

IS RÛH (SPIRIT) A PROBLEM OF THE INVISIBLE WORLD? Viewpoints of the Islamic Sects on Ruh (Spirit)

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Abstract

The concept of Spirit (ruh) is researched during the whole history of philosophy. Muslim theologians have made clear its uses and implications in their works. It is explained both spirit and soul. The question of definition or destination of soul was always central. Some scholar surely accepted its existence without body and defines the ruh as a spiritual substance, imperishable, single and simple. According to those scholars, human body can have feeling, animation or perception by the means of spirit. Much of the discussion about spirit or soul in Islamic thought and works of theology has centered on the relationship between the ruh and holy (al-jism). So another problem has occurred if spirit or soul is a problem of the invisible world. This paper examines the Muslim scholars' opinion about the subject. For ease of reference, the ideas discussed in that paper have been grouped under some headings.

Key Words: Spirit, soul, Mu'tazila, invisible world, Islamic sect.

Ruh Bir Gayb Problemi midir? İslam Kelamcılarının Ruh Konusundaki Görüşlerinin Epistemolojik Çerçevesi

Özet

Ruh kavramı ile ilgili tartışmalar tüm düşünce tarihi boyunca birçok açıdan gerçekleşmiştir. İslam düşünürleri onun tanımları ve fonksiyonları ile ilgili birçok teori üretmişlerdir. Bu konuda görüş bildirenler, onu bazen ruh bazen de nefis kelimeleri ile ifade etmişlerdir. Tarih boyunca ruh hakkında yapılan tartışmaların odak noktasını ise onun bir gayb problemi olup-olmadığı konusu oluşturmuştur. Onun bedenden bağımsız, manevî ve basit bir varlık olduğu savunanların yanında, bedensiz var olamayacağını kabul edenler de bulunmuştur. Bu bağlamda, bedenün bütün duyularının, his ve işlevlerinin ruh sayesinde gerçekleştirdiği benimsenmiştir. Dolayısıyla tartışmaların çoğu ruhun gaybla ve buna bağlı olarak da cisimle ilişkisi konusu etrafında gerçekleşmiştir. Bu araştırma İslam bilginlerinin ruh teorilerinden hareketle onun gaybla ilişkisi tespit edilmeye çalışılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ruh, nefis, gayb, Mu'tezile, İslam mezhepleri.

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Introduction

If the 'spirit' is regarded as the issue of epistemology, firstly it will be necessary to find an answer to the question of whether the 'spirit' may be a subject of our knowledge or it should be accepted as a problem belongs to metaphysics in the nature of which we are not able to know by means of human learning and perception. Here, we should explain that both two alternatives have some special problems and outcomes.

If we deal with 'spirit' as a problem which might be a subject of our cognitive-knowledge, then it can be easily observed that the judgments about it are to expose a window letting it to be legitimated and valid, at least with regarding to research techniques. On the contrary, if we admit the matter of 'spirit' as a question belongs to metaphysics or to the invisible world, then it will not be scientifically valid to make any debate on 'spirit' and to see it as the subject of our knowledge.

In this context, from the historical point of view, the question, at first glance, presents a paradoxical statement. There exist some verses of the Qur'an and some Hadith¹ concerning all debates and the inquiries on spirit as meaningless and impossible for humans, on one hand, and also exist lots of discussions on the issue in the fields of Theology, Sufism and Philosophy on the other hand. Whether, Muslim scholars, as they hold these discussions, ignored the verses of the Qur'an which declare that spirit is a problem of the invisible world or they interpreted them with other hearsays exposed a mixed explaining way in accordance with their perception of spirit.

It is noticed that, if arguments and ideas regarding to 'spirit' in Islamic thought are taken into consideration, some trends accept the issue as a problem of metaphysics², and some others adduce a multiplicity of ideas and discourses on this topic. However, on this subject, especially in the manner of the Islamic theologians, that point is very clear: whatever opinion is sanctified, all the Islamic theologians took the decisive infor-

- 1) For example, see al-Isra 17:85; also for the answer Mohammad gave to those who wanted information about spirit from him, look at Abu Abdullah Muhammad b. Ismail b. Ebrahim b. Mugira b. Bar-dizba al-Ju'fi al Bukhari, *al-Jaamius-Sahih*, Istanbul 1992, "Ilim", 3; "Tafsir al-Quran", 45, "I'tisam", 76, "Tavhid", 77; Muslim, *Sahih*, "Sifat al-Kiyamah", 52; Tirmizi, *Sunan*, "Tafsir al-Quran", 44; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *al-Ruh fi al-kalam ala arwahi al-amwat wa al-ahya*, Riyad 1992 et seq; Macdonald, D. B., "The Development of The Idea of Spirit In Islam", *Muslim World*, vol. XXII, 1966, pp. 25-32; Akintola, Ishaq Lakin, "Rûh (Soul) in Islamic Eschatology", *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol. XXVI, No. 2, 2004, pp. 7-11; Tritton, A.S., "Nafs, Rûh, Aql", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. XXXIV, 1971, p. 490 and passim.
- 2) The first and the most explicit example of that in Islamic system of thought is realized in spirit theories of Muslim philosophers. However, as time passed, this view had its base amongst some scholars of the Quran and Sufism. To illustrate see, Farabi, *Uyun al-Masail*, pp. 210-211, Istanbul 1984; Idem, *Risalah fi Masaili Mutafarrrika*, (Matbaat-u Maclis-i Dairat al-Maarif al-Nizamiyya al-Kaina), Haydarabad 1344, pp. 18-19; Idem., *al-Madina al-Fa'ila*, (ed. Albert Nasri Nadar), Beirut 1986, pp. 101, 142 and passim; Abu Rayyan, *Tarih al-Fikr al-Falsafi fi al-Islam*, Alexandria 1970, p. 383; Ibn Sina, *al-Isharat*, (ed. Suleiman Dunya), Cairo undated, vol. 2, pp. 314-324, 329-332, 379-383, 390-394, 399, 404-405; Idem., *Kitab al-Mubahasat*, (ed. Abdurrahman Badawi), Cairo 1947, pp. 195-196; Idem, *al-shifa*, al-Nafs, (ed. G.C. Anawati-Said Zayad), Cairo 1975, pp. 13, 25-26, 192, 207, 225-227; Idem, *Risala fi Marifat al-Nafs al-Natika wa Ahwaliha*, (ed. Muhammad Sabit al-Fandi), Mashrik 1934, p. 186; Idem, *Risalah Adhaviyya fi Amr al-Maad*, (ed. Suleiman Dunya), Cairo 1949, pp. 94-95, 107-108; Idem, *At-Talikat*, (ed. Abdurrahman Badawi), Cairo 1973, pp. 30, 64, 79-80, 107, 147-148, 160-161; Idem, *Risalah al-Laduniyya*, (in Macmua al-Rasail li al-Imam Gazzali), Beirut 1986, p. 13; Muhammad al-Tayr, *Hadi al-arwah*, Cairo 1971, pp. 16-17; Mahluf Adawi, *al-Matalib al-Kudsiyyah*, Cairo 1963, p. 32.

mation³ into consideration, which expresses the restraint of epistemological facilities on spirit question and, on this aspect, transfers the knowledge of spirit, at the last frame, to God on this or that way.

In other words, discussions and analysis of the Islamic theologians on spirit have occurred on a ground that relative Qur'anic verses and hadith records are placed in the centre and proceeded from the basis of them.

Islamic Theologians

The Islamic theologians, on one side, took part in discussions about spirit, conducting from a sense and reference point determined by some verses mentioned in the Qur'an, and on the other side, they inquired various problems concerning spirit with the remarkable effect of some other internal and external factors in Islamic thought. In this context, they reached different results in both interpreting the decisive information and the ideas that they determined about spirit⁴.

Besides, we encounter such a problem like; whether if the rise of discussions on spirit stemmed from understanding and interpreting the decisive information or the disputes regarding spirit began by the confrontation of Islamic culture, with its progressive steps, to other cultures, especially to Greek philosophy, and then the decisive information was commented on with the direction of reborn ideas?

The answer to this question can be observed most explicitly in the books of first period Islam scholars. As a matter of fact, it is realized that there exist crucial differences if the first epoch works are compared with later ones in the way they handle the question. This juncture proves that there exist some considerable distinctions between the conversion of spirit problem into a controversial subject and its process line of development. Therefore, although the dominant attitude of first epoch works was an attempt fixing mostly the comprehension and interpretation of decisive information and hearsays concerning the topic, also, it is noticed that the contemporary debates, with the influence of extrinsic factors depending on the development of Islamic culture, followed a course that is utterly distinctive from general content of the decisive information⁵.

The problem with which we cope in this notification is to determine how and why the Islamic theologians took up spirit as a subject of knowledge, in spite of the existence of some verses and hearsays presenting it as a problem of metaphysics, and, in this context, what kind of explanations they brought to these verses. In addition to this, it keeps significance to handle the viewpoints of the Islamic theologians while dealing with the entity and nature of spirit and the evidences from which they benefit in general.

3) al-Isra 17: 85.

4) Ash'ari, *Makalatu al-Islamiyyin*, (ed. Muhammad Muhyi al-din Abd al-hamid), Maktabat al-Nahda, Cairo, undated, pp. 329-331, 335, 358 and passim; Ibn Hazm, *al-Fasl fi al-milal wa al-ahvâ wa al-nihal*, Egypt 1317, vol. 4, p. 121; vol. 5, p. 204; Qadi Abd al-Jabbar, *al-Mugni fi ahvâb al-tawhid wa al-adl*, al-Muassasah al-Misriyya al-Amm, Cairo, vol. 11, p. 310 etc.; Zuhdi Jar Allah, *al-Mutazilah*, Cairo 1947, p. 151; Abu Ride, *Ibrahim b. Sayyar al-Nazzam wa arauh al-kalamiyya al-falsafiyya*, Cairo 1946, p. 99 and passim.

5) For example see, Maturidi, *Kitab al-Tawhid*, pp. 15, 25, 28, 157, 210-212; Idem, *Tawilat al-Quran*, Istanbul, Haci Salim Aga no: 40, f. 429b; Ibn Furak, *Mujarradu Maqalat, al-Shayh Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari*, pp. 146, 215; Ibn Hazm, *al-Fasl*, vol. 5, p. 202 et seq; Ibn Kayyim, *al-Ruh fi al-kalam ala arwahi al-amwat wa al-ahya*, Riyad 1992.

In this regard, we can distinguish the Islamic theologians with two main lines if they consider the spirit as a problem of metaphysics. Some scholars accepted spirit as a question belongs to metaphysics and claimed that it is impossible for us to say anything about this subject with our human means and facilities and that human knowledge about spirit is restricted to especially the 'short knowledge' (al-ilm al-Qalil) mentioned in the verse⁶. Actually, in this point, the attitude of above mentioned scholars appears as a continuation of their general approach against similar problems of metaphysics and as an inevitable result of the process they appropriated.

As a matter of fact, these Islamic theologians who are called as *Salaf* (pertaining to their predecessors), just like the way seen in all metaphysical discussions, disregarded the speculative disputes and resolutions about spirit problem, and also they considered the human knowledge on spirit restricted to what the decisive information offered. And this information is presented by God who kept the real and perfect knowledge for Himself aside.

Salaf

In this regard, the opinions of *Salaf* scholars on spirit are restricted to decisive information given by Qur'anic verses as mentioned above. In the very beginning of these decisive points does stay the verse of the Qur'an "They ask you concerning the spirit, say that it is off the command of my Lord"⁷. According to this verse, the knowledge that human can have concerning to spirit is incomplete and that may be concerned as not enough. Besides, this incomplete knowledge is given by the verses of the Qur'an and the maxims of the Prophet. Proceeding from some widely known maxims regarding the subject, we can summarize *Salaf* scholars' handling the spirit problem and the ideas they alleged as:

Salaf thinkers, as known, appropriated a method which can be condensed as accepting the existent points of decisive information about theistically matters just in the same way and not interpreting, not disputing or not presenting any viewpoints on them. Nonetheless, *Salaf* scholars, looking at the exterior of the verses and the maxims, can be regarded as appreciating spirit, apart from body, as a being which is alive, acting on its own, having a divine character and able to enter and leave the body. Hence, spirit is a being that is breathed into human body in late, enlivens it, and leaves it temporarily in time of sleep, but completely in time of death. Also, spirit is believed to be a wise, lively and active being that dying person could see and watch it on one side, and that is able to see other persons' insight and to go wherever it wants without body on the other side⁸.

Therefore, the first *Salaf* thinkers, proceeding from just the expressions mentioned in decisive information, explained their viewpoints on spirit and never regarded it as a matter of subject to be disputed on.

6) See: Surah al-Isra, verse 85. As a matter of fact, even Abu al-Barakat al-Nasafi asserted that the content of spirit can not be known and he avoided making any comment. See, *Madariq al-tanzil wa ha-qâiq al-ta'vil*, Cairo undated, vol. 2, p. 265.

7) al-Isra 17:85.

8) Bukhari, *Shahih*, "Anbiya", 2; Muslim, *Shahih*, "Birr", 45, 159, 160; Abu Davud, *Sunan*, "Adab", 40; Ahmad b. Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, vol. 2, pp. 295, 527, 537; Abu Davud, *Sunan*, "Adab", 16; Halil

Metaphysical Problem

The Second group of Islamic theologians, instead of considering spirit as a metaphysical problem, are inclined to accept it as a thing that can be known by means of human knowledge, and, only by this sight, our assumptions which is about it can be valid. This group which consist of scholars other than Salaf, do not consider spirit as a metaphysical matter and accept it as the subject of our knowledge in terms of existence, although its nature and entity is not possible to be grasped exactly, at least distinguishing nature and existence of something from each other. While constructing this standpoint, they brought some explanations for the verses mentioned above, then, proceeding from some other evidences; they assessed the nature and entity of spirit and some other problems that are at least as important as these two in an epistemological frame⁹.

For that reason, Islamic theologians put forward various assumptions firstly by evaluating what the concept of spirit in the verses means. It is true that the viewpoints from some famous hearsay regarding these verses as being descended in order to prevent the disputes on spirit were very often depicted. However, the scholars firstly strived, regarding all the contexts mentioned in the Qur'an, to prove that the verses did not consider spirit problem as a metaphysical issue¹⁰.

In fact, when we assess the verses mentioned in the Qur'an in this context altogether and examine them in a semantic method, we see that the Qur'an uses the word 'spirit' mostly in the meanings of the angel, the revelation and the Qur'an except of the miraculously creation of two humans (i.e. Adam and Jesus)¹¹. According to this, the spirit mentioned in this verse "...say that it is off the command of my Lord"¹² is Gabriel who

Ahmad Saharanfuri, *Baḥḥ al-majhūd*, vol. 19, p. 83; Ayni, *Umdat al-Qari Sharhi saḥīḥ al-Buḥārī*, I-XII, Cairo 1972, vol. 12, pp. 371-372; Kastalani, *Irshād al-s-sārī li-sherhi saḥīḥ al-Buḥārī*; I-V, Beirut, vol. 5, p. 325; Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Ithaf al-Qari bi-ihṭisārī Fath al-bārī*, I-III, Riyad 1993, vol. 3, p. 9; Idem, *Fath al-bārī bi-sharhi saḥīḥ al-Buḥārī*, (edit. Muhyiddin Hatīb), Kahire 1987, vol. 6, pp. 426-427; Muhammad b. Halifa, *Iqmalu Iqmal al-Muallim bi-sharhi saḥīḥ muslim*, Bairut 1994, vol. 8, pp. 613-614; Nawawi, *Saḥīḥu Muslim bi-sharh al-Nawawi*, vol. 8, p. 185; Cf. Ajluni, *Kashf al-hafa wa müzīl al-ilbās: ammā ishtahara min al-ahādīs*, Bairut undated, vol. 1, pp. 110-113; Bikai, *Sirr al-rūḥ*, (edit. Muhammad Mahmūd Nassār), Cairo 1990, pp. 43-44; es-Saliḥ Ibn Tolun, *at-Tahrir al-Murassah fi ahvāl al-barzah*, (trs. Abū Abdurrahman al-Misrī), Tanta 1991, p. 323; Also see, Josef Van Ess, "Ein Unbekanntes Fragment Des Nazzam", *Der Orient in Der Rorschung*, (Wilhelm Hoenerbach), Wiesbaden 1967, vol. 5, pp. 177-179.

9) For example see, Ash'ari, *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin*, pp. 331-332; Ibn Hazm, *al-Fasl*, vol. 5, pp. 65-66, 74-80; Qadi Abd al-Jabbar, *al-Mugni*, vol. 11, p. 310 and passim; Idem., *al-Muhit*, vol. 2, p. 244; Zuḥdi Jar Allah, *al-Mu'tazilah*, p. 151; Tahanawi, *Kashshafu Istilahat al-funun*, vol. 1, pp. 541-542; Razi, *Mafatih al-gayb*, vol. 5, p. 331; Gazzali, *Risala al-Ladunniye*, p. 100; Bikai, *Sir al-Ruh*, pp. 45-47; Hasan Hanafi, *Min al-Akida ila al-Savra al-Mukaddimat al-Nazariyye*, vol. 4, pp. 452-457; Hallawi, *Ya'salunaka an al-Ruh*, pp. 29-31, 98-99; Mahluf Adawi, *al-Matalib al-Qudsiyyah*, pp. 31-35; Ibn Rushd, *Tahafut tahafut al-falasifa*, pp. 330-332; Osman Emin, *al-Falsafa al-Rawaqiyye*, p. 300; Macdonald, D. B., "The Development of The Idea of Spirit In Islam", *Muslim World*, vol. XXII, 1966, pp. 25-32; Akintola, Ishaq Lakin, "Rūh (Soul) in Islamic Eschatology", *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol. XXVI, No. 2, 2004, pp. 7-11; Tritton, A.S., "Nafs, Rūh, Aql", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. XXXIV, 1971, p. 490 and passim. For criticism of the Quran scholars' attitude see, Gazzali, *Tahafut al-Falasifa*, p. 201; Irfan Abdülhamid, "Islam Tefekküründe Ruh Meselesi" (trs. M. Saim Yeprem), *Nesil Dergisi*, vol., VIII, pp. 26-32.

10) Ibn Furak, *Mujarradu Maqalat*, pp. 146, 215; Ibn Hazm, *al-Fasl*, vol. 5, p. 202 et seq; Irfan Abdülhamid, "Islam Tefekküründe Ruh Meselesi" (trs. M. Saim Yeprem), *Nesil Dergisi*, vol., VIII, pp. 26-32.

11) al-Hijr 15:29; al-Sajda 32:9; Sad 38:72; al-Anbiya 21:91; al-Tahrim 66:12.

12) al-Isra 17:85.

is the angel of the revelation. Derived from this meaning, the thing which is a metaphysical problem is Gabriel himself and his function. Hence, the verse notifies that the revelation is a metaphysical matter in the form and nature of which can not be understood by human.

Similar comments can be made for other verses. In this regard, the verse "I breathed into him of My spirit"¹³ has been explained in relation with Gabriel or interpreted as an expression indicates the coming of lifeless body into life¹⁴.

In that case, some of the scholars never derive the meaning of 'human spirit' from the word 'spirit' mentioned in the verses and maxims of Prophet which reflect it as off the means of human perception. To them, it is out of question that the entity or nature of human body is a metaphysical matter. On the contrary, what is metaphysical matter is the angel of revelation, called Gabriel or the Holy Spirit, and his relation of revelation with prophets¹⁵.

In their interpretation of these verses, Islamic theologians, having developed certain legitimacy for discussions on spirit, strived to construct another aspect of the question which is more important for them. This is the question of human identity and nature which appears in conducting the belief in Afterlife¹⁶.

When we examine the ideas of the Islamic theologians on the matter of spirit, we see that actually they tried to find who is responsible in the life of this world and Hereafter. In other words, the main question of these theologians is composed of developing an idea of psychically-perceptible-human (haykal-i mahsus) who is responsible for the revelation of God. In so doing, they related the problem with a metaphysical question by looking from a different point of view. This is the attempt to build up an assumption of human who is responsible for his actions and deeds in hereafter¹⁷.

The Islamic theologians, after deriving from the verses the result that the problem of spirit can be subject of our knowledge, at this time, they, proceeding from various evidences, initiated to explain the matters like the entity and nature of spirit and its relation with body and to argue for their viewpoints.

In this context, the evidences of the Islamic theologians, at first, consist of a certain number of lingual analyses. There is no doubt that Arabic composes the most important frame of reference about every subject not only for the Islamic theologians but also for all Muslim scholars. By this aspect, the Islamic theologians, proceeding from the mentioned word's meanings of term and dictionary, strived to interpret the decisive information in their hands while trying to build up objective and acceptable comments about their assumptions on spirit¹⁸.

13) al-Hijr 15:29.

14) Al-Maturidi, *Ta'wilat*, ff. 386b, 474b; al-Tabari, *Jami al-Bayan*, vol. 14, p. 31; vol. 21, pp. 93-96, vol. 23, p. 85; Zamakhshari, *al-Kashshaf*, vol. 2, pp. 334, 513; vol. 4, p. 119; Razi, *Mafatih al-Gayb*, vol. 22, p. 218; Qurtubi, *al-Jami*, vol. 10, p. 24; Elmalili, *Qur'an Dili*, vol. 6, p. 4109.

15) Zamakhshari, *al-Kashshaf*, vol. 3, p. 20; Razi, *Mafatih al-Gayb*, vol. 22, p. 218; vol. 30, pp. 50-51; Elmalili, *Hak Dini*, vol. 5, p. 3367; vol. 7, pp. 5134-5135.

16) al-Razi, *Mafatih al-Gayb*, vol. 21, p. 40 et seq.

17) Maturidi, *Ta'wilat*, f. 644a; Regis Blachère, "Nefs" Kelimesinin Kur'an'da Kullanılışı Hakkında Bazı Notlar", *AÜİFD*, vol. V, pp. 195-196.

18) See, for example, Ibn Furak, *Mujarradu Maqalat*, pp. 146, 215; Ibn Hazm, *al-Fasl*, vol. 5, p. 202 et seq; Maturidi, *Ta'wilat*, f. 574b; f. 635a; f. 754a. Also see, Bikai, *Sir al-Ruh*, pp. 42, 111-114;

Mutazilah

Another one of the evidences that the Islamic theologians employed to explain some of their ideas about spirit seems to be the experience and observation of each human. As an example of this, we can give some Mutazilah (the schismatic sect) scholars who argue for a materialist viewpoint on spirit. They proceeded from especially daily experiences in order to support their opinions. In this context, they appropriated the assumption that human consisted of a body which they call *haykal-i mahsus* (a perceptible body). Also, they endeavored to explain not only the existence of spirit as independent from the body but also its relation with body by means of some theoretical and rational evidences¹⁹.

In accordance with developing steps of Islamic thought, the problem of spirit was handled in more systematic and technical methods. These discussions reached to different dimensions thanks to new problems appeared as a result of improving philosophical schools after translation of some Greek philosophy books into Arabic, and after encountering of Muslims to some new cultures and beliefs. With this regard, it is well-known that the first Mutazilah scholars were interested in philosophical objects and that they were affected by reading the books belong to old Greek philosophy, which were translated into Arabic in the period of Umayyads. As a matter of fact, the method of Salaf scholars was replaced by a method interprets the decisive information with wisdom, with depending upon this decisive information for subjects concerning faith²⁰.

In this manner, just as in all other theological matters, the problem of spirit was also exposed to examination in accordance with the principles of reason and philosophy. The Islamic theologians considered themselves obligatory to bring up this matter in all its aspects against materialists and naturalists who denied the existence of spirit²¹.

Mutazilah thinkers who are known as the first carriers of the method mentioned above embarked on advancing some remarkable theories about spirit as to the system they maintained to follow by the beginning of the second age of the Hijra and contended to reveal them grounding on verses and hadiths.

The first notable point in Mutazilah's view on spirit is that they opposed to Salaf savants by handling the problem as the subject of inquiry and of analyse and also that they promoted, not considering the spirit problem as a principal matter of religion, an approach providing some various assumptions with coming into effect. This approach would continue pronouncing in later progressive milestones of Islamic theology.

Hasan Hakim al-Tirmizi, *Bayn al-Fark*, pp. 96-97; Muhluf Adawi, *al-Matalib al-Qudsiyyah*, pp. 70-71, 75-77; Irfan Abdulhamid, "İslam Tefekküründe Ruh Meselesi" (trs. M. Saim Yeprem), *Nesil Dergisi*, vol., VIII, p. 26-32.

19) Qadi Abd al-Jabbar, *al-Mugni*, vol. 11, p. 312; Zuhdi Jar Allah, *al-Mu'tazilah*, p. 151; Osman Amin, *al-Falsafa al-rawakiyya*, p. 300; for the criticism of this approach see, Gazzali, *Tahafut al-falasifa*, p. 201; Razi, *Mafatih al-gayb*, vol. 5, p. 331; Bikai, *Sir al-ruh*, pp. 45-47; Hasan Hanafi, *Min al-akida ila al-savra al-mukaddimat al-nazariyya*, vol. 4, pp. 452-457; Hallavi, *Yas'alunaka an al-Ruh*, pp. 29-31, 98-99; Muhluf Adawi, *al-Matalib al-Qudsiyyah*, pp. 31-35; Irfan Abd al-Hamid, "İslam Tefekküründe Ruh Meselesi" (trs. M. Saim Yeprem), *Nesil Dergisi*, vol., VIII, p. 26-32.

20) Qadi Abd al-Jabbar, *al-Mugni*, vol. 11, pp. 310-311; Ash'ari, *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin*, pp. 329-331, 335 and passim; Ibn Hazm, *al-Fasl*, vol. 5, pp. 41-47; Abu Ridah, *Ibrahim b. Sayyar al-Nazzam wa arauh al-kalamiyyah al-falsafiyah*, p. 99; Hallawi, *Yas'alunaka an al-Ruh*, p. 98; Muhammad al-Tayr, *Hadi al-Arwah*, p. 22.

21) Maturidi, *Tawilat al-Qur'an*, f. 429b.

Although there exist some scholars amongst *Ahl al-Sunna* theologians, rejecting the understanding of spirit which is responsible for human actions and independent from body, they mostly followed the view which we can call moderate materialism forming the second group of Mutazilah noted above. In spite of the diversified disagreements between them, in *Ahl al-Sunna*'s opinion, spirit is a gracious substance independent from body and attaching it later. In this point, *Ahl al-Sunna*, as much as they gets, benefited from not only from verses and hadithes but also from rational and theoretical evidences primarily the data of linguistics. However, it should be remembered that this view was revealed later and actually the dualist understanding of human was not considered so much clear amongst the first *Ahl al-Sunna* scholars. This situation, in fact, is very obviously seen in quite a few sources of *Ahl al-Sunna* theology³³.

The scholars of *Ahl al-Sunna* could give to the word spirit cited in the verse the meanings of Gabriel, the revelation or the Qur'an, but also they managed to call it as self in the meaning of the human core. Now, in this point, what needs to be accentuated is that the main emphasis of *Ahl al-Sunna* is to relate their views on spirit with the matter of resurrection proceeding from the decisive information about hereafter³⁴.

Conclusion

We can summarize the viewpoints of the Islamic theologians on spirit as follows: Firstly, the concepts of spirit or self are used in different meanings and context in the decisive information. As a consequence of this, there appeared various disagreements amongst Muslim scholars. A certain number of them did not appropriate to inquire for or discuss on spirit since they sanctified it as a metaphysical problem. Their starting point is especially the verse "...say that spirit is off the command of my Lord". The belief that this verse forbids and bangs the door on any dispute about spirit kept Salaf scholars from discussing on this subject, too, just as in every kind of metaphysical problems. Therefore human spirit is the issue of invisible world for Salaf.

The second group forming the main part of the Islamic theologians does not regard spirit as a metaphysical matter, and, in order to fix this, they analyzed and interpreted the concepts of spirit cited in the verses in a certain methodology and system. As a result of that, instead of considering spirit as one of the main problems of religion, they regarded it as a problem that one can make inquiries on and analyze by means of the decisive information and other correct data. Hence, the investigations and discussions about spirit became easier and their ways were opened, a quite number of the views were discussed in the books of Islamic theology.

33) For instance see: Ibn Furak, *Mujarrad Makalat*, pp. 146, 215; Tirmizi, *Bayan al-Farq*, pp. 96-97; Bikai, *Sir al-Ruh*, pp. 111-114.

34) Maturidi, *Tawilat al-Qur'an*, f., 386a; 429b; 635a; 644a; Ibn Furak, *Mujarrad Makalat*, pp. 245-146, 215-218; 257; Nasafi, *Tabsirat al-Adilla*, II, 764 et seq.; Idem, *Tamhid*, p. 353 et seq.; Abdulatif Harputi, *Tanqih al-Kalam fi Akaid Ahl al-Islam*, p. 139.