [Independent Newspaper].

This article thoroughly explains the distinctive characteristics of "totalitarian sects": They manipulate consciousness and break down a person's identity. In totalitarian sects, "a member, instead of being the goal, becomes the means by which the leader can reach specific

¹ See the magazine *Kommersant* "Konferentsiya po problemam sektantstva. Pravoslavnyaya tserkov boretsya s 'Bogorodichnym tsentrom'" ["Conference on the Problem of Sects. The Orthodox Church Battles 'The Mother of God Center'"] by Natalya Rusakova, No. 48 (271), 17 March 1993, <http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/42229>

² Alexander Shchipkov –journalist (chairman of the Guild of Religious Journalism and the Club of Orthodox Journalists), religious sociologist, candidate of philosophical sciences, and author of the books: *Vo shto verit Rossiya* [What Russia Believes] (1998), *Soborniy dvor* [Cathedral Courtyard] (2003), *Khristianskaya demokratiya v Rossiye* [Christian Democracy in Russia] (2004) and others. Chief Editor of the internet portal, "Religion and the Mass Media."

doctrinal or material goals,” and therefore should be considered pseudo-religious sects. The leader and teacher hold a very special position in totalitarian pseudo-religious sects: “The teacher in the sect always states that he is the only and exclusive mediator between God and man. Only he possesses complete spiritual knowledge and without him a person cannot be in contact with God.”

Ten years later, the author included this article in a collection of his journalistic articles from 1991 to 2001, under the title “Totalitarian Sect”, with an interesting commentary. “This is the background of this article,” writes A. Shchipkov. “At the beginning of the 1990’s, I was actively involved in the study of new religious movements. Many things were unclear to me, and many things frightened me. The result was that I introduced to Russia the term ‘totalitarian sects,’ which, strictly speaking, is not at all scientific. This text reads more like instructions on combating sects than it does a work of journalism. Many months went by before I understood the mechanism of the emergence, development, spread, and disappearance of a sect and became convinced that they cannot envelop the entire country. Today, the process of development of new religious movements has come to a standstill and does not pose a real threat. The subject and the style of the article are outdated but reflect the mood of the time and therefore it was left in the collection.”¹

I completely agree with A. Shchipkov that new religious movements do not pose a real threat to traditional religions and that the term “totalitarian sects” is absolutely unscientific.

Meaning of the Concept “Totalitarian Sect” and Its Unscientific Nature

What is the essential failing of this concept? If the characteristics attributed to a “totalitarian sect” are summed up, then the following picture emerges.

¹ Alexander Shchipkov. *Soborniy dvor* [Cathedral Courtyard]. Moscow. 2003, page 146.

1. A “totalitarian sect” is a group whose leadership controls the consciousness, behavior, and emotions of the members of the group and exploits them. A “totalitarian sect” can harm its members psychologically, physically, and financially. “Totalitarian sects” hide their true nature and objectives from potential or new adherents, using deceitful methods to recruit and draw in new members.

2. Members of a “totalitarian sect” unselfishly serve the leader of the group and do not question any of his statements or actions. Questions, doubts, and dissatisfaction are eradicated or even punished. Mind-numbing methods are used to suppress doubts regarding the group and its leader.

3. The group’s leadership determines how the members of the “totalitarian sect” should think, act, or feel. The members have to receive permission to go on dates, change their work, or marry. The group has strict rules on how to dress, raise children, where to live, and so forth.

4. Members of a “totalitarian sect” usually sever ties with their family and close friends and reject life goals and personal interests that they had before they were recruited into the group. The leadership of the group not only encourages but also requires that the members of the “totalitarian sect” live with other members and associate only with them.

5. The group devotes excessive attention to obtaining more money. They are not above using even illegal means.

Having studied religion for more than 35 years, I am convinced that such “totalitarian sects” are a product of anti-cultists’ fantasy.

Among the new religious movements, there are no groups, and cannot be any, that have the characteristics of “totalitarian sects.” As a rule, new religions are based upon the enthusiasm of their followers and do not have a specific or concrete organizational structure. As a new religious movement develops, producing organizational

structures and rules of discipline, usually the enthusiasm of most followers wanes.

Dominance and submission in religious associations has its own specific nature, but it is completely different from what anti-cultists assert. The foundation of the discipline that binds a religious organization together is usually faith, love, hope, and other noble moral principles (self-sacrifice, the pursuit of a moral ideal, salvation).

Perhaps the most poetic description of the power of love and the psychology of a person in love comes from Alexander Pushkin:

“Ah, it’s so easy to deceive me!
I’m happy to be deceived!”¹

A religious association is strong due to the faith and love of its members and their trust in their leaders and instructors. The leadership of a religious movement is able to “control” the consciousness of its followers only to the extent to which the followers desire it.

The “totalitarian sect” described in anti-cultist literature resembles not a new religious movement, but a monastic community of some order with a stable hierarchy and regulations, developed over centuries, that prescribe isolation from the world and submission to the father superior.

Toward the mid-1990s, despite its weak evidentiary basis, anti-cultism in Russia was a fairly influential movement. How was this possible?

¹ A. S. Pushkin. Poem *Priznaniye: k Alexandere Ivanovne Osipovoi* [Confession to Alexandra Ivanovna Osipova] (I love you though I must be mad. . .). Full collection of writings. Ten volumes. L. Science. Leningrad division, 1977–1979. Volume 2 Poems, 1820–1826, 1977. Pages 302 and 303.

The Transformation of Anti-cultism Into a Common, Ordinary Occurrence

"People willingly believe what they want to believe," asserted Julius Caesar¹. Many people suffer from xenophobia².

The nature and functions of xenophobia have two aspects. On the one hand, xenophobia is the manifestation of the social instinct of self-preservation of a certain social-economic formation and national culture. On the other hand, the twentieth century vividly demonstrated the destructive consequences of intentionally cultivating xenophobia as a tested method of controlling the population, extensively used by the Nazi and Communist regimes.

The principle of rallying a country's citizens based on xenophobia is quite ancient and involves merging general ideas of hatred by creating an "image of the enemy," inciting hatred against other nations and religions, as well as inciting class hatred.

The roots of intolerance of religious minorities and new religious movements are deep because they are fed by people's inclination toward xenophobia.

The greatest masters of the propaganda of xenophobia were the Nazis. Although Nazism was destroyed in 1945, the expression "the propaganda of Goebbels" has remained to this day³.

¹ Julius Caesar (Latin –Gaius Iulius Caesar, 100 or 102–44 B.C.E.) –ancient statesman, politician, general, and writer.

² Xenophobia: (from Greek –stranger + fear) fear or hatred of someone or something that is foreign or strange; perception of that which is foreign as incomprehensible and therefore dangerous. On becoming a constituent part of state ideology, xenophobia may become the cause of enmity on the basis of national, religious, or social distinctions.

³ Paul Joseph Goebbels (1897–1945) –Reich Minister of National Instruction and Propaganda of Germany (1933-1945). Goebbels is credited with a statement to the effect that lies are an effective means of propaganda. To compare someone with Goebbels (as in the expression, "a grandson (granddaughter) of Goebbels," "Goebbels's propaganda methods") has a negative connotation. Usually, the expression, "by Goebbels's methods of propaganda," means a deliberate distortion of facts or a lie mixed with genuine facts.

One special feature of totalitarian propaganda is that it does not simply manipulate public opinion, but it creates it, becoming an important instrument of social control. "Propaganda should reach each individual." In implementing this principle, the apparatus of Goebbels showed inexhaustible ingenuity. New technology such as the radio was used, making it possible to directly influence millions of housewives who spent their time in the kitchen; there were mandatory propaganda newsreels before film showings, and the book *Mein Kampf* was an essential gift to newlyweds. Propaganda influenced even the gastronomic tastes of the population. In the context of the policy to economize currency, a campaign was launched to reject organic coffee, while butter was included on the list of products undermining Germany's defense capability.

Anti-cultism intensifies xenophobia, stirring up enmity toward sects and new religious movements. The propaganda of anti-cultism is based on the intentional distortion of facts or on lies "diluted" with a few genuine facts to make the propaganda more convincing.

The title of my brochure has something in common with the title of the documentary film by Mikhail Romm¹, *Obyknoveniy fashizm* [Ordinary Fascism]. This masterpiece, which came to the screen in 1965 and shocked thinking audiences, is still the best documentary on Nazism, both by its influence and its anti-fascist content². Mikhail Romm's film reveals the essence not only of the Nazi regime, but of totalitarian regimes in general.

Do Fascism and anti-cultism have much in common? There could be different approaches and viewpoints. The book by Swedish author Bertil Persson that contains many documents is noteworthy. The book shows the ideological kinship of Nazism and modern anti-cultism³.

¹ Mikhail Romm (1901–1971) –Soviet film director.

² Elionor Figon. To understand the essence of Fascism... Recollections of the shooting of the film *Obyknoveniy fashizm* [Ordinary Fascism]. Scientific-educational magazine *Skepsis*, http://skepsis.ru/library/id_1848.html

³ Bertil Persson. *The Fight Against Sects. A Summarized Ideo-historical Study*. Moscow, 2012 –page 189.

In my opinion, the main thing Fascism and anti-cultism have in common is their reliance on hatred. Fascists hate political opponents, Jews, and a variety of other nationalities. In the broadest sense of the word they hate all free persons who refuse to reject their own conscience and deify the leader.

Anti-cultists hate people of other religions; above all, they hate followers of new religious movements and all those who defend freedom of conscience.

What is the source of hatred? According to Cyril Connolly¹: “[T]here is no hate without fear. Hate is crystallized fear, fear’s dividend, fear objectivized... Hate is the consequence of fear; we fear something before we hate it.”

Fear of new religious movements, which became the moving force behind modern anti-cultism, emerged and gained strength as a result of the swift spread of new religious movements in the West during the period of the 1960’s to the 1980’s. One would think that when the “boom” of new religious movements ended in the 1990’s, the anti-cultists’ hatred for them would end. But it did not.

Here it is appropriate to recall the wise words of Aristotle²: “Anger can be cured by time; but hatred cannot.” A key to the mystery of the “incurable nature” of hatred may be found in the observation that “people always hate those they hurt.”³ Anti-cultists well illustrate the truth of this conclusion.

The priority of anti-cultists is to promote intolerance in society toward new religious movements (cults), motivate legislative agencies to adopt “anti-cult” laws, and compel law enforcement and judicial agencies to suppress the activity of cults.

State agencies, law enforcement structures, and the mass media make up the target audience of anti-cultists. The anti-cult movement

¹ Cyril Vernon Connolly (1903–1974) –English literary critic and writer.

² Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.) –philosopher and scientist of ancient Greece

³ Luc de Clapiers, marquis de Vauvenargues (1715–1747) –French philosopher, moralist, and writer

strives to present cults as socially dangerous criminal formations, which the government and society must resolutely combat.

The anti-cultist movement is inherently confrontational. It aims to mobilize the state and society against new religious movements and seeks to restrict their growth or completely ban them.

The “achievements” of anti-cultists have not been the same in all countries.

Unquestionably, the creation of the stereotype of the evil “cult” that engages in “brainwashing” is an achievement of the anti-cultist movement in the United States. Although the scientific community rejects the theory of “brainwashing,” the collective consciousness of Americans has accepted this myth.

In regard to governmental-religious relations, the anti-cultist movement in the United States has suffered complete defeat. “American anti-cultists have frequently undertaken to have laws enacted that restrict or control the activity of new religions. Sometimes they were successful in gaining the support of an American politician, for example, Senator Robert Dole; however, not once in U.S. history was a law directed against “cults”¹ enacted, either at the state or federal level.

In Western Europe, the greatest results of the anti-cult movement were attained in France in 2001 when a special law was adopted (“About-Picard Law”) “intended to reinforce the prevention and repression of sectarian (cult) movements that infringe on human rights and fundamental freedoms.” The law, however, could not be applied in practice and can be said to illustrate the well-known expression, “the mountain gave birth to a mouse.”² In this case, however, the mountain gave birth to a “dead” mouse.

¹ M. M. Gordus. *Gumanitarniye i sotsialniye nauki*, “Antikultovoye dvizheniye: istoricheskiy obzor” [Humanitarian and Social Sciences, “Anti-cult Movements: A Historical Overview”], 2008. No. 2. Philosophy. Pages 1-5, http://www.hses-online.ru/2008/02/09_00_13/03.pdf

² The expression “the mountain gave birth to a mouse” is used when there are great expectations, but few results. The expression dates back to Aesop’s Fables (VI century B.C.E.), made known in the retelling by the Roman fabulist Phaedrus (circa 20–50 C.E.) *Mons parturiens* (The Mountain Giving Birth).

Anti-cultism in the Russian Federation has gained great influence¹. However, it can be expected that the influence of anti-cultism on the development of state religious policies will decrease in the foreseeable future.

The following are among the factors undermining the position of anti-cultism: cessation of the rapid growth of new religious movements; unrealistic goals promoted by anti-cultists; and the colossal failure of their legal actions, such as the legal proceedings in Tomsk to declare the book *Bhagavad Gita As It Is* extremist material.

It is also important to note that anti-cultism is experiencing an internal crisis in our country – “turmoil and vacillation” among anti-cult activists.

I remember the 1990’s well, when anti-cult activists were inspired and selfless. Most were parents (as well as grandmothers, grandfathers, and other relatives) of the young men and women who became adherents of new religious movements and ruined relationships with their families. Concerned parents considered that the religious enthusiasm of their children was because insidious sects “brainwashed” and “turned them into zombies.” Various committees of parents were formed, uniting those who believed that their children were victims of totalitarian sects and who demanded that the sects be banned.

These unfortunate and angry parents never received any practical help from professional anti-cultists. In time such “committees of parents against sects” disappeared.

Later, in the 2000’s, professionals took over the work of anti-cultism, and it entered the fiercely competitive market economy.

According to several “anti-cult activists,” no organized, united anti-cultist movement exists in modern Russia. Mikhail Vershinin

¹ Sergey Ivanenko. *Vtorzheniye antikultizma v gosudarstvenno-konfessionalniye otnosheniya v sovremennoy Rossii*. [Encroachment of Anti-cultism on State-confessional Relations in Modern Russia.] Saint-Petersburg: published by *Tree of Life*, 2012 –52 pages.

(Samara), a social psychologist who provides “counseling for victims of destructive cults,” in a September 2011 essay entitled “The Anti-cult Movement in Russia,” admits that no unified, anti-cult movement exists in the country. But there are groups of specialists and individuals attempting to solve the cult problem in their own way.

In Mikhail Vershinin’s opinion, anti-cult activists are divided into two primary groups: 1) religiously based (approximately 600 persons, among whom there are approximately 300 persons who often deal with cults in their work, and 50 persons who specialize in only cults and sects) and 2) secular specialists (approximately 100 persons, among whom there are 30 persons who often deal with cults in their work, and 7 persons who specialize in only cults and sects). These two groups virtually do not cooperate with one another.

Not even the Russian Orthodox Church has a united “anti-cult unit.” There is a large group of specialists united under the direction of Alexander Dvorkin, and a smaller group of specialists under the direction of Archpriest Oleg Stenyayev. Dramatic arguments and conflicts regularly flare up between the two groups, and they quietly compete for resources of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Mikhail Vershinin writes:

If you take the past 15 years and subjectively analyze the level and quality of anti-cult activities, scientific research, and state supervision, then I for one can see a pattern of general deterioration. The anti-cult movement is not growing and neither are new scholars or researchers joining their ranks. Everyone is concentrating either on proving “the rightfulness of their approach” or on problems with their own scientific research.

Based on the real and quite unfortunate state of anti-cultism in Russia, one can conclude that the strength of anti-cultism comes from the support received from state and confessional organizations.

The increased support of anti-cultism from the state has been especially noticeable in 2009 and the period thereafter. On 3 April 2009 Alexander Dvorkin, known for his radical anti-cultist views, was appointed to be chairman of the Expert Council for Conducting State Religious Expert Studies under the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation.

In essence, anti-cultists and their ideas started to dominate in state organizations responsible for developing and carrying out religious policies. It can be stated that from 2009 until now, anti-cultists have been acting as informal authors (or co-authors) of conceptual approaches to solving problems between the state and religious associations. Frequently, anti-cultist mythology motivates law-enforcement agencies to initiate and investigate cases against new religious movements and motivates courts to render unlawful decisions.

To combat sects, anti-cultists rely on two methods: dissolving and banning religious organizations, and declaring religious literature of “sectarians” extremist materials. According to A. Dvorkin, the dissolution and ban of religious organizations is not enough since the sects can continue their activity in the form of religious groups or under other names. If the fundamental literature of a sect is declared extremist, then it is much harder for the sect to continue its activity.

One of the Primary Targets of Anti-cultists – Pentecostals

The Evangelical Christian religion (Pentecostals) is one of the main movements in modern Protestantism. The New Testament states that at the time of Pentecost, the holy spirit descended upon the apostles, “and they all became filled with holy spirit and started to speak with different tongues.” (Acts 2:4) Pentecostals practice “speaking in tongues” during prayer services. This is their foremost distinction from other movements of Protestantism.

Pentecostals are divided into different denominations. Considering that from a religious scholarly point of view there are no major distinctions between Pentecostals and “neo-Pentecostals,” then anti-cultists are waging war against one of the largest and fastest growing movements of modern Protestantism.

Bishop Sergey Ryakhovskiy is one of the leaders of Russian Pentecostals and chairman of the Russian Union of Evangelical Christians (approximately 1,000 unregistered religious groups and more than 1,350 communities registered by the Federal Registration Agency, which makes up around 6 percent of all the registered religious organizations in the Russian Federation). He is the object of constant, malicious, and personal criticism from A. Dvorkin and other anti-cultists.

Sergey Ryakhovskiy is a member of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, the co-chairman of the Advisory Board of Protestant Church Leaders in Russia, and a member of the Council on Interaction With Religious Associations. He has state and departmental awards, including “The Order for Merit to the Fatherland” of second degree, the medal, “In Commemoration of the 850th Anniversary of Moscow,” and the medal, “In

Commemoration of the 200th Anniversary of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation.”¹

Like the majority of Christian Pentecostals, and, for that matter, Russian Protestants in general, Bishop Sergey Ryakhovskiy is patriotic and takes a balanced and conservative position on moral issues, supporting traditional family values. Hysterical and even manic attacks on Sergey Ryakhovskiy by the St. Irenaeus of Lyon Center for Religious Studies are due to the personal hatred of anti-cultists and aggressive rejection of Pentecostals.

An achievement of the anti-cultists in their fight with Pentecostals was the decision to dissolve one of the largest communities of over 1,000 members—the local religious organization the Church of Evangelical Christians (Pentecostals) “Blagodat” of the city of Khabarovsk – and ban its activity in the Khabarovsk Territory, rendered by the Khabarovsk Territorial Court on 27 April 2011 regarding the claim of the Prosecutor for the Khabarovsk Territory. The most significant statement in the decision was the assertion that the characteristics of the religious practice of Pentecostals, including “speaking in tongues,” harm the health of citizens. If this decision entered into legal force, it could be used against all Christian Pentecostals.

The “Blagodat” Church appealed the decision of the Khabarovsk Territorial Court to the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, which declared it as unlawful on 5 July 2011 and sent the case to the Khabarovsk Territorial Court for retrial.

The retrial took place from 15–19 December 2011 in the Khabarovsk Territorial Court. The court denied the prosecutor’s claim. However, the prosecutor’s office appealed this decision. Moreover, the Khabarovsk Territorial Prosecutor’s Office continues to investigate the criminal case against the “Blagodat” Church as an organization that harms the mental health of citizens.

¹ In 2011 the Russian Council of Muftis awarded Sergey Ryakhovskiy with the medal, “For Spiritual Unification.”

According to the Guild of Experts on Religion and Law (president, Roman Lunkin; chairperson; Inna Zagrebina), the main attacks against Pentecostals are taking place in the Far East¹.

Unfortunately, violations of the rights of Christian Pentecostals have occurred in Moscow, as well as in other regions². Thus, on 6 September 2012 a building of the Church of the Holy Trinity, located on Nikolaya Starostina Street, in Novokosino, Moscow, was ransacked and destroyed. The church belonged to the community of the Russian Church of Evangelical Christians (Pentecostals).

For many years believers have tried to legalize the right to a church building in the East Prefecture of the City of Moscow. However, their efforts were not successful. On 17 May 2012 a judicial decision was rendered to remove temporary structures belonging to the community. The believers' requests to allocate a land plot for the construction of a new church building were not considered by the prefecture.

Almost immediately after midnight on 6 September, persons who identified themselves as the police broke into the church, cut all lines of communication and, having seized the cell phone of the girl on duty at the church, detained her at the police station for several hours. During this time all valuables were stolen from the Church of the Holy Trinity, including religious books and chalices for the Eucharist. Objects sacred to the believers and religious books were desecrated. All supporting buildings on the territory of the Church of the Holy Trinity were barbarically ransacked. Safes were opened. An automobile was broken into and a generator, an audio control console, musical instruments, and other valuables were stolen.

¹ "The campaign to discredit Evangelical Christians is gaining momentum. It is not too late to stop the campaign." (statement made on 21 July 2012 by the Guild of Experts on Religion and Law), <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=news&id=93996>

² On 20 September 2012 in the village of Kulotino of Okulobskiy District of the Novgorod Region, based on a court decision in the administrative case, the bailiff service demolished the Pentecostal church, "Word of Life." The administration of the Okulobskiy Municipal District acted as the exactor in the case.

Upon arriving, Pastor V. N. Romankov could not enter the premises of the church. The minister was insulted by unknown persons at the site of the ransacked church building. Church members were subjected to physical violence from people identifying themselves as the "people's guard." Police officers present at the time ignored the believers' requests for protection from insults and violence.

Such an event is an act of vandalism and barbarism. What happened was a flagrant insult to the religious feelings of the believers.

The history of Pentecostals in the U.S.S.R. shows that this religious movement of Protestantism cannot be broken even by the harshest persecution. In 1929, the activity of the Evangelical Christian religion (Pentecostals) was banned in the Soviet Union. From 1929 to 1941, Pentecostals received 20–25 year sentences in labor camps, and at times were sentenced to be shot.

In 1945, Pentecostals were offered registration as part of the National Council of Evangelical Christian-Baptists; they were not allowed to create their own religious center. They could receive registration on the condition that they renounced their evangelical, missionary, and charitable activities, as well as "speaking in tongues." Therefore, the majority of Pentecostal communities refused registration and continued their activity underground.

The end of the 1950's and the beginning of the 1960's marked the start of systematic persecution of Pentecostals in the U.S.S.R. A. I. Solzhenitsyn gives a detailed account of this in his book *Arkhipelag GULAG* [The GULAG Archipelago]. During that period many leaders of the communities and ordinary church members received long prison sentences. The mass media attempted in every way to discredit the activity of Pentecostals, attributing to them monstrous crimes.

Starting from 1968, some Pentecostal communities received approval for state registration, however most Pentecostal churches remained without registration until the start of the 1990's.

In the U.S.S.R., the activity of unregistered religious communities was banned and prosecuted as a crime. Ordinary members of unregistered communities were constantly persecuted, usually by the imposition of fines, for their participation in prayer meetings. There were several instances where private homes used by Pentecostals for joint prayer were confiscated or even demolished.

During court proceedings, various criminal charges were leveled against directors of unregistered communities of Pentecostals, including charges under Article 190 or Article 70 of the Criminal Code, that is, slander against the Soviet system and anti-Soviet propaganda. The directors of the Pentecostals were accused of harming the believers' health with fanatical rituals.

Soviet propaganda used two main methods to discredit Pentecostals. They were accused of extreme fanaticism, even of human sacrifice. The story also spread that religion was just a cover for their true mercenary motives – they “served the interests of world imperialism” for dollars.

After the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Law on Freedom of Religion dated 25 October 1990 entered into force, unregistered communities of Pentecostals began to legalize their activity. The Decree by the President of the Russian Federation on Measures to Exonerate Religious Ministers and Believers Victimized by Groundless Repression dated 14 March 1996 No. 378 condemned the “many years of terror unleashed by the Bolshevik Soviet Party regime against religious ministers and believers of all denominations.” All previously convicted Pentecostals were exonerated.

Anti-cultist myths used against Pentecostals in recent years essentially replicate the stereotypes of Soviet anti-religious propaganda and promote divisions in society on the basis of religion.

The strengthening of the influence of Protestantism, including that of Pentecostals, is a normal process in modern Russia. Russian Protestants are an integral part of the developing middle class. They are the ones most active and effective in social work: they help drug addicts and alcoholics return to a normal life, aid children in difficult situations – including adopting orphans. Protestants obey the law, pay taxes, engage in business, and follow Christian moral principles. They are conscientious workers. They do not drink or smoke.

A noteworthy event was the election on 18 March 2012 of a Protestant mayor in the city of Tolyatti. The majority of voters (in the second round – about 57 percent) cast their ballot for Sergey Igorevich Andreyev, who did not hide his affiliation with Protestantism, despite the “anti-sect” campaign launched by his opponents.

It is high time for decisive measures to be taken to normalize relations between the State and Protestants, including organizing regular meetings of the leaders of the country with the Advisory Committee of the Leaders of the Protestant Church in Russia.

Jehovah's Witnesses – A Priority in the “Fight Against Extremism”

Jehovah's Witnesses are one of the later movements in Protestantism, appearing in the United States in 1870. They first appeared in Russia at the end of the 19th century; in Finland they received official recognition in 1913, which at the time was part of the Russian Empire.

Jehovah's Witnesses experienced severe repression in the U.S.S.R. Leaders in the communities and active preachers were sentenced to long prison terms. Believers and members of their families were deported to Siberia.

For example, in 1949 all Jehovah's Witnesses who were discovered by the authorities in Moldova and who refused to renounce their faith were deported to Siberia and the Far East. In 1951, all Jehovah's Witnesses known to the authorities in Western Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia who maintained integrity to their beliefs were deported to Siberia (over 8,500 persons).

In 1965, Jehovah's Witnesses were released from exile in Siberia; however their religious communities in the U.S.S.R. were not permitted to register. Repression of the believers continued until the beginning of 1991.

Jehovah's Witnesses received official recognition in Russia on 27 March 1991. In accordance with the Federal Law on Exoneration of Victims of Political Repression dated 18 October 1991 No 1761-1 and the Decree by the President of the Russian Federation on Measures to Exonerate Religious Ministers and Believers Victimized by Groundless Repression dated 14 March 1996 No. 378, all Jehovah's Witnesses persecuted under the Soviet regime were exonerated and declared victims of political repression.

Accusations of extremism were brought against Jehovah's Witnesses and their religious literature starting in 2009. In the last few years, on their official website "Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia" (<http://www.jw-russia.org/>), there is a steady stream of news releases and documents regarding new criminal and civil cases, court proceedings, searches, and detainments of believers. Certain publications have been declared extremist materials.

A person unfamiliar with the preaching of Jehovah's Witnesses may wonder if they are a dangerous terrorist organization, posing no less a threat than al-Qaeda.

As a religious studies expert, having defended in 2002 my doctoral dissertation on the evolution and activity of the religious organization of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia and having continued to acquaint myself with their publications, I can affirm that Jehovah's Witnesses do not take up arms and that they reject violence. There is no extremism in their teachings, but there is the firm conviction that their religion is the only true one.

Obviously, if you declare extremist religious publications in which a religious organization claims their religion is the true one and other religions have strayed from the truth, then almost all religious literature, including the holy writings of world religions, would be declared extremist.

There is something else that is obvious. If neither Hitler nor Stalin could destroy the religious organization of Jehovah's Witnesses, then even more so modern Russian anti-cultists cannot. The history of Jehovah's Witnesses irrefutably proves that they cannot be intimidated by false accusations of extremism, fines, or criminal cases.

I believe that the centralized religious organization that numbers around 200,000 members in Russia merits more objective and benevolent treatment by the state. I recommend that persons responsible for decisions in the field of politics relating to religious

associations personally visit the Administrative Center of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia located in Saint Petersburg. See the exhibit dedicated to the history of the organization. Speak with the workers there, and you will see they are not extremists but law-abiding persons convinced that their religion is the true religion. Meet with the administration of Jehovah's Witnesses and try to reach an agreement on how to avoid conflicts and settle differences.

There is something else that is obvious. If neither Hitler nor Stalin could destroy the religious organization of Jehovah's Witnesses, then even more so modern Russian anti-cultists cannot. The history of Jehovah's Witnesses irrefutably proves that they cannot be intimidated by false accusations of extremism, fines, or criminal cases.

I believe that the centralized religious organization that numbers around 200,000 members in Russia merits more objective and benevolent treatment by the state. I recommend that persons responsible for decisions in the field of politics relating to religious associations personally visit the Administrative Center of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia located in Saint Petersburg. See the exhibit dedicated to the history of the organization. Speak with the workers there, and you will see they are not extremists but law-abiding persons convinced that their religion is the true religion. Meet with the administration of Jehovah's Witnesses and try to reach an agreement on how to avoid conflicts and settle differences.

*Is There Any Extremism
in The Church of Scientology
and L. Ron Hubbard's Works?*

The Church of Scientology is one of the few religious organizations, that don't deny the verity of other religions. The idea of God as of the urge of Man towards existence in the form of infinity enables Scientology to overcome contradictions between different conceptions of Superior Reality, characteristic of religious thought.

In Scientology they suppose, that, along with his spiritual growth, every man comes to his own, growing more profound, comprehension of God, and also to his communication with Supreme Being. Moreover, a Scientology Church member may be at the same time a Christian, a Muslim, a Buddhist, a Hebrew or may have other religious convictions. If we take the statistics all over the world, then among Scientologists, according to their own data, besides 24% of Scientology Church members, having no other religious convictions besides dedication to Scientology, 26% are Catholics, 27% are Protestants, 5% are Hebrews, 1% are the followers of Buddhism or Hinduism.

Scientologists declare proudly, that this religion, having emerged in 1954, is the most fast-growing religious organization in the world. That's why the lack of claims on the verity of their religion alone doesn't save the Church of Scientology from extremism charges. The true reason of aggressive attacks of anti-cultists, aimed at the Church of Scientology, is the dynamic growth in number of followers of Scientology all over the World, including Russia as well.

According to A. Dvorkin's convictions, any materials by L. Ron Hubbard are extremist and dangerous; if one achieves the

prohibition of Hubbard's works, then the activity of the Church of Scientology will become impossible without them.

Anti-cultists are not daunted by the fact, that, in accordance with the reckoning available, over ten thousand of published works, describing the doctrine and technology of Scientology, including dozens of books, thousands of articles and over 3 thousand of recorded lectures, belong to L. Ron Hubbard. That's why it's not so easy to declare them extremist. Besides, Hubbard is known as a fiction writer. Can even literary works by Hubbard, including his fiction novels, really be extremist too, according to anti-cultists' conviction?

Of late years in Russia constantly, but with various results, the trials are going about admission of one or another of Hubbard's works as extremist materials.

So, in Surgut (Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area) on March 26, 2010 the city court made a decision to declare 29 works by Ron Hubbard "extremist". On October 12, 2010 the court of Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area rescinded the decision of Surgut city court of March 26, 2010, sent the case for retrial to the same first instance court with differently constituted bench. On December 9, 2010 Surgut city court rejected the claim of the public prosecutor's office for declaration of 29 works by Ron Hubbard "extremist". Scientologists pushed the removing of those 29 texts out of the Federal list of extremist matters.

In Novy Urengoy (Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Area of Tyumen Region), in 2011 the court has non-suited the claim of the public prosecutor's office for declaration of Hubbard's biography the extremist matter.

On August 24, 2011 the court of Naberezhnye Chelny (Republic of Tatarstan) declared 13 works, 3 thousand pages of printed text in size, and 63 hours of recorded lectures extremist matters. No one of Scientologists has been informed about the trial, and from the court record it became known, that the proceeding, in the course of

which the matters were considered by the prosecutor and the judge, took only twenty-five minutes. Probably, such efficiency is worthy entering in The Guinness Book of Records – the yearbook of world records, including the most funny and extravagant achievements.

On March 19, 2012 the Supreme Court of Republic of Tatarstan reversed the judgment of the city court of Naberezhnye Chelny, according to which 13 works by Ron Hubbard were declared extremist.

Just adjudications, delivered in the number of regions, are remarkable: they indicate, that the triumph of legality and common sense in the processes for declaration of pious literature extremist matters is possible.

Otherwise, passing of unfair judgments is also going on. For example, on June 29, 2011 the city court of Schelkovo (Moscow Region), in accordance with the claim of city prosecutor, declared 9 books and 9 audio-lectures by Ron Hubbard extremist matters. On March 20, 2012 Moscow regional court left without revision this decision of the city court of Shchelkovo. In connection with this judgment at law the books and audio-lectures by Ron Hubbard will be included in the Federal list of extremist matters and their dissemination on the territory of Russian Federation will be prohibited.

The city prosecutor of Schelkovo stated, that Hubbard's doctrine absolutely doesn't correspond to the mentality and lifestyle of Russian citizens, and the study programs, publications, audio and video editions on Scientology "undermine traditional spiritual basics of life on the territory of Russian Federation".

From the religious expert's point of view, the doctrine, which absolutely doesn't correspond to the mentality and lifestyle of Russian citizens, has no chance to acquire any followers on the territory of Russia. All the more, it can't constitute any real danger for "traditional spiritual basics".

So, what did the city court of Schelkovo find in the works by Hubbard, that is extremist? In accordance with the conclusions of the complex psycholinguistic research, on which the court decision was based, the books and booklets by Hubbard “are aimed at the formation of isolated social group, which is the Church of Scientology, the members of which are being trained in perfect functioning. This literature contains appeals to execution of extremist activity, the information in these materials is aimed at the destruction of social groups, different from the Church of Scientology”.

One may agree that the members of the Church of Scientology are being trained in perfect functioning. In fact, the most serious consideration is given by Scientologists to the staff training. The other statements are false.

Neither the Church of Scientology nor the community of Scientologists has indications of “isolated social group”. The Church of Scientology is open for visitors; people of miscellaneous social, professional and ethnic belonging may be and become its members. A man “from the street” may come to the Church of Scientology and take part in a divine service, in “Life Improvement Courses” and other programs.

The Church of Scientology is interested in the most widespread dissemination of its ideas, Scientologists least of all resemble “isolated group”. They appreciate communication very much and try to take advantage of any chance to get into communication with miscellaneous people, with social, professional and other groups.

As of the expert’s statement, as if Hubbard’s works are aimed at the destruction of social groups, different from the Church of Scientology, it runs counter to the real contents of Hubbard’s works and the doctrine of Scientology. The essence of Scientology is in the doctrine, that it has the tools (practical methods), capable to ensure spiritual growth of personality, to consolidate social groups,

to make their activity really effective, and also to resolve global problems, facing Mankind.

How thoroughly the expert's conclusions are backed with arguments and facts?

According to the assessment of the prominent lawyer Galina Krylova, "public prosecutor's office ordered and got the research of the four books (about 3500 pages) to the sector of psycholinguistics of the Institute of linguistics of Russian Academy of Science. In this resolution on 14 pages in a large type the "research" occupied only 3 pages; the rest – quotations from the law, the citation and other formalities. Then, since the prosecutor claimed to declare "extremist" nine books and nine audio-lectures (about 6000 pages and 10 hours of listening), he addressed the same expert again. The new resolution of the chief of the sector, Professor E.F. Tarasov literally duplicated the previous one, except for the extension of the list of objects. And it fitted into 14 pages as well. Small rain lays great dust... And now imagine the research of over 6000 pages, written on 3 pages. Try just to quote one extract out of each title (9 books and 9 audio-lectures) to reason the conclusions by E.F. Tarasov, that every book and lecture he examined "instigates hatred and hostility,... humiliates the self-respect of personality or group according to their sex, race, nationality, language, birth, relation to religion, and also their belonging to a social group"... Of course, there were no such things in this resolution. But, if the expert draws conclusions like that, he must answer intelligibly such elementary questions. Keep in mind, I do not touch upon the methods and so forth. In any way, the compliance of expert must be somewhat limited" (<http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=news&id=87756>).

A. Dvorkin welcomed the decisions of the city court of Schelkovo and of Moscow regional court, but expressed regret for the fact, that they can't interfere considerably the Scientologists' activity. He expressed firm conviction that Scientologists "will appeal against

Moscow regional court decision and will sue to all instances up to European Court of Human Rights". The Church of Scientology "will litigate till the end, – there is no alternative here. But, in spite of the further plans of the sect, the court decision is valid in law all over the territory of Russian Federation till it is repealed... One must be ready for the considerably serious extra-national pressure, which, in connection to this case, Russia will suffer," – said the leading Russian sect-expert.

As Winston Churchill (1874–1965) would say about a man of such kind, "he comes into the truth at times, but then, as a rule, jumps up and cheerfully keeps going". In this case, one may agree with A.Dvorkin, that court proceedings will continue and, finally, the decision about the declaration Hubbard's works extremist matters will be repealed. It is also right, that Scientologists won't be idle, but will keep on acting vigorously. Scientologists have already made complaints to the Supreme Court of Russian Federation and European Court of Human Rights against the decision of the city court of Schelkovo.

The reasons, that make it possible for Scientologists to grow and develop dynamically in spite of the duress they suffer, are considered by one of the "veterans" of the Church of Scientology in his interview.

Scientology: Dynamic Growth despite Attacks

The interview with Vladimir Kuropyatnik (Moscow)

1. Question: The word Scientology means “knowing how to know”; it comes from the Latin scio, meaning “knowing in the fullest sense of the word” and the Greek logos, that means “study of”. How can a name like that concern religion? This could be a name of a scientific subject or of a philosophic doctrine. Many countries have recognized Scientology as a religion, but there are some skeptics, who deny its religious status. If Scientology is really a religion, then what is the God its followers believe in?

Answer: Scientology is a new word that was invented by Ron Hubbard and became the name of a dynamically progressing religion. As Scientology spread over the world, they began to interpret this word as the name of a new religion and perceive it as a religious one. There is a profound significance in the fact that the word Scientology has something in common with the English (now international) word science. In Scientology science and religion have at last become “friends”. Many phenomena, that are traditionally thought of as supernatural and are taken as something beyond the grasp of the mind, were explained scientifically and proved experimentally in Scientology. Everybody should come to the comprehension of God by himself. The founder of Scientology Ron Hubbard has shown the way, which may lead you to comprehension of God. Scientologists follow it. It is a significant work at oneself, at one’s own spiritual improvement. No one in Scientology imposes his own idea of God on anybody. A Scientologist can believe in God in a way, as it is assumed in some or other of the known religions. Moreover, a Scientologist, according to his convictions, may be a follower of any religion and of course – may believe in God that is dear to him. And he will find the

way to his God in Scientology. I know personally some Scientologists that are also the followers of other religions. Some of them are Muslims, one woman is a Buddhist (she has built a Buddhist temple in her city at her own expense), two of them are the members of Protestant confessions and some are the Orthodox Christians. Once, in a Church of Scientology of New-York I've met a staff member, who was a Jew. He worked in the church in the evening and trained to be a rabbi in the daytime.

2. Question: Scientology is a relatively new religion that demonstrates the most high growth rates, as compared with the other religions, the traditional as well as the new ones. What is the source, the driving force of this dynamic growth of Scientology?

Answer: Scientology has some special features that make it very attractive for modern man. Scientology doesn't lead man away from society, but makes him more effective in the society he lives in and more able to influence this society. So the more advanced in spiritual growth a Scientologist is, the more successful he is in the worldly life.

Another peculiarity: if you don't want to wait for your death to find oneself in Paradise, so you needn't! You may start creating a "paradise" in one family, in one firm. Scientologists do this quite naturally. This is a part of their philosophy. And they begin with the state of their own soul, all the rest adjusts to it. Scientology was created by our contemporary, so Scientology speaks to people their language. There are no mystic or odd rites in it, not any exotic garments. If one comes today in the Church of Scientology, he may see there many up-to-date, beautiful people, vividly talking to each other and laughing. Life is in full swing in the Church. This may attract modern man.

I think if people wouldn't get in the Church something they've come for, the Church would soon become empty. And none of the advertising, none of the missionary work would save the situation. And otherwise, if people get in the Church something they've sought for and even more, then none of anti-cult propaganda, none of repressions can overwhelm such a Church or stop its growth.

3. Question: You were at the source of the Church of Scientology in Moscow – the first religious organization, registered by Scientologists in Russia in 1994. Eighteen years have gone by, there were attempts in Russia to register other Scientology organizations, but success still did not crown these efforts. Why does the growth of Scientology meet in Russia, as well as in some other countries, such a furious resistance? What can Scientologists oppose to the rejection on the part of the bodies of state power and the heads of a number of religious organizations?

Answer: There are a few reasons. Were you on the watch of your state's security, how would you react at the emergence on your territory of a well-organized group dozens of thousands strong and expanding rapidly, being ruled from abroad, moreover – from the USA? You'd probably become anxious about it. You would try to find, what the group is like and what its aims are. And, having sorted it out, you'd settle down and start to help this group, because its aim is "a civilization without insanity, without criminals and without war, where the able can prosper and honest beings can have rights, and where Man is free to rise to greater heights"¹. You also would look at the special Scientology programs and find, that these programs (against drug addiction, against crime, against moral decay etc.) deserve all kinds of support.

It is easy to find all this. So, why those, who attack Scientologists, don't see the evident things? I think, they do. Simply they have different, the opposite goals, and Scientologists are as a bur in the throat for them. There is one more category of anti-scientologists. These are paranoiacs, figuratively speaking. They look at white and see black. I've been communicating with people like that. They serve in fierce structures and seem to find a suspect in everybody by virtue of office.

To resist the pressure Scientologists should simply do what they are doing better and on a broader scale. And they are doing very

¹ <http://iasrus.ru/target.html>

important and extremely essential for society things, coming closer day by day to the goal, that Hubbard had formulated for Scientology as early as in 1950-s and that I've cited above.

4. Question: Have you ever encountered the manifestations of intolerance? Have you communicated to militant anti-cultists? What is the reason of their hostility to Scientology? Is there something alike to totalitarian political systems (Nazism, Stalinism) in the ideological aims of modern anti-cultism? Has Scientology potential enough to successfully resist anti-cultism and to protect freedom of conscience?

Answer: More often I've encountered the fear of officials and heads of mass media of anti-cultists to give them the shakedown if anti-cultists notice that they help Scientologists. A typical excuse: "Nothing personal, but you do understand..." And they mean they will have troubles, because they co-operate the wrong church. No matter, how many people would benefit of this cooperation, how many families would become happier, how many people would be saved. Personally I didn't practically ever encounter with anti-cultists slam-bang. The closest communication with them took place during the search in my organization in August of 2010. Not a great pleasure, I should say! They were officers of law-enforcement authorities. The impression was, that besides the search itself their task was to humiliate and to insult as much as possible those, whose organization they were searching. I don't know whether they were assigned with this task or it was their personal fervor.

When communicating with them, a historical analogy occurred unintentionally: fascists, you know, also actively fought sects. In this struggle they also cooperated with the title church, for them it was the United Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Germany (UELCG).

The most odious Russian anti-cultist Dvorkin keeps a list of sects. A list like that was kept also by fascists. In 1935–1941 they published the list of prohibited sects. In this list there are many of those, which Dvorkin tries to prohibit nowadays. In 1938 SS published the "Guide on Struggle against Sects". Dvorkin also publishes guides like that.

That SS guide in itself contains ideas, the majority of which Dvorkin uses in his activity till now.

A certain Walter Kunnet, a clergyman of UELCG, opened an apologetic center that fought against sects and actively cooperated with Gestapo, providing them with data on sects. It is alike Dvorkin is doing nowadays.

I remember one curious incident, demonstrating, that data are provided evidently in both directions. I was in charge of the Church of Scientology of Moscow. Someone of my staff-members has visited a meeting with the representatives of the Unification church and brought a big photo album – the biography of the founder of the church. I thought that it would be nice to establish some kind of communication with that man and wrote him a letter. I sent it by post. But in some time I've seen this letter, scanned, on Dvorkin's site! It never reached the target.

We realize fully, that we won't have hothouse conditions for growth. But which of the young religions had them? Everybody, apparently, has to go through this. Whatever the difficulties are, we always defend freedom of conscience for everybody. We believe that it's the only way to overcome xenophobia and totalitarianism in ideology. I wish to cite here the statement of the president of Helsinki Group of Moscow Lyudmila Alexeyeva, which she said on the event of opening the new Church building: "Your church is noticeable of special commitment to upholding the freedom of belief not only for your churchmen, but for all the believers, whatever religion they belong to"¹.

5. Question: You are the first in Russia member of International Association of Scientologists, who was awarded with the Freedom Medal in 1996. The laureates of the Freedom Medal of MAS are people, who contribute a great deal in the cause of religious freedom and devote their activity to the attainment of goals of Scientology

¹ <http://www.scientologynews.org/press-releases/grand-opening-scientology-ideal-organization-opens-moscow.html?locale=ru>

in society¹. What do you consider your main achievements in the upholding the freedom of belief and the attainment of goals, sought by Scientologists? Have you had any failures on this thorny path? Don't you regret that you became a Scientologist? Do your family and friends support your choice?

Answer: I have one more status that I'm not less proud of: I'm the first Scientology minister in Russia. I had the good fortune to be among those, who started the "explosive" dissemination of Dianetics and Scientology in Russia in the mid 90's. There is a documentary film about this period of my activity, which you may watch in the information center of the Moscow Church of Scientology, on Taganskaya Street, 9. The film tells what I was awarded for.

Almost every man believes in his soul, that he is something major then just a body. He has dim guesses in this respect. But he doesn't know exactly: who is he? Why is he here? How did he get here? What are his true abilities? How to regain them? And so on, and so forth. You must admit, that these are not any abstract questions. They may be major philosophic questions! Man wanders in the dark, not knowing the answers. Even worse than that, he drags out a miserable, slavery existence. The fact, that he is not aware of it, doesn't mean that the problem doesn't exist. Scientology gives man a chance to come out of this state and to take the road to spiritual freedom. I consider my major achievement, that with my help many thousands of people got to know Scientology and so got a chance. Of course, there were failures and mistakes. It's life! But the fact, that successive and proper actions were much more, warms the cockles of my heart! It can't be otherwise, or we had no progress in our dissemination.

To ask a Scientologist, whether he regrets that he has become a Scientologist, is just the same as to ask a stout man, having become slim, whether he regrets that he became slim! Or to ask a blind man, who has regained eyesight, whether he regrets that he became

¹ <http://www.scientology.org.ru/html/part06/chp24/pg0416.html>

sighted! They often say that life is a game. And it's true! I'd call Scientology a mega game. It's the most exciting game I can imagine.

My wife is the dearest of all people to me. She is also a Scientologist. She is engaged professionally in programs, aimed at the anti-drug effort, crime control, moral decay of society, and also at the assistance in the area of education.

6. Question: What would you say to the question why Russian authorities and already established in Russia religious organizations shouldn't apprehend the dissemination of Scientology? What can Scientologists suggest to resolve the most actual and critical problems in Russian society? What is the use of Scientology for a concrete Russian citizen?

Answer: To answer this question fully one had to publish a separate book! By the way, we have such a book. It is entitled *What is Scientology?* Evidently, because of this (because it contains the answers to your questions!) it is now prohibited as extremist!¹ The ban, of course, is temporary. Sooner or later, the truth always prevails over the lie.

Russia, for a long time and for the present to no effect, tries to combat corruption. Even the President has proclaimed struggle against corruption one of the priorities of his work². But things are still where they started. A friend of mine from Novosibirsk some years ago tried to establish an All-Russian public organization of business owners, who don't bribe, don't pay kickbacks (do you remember the dialogue between Putin and Makarevitch on this subject?), pay all the taxes and pay wages only legally. She didn't manage. She couldn't find any enthusiasts! The business owners had a whole lot of reasons

¹ <http://www.scientologyfacts.ru/?show=news&id=77>

² A federal statute of December 25, 2008 №273-FS *On the Countermeasures against Corruption*, National Strategy of Struggle against Corruption and National Plan of Struggle against Corruption for 2010-2011 were passed (upheld by the decree of the President of Russian Federation on April 13, 2010 №460), and the Plan of Struggle against Corruption for 2012-2013 (upheld by the decree of the President of Russian Federation on March 13, 2012 №297).

why they couldn't undertake such obligations now. Alongside with this, for many years already, there is a business community among Scientologists, who live just according to these rules! There are more than a thousand of members in this community (by the way, it's the major independent association of business owners in Russia), and not by a long shot all of them are Scientologists. But it was established by Scientologists. It is called "WISE CIS"¹. I've been heading it for twelve years, so I know the subject. A Scientologist, because of his religious beliefs, can't conduct his business otherwise. Or his spiritual progress will stop.

There is one more interesting problem, for which Scientologists have found a solution, and they are ready to share this solution with everybody. This is a problem of arguments between business owners. Two business owners once have come to an agreement about something. And then it turns out, that they really haven't, or the old agreement seems to one of them unfair, or each of them interprets it in his own way. A conflict, and sometimes even a war, occurs. Friends become enemies. Such situations constantly occur in business, deflecting attention away from production, demanding a lot of energy and huge resources. Experts rack their brains, trying to find a way of solve the conflict in such a way, that both sides would be satisfied.

In WISE such a way is found and is long ago in use. You have not to bribe to the judges for they would settle an argument in your favor. By virtue of the technology for settlement of dispute, used by Scientologists, a business owner not only handles his situation, but repairs communication and often even friendly terms with the man he had argued with before.

One more instrument for the solution of the corruption problem is a simple and clear moral code, that is impossible to controvert and that everybody can follow. Ron Hubbard has especially made it

¹ For more details see Ivanenko S.I. *Scientology and Business*, - SPb: *Tree of Life* publishing, 2011. – p.152.

irreligious, for it may be used by the followers of any religion, as well as by atheists. This code is set out in a small book, entitled *The Way to Happiness*. Here are the titles of its chapters:

1. Take Care of Yourself
2. Be Temperate
3. Don't be Promiscuous
4. Love and Help Children
5. Honor and Help Your Parents
6. Set a Good Example
7. Seek to Live with the Truth
8. Do Not Murder
9. Don't Do Anything Illegal
10. Support a Government
11. Do Not Harm a Person of Good Will
12. Safeguard and Improve Your Environment
13. Do Not Steal
14. Be Worthy of Trust
15. Fulfill Your Obligations
16. Be Industrious
17. Be Competent
18. Respect the Religious Beliefs of Others
19. Try Not to Do Things to Others that You Would Not Like Them to Do to You
20. Try to Treat Others as You Would Want Them to Treat You
21. Flourish and Prosper

For popularization of each of these principles thirty-second reels of social advertising have been produced, and they've already won a set of professional awards. There are teacher's methodological guides that help to foster children in the atmosphere of these principles. There are also methodological guides for introduction of these principles in commercial and state structures. All of these, of course, don't lie on the shelves waiting for something. Scientologists are using these tools actively as far as possible. And in the countries, where

these programs got government assistance, results are visible in the nationwide upswing¹.

Generally speaking, any of the critical problems, that Russian society is facing with nowadays, has its answer in Scientology. I've cited corruption just as an example. It is significant to note, that it is not necessary for a man to become a Scientologist to use the tools Scientologists have.

I'll cite some more problems, in resolution of which Scientologists are experts. First of all, it's the sphere of mental health. I'll stress, not mental disorders, but mental health! That is how to make a sane man saner! We haven't got accustomed to look at this aspect. More often we look at the scale from "normal" and down. And what about looking upwards? It turns out, that there is no limit! The steps of this scale are described in Scientology, and people come upstairs, getting rid of various problems and gaining new strength and abilities with each step.

Let's take such a social problem as drug addiction. It is known, that it is easier to prevent a disease, than to cure it. Scientologists pay great attention to the prevention of drug addiction. The most interesting and the most effective lectures for teenagers about drugs are delivered by Scientologists. For example, one of such lectures, and delivered in Russian, was shown by 28 TV channels of Ukraine, including the national ones, more than 120 times! Several departments and offices of the country at a time recommended this lecture for use in the activity with young people². Besides the lectures, Scientologists use in their preventive activity 16 high-professional reels of social advertising and a documentary *The Truth about Drugs*.

A special brochure on each of the widespread drugs was developed. These brochures are handed out in night clubs, cinemas, schools and other places, where young people gather. And to those involved professionally in the activity with young people, they send

¹ <http://ru.thewaytohappiness.org/programs/programs-and-results.html>

² <http://marinagribanova.com/voprosy-i-otvety/otzy-vy-gosudarstvenny-h-organov/>

educational sets, which include, besides the matters I've mentioned above, a methodological guide with the program¹.

For those, who hadn't escaped the misfortune, there is a set of rehabilitation centers "Narconon"². Over 70% of their graduates never return to drugs again. It's a record performance. In "Narconon" they don't use medicinal methods of treatment and hypnotism. The basis of their methodology is the program of detoxication of the body, developed by Ron Hubbard. This program has another application: it is the only known program today that helps to remove radiation out of the body, and all this in few weeks!

The whole world knows the movement of Scientology volunteer ministers³. They are volunteers, who, using their knowledge and skills, got in Scientology, help the victims and the rescuers in zones of cataclysms and natural disasters.

They worked after the earthquake in Sakhalin, and after the act of terror on Dubrovka, and after the flood in Krymsk. During the last 30 years Scientology volunteer ministers helped to eliminate the consequences of 128 major cataclysms in the world (including the explosion of the twin-towers in New-York and tsunami in Haiti).

I shall not retell the entire book I've mentioned at the beginning of my answer. I think that the readers soon will have the chance to leaf it over themselves and find more information about the solutions Scientologists have for the problems in education, in rehabilitation of criminals and delinquency prevention, in international relations, in human rights, in family relations and in many other spheres.

I want to conclude with Hubbard's words: "Governments need Scientologists much more, than it seems to them"⁴.

¹ <http://ru.drugfreeworld.org/takeaction/anti-drug-education-package-details.html>

² <http://www.narconon-standard.ru/>

³ <http://ru.volunteerministers.org/#/tent/nav-disaster>

⁴ *L. Ron Hubbard Series. Humanitarian. Rehabilitating a Drugged Society.* - Copenhagen : New Era Publications International ApS, 2012. - p. 18.

*Interview with a Jurist Aydar Sultanov
(city of Nizhnekamsk of the Republic of Tatarstan)*

1. Question: Among other claimants, you have addressed the European Court on Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg (complaints №76836/01 and №32782/03 by Eugeny Kimlya, Aydar Sultanov and the Church of Scientology in Nizhnekamsk against Russia) and won. Could you briefly describe the essence of the matter?

Answer: A number of Russian citizens, having found Dianetics and Scientology useful for themselves, decided to unite and form a religious community as a legal person in the capacity of a public or religious community.

This group of citizens was at first refused in registration of the community they established in the capacity of a public association, having been point at the religious character of Scientology. Since the state registration in the capacity of a public association documents were submitted, the registry has not been executing any operations for a long time. And then, informed that it is necessary to make a religious examination, having explained at the same time, that the body of religious examination in Tatarstan was not established yet.

So far as a whole lot of examinations on Scientology were made in various countries, it didn't take a lot of effort to make them available for the Registration Chamber with the claim to speed up the state registration. The human rights ombudsman in the Republic of Tatarstan has considered the delay in the state registration unconstitutional. The Registration Chamber rejected a state registration, motivating it by the fact, that the council for religious affairs under the Cabinet of Ministers in the Republic of

Tatarstan has not made a religious examination. That is, Russian citizens were accused of inactivity of the state department.

Of cause, such a “ridiculous” rejection was protested in the court, but at first the court dismissed the complaint. The Supreme Court of the Republic of Tatarstan reversed this judicial decision and administered the retrial. Then there were a new reject and a new reverse. Finally, on May, 28, 2002 the court answered our claim and admitted the rejection in registration of the religious organization “The Church of Scientology of Nizhnekamsk” illegal. The decision was appealed by the prosecutor, but confirmed and became obligatory for all public authorities on July, 4, 2002.

But since 01.07.2002 the authority to state registration were passed on to the Agency of Ministry of Justice of RF in the Republic of Tatarstan, which concluded, that so as the registration was denied by another body, then they must not satisfy the court decision. When the unsatisfied judgment was appeal by us, the Agency of Ministry of Justice instantly wrote a message to the President of the Supreme Court of Republic of Tatarstan with the request to repeal the court decision in the order of supervision and to suspend the execution of the court decision. The Supreme Court of Republic of Tatarstan answered the request of the Agency of Ministry of Justice and on November 27, 2002 repealed the court decision, having pointed, that it's still necessary to make the examination.

On November 28, 2002 a public religious-expert's examination took place, that established, that “‘The Church of Scientology of Nizhnekamsk’ meets the criteria of a religious doctrine. The data supplied, concerning the basics of the religious doctrine and the practices appropriate of ‘The Church of Scientology of Nizhnekamsk’ are valid.”

After the receipt of the results of the religious examination the registration units have thought of the opportunity to shelve the documents of a religious organization in connection with the

absence of a document of 15-year existence, and while the new consideration of the case the courts considered the refusal of registration to be valid, as the certificate of 15-year existence of the organization, issued by a local body, was not provided. One might get upset, of course, if it were not for the curiosity of the situation: on the moment of the refusal there were no actually any local bodies in Tatarstan.

We had to appeal the ECHR.

2. Question: On October 1, 2009 ECHR stated in its resolution, that Scientologists' rights were violated, and the respondent state is liable to pay compensation to the claimants. What are the consequences of this resolution?

Answer: It is always nice, when truth wins, when justice triumphs. When right things occur in life, you feel something like "renaissance" of belief in the possibility of the improvement of the world. The more so because, that each decision of ECHR influences directly 47 member nations of the Council of Europe, raising the standards of the protection of human rights on the higher level.

The decision by ECHR on the case "Kimlya at alias against Russia" of 01.10.2009 has become precedential. It is referred to by ECHR itself in its decisions and by the Constitutional Court of Russian Federation. In September of 2010 Ministry of Justice of Russia has distributed to its departments the instruction not to apply "the rule of 15 years".

That is, by having protected our rights, we assured the protection of rights in the area of freedom of conscience and freedom of association for everybody.

3. Question: What personally for you meant in practice to be a claimant in a case, considered by ECHR?

Answer: Certainly, when appealing final judicial authorities, you feel higher responsibility, than when appealing any other judicial authorities. Legal effect of final judicial authorities' verdicts

is far wider, than that one of first or second instance court, and the decision of ECHR influences 800 millions of inhabitants of Council of Europe countries.

The appeal to ECHR alone in our situation was just the evidence of slippage of human rights' procedures in Russia. We had no right to give in to the mistakes of judicial enforcement. Because you know, a well-known German lawyer Rudolf Ihering¹ is absolutely right to have written, that "struggle for right is a duty of the entitled regarding oneself".

Protection of human rights meets the regulations of the Scientologist's Code, which has the following items:

To support true humanitarian endeavors in the fields of human rights.

To embrace the policy of equal justice for all.

To work for freedom of speech in the world.

To actively decry the suppression of knowledge, wisdom, philosophy or data which would help Mankind.

To support the freedom of religion.

4. Question: What do you think are the true reasons for refusal in registration of the Church of Scientology of Nizhnekamsk on the part of the bodies of power?

Answer: The reason of the refusal, to my mind, is the lack of trustworthy information on Scientology. Any actions, taken on the basis of false information will result in mistakes, it's an axiom. There are people, calling themselves sect-experts, who are so radically set against other religions, that they readily believe all sort of rumors, collect and spread them, "foaming at the mouth". And with sincere belief and obsession, resembling sometimes Know-nothing (a hero of Nosov's tale), who imagined, that the Sun is falling down and himself believed it sincerely, having caused panic and fallen himself a victim of this panic.

¹ Rudolf Ihering (von Ihering, 1818-1892) – a famous German jurist.

Of course, the government mustn't act on the basis of false, preconceived data. There must be enough sense to realize the necessity of making decisions solely on the basis of true data.

It's not too difficult to get trustworthy data. Thus, in Kirgizia, before making the decision about the registration of the Church of Scientology, they have sent a special delegation in USA, where Scientology has come into being, to watch how the Church of Scientology functions and to get the information from the state structures of the country, where Scientology is known for a long time.

5. Question: Is the Church of Scientology in Nizhnekamsk working in spite of refusals in registration? Is the number of its followers growing?

Answer: The right of views dissemination doesn't depend on the grant or non-grant to a civil community of legal right. If an idea contains truth, it will make its way through no matter what and become known, even though someone doesn't wish to know this idea. It is impossible to suppress ideas; the truth always prevails, because the lie is merely distortion of the truth. If an idea contains lie in itself, then it will give to the truth, no matter how much time it takes. But, of course, one would always like the triumph of truth and justice to come as soon as possible. The lack of state registration, surely, is a discomfort for religious community in its work, but nobody can stop citizens, who wish to share truth and wish to help their family and friends. The church of Scientology in Nizhnekamsk is working as a religious group, and so far as Scientology is effective, no wonder that the number of its followers grows and, I'm sure, will grow on.

6. Question: In 2012 in Moscow you have published the book *European legal standards, historical lessons and law enforcement practice*. You have quite a number of other substantial published works. As a lower, analyzing the problems of international and Russian legislation on the freedom of conscience and the activities

of religious communities, how would you estimate the situation with observance of believers' rights to freedom of conscience in Russia, including the right to registration of religious communities? What is reasonable to take for international standards of observance of religious minorities' rights become really applicable in our country?

Answer: To my mind, the reason of violence against human rights and freedoms in the scope of freedom of thought, conscience and beliefs is on the one hand in the lack of understanding of nature and significance of these freedoms, and on the other hand in burden with the long life in totalitarian society, where the state pursued the "policy of united ideology" and of struggle against dissidence.

There is no full understanding of these rights and freedoms by neither those, who enforce law, nor courts in our country.

That's why I wrote a book that was intended not as a narrow-professional study to be read only by some experts in the field of law. The book was written to demonstrate by obvious historical examples, that European legal standards are not something fancied by the Council of Europe or by European Court on Human Rights, but something achieved through much suffering.

I think that our society lacks education in the field of human rights.

Few of the judges, trying freedom of conscience cases, consider the fact, that freedom of conscience is the basis of democratic society.

Though as far back as at the beginning of XX century Russian professor Sergey Kotlyarevsky¹ was absolutely right, when wrote, that religious freedom was the ancestor of all "natural rights". Just the declaration of absolute religious freedom and the separation of Church and State made possible American "declarations of rights" – of separate states and of all Union – the declarations, having served as a model for the famous act of the French National Assembly, the Declaration of Human and Civil Rights of 1789.

¹ Sergey Kotlyarevsky (1873-1939) – a Russian historian, writer, legal scholar, statesman.

The solid research of the German lawyer George Hellineck¹ demonstrates that just the urge towards religious freedom caused the adoption of the Declaration of Virginia State in 1776 that influenced very much all the next declarations of human rights.

The introduction of items from Universal Declaration of Human Rights and European Human Rights and Basic Freedoms Convention into everyday practice would in fact solve the problem of abuse of rights of religious minorities and would make Russia a very attractive place for residence, and for investment expenditures.

7. Question: A number of works by the founder of Scientology L. Ron Hubbard² was included in the federal list of extremist matters (numbers 1170-1176) on the ground of the decision of 29.06.2011 of the city court of Schelkovo in Moscow region and on the determination of civil chamber of Moscow regional court of 20.03.2012.

Answer: It's not a single example. The attempts, more or less unsuccessful, to declare Ron Hubbard's works extremist were taken earlier as well and most probably will continue.

8. Question: Has the decision of the city court of Schelkovo, having found extremism in Hubbard's works, any legal ground? Do you think it's possible to put in issue on that decision in European Court on Human Rights?

Answer: To my mind, these court decisions are unlawful, pronounced by the court without examination of those books, that it declared extremist, with gross defects in process. These defects are so numerous, that only to describe them would take two dozens of

¹ George Hellineck (1851-1911) – a prominent German legal scholar.

² 1170. The information matters by L. Ron Hubbard: PTS/SP Course lectures, containing 9 tapes and one book; 1171 The book *What is Scientology?*; 1172 The book *Scientology Ideal Organizations*. AC/EC Member Hat; 1173 The book *Scientology Ideal Organizations*. The course *What is an Org?*; 1174 The book *Management Status One*; 1175 The book *Organization Executive Course Volume 0*; The book *Management Course*, Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3: <http://www.minjust.ru/nko/fedspisok>

pages. One might even write a monograph on these court decisions – “The way you mustn’t try cases: the summary of gross procedural errors, which lead to erroneous adjudication”.

The court in adjudication of the litigation on Scientology writings pretended that there was no litigation at all and tried the case in indisputable procedure, a special process, designed to protect the rights of one party. The prosecutor has seen fit to adjudicate without involvement of the Church of Scientology, and the court believed and wrote in its decision, that it doesn’t affect the rights and legitimate interests of the Church.

The absurdity of this court decision can be demonstrated in the following way: the court declared the book “What is Scientology?” extremist, but didn’t explain, why it declared this book like this; in addition to that there aren’t any reasons to classify this book like extremist edition. This book was even distributed by Interpol to its subdivisions all over the world to deliver true information about Scientology.

I think that Russian courts in this case have done everything to lose in European Court on Human Rights.

9. Question: You are employed as the head of the legal administration of the public corporation “Nizhnekamskneftehim”. How do your associates and leaders take your religious convictions, your vigorous activity in protection of freedom of conscience?

Answer: In the group I work in they appreciate professionalism first of all, the wages are paid for the well-done work, but not for convictions. Of course, they take my religious convictions with respect, as well as the convictions of others.

My belief helps me to cope with my problems, the others’ belief – with theirs. I think that place of employment is a place for teamwork, but not for religious disputes.

The fact, that I won in European Court on Human Rights, protecting my rights, was taken by my associates even with some

pride. This gave them some more certainty about my ability to protect properly the rights of the public corporation "Nizhnekamskneftehim" as well, the company, where I work since 1984.

Though even before the European Court on Human Rights I managed with my team to win significant cases in final judicial authorities: in Constitutional Court of Russian Federation¹, in Superior Arbitrage Court of Russian Federation, in the Supreme Court of Russian Federation, and even such cases, that, according to other experts' assessment, could not be won.

Did my knowledge of Scientology help me in all these? Yes, of course. To be able not to lose your heart, having got into a complex situation, and to win, you must remember, that "there can be done something about it", as Ron Hubbard wrote about the most difficult problems.

¹ The resolutions of Constitutional Court of Russian Federation on February 20, 2006 № 1-П "On the case of inspection of constitutionality of the provision of Article 336 of code of civil procedure of Russian Federation in connection with complaints by the citizens K.A. Ineshin, N.S. Nikonov and of the public corporation "Nizhnekamskneftehim" on February 5, 2007 № 2-П "On the case of inspection of constitutionality of provisions of Articles 16, 20, 112, 336, 376, 377, 380, 381, 382, 383, 387, 388 and 389 of code of civil procedure of Russian Federation in connection with the inquiry by the cabinet of ministers of Republic of Tatarstan, with the complaints of public corporations 'Nizhnekamskneftehim' and 'Hakasenergo', and the complaints by a number of citizens"; the decisions of Constitutional Court of Russian Federation on November 11, 2008 № 556-О-П "On the interpretation of the resolution of Constitutional Court of Russian Federation on February 5, 2007 № 2-П on the case of inspection of constitutionality of the provisions of Articles 16, 20, 112, 336, 376, 377, 380, 381, 382, 383, 387, 388 and 389 of code of civil procedure of Russian Federation, on January 16, 2007 № 234-О-П "On the complaint of the public corporation 'Nizhnekamskneftehim' about violations of its constitutional rights with the provisions of parts 2 and 4 of the Article 117 and part 2 of the Article 276 of Arbitral Procedure Code of Russian Federation", on March 25, 2008 № 6-П "On the case of inspection of constitutionality of part 3 of the Article 21 of Arbitral Procedure Code of Russian Federation in connection with the complaints by the close corporation 'Developers Partnership', the public corporation 'Nizhnekamskneftehim' and the public corporation 'THK-BP Holding'", on June 24, 2009 № 11-П "On the case of inspection of constitutionality of provisions of items 2 and 4 of Article 12, Articles 22.1 and 23.1 of the Law of RSFSR "On the competition and the limitation of monopolistic activity at goods markets" and of the Articles 23, 37 and 51 of the Federal Law "On the protection of Competition" in connection with the complaints by the public corporations "Gasenergoset" and "Nizhnekamskneftehim".

10. Question: You are a member of the Association on Betterment of Life and Education, that has as its goal to save the society from drug addiction, illiteracy, crime and immorality, using the methods of the improvement of the society, developed by Ron Hubbard and, as far as I know, disseminate the book *The Way to Happiness*. What did urge you, a prosperous lawyer, to do this?

Answer: In legal conflicts there are often more thorough causes than violation of legal regulations. When people communicate with each other and treat others as they would want them to treat themselves, the necessity in application of legal regulations even doesn't occur. In the remote III century B.C. the ancient Greek philosopher Crates spoke: "It's better, when people learn to act by right, than are enforced not to commit crimes...". One cannot make a man more ethical and honest only by law. So, when I have spare time, I deliver lectures on the book *The Way to Happiness*¹, written by L. Ron Hubbard. The book is very small, very easy, but it contains the fundamental principles of co-survival in a society. The book is written so that it is easily grasped and understood by any man.

I grew interested in this book, when I got to know, that having studied the course "Criminon", based on the book *The Way to Happiness*, a criminal stops to commit crimes. At first it raised doubts in me, and then as well a wish to study the book thoroughly. Well, having studied it, I saw, that a great potential is really laid in this book.

The Way to Happiness makes a man more powerful and able to avoid temptations, to solve problems and to get on well with other people, to achieve his goals legally. I deliver lectures on this book for 15 years already, and every time I discover more and more faces of this diamond, that help not only to my listeners, but also to me to become more ethical.

And to the readers, who are interested in problems of freedom of conscience, I recommend to familiarize with one of the chapters of this book, entitled *Respect the Religious Beliefs of Others*.

¹ <http://ru.thewaytohappiness.org/>

The Search for Extremism in Religious Texts of Vaishnavism – a Threat to Russian-Indian Relations

*(Court proceedings in the city of Tomsk to declare extremist
the book Bhagavad-Gītā as It Is, and the negative impact of
the proceedings on Russian-Indian relations)*

As Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin (1826-1889) stated fair enough, “there’s manners everybody’s got to keep”.

This essential principle was broken, when the municipal public prosecutor’s office of Tomsk on June 30, 2011 claimed the court for the declaration of the book by the founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness Shrila Prabhupada “Bhagavad-Gita as It Is”¹ an extremist matter.

The initiators of the trial in Tomsk supposed, that it’s enough to declare – “we do not encroach on Bhagavad-Gita² itself, but suspect in extremism one of the comments to this pious book” – and they won’t be raised claims from the majority of the followers

¹ *Bhagavad-Gita as It Is* -- the translation of the Hindu sacred volume *Bhagavad-Gita* with comments, done in 1960-s by Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (1896-1977), the founder of Vaishnavas religious organization “The International Society for Krishna Consciousness” (ISKCON). *Bhagavad-Gita as It Is* was translated into over than 80 languages and published in the number of 100 million of copies. This translation of *Bhagavad-Gita* is the most widespread beyond India and one of the most widespread in India. The first edition of *Bhagavad-Gita as It Is* was published in Russian in 1984. The next years the book was reissued repeatedly and was sold out in the number of more than million copies. According to data of the Center of Indian Research of the Institute of Oriental Studies of RAS, it’s the only widespread Russian translation of *Bhagavad-Gita*. The other, scientific interpretations, are known only to scientists, experts.

² *Bhagavad-Gita* (Sanskrit. Divine Canto) – the memorial of antique Indian Literature in Sanskrit, containing 700 verses. It is one of the most esteemed sacred texts and influences life and culture of Indian society very much. In Russia they got to know *Bhagavad-Gita* in 1788, after N.I. Novikov (1744-1818) has published it first in Russian.

of Hinduism. Only the members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, who revere Shrila Prabhupada, will rebel, but who will listen to them? Because of the strange, opposing the reality, but thorough conviction of “sect-fighters”, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness doesn’t enjoy support and esteem in India.

The real situation turned out to be absolutely different. The parliament and the government, the major political parties of India, the religious circles, the mass media regarded this trial as a grievous insult of religious feelings of Hindus, as the encroachment on the greatest object of worship – the sacred book Bhagavad-Gita. The point is, that, as real scientists and specialists in Indian culture know (but anti-cultists do not), for the follower of Hinduism to insult the authoritative comment to such a sacred book as Bhagavad-Gita means to insult the sacred book itself and all the Hindus.

The Indian leader has provided a powerful support to the Society for Krishna Consciousness, one of the authoritative religious communities of India. For the first time in the whole history of Russian-Indian relations, the anti-Russian mass protest actions were held in India. The deep indignation with the trial over Bhagavad-Gita as It Is was also expressed by the representatives of business circles.

On December 28, 2011 the Lenin’s district court of Tomsk refused to satisfy the claim of the public prosecutor’s office, but it appealed against this decision.

It was evident to all the competent experts, that, if the repeal of the decision of the Lenin’s district court of Tomsk takes place and the trial is reopened, the response of Indian society and of the leadership of Republic of India will be not less painful and sharp. Russian-Indian relations will suffer a great detriment.

On February 24-25, 2012 the All-Russian Scientific Conference ‘Bhagavad-Gita in History and in Modern Society’, organized by the

state-run university of Tomsk in collaboration with the Department of Culture of the administration of the Tomsk Region took place in Tomsk. The participants of the conference passed the resolution, signed by the 64 participants of the conference with one abstention. The resolution, particularly, told that to such religious texts as Bhagavad-Gita as It Is the notion of extremism is not applicable.

The experts, who, having no the proper scientific qualification, signed the review, in which Bhagavad-Gita as It Is was declared an extremist matter, were condemned in this resolution. Their opinion was called “non-professional, unscientific and committed”, and their “moral attitude” – unacceptable. The distrust to A. Dvorkin, as the chairman of the Council of Experts of the Public Examination under the Department of Justice of Russia, was expressed in the resolution. The necessity of “organization of independent and competent community of experts, composed of religious experts, linguists, historians, philosophers, sociologists, psychologists and jurists, capable to deliver objective, scientifically grounded conclusions”.

On March 14, 2012 a number of prominent Russian scientists addressed the president of Russia D.A. Medvedev and the Chairman of the Government of Russian Federation V.V. Putin with the open letter, calling them to take over the personal control of the trial in Tomsk. According to the judgment of the prominent scientists, the book Bhagavad-Gita as It Is represents an authentic element of true Hinduism, and the activity of the public prosecutor’s office in Tomsk not only harms considerably the reputation of science and culture of our country, but also discredit Russia in the eyes of civilized world and drives the wedge into Russian-Indian relations.

On March 21, 2012 the civil judicial board of Tomsk regional court left without amendment the decision of the court of first instance, which refused to satisfy the claim of the prosecutor.

Unfortunately, the trial, initiated by the prosecutor of Tomsk

damaged considerably the Russian-Indian relations and led to emergence of anti-Russian mood in India, never present there ever before. Let us hope, that Russian-Indian strategic partnership will bear this strength test.

To a considerable degree, moral responsibility for the damage of the reputation of Russian Federation, must share anti-cultists, having become the ideological inspirers of the trial in Tomsk.

The international scandal, provoked by the trial in Tomsk, must become the illustrative evidence of the pernicious influence, that modern anti-cultism can exert on state-confessional relations.

*Interview with Mikhail Frolov (Moscow),
jurist of the Central Religious Organization, Center of
Societies for Krishna Consciousness in Russia, and defense
representative in court proceedings in the city of Tomsk
to declare extremist the book Bhagavad-Gita as It Is an
extremist matter*

1. Question: How much proper legally is the law enforcement practice, concerning the declaration extremist of some or the other matters?

Answer: In spite of the obvious absurdity of many cases like that the declaration of matters as extremist is exercised de jure quite properly. There is fixed by law ground, there are experts, there are authorized extremism-law administrations, there is an established court practice, that confirms correctness of observance of the law, there is political will.

But the problem consists just in the fact, that formally legal proper procedure because of system defects involves absurd. The law without clear definition of the notion "extremism", the absence of generally accepted methods of its exposure, the absence of powerful and independent court system and the orientation of law-enforcement authorities on execution of plan, and not on the real protection of civic rights create favorable conditions for flourishing of just vicious enforcement.

To me, as to many other lawyers, are obvious some system defects of formed practice of declaration of matters as extremist.

First of all, an independent and powerful court system hadn't formed yet in our country. In the enforcement authorities the tendency prevails to work not for the real result, but for the ensuring of high statistics, of advantageous reports. As a result, in most cases,

concerning the declaration of matters extremist, a legal investigator selects experts not for their professionalism and objectivity, but for other criteria: is the potential expert ready to write in the expert's report just "what is necessary" and "as fast as possible"? Demand gives birth to offer, a great deal of "puppet experts" come into being. Unfortunately, there are lots of examples of this. A single method of examination of texts for indications of extremism has not been fixed yet. Procedural legislation lets an expert to use methods at his choice, including his own ones.

A situation occurs frequently, when the court is presented with several contrary in conclusions expert reports, and the court has to choose something singular. And the courts are inclined to evaluate the delivered expert's reports not from the position of scientific character and depth of research, but proceeding from their procedural status. That's why, in the majority of cases the court forms its decision on the basis of legal expertise (set by the court), regardless of the scientific quality of this examination. They play the roulette of some kind: who will be designated as experts?

Let's remember as an illustrative example the lawsuit about the declaration of the book *Bhagavad-Gita as It Is* an extremist matter that took place in Tomsk in 2011-2012.

When the question arose about the choice of experts, the prosecutor offered two men: a linguist with an academic degree of candidate of science, and an entry-level psychologist, having no academic degrees at all and with little length of professional service. The party of defense offered as experts the leading specialists in linguistics, in religious texts of Hinduism and in psychology with academic degrees of Doctors, well-known scientists with length of service of many years.

Nevertheless, the court turned down all the other candidates, except those offered by the prosecutor, having motivated its choice, that "Moscow is far away" and that "the presence of academic degrees

for the trial is not obligatory”. To my reasons about the significance of involvement of the Doctors as experts the judge objected: “But why do you think, that only Doctors must make the examination? Indeed, from the procedural point of view the presence of higher education and even little length of professional service are quite sufficient for the recognition of such a specialist as expert.

2. Question: What is the specific character of application of the counteraction against extremism legislation concerning pious literature?

Answer: The fuzziness of the legislative definition of the notion “extremism” on the one hand and the metaphorical, expressive and poly-semantic character of religious texts on the other result in fertile ground for revelation of formal signs of extremism practically in any religious text. On the other hand, it is well known, that in pious literature of any religion it is maintained the verity of its own and the falsity of others. In any religion there is a notion of “sinners”, whose deeds are criticized, and a notion of “saints”, who are praised in every way possible. Here are now the promotion of inferiority and the promotion of superiority of “a group on the basis of relationship to religion”. Especially after such an indication of extreme activity as connection to “violence and calls for violence” was removed from the definition of extreme activity in 2006, the execution of plan on the struggle against extremism is bouncing along. It became possible quite legally to accuse pious literature of one or the other religious organization out of favor of the “ promotion of inferiority”, of “promotion of superiority”, of “instigation of confessional strife” and declare it extreme. And this action is used, as a rule, against religious minorities, who became the object for “sect-fighters”, to give an appearance of legality to infringement of believers’ rights.

3. Question: What is the relationship between the declaration of some or the other doctrinal text an extreme matter and the infringement of believers’ rights?

Answer: The consequences, stipulated by law, of the declaration of matter extreme involve considerable interference into the guaranteed by the article 28 of the Constitution of Russian Federation rights of citizens to chose and disseminate religious convictions freely, to act in line with them¹. In addition to that, there is no legislative supply for legal foundation for prevention of arbitrary and disproportionate interference in these rights.

What is the interference in question? First of all, determining the legal status of a doctrinal text as an extreme matter, the state in judicial authority evaluates negatively the doctrine itself and the religious convictions of those citizens, who share it. And this is inconsistent with the principle of non-interference of the state in the determination by a citizen of his attitude to religion and religious affiliation, as well as the right to disseminate religious and other convictions and act in line with them.

Legal relations, connected with the freedom of conscience and the freedom of religious convictions, concern the inner world of man and are one of the most complicated objects for legal regulation. Without visible and ostensible necessity (let us suppose, when in the name of some or the other religion calls for violence are heard or blood is shed) lawyers mustn't interfere in a man's inner world and his religious convictions with their imperatives, supported by the state force.

Besides, the legal fact of a declaration of a doctrinal text an extreme matter forms legal ground for further persecution of all the followers of this doctrine. In addition to that, no one of the citizens, for whom more or less come unfavorable legal effects, even have no chance to know about the legal process, being held.

¹ As the Article 28 of the Constitution of Russian Federation says, "everybody is guaranteed with the freedom of conscience, the freedom of religion, including the right to profess individually or in common with others any religion or not to profess any religion at all, to freely choose, have and disseminate religious and other convictions and to act in line with them".

Thus, a “private” court session has taken place somewhere: a prosecutor, a judge and a secretary. Having considered a prosecutor’s claim and a research, held by the investigation order, the court made a decision of declaration of some doctrine text an extremist matter.

No one of the believers or leaders of this religious community appealed this decision (it simply was not known), and it has come into effect. At the same time, for practically any persons, who related somehow to this text, regardless of their own will, come quite concrete legal effects: It is prohibited to keep this text, it is prohibited to disseminate it, it is prohibited to found their doctrine on such a text, it is prohibited to publish, it is prohibited to sponsor the edition, it is prohibited to give praise to everything listed above.

A great many of law-abiding citizens, having never committed any criminal acts in connection with the doctrine they use, become potential “extremists” and turn to be more or less outside the law.

Moreover, investigating authorities get the temptation to make anyone of them criminally responsible for the dissemination (edition) of this text even for the period, prior to the declaration it extremist by the court.

Thus, the rights of indefinite circle of persons are affected, but none of the effective legal ground for prevention of arbitrary and disproportionate interference in these rights is present.

It is precisely what took place in the legal process in Tomsk over *Bhagavad-Gita as It Is* (2011-2012).

The doctrine, set forth in this book, was charged with extremism, and it was pointed at directly in the prosecutor’s claim.

As a result, the rights of those, professing Hinduism, turned to be affected, the number of whom exceeds all the population of Russian Federation many times. Finally, mass protest actions took place in India; some of them were anti-Russian, that was never before in this friendly to us country. Under the impact of the legal process in Tomsk, which was discussed a lot in Indian mass

media, the outraged people went out and said: "If Russia prohibits Bhagavad-Gita, we shall prohibit Russia".

It is obvious, that those, who set to look for extremism in the sacred for Hindus text, damaged Russian-Indian friendly relations significantly.

4. Question: Had the prosecutor's office of Tomsk any real reasons to suspect Vaishnavism followers and their doctrine writings in extremism? Or the initiators of the process were guided by their wish "to ban the totalitarian sect", that is operated on the basis of anti-cultists' notions about Vaishnavism followers?

Answer: None of unlawful acts was committed by Vaishnavas in Tomsk or nearby regions. The followers of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness are known as law-abiding, peace-loving people.

There are active anti-cultists in Tomsk. Probably, their aggressive stand inspired the initiators of the process, influenced some of the experts.

In any religious (and not only in religious, but in any polemic, critical) text one, if he really wants it, may find formal signs of extremism. And if to charge with expertise the sect-fighters, the result may be 100% predictable. There would be a text – there will be an expert. The specific feature of examination of a religious text in the aspect of it's possible extremist character consists of the fact, that the contents of the doctrine text itself is considered beyond any relation to the activity of the religious organization and its followers. A legislator, having set the criteria for the declaration of a matter extremist, hasn't included such significant, characteristic of the social meaning of a matter, consequences as the activity of the religious organization, the doctrine of which is based on the religious text examined, and the conduct of its followers.

Though at all times just practice was the criterion of truth, on the examination of a religious text for the court the key circumstance

of effective consent is a secular expert's decision. The court, alas, doesn't take into account the formal explanation by the religious organization itself of the meaning of a sacral text; it's canonical for this religion doctrinal interpretation.

Secular experts, appointed by the court (linguistics, psychologists etc.) assign to the religious texts examined quite the other meaning, then that, which is put into it by the religious tradition proper.

As a result, the religious text may be charged with extremism, for instance, for the criticism of sinners, whom the experts took for a social group, or for the moral censure of "fools, deprived of knowledge", whom the experts defined as "the group, that doesn't share the values of this doctrine". In this case the doctrine text, and the doctrine itself, the religious organization and its followers after it turn to be... out of law. The society becomes hostile to them exactly, though the believers themselves didn't commit any criminal acts.

Finally, the struggle against fancied extremism in religious texts provokes really hostile attitude to the law-abiding followers of the doctrine, set forth in such a text. And these are not unsubstantiated statements; there are many examples of this in court practice. The established law-enforcement practice of struggle against extremism on the part of declaration of matters extremist often brings about the results, opposite to the expected ones. The institution of declaration of information matters extremist discredits oneself more and more and doesn't execute the enforcement function, entrusted with.

5. Question: Do you share the religious views and ethical values of the Society for Krishna Consciousness? Does it help or more likely interfere with your professional activity as a lawyer? How are your convictions taken by your associates-lawyers, by prosecutor's office officials, by judges?

Answer: Yes, of course. For the first time I've read Bhagavad-Gita in 1993, and the values, set forth in it, the explanation of the origin and of the purpose of the universe, the thorough solutions of

“eternal” questions drew my attention very much. Knowledge, set forth in this book, will undoubtedly help any man, regardless of his occupation, because the purity of motivation and the orientation of activity matters, but not its particular type. And lawyers are not the exception. Any spiritual practices clear mind, strengthen memory (the main ammunition of a lawyer), make it easier to get to the back of things, to understand human behavior – all these help very much in lawyer’s work.

My associates and law-enforcement authorities’ officers take my religious convictions at large with approval. The judges, fortunately, don’t consider yet my religious views as importing legal effect on the cases, tried with my participation.

6. Question: Have you ever communicated or argued with supporters of anti-cultism? What is the source of their disapproval of other religions, including Hinduism?

Answer: Formerly I tried to argue with “sect-fighters” online, including openly militant, but then, because of the shower of insults concerning persons I honor, stopped any communication with them. Why? Because I saw, that they don’t seek truth, but self-affirmation in their views at any cost. I have neither will nor necessity to communicate with such people.

But, nevertheless, to my mind, you mustn’t confuse sect-fighters with the beginning followers of some religion, who try to strengthen their belief with the denial of the verity of other religions and to whom it is difficult to explain their belief rationally, if the others are also well and happy. There is even a notion in Hinduism “kanishtha-adhikary”, that is neophyte or a man, whose spiritual level doesn’t let him to see the God outside the church. This is typical of any religion. And much later, having understood the nature of God more thoroughly, a believer sees His manifestation as in other religious traditions, so in general in everything existing.

7. Question: In 2011 in the village Kandinka of Tomsk region the police officers carried out the court decision about the demolition of an “illegally” built house, where four families of the followers of the Society for Krishna Consciousness lived. Do you see in these incidents the religion discrimination and the influence of anti-cultism? Do you know other similar court trials or other facts of Vaishnavas’ discrimination?

Answer: Anyone acquainted with this case can’t but see the dependence of development of events from religious affiliation of the people, who built these houses. The local administration and the inhabitants of the village didn’t initially mind the building of the houses in the field behind the village. And only after active sect-fighting propaganda of the head of missionary section of local eparchy of Russian Orthodox Church people became hostile to the followers of the Society for Krishna Consciousness and impeded the building of houses in every possible way. An administrative recourse joined in, the prosecutor’s office. The first trial has found the rejection of revision of permitted use of the land type illegal and pointed out the inadmissibility of solution of the problem, based on the religious affiliation of citizens. So, to demolish the houses on legal grounds, the authorities had for the time of the trial to include the questionable lands in the preserve, where any building is prohibited, to confirm the legitimacy of the refusal with the court decision, to demolish the houses... and right after the demolition of the houses to exclude the lands out of the preserve again.

By the way, when the argument on the houses was yet in progress, in 2010 the prosecutor’s office was already searching the way to discredit the Tomsk Vaishnavas and ordered in the University of Tomsk the notorious examination of the book *Bhagavad-Gita as It Is*.

8. Question: The facts indicate, that Indians and the leaders of the Republic of India appreciate the Society for Krishna Consciousness and consider, that they accomplish the significant

mission – popularize Vedic knowledge. According to the leaders of India, the book *Bhagavad-Gita as It Is* by the founder of the Society for Krishna Consciousness A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada conveys adequately the message of Sri Krishna, set forth in the sacred for Hindus *Bhagavad-Gita*. What is appropriate to undertake for consolidation of Russian-Indian relations, for overcoming the negative consequences of the response, caused in India by the trial in Tomsk?

Answer: I'll concentrate on the last question from the start. The great role in smoothing, maintaining and raising the relations to a new level belongs both to scientists and to officials. It is no secret that last years the academic and specific study of Hinduism, of its essence, of the traditions and cultures, relating to it, was not of great importance. There was no either a comprehensive approach to the study of spiritual and cultural heritage of India, though religiousness exactly underlies the culture of this country, even in the modern period of development.

But if the community of scientists is silent, then the state considers drastically framed sect-fighters, so the risk of repetition of the regrettable story of Tomsk is still present.

But it is also obvious, that great attention to Hinduism should be also paid by the public officers, because one can find in it an incredibly rich socio-cultural potential for oneself and one's plans. Vaishnavas, as also the followers of other religions, are able to perform unselfishly, as their religious duty, those ethical tasks in society that the state is unable to accomplish because of the slowness of its structures. I think, that the example of the Society for Krishna Consciousness indicates, that Hinduism is really a World religion, influencing different processes in the World. Here the full-blooded, constructive dialogue, which will be only beneficial for everybody, is of consequence.

It is necessary to convey widely to society the true information on behalf of Russian and Indian scientists, specialists in Indian

culture, historians and on behalf of the followers of the Society for Krishna Consciousness themselves. It also depends to a large extent on Vaishnavas themselves. They must more actively report their activities in the regions, offering information about themselves at first hand to the various groups of society, making the guesswork of anti-cultists worthless. It is necessary to report on a large scale the regular cultural events, associated with the popularization of Indian culture.

9. Question: Can we come to the conclusion, that the leaders of Republic of India and Indian mass media will stand up for Vaishnavas in Russia in future, and every incident of discrimination or of slanderous attacks, aimed at the Society for Krishna Consciousness, will be regarded by India as an unfriendly act?

Answer: The press in India in itself is independent, and I can't predict, how and why they will react on. But I know exactly, that India is a great country, where people value very much their spiritual and historical heritage, carrying the ideals of ethics and humanity. Whether in Russia or somewhere else, in case of attacks at the Society for Krishna Consciousness or any other Hinduistic organization, carrying in itself a particle of the great cultural heritage of India, any efforts to depreciate the sacred writings or to slander them will look as a manifestation of dangerous radicalism, as driving a wedge between nations for the sake of somebody's selfish ends and cheap populism.

“Unlawful Anti-extremism” as a Means of Limitation of Rights of Religious Minorities

Interview with Alexander Verkhovskiy, the director of the SOVA Center for Information and Analysis (Moscow)

1. Question: The sphere of interest of the informational and analytical center “Sova” – the problems of nationalism and xenophobia, of interrelations of religion and society, of political radicalism, inculcation of liberal values and observance of human rights in our country. What determines, as you think, the character and the development of relations between religion and society in Russia? Can this process be called clericalisation? Or another term is necessary?

Answer: I don't like the term “clericalisation”, because it supposes historically delegating authority of some kind to the church. This is not or almost not present here. Desecularization, departing from Peter Berger¹, is more exact term for that, what is happening in today's Russia. Contrary to popular ideas, Berger, introducing this term, didn't mean literally “the return of religion”: in real history something can return very rarely. Berger's desecularization is a phenomenon of modernized and secularized societies, in which religious organizations, groups and trends master and even create new forms of activity and become able to influence society in a new way. In this sense the activation of political Islam in Arabic world is not desecularization.

One may ask question, is Russia a modernized and secularized country in the same sense, as USA and countries of Western Europe.

¹ Peter Ludwig Berger (born in 1929) is an Austrian Lutheran theologian and social scientist, living in the USA. He is the representative of the social-constructivist school in sociology. He is known for his work *Social Construction of Reality. The Treatise upon the Sociology of Knowledge*. (New-York, 1966).

And the answer will be, surely, negative. The process of secularization proceeded in our country to say the least in a different way and, accordingly, gave another type of secularism, and the extent of modernization of societies is definitely not comparable.

And still I use this term, because it is closer to Russian reality, then “clericalisation”.

Russian Orthodox Church and some other major religious organizations in every way possible try to increase their influence on society, relying on really growing religiousness (having a propensity to exactly such organizations) and on more noticeable (at least from the middle of presidential period of Dmitry Medvedev) state interest in these organizations. This process includes both the increase of financial and administrative resources and the “expansion” of religiously motivated conceptions and language into public sphere.

The secularized section of society maintains resistance. This process, undoubtedly, will continue, so in near future we may expect only the strained confrontation. But with the lapse of time, as reflection on both sides will grow, and, that is of no small importance, in that sector of society, that is not involved in the confrontation, the dynamics will inevitably change.

Of course, this is a very general scene, so as the number of sides here is far more than two.

2. Question: What consequences for observing the rights of believers and nonbelievers may we expect in near future: 1) temporal character of the state, the equality of religious organizations before law and the principles of freedom of conscience will remain; 2) the deformation of these principles will occur, one or several of religious communities will gain additional preferences, but religious minorities will be limited in their rights.

Answer: Individual right of conscience in Russia is practically unlimited besides some exceptions as discussed further and incidents of “going too far in the field”. The problems are exactly the state

secularism and the principle of equality before the law in relation to organizations and informal groups (currents), to the extent this principle is applicable to them.

Under the president Dmitry Medvedev the notion "traditional religions" shifted from official rhetoric to the sphere of rule-making. At first time they've got official preferences in the acts, introducing the block on "spiritual and moral education" at school and the post of chaplain in the army. Of course, it's too early to speak of the adoption by Russia of the mode of legal division of religions into the privileged ones and others, but the notion "traditional religions", established as early as ten years ago, tends to institutionalisation.

During the second presidential period of Vladimir Putin (and already in the middle of the first one) his power didn't demand a support from the main religious organizations, as well as any other, didn't strive to get it and, of course, could not to ensure this support with any practical measures. But since that time political administration of the country – for various reasons – mends relations with backup groups in society, what in relation to religious organizations provides smooth passage from the politics of not obligatory rhetoric about something "spiritual" to legalization of real privileges.

This process comes to meet more and more activity of the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church and some other religious organizations. By the way, the list of such most active organizations differs from the list of organizations of "traditional religions", which are the part of the Inter-confessional Council of Russia that makes real structure of relations of authority with religious organizations not so predictable.

But whatever religious communities the authority become friends with, it leads inevitably to certain consequences.

At first, one or other discrimination is inevitable of some other religious trends and groups (inside those confessions themselves). The forms and methods of such discrimination seem to be

predetermined by national or even private officials' interests, but not by the preferences of the privileged organizations themselves.

Secondly, religious communities, of course, propagate their own notions of various public problems. And authorities more willingly meet them halfway, that means, as I've mentioned already, de-secularization of society, even if it goes slowly and not at all systematically.

3. Question: One of the permanent areas of monitoring, conducted by SOVA are the manifestations of "unfair anti-extremism". What is the degree this phenomenon "make life unbearable" for law-abiding religious communities? How to draw the line in religious sphere: what may be regarded as struggle against real extremism, and what is obviously "unfair anti-extremism"? Why exactly Jehovah's Witnesses, Scientologists and some currents of Islam more often than others become target for unfair charge with extremism?

Answer: The notion "extremism" belongs to political science, and the direct introduction of it into the law is at least problematic. Russia, that has yet begun this operation ten years ago, is unique in relation to this on the territory of Europe, and only this should give one something to think about. In fact, the introduction caused the evident degradation of law: the principle of legal distinctness. Now no one can tell what is "extremist", and what is not. For the manifestations of religious intolerance, defined by law as "extremist", vary in fact from the direct instigation to terrorism to the establishment of superiority of one's own belief over others.

There are established by European Convention on Human Rights and interpreted by European Court of Human Rights notions of that, to what degree the freedom of expression must be restricted, in connection with religion as well. These notions were supported as well by the Supreme Court of Russia in 2011, having stated, that criticism of religious, political and other beliefs, communities and practices is not a crime (as it is put in the Art. 282 of Criminal Code). Alas, enforcement practice is too far from these notions.

There are many incidents, when the only charge, as a matter of fact, was exactly the charge with the establishment of the truth of one's own religious beliefs as compared with others. In the most systematical form such a repressive approach shows itself in the "anti-extremist" prosecution of Jehovah's Witnesses and the followers of Said Nursi¹.

Of course, a question arises therewith why the unfair anti-extremist prosecution concerns certain groups and don't concern the other ones? Are there any reasons of system property or any particular reasons are taken into account? The answers that may be given to these questions are most likely analytical, then actual ones, as the motivation of the initiators of any prosecution doesn't often show itself explicitly.

The most significant systematic cause, to my mind, consists in disability of not only of authorities or of law-enforcement agencies, but of the community at large as well to distinguish between serious and unfounded menace, and in disability to even to develop a sufficient criterion of such a distinction.

Anti-extremist legislation didn't originate from scratch, its problem is not in the groundlessness of the undertaking, but in the inadequacy of legal instruments being offered.

There is quite real menace of terrorist and other violent actions, motivated by religious-political reasons. There is no need in giving the examples. There is a speculative, but also rather real menace of increasing of tension in any region, based considerably on religious-political confrontation.

There is a menace of aggression against people or property (including religious structures), motivated by religious or religious-

¹ Bediüzzaman Said Nursi (Turk. Bediüzzaman Said Nursî, 1876 - 1960) -- a Turkish Islam theologian of Kurdish descent; the interpreter of Koran. Known for his infallible memory, he has got at an early age an addition to his name Bediüzzaman (The Wonder of the Age), which gained only the most remarkable scholars of Islam. He is one of the most honored figures of Islam in Turkey and in the Turkey world. In 2007 the court of Koptev in Moscow has declared some of the Russian translations of his books extremist.

political hatred; this menace is also quite real, and though the exact religious-based attacks beyond the Caucasus are few (as opposed to attacks, motivated by ethnic hatred), the acts of religious (or anti-religious) motivated vandalism are comparably numerous.

There is a menace, noticeable though not for everybody, but many, of insulting of any people's religious feelings, and sometimes even of sufficiently large groups of people. Usually, the source of such insults is the publications in mass media, though, of course, the diversity of insulting actions is great.

Finally, I have to mention the menace, that I myself consider mythological, but many citizens take as real – the menace of joint identity or, as they sometimes put it bombastically, of “spiritual security”. Behind somewhat fantastic, sometimes ideological constructions, related to this notion, one can notice also quite real discomfort of some of our citizens, related to the swift changes, concerning also religious life. Adequate mechanisms of defense must be opposed to all these menaces, in line with their nature and gravity. But the anti-extremist legislation offers only one solution for all these. Many people seem still to believe the effectiveness of “simple answers”. And these people obviously don't believe in any control mechanisms, except the repressive ones.

Criminal prosecution and brutality¹ of intelligence services are appropriate, when we speak of terrorist, and in general violence-oriented groups, but even in this case the necessary legal guarantees must be observed (and this, I'll stress, concerns all of us, but not only real, future or supposed terrorists).

But the same methods often aren't effective in the prevention of the escalation of a more large-scale conflict, and even quite the reverse.

And they are certainly not only useless, but even evidently harmful, when we mean the “insult of feelings”, so as here such things

¹ Brutality (from French brutal and Latin brutus) cruel and violent behavior, or an event involving cruel and violent treatment.

as freedom of expression and freedom of conscience, tolerance and dialogue, history and today of inter-confessional relations, etc. are concerned. And all these matters are not the business of a prosecutor or policeman: they are likely to harm her more, then to help.

The position of our Center – running counter, alas, to now-existing trends of lawmaking – is the necessity of decriminalization¹ of verbal deeds, such as “insults” and “humiliations” (as a common insult was decriminalized yet in 2011), so as to focus the attention of law-enforcement agencies on really dangerous instigation activity (not to mention the violent actions themselves) and to free the public discussion itself, concerning religion in any way, of threatening it personality of prosecutor.

The amazing belief of our fellow citizens in the possibility to control tolerance with prosecutor’s methods is illustrated by enacting of such an element of anti-extremist legislation as the Federal List of extremist matters, at least among those, who is involved in the religious-social controversy.

Of course, the work of this mechanism is subjected to criticism almost everywhere, but on its own account it is considered acceptable.

Meanwhile, the mechanism of matter prohibition as extremist, a unique one on the territory of modern Europe (geographically), not only fraught with numerous abuses, but doesn’t restrict in any way the circulation of xenophobic and other dangerous matters. The sufficient reason of ineffectiveness of this mechanism is that the subject of prohibition can’t be defined quite exactly, so even insignificant changes, introduced into the text (video or song) make them another matter, not affected by the ban. In fact, just because of this the countries, taking seriously the legal regulation, don’t use this instrument. So far, as there is a demand, though not openly formulated, from the society for mainly repressive control of the intolerance problem, the religious as well, we can hardly expect

¹ Decriminalization – legal requalification of some part of criminal deeds and the transfer of them into the category of administrative, disciplinary and other offences or of legal acts.

from the state, even without this disposed to such approach, that it wouldn't operate too repressively. The arbitrary rule of certain officials sufficiently aggravates this situation in some places, but the fundamental cause is still not in these certain officials.

Besides, there are also causes of more particular nature, provoking repressions against some or other groups or some or other types of public remarks.

For example, yet before the Pussy Riot's case, in 2011, the two sentences were passed on the Art. 282 of the Criminal Code, by which the convicted were punished for rude attacks upon believers in general, upon orthodox believers – particularly, and upon the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church -- especially. And the public response to the remarks themselves was near-zero. There were no such sentences before (the cases of exhibitions in Sakharov's museum are still of somewhat different nature), so these cases can't be referred to law enforcement agencies' necessity to fill in the "anti-extremist" statistical reports. They can't be explained either by the mentioned above propensity of the public to the repressive solution of problems: just because that in these cases, in one of them exactly, there was no any problem at all. The supposition remains, that the point is in the firmly established status of the Russian Orthodox Church at the market of elite statuses, so some of the officers consider already necessary and possible to try criminal cases just for rude remarks, concerning the leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church, as occur the cases for rude remarks, concerning the high-ranking officials.

The prosecutions of the followers of Said Nursi, who are notable for extreme peacefulness, are most likely connected with the widespread idea, that they all in general and their main current authority Fethullah Gulen¹ are something of a secret society inside

¹ Fethullah Gülen (Turk. Muhammed Fethullah Gülen, born in 1941) is a Turkish thinker, the author of more than 60 books on Islam, regarded in 2008 by the American magazine "Foreign Policy" and the English magazine "Prospect" as the leading intellectual of the world.

Islam, closely associated with Turkish authorities (and sometimes they say – USA). So they may be suspected as secret champions of “Panturkism” – another mythological enemy of Russian sovereignty.

Everything, that in any way, really or supposedly, concerns Gulen, is prohibited for a long time. Thus, gradually, they’ve come to the prohibition by the Supreme Court of non-existing organization *Nurdzhullar*¹: the word itself means the followers of Nursi, but nobody saw any signs of the organization (and if anybody saw, then didn’t publish his observations, and the decision of the SC doesn’t clarify this mystery too).

This is the apotheosis of conspiracy thinking. Simply, with regard to the plot of *Elders of Zion*, it is clear to everybody, that it is something like a menace from Martians, but in case of *Nurdzhullar* one can still “sell” the idea of the plot, exploiting general fear in front of the militant trends of political Islam and the fact, that few know much about these trends.

Though sometimes it happens, that none of specific reason of a repressive campaign is noticeable. This is an example of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Of course, they are the typical unpopular minority. But they have been being almost always as such, and it is not clear, what has changed in 2009, when a campaign against them began. What has happened? The quick expansion is not prodigious already (that is, no hypothetical motive of competition with major religious communities, enjoying the protection of authorities, is noticeable, as opposed to the situation with many Muslim groups), Witnesses do not take part in the public dispute on burning questions, they, of course, are not involved in anything undermining or violent.

4. Question: To what extent Russian legislation about the opposition against extremism correspond to the standards of international law and to the demands of common sense as well?

¹ By the judgment of the Supreme Court of Russian Federation of April 10, 2008 the activity of the organization *Nurdzhullar* was prohibited on the territory of Russia.

Answer: The standards of international law in the scope of defense of public safety and limit on expression freedoms are formulated not so distinctly, and the style of the law “On the opposition against extremist activity” is also quite vague, so one cannot speak of the direct contradiction here.

But there is a contradiction to the common sense, and I’ve briefly told about it above.

But also from the legal point of view our legislation seriously encroaches upon the two not strictly formulated, but very significant standards of law – proportionality and distinctness. I have told already, that many elements of law break the principle of legal distinctness. The most known example of this is extremely vague notion of “social group”. But the principle of proportionality is also broken: the law covers a great deal of miscellaneous deeds and provides a wide range of punishment or preventive measures (warnings as a rule), but doesn’t explain anyhow, what should be used for what. Because of this incompatibly severe punishments are not rare. The sentence to the participants of Pussy Riot is the most known example, but also the prohibition of the Taganrog organization of those Jehovah’s Witnesses is obviously the disproportional punishment for the dissemination of religious booklets, even if to propose, that those booklets are really so intolerant, as the court decided. For now the Witnesses of Taganrog may turn to be charged with the crime (the continuation of activity of religious organization¹) just for the fact of the propagation of their belief.

¹ On August 5, 2011 a criminal case on the p.1 of the Art.182.2 of the Criminal Code of RF (The setup of the activity of an extremist organization) was brought against Jehovah’s Witnesses by the Investigation Department of the Chief Directorate of Home Office of Russia on the SFO in Taganrog. On May 31, 2012 the resolutions were passed on bringing to trial 17 persons as defendants in the case. The four of them are charged on the p.1 of the Art.182.2 of the Criminal Code of RF (The setup of the activity of the extremist organization), the others – on the p.1 of the Art.182.2 of the Criminal Code (The participation in the extremist organization). According to the version of the inquest, the accused, knowing full well that the community Taganrog was prohibited, and guided by extremist motives, resumed and went on with the activity of the local religious organization of Jehovah’s Witnesses Taganrog, that on September 11, 2009 has been declared as extremist by the regional court of Rostov.

5. Question: To what extent legally correct is the enforcement practice, concerning the declaration as extremist of some or the other religious editions and texts?

Answer: I've told already, that I consider the idea itself of injunction against texts senseless, even if it is a matter of really harmful and dangerous texts. Yes, there happen to be texts, the systematic dissemination of which in any democratic country would be taken as a crime. Such are, for example, the texts, calling for an armed jihad¹ not in abstract theory, but in today's Russian reality. In this case the author and/or a distributor may be convicted for the crime, specified by one or several of the articles (280, 282 and 205.2) of the Criminal Code, but the prohibition of the text itself (for instance, of propagation by Said Buryatsky²) is of no sense.

Let's consider the question, having distracted our mind from the considerations of expedience and even of legal distinctness. Then in a secular state we have to admit, that religious nature of a text doesn't bring any exemption neither about the text, nor about the author (as well as it is not an aggravation). But the problem of interpretation occurs.

In fact, this problem occurs with regard to any text. The question is how the text is interpreted by its primary audience and how this must be estimated by the investigation agencies and the court.

Let's compare, for example, the phrase "I came not to send peace, but a sword"³ (*The Gospel According to Matthew* 10:34) and

¹ Jihad (from the Arabic word, meaning "effort") – the notion in Islam, meaning "zeal on Allah's Way". Some of the Islamic theologians divide Jihad into the major (spiritual struggle) and the minor (Ghazw -- armed struggle).

² Said Buryatsky (birth name – Alexander Alexandrovitch Tikhomirov, 1982 – 2010) – the participant of terrorist groups, the gosseller of Islam and one of the ideologists of North Caucasian armed clandestine organizations.

³ This is a passage out of the exhortation of Christ to twelve apostles: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it".

the slogan "War is in your town. Be armed!" (Approximately such slogans were pronounced and written by ultra-rights in Moscow in summer 2011). And for the complete comparison, let's take the song line – "Let there be war!" (The song *War* by the punk-team *Survival Instruction* that was popular in certain area about twenty years ago).

Now, according to the established practice, the investigation agencies and the court get involved various experts for estimation of texts. Those experts, miscellaneous in their professions and in the level of training in humanities, try to estimate the texts or the fragments, relying, as a rule, on certain own notions of how one or another text must be read. The specific character of a readership is almost never taken by them into account; the conceptual line, in which the text is shaped, is also frequently disregarded. With such an approach all the above three phrases are likely to turn the extremist ones. Meticulous investigators and/or experts will even be able to find the examples, when people, following these or the like phrases, indeed resorted to violence: on number one they will recall crusades, on number two – plenty of racist crimes in the capital, on number three... well, if they will show erudition, they will recall the disorders, kicked up by punks at the presentation of the project *Russian Breakthrough* in Moscow at the end of 1993.

But all this won't relate in any way to the text analysis concerning their real audience. On the one hand, punks are inclined to violence, but the song *War* is absolutely not about this (as, let us say, also the far more known song by Victor Tsoy). On the other hand, ultra-right slogans stir up racist emotions and raise the probability of certain crimes. As for the militant Christianity, it is in no want in explanations. But still it is: they have declared extremist the slogan "Orthodoxy or death!"¹, after all.

¹ Orthodoxy or Death! – a slogan, that is popular among radical groups in Orthodox Church. The slogan "Orthodoxy or Death!" is inscribed in Greek since 1970s on the black banner of Esphigmenou monastery on the Holy Mt. Athos, the brotherhood of which refuse to commemorate the ruling hierarch of the Holy Mt. Athos – the Patriarch of Constantinople, and also has no canonical communication other Mt. Athos monasteries. The

In fact, in the majority of “extremist” cases there is no need in expert examination at all: the meaning of the texts is quite transparent and doesn’t demand any academy analysis. But in point of the religious texts it is not like that: the style of these texts is so specific and vague beyond certain area, that the law enforcement agencies simply need a “translator’s” service. Only such a translator must be not a linguist, not a social psychologist etc., but only a religious expert, and specializing in the given religion. Now, alas, it happens like that very seldom.

The common practice is primitive: within a certain case a large pack of writings is seized, that is passed to some local expert. He, within his own understanding, singles out the “extremist” part in the pack. In the process, most often, they commit a gross violation of the formal law, that is the expert makes the judgment on legal matters as “does the text instigate hostility and to whom”, but the expert mustn’t be asked about this, and he mustn’t answer anything like this. Then expert’s reports almost literally come into the file or the indictment, and from there – into the court decision. The results, you know, grow more and more impressive; recently they prohibited even the writing by al-Ghazālī¹ of eight hundred-year antiquity.

In essence, such a practice is below any criticism.

6. Question: Is it reasonable, to your opinion, to enter into the anti-extremist legislation the amendments, taking into account the specific peculiarities of religious communities’ activity and of

slogan presents in itself the rephrasing of the slogan of the Greek Revolution of 1821 “Freedom or Death!” In Russian Federation the slogan “Orthodoxy or Death!” is declared as extremist and included into the Federal List of Extremist Matters with the number 865 by the solution of the district court of Cheremushki in Moscow, passed on December 21, 2010.

¹ Abū Hāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (1058 – 1111) -- a Muslim theologian and philosopher of Persian descent. He is one of the most authoritative teachers, reckoned among the founders of Sufism. By the resolution of Sol-Iletsk district court of May 28, 2012 about the declaration of a number of Muslim religious writings as extremist, the book by Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī *The Counseling Kings* was declared as extremist, Publishing House “Ansar”, Moscow, 2008 – 334 pages.

content of religious writings? For instance, is it reasonable to prohibit the “pursuit of extremism” in the sacred books of World religions? To introduce the specification, that the recognition of truth of only one religion is not an indication of extremism?

Answer: Not only the assertion of truth of one’s own religion, but also the assertion of exclusive falsity, harmfulness and nonsense of all the others is not a crime. As I have said already, this has been obviously resolved by European Court of Human Rights, and our Supreme Court thinks so, as well.

But to exclude in the legislation itself the sacred books out of the number of suspect is impossible. Russia is a temporal state, in which, constitutionally, all the religious communities are equal before law and which thus can’t determine by the legislation, what books are sacred, and what are not, what religions are the World ones, and what may be considered just hobby groups. And there is no necessity in it: if to take into account the scope of application of some or the other texts, then the problem won’t arise. A man may be convicted for instigation of terror act by citation of Koran, but it doesn’t make Koran extremist. The probability of changes with the lapse of time in the interpretation of texts is not the specific feature of religions too. Just the same takes place with temporal ideologies, with Marxism, for instance. And it’s time to admit in general, that certain historical texts may be used critically and mustn’t be eliminated as an object for study, and not to try invent something special. The practice, take notice, goes this way all the same. Thus *Mein Kampf*¹ is prohibited, but available in libraries, not to mention the Internet. If someone would disseminate it with propagandistic intent, it will be a crime. And if someone would research it, this will be another dissertation.

7. Question: Is there any connection between anti-cultists’ myths and “unfair extremism”? Thus, were there any real legal grounds

¹ *My Struggle* (Germ. *Mein Kampf*) – the book by Adolf Hitler, combining the elements of autobiography with the description of the ideas of national-socialism.

for the prosecutor's office in Tomsk to suspect Krishnaists and their doctrine literature in extremism? Or the initiators of the process about declaration of the book *Bhagavad-Gita* as It Is extremist were guided by the wish "to prohibit the totalitarian sect", that is operated in terms of anti-cultists' ideas of Krishnaists?

Answer: The connection is present, of course. As I have said already, neither the state, nor society can distinguish between different menaces. The activity of new or relatively new religions is potentially fraught with conflicts, as in essence, any wake-up of religious life and as generally any other wake-up. To a large extent on this, I think, holds up the broad support of anti-cultist ideas even among those, who is not engaged confessionally and doesn't take any tales about "totalitarian sects" for granted.

A conflict or even the menace of it is interpreted as "extremism", thus comes the trend to use anti-extremist tools against new religious movements and other religious opponents. One may probably get surprised, that this tendency came real with long delay after adoption of the law "On combating extremist activity".

The probability to find an apology of violence etc. in *Bhagavad-Gita* or in comments by Swami Prabhupada is predetermined by given above mechanism of the "mechanical" reading of a religious text. But for the mechanism to run, a motive is necessary. And in this case this motive evidently was anti-cultist.

8. Question: Did you ever manage to communicate or argue with supporters of anti-cultism? What is the source of their disapproval of principles of the freedom of conscience and other religions? Is it possible to consider anti-cultism as a specific form of xenophobia?

Answer: I don't have so much experience in such a communication. People's motivation is quite diverse. For someone anti-cultism is a derivative of their religious orthodoxy. For others it is motivated by care about state defense in the version of "spiritual safety". Someone

is really anxious about dramas of people, “involved into a sect” or of their relatives, just not understanding, that he is facing not the peculiarity of some or another “sect”, but the phenomenon, typical on the one hand for active religiousness in general, on the other hand – for developing subcultures.

All these motives, in some way or another, assume a certain prejudice that in itself is the essence of xenophobia. Anti-cultism is one of its types. Alas, our society is in whole very intolerant, and this is only one of many manifestations of general phenomenon. Though, of course, one must not forget of certain causes as well.

But this form of xenophobia, as well as the others, is worth of struggling against by direct bans and moreover by criminalization¹ only in the last resort. The champions of liberty of speech must bear in mind, that liberty of speech guarantees apply to their opponents as well. Bluntly speaking, stating in public, that Krishnaism is a pseudo-religion, totalitarian sect, etc. is silly and bad, but not prohibited. The notions “bad” and “prohibited” may match only in a totalitarian society.

¹ Criminalization is the process of admission an act as criminal, appointing to its characteristics in the Criminal legislation and setting of liability for it.

Conclusion

What can be done for Russian society and the state become immune to anti-cultism?

1. Regarding the effect, produced on state-confessional relations, anti-cultism and religious study are antipodes. Anti-cultism adds to state politics in relation to religious minorities a fair amount of xenophobia. To multi-confessional country, such as Russia, anti-cultism in the capacity of ideological basis for making state-confessional administrative decisions is the course towards constant failures and conflicts.

Unfortunately, secular religious studies have been in a difficult situation for the last years. Thus, after the set up of Russian Academy of National Economy and Government Service under the President of Russian Federation the Department of state-confessional relations proved to be in a such situation (it had been operating successfully as a part of Russian Academy of Government Service before). In many regions of the country the process of exclusion of scientific religious study out of the institutes of higher education is taking place.

2. The development of religious studies, the transformation of scientific religious studies into the basis for making state-confessional administrative decisions is the most effective means of normalization of the state of affairs. Particularly, the Council of Experts on State Religious Examination under the Ministry of Justice of Russia must include persons with high religious study qualification. There must be systematic activity on rising of level of religious study standards, including public officers, law-enforcement officials, judicial community and pressmen.

Religious study experts strive for consolidation of power. In particular, the participants of International Theoretical and Practical Conference *New Challenge to the Freedom of Conscience in Today's Russia* (Moscow, the Central House of Journalists, on June 26, 2012) made the decision to set about the formation of the Independent Religious Study Council of Experts. It is intended, that the purpose of the Council of Experts would be conducting, on the basis of scientific religious study, of examinations of: draft laws and other regulatory materials on the problems of religious freedom and activities of religious organizations; law enforcement practice in relation to religious organizations; resonant materials in mass media on the subjects of religious freedom, doctrines and activities of religious organizations.

No doubt, the establishment of the Independent Religious Study Council of Experts having legal capacity would be a significant step in the strengthening of the positions of religious study.

3. The important line of development of religious study is conducting of sociological studies of citizens' attitudes towards religion, the condition of state-confessional relations, the role of religious communities in the solution of critical social problems. One of the most actual subjects is sociological study of the followers of the new for Russia religious organizations, of their role in public and religious activities.

Thus, there is a research of significant interest by the Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, professor Ekaterina Elbakyan. It is a sociological study of Scientology community of today's Russia¹, carried out in 2011-2012. As the study has indicated, Scientologists take the active stand in life, support socially-significant projects, aimed at the improvement of moral atmosphere, overcoming of drug addiction and decrease in the crime rate.

¹ Ekaterina Elbakyan, *The Social Significance of Scientology and the activity of Scientology Community in modern Russia (on the social study, autumn of 2011—winter of 2012)* Moscow. Publishing House of Academy of Labor and social Relations, 2012, – 48 pages.

The impartial study by sociological methods is apt to give results which are highly important for adequate understanding of prospects to normalize the relations between new religious communities and the state.

4. For religious study anti-cultism is one of the subjects of study. Anti-cultism must be clearly defined as an ideological current, its role as a factor, influencing very much state-confessional relations in today's Russia in a negative way, must be perceived and explored.

In particular, there are sufficient reasons for exercising the religious study monitoring of the activities of *Federation of European Centers of Study and Information on Sectarianism* (FECRIS), of *Center of Religious Research in the Name of the Priest-Martyr St. Irenaus of Lyon*, of so-called Russian Association of Centers of Study of Religions and Sects and other anti-cultist centers, evoking the violation of legal rights of the followers of religious minorities by the bodies of state power and municipal administration.

5. Considering the significant role of the use of legislation on combating extremism in attempts to paralyze activities of a number of religious organizations, it is important to assure the specification of legislation, containing the notions "extremism" and "extremist activity".

The basic law in a democratic society must be the principle, according to which one must be made responsible not for some or other judgements or views, but only for calls to violence. It is necessary to define extremism and extremist activity as instigation of hostility and hate in aggregate with violence or with calls to violence. Such definition will save the law-abiding religious organizations, insisting on verity of their doctrine but avoiding calls to violence, of groundless charges with extremism.

6. The need cannot be put off to raise the level of religious study competence and the level of tolerance, including the law enforcement officials, who are engaged in combating extremism. It is necessary

to work out and to secure by law the principles, the conditions and the procedure of psycho-linguistic, religious, philological expert examinations, to define the proper criteria of persons' and organizations' access to such examinations. Examinations by persons without proper theoretical and practical training (scientific degrees and titles, scientific publications on the relevant subject) or having direct or circumstantial interest (including confessional commitment) in a certain result of examination must be made inadmissible.

7. The attitude of human rights ombudsman in Russian Federation Vladimir Lukin, who thinks that Russian authorities must correct the legislation to save sacred religious books from charged with extremism, deserves most resolute support.

Appendix

Konstantin Nikitin

Religious Freedom Watch correspondent

www.religiousfreedomwatch-ru.org

Some Data on FECRIS (Federation of European Centers of Study and Information on Sectarianism)

FECRIS is one of the major international anti-cultist organizations. At first the idea of its foundation was initiated at the conference of anti-cultists in Barcelona in 1993.

It is founded and registered in 1994 in Paris.

According to the data from the official FECRIS website the association includes 54 anti-cultist groups from the following countries: France (6 member-organizations), Germany (5), Italy (4), Great Britain (3), Russia (3), Ukraine (3), Switzerland (2), Sweden (2), Israel (2), Bulgaria (2), Belgium (2), USA, Spain, Slovakia, Serbia, Poland, Norway, the Netherlands, Malta, Lithuania, Latvia, Ireland, Finland, Estonia, Cyprus, Croatia, Belarus, Austria, Armenia, Argentina.

FECRIS conducts annual conferences in different cities: London, Hamburg, Paris, Warsaw, etc. In 2009 the meeting of FECRIS members took place in St. Petersburg in the building of law faculty of Saint Petersburg State University. Alexander Dvorkin was elected as Vice-President of FECRIS at that conference, and Thomas Sackville – the former secretary of Home Office of Great Britain – had become the President.

Minister of Justice of Russia Alexander Kononov, Deputy Minister of Justice Aleksey Velichko came to the conference of FECRIS. Alexander Kononov presented his report at the conference of FECRIS in Hamburg in 2007.

FECRIS Financing

FECRIS is financed for more than 90% out of France budget¹. This is indicated by the facts about funds, assigned since 2001 up to 2010.

Source of income	2001	2002	2003	2004
1) Prime minister of France	45735 euro	54000 euro	40000 euro	40000 euro
2) Membership dues	2317.24 euro	2603.78 euro	2936.23 euro	3024.00 euro
3) Other sources (financial transactions, donations, sale of property, etc.)	781.37 euro	1921.84 euro	811.81 euro	5024.42 euro
Total	48833.61 euro	58524.62 euro	43748.04 euro	48048.42 euro
Percent of income from the first source	93,6%	92,2%	91,4%	83,2%

Source of income	2005	2006	2007	2008
1) Prime minister of France	40000 euro	50000 euro	45000 euro	38000 euro
2) Membership dues	2782.23 euro	3200 euro	2957.24 euro	3500 euro
3) Other Sources (financial transactions, donations, sale of property etc.)	2709.23 euro	2800 euro	2178.79 euro	7800 euro
Total	45491.55 euro	56000 euro	50136.03 euro	49300 euro
Percent of income from the first source	87,9 %	89,2 %	89,7 %	77,1 %

¹ <http://www.coordiap.com/Document/fecris-2010-onu.pdf>

Source of income	2009	2010
1) Prime minister of France	36000 euro	35000 euro
2) Membership dues	3500 euro	No data
3) Other Sources (financial transactions, donations, sale of property etc.)	4500 euro	No data
Total	44000 euro	No data
Percent of income from the first source	81,80 %	No data

35 thousand euro, assigned last year by the Prime minister of France, had been spent to hold the annual FECRIS conference in London.

EDITIONS *les 3 génies*

© 2013 éditions les 3 génies
11, rue Chaligny, 75116 Paris
les3genies@orange.fr

imprimé par
Viaprint
101/606, Trojska st., 182 00 Prague 8, Czech Republic
viaprint@viaprint.cz

achevé d'imprimer en avril 2013
Dépôt légal : avril 2013
imprimé en République Tchèque