

MYSTICAL INTERPRETATION OF SHEIKH BADR AL-DĪN IBN QĀDĪ SAMĀWNĀ'S CONTROVERSIAL IDEAS

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Abstract

An important factor that affected political, religious, and social life during the period of Ottoman history called the "Ottoman Interregnum" was Sheikh Badr al-Dīn ibn Qāḍī Samāwnā's (d. 823/1420) ideas and activities that resulted in a rebellion. Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, who managed to come to prominence in each position that he held, received the highest level of education. In addition to his scholarly identity, he officially served as *qāḍī askar* (judge of the army), an important bureaucratic rank for the state. Finally, as a Sufi, he attracted many supporters in a short time. Although several studies have examined his life and ideas, a considerable number of these studies were written for ideological purposes. A Sufi scholar, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn has been unrighteously and incorrectly accused of being a pioneer of atheism, pantheism, anarchism, communism, and materialism in Ottoman times. The main reason for these inaccurate accusations is that his work *al-Wāridāt* has not been regarded as a mystical text. In this paper, I will attempt to address his controversial ideas at the mystical level, demonstrating the similarities and differences between his thoughts and those of earlier Sufis. The first commentaries written on *al-Wāridāt* are the main sources for the paper.

Key Terms: Sheikh Badr al-Dīn Ibn Qāḍī Samāwnā, *al-Wāridāt*, Mullā 'Abd Allāh Ilāhī, the Judgment Day, resurrection, the eternity of the world, *mushābada*

Sources state that because of his authority especially in the field of Islamic jurisprudence, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn's scholarly identity and the prestige he gained were well received in academic circles during the period in which he lived and in later centuries. His influence was not limited to Anatolia and Rumelia but spread throughout the Islamic Middle East, especially Egypt. Hence, the famous scholar al-Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413), whose company the Sheikh enjoyed in Cairo, praised his scholarly personality. Ibn 'Arabshāh, who had the opportunity to talk to Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, mentioned his authority in the field of *fiqh*. Ibn 'Arabshāh also wrote that the Sheikh's academic proficiency was so high that he disagreed with one of the major works of the Ḥanafī *fiqh*, the *al-Hidāya* with one thousand and ninety questions. Even the 16th century Idrīs al-Bidlisī, who identified him as a "*mulḥid* and *zindīq* (heretic)" due to his mystical thoughts, could not help commenting that the Sheikh was one of the leading scholars and jurists in religious and rational sciences. Undoubtedly, what established Sheikh Badr al-Dīn's scholarly authority was that he wrote such works in the field of *fiqh* as *Jāmi'* *al-fuṣūlayn* when he served as *qāḍī 'askar* of Mūsā Chalabī for ten years in Edirne. These works would be studied in Ottoman madrasas even after his execution.¹

How was such a scholar, whose scholarly competency was accepted in nearly all circles, accused of blasphemy because of some words he said as a Sufi? The common opinion in studies on Sheikh Badr al-Dīn is that the reason was his work *al-Wāridāt* and the ideas expressed therein. In fact, before we address these ideas and the context in which we interpret them, we must examine the issue of the authenticity of *al-Wāridāt*. This little treatise is a collection of lectures given to the Sheikh's disciples when he was under house arrest in Iznik [Nicaea] or, according to a more reliable source, after he fled from Iznik to Rumelia in search of the Sultan Chalabī Meḥmed around 820-823/1417-1420. Judging from the fact that the subjects of the treatise are not addressed systematically, it has been claimed that the treatise as it appears today was not written by Sheikh Badr al-Dīn. It has been argued that one of his disciples collected the Sheikh's ideas, to the best of his recollection, after the Sheikh's death. It has also

¹ For remarks on Sheikh Badr al-Dīn's different identities, see Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülbidler (15.-17. Yüzyıllar)* [*Zindīqs and Mulḥids in Ottoman Community (15th-17th Centuries)*] (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998), 152-160.

been said that although the treatise most likely was not written by the Sheikh himself, he saw the treatise after it was compiled and translated into Arabic. Others hold that it may be the Sheikh himself who translated the work into Arabic, so the last version of the treatise was probably checked by the Sheikh. All of these approaches claim that *al-Wāridāt* does not present Sheikh Badr al-Dīn's original ideas and thus cannot be accepted as a reliable document.² I argue that these claims based on the unsystematic character of the work or the discrepancies between the ideas expressed therein and those expressed in his other works can be appraised from two angles. First, the disconnection of opinions and witnessings (*mushāhadās*) and the lack of chapter headings and sections in the book is specific to this type of literature, i.e., *wāridāt* literature. With regard to the content of his Sufi interpretations, if we consider his mystical connection to Sheikh al-Ḥusayn al-Akhlāṭī in Egypt, his affiliation with the Akbarī School and his writing of a gloss on Dāwūd al-Qayṣarī's commentary on *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, the source of his mystical opinions and witnessings about the issue of *mabda'* and *ma'ād* is revealed.³

Muslim theologians hold that because scriptural texts about the afterlife fall into the category of *mutashābih* (unclear in meaning), they can have figurative meanings in addition to their literal meanings. This is because the other world cannot be conceived with the five senses, so reason, which depends on data provided by the senses, cannot be used for its perception. In his *al-Wāridāt*, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn provides esoteric meanings instead of exoteric meanings to such eschatological issues as the Apocalypse, Judgment Day, Heaven, Hell, the rewards of Heaven, the punishment of Hell; to unseen crea-

² For similar attitudes toward *al-Wāridāt*, see Khalil ibn Ismā'īl, *Simavna Kadısoğlu Şeyh Bedreddin Menâkıbı* [*Manâqıb of Sheikh Badr al-Dīn Ibn Qāḍī Samāwnā*] (eds. Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı and İsmet Sungurbey; Istanbul: Eti Yayınevi, 1967), 30; Cemil Yener, *Şeyh Bedreddin - Vâridât* [*Sheikh Badr al-Dīn - al-Wāridât*] (Istanbul: Elif Yayınları, 1970), 44; Necdet Kurdakul, *Bütün Yönleriyle Bedreddin* [*Badr al-Dīn in All Aspects*] (Istanbul: Döler Reklam Yayınları, 1977), 145-167; Bilâl Dindar, *Şayh Badr al-Dīn Maḥmûd et ses Wāridât* (Ankara: Ministère de la Culture, 1990), 51; Ocak, *ibid.*, 191.

³ Sheikh Badr al-Dīn's grandson Ḥāfiẓ Khalil ibn Ismā'īl, in his *Manâqıbnâme* of his grandfather written in 1460, says that *al-Wāridāt* is the last work by the Sheikh himself (Khalil ibn Ismā'īl, *ibid.*, 131-132). However, it is intriguing that he does not say that the work does not belong to him to vindicate his grandfather, who was executed because of his views in *al-Wāridāt*.

tures like angels, *jinn*s, satan, and the other controversial issues such as soul-body connection, the problem of good and evil, the eternity of the world, the relation between master and disciple, the reality of dreams, and the knowledge of the essences of things (*maʿrifā*). He attempts to explain these concepts based on the principle of the unity of being (*waḥdat al-wujūd*). These issues, which constitute the subject of our paper, can be addressed under the following headings.

1. The Nature of the *Ḥashr*

The *ḥashr*, i.e., the gathering of all those who are going to be resurrected on the Last Day in a place to be judged, constitutes a second eschatological stage after the resurrection (*baʿth*). The belief in both gathering and resurrection rely on the Qurʾānic text, the prophetic traditions, and the consensus of believers. Thus, these concepts constitute a creed for Muslims, and those who reject this creed are regarded as unbelievers. Almost all sects, with the exception of some non-Islamic sects, such as al-Manṣūriyya and al-Janāḥiyya, accept that the gathering and the resurrection will occur. Discussions about the topic fall into three categories:

- a. Those who accept that the material body in the Hereafter will be the same as in this world.
- b. Those who claim that the resurrection will only be spiritual.
- c. Those who accept the resurrection and believe that re-creation in the Hereafter will be in a similar body, not in the same body as in this world.

Almost all Muslim scholars hold that the resurrection will be bodily, judging by the relevant Qurʾānic verses and prophetic traditions.⁴ According to them, descriptions in the Qurʾānic verses and prophetic traditions about Heaven and Hell, the people of Heaven, the rewards in Heaven, the people of Hell, and the punishment of Hell are clear proof that the resurrection will be bodily. A Naqshbandī sheikh, Mullā ʿAbd Allāh Ilāhī (d. 896/1491), who was one of the first commentators of Sheikh Badr al-Dīn’s thoughts, accepted that resurrec-

⁴ For the relevant verses and prophetic traditions, see Q 50:4; Q 36:78-79; Q 71:17-18; Q 39:68; Q 70:43; Q 30:56; Q 50:42; al-Bukhārī, “al-Īmān,” 37, “al-Tafsīr,” 39/3, 78/1, “al-Riqāq,” 45; Muslim, “al-Fitan,” 141, 142, “al-Janna,” 55-59; al-Nasāʾī, “al-Janāʾiz,” 118.

tion will be bodily, however, this body could be the same with the one in this world as well as a new body created from different elements.⁵

The starting point for Muslim Peripatetic philosophers, who deny the bodily resurrection, is their view that the *i'āda* (resurrection) of *ma'dūm* (the non-existent) as it was is impossible. This view suggests that it is not possible for the body that decayed and became non-existent to be resurrected in the Hereafter. The soul is permanent and does not change. Even though God is able to create a new body and connect it to the soul, the connection of the same soul to different bodies entails incarnation. Thus, resurrection and gathering are relevant to souls, not bodies. Bodily depictions in Qur'ānic verses and prophetic traditions are only symbols that are applied to help people understand the realities of life in the Hereafter, encouraging them to do good and discouraging them from doing evil.⁶ Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, who maintains that the soul's gaining a new body is not incarnation, sees these interpretations as unbelief and denounces these philosophers as unbelievers.⁷ Among Muslim philosophers, al-Fārābī,

⁵ Sheikh 'Abd Allāh Ilāhī al-Simāwī, *Zād al-mushtāqīn* (MS Istanbul, Hacı Selim Ağa Kütüphanesi, Kemankeş, 206), 23b-24a, 45a-46a; idem., *Kashf al-Wāridāt* (MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Şehid Ali Paşa, 1325), 9b-11b.

⁶ Theologians responded to this attitude of Muslim Peripatetics with a view called "*al-ajzā' al-ʿaṣliyya* (essential parts)." According to them, although the bodies of every living being change throughout their lives, there are some essential parts that do not change. On the day of the apocalypse, the body of every living being will be created from these essential parts. See Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Tabāfut al-falāsifa* (ed. Jirār Jahāmī; Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Lubnānī, 1993), 213-214; Abū l-Maʿālī Imām al-Ḥaramayn Rukn al-Dīn 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Juwaynī, *Kitāb al-irṣād* (eds. M. Yūsuf Mūsā and 'Alī 'Abd al-Ḥamīd; Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1369 H [1950]), 371-372; Abū Maṣūūr 'Abd al-Qāhir ibn Ṭāhir ibn Muḥammad al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn* (Istanbul: Dârülfünun İlahiyat Fakültesi, 1346 H [1928]), 234; Abū 'Abd Allāh Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Umar al-Rāzī, *Kitāb ma'ālim uṣūl al-dīn* (ed. Samiḥ Dughaym; Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Lubnānī, 1992), 89-90; Süleyman Toprak, *Ölümden Sonraki Hayat: Kabir Hayatı [Life After Death: The Intermediate Life]* (Konya: Sebat Ofset, 1989), 213-214; Yusuf Şevki Yavuz, "Ba's [Ba'th]," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (DİA) [Turkish Religious Foundation Encyclopedia of Islam]*, V, 100.

⁷ See al-Ghazālī, *Tabāfut al-falāsifa* (ed. Sulaymān Dunyā; 2nd edn., Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1955), 84-90.

Ibn Sīnā, and Ibn Rushd explain happiness in the Hereafter as the achievement of intellectual pleasure and explain punishment and pain as the lack of this pleasure. Thus, they claim that the Judgment Day will be spiritual rather than bodily.⁸

Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, who was regarded by Mullā ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī as among *muḥaqqiq* Sufis, stated his views on the resurrection and the gathering in his famous *al-Wāridāt* as follows:

The permanence of the body and the gathering of its parts together are not possible, after it dismembers and ceases to exist, as it was before. The resurrection of the dead does not mean that.⁹ The judgment of the bodies is not the way ordinary people assume. However, it is possible that a time comes that there is not any single human being. After that, a human being comes to the existence just like in Adam being without parents out of soil, then through reproduction (*bi-l-tanāsul*).¹⁰

It can be understood from the above statements of the Sheikh that creation in the Hereafter will only be of the soul, not of the body; even if it is bodily, the body there will not be the same as the body of this world. According to ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn intended the second meaning and did not deny bodily resurrection. The point Sheikh Badr al-Dīn makes is as follows: the body consists of four elements that bear the character of dismemberment and destruction. Although the soul is in contact with the body through divine will, the connection of the soul with the body does not make the body eternal. For that reason, the elements that constitute the body change to their real character, i.e., the character of mortality after death, and the body dismembers and vanishes. If human beings are

⁸ On this issue, see Yavuz, “Ba’s,” V, 98-100; Süleyman Toprak, “Haşr [Hāshrl],” *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (DİA)* [*Turkish Religious Foundation Encyclopedia of Islam*], XVI, 416-417; Çağfer Karadaş, *İslâm Düşüncesinde Âbiret* [*Afterlife in Islamic Thought*] (Bursa: Emin Yayınları, 2008), 91-95; Yaşar Aydın, *Fârâbî’de Tanrı-İnsan İlişkisi* [*God-Human Relation in al-Fârâbî*] (Istanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2000), 112; Orhan Şener Koloğlu, “Mutezile Kelâmında Yeniden Yaratma (İ‘âde) [Resurrection (İ‘âda) in Mu‘tazilite Thought],” *Usûl İslâm Araştırmaları* [*Usûl Islamic Researches*] 9 (2008), 7-40.

⁹ Sheikh Badr al-Dīn Maḥmūd Ibn Qāḍī Samāwnā, *al-Wāridāt*, in Sheikh ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī al-Simāwī, *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 9b.

¹⁰ Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, *al-Wāridāt*, 35a, 36b.

to be created in the Hereafter in their bodies, even if their bodies resemble the shapes of those in this world, they differ in their characteristics. It is not possible to think of corruptible elements in the eschatological body because there will be eternity in the Hereafter. Thus, as stated in the Qur'ānic verses and the prophetic traditions about the resurrection, the differences in the structure of eschatological bodies, including not feeling exhaustion and boredom, not needing sleep, not getting sick, and not getting old, indicate this situation. Hence, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn does not oppose bodily resurrection; he only disagrees with people's incorrect understandings about the nature of the resurrection. Referring to Ibn 'Arabī's statements, 'Abd Allāh Ilāhī tries to prove Sheikh Badr al-Dīn's position that the resurrection happens with the blow of the soul and reproduction, as in the case of Adam after he was created from soil.¹¹

One commentator, Sheikh Yāwṣī (d. 920/1514), who was the father of Sheikh al-Islām Abū l-Su'ūd, holds the same views. He thinks that the body consists of elements, and every thing that consists of other things is temporal, not eternal. After the elements that form the body dismember and vanish, they do not come together; they return to their essential nature.¹² Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥarīrīzāda who wrote the first Turkish commentary on *al-Wāridāt* under the name *Futūḫāt-i Ilābiyya* states that the collection of elements that constitute bodies in the Hereafter is not "elemental (*unşuri*)" but an "imaginal (*mithālī*)" way that is specific to that world. In other words, although the body supersedes the soul in the world, in the Hereafter, the soul supersedes the body.¹³ Criticizing Sheikh Badr al-Dīn's thoughts, a 17th cen-

¹¹ See Ilāhī, *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 9b-11a; 35a-36b; Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Ibn 'Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (ed. Abū l-'Alā 'Afīfī; Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, n.d.), 67; idem., *Fuṣūsu'l-Hikem Tercüme ve Şerhi* [*Translation and Commentary of Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*] (translated into Turkish with a commentary by Ahmed Avni Konuk, eds. Mustafa Tahralı and Selçuk Eraydın; 4th edn., Istanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, 2005), I, 246-249.

¹² Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muştafā al-Iskilibī Yāwṣī, *Ḥaḳīqat al-ḥaqā'iq fī sbarḥ Kashf asrār al-daḳā'iq* (MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Hacı Mahmud Efendi, 2620), 4a, 22a-b.

¹³ Ḥarīrīzāda holds that the bodies of prophets and saints do not vanish because their bodies are souls and their souls are bodies. See Meḫmed Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥarīrīzāda, *Futūḫāt-i Ilābiyya Sbarḥ-i Wāridāt-i Ilābiyya* (MS Istanbul, Istanbul Büyükşehir Belediye Kütüphanesi Atatürk Kitaplığı, Osman Ergin Yazmaları, 507), 11b; 52a-57a.

ture Khalwatī sheikh Nūr al-Dīnzāda took a more deliberate approach. He suggests that if the author (the Sheikh) means that the body created in the Hereafter will be different from the one in the world, that can be accepted. However, if he means to deny the bodily resurrection and to support spiritual creation in the Hereafter, this meaning is contrary to the Qurʾān, the Sunna, and the consensus of believers and leads to blasphemy.¹⁴ Sheikh al-Islām Mūsā Kāzīm claims that Sheikh Badr al-Dīn was not interested in the material things because he was always occupied with spiritual things; thus, he denied bodily resurrection.¹⁵

‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī insists that Sheikh Badr al-Dīn did not deny bodily resurrection. According to him, those who are not prophets and God’s friends cannot completely understand issues related to the Hereafter. Accordingly, judging from the literal meanings of the Sheikh’s words, some ignorant people supposed that he denied bodily resurrection and the material character of Heaven. However, the meaning meant by the pure (*asfiyāʾ*) and the saints (*awliyāʾ*) are far from the thoughts of ignorant people. Average people’s knowledge and assumptions about the Hereafter, Heaven, the houries, the trees, etc. are different from the perceptions of the *muḥaqqiq* Sufis.¹⁶ Mullā Ilāhī recommends the following to those who do not accept the words of the Sheikh:

Just and intelligent people should accept the words of the people of *kashf* and *shubūd*. If they do not, at least they should not insist on their bigotry. However, to accept completely what *awliyāʾ Allāh* say is a more suitable way, if possible.¹⁷

In addition, quoting from Ibn ‘Arabī to support his thought, Mullā Ilāhī emphasizes that Ibn ‘Arabī supported both bodily and spiritual

¹⁴ Muşliḥ al-Dīn Muştafā ibn Nūr al-Dīn Aḥmad Nūr al-Dīnzāda Filibawī, *al-Radd ‘alā l-Wāridāt* (catalogued as *Risale fi izabi ma vakaa fi’s-sirri’lezi ebanebu Mahmud es-Simāwī*; MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Carullah, 2079), 213a-214a, 228b.

¹⁵ Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, *Varidat-i Bedreddin [Wāridāt-i Badr al-Dīn]* (translated into Ottoman Turkish by Mūsā Kāzīm Efendī, ed. Mehmed Serhan Tayşī; Istanbul: MVT Yayıncılık, 2010), 3.

¹⁶ Ilāhī, *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 9b-11b, 35a-36b, 74b; idem., *Zād al-musbtāqin*, 45a-46a.

¹⁷ Ilāhī, *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 11b-12a.

resurrection.¹⁸

2. The Rewards of Heaven and the Torment of Hell

One of Sheikh Badr al-Dīn's views that received criticism was that he saw the rewards of Heaven and the punishment of Hell as spiritual things. His statements in *al-Wāridāt* are as follows:

Do not doubt that Heaven, mansions [therein], trees, houries, dresses, rivers, fruits; the torment of Hell, fire, etc. – they are to be found in reports and [people's sayings about them] have spread – are not limited to their literal meanings. They have other meanings that only *aṣfiyā'* of saints know.¹⁹ ... Houries, mansions, rivers, trees, fruits, and the like exist in the imaginary world, not sensual world.²⁰ Heaven, Hell, and their details have meanings outside of the minds of ignorant people.²¹ ... Houries, mansions, dresses, and gardens were compared [to their worldly names] to explain them to ignorant and half-wit people.²² ... You should know that we can call every worldly/exoteric and other-worldly/esoteric state, rank, or station, which are precious, "Heaven." Similarly, we can call every worthless state, material, and low station "Hell, snakes, scorpions, and *zaqqūm*."²³ ... If the world, the Hereafter, houries, mansions, and Heaven are so, there is no need for [all] these strivings. [If anyone thinks so] they not only misguide themselves but also others.²⁴ ... Thus, you understand that there are other meanings of Heaven, houries, and Hell. Hence, I had mentioned this issue a couple of times before. The same applies to other verses in the issue. Accordingly, the Prophet said that the Qur'ān has one literal and up to seven figurative meanings.²⁵ ... Similarly, we had said that Heaven, mansions, fruits, and the like are not what the average people and the scholars of *ẓābir* assume. Hence, they compare all these to the visible world. They even claim that those other-

¹⁸ See Ibn 'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d.), I, 312-313.

¹⁹ Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, *al-Wāridāt*, 4b.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 14b.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 36b-37a.

²² *Ibid.*, 66b.

²³ *Ibid.*, 72a.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 72b.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 98a.

worldly things consist of elements like these [worldly] trees, rivers, mansions, and houries.²⁶

If the above statements by Sheikh Badr al-Dīn are considered, at first glance, one can assume that he supported the idea that the descriptions in the Scripture about the rewards of Heaven and the torments of Hell are symbolic and are no more than sanctions that encourage good and discourage evil. However, ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī asserts that this assumption is completely wrong. With these statements, the Sheikh intended to show that the Hereafter does not consist only of a material life but also has a spiritual aspect. Thus, judging from the fact that the Qur’ān has an esoteric meaning in addition to its exoteric meaning, the Sheikh sought to interpret the relevant verses in an esoteric way. Because the afterlife means the bodily and spiritual happiness, the meanings of Heaven and its rewards and Hell and its torments cannot be restricted to literal meanings. According to Mullā Ilāhī, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn notes these esoteric meanings about Heaven and Hell in addition to the literal meaning:

Heaven is divided into three parts, the heaven of essence (*dhāt*), the heaven of attribute (*ṣifa*), and the heaven of act (*fi‘l*). After the lower self (*nafs*) escapes the curtains of corruption, achieves the attributes of perfection, and reaches the level of satisfaction, it reaches one of these heavens based on its level. When the soul separates from the body, the results of people’s virtues and righteous deeds are revealed as the rewards of Heaven. The meaning of Heaven and its rewards is tasting (*dhawq*), unveiling (*kashf*), and the sciences of *tawhīd*. The wine of Heaven and its fruits are luminous and spiritual attributes and are the nourishment of the spirit and the heart. Houries represent the self’s escape from lustful desires, its purification from natural dirt and the murkiness of the elements and, finally, the *jamālī* manifestations achieved after these purifications. Rivers belong to the *tawhīd* of the Essence and its attributes. Mansions are spiritual contentment (*riḍā*) achieved by the soul. Trees are the trees of the perfect man (*al-insān al-kāmil*) that have perfect attributes because in these trees, ‘*aqlī-qudsī* flowers blossom and the fruits of the Essence and manifestations of its attributes grow. Moreover, it is the witnessing of manifestations of divine beauty (*jamāl*) and its lights in the rank of the soul.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 102a.

Hell is the spiritual condition of pain after the soul is veiled from God because of poor character and unrighteous deeds.²⁷

However, these interpretations do not mean that literal facts about Heaven and Hell cannot be accepted. Furthermore, Sheikh Ilāhī states that Hell and its torments are everlasting. He also mentions the specific levels of Heaven and Hell to which each righteous and unrighteous deed corresponds.²⁸

According to ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī, it is not correct to say that the form of Heaven, its rewards, gardens, and rivers or Hell and its torments are only material. It is also not correct to say that they are spiritual or to interpret them with spiritual concepts and symbols. The essential point is that the material and the spiritual will be together.²⁹ Moreover, spiritual pleasures, such as achieving the consent of God, speaking with Him, and observing His beauty, supersede material pleasures, such as eating, drinking, cloth, scent, houries, trees, and rivers. In other words, the spiritual heaven supersedes the material heaven. The main purpose is to turn toward God and to achieve His consent. Thus, the people of Heaven find real happiness in spiritual pleasure, not in formal things, as average people assume. On this point, Mullā Ilāhī mentions that for Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, the torments of Hell and the rewards of Heaven have the same names as in this world, but there is no other relationship between them because of the difference in their structure.³⁰

²⁷ Ilāhī, *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 4b-5b, 15b. For the heavens of essence, attributes, and act, see Kamāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Razzāq ibn Abi l-Ghanā’im al-Kāshānī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-ṣūfiyya* (ed. ‘Abd al-Khāliq Maḥmūd; Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1404 H [1984]), 64.

²⁸ Ilāhī, *Zād al-musbtāqīn*, 46b-48a, 90a-91a, 123b. Sheikh Yāwṣī and Ḥarīrīzāda compare the unity to the water river, *ḥilm* to the honey river, knowledge to the milk river, and *ma‘rifā* to the wine river. In contrast, things such as wrong belief and poor character are seen as snakes and scorpions. See Yāwṣī, *Ḥaḳīqat al-ḥaqā’iq*, 3a-b; Ḥarīrīzāda, *Futūḥāt-i Ilābiyya*, 10a.

²⁹ Ilāhī, *Zād al-musbtāqīn*, 45a.

³⁰ Sheikh Ilāhī notes that average people are veiled by the literal meanings of the Qur’ānic verses and ḥadīths on the nature of eschatological issues, Heaven, and Hell. On this issue, see Ilāhī, *Zād al-musbtāqīn*, 90a-92a, 123b; idem., *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 4b-7a, 12a, 33a-b, 66b-67b, 71b-73a, 98a-99a, 102a-b; idem., *Uṣūl-i wuṣūl-i ilābiyya* (MS Manisa, Manisa İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 1524), 305a; Yāwṣī, *Ḥaḳīqat al-ḥaqā’iq*, 3a-b.

According to Sheikh Yāwṣī, who supports ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī, everything in the world of *shabāda*, or sensible world, has an essence and only exists with this essence. For this essence, there is an ideal form in the angelic world (*malakūt*) and the hidden realm (*ghayb*). Thus, in his statement that “houries, mansions, rivers, trees, fruits, and the like exist in imaginary world, not in sensual world,” Sheikh Badr al-Dīn stresses that the realities of these rewards come existence in the world of image (*mithāl*), not in the world of *shabāda*. Nūr al-Dīnzāda holds that this view is incorrect because the imaginary world is a *barzakh* between this world and the Hereafter. Sheikh Ilāhī regards the imaginary world as the world of *baqā’* after *fanā’*. Those who are purified from all types of veils can observe Heaven and its rewards in the sensual and imaginary world, but those who become slaves to their selves and cannot rid themselves of their evil character will not see them at all. They fall into the great fire in this world due to their veils.³¹

Nevertheless, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn’s esoteric interpretation of Heaven and Hell was not an original idea. It is known that some early Sufis, especially Ibn ‘Arabī, held this view. According to Ibn ‘Arabī, for every deed, there is a heaven; there is a heaven for every *fard*, *nāfila*, righteous deed, and prevention of evil or prohibited deed. Those who act with more morality and have more righteous deeds receive more shares of these heavens. Called “the heaven of deeds” or “the heaven of self,” this heaven is the *ṣūrī heaven*, which includes delicious food, pleasant and healthy drinks, and beautiful partners. It is built by the deeds of believers. The spiritual heaven, which comes from the manifestations of the divine names and attributes, is called the *heaven of attributes*. The heaven of attributes, which gathers the worlds of *ghayb* and *shabāda*, is the heaven of the heart as well. The *heaven of essence* is the heaven of the soul, the observation of the beauty of the Essence at the level of oneness (*aḥadiyya*). Ibn ‘Arabī accepted the Heaven that consists of formal pleasures as the heaven of the self, the heaven that consists of spiritual pleasures formed by the manifestations of the divine names and attributes as the heaven of the heart, and the heaven that is formed by observing the beauty of God beyond the two worlds as the heaven of the soul. However, this

³¹ See Ilāhī, *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 15b-16a; Yāwṣī, *Ḥaḥiqat al-ḥaqā’iq*, 3a-b, 6b; Ḥarīrīzāda, *Futūḥāt-i Ilābiyya*, 14a-16a; Nūr al-Dīnzāda, *al-Radd ‘alā l-Wāridāt*, 219a-b.

does not mean that he did not accept the existence of a sensible (material) heaven and hell in addition to the spiritual heaven and hell.³²

3. The Apocalypse and Its Signs

Sheikh Badr al-Dīn states that some people during the time of the Prophet expected such apocalyptic signs as the Dajjāl, *dābbat al-arḍ*, and the Mahdī. Similarly, those who came after this time expected those signs to occur during their time and even wrote on this issue. However, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn attempted to interpret the apocalypse and its signs outside of their literal meanings. The apocalypse means the complete emergence of the Essence due to the annihilation of attributes, both exoterically and esoterically. ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī calls this “the great apocalypse (*qiyāmat-i kubrā*).” In a sense, this means the inclusion of the existence of the servant (human beings) in the existence of God after the self is completely annihilated. A person’s death, be it voluntary or involuntary, is the little apocalypse (*qiyāmat-i ṣughrā*).³³ In fact, Sheikh Ilāhī explains the issue by dividing the apocalypse into four parts; because there are four births, there are four apocalypses. The birth of a child from the womb of the mother is called the bodily birth (*wilādat-i ṣūrī*) and the little apocalypse (*qiyāmat-i ṣughrā*). Reaching puberty and distinguishing between good and evil by learning is called the spiritual birth (*wilādat-i ma‘nawī*) and the middle apocalypse (*qiyāmat-i wuṣṭā*). Reaching middle age and gaining satisfaction and maturity is called the beautiful birth (*wilādat-i ṭayyiba*) and the great apocalypse (*qiyāmat-i*

³² For Ibn ‘Arabī’s views on Heaven and Hell, see *al-Futūḥāt*, I, 297-304, 317-318; III, 32; al-Kāshānī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-ṣūfiyya*, 60-63; idem., *Laṭā’if al-i‘lām fi isbārāt abl al-ilbām* (ed. Majīd Hādizāda; Tehran: Markaz-i Nashr-i Mirāth-i Maktūb, 2000), 223-224; Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-Hikem Tercüme ve Şerhi*, I, 77-81; Su‘ād al-Ḥakīm, *al-Mu‘jam al-ṣūfi* (Beirut: Dār Nadra, 1981), 287-292. Al-Ghazālī accepted the esoteric interpretations on this issue. He stated that the pleasures of Heaven are divided into sensual, imaginary, and intellectual, and everyone benefits from them according to their abilities. See al-Ghazālī, *al-Maḍnūn bibī ‘alā gbayr ablibī*, in idem., *Majmū‘at rasā’il al-Imām al-Ghazālī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1406 H [1986]), IV, 159-161; idem., *Fayṣal al-tafriqa bayn al-Islām wa-l-zandaqa* (ed. Sulaymān Dunyā; Cairo: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Kutub al-‘Arabiyya, 1381 H [1961]); Bekir Topaloğlu, “Cennet [Heaven],” *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi (DİA)* [Turkish Religious Foundation Encyclopedia of Islam], VII, 381-384.

³³ Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, *al-Wāridāt*, 73b, 74b.

‘*uzmā*). Passing the level of knowledge and reaching the level of seeing and living things that are known is called the real birth (*wilādat-i ḥaqīqī*) and the great apocalypse (*qiyāmat-i kubrā*).³⁴

The esoteric interpretation is valid for the signs of the apocalypse as well as the apocalypse. According to Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, only those who are perfect men and *muḥaqqiqs* can understand the essence of the apocalyptic signs that were recorded in the Scripture, such as the sunrise from the west, the closure of the gates of repent, the emergence of the Dajjāl, *dābbat al-arḍ*, and the Mahdī. It is wrong to interpret these events in a literal way, as average people do, and to expect them occur literally. Accordingly, the Dajjāl refers to the emergence of the ‘*aql-i ma‘āsb* with arrogance, the overcoming by the natural faculties of people over spiritual ones, or people who misguide others by lying, as in the example of Abū Jahl and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy ibn Salūl in the time of the Prophet. Similarly, Gog and Magog refer to the complete emergence of the evil character and thoughts of human beings and their invasion of people’s hearts. The Mahdī refers to the emergence of the universal intellect and the *rūḥ-i a‘zām*; the *dābbat al-arḍ* refers to the regretful self (*al-naḥs al-lawwāma*); the sunrise from the west refers to the separation of the soul from the body; and the closure of the gate of repent refers to the end of the lives of believers. Furthermore, the coming of Jesus is a metaphor for the emergence of the ‘*aql-i ma‘ād* with the light of *yaqīn*. His killing of the Dajjāl means the bringing of his rule to an end.³⁵ After stressing that these interpretations are not decisive, Sheikh Ilāhī states that one cannot conclude from these esoteric meanings about the apocalypse and its signs that the apocalypse and the resurrection after death will not happen.

³⁴ Ilāhī, *Zād al-mushtāqīn*, 44b-45a. Also see al-Kāshānī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-ṣūfiyya*, 104-105; idem., *Rasḥ al-zulāl fī sharḥ al-alfāz al-mutadāwila bayn arbāb al-adbwāq wa-l-aḥwāl* (ed. Sa‘īd ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ; Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth, 1415 H [1995]), 146; Sharaf al-Dīn Dāwūd ibn Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad al-Qayṣarī, *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (ed. Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī; Tehran: Mu‘assasa-i Intishārāt-i Amīr Kabīr, 1370 HS [1991]), 130-131.

³⁵ Yāwṣī, *Ḥaqīqat al-ḥaqā’iq*, 81b-83a; Ḥarīrīzāda, *Futūḥāt-i Ilābiyya*, 161a-165a; Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Iṣḥāq ibn Muḥammad al-Qūnawī, *Kırk Hadis Şerhi ve Tercümesi [Interpretation and Translation of Forty Ḥadīths]* (ed. and translated into Turkish by H. Kâmil Yılmaz; Istanbul: Meram Belediyesi Konevi Araştırma Merkezi [MEBKAM], 2010), 42-43.

Life, death, and the apocalypse as explained does not cancel the belief in the resurrection and gathering after death, the apocalypse, and the Judgment Day. Our Prophet and other prophets reported the torment in grave, the Judgment, Hell, and Fire, the *ṣirāṭ* bridge, and the people of purgatory. They will happen as reported and they are literally and figuratively real.³⁶

4. Angels, *Jinns*, and Satan

One of the issues for which Sheikh Badr al-Dīn was criticized is the claim that he did not prove an external existence for the unseen creatures such as angels, *jinns*, and Satan by contrast with the thought of Ahl al-sunna; instead, he interpreted them as esoteric powers.³⁷ Early in his *al-Wāridāt*, the Sheikh's words are as follows:

Everything that directs you to God is angel and *raḥmān*; everything that directs you to worldly things (*mā-siwā*) is *Iblīs* and Satan. Your power that causes you to lean toward God is angels and your power that causes you to lean toward worldly and lustful appetites are satans. You are full of angels and satans. Your position is decided by which side is dominant. *Jinns* are between angels and satans.³⁸

According to ʿAbd Allāh Ilāhī, by these words, the Sheikh notes the angelic and the satanic character and thoughts of human beings. Yet, he does not deny their external existence. A person has a good as well as a bad side. The good side indicates a person's soul and his/her spiritual aspect, and the bad side indicates the ego (*naḥs*) and his/her wordly appetites. Thus, people are filled with angelic and satanic characteristics. If a person has characteristics such as leaning toward what is right and good, keeping promises, and practicing religious duties, the dominant side is the angelic one. Similarly, if a person has characteristics such as envy, arrogance, stinginess, self-love, lust, and fame, the dominant side is the ego and the satanic one.

³⁶ Ilāhī, *Zād al-musbtāqīn*, 45a.

³⁷ Nūr al-Dīnzāda holds that the fact that angels, *jinns*, and satan have a *laṭīf* (subtle) structure does not mean that they are not separate and real beings. See *al-Radd ʿalā l-Wāridāt*, 219b, 221b-223b.

³⁸ Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, *al-Wāridāt*, 20b.

Thus, one should know which side is dominant in him/her and take the required precautions.³⁹

The angels that are the manifestation of the divine name *al-Hādī* inspire recitation (*dhikr*), good thoughts, and good morals with *rahmānī* revelations (*kbawāṭir*), the satans that are the manifestation of the divine name *al-Muḍill* inspire lustful and egoistic revelations and thoughts. Thus, the faculty that leads someone to God, which is the intellectual or spiritual faculty, is called an “angel,” whereas the *wahmī* faculties that keep someone from God are called “satan.”⁴⁰ This is because the intellect in the human body symbolizes Gabriel, and *wahm* symbolizes *Iblīs*. People are under the rule of whichever one is dominant. According to Ḥarīrīzāda, this dominance is because of predestination (*qadar* and *qaḍāʾ*), which is no more than *ḥayr-i aqdas* and *ḥayr-i muqaddas*. In contrast, the *jinns*, which are between angels and Satan, symbolize the *al-quwwa al-kbayāliyya*. Although they could have the ability to appear in different forms because they are spiritual beings they are seen by *ḥiss-i bāṭin* and the faculty of *kbayāl*. Thus, angels, *jinns*, and Satan resemble each other due to their being composed of non-material substances, and they differ due to knowledge and power.⁴¹

Sheikh Badr al-Dīn means that angels are spiritual beings when he says, “You should know that celestial, elemental, and similar faculties are angels. Prophet’s sayings about angels indicate my words on faculty. It is not the way ignorant people assume.”⁴² According to ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī, the Sheikh does not hold that these beings do not have any material bodies, as some philosophers assume. However, Ḥarīrīzāda states that angels can have hands and multiple wings, which represent power.⁴³ In other words, rather than the existence of their material forms, the reason for indicating that they have material forms is to show that they can take the form of birds or human beings

³⁹ Ilāhī, *Zād al-musbtāqīn*, 7a, 95b-96b.

⁴⁰ According to Sheikh Badr al-Dīn (*al-Wāridāt*, 70b), angels refer to the universal faculties in *āfāq* and the particular faculties in *anfus*.

⁴¹ Ilāhī, *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 14b, 20b-21b, 37a-b, 70b; Yāwṣī, *Ḥaḥiqat al-ḥaqāʾiq*, 9b-10b, 22b-23b, 74a; Ḥarīrīzāda, *Futūḥāt-i Ilābiyya*, 23a-28a, 57b-60a, 152b.

⁴² Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, *al-Wāridāt*, 51b-52a.

⁴³ See Q 35:1, Q 53:5, Q 66:6, Q 81:20, Q 6:93.

depending on their duties.⁴⁴

5. The Issue of Free Will

Sheikh Badr al-Dīn states, “All actions belong to God. Forms are His tools (...) There is no one who owns and has an influence on the forms of humans and humans are not aware of this. Thus, they imagine a choice, action, and existence that are special to them ... However, this imagination is evil because of their ignorance ... They assume that they have the ability to give up the actions, however the situation is not so.”⁴⁵ Because of these words, he was accused of denying the *al-irāda al-juz’iyya*, i.e., human’s free will, and holding the idea of fatalism. ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī explains his words in terms of the unity of existence. Accordingly, the knowledge, power, and will of the human, those who in fact do not exist and remain in non-existence (*‘adam*), are the attributes of God. The emergence of the actions of the human is due to their abilities and aptitudes in the eternal knowledge. They only happen as a result of the power of God. Thus, because every person’s actions are because of his/her abilities and aptitudes, there is no fatalism here. The Sheikh points out that it is heedlessness for the human to imagine that they have an independent existence and thus independent actions. All possible beings, including all types of wills and actions, are the products of the existence of God. There is no other agent except for Him, and there are no will and actions except for His. The emergence of actions by the human with the presence of causes is, first, because of the divine will and, second, because of the emergence of actions in accordance with their abilities and aptitudes. In other words, when causes do not come together, the will does not occur, and when the will does not occur, actions do not come into existence. However, one should bear in mind that this relation between the will and the abilities does not contradict the *al-irāda al-juz’iyya*.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Ilāhī, *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 51b-52a; Yāwṣī, *Ḥaḳīqat al-ḥaqā’iq*, 37b; Ḥarīrīzāda, *Futūḥāt-i Ilāhīyya*, 88a-b. Also see Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, 49; idem., *Fuṣūsu’l-Hikem Tercüme ve Şerhi*, I, 119-120; al-Qayṣarī, *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, 339-340.

⁴⁵ Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, *al-Wāridāt*, 25b-27a.

⁴⁶ See Ilāhī, *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 25b-27a, 39a-40a; idem., *Zād al-mushtāqīn*, 82b, 101a, 110b-111a, 174b, 181a; Yāwṣī, *Ḥaḳīqat al-ḥaqā’iq*, 15a-16a; Ḥarīrīzāda,

6. The Situation of Jesus

The issue of the descent of Jesus (i.e., the death of Jesus and his return to the world as a sign of the apocalypse) is one of the most controversial issues among Muslim scholars. Sunnī scholars hold that when Jesus was about to be killed, he was raised to the divine presence both bodily and spiritually, and he is still in the heavens. Before the apocalypse, he will come to this world following the revelations brought by the Last Prophet, kill the Dajjāl and establish the rule of justice. Accordingly, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn states, “Jesus (peace be upon him) is alive with his spirit and dead with his body. Because he is the soul of God (*rūḥ Allāh*), his spiritual side is dominant. There is no death for the soul. They all said: ‘Jesus was not dead.’ This does not mean that his body which consists of elements was not dead. For this kind of thing is impossible.”⁴⁷ Thus, Jesus, as the soul of God, is spiritually alive and was raised to the world of *malakūt* and parted from his body which consists of elements when he ascended. The impossibility of his bodily ascension is because of that the essential character of the world of *malakūt* is being subtle (*latīf*), not intensive (*kathīf*).

In addition, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn attempts to support his ideas by narrating a dream of him about Jesus: “In the year 808 [1405] on Friday, I saw two men ready. One of them was holding the dead Jesus. It seems that they were trying to tell me that Jesus is bodily dead. God knows the best.”⁴⁸ According to Sheikh Yāwṣī, while Jesus’ being the soul of God and the dominance of his spirituality over his materiality is an intellectual proof, this dream is an intuitional (*kashfī*) proof for the fact that he is bodily dead. In the eyes of Sufis, the *kashfī* proof is better than the intellectual proof because it shows the truth.⁴⁹ Yet Nūr al-Dīnzāda states that this type of *kashf* cannot be accepted as proof because it contradicts the Qurʾān and the Sunna.⁵⁰

Futūḥāt-i Ilābiyya, 36a-40b. About Ibn ‘Arabī’s dealing with the issue in terms of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, see Su‘ād al-Ḥakīm, *al-Mu‘jam al-ṣūfī*, 438-442, 633-639.

⁴⁷ Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, *al-Wāridāt*, 34a.

⁴⁸ Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, *al-Wāridāt*, 34b-35a.

⁴⁹ Yāwṣī, *Ḥaqīqat al-ḥaqā’iq*, 22a.

⁵⁰ Nūr al-Dīnzāda, *al-Radd ‘alā l-Wāridāt*, 227b.

‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī chose to adopt a moderate approach to the ideas of Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, whom he saw as a Jesus-like character. For instance, contrary to the Sheikh’s acceptance of the eternity of Jesus’ body as improbable, he says that although it is improbable by reason, it is not improbable in terms of the divine power and the Scripture, and this can only be achieved by mystical taste (*dhawq*), not by *taqlid*. Furthermore, he holds that the Sheikh’s dream can be interpreted. The Sheikh’s closing words, “God knows the best,” are an indication that the dream is subject to interpretation. Nūr al-Dīnzāda severely criticizes both the Sheikh’s comments and those of his commentators including ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī.⁵¹

On the other hand, ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī addresses another issue concerning Jesus for Christians in his work *Zād al-musbtāqin*. He specifically criticizes the acceptance of Jesus as God and stresses not to forget that he was a servant of God, although he was created without a father and he had the name “the soul of God.”

7. His Understanding of Divinity and the Issue of the Eternity of the World

It has been argued that Sheikh Badr al-Dīn takes a pantheist approach in his understanding of divinity, particularly referring to his words regarding the issue of the eternity of the world.⁵² I believe that these types of claims mentioned mostly in modern works are the result of incomplete knowledge about the Sheikh’s thought. In contrast,

⁵¹ For example, he criticizes Ilāhī’s phrase, “even if it is impossible by reason, it is possible by the Scripture and the divine power,” saying that just as it was possible for Jesus to be born without a father, it was possible for him to be raised to the world of *malakūt* as well. See Ilāhī, *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 34a-35a. Nūr al-Dīnzāda, *al-Radd ‘alā l-Wāridāt*, 226b-228b. On this issue, see also al-Kāshānī, *Sharḥ ‘alā Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (3rd edn., Cairo: Sharikat Maktabat wa-Maṭba‘at Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1408 H [1987]), 208; al-Qayṣarī, *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, 845-849; Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūsu’l-Hikem Tercüme ve Şerhi*, III, 126-131; Ḥarīrīzāda, *Futūḥāt-i Ilābiyya*, 48b-51b. Ahmed Avni Konuk states that Jesus’ form, which is far from the natural character, transmitted from *zābir* to *bāṭin*. However, this transmission happened with the disappearance of the luminous form, which was specific to Jesus. For him, this *ghaybūba* is the ascension that happened to prophets and saints. See Ahmed Avni Konuk, “Hz. Meryem ve İsa’ya Dair Risāle [Treatise on Mary and Jesus],” in Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūsu’l-Hikem Tercüme ve Şerhi*, III, 372-377.

⁵² For example, see Ocak, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülbidler*, 159, 201.

the entire thought of the Sheikh depends on the unity of being. Explaining his stance, he says that the absolute and the unique being is God, that His essence tends to emerge because of love, that possible beings come into existence due to this emergence and the divine names and attributes, that the essence of God is the same as things in that He gives them their existence, although it is independent (*munazzab*) from everything, and that there is a relative dualism in existence in addition to the absolute unity of being.⁵³

‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī interprets Sheikh Badr al-Dīn’s statement regarding the eternity of the world that “the world is eternal in terms of its genus (*jins*), species (*naw’*), and individuality (*shakhṣ*). Its temporality is essential (*dhātī*), not temporal (*zamānī*).”⁵⁴ by noting that the world is temporal in one way and eternal in another. According to him, the world is eternal in the knowledge of God before it comes to appearance in reality, while it is temporal in terms of its dependency to the existence of God to come to existence. However, the temporality of the world is not limited by time; it is related to the essence. This is because it is not possible to mention about time in this stage.⁵⁵

Conclusion

Sheikh Badr al-Dīn has been both supported and criticized by scholars and Sufis because of his above-mentioned thoughts, which were the reason for his execution. Furthermore, his work *al-Wāridāt* was severely attacked because it was accepted as the source of blasphemy and heresy among the scholars. ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Arabī, who was one of the scholars during the reign of the Sultan Mehmed II, attempted to have the book burned.⁵⁶ Sheikh al-Islām Abū l-Su‘ūd announced that those who followed the Sheikh were unbelievers.⁵⁷ Idrīs

⁵³ Sheikh Badr al-Dīn, *al-Wāridāt*, 16b, 23b, 40a, 42b, 47a.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 27a.

⁵⁵ Ilāhī, *Kashf al-Wāridāt*, 27a-28a; Yāwsī, *Ḥaḳīqat al-ḥaḳā’iq*, 17b-18a; Ḥarīrīzāda, *Futūḫāt-i Ilāhīyya*, 41a-42b.

⁵⁶ Abū l-Khayr ‘Iṣām al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muṣṭafā Tāshkuprīzāda, *al-Sbaḳā’iq al-Nu‘mānīyya fī ‘ulamā’ al-Dawla al-‘Uthmānīyya* (ed. Ahmed Suphi Furat; Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1985), 174.

⁵⁷ M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ, *Şeyhülislam Ebussuūd Efendi Fetvaları Işığında 16. Asır Türk Hayatı* [Turkish Life in 16th Century in the Light of Fatwās of Sheikh al-Islām Abū l-Su‘ūd Efendī] (Istanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1972), 194.

Bidlisī wrote that the work spread the seeds of heresy among people.⁵⁸ One of the sheikh al-islāms of the 19th century ‘Arif Hikmet Beg bought copies of the book and had them burned whenever he found because he believed that it would harm Muslims.⁵⁹ In Sufi circles, the most serious criticism came from Nūr al-Dīnzāda, who criticized the Sheikh’s views on the interpretation of the Scripture, the afterlife, angels, spiritual beings, and his understanding of being. According to him, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn adopted a type of Bāṭinism in interpreting the Qur’ānic verses and prophetic traditions and he was also confused about the issue of the Hereafter. He negated the objective realities of angels by reducing them to pure faculties. In the 16th century, the Khalwatī sheikh Bālī Efendī of Sofia accepted the Sheikh as the leader of the heretics. In the 17th century, in his letter to the Sultan Aḥmad I, the Jalwatī sheikh ‘Azīz Maḥmūd Hudā’ī said that “he was hung because of his damnation in the presence of God.”⁶⁰

Despite these attacks, some Sufis regarded Sheikh Badr al-Dīn as “the sun of religion, the sultan of ‘*arīfs* and *muḥaqqiqs*.” Some scholars wrote commentaries on *al-Wāridāt* to defend his views soon after he was executed. Among these were Mullā ‘Abd Allāh Ilāhī, who played an essential part in spreading the Naqshī order in Anatolia, the Khalwatī sheikh Muḥyī al-Dīn Yāwṣī, who was the father of the sheikh al-islām Abū l-Su‘ūd, and Muḥammad Nūr al-‘Arabī, who is known as the founder of the Malāmī order in its third period. With a poem of him including the verses meaning that “Muḥyī al-Dīn and Badr al-Dīn revived the religion/*Fuṣūs* is an ocean and *al-Wāridāt* is its river,” another Khalwatī sheikh Niyāzī al-Miṣrī, regarded the Sheikh as one of the followers of the school of Ibn ‘Arabī.⁶¹ Contrary to his sheikh ‘Azīz Maḥmūd Hudā’ī, Ismā‘il Ḥaqqī Būrsawī holds that

⁵⁸ Idrīs Bidlisī, *Hasbt Bibisht* (MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Esad Efendi, 2197), 255a-256b.

⁵⁹ Aḥmad Jawdat Pasha (as Ahmet Cevdet Paşa), *Kısa Enbiya: Peygamberler Tarihi [Qışaş-i Anbiyā’]: History of the Prophets* (Istanbul: Türk Neşriyat Yurdu, 1942-1955), XX, 1746.

⁶⁰ Meḥmed Sharaf al-Dīn (Yaltkaya), *Simawna Qāḍiioğlu Sheikh Badr al-Dīn* (Istanbul: Awqāf-i Islāmiyya Maṭba‘asi, 1340 H [1924]), 71-72.

⁶¹ Niyāzī Meḥmed ibn ‘Alī Chalabī al-Miṣrī, *Diwān* (Būlāq: Maṭba‘at Būlāq, 1259 H [1843]), 14.

al-Wāridāt does not contain any disbelief.⁶² Ḥarīrīzāda describing him as “the *quṭb* of martyrs” said that none of Sheikh Badr al-Dīn’s thoughts is contrary to religion.⁶³ The common point of the Sheikh’s supporters is that they interpreted his thoughts in a symbolic (*ishbārī*) way in the Sunnī framework. They also strove to support their interpretations with the ideas of the followers of Ibn ‘Arabī and the Akbarī School. Hence, Aḥmad Jawdat Pasha defines *al-Wāridāt* as a treatise that “was written to imitate *Fuṣūṣ*.”⁶⁴

If all of these positive and negative comments about Sheikh Badr al-Dīn are taken into consideration, it can be understood that his execution was political, not religious. When his most important supporter, Mūsā Chalabī, lost his fight for the throne, Sheikh Badr al-Dīn was regarded as one of those who rebelled against the state. His statements in *al-Wāridāt* were offered as evidence, and he was hung for the crime of heresy because of these statements. Putting aside the mystical tendencies and character differences of those Sufis who found his views heretical, the problem is still political. Hence, it is intriguing that those who criticized Sheikh Badr al-Dīn were close to the state and to the central authority, whereas those who supported him fought the state or, at least, kept their distance.

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⁶² ‘Uthmānzāda Ḥusayn Waṣṣāf, *Safīna-i Awliyā’* (eds. Mehmet Akkuş and Ali Yılmaz; Istanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2006), III, 114.

⁶³ Ḥarīrīzāda, *Futūḫāt-i İlābiyya*, 3a-5a.

⁶⁴ Aḥmad Jawdat Pasha, *Kısaş-i Enbiyā*, XX, 1746.

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