



Original Article

Soul and its Implication in Philosophy, Medicine and Religion

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Abstract: The reality is that soul and death are the integral part of human life. The soul is the essence of life as fuel is the energy that runs the automobile or the light that makes the eye see. We all see the human body when the soul leaves and the human body is left senseless and ultimately dissolves into the earth. Why we do not have knowledge about soul where this element is the integral part of our human life. Most of us are not aware about this and do not like to research on it even do not discuss in life time. There is hardly any study on soul. Western bioethics totally omits discussion on the soul, though they discussed on “good death”. Only religion discussed soul elaborately specially Islam. No literature is available from Bangladesh. Therefore, the present study has been done to expand the body of knowledge on soul in the light of current theory with a view to aware people for further research for understanding and comparing with concept of philosophical, religious and medical variation.

Key words: soul, philosophy ethics, bioethics, religion, medicine

Definition of soul: Soul is divine and immortal, is the self of a person¹. In evident based scientific inquiry, soul is the life force, the theory of functioning of physic in causal and categorical sense². Self or person is the identity, the reflection of a knowledge of our beliefs, personality traits, physical characteristics, abilities, values, goals, and roles³. According to contemporary social science personality is cultural conditioning and biological make-

up^{4,5}. Though soul and spirit usually is use as synonym but there is little difference. In Islamic religion, the spirit is the command of Allah, is our *true entity, our being*⁶. Soul is boundless and immaterial, the self, the mind, our identity or consciousness⁷.

Mind is the conscious mental events and capabilities in an organism *phenomenally it manifests* feels, desire, belief, thinks, emotion that is the thought process that



can be experienced and help in the survival chance of ourselves and our species⁷. It is act by non-material (soul) and material (Brain) as a unity. So mind is the

composite of the information-processing processes of the brain⁸. Therefore, mind is the synonym of soul.

Soul in philosophy: Homer (800 701 BC) attributed the soul as person, or quasi-person that exist after death. He spoke soul only in the human beings which endures after a person's death in the underworld. Thales of Miletus, (611 BC - 545 BC) proposed soul is a magnet, in a sense magnets are capable of moving iron. Pythagoras (570–495 BC) thought that plants have souls like human⁹. Pythagoras had described the soul consists of three parts—intelligence, reason and passion. The seat of the soul extended from the heart to the brain, passion being located in the heart and reason and intelligence in the brain¹⁰. Heraclitus (535 – 475 BC) agree with Pythagoras and proposed there are two type of soul. the dry soul, is the wisest and the best” and moistness of soul, abilities of soul be impaired due to drunken¹¹. Heraclitus also said soul has connection with motor functions and must have a logical faculty⁷

Socrates (470–399 BC) considered the soul is the psyche, an eternal, the essence of a person to behave as being⁷. (Britinica 2019). Reflection of thinking on soul by Plato (428-427 BC) and Aristotle (384 -322 BC) were present in their book *Phaedo* and the *Republic*; and in the *De Anima* or *On the Soul* respectively. Their broad conception of soul was that the soul is not only responsible for mental or psychological functions like thought, perception and desire, moral qualities and

also functions vital organ of a living organism. According to Plato Trichomy theory of soul enter into body function and exists even after death and able to think

and transcend (metempsychosis) in subsequent bodies. He considered the soul has three parts. The *logos* are related to reason that control the other parts, located in the head, the *thymos* located near the chest region and is related to anger and the *eros* located in the stomach and is related to one's desires. Where in a city or an individual, justice is declared when three parts fulfills its function as a whole, while temperance each part or interfere then justice does not attempt⁷. In Aristotle dualism the soul and body is the composite of human. Aristotle felt that man is born with a blank slate (*tabula rasa*) on which experiences and perceptions are written to the mind¹². (Aristotle 350 BCE). Epicureans (341–270 BC) believed everything was composed of atoms. He disagreed with Plato and Aristotle that plants were ensouled⁷. (Britinica 2019). However, during Hellenistic era in the 3rd century AD Stoics attribute the soul was responsible only for mental and psychological functions¹³.

Avicennian (981–1037) doctrine of soul in his "The Ten Intellects" attribute the nature of the soul that was influenced among the Scholastics. Immortality of the soul is a consequence of its nature of law, and not a purpose for it to fulfill. According to his theory, human soul as the tenth and final intellect Avicennian theory of soul Aristotelian base with a strong Neoplatonic superstructure¹⁴.

Religious Scholars philosophers claimed that soul is essence, a non-matter, a reality, concealed within materials body and

administers the body under influence of soul. Hence the soul is a metaphysical reality, but at the same time has a direct communication with matter and the body of man and conduct it.

Soul in Religion: Moses and Jesus did not say anything about soul. Christian accept the notion of Plato's trichotomy to church through Augustin (354–430 BC) to Aquinas (1225- 1274) when Christian became the state religion in the 4th century AD. Chastain tradition believed the agony of body and spirit in material universe and then transcend to God. Some who have conviction in God revelation and belief Torah, Bible and Quran. Their conviction is that the same book has been revealed by God one after another on most obedient choose people of God. But latter Torah and Bible had changed by Roman and Greek wisdom. As the Quran is the latest religion and written by the time of prophet Mohammad, no part can be deviated. And also Quran is the vast knowledge of soul, death, burzek and hereafter. So we can learn religious verdict about soul, death, burzed and hereafter from Quran in detail which is the Islamic laws, ethics, and prescriptions for life.

In Hebrew nefesh or ruah refer to wind or breath. In the Old Testament says God formed man from dust, and breathed into his nostrils; and man became a living soul^{15,16}.

In Christian eschatology, after death souls will be judged by God according to their deed and after resurrection they will be rewarded to heaven or hell. It is interesting that, in the 6th century the bishops Council of Maçon had to vote to decide whether women had souls¹⁷.

Hindus believe in traducianism. According to Hindu "soul" is the eternal, unchanging and infinite cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. Our souls are continually reincarnated in different physical forms according to the law of karma, a cosmic law of moral debit and credit. They belief the soul exists before the moment of conception. In 3rd century BC, Buddhism, does not belief the soul is eternal and transmigrates from one life to the next. They belief that karmic flame is the consciousness is the "soul"¹⁸.

Soul in Islam: The Arabic word the *nafs* (soul) and the '*Ruh*' (spirit) which is the cause of life. The spirits are the first creations¹⁹ the *command* of Allah²⁰ closest to Allah, a part of Allah. *The soul is the self, the mind, our identity or consciousness. Personality or ego is the ever changing different levels of consciousness.* Soul is constituting with the moral and religious orientation. Deviated of this orientation soul become evil⁷.

*"When I have fashioned him (in due proportion) and breathed into him of My spirit, fall ye down in obeisance unto him."*²¹. And also '*O Mohammad, they ask you about "the spirit". Say: "The spirit descends by the command of my Lord, but you have been given only a little knowledge"*²².

Our soul was created by God much before our long birth and committed there is no Lord other than Him¹⁹. Below verse of Quran reminds us about the commitment made between us and Allah before our birth. So that no one can say we did sin as our forefather did. Why Allah you will punish us for their sin. This confirms that

we had an existence and conscious before our birth.

“When your Lord brought forth descendants from the loins of Adam's children, and made them testify concerning themselves (saying) Am I not your lord? They replied: we bear witness that you are. (this he did so) so that you should not say on the Day of Judgment that we had no knowledge of this.” 173 Or lest ye should say: “Our fathers before us may have taken false gods, but we are (their) descendants after them: wilt Thou then destroy us because of the deeds of men who were futile?”²³.

All the living creature such as animals, plants and other living organism are obedient to Allah, exalt Allah and never forget to their promise to Allah. But only the human and Jinn forget His order entering into worldly world. Some can remember and some cannot. Some can remember at least once. According to their conduct in the world the immoral soul, the human and the Jinn will be reward and punishment in the hereafter.

“Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth exalts Allah,¹ and He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise”²⁴.

And

“[O men!] Follow what has been revealed to you from your Lord and follow no masters other than Him. 4 Little are you admonished”²⁵.

First soul created: Allah made human soul as special from His own breath, give conciseness and free will and give preference above all the creation. After creating Adam, the first human from clay

Allah provide spirit from him and commanded all angels to prostrate the Adam.

“And We did certainly create man out of clay from an altered black mud. 27 And the jinn We created before from scorching fire. 28. And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, 29 “I will create a human being out of clay from an altered black mud. And when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My [created] soul, then fall down to him in prostration”²⁶. And also “When I have fashioned him (in due proportion) and breathed into him of my spirit, fall ye down in obeisance unto him”²¹.

However, Shaykh As-Saduq in his book Creed said that the soul of Muhammad is the first soul created long before the creation of Adam (A) is in conformity with Prophet Mohammad (PBU).

Prophet Mohammad (PBU) said: *“The first thing which Allah created out of nothing were the blessed and pure souls; then Allah made them declare His oneness (Tawheed); and after that He brought into being other creatures”¹⁹.*

How other Souls created: Allah created Hawwa (Eve) the mate of Adam from the same nature and soul. From them, generations of human beings are being lived in the earth.

“It is He - Allah - Who created you from a single being, and out of it He made its mate, that he may find comfort in her”²⁷.

And

“He it is Who created you from a single being, and He it is Who made from it its mate. He it is Who created for you eight heads of cattle in pairs. He creates you in your mothers' wombs, giving you one form after another in threefold depths of darkness. That, then, is Allah, your Lord. His is the kingdom. There is no god but He. So, whence are you being turned astray”? ²⁸. And

“Oh humankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honored among you in the sight of Allah is the who is the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)” ²⁹

Are these verse indicate the cloning human embryos and stem cells? Cloning is derived from a single individual as a result of non-sexual reproduction an organism with an identical genetic make-up³⁰. Every tissue can be formed from cloning to repair and replace the pathological tissue and organ of human. Thus scientists hope to treat cancer, diabetes, nervous tissue disease, heart disease, immunity disease and genetic disease as well³⁰. Is this verse being direct concomitant with human cloning in Islam? Not only this verse, many verse of Quran indicate for the cloning, human embryos and stem cells development process. Again and again in many verse Allah said *He provide all the information's. There are many things to research for knowledgeable persons.*

However, human cloning is not permitted in Islam probably there are many ethical, leagal and medical concern. Little is known yet about potential side effects of cloning. How to determine the age of clone person? Does it count from their birth or the date of birth of the donor? There is possibility of jeopardized biological diversity of the species, human rights, freedom, dignity. There is possibility of trade of the cloned body and organs, abortion, killing trade of slave rate may increase^{30,31}.

However, Quran also depict some unusual birth by the grass of Allah's will. Allah gave Zakaria the son of Yaahia at his old age when his wife was no longer capable of gave birth baby ³². And the birth Jesus (Children of Israil) without touch of any man. Birth of Jesus was like the creation of Adam develop from nothing at Allah's will.

*“Surely the likeness of Isa (Jesus) in the Providence of Allah is as the likeness of Adam. He Allah) created him of dust, thereafter He said to him, "Be!" so he is). This is the truth from your Lord; be not, then, among those who doubt”*³²

Quranic verse say other souls are down to the earth through Engels by the order of Allah except Adam.

“The angels and the Spirit descent unto him” ³².

Harmony between souls: 'Love at the first sight' or hate at first sight are not just present in cinema. Souls are meet and have experienced these inexplicable feelings at one time or the other ¹⁸. (Shaykh As-Saduq 1942). Imam Ja'far as Sadiq, the sixth descendant of the Prophet Mohammad said: Allah established brotherhood

between the Souls 2000 years before creating the bodies. For this reason, when the Imam Mahdi (A) will appear, man will alliance to him in brother of spirits but not the brother by birth¹⁹.

*“And the Prophet has said, the souls are like a collection of armed forces, whichever souls knew each other (in that world) are attracted towards each other (in this world) and whichever remained apart and aloof there are repulsed from each other (in this life).”*¹⁹.

Phenomenological, our bodies emit electrical currents, that electrical waves are in harmony with ours, we are attracted to and if the waves are not in harmony, we instantly dislike that person. But Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) explained that the primary cause of attraction or repulsion is for the spiritual world¹⁹.

The soul during death: According to hadith, when a person dies, the soul travels from feet to the throat and the eyes roll-up as the soul travels and leaves from body. *‘When the soul is taken, the eyes follow it.’*³⁴.

The soul after death: After a person dies, the soul is taken to the heavens by two angels and its fate depends on its state of righteousness. According to a hadith of Abu Hurayrah who said:

“When the soul of the believer is taken, it is met by two angels who take it up...” (The narrator said: then he mentioned its good fragrance and scent of musk). The people of heaven say, *‘A good soul that has come from earth, may Allah bless you and the body in*

which you used to dwell. Then they take it up to its Lord, may He be glorified and exalted, then He says, ‘Roam with it until the end of the world.’ When the disbeliever’s soul comes out... (the narrator mentioned its putrid smell and curses). The people of heaven say, *‘An evil soul that has come from earth,’* then it is said, *‘Roam with it until the end of the world’*³⁵. *“Messenger of Allah (PUH) put a piece of cloth over his nose of disbeliever’s soul, like this”* said Abu Hurayrah.

Soul in Medicine Neurosurgeons attempt restoration of the internal structure of the brain to normalcy by lobotomy but did not find soul³⁶. According to them brain is compost with hundred billion neurons and various complex neural networks, attribute its function by chemical and electrical reactions staggering human thought and experience So, mind is the neural structure of the brain³⁶. However, mind cannot be localized to particular areas within the brain, though the entire cerebral cortex and deep grey matter are important components of mind. But conceptually, amount of grey matter in the frontal lobes for intelligence and the parietal lobules for spatial reasoning and intuitions are the mind³⁶.

Psychologist suggested adrenaline, serotonin, dopamine, the endorphins and encephalins, enable and modify the many functions of brain and mind and exerts personalities³⁷. Cardiac surgeon Dr. Max Baff, Clark University, Worcester, USA studied the soul using x-ray cinematography Photographs at the moment of death and immediately after.

They could not see the soul leaving the body when the heart beat stops³⁸.

Where does soul located in human body? Science understand souls are purely corporeal and the qualities of life are associate with emerge through neurotransmitters such as serotonin, dopamine, epinephrine, norepinephrine from the brain. In the 15 to 18 century philosopher tries to location of soul in the body. Descartes (1596–1650) proposed that soul is localized in the pineal gland³⁹. Lancisi (1654–1720) felt that the soul could flow in the fibres of the medial striae of brain to corpus callosum to anterior columns of the fornix to posterior part of the corpus callosum to thalamus to frontal cortex for consciousness and emotion, make connection from here to the peripheral organs of the body⁴⁰. Total resection of pineal gland carcinoma is the most appropriate treatment and the better survival rate in neurosurgery treatment⁴¹. Moreover, cognitive and behavioral domains is normal after corpus callosotomy and hypothalamus section in epileptic patients^{42,43}. Albrecht von Haller (1708–1777) placed the soul in the medulla oblongata⁴⁴.

Jews and Christian religious scholar try to find out location of soul. Some said blood could be resided physically in the blood⁴⁵. *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life”*⁴⁶. But the blood can be drained off completely and died in the spleen to filter it off and replaced by new blood cells continuously developed from bone marrow⁴⁷. Soul cannot be died, drained of and replaced again and again. Some proposed

that soul may live in the germinal layer of our reproductive organs (testes or ovaries). Actually, soul is still present in human in absence of the reproductive organs⁴⁷.(Vishram 2018).

Islamic religious scholar, philosophers did not point out the seated of soul in the body. They understand soul is connected with the body; but cannot know where it is. Shaykh As-Saduq said if a limb of a man is severed, we do not say that so much portion of his soul has been cut off. Thus, we say that life is everywhere in the body. At the same time do not say that 'It is here', or 'It is there. Likewise, we know that God is everywhere; but we cannot say, 'He is here', or 'He is there'. We cannot point towards Him¹⁹. Prophet (PUH) understand soul is eternal and change adobe from heaven to body during birth and body to Burzek/heaven after death.

The Prophet has said: ‘You were not created for extinction, but for eternal existence and you will only be transferred from one abode to another’. Verily the souls are strangers in the earth and imprisoned in the bodies¹⁹.

Our proposition regarding soul: Soul is eternal, non-material and immortal and function when seated in the body. My proposition toward the Albrecht von Haller placed the soul in the medulla oblongata. As the medulla oblongata contains upper center for autonomic nervous system that animate the heart and lung. During the development human, heart starts to first pump to beat at about the 28 day after fertilization that is 40 days after last menstruation. I am convinced that that time body is ensoulment and start functioning. Moreover, the

musculoskeletal system and nervous system starts to develop end of 3rd week of intra uterine life. Sympathetic of autonomic nervous system start to develop at about 4th and Para systemic system at about 5th week. The shaping of human being needs up to 3 months to function psychophysical as being ⁴⁸. Soul or self may be the interaction the heart – brain. Later, heart is functioned under control of autonomic system resides in the medulla oblongata of brain. We are convinced about the soul may reside in the heart. Heart provide proper nutrition to function of the body. When the heart stops man dies. Soul should be free any control. Actually we cut off heart from frog and keep it a normal saline solution, it is still beating for three days. Heart surgeon perform bypass surgery and Pacemaker in Heart Surgery is done by stopping the real heart using the artificial heart lung machine. Heart can work minor congenital development but major congenital heart abnormalities life is fetal. Soul animation, breathing, and pulsation from the heart through the veins ⁴⁹.

However, this view is consistent with Quran. Therefore, some school of Islam who belief heart is the seat for ensoulment permitted abortion 40 days, and some school belief interaction the heart-brain permit abortion upto 3 months. And also later school belief the censuses is the life or soul, may accept brain death and euthanasia or turn off life support machine when the life is in vegetated state, no sing of revert.

However, Allah at first make the human image from clay from and then ensoulment soul from him. Therefore, the human soul is the divine and coming from other world.

Islam totally deny the Darwinian theory of evolution from human development from but monkey.

12. We created man out of the extract of clay, 13. then We made him into a drop of life-germ, then We placed it in a safe depository, 14. then We made this drop into a clot, then We made the clot into a lump, then We made the lump into bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, and then We caused it to grow into another creation.

15. Thus Most Blessed is Allah, the Best of all those that create⁵⁰.

Weight of soul: In 1907, Dr. Duncan MacDougall found the soul and it weigh between 0.5 to 1.5 ounces⁵¹. He experiments with in six dying patients of tuberculosis and weighted the soul by weighing a human being during death. Beam end slightly upper limiting bar above balance before death. At the end of three hours and forty minutes he expired and suddenly coincident with death the beam end dropped to lower limiting bar and remaining there with no rebound. He concluded weight of soul was 1.5 ounce. but other disagreed. After death there are sweating, urination or stool pass out from the death body due to relaxation of muscle.

Soul in Quantum physics: According to quantum physics energy is come from vibrating atoms. Two subatomic particles, can be in communication with each other even they are situated at the ends of the universe without signal is called non-local acausal relationship. As for example consciousness or dream etc. In consciousness we can move from New York to Dhaka and so on in a second. So

quantum mechanics agree the existence of soul or consciousness in the neural processes in the brain.⁵² According to quantum physics, if energy dissociated there is nothing remain. But between the two subatomic particle even a nano meter of empty space, there is pure void of cold blackness, a virtual energy. This energy is the soul. If we understand from something to nothing, from solid to intangible, from energy to potential, from action to possibility, we can grasp our soul⁵³.

Conclusion: From above discussion it has been seen that soul was discussed more actively by philosophers before birth of Christ. Only religion discussed the soul elaborately. Though discussion of soul is extensive in Islam then other religion. Medicine did not answer what is soul and where does soul situated in our body. Western bioethics totally omits discussion on the soul, though they discussed on “good death”. We cannot understand death well enough if soul is not addressed. Quantum physics is trying to address soul in different perspective that may be the triumph of 21st century. May be we can find the solution one day. This article may highlight soul for further research what actually soul is? where is it situated? and what is the implication of soul in our life existence?

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