

Rafig Aliyev

**POWER, SOCIETY
AND RELIGION**

Baku - 2008

**Composed, proofread and made
into page at “Irshad” Center for
Islamic Studies (Baku, Azerbaijan)**

**Responsible persons: Mehebbet Seyidova,
 Nezrin Aliyeva**

RAFIG YAHYA OGLU ALIYEV

**POWER, SOCIETY AND RELIGION
2008, Baku, 76 pages**

The book is dedicated to very urgent and important issue of today – relationship of power, society and religion. Following his five-year work experience as chairman of the State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the Work with Religious Associations, the author tries to argue the view that these three vital components of public life not only interact but they are also, interdependent and intercorporated. The author thinks that their deep-laid relations represent logical bases in maintenance of the balance of power in society as whole.

**Sponsors of publication: “Irshad”
Center for Islamic Studies**

11^a Vagif Ave., AZ1007, Baku, Azerbaijan
Tel/Fax: (994 12) 441 01 32/33/34
E-mail: rafigaliyev@gmail.com

Number of copies: 1000

© “Irshad” center
© “Apostrophe”

INTRODUCTION

The issue of interrelation of power, society and religion is so urgent and important and philosophic base of their interrelation itself is so broad and deep, that it is evident that the scope of this work is not sufficient for complete disclosing of the essence of this issue: that is why we set a task to approach the issue differently and by sections.

Having studied available materials, publications of the last 15 years dedicated to the issue in question, we focused on those parts in which, from our point of view, this issue is set out not professionally, correctly and easily enough. Individual studies and publications on this issue, as it seems, almost don't indicate what is corner stone of all possible forms of interrelations of religion, society and power, namely, **interdependence** and **intercorporation**. In three conditional sections of the work we tried to give our own evaluation, overview of this issue; we tried to show that power being the vertical (governance system from top), and society and religion – the horizontal, that is the system or totality of moral values upon which these three components of public relations are rested, represent some integrated organism.

Based on such problem definition, there was made first attempt to consider their relationship and interdependence not separately, as it used to be done traditionally on the basis of accepted methodology but completely. We mean, with some exception, power, society and religion in fact have never been truly hostile to one another, never struggled for destruction of one another, to the contrary, their deep invisible but evident relations existed over the centuries and they exist now. To our view, without organic relations, the funda-

ment of power structures which rests virtually upon the society would have collapsed. The society in turn gets energy and strength to survive and to self-control owing to ethics values of religion. Without inward self-control system which is peculiar to religion no society with chosen form of government would have lived long and maintained the balance of power.

We hope author's information and subjective comments given in this book which base not only on theory but also experience will help readers to familiarize themselves with complicated and not always transparent for the majority relations of power, society and religion.

SECTION I

RELIGION AND SOCIETY

*Religion – strictly organized,
structured system of beliefs*

**Society – original laboratory of democracy
(Application and theory of secular laws per se)**

THE BELIEF AND THE LOVE... THE MIND AND THE SOUL...

(the harmony or the contradiction)

The belief as well as love in its breadth and depth has no scopes, even horizons are not seen, and no bounds.

Could the belief overcome soul and mind of human simultaneously? If yes, then what can be happened to him? Did he become slave of the unity of belief and mind? Many people call such person fanatic, ascetic, hermit, a creature out of this world or even worse insane. Unfortunately, all that is true.

Didn't Qeys fell in love sincerely, i.e. gave his soul and mind to love became insane Majnun? Are there few facts in history about ascetic people who gave their soul and mind to some idea or belief? Aren't Christian cloisters exemplified for that? The Catholic orders have been existed over the centuries and they exist now. The European annals have hundreds of evidences about such secret orders which members have suicide themselves for the sake of idea gradually, consistently imposed on them by their religious and political leaders. Aren't there few browned heads, members of their families and other distinguished figures who became victims of fanatical idea? Didn't the Knights Templars shock in due time the Europe, especially France?

Then for Europe religion was more than sacred and greater than any secular power. All autocrats of European

countries and Russia were regarded as God's anointed sovereigns. Any secular power per se has been considered through the prism of religion, particularly Christianity. To prevent true, sincere belief's interference into government many grandees dressed themselves up cardinal, or as in Egypt pagan priest. They governed on behalf of God – that's why their successors have remained and are governing up to date. The phrase "the power is god-given" became their fundamental motto not because to please the Most High, demonstrating His omnipotence and grandeur but on His behalf to rule over the community and keep people in awe of divine retribution. It was more convenient and even harmless for them to meet their imperious ambitions on behalf of God. In this way it was easy to explain mere mortal and illiterate people the meaning of their deeds, - including mean predatory crux, directed quiet often not only against the God's creatures but also against the God indeed.

History demonstrates that when **belief** turns to ideology, it is capable of much. One who perceives the belief not only with soul but also with mind becomes dangerous for surroundings – either he ceases to understand society itself in which he lives or begins to eliminate their society just because it does not meet his belief, ideals and principles: that which he has been taught by the so-called clergy and religious leaders who did him weak-willed slave.

That's why through the centuries to conceive belief and love through the mind has been inadmissible – otherwise either they loose their meaning or arming with their soul and conscience destroy everything and everybody on their way. Hence extremism and terrorism, felones-de-se – the so-called martyrs, shehids are likely to appear. As it proved, they have neither belief, nor love; there is no God for them. Otherwise they would not stand against God's will set forth in the sacred books and explode themselves at the same

time killing the multitude of others. They would not do moral and physical pain to other people created by God. If they die for the sake of belief, then it would be easier. Either every such fanatic would isolate to some solitary place and commit suicide, or like followers of Zaratustr regularly reduce food intake and physically decay, thereby approaching – in accordance with his belief – his death and reunification with divinity. In this case such people do harm to nobody.

Many religious fanatics act also in this way today. In monasteries there are individual rooms which have doors only for getting meager food. A monk freely isolates from the community and quiet often few days later his soul quits his body. For some reason the community approaches tolerantly even with sympathetic to that. The monk's deeds are regarded as heroism, considering that as deepening of belief.

Ordinary reasonable person protesting against processes progressing in society shows indifference to everything that is usually considered as egoism. But the monk is believer with strong will! Perhaps because it does not concern strongly the community proper, - that is more important – they do not jeopardize the authorities. Everybody is considered to be born free and each of them should independently choose their course of life, including the path to God. He leads only his life, only himself to destruction. On this occasion he can be regretted and sympathized but nobody intends to be indignant and to analyze this choice through the prism of the welfare of the people and community. But in vain!

Owing to the connivance of the community of coreligionists and cofamilies any form of self-destruction is encouraged. International community as usual stigmatizes euthanasia but approves those who kill themselves in hundreds of monastery solitary cells without any trial and sentence. Then what is the difference between suicide-monk

and suicide-bomber who decided to explode himself publicly, in crowd, at the same time killing others? Those and others cause pain morally and physically to people and society, and insult dignity of individual and even God itself.

Of course, it is not right to draw the parallel between suicide-bomber and a religious fanatic. The intentions and results are different. But the matter concerns the meaning of this deed and community's attitude towards such kind of deeds beyond the scope of ethics, moral and standards of living together. That's why showing indifference to religious ascetic we could support religious extremism, the worse terrorist under cover of religion.

And there the community faces the choice of harmony and contradiction. The following scheme exists: relations between development and contradiction in turn, cause the harmony and there continues further self-improvement process. But nature itself demonstrates another way of development and self-perfection. This way shows that the development is not at all in harmony, but in the contradiction. The harmony is the meaning of shorter lifetime that ends very soon. It is impossible to sow two years in a row in the same field, for instance wheat. The potential began exhausting and there comes an end to the harmony of wheat and land. But how they looked happy and nice two years ago! Now wheat should find itself another field and create new harmony, but land will be in harmony already with other sort of plant – corn, cotton-plant, etc.

I think that the contradiction is the infinite value at the heart of which is underlying a core of dawn and prosperity. All grand figures of mankind were always in contradiction with the time, community in which they lived, but some of them live in this way now. When they were in harmony with the community, there were occurred revolutions, countries faced with disasters, and the community invariably lost its

balance, because they held their places upon the society and time, as if observing the society at a height. Didn't the history, including the recent (20th century) give us hundreds of examples of such kind of concourse of circumstances worldwide? Do we live in the community of harmony and also consensus and peace today? Are there thieves, swindlers, drug addicts, killers and embezzlers of public funds less today? **Are we in harmony with ourselves when we appear on TV, press and talk in personally with friends? Not at all, and everybody knows it well. To recognize that could mean to stop to live normally, coexist rationally and conveniently to be in perpetual search of truth, harmony and ideal.** Otherwise it would mean the lost of the meaning of life, so a human being feels the end of his existence. **To live within real dimension is more difficult than in vague enough meaning of the life itself.** That's why we are seeking this ideal in the next existence - wherein everybody does nothing, does not talk and has no close relations, etc. According to religious sages, there remains only soul of human without his despicable body from which after a long fight has been freed and has a feeling of euphoria and eternal pleasure. There is no contradiction or harmony there, and everybody exists by themselves, nobody stands in somebody's way, takes away nothing from neighbor, steals and kills. True equity and indifference which we hate prevail there, there is full freedom there. They are not interested in notions like belief, love and mind. There indifference is a way of life and useful, but for us indifference is embodiment of calamity and abomination. The transition from one world to another is seen, the bridge led to the world of indifference. Aware of our end we have to profit by other wordings of the life in this world to know the meaning of life, difference of transition from one world to another!

Returning to the beginning of the conversation it is possible to conclude that belief and love should not overstep the limits of soul, emotion and feeling. **The mind in any case should coexist with the belief and the love, not becoming their slave and allowing them to pass through their sieve.** The nature has the multitude of facts and cases when unity of mind and belief, mind and love inevitably cause the both elimination. The history just knows nothing about other cases.

THE IDEA IS IMMORTAL, IT CAN BE REPLACED ONLY BY ANOTHER ONE

*The idea has immortality nature.
It is not so easy to influence upon
lucid mind and bright intellect*

Holding round tables, seminars and even conferences focusing on religion, its mission in society and politics of late has become habit. It'd be normal phenomenon, if they were based on desire to improve the present religious situation. All analysis show that those who have poor religious knowledge speak, make report at these arrangements and dispute. This incorrect attitude towards the subject can serve for more radicalization of religious groups rather than challenge for harmony and dialogue. One might say: "The grants are received, must spend manats". That's why I'd like to express my standpoint on this occasion. The essential is not only to see and indicate blemish, but also to develop mechanism aimed at improvement of the situation and minimization of threat of various religious groups' radicalization in our country that is more important. It will be important to know with what ideas our citizens – grant-receivers are concerned.

Some semiliterate people in the field of religion talking but not thinking of ideas and ideologies which are unacceptable for our society are making too much groundless panic and quiet often express opinion that as if "if it is so ongoing", soon it will be put an end to our ancient traditions and mores, and missionaries of ideas which are unacceptable for majority of our country's population can create such condi-

tions within which our identity, individuality and national features will yield to alien ideas very quickly. As if such people as American George Soros, Korean citizen Sen Men Mun, Arabian by birth Muhammad Abdul Vahhab and various Christian missionaries make our society impossible for tolerant and indulgent co-existence. I am inclined to consider such simple opinions and thoughts as having no concrete and essential ground.

I'd like to present reader a chance to compare ideas of such people as G. Soros, Sen Men Mun, Said Nursi, Fatullah Gulen, Suleyman Efendi (the last three usually are Suffii as the religion of love), V.Lenin, K.Marx, F.Engels, A. Hitler, Napoleon, J.Caesar, etc. All of them thought that it is possible to rule over the world owing to their ideas as absolute for each of them. For instance, G.Soros thinks that realizing an idea of creation the so-called Open Society inevitably will cause the essential improvement of the society quality itself. On basis of all world religions S.M.Mun has fancied to set up one – church of union, and then begun actively forming the idea of ideal family (by the example of his own) which from time to time could be prototype of society of love, peace and harmony and this, to his view, could cause the full harmony of mutual relations with all people – children of one God.

Said Nursi, the founder of Nursi movement, thought that right upbringing of future generation at the turn of science and religion will create ideal, social and economic and ethics conditions for the improvement of people's life worldwide. According to him, change of young people's mind direction under his own ethics education system was the basis for qualitative new life. V. Lenin, K. Marx and F. Engels considered that at the heart of all blemishes of the society is underlying a predatory crux of capitalist system (this view is partially true). According to them, just distribution of wealth can and should save world from the fall. Hitler believed that

a nation selected by God, i.e. the Germans should rule over the world (not Jews as it given in sacred books, particularly the Germans – the Aryans).

The Sufiis have persistently proved and continue to prove up to date that only love that they feel to each other and Allah will save and direct them at righteous way of life, at the path to reunion with Allah as Creator of all existing in the world.

There have been a multitude of such ideas and ideologies in history and unfortunately they are being existed today. The world has never been without fundamental ideas and ideologies and today it is also doomed to exist with such ideas. The de-ideologization of society also concerns such partly delusion-like fantasies.

Thus, relay race of grand thinkers, politicians and religious figures and simple ideological dreamers is passed from generation to generation and there is no wonder. Each of them, for instance, evidently G. Soros takes a great pleasure in spending of his own millions for the realization of his own ideas, using enormous number of people, including in our post-Soviet space. For him our countries and nations are ground and true laboratory of living beings. He imagines countries as laboratory to experiment on his own ideas.

The distinguished ideologists understand that it is impossible to kill no idea neither with sword, nor bullet, even or atomic bomb, - it is not substantial. It has no physical properties, as an idea of God or God itself. That's why **such ideas have very important quality – immortality nature. The idea can be replaced only by more reasoned, more well-founded idea taking into consideration all cobweb of the time, way of life and peculiarities of thinking.**

Currently some of the above-stated ideas are ongoing to hold strong position in thoughts and behaviors of our generation. Who can claim that ideas of Caesar, Napoleon and

Hitler at the heart of which it was underlying war, G.Soros – color revolutions, S.M. Mun, S. Nursi, Abdul Vahhab – directed to change the way of thinking and social behavior of people have no supporters today? They exist also much among our compatriots especially young people who lost to all appearances not without any objective reasons, social and political and ideological guiding lines.

One is clear that it is not so easy to influence upon lucid mind and bright intellect. We have a great deal of such people. But the trouble is that today except mere negation and knock there is nothing to oppose with these ideas yet. Of course, it is difficult for ordinary person to comprehend which of the ideas presented to him has more evil or good, and to all appearances there is clearly a need the alternative ideas.

History teaches that any idea can be presented so that it becomes very attractive and even vitally important for all society and every human being, - potential object. But this idea requires much finances and faithful people. I.e. we again return to the beginning – roughly speaking, to the brainwashing mechanism of certain group but through them to the greatest part of the community. Actually nobody will accept you with empty-handed. This is undeniable fact. Even if they accept, they won't comprehend and attempt to distance from you. They need two things at least:

- a) provision with concrete material benefits or
- b) well-founded hope for the rather improvement of welfare.

Of course, it'd be better to have both arguments, success of an idea most likely will be guaranteed.

As already mentioned above, the idea can be replaced only by idea. Others, including power factor, usually, do not cause the good, on the contrary they can give converse effect, i.e. persecuted idea will become stronger and task to put an end to that will be more difficult.

That's why it'd be useful for us to take into consideration this historical experience of human development, especially since it has quiet real outlines and logical explanation. Our geopolitical situation and international authority, independence and sovereignty dictate that.

POLITICS AND RELIGION AGAINST BACKGROUND OF MORAL VALUES

Any form of freedom including religious one is restricted by laws currently in force in the state, and it is not allowed to overstep their frames

Recently public figures, politicians and journalists started paying more attention to religious factor. They get into the habit of using of the religious terms in their speeches in the course of different workshops and press conferences. Series of “round tables” are held, and participants attended them guided by their knowledge discuss urgent issues related to the role and place of Islam in the life of not only society and individual but also state as whole.

It gives impression as if a number of political and public groups seriously intend to solve social and economic, moral and even political problems of the country generally with the help of religion, - in our case - with the help of Islam.

However, it must not be ruled out that all this is done only to win support of followers of Islamic movements and groups acting in Azerbaijan. The fight for votes and minds of believers is going on. And not only political parties and movements are “fighting” for consciousness of our citizens, many religious currents, including extremist and radical ones are also involved in this fight.

Much was said about existence of such movements and appropriate measures in compliance with laws currently

in force were taken to bring their activity to the frames of Constitution.

As usual power doesn't advocate strict measures and bans taken against those who do not believe so as they want that. Necessary measures should be adequate to the appropriate situation, not overstepping the legal frames.

Power has always held the view and it adheres that now that religion should stay outside the politics but religious men are obliged to follow regulations of the Constitution and laws currently in force in the country.

Citizens of Azerbaijan have the right to belief: the General Law of the state guarantees it. And those who attempt to "encourage" state to ban any religious currents legally, blaming the state for being overdemocratic, forget about the facts of our recent past, - history of USSR, - when ban was imposed on any religious current and purposive fight against religion – the so-called remnant of fanaticism - went on for 70 years. The further course of history and results is well-known.

Moreover there are fresher examples: in 1999 Vahhabism as religious current was outlawed in neighbor Dagestan accordingly to decree of the chairman of State Council of the Republic. Radical vahhabits went underground, however, it didn't lessen their influence on society. And figures prove that: during the Soviet Union in Dagestan, the most Islamic region of the Caucasus – only 27 mosques functioned in 12 districts and 4 cities of Republic. By late 1994 there were 720 mosques, 8 Islamic high schools and 111 medreses (religious schools), and following data of 2000, in Dagestan there were already 1.594 mosques. To-day in the mentioned Republic there are more than 2.150 mosques and 438 educational institutions (of them 17 are Islamic ones with 45 branches). Over 5000 people get

higher religious education there; approximately 15 000 study in Islamic educational institutions.

The said Republic outran not only such traditional Muslim subjects of Russian Federation as Tatarstan or Bashkortostan but also Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan that have incomparably rising population. The fact that today population of Dagestan is just 2.5 millions should be taken into consideration.

Thus, not comforting results of endeavors directed to solve the urgent problem related religion with the help of bans and administratively are evident.

Therefore principle approach of Azerbaijani authorities to the issues concerning the relations of state and religion drastically differs from those which are given in many mass media. It is obligation of state to create normal conditions for its citizens in compliance with the law of religious freedom which guarantee free choice of religion and to form religious communities in which everyone can practice his or her religion.

Of course by no means it should be understood as some unlimited freedom. Any form of freedom, including religious one, is restricted by laws currently in force, and it is not allowed to overstep their frames. The power is guided particularly by this very principal approach to buildup its relations with religious communities.

In this connection it should be underlined that some journalists assume great responsibility by emphatic and publicly suggesting the authorities to ban activity of any religious movement on legislative level, arguing their negative view of alleged use of religion by these movements for political purposes, or by intention of a number of Protestant movements to turn Azerbaijan to Christian country.

Moreover, they also criticize authorities for being excessive democratic in respect to religious currents and

movements, for a while forgetting about the rights of people to freedom of religion, though following its significance right to belief takes the second place yielding to the right to life only as fundamental human right. That is why such kind of “concern” unfortunately is rather connected with lack of knowledge of authors of such articles about the essence of the issue and the authorities' policy about which they write.

However the problem related spread of radical religious currents in our country really exists and it has been existed for a long time. It is due to many factors of social and economic, political and geopolitical nature. As regards the foreign impact upon this complicated and many-sided process, then, as it seems, it is not of primary importance, though it finds itself only in negative aspect.

No matter how strange it sounds but today the main attractiveness of religion is not religious ideas itself, but unsuccessful awareness raising of other ideologies including liberal, social and democratic, national. Perhaps the majority of politicians have already exhausted their potentialities to affect people's sentiments, drawing them to their side with unreasoned promises of soonest improvement of welfare, providing just distribution of national wealth, building of real west model democracy, removal of unemployment and poverty reduction, rapid solution of the problem of return of occupied territories etc.

They have nothing to do but to trust in God's will, but as is well known the Almighty loves only those who have pure thoughts, and He judges by intentions and by deeds.

Those who want to use religion as the way to reach their political goals can't really rely on God's help.

Holy books teach us that unlike human being the Almighty knows everything; He can't be deceived by physical transfer from one party to another or by formation of some new blocs with selected political figures as chance to be un-

derstood by believers. As for deeds of many politicians they can't mislead even the naïve. **The old saying tells that the trust is like sugar, the cheep is the price of the wet one.**

To think that solving of current problems is possible with the help of religious postulates is naïve with no long-dated perspective. Most likely such intention is designed for "once-only time", moreover it is proclaimed with intonations of liberalism, democratism and secularity. The religious dogmas are not meant for liberalism and full freedom of deeds. All religions are conservative indeed that is why they exist for centuries. Apparently, this historical truth is not regarded by liberals and democrats in their choice of the means to achieve their political goals.

Nevertheless today we witness how true religious values are replaced by imaginary political passions. Finally the society will end up losing as a result of which the community may loose the faith not only in politicians or religious men but also in God Himself due to excessive tolerance to politicians' blasphemy.

To speak on behalf of religion and to put moral values of Divine Books on political map is at least political immorality: I have no doubt in this respect. The meaning of politics, that is possession of their "individual" religion by politicians, per se contradicts to Divine content of religion – so to speak.

The essence of this "political religion" is not of divine nature, it is close to earthly affairs, more physical needs rather than spiritual. Medieval men of genius were right in their times when they separated politics from religion. This action which defined in advance the further way of development of society for hundred years hasn't lost its urgency and significance today.

Consequently the way to power should be searched for with the help of different ways which would be in line with public morality currently existing in society, and religion

should be left for soul, which is not less important than the power.

THE CULTURE OF BELIEF IN AZERBAIJAN

Belief in God should penetrate human heart, be formed in consciousness and be reflected in his deeds

We find different definitions of the notion of “culture” in dictionaries and philosophic works. Latin term “cultura” originally denoted “grow”, “bring up”, in Middle Ages gained the meaning “city way of life”, and later it was transformed to the notion “sign of personal perfection”. Mainly in this sense culture is of interest to us as only in this way we can speak about culture of morality and culture of belief.

The culture of belief in Azerbaijan, we may say, remains almost unstudied field. In Soviet epoch majority of Azerbaijani philosophers thought it unnecessary to speak about it: on the basis of generally accepted research methodology of that time it was considered that study of religion in close connection with then existed lack of culture - ignorance, fanaticism and inventions – more corresponded to “social order” of the ideology of Soviet society. Due to antireligious policy realizing by state, even traditional way of life, Muslim moral standards and valuable criteria were partially forgotten in Azerbaijan. At the same time socialism failed to bring forward new values instead of religious ones that could be deeply rooted in consciousness of citizens.

Having lost traditional Muslim values, people failed in full measure to comprehend new ones to pass them on from generation to generation. Within such non-typical, “off frame” conditions our society embarked on the path of independent

social development, transferring to new public, political, cultural and economic formation.

In short period of independence and transformation the society opened up for different foreign ideas; the interest to religion, cultural heritage and religious values as integral system aroused. Strangely enough it led to some uncertainty and inconsequence in social conduct of citizens of the country: every individual actually got entangled because of existence of notions, started behaving inadequately in one and the same conditions sometimes forced to think one and to do another.

There appeared natural contradiction between deeds and mind – that is, speaking in more acceptable way, unbalance of soul and mind became distinctly seen with some emotional derangement. With a view of these circumstances it became urgent to study the issues concerning the morality in society. In this connection study of not only culture of belief but also its' fundamental signs and criteria of its appearance is of great importance. Right understanding of issues related this problem is important for right building up interpersonal and state-religion relations in Azerbaijani society of today. It seems to me that it is necessary to take this issue into account in upbringing processes realizing in families, schools and high schools of Republic.

And what is the culture of belief itself?

To answer this question first of all we should find the answer to following question: what level of culture of belief do have religious people, assumed due to their social status of presenting and propagandizing this very culture? Maybe, first of all, tutor himself should be well-bred. In this case, at what level is the education of moral "leaders" in our country?

Of course by rising this issue I'm not going to make only religious men responsible for low level of culture of belief. We all are responsible for culture of belief of individual,

social groups, religious communities and finally whole society. However first of all religious men, clergy and preachers should assume this responsibility: at least because of the fact that believers and unbelievers, regardless of whether they want it or not, expect prototypes of due, worthy and exemplary conduct from religious men within the frames of culture of belief.

Undoubtedly during the years of independence level of professional knowledge in the field of religion raised in our society; more precisely unlike the Soviet times, persons speaking on behalf of religion don't enhance atheist ideology with their conduct. To the contrary: having gained religious education they try to inform people about religion on the basis of science or at least knowledge close to science gained in different countries and high schools, however, the lack of due, basic religious knowledge restricts their potentials.

However even this phenomenon contains certain danger: first of all, those who speak on behalf of religion think that they know all particulars of religious issues and they are ready to solve problems which faces people in their life on basis of religious standards and canons. Secondly, quiet often religion is totally separated from culture: professional religious men hold that religion itself is culture, and any clergyman is bearer of this culture. Such approach entails false opinion that religion doesn't need culture. And such delusions deprive religious knowledge of their peculiarities, the frontier which defines universality of this form of knowledge is overstepped whereas Islam itself doesn't advocate such excessiveness: "But do not transgress limits; for God loveth not transgressors" (al-Bagara, 190).

Nevertheless the main problem of culture of belief is self-knowledge of believer. Not without reason wise men said: "When you come to know yourself, you come to know God". Need in self-knowledge and the world that surrounds

us is reflected first of all in religion. Different versions of religious conception of real world (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, Brahmanism, Zoroastrism etc.) emerged at result of endeavors to satisfy this need of human soul and mind. The new question arises – what forms of manifestation has this self-knowledge? Is it true self-knowledge or arrogance, denial of everything which is “alien”? Islam doesn’t welcome arrogance: “Enter ye the gates of Hell, to dwell therein; and evil is this abode of the arrogant!” (Mumin, 76). Consequently if intolerance, fanaticism, extremism and terrorism alien to religion are condemned by any ways, then misunderstanding of religion and nervousness and fear regarding it should also be referred to the lack of culture. Thus, wearing headscarf is ancient deep-rooted tradition of Islamic culture, - the sign of woman’s freedom and inviolability. Wearing of headscarf is privacy of every woman and forced uncovering of head under the pretext of progress with shouts “headscarves off!” or any compulsion to wear it also demonstrate the lack of elements of culture of belief.

I think first sign of culture of belief should be the level of general culture of person. I mean elementary level of culture which usually forms in family, elementary school and it starts from the ability to read and write correctly, to express one’s thought precisely. Today many of those who speak on behalf of religion lack for this merit. Judging by their speeches it is not difficult to guess from which regions they came from, where they got education, what religious current they represented. However in Azerbaijan culture of belief requires eloquent speaking in Azerbaijani language and right reporting of the Word of Allah not distorting its true meaning. In the absence of such elementary culture, it is impossible to speak of culture of belief and religion at all.

One of the classic showing of the culture is morality that is why study of the issue of relations between religion and morality may help to rightly understand culture of belief. Ideas of believer about morality, his behavior and deeds represent special dimensions of his attitude to the world.

Islam considers that trust in Allah is manifested first of all on lips – man pronounces witness of trust in One God, then trust penetrates heart turning to conviction and only after it, it starts reflecting in human deeds. It is formula of love, the great and devoted one, in this case – not love of human to human, but love of human to God. If such bright, conscious belief doesn't disclose in human deeds, then there is no need to speak of culture of belief. If mullah attempts to gain more money from organizer of funerals and to leave earlier under the pretext of performance of prayer in time, then such meetings loose neither religious nor upbringing values, as funeral repasts are organized not for the dead but for alive.

In general, traditional and habitual forms of funeral repasts show that culture of belief in our country is at very low level. There is no such notion as "funeral repast" in Islam. When it was touched upon, academician, Ziya Bunyadov, used to say: "Don't pray for the dead! If he deserved God's mercy being alive then with your wishes you show that you are against Allah's will". And though this phrase doesn't reflect the whole essence of problem it has certain impartial meaning.

Islam welcomes expression of condolences, however, it doesn't welcome people's gathering at funeral repast in order to express dry condolence to relatives of the dead and then talking about secular affairs at the same time smoking cigarettes. Accordingly to Islam condolence implies rendering material and moral aid to relatives of the dead before funeral.

The culture of belief of our religious men and their striving for material enrichment emerged under the influence of some prohibitions connected with not only funerals at the Soviet time, impede rehabilitation of true Muslim traditions of funeral and establishing public control of this field. For example, menu proposed at funeral repasts becomes various along with improvement of living standards: new meals appear on the table following silent consent of “mourning” mullahs and their senior “chiefs”; superfluity peculiar to our weddings gradually reaches funeral repasts. But Islam strictly condemns such superfluity “...But waste not by excess: for God loveth not the wasters” (al-Anam, 141).

The culture of belief requires from a human being to understand its true and deep essence. Trust in Allah should penetrate human heart and be deeply rooted in consciousness. Perhaps it may occur only when people who regard themselves as believers come to belief whereby they will be accounted for their deeds, intentions and their attitude to everything existing on the earth.

Summing up the above said some conclusions can be made:

- **culture of belief as integrated, closed system of relations between human being and God, himself and outward things, being formed for years that is a part of common cultural level of individual;**

- **religious man may represent the culture of belief only when his belief penetrating through consciousness and mind, will be reflected in his deeds, and when his words won't differ from his deeds;**

- **today we can only speak about the start of formation of such culture of belief in Azerbaijan; the course of this process itself will depend on how our society is ready to distinguish true belief from religious fanaticism, extremism and any kind of intolerance.**

I'm convinced that finally only strong state and efficient governance will be able to provide citizens with normal conditions for making right choice, maintenance of faith and belief and harmonious development of society in which religion and democracy, traditional and liberal values have chance for simultaneous development being mutually supplemented. Only in this case we can speak about harmony of freedom of religion, democracy and law as modern rich culture existing in our country.

DO WE BELIEVE RIGHTLY?

The world history is rather history of beliefs. Everyone believes accordingly to his level of knowledge of God

Today world experiences fast spread of religions and also development and growth of sectarian movements, relations of which sometimes pass into open confrontation.

Some experts in religion from West Europe and USA more often draw attention of world community to radical Islamic fundamentalism which allegedly causes such religious revival in connection with which the global fight against Islamists and Islam as whole is called on. Unfortunately, they don't take into account or maybe they do not want to take into account the fact that their fictitious antiterrorist actions, including armed fight against the so-called global terrorism which for unknown reasons is associated with Islam, promote fast spread not only of Islam and Christianity, but also different kind of destructive religious sects and fellowships. Thus, as we may see, as long as global confrontation is spoken about actually different political projects are realized. And creation of objective conditions, now in vogue, to start religiously motivated global confrontation is artificially speeded up. Such not totally well-weighted actions in compliance with unbiased situation directed first of all against followers of the last Divine religion – Islam, as expected, yield no result. Muslims who do not associate their future with promised democracy but with return to their historical beginnings, - that is, fundamentals closely twisted with Islamic

moral values and local traditions. It strengthens their feeling of self-preservation and self-defense still more.

As is well known, such confrontation and interreligious wars took place not a once in the history of mankind. Actually no war could do without involvement of religion since the beginning of our epoch; many of them were solely of religious nature. Therefore approaching of the start of global interreligious confrontation which following west model of dreamers must and can turn to the Third World War is nothing else but possible repeat of bloody wars of the history but now on the world scale with application of the latest weapons including weapons of mass destruction invented by great scientists – people regarded as the best creation of Nature. Geniuses of science and technology, unfortunately, directed their high intellectual skills to invent such weapons which will be able to destroy not only all the Earth but also will make the Universe give a start. It gives an impression as if people are born to create new types of weapons, only competing in annihilation each other. Since the first day of creation a human being people launch for life and death struggle each other.

With such a simple, but at first glance quite logical raising of the issue, many complicated questions still remain unanswered. What to do? How should we respond to all heard and seen today? What is it: is this the start of the end of the world, predicted by ne'er-do-well Nostradamus, and now being proved as real fact by modern political “clairvoyants”? Or we should think where “civilized” people from different countries of the world are helpfully pushing us to? What are they lacking for? Maybe, someone wants to repeat “feat of arms” of Alexander Macedonian, Julius Caesar, Vladimir Lenin or Adolf Hitler? As biography of these people or uniting them fixed idea on governing of the whole world are known. So they failed.

Such fantasies always brought calamities to people, in turn, they resulted in failure for “fathers” of such harmful ideas.

The world history is rather history of beliefs. That is why we think that those who want to govern the world (alone or collectively – these are trifle) are at least believers. Accordingly they should have understood long ago that world is not governed only by forces of secular nature. Century-old historical and worldly practice clearly shows that peaceful living is necessary not only with neighbors but also with the Almighty God: it would be the most natural and simplest answer to all our questions. But in order to live in peace with God it is necessary at least to be friends with neighbor not claiming to properties of others, - the path from the wish to be master of the alien property to own misfortune is the shortest one, and it is known to all thinking and respectable citizens of the world.

We need history for better understanding and explanation of ongoing complicated processes in relationship between followers not only of different religions, but also in relations inside one religion. It is necessary for our citizens to understand that contradictions sometimes even taking forms of factions between followers of different religions are natural just like existence of religions themselves. It should be taken coolly and tolerantly at the same time not allowing the raising of these conflicts to higher level.

It is apparent from the above said that contradictions are inside the structure of religion itself. Having one Holy Book and one Prophet, in practice people understood the meaning of God’s Word differently; they interpreted and commented the actions of their Prophet even in his lifetime. From this reason different versions of Gospel (from Luke, John, Matthew etc.) as well as different judicial schools and currents in Islam followed. That is why many scholars come

to opinion that internal religious contradictions, no matter how paradoxical it is, from the start represented the main factor of preservation and the spread of any religion's influence. Here is the key to many complicated questions. Why did sectarianism appear? Why even followers of one and the same religion sometimes hate and cast doubt on each other?

We understand that it is impossible to answer these complicated, moral and psychological questions by giving real facts from the history of divine and world religions though such examples are more than we can imagine. Nevertheless we do not advance guided by them.

Historical facts and events of two millenniums of our epoch should set our minds at rest in connection with the fact that religions exist just because of followers of any religion let themselves to trust in God differently. The main conclusion: if everyone believed the same way (what is impossible) then religion wouldn't exist, and the notion of "religion" would disappear. History of Christianity is vivid example: division into Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Protestantism and hundreds of different confessions as well as the scores of forms of practice of religion and belief. If we add frequently observed facts of intolerance occurred even between three main confessions then one can imagine what has been remained from the practice of belief of early Christianity of the time of Prophet Jesus and his 12 apostles.

The same complicated picture can be seen in the history of other divine and world religions: though the essence of belief itself under any circumstances remains the same, unchanged, however, forms and methods of belief in God are very different. That is why every believer sees the way to the Almighty differently, that is, everyone believes in his/her own way and, for the most part, wrongly. This "wrong", as we may guess, creates acceptable conditions for preserva-

tion and spread of religions. Thus, the advent of different confessions, denomination, sects and groups of believers is quite understandable.

Religion is original form of belief, and everyone understands and believes accordingly to his level of knowledge of God. Probably, no one believes the same way as there have not been sent the same prophets and Messengers of God. They were all different, though they truly believed and called on their followers to come to believe in One God.

Thus, one may agree with view that the transfer of religious consciousness across the generations usually takes place at result of the advent of different forms of beliefs; at the same time everyone has chance to seek the path to God with the shortest and easiest way. Believer has variants, - scores of different variants, including expectation of the second coming of Prophet Jesus or imam Mehdi who to rehabilitate justice on the earth and to punish the faithless, that is, as we may guess, the ones who believe wrongly represent the overwhelming majority. Where the majority is, there govern their rules, thoughts and hindrance. So, as usual people will believe wrongly in the future. But the principal moment is that it wouldn't impede others to do the same – to go on believing in God in their own way.

SECTION II

RELIGION, SOCIETY AND POWER

**(Morality – Religion,
Democracy – Society, Law – Power)**

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND POWER

The law is one in the country, religions are many. General Law can consider only universal religious values for majority

It is known from the history that on the territory of present-day sovereign Azerbaijan there were many religions. Zoroastrism (fire-worshipping) is regarded as the ancient one. Even today temple of fire worshippers is visited. History of Albanian Christian churches traces back to the early IV century of Common Era. The Albanian Christian Church eliminated in 1836 by Synod of Russian Orthodoxy (at the time when Azerbaijan was a part of Russian Empire), managed to preserve some constructed tumbledown temples. Today three such churches, situated on the territory of present-day Azerbaijan, are restored, and they represent our national heritage. Recently owing to the efforts of the Government of the Azerbaijan Republic Alban-Udin church was reconstructed and Alban-Udin Christian community was registered. History of our country is full of many wars, but we are always proud to say that none of them has been religiously motivated.

As is well-known, religions constitute the essence of morality. We believe that conditions for normal functioning of society can be available in case if state has completeness of supreme power, and social and political and religious organizations can positively influence upon open institutes of public authority. Law guarantees normal development of so-

ciety owing to activity of state executive structures and referring to traditions and habits, which mainly have their origin in religion. State regulates social, economic and moral fields of society. Strange though it may seem they are closely interconnected. Thus, state must provide equal conditions for activities of all religions. It is a guarantee of tolerance and indulgence among religions and confessions.

We know that laws are directed not only to preservation and defense of the rights, but also to certain restriction of freedoms, which is peculiar to human nature. This is considered as normal. Holy Scriptures of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and other religions contain restrictions rather than permissions. And so truly religious people should accept and respect laws adopted by their states.

Our task is somewhat to explain people, - believers and unbelievers, - in widely available way, that only strong power rested upon morality, is able to ensure freedom in society, to defend religion itself, freedom of religion and belief. Therefore quiet often the goals and objectives of state and religious structures coincide in many respects.

General Law is one in the country, religions are many. The law can not take into account all elements and peculiarities of all religions accordingly: it can take into account only universal and generally accepted values, and on this ground buildup its relations with believers, attributing convictions and beliefs to privacy of everyone.

Over past 15 years Government of Azerbaijan endeavors to provide as many conditions as possible for religious practice. In mid-March of 2003 the inauguration of the largest synagogue in the Caucasus and the main Cathedral church of Orthodox Christians was held in Baku. Despite in Azerbaijan the number of Catholics is not large, in March 2008 the Catholic Church was opened. As the saying goes,

a historical injustice has been rehabilitated (the Catholic Church was destroyed by Bolsheviks in 1930). Muslims and Christians have been involved in construction of three praying houses. They assisted financially and they were directly involved in construction. Cathedral church of Russian Orthodox Eparchy, built in 1907 by Azerbaijani millionaire Z. Tagiyev almost hundred years later was completely reconstructed by one more Muslim, accordingly to religion, - businessman L. Gurbanov.

The Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan (1918-1920) was the first secular republic among all Muslim states in the East, where all religions and beliefs had equal protection of law and religion was separated from state. It was for the first time in the country with Muslim population. Thus, in Muslim world a historical example – the model of state-religion relations was established.

The Republic of Azerbaijan follows this tradition today. This equality of rights is enshrined in Constitution and it demonstrates availability of religious diversity in our country. At the same time power strictly observes the principle of separation of religion from the state. Indeed, it defines just political and ideological nature of authority in our country. Criteria of ethics and morality, including national and moral values are closely connected with religion and they exert certain influence upon the nature of power.

In present-day democratic society it is necessary to form some model of peaceful co-existence of religion and secular state. State endeavors to put into practice this idea and to derive benefit for religion and society from it. Probably that's why a number of arrangements – international conferences, symposiums, workshops, “round tables” etc. with the participation of different religious communities routinely are organized for this purpose. It is appropriate mention that with rare exceptions these meetings are very useful.

We would like to underline that recently religion is used for other goals, - particularly for terror and extremism. Thus, speaking about freedom of religion and belief, we shouldn't forget about negative role of many religious leaders and groups waging wars under the cover of religious slogans in the history of East and West. Even today there can be cited many examples concerning the use of religious beliefs of people purposely to start the wars and to conflagrate bloody conflicts in different places worldwide. In addition to respecting for people's beliefs sometimes we should cast serious doubt on them. Not all beliefs, - including religious, - are pure and serve for good. Acts of terrors under the illusive religious slogans caused the lost of innocent people, are committed, I am sure, only by people with distorted religious beliefs. The community should be able to distinguish good beliefs from the harmful. We advocate purity of religion; we advocate that government itself should help citizens in religious awareness-rising and in right choice of belief, providing with more information about religions. It can be realized in schools and higher educational institutions. And mass media should play their role in this respect. Generally this is the task of the society, community and each of us.

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF COEXISTENCE

State represents the supremacy of law, but the essence of law is morality and spirituality. Theoretically it must be so.

The problem of “Religion and state” is referred to important element of strong governance system built on fragile balance of ideology (belief) and power. All mankind is concerned with this intractable problem which influence upon destinies of all citizens worldwide. In other words, the problem mostly comes through sieve link between human beliefs and his concrete actions.

Many people are mistaken not making differences between the role of religion and beliefs in democratic society. Often people don't go into the particulars of these two notions and probably due to this approach such notions as terrorism, extremism, religion and beliefs and their interconnection remain unclear not only for ordinary citizens but for persons involved in this sphere long ago. Because of lack of knowledge people often mix freedom of belief with freedom of religion and conscience.

Freedom of belief is recognized as one of the fundamental human rights in many international pacts, conventions, resolutions, and we may say, that it is enshrined in constitutions of all world states, including the Constitution of the Azerbaijan Republic.

But we should take into account the fact that human beliefs are not restricted with religion only. Freedom of belief is regulated by laws and realized within domestic legislation.

If we review history we will make sure that people's beliefs including religious ones quiet often have been conflicted with their actions. In the community as well as in family, issues of belief often turn out to be primary factor for rise of the range of complexities and conflict situations.

Terrible wars, tragic conflicts, repeated changes of the map of the world, creation and the fall of empires, - starting from ancient times up to our days, - not always happened due to people's striving for power. Beliefs and often religious ones represented integral part of this ruthless and senseless fight. Historical facts prove that wars waged in the name of religion or under the cover of religion caused not less bloodshed than World Wars I and II.

Destruction of Jerusalem by pagans, fall of Roman empire late IV and early V centuries at result of spread of Christianity, crusades, Muslim conquests, inquisition of the Middle Ages and other known events and facts directly connected with religious beliefs once again prove that beliefs formed as religion not always achieved success and leadership in society through peaceful way, in order to gain power often force and weapon were resorted to.

And the matter does not concern the Divine essence of religion, and we mean different approaches towards understanding of this essence and practice of religion in society.

Right after September 11, 2001, there appeared many people starting to relate terror and terrorism in general to religion. Unfortunately, there were also those who called Islam as religion of terror. Years have passed since this tragedy, but yet no one wants to show courage in order to clarify the issue related presence of connection between religion, religious beliefs and terror of such scale. Some people cautiously point to connection of religion with terror and extremism, others make efforts to prove absence of any connection between religious beliefs, terror and extremism, thereby in-

sure religion and religious organizations which are not always dealt with purely religious affairs. Amongst these organizations, of course, there are those which are involved in terrorism; through their bank accounts they render financial aid to organizers of terror acts. Certainly, this is the theme for other consideration. Now we are talking about another subject.

As is well known, religion and beliefs are not abstract notions. Terrorists, extremists and people who sacrifice their lives for the sake of religion are not virtual subjects. Actually they are real persons and each of them has religion, nationality and citizenship.

If we just make superficial analysis of the events took place in XX century or in the past 50 years we will be sure that presence of religious factor in “ideology” and “politicization” of present wars and conflicts is beyond doubt.

Events of the passed years particularly Israeli-Palestinian conflict, long tragic confrontations between Catholics and Protestants in Ulster, first and second wars in Chechnya and finally occupation of 20% of territories of Azerbaijan give concrete, non-prosaic meaning to the above said.

The religious factor affects these wars and conflicts which entail numerous victims, in some of them religion and religious organizations play the role of ideological support. For example, the Armenian Apostolic Church supports endeavors directed to peaceful regulation of Armenian and Azerbaijani the Upper Garabagh conflict by words. To date this church hasn't recognized that the mentioned conflict is result of Armenian policy and always considered Azerbaijan's territorial integrity without the Upper Garabagh. In 1988-1989 the Armenian Church supported separatist goals of Armenians of the Garabagh.

Thus while considering the role of religion in democratic society attention should be paid to original peace loving nature of Divine religions and Holy Scriptures, at the same time, activity of people who practice religion should be considered through the prism of laws of democratic and civil society, and, religious leaders' role and responsibility in civil society should be defined taking into account their great authority.

This responsibility should represent at the least appropriate response to privileges gained by religious leaders for some known reasons, from authorities in democratic society. These privileges even can be found in civil rights which international and national legislations guarantee.

While analyzing ongoing processes in society, it becomes clear that for protection and complete guaranteeing of human rights and fundamental freedoms including freedom of religion, democratic society needs strong power and efficient governance. This generally accepted postulate has been also observed by fathers of democracy in Europe and USA.

These two important factors for society are directly connected with people's morality and beliefs.

I would like to make readers acquainted with some conclusions and considerations concerning problems of relations of state (power) and religion (belief) which quiet often are at issue.

1. I am sure that not tanks, cannons and fighters should stand on front lines of the fight against religious extremism but real religious figures and influential religious leaders who would be courageous to proclaim "spiritual jihad" in the name of preservation of integrity of democratic society citizens of which they are themselves. In this fight an official notion "religion is separated from state" should be moved into the background and soci-

ety should be freed from such terrible disease as extremism and terror with united efforts. The dimensions of this joint activity should be clear and comprehensive enough. Religion, religious leaders and religious organizations should promote the strengthening of state authorities owing to their activities in the field of spirituality as strong power has broad opportunities for full guaranteeing of freedom of belief and freedom of religion.

Such close cooperation shouldn't lead to rise or decrease in rights, privileges and authorities of any part. It should be recognized as special form of joint struggle for universal peace.

2. In my opinion, one of the integrated parts of fight against extremism and terrorism is rightly organized religious awareness-raising. Society shouldn't feel the lack of information about religion. However religion itself shouldn't turn to be primary field of information. At the same time information about religion shouldn't be given by religious men only, it should be available in other sources. The State should give such necessary information. Generally, it will weaken inclination to religious fanaticism and provide objectivity of presented information.

Administrative persecution of persons who are strongly fanatical attached to religion and treating them as inferiors provoke underground activity which fosters spirit of "romantic revolutionists" especially in young people. This may play a fundamental role in development of terror and extremism in any society with sound image.

3. State and religion represent two important elements of the society. First implies the rule of law, the second – essence of the law: morality and spirituality. The power, morality and spirituality virtually supplement each other in life of the community. In other words, power

and adopted laws of secular nature as a result of moral and spiritual criteria together play a significant role in society.

Law should protect morality and spirituality. History shows that power in comparison with religion has inconstant nature, and any power deprived of morality and spirituality loses its meaning for majority of country's citizens. Traditionally morality gets feeding from religious values. Therefore **state and religion need each other, they are necessary for each other, however, it should occur only within conditions of autonomous coexistence.** The history has no convincing facts or successful practice proving the contrary. Here the main question is solved. What kind of autonomous coexistence should be in order not to deprive policy of spirituality and morality, thereby creating conditions for keeping true essence of Divine religions and determining social status of religion in society for playing regulating role of social relationship in the community that should not impede the State?

4. In society guided by democratic principles the State should provide equal conditions for all religions and beliefs. State shouldn't deal with promotion of any religion. I think that one of the failures of long-lasting inter-religious dialog is particularly presentation of religions as privileged, traditional, non-traditional and destructive and establishment of relations with them on this base. If the matter concerns a belief, we should know whether it is harmful or not, useful or not for society. If harmful belief takes the form of religion then it should be seriously resisted by society and state should assist it. Fight against harmful form of belief spread under the cover of religion shouldn't be considered as encroachment upon freedom of religion. Unfortunately some international organizations have such approach to this issue namely. **The Constitution is the only general law for citizens practicing different religions and ideologies.**

For religion and religious men spirituality of people and their religious views of course represent priority field of activity. Without involvement in policy religious figures and religious men upbringing high moral and morally pure people would be able to fulfill their sacred mission and, at the same time helping the state. They can be useful to society if they prevent turning ultra-extreme religious fanaticism to extremism and terror. To my view, it can be considered as a optimal form of autonomous coexistence in relations between religion and State in democratic society and, these relations, in my opinion, should be built on this very fundament.

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE AND PRAYER

On 21 June 2003 International Conference on “Religion and Democracy: Theory and Historical Practice” was held in Baku

I would like to share ideas and thoughts which occupied my attention that day in 2003 with readers. It is known that the United Nations Organization proclaimed June 21 of every year International Day of Peace and Prayer. Accidentally or not but 3 years ago, that is, on June 21, 2001, the State Committee for the Work with Religious Associations was established accordingly to decree №512 signed by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev.

6 months before the start of the Conference, of course, we couldn't think that such pleasant coincidences could have happened. We preferred the first day of the week – Monday. Of course *Friday*, *Saturday* or *Sunday* could have been chosen but as these days are special for followers of Islam, Christianity and Judaism, we guessed that every believer must be in mosque, church or synagogue, and it would be sin to offer them not to go there for the sake of scientific conference.

So, we have chosen Monday – the day convenient for everyone in all cases and remote from the day of prayer which is sacred for believers – contact with God.

Therefore coincidence of three main events once again makes us believe not only in Creator, but also in some invisible mechanism of regulation of our mutual relations on

the earth, in society as well as the Almighty's wish to fill them with morality and love.

Topic of the said conference "Religion and democracy: theory and historical practice" is urgent not only from the standpoint of religion, philosophy and policy, what is very important today, but also in respect to possibility (or necessity) of interaction of the two important elements of our life, our existence.

We all understand and assume the fact that people have always had belief, and it may forever remain in life of everyone. But today the majority of countries and nations live not only with belief inside, but also in accordance with the laws of democracy – generally accepted laws which sometimes are inconsistent with strict religious canons. Particularly these laws actually create relatively equal for everyone conditions of coexistence and normal labor, providing and guaranteeing invariability of freedom of choice, speech, actions and they also regulate relationship between members of the community regardless of their nationality and religions.

There already exists general view that religion is more ancient than democracy. Canons and dogmas of religion are unchangeable and they can't be subjected to reforms in compliance with new public and political conditions. People, no matter how they wish it, are not allowed to change Divine Laws.

The laws of democracy changing from time to time have been improved and this is due to its' nature which is constant. It seems to me that principles of democracy appeared earlier than divine religions. They existed in their primitive form even when first people appeared on the Earth. The selection of a chief of tribe was realized in the time of traditional when no divine beliefs existed yet. Certainly, today it is not so important when religions and habitual for us

notion of “democracy” have been arisen. Their actual existence today as real milestone for our existence is essentials. Therefore **relations of religion and democracy today can't be referred to simple issue. They finally define vital capacity of existence of every nation, state and world as a whole.**

Today many people talk about approaching of global clash of civilizations, cultures and religions. I think it is considerable estrangement from the essence of the problem itself. Everything depends on possibility of co-existence of religion and democracy. I know, - religious figures may say that religion is the best democracy as it is sent down by God Himself to establish peace and accord between people on the Earth. I have no argument against it. Over centuries religion regulated life and actions of believers. Sometimes it describes in details when and how something should be done; religion contains precise notions of what is permitted and prohibited. It seems as if the notion of democracy itself is not necessary at all. What is the use of it?

Supporters of democracy may say the contrary: the law is one and religions are many. At present relations between nations and states can't be regulated only by religious regulations. Yet there are no universal religious regulations which would be accepted by followers of, at least, 5 world religions as just and equal for everyone. No matter how hard theologians and high rank clergy tried for centuries but they failed to find religious criteria which could satisfy all 6-billion population of the Earth.

The principles of democracy are more universal and they can be applied without serious restriction of human rights regardless of whether they imply belief or not. Unfortunately it is impossible in respect to religions. Tolerance in them has clear frontiers. Outside the “red line” heresy starts which places man outside the

society of believers; actually those have no right to be equal within all principles of religious dogmas.

However it is likely to be hundredth visible side of contradictions between religion and democracy, but people, nations and countries need both – religion and democracy. Actually it is not necessary to try to oppose these two real forces of the world community, though since 2000 a number of politicians and religious figures' efforts aimed to find a real way for separate existence of religion and democracy, claiming more significance of one of the both for world's destiny is in rise. It led politicians and religious leaders and also the mankind into a dead end.

As a result of that we have what we have. I won't talk of real destructive results of this incorrect confrontation. They are well known for everyone today. I would like to underline possibility of the contrary, that is, close interaction of religion and democracy to buildup peace and accord in society.

Leaving the frames of what religion permits, I would compare their unity with community of body and soul. One without other means almost nothing in the real world and will loose their importance. Democracy without spirituality is destined to failure: almost everyone knows about it. The religion without democracy and modern democratic institutions is unable to establish peace and accord for us.

What is the matter then? What is the reason of wars, violence, terrors and fear about the future? All these of course can be explained differently: because of lack of more steady spiritual guidelines, by constant deformation of the essence of democracy itself or by both.

If we accept this point of view then whole world is destined to death, however, it seems to me that we have no right to think of this version as real.

I guess that the reason is in the second part of the name of the topic – in contradictions between theory and historical practice. It equally concerns religion and democracy. **Unfortunately today we have to state about the fact of lacking of more or less ideal state built-up either accordingly to religious dogmas or accordingly to principles of democracy.**

Nevertheless we have historical experience of the countries of Europe and East: it is a long-lasting coexistence of power of absolute monarchy and democracy which are contradicting each other by nature and structure. And many examples can be given in this respect. It gives additional chance to seek the prevention ways of many contradictions between religion and democracy.

Today as you may understand I can just emphasize the statement of a question: what kind of our actions should be in order to neutralize the danger which can lead to disastrous consequences for the whole world? I think that existence of such danger – judging by development of events at least of last five years – cast doubt on nobody. **Despite the whole might of democracy and prayers of religious figures, the world faces with very serious danger today. And the alarm is already given.**

History teaches us that house collapses as rule in two cases: when the fundament is not strong or when people provoke God's anger. For our peaceful living as life itself teaches us we should act rightly in both cases: to lay strong fundament in compliance with the principles of democracy, and, naturally, not to be the object of the anger of Divine forces. For this reason religion, as a code of Divine laws, and democracy - as way of life invented by the best creatures of God should work not for the selected nations and countries but for everyone and equally. Then the life will be

as fairy tale: with Command of God and wish of human being.

THE BALANCE OF BELIEF AND POWER

Any property is the product of consciousness. If one possesses consciousness then he possesses property as well

This chapter is focused on religious movements which of belief turned to ideology of future power that they want to establish. Training of skilled people capable to govern the community with total influence on consciousness, social conduct and power of course is very difficult work. The statement of the power related question and efforts for its solution require, at least, two decades. For this period of time through the thin sieve of religious intellectuals some hundreds and sometimes thousands of young people who are ready to make serious decisions and to realize plans of gaining and maintenance of power in their hands for a long period of time should pass. Gaining of power for this formed stratum of society can't be regarded as an end in itself. The main thing is that the power should be gradually passed to them democratically. Hundreds of well-trained religious intellectuals are assumed to maintain this power.

On the area of Turkic language nations and states one of such movements is represented by the so-called Nursists – followers of well known Said Nursi, who died last century. He founded his movement and for a long time he was in prison in Turkey. Fatullah Gulen who is not less famous than his teacher successfully continues his work now. F. Gulen lives the life of emigrant in Washington. Turkish authorities took a dislike to his way of thinking and plans still 30 years

ago, and how do matters stand now is difficult to know. Nevertheless not a few supporters of his ideas directed to synthesis of science and religion for the sake of “happy society”, were found in Azerbaijan – here they appeared in 1992. Over 15 years F. Gulen’s ideas are used by our high-educated and intellectual young people. F. Gulen’s followers who established close cooperation with Azerbaijani side educate them, Gulen himself finance all mass media and educational projects. Graduates of his lycées have already become remarkable part of society. They take no interest in power itself but they are interested to gain opportunity to dominate over the individuals for a long time, thereby keeping them in the power of ideas belonged to the said Nursi. **The domination itself – without hegemony of ideas – is essentially regarded as temporary, transient, - per se governance tool with the help of laws. The key thing is to govern people by ideas, which became norm of life for them, obligatory attribute of existence.** In the East such form of government had been always demanded from those who were at the head of the society and government. It is important today and what is more important such goal can be achieved –Iran and a number of Muslims countries can be exemplified for speaking about it. Or is it possible to imagine for example Britain of today without ideas of absolute monarchy? Even to think about it is abusive for pure Englishman. There are many such states in Europe. Such form of government exists over the centuries and what is more important it justifies itself. In these countries the societies' need the alternative ideas is minimum. Only immigrants who like Englishmen, Dutchmen, or Swedes need ideas for soul and mind may think so. Lack of them, as we observe today, causes the mass actions, disorders in the cities of France, England or other European countries. As it proved, these people are rather displeased by the lack of ideological

guidelines in these societies than by their social and economic state. That is why authorities are not able and most likely will fail to find the ways to their hearts – as the ways to change their aggrieved consciousness have not been found. Being close to Frenchman no migrant regards himself as equal to him, and probably this inherent complex of ideological insufficiency, inferiority can't be compensated with any decisions of social and domestic nature. Unfortunately, for some reasons everyone tries to establish the reason in lifting of public and economic problems of these people, however, as it seems to me, this factor is just auxiliary motive. The reason is the lack of ideas capable to be the main in their social conduct. If French authorities build the latest buildings for them providing all immigrants with work and grants, even if in this case peace will be temporary – the lack of ideas which unite these individuals sooner or later will be obvious. There can be found many other reasons for vandalism, disorders, and burnings. **That is why ideas play decisive role in our life – they direct our consciousness in making decisions.**

This once again proves that power over people's mind is more important than secular power as such – even with the most unlimited rights and authorities. These two forms of power are incomparable; however, when they are in one and the same hands, such power is strong and long living. I think those who stake first of all on mastering consciousness not properly understand it well. **Any property is the product of consciousness and if one possesses consciousness then he possesses property as well.** This is a long but right way tested by time. Even the Almighty before considering His actions takes into account the factor of consciousness – factor capable to change the way of thinking of man created by Him, His slave whose consciousness as history of thousands years shows sometimes oversteps the line

drawn by God. The Almighty regulates relationships with people, taking into consideration this important factor. Holy Scriptures sent down by the Almighty teach us that sometimes way of return of man to within established limits runs through the hell, atonement, humiliation and other forms of punishment invented and prescribed by God in the Books.

I guess that the last paragraph can be considered as conclusion made up from the above-said brief talk.

GAME FOR LEADERSHIP: POWER AND RELIGION

(Conversation with reader in form of interview)

All religions have specificities of fundamentalism. It conditions on longevity of religions.

- Which, in your opinion, religious currents and their branches are radical or inclined to radicalism in Azerbaijan? Particularly two currents are mentioned: vahhabism and nurism. Do you agree with it or you have different opinion?

- I think it is well known that any movement be it political or religious and also community of like-minded persons have general regulations of public conduct nature. Mainly it is due to psychological state. In this case at the mentioned conference and other workshops held during the said time, radical Shii wing was ignored. One thing yet can't be understood: who is interested in it? As Vahhabism religious and political movement in the mid XIX century became ideological base for creation of the Kingdom of Saudits (present-day Saudi Arabia). But present authorities of this country have to combat radical wing of Vahhabites. Shii current of Islam became state ideology and base for preservation of statehood in XVI century with active participation of Shah Ismayil Khatai. Since then shiism only sometimes, especially at the time of shah reign was receded into the background by political leadership of the state. However, today radical wing of shiism is active in Lebanon (Hezbollah), in Syria and other countries worldwide. Azerbaijan is not exception in this con-

nection, and recent development, and also present situation in some regions of our Republic prove that.

Naturally every religious current has moderate, conservative-passive and active-radical followers. It'd be wrong to keep silence or to say that amongst followers of any religious current there are only moderate followers. That is why I think that religion related picture of today in our country is more or less clearly seen through the prism of equal and just attitude to all religious radicals, regardless of their beliefs. Amongst followers of Said Nursi (the so-called Nursists) yet no active-radical people like members of two other currents was noticed, however appearing of such shouldn't be excluded taking into consideration the history of creation and spread of Nursism. Nursists – who support coming to power by moderate way, by upbringing of a great number of educated young followers of the current. In addition, Said Nursi's ideas are not wide-spread in Azerbaijan today. At present the leading role belongs to some Fatullah Gulen who is successor of Said Nursi, with the headquarters in Washington and wide net of education and mass media structures in Russia, Central Asia and also Caucasus. 90% of education and mass media systems created by Fatullah Gulen in the Caucasus fall to the share of Azerbaijan.

Thus, to date three main “players” are sitting at the religious map of the future of Azerbaijan:

Vahhabism, Shiism, Nursism.

The first and the third are referred to sunni mazhab despite each of them understand differently the essence of religion itself and during a certain time even the meaning of the Noble Qur'an.

To all appearances all stakes are made, and the rest is in the hands of power. It is wonder, what step will take the State, will it win or loose? Today it is likely to be the most urgent issue related system of mutual relations between

state and religion. Serious “players” are at table with grand experience and immense capital: financial and intellectual.

- How do you think what is the role of religion in globalization process? Is it possible to return religion to the path of morality? Could say, belief is for soul, but policy – for mind and business...

- It is appropriate mention that the word of fundamentalism most recently was in vogue and everyone with pleasure spoke about Islamic fundamentalism, forgetting that fundamentalism and conservatism are almost single meaning notions. Actually any religion in the broad sense of the word is “ill” with fundamentalism. If it were otherwise, then no religion would survive till now. It is just like conservatism in England, where king (or queen) is the head of Anglican Church. Mainly because of that after overthrow of Shah’s regime in Iran in 1979 the West opposed the prominent rapid revival of Islam which was partially dangerous for them. That's why because of lack of another notion implying all negative specificities attributed to Islam they attached the word of fundamentalism to Islam. Now nobody recalls fundamentalism, the Vahhabism which is on everybody's lips. Unlike supporters of an intensive fight against fundamentalist phenomenon, this time a part of Muslim religious figures declared war against Vahhabism. As a result, the West and Christian world achieved this very turn of events - one might say catching the snake with the hands of neighbors. A part of Muslims joined the ranks of staunch defenders of war against radical Islamists, ignoring the fact that soon war would be declared to all Muslims – radicals, moderates and to the ordinary people who are not aware of these political games (if we guess that such war has not started yet). However very reasonable question rises: “Was it possible to avoid all this?” I think unfortunately it wasn't. In the second half of XX century and in the beginning of the present there

are religious factors on any political fight scene worldwide which are likely to be in future; it was necessary at the time of “cold war”. To my view, real are thoughts of those who guess that if there were no idea of atheism at the bottom of Marxism ideology, it would not be so easy to oust it from the scene of big policy and vehement strife between capitalism and socialism. As is well known, the socialism was based on the main elements of Marxism ideology. Therefore, following the collapse of Marxism in Soviet Union which caused the end of “cold war”, active phase of war on another ideology began (not on belief but against ideology) – the war on Islam that is religion of 1/3 of population worldwide started. Apparently, because of lack of another means of resistance they resorted to methods of fanaticism, extremism and suicide-bomber (i.e. terrorist - kamikaze).

If Islamic world were well developed, strong and armed as West, then, according to radicals, there would be no terror and terrorism as weapon of revenge; in this case they would have classic way successfully used in the East and in the West during the history. Unfortunately, history – including present one – gives us many facts which confirm this subjective opinion.

I think wise men will understand me. But for others it is not so easy to explain complicated issues progressing within the limited financial and economic processes on the path to conquer religious and political and new markets, sources of incomes. Everyone counts his money, despite the amount it is not enough. Commodity-money relations have been always represented the base of state institutions in the history of mankind. No society and no country are free from this main human vice of all times, and even tribes in the depth of Africa or South America have it. That is why religion itself - including Islam – played no active key role in global processes and historical changes and it would be so in future

also. It is strange but everything is in the hands of politicians. Religion itself is just some peculiar and necessary tool in fight for a great piece of real great cake called “Capital”.

SECTION III

LAW, MORALITY AND DEMOCRACY

(Tragicomedy of three actors)

“THE LAW AND MORALITY” – CRITERIA OF MAN’S CHOICE

*A person shouldn't be indifferent
to other's grief. When grief is in-
dividualized, its' burden becomes
heavier*

(Article is written on June 13, 2004
after acts of terror in Madrid, Spain)

The Law and morality: throughout the centuries these two notions have been existed and now exist as a stem of human behavior in compliance with rights given to us by our morality. How moral we must be not to violate the rights of others? The number of those saying “Bullet which flew next close touched my brother, - and thank God” has grown. How is right a person who got accustomed to the most appalling psychological state the name of which is - “indifference” when he tries by all means to prove appropriateness or rather compliance of horrors which sometimes shocks the whole world with principles of International law?

The most outrageous event of this month happened in Spanish city Madrid. As result of acts of terror innocent people died – hundreds of murdered and wounded. Many people are condemned to be disabled for the rest of their life. These dreadful acts of terrorists which are far from common ethics caused heap of grief and sufferings. Whoever these terrorists are enemies of all the mankind. These monsters of cruelty having killed and crippled many people attempted at hopes, purposes and future of others, - including, of course,

ours. Our hopes for peace, rest and happy future gave one more deep cracks having become more vulnerable and fragile.

Returning to indifference and analyzing what we have now, following conclusion can be made: world for a majority of people on the Earth has changed, - it became complicated in respect to observation of ethics and **right of choice** of any actions.

Yes, someone chose terror and killing which frighten people. Today even in the morning the most indifferent person taking electric train, can't enjoy landscapes seen out of window. Not depending on himself he is tormented by thoughts whether there is any infernal machine which in one moment may turn his life to nightmare in the center of civilized Europe. Unfortunately, the matter concerns the Europe of XXI century, which voluntarily not asking anyone took the right to dictate everyone to live and to work in accordance with standards accepted by it, - the so-called "standards of democracy, the rule of law, justice and morality; standards of equal attitude to all countries and nations".

Do matters stand in such way indeed?

Doesn't tragedy in Spain resemble the echo of Khojaly, only now reached the ears of Europeans? Isn't it the result of indifference and carelessness towards sufferings of others or of double or even threefold democratic standards of Europe applied to other countries?

It is already 16 years that some European democrats and socialists, conservators and reformers don't want to assess and confirm an evident proof that **"...yes, dear Azerbaijani nation, we understand and share your grief. We see irrefutable facts of barbarian cruelty and inhumanity after watching films devoted to the genocide of Khojaly. Yes, those who committed these outrageous killings are worse than terrorists, as they killed looking into the**

eyes of still alive men hearing the prayers for mercy. Sneering at old men, children and women they killed them; and the state of woman holding her one year old child expecting bullet from Armenian soldier, can't be described by the most gifted writer or by the distinguished psychologist in the world".

This is embodiment of fear and love, state of evaluation of the good and the evil, deep disappointment and disbelief in gods who allowed to create such monsters enjoying killing others even.

They are those who are alien to humane sufferings and do not understand true meaning and essence of the words "law" and "morality" cannot comprehend all that, feel sympathy towards victims, not sharing their grieves, and do not try to unmask the people resorting to such barbarian acts.

Certainly one could say that "the tongue ever turns to the ailing tooth". I agree and share your view, but I have been astonished by the fact that nobody has gone to foreign embassy representing interests of Spain in Azerbaijan in order to express their condolence and sympathy to the country which faced such tragedy. It is not less terrible. It means we have lost the feeling of compassion. We prefer also to be indifferent to others' pain.

I'm convinced – we shouldn't return mutuality as far as indifference is concerned. Certainly, we have moral right to do so, however, our morality should not accept it: we cannot and should not behave in this way, because our fathers and grandfathers taught us the otherwise.

For last 5 years we have taught many things from Europeans. However, example of their attitude to our tragedy, - genocide committed by Armenians towards Azerbaijani nation, - shouldn't make us to forgo our morality. The Europeans should not be exemplified for us in this respect. **Virtually the morality is higher than law and in such**

cases we should be faithful to ethic standards and centuries-old traditions.

The feeling of compassion and sympathy to others' grief relieve the sorrow. When someone shares his sorrow he becomes soothed.

Of course, we share the sorrow of people who lost their relatives, friends and express sincere condolence to relatives, generally to Spanish people. Once again we are backing to fight against all forms of terrorism and extremism, calling all nations of the world to fight not only against terror but also indifference. Terror and indifference feed one another. The indifference is a passive aid to terrorists giving them confidence in their impunity, thereby affording them to continue their heinous crimes – killing people. This is so indeed.

Only understanding and right evaluation of bloody events took place in the world can help to surmount terror and easily to endure its consequences. Our universal solidarity can give us confidence in victory over terror as “plague of XX century”. However we should confess that in the world we are living in today there still exist certain objective and subjective prerequisites as well as “justification” for existence of the terror. To my view, we won't be wrong saying that those who create the said conditions are companion in terrorists.

To date while wars, bloody conflicts and occupations contradicting to principles of International Law and ethics take place which do not face proper fight and political and economic and financial interests are more preferable to law and ethics, we'll be kept in awe of the same terrorist who violate our peace with his actions for long, taking away feeling of compassion.

WHAT PREVENTS THE DEMOCRACY VIRUS FROM FIGHTING AGAINST THE DICTATORSHIP VIRUS?

All vices of human being, unfortunately, is a product of consciousness given by God

(Political pamphlet with tears in the eyes)

Recent developments took place in Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and the Upper Garabagh resulted in arisen of deep break in the system of international law. The law is very sensitive substance and mutual relations between all nations and countries that are integrated elements of that naturally are regulated in compliance with generally accepted principles and mechanisms. This process cannot stand unwarranted interference. The one who violates the principles of International Law should be punished with all strictness of the law.

Unfortunately, citizens of planet Earth for a while now have started to get used to another. Now the strong "beats" the weak one who due to their weakness violated some articles of the said law and specific regulations of social law. The fight against them is carried out not within legal regulations, but in compliance with war law, very strictly – without trial and investigation. This fight caused "international lawyers' " great shame, destroys the generally accepted principles of International law through echo of explosive rockets, shells, "martyr" (suicide-bomber) belts.

And judging by TV broadcasting we can conclude that all this does not arouse not only usual for us state of psychological shock but also even the slight feeling of compassion which is gradually vanishing.

However, apparently, nothing is so gloomy: recent execution of one innocent Italian in Iraq shocked all Italy and many European countries as mass media informed. Perhaps the matter is that human soul due to psychophysical nature can't be indifferent to so much pain and sorrow goes through witnessed everyday.

If to act as human nature dictates then world can turn to the great ward of intensive care. Maybe the saying "self likes itself best" exists for centuries for such case, and as some French philosopher told, "impossible to cry for the whole world, just one should be chosen". Now everyone cries near his boat, heap guarding his carriage.

Every hour radio, TV, press and other mass media "overload" us with so many things that little engine called "heart" and also soul shrinks from the horrors of what is heard, seen and read: in turn mind refuses to help the soul as a guide and filter of incoming information.

Sometimes it seems that mind has just stopped to analyze everything which going on: "...in April over 1200 Iraqi people were killed; war caused death of 70 soldiers of the coalition forces". At first just "killed", then – "war caused". Remarkable precision of words used by correspondents of the world TV channels: "killed at war", "war caused".

As a first case there will be communal grave from the gathered parts of human corpses, for the second – ceremonial funeral with giving all tributes including firing volleys for the heroes of modern super democracy.

Probably everyone who "are not killed" and "not gone" should often recall not those who gone by the wind but those

who gone by terrible, merciless war and already needless war.

The above said point to the end of international law which is milestone of such new democracy of XXI which has been unknown for world political science to date. By the completion of build-up of basic elements of this system, perhaps, there won't be a serious need International law as such democracy doesn't need additional conglomerations, especially, - the more so as some arrogant gentlemen from Europe and America invented it once while drinking tea or whisky, then adding the notion "international" to this word.

If we watch closely we will see that representatives of several nations live in every country, and the same law could have been created in these countries attaching the word international.

It follows from such simple logical formulation that we can get many international laws as result of which once established law psychical and physiologic potentials of our hearts that currently are unable to take fantasy of "fathers" of democracy are exhausted. But International Law impeding some all-knowing and wealthy people to make their "global fantasy" real idea, having supported it with practical affairs will vanish in itself.

They say that some countries and nations have not been selected for test in itself, i.e. "not by chance". The test is just for the selected – just like healthy rabbits in biologic laboratories that turned to be sick due to injection of virus to their organism. But we all know as the saying goes everything is done for saving the sick people, - for the sake of the good deed. It seems as if these nations "selected" are not well explained the essence of historical experience realizing for approbation of new system of democratic principles. The "virus of democracy" is already brought in, organism has re-

acted, immune reaction started, clockwork is ticking and result will be known later.

Incubation period of different kind of viruses is not the same. Now everything else is just adverse effect of test. Maybe dictatorship virus blocks action of the virus of democracy, as the latter has never been dominant in Iraqi society. Nevertheless to have two viruses in one and the same organism is not desirable, however, apparently there is no way out.

Now we are waiting for the end of fight between two viruses, invented to decide organism's destiny which is weak and exhausted. However judging by information of international democratic laboratory, one more the third one virus enters it – virus of religious fanaticism and extremism allegedly as balancing “spiritual and biological” element. Medical men say that if these three independent from one another viruses live in one organism then this phenomenon can be called in advance “golden discovery of XXI century” having granted all possible awards and medals to it.

We have nothing else just to observe how democracy virus fights against dictatorship virus and what virus of religious fanaticism will do in case the former ones weaken, thereby failing to be adapted by organism.

From biology and medicine we know that virus represents “thing”, - actually it is not the living organism and functions like robot. But medical men have doubt in one: they do not study the virus of religious fanaticism completely and it may turn out to be of another kind and nature once compared with other viruses as its “conduct” and structure doesn't fall under logical or electron and microscope analysis. Such unexpected and strange element impedes civilized fight between viruses of democracy and dictatorship that is quite “legal” and has been approved over centuries.

Not much time is left.

Just little patience is needed to wait.

Rafiq Yahya oglu Aliyev was born in Aghdam region of Azerbaijan in 1947, Doctor of Philosophy, Professor, founder of “IRSHAD” Center for Islamic Studies since 1990. He worked as chief of section, deputy director on foreign relations at the Institute of Oriental Studies, director of the Center for Islamic Studies in the Caucasus of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences. On 21 June, 2001 he was appointed chairman of the State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the Work with Religious Associations. Since 27 June 2006 he is director of “Irshad” Center for Islamic Studies.

Rafiq Aliyev is member of Professors’ World Peace Academy, International Interreligious Committee. Author of 12 books and more than 250 scientific articles. Married, has two children.

CONTENT

Introduction	3
Section I. Religion and Society (Application and theory of secular laws per se).....	5
a. The Belief and the Love... The Mind and the Soul.....	7
b. The Idea is Immortal, it can be replaced only by another one.....	13
c. Politics and Religion Against Background of Moral Values.....	18
d. The Culture of Belief in Azerbaijan.....	24
e. Do We Believe Rightly?.....	31
Section II. Religion, Society and Power (Morality – Religion, Democracy - Society Law – Power).....	37
a. Relationship between Religion and Power.....	39
b. The Basic Principles of Coexistence.....	43
c. The International Day of Peace and Prayer.....	50
d. The Balance of Belief and Power.....	56
e. Game for Leadership: Power and Religion.....	60
Section III. Law, Morality and Democracy (Tragicomedy of three actors).....	65
a. “The Law and Morality” – Criteria of Man’s Choice.....	67
b. What Prevents the Democracy Virus from Fighting Against the Dictatorship Virus?.....	71
Content	76