

## Views of Uzbeks About the Human Soul

**Payzieva Muqaddas Khabibullaevna**

Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Department of social and humanitarian sciences

deputy head candidate of historical sciences, senior researcher

m.payzieva@yandex.ru

**Abstract:** The article reveals on the basis of ethnographic and scientific literature that Uzbeks' views and ideas about death, human spirit and soul are connected with their ancient religious ideas. The article also highlights the views of fraternal peoples.

**Keywords:** Uzbeks, soul, spirit, faith, religious beliefs, customs, rituals.

In all times of human life death generates unhealthy mental states. The existence of the soul is always interpreted in connection with the death of a person, i.e. the exit of the soul from the body. For example, according to animistic views, after the death of a person, his soul is separated from the body and lives as an invisible spirit.

The emergence of ideas about the soul greatly complicated the relationship with the dead, after the death of a person his body rots, but the soul continues to live, the emergence of the idea that there is a world of ghosts under the water or underground, in the sky the idea of respecting the spirits, remembering them, carrying out rituals and sacrifices to avoid the anger of ghosts. Various traditions have been created, such as deeds [1].

According to the views about the fate of the soul after death, souls can stay somewhere in the fire, in the world of the living, or they can go to their own world. These views are definitely connected with totemism [2]. Representations about the soul of ancient tribes were clear and reflected their real life experience. Therefore, at present, the first layer of religious representations is dominated by the idea of totemism, in which people realised that they were in close kinship with the natural environment unique to them. Thus ethnographer S.A. Tokarev tried to analyse the existing ideas about the "otherworld".

Belief in the existence of the soul of a deceased person and honouring it is a social phenomenon common to the peoples of Central Asia [3]. Traces of ancient pre-Islamic religious ideas in people's ideas about the human soul are preserved in a mixed form with the views of Islam.

Ancient ancestors believed that when a close person left, his soul would live on, and buried his body near their hut, even inside the hut with food [4]. They understood spirits as representatives of the "spiritual world" and imagined it as intangible, transparent, in the form of vapour, air or shadows in human form. In their view, whatever body the soul lived in was the criterion of its existence and it possessed personal consciousness and will. They thought it possessed the power of travelling rapidly from one body to another, from one place to another. They imagined that although it was invisible, it possessed physical form and power and could be seen by both sleeping and awake people.

Let us dwell here on the fact that there are different views about the place of the human soul in the body. About the place of the soul Abu Ali ibn Sina writes in his *Laws of Medicine*: "*The hottest thing in the body is the soul, and the place of origin of the soul is the heart*" [5].

Uzbeks living in Tashkent also believe that a person's soul lives in the heart, when the soul dies, it leaves the mouth of the person and goes up to heaven, unseen by anyone, and from there observes the body until it is buried. [6].

At the beginning of the 20th century A.M. Balaubaeva-Goliakhovskaya left information about the existence of such a concept among the Kazakhs of Okmola [7]. In the views of the Yagnob Tajiks there are ideas that the soul is in the head of a person [8].

It is difficult to draw a boundary between the views of the Uzbeks of Tashkent on soul and spirit, but based on the notion that the soul is a force that moves the whole being, when a person dies, they say that "*the soul is gone*" or "*the blood is gone - the soul is gone*". In this case we can notice that the term soul is also used in relation to a material element, i.e. blood. That is why Uzbeks have long been cautious about blood. Even now the blood of a sacrificed animal is buried in the ground or washed away [6]. In Tajiks, human, animal or snake blood spilled on the ground must be covered with earth [9].

This point of view is widespread not only among the Uzbeks of Tashkent city, but also among Uzbeks living in the Fergana Valley [10], Kashkadarya province [11], Khorezm province [12], Kyrgyz [13] and Tajiks [14]. Based on this, we can say that the ideas about the soul among the peoples of Central Asia are practically similar.

Tashkent Uzbeks generally believe that a person has both a "soul" and a "spirit" [6]. When a person dies, the "soul" leaves the body and goes to God, while the "spirit" remains on earth to keep in touch with people. It is believed to be a ghost, the ghost of ancestors. According to folk beliefs it is understood that it goes around the relatives of the deceased in the form of a butterfly, and this butterfly is called "ghost butterfly" [15].

Khorezmians believe that the soul leaves the body in the form of a bird or a butterfly [12], Kyrgyz see the soul rather in the form of a fly or air-coloured smoke [13], and Kazakhs see the human soul in three forms: "*shibin dzhan*" (soul in the form of a fly), "*et dzhan*" (body and soul) and "spirit and soul" (*rukha*) [16]. Nogai people call the human soul "*yang*". They do not make a clear distinction between the soul and spirit. In the representation of the people the human soul is like a small fly, so it is called "*shibin yan*" [17]. Kalmyks also divided the human soul into three parts, i.e. "*amn*" (or *amin*) "life soul" or "breathing soul", the second "*sunen soul*" or "left soul", the soul that leaves the body during illness or sleep, and the third "*biye*" means the external human being. They realise that it consists of the body [18].

Some Uzbeks of Tashkent city, when they see a "ghost butterfly" in their houses, remember the dead saying that this "ghost butterfly" has come, not surprisingly, it is the ghost of some of our dead ancestors who came to receive news from us [6].

In science, the group of butterflies known as "ghost butterfly" is called "dead head" because of the shape of their shoulders, which resembles a human skull [19].

The popular belief that the soul has the shape of a "ghost butterfly" is not settled. According to surveys conducted among Tashkent Uzbeks, 69 per cent of respondents said that the spirit is not visible to the eye, 29 per cent said that spirits appear in the form of butterflies, and 2 per cent said that spirits appear in the form of butterflies.

Uzbeks believe that ghosts are connected with the living, that the souls of the dead walk where they lived and were buried, and patronise people. Scientific literature shows that similar ideas exist among other peoples, including Ossetians [20].

Based on the belief that the spirit of the deceased walks around the place where he was buried, there was a custom of lighting candles to spirits in city cemeteries. For this purpose, a "beacon" was made of three bricks in the headboard of the grave and a lamp was lit there. In

Tashkent, this custom was preserved until the 70s of the twentieth century[6].

There is a belief among the Uzbek people that if the dead enter the dreams of the living and ask for food, it means that they are hungry. As a result of these views, there arose the notion that when spirits are hungry, they harm the living, and they should always be fed. "*Such and such a Qur'an (prayer) is required.*" - prayers and blessings and "deliverance" were performed in the house. It was fundamentally understood that souls were nourished by prayers and blessings, and when they smelt, they tasted not the food itself, but its warmth and odour.

Therefore, householders who made an "outrage", "donation" or "godly" also sent some food to the cemetery workers to pray for the deceased.

From the popular perceptions we can conclude that the first reason for caring for the deceased is to respect and remember them, to expect help from them, and the second reason is to fear the hatred of one's soul. About the second reason S.P. Tokarev writes that "*the fear of the living of the dead arises from the social connection between them*" [21].

In general, the spirit of the past, the notion of ghosts existing among Uzbeks, simultaneously embodies, firstly, the need to remember the souls of ancestors, secondly, the fear of displeasure and anger of the deceased, and thirdly, the image of a saviour protecting from possible troubles and suffering.

Tashkent Uzbeks understand that the soul leaves the body through a person's mouth. Among them are the ideas that the soul can leave the body for a certain period of time, even when a person is asleep, and that the dreams a person sees are visions of the soul. Based on this, there are opinions that one should not wake up a sleeping person suddenly, otherwise the soul will not have time to return to the body and this may cause the death of a person. Such views are found not only among Uzbeks [3], but also among Kazakhs [16], Nogai [17] and Kalmyk [18] peoples.

The notions of soul and spirit are combined with each other in the imagination of the Uzbek people. According to their beliefs, the soul of the deceased remains in his house for 40 days, and then flies away to the spirit world to heaven and comes only on the days of commemoration of the deceased, that is, Thursday, Friday evening, eve days, religious holidays, morning and evening, to see him remembered. Accordingly, in Tashkent until the 60-70s of the 20th century it was customary to put water and a branch of a tree in a vessel so that the spirit came and settled in the house of the deceased for up to 40 days. , and the water in it changed [6].

According to the religious beliefs and ideas of many peoples, the soul of the deceased can go to heaven or hell. They believe that it is related to his faith, how he lived and what he did. Friday, Eid al-Adha and Ramadan are good and favourable days for the dying person. According to popular belief, the gates of paradise will be opened on these days [6].

Uzbeks consider man to be a "precious being" created by God. The popular belief is that it was created by God, consisting of the material world (clay, soil) and the spirit world, and the spirit world is located in the sky [6]. This can be attributed to the vision of the connection of the human soul with the stars. According to Zoroastrianism, when the human soul dies, a special exchange takes place. That is, when a person dies, a star falls from heaven to earth, and the soul flies from earth to heaven [21].

In addition, there are also visions of the eternal migration of the human soul from one body to another. That is why Uzbeks say that a "white snake" appearing in the house cannot be harmed, just like other Central Asian peoples. They believe that the spirit of a dead person visited in the form of a "white snake". The Uzbeks of Tashkent[6], Khorezm[12], Kashkadarya[25] and the Tajiks[22] believe that if a snake appears in the house, sprinkle flour on its head or give it milk, it will disappear without harming anyone.

No matter how much we think about the soul and the spirit, we can be sure that they are all a set of beliefs and perceptions that have been living among people for hundreds of years and that there are certain hidden religious views in them. After all, in Surah Al-Israh of the Holy Quran, "(O Muhammad) they will ask you about the soul and the spirit. Say, *'The soul is one of the things which my Lord alone knows.'* It is said that very little knowledge has been given to you [24].

Summarising the above opinions, we can say that the roots of ancient religious ideas are also reflected in the Tashkent Uzbeks' ideas about the soul, along with the Islamic worldview.

The views of the capital's Uzbeks on the soul, like those of other Central Asian peoples, are based on the notion that when the soul leaves the body, the body dies and the soul lives forever in the world.

During the period under study, the views of Tashkent Uzbeks about the soul have not changed significantly. It can be observed that fear of spirits, which appeared only at the early stages of cultural development, has now been replaced by endless respect and longing for them.

During Soviet times, traditional rituals performed in all ceremonies related to death and burial were condemned and atheistic idea prevailed in society, where traditions were considered a matter of antiquity, but the ruling ideology did not influence Uzbeks' ideas about the human soul and the spiritual world. At the same time, research results show that young people have less knowledge about the human spirit, the spiritual world and life in the afterlife.

### Reference

1. Jabborov I. *Spiritual World: Ignorance and Perfection*. – Tashkent, 1988.
2. Tokarev S.A. *Early Forms of Religion and Their Development*. – Moscow, 1964.
3. Abdulloev U. *Ethnological Processes in the Ferghana Valley*. – Tashkent, 2005.
4. Roziyeva M. *Rituals of Respect // Science and Life*. 1976. No. 6.
5. Abu Ali ibn Sino. *Laws of Medicine*. – Tashkent, 1993. Volume 1.
6. *Documents of the Past. Districts of Tashkent City*.
7. Balabaeva-Golyakhovskaya A.M. *Burial Rites among the Cossacks of Akmolinsk Province*. – Tashkent, 1928.
8. Andreev M.S. *Materials on the Ethnography of Yagnob // Records 1927 – 1928*. – Dushanbe, 1970.
9. Andreev M.S. *Tajiks of the Huf Valley Issue 1*. – Stalinabad, 1953.
10. Ashirov A. *Ancient Customs and Traditions of the Uzbek People*. – Tashkent, 2007.
11. Nasriddinov Q. *Uzbek Funeral and Mourning Rituals*. – Tashkent, 1996.
12. Snesev G.P. *Relics of Muslim Beliefs and Customs among the Uzbeks of Khorezm*. – Moscow, 1969.
13. Bayaliev T.D. *Pre-Islamic Beliefs and Their Survivals among the Kyrgyz*. – Frunze, 1972.
14. Rakhimov M.R. *Customs and Rituals Associated with Death and Burials among the Tajiks of the Kulab Region // Bulletin of the Department of Social Sciences of the Academy of Sciences of the Tajik SSR*. – Stalinabad, 1953.
15. Komarov P. *From the Beliefs of Tashkent Sarts // TV, No. 2035, February 3 (16), 1902*.
16. Toleubaev A.T. *Relics of Pre-Islamic Beliefs in the Family Rituals of the Kazakhs (XIX – early XX centuries)*. – Alma-Ata, 1991.
17. Yarlykapov A.A. *Funeral and Memorial Rituals of Steppe Nogais in the Past and Present (XIX-80s of the XX century) // Central Asian Ethnographic Collection*. – Moscow, 2001.

18. Bakaeva E.P., Guchinova E.B. Funeral Ritual among the Kalmyks in the XVII – XX centuries // Soviet Ethnography. 1988. No. 4.
19. Ergashev N. "Arvoh" Headwear // Science and Life. 1981. No. 11.
20. Tokaeva N.F. Funeral and Memorial Rituals of the Ossetians in the XIX century // Soviet Ethnography. 1957. No. 1.
21. Khismatulin A.A., Kryukova V.Yu. Death and Funeral Rites in Islam and Zoroastrianism. – St. Petersburg: Center for St. Petersburg Oriental Studies, 1997.
22. Khamidzhanova M. Some Beliefs of Tajiks Associated with Snakes / In Memory of M.S. Andreev // Reports of the Academy of Sciences of the Tajik SSR. – Dushanbe, 1960.
23. Malitsky N. From the Field of Tajik Folklore // Collection of the Turkestan Oriental Institute in honor of Prof. A.E. Schmidt. – Tashkent, 1923.
24. Quran Karim. Uzbek Translation with Explanatory Notes / Translator and Commentator Aloudin Mansur. – Tashkent, 1992.
25. Documents of the Past. Kashkadarya Region.
26. Bakhronovna R. D. The scientific expedition of french explorer charles eugene ujfalvy in central asia //Asian Journal of Multidimensional Research (AJMR). – 2019. – T. 8. – №. 8. – C. 78-85.
27. Rasulova D. Emotional intelligence and its influence on executive performance //South Asian Journal of Marketing & Management Research. – 2020. – T. 10. – №. 4. – C. 28-32.
28. Rasulova D. B. Scientific Cooperation Between French and Uzbek Scientists in the Field of Archaeology During the Years of Independence //American Journal of Social and Humanitarian Research. – 2021. – T. 2. – №. 4. – C. 154-159.
29. Bakhronovna R. D. French manufacturing and cleaning ioakim aloizi in the turkestan territory //Asian Journal of Multidimensional Research (AJMR). – 2018. – T. 7. – №. 8. – C. 252-265.
30. RASULOVA D. AREA OF SCIENTIFIC AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING //FAN, TA'LIM VA AMALIYOTNING INTEGRASIYASI. – 2023. – C. 28-35.