

B. PAPERS

Gāzīs and *cādūs* at the margins: conversion at the point of sword and enchantment

ZEYNEP AYDOĞAN (Rethymno)*

The management of public perceptions, much as it is today, constituted an essential part of medieval warfare. Warriors from various ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds were infused with an image of the enemy that was purely evil and alien. The “infidels” in the Turkish warrior epics are reduced

* Research for this article was undertaken as part of the research project “GHOST: Geographies and Histories of the Ottoman Supernatural Tradition: Exploring Magic, the Marvelous, and the Strange in Ottoman Mentalities” (funded by the European Research Council, CoGr2017; no. 771766). I am grateful to Marinos Sariyannis and Aslıhan Gürbüz for their precious remarks and suggestions, which contributed to the shaping of the present article.

Copyright: © 2020 The Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FORTH and the Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

Aca'ib: Occasional papers on the Ottoman perceptions of the supernatural is an open access journal published by the Institute for Mediterranean Studies/FORTH.

Aydoğan, Zeynep. 2020. “*Gāzīs* and *Cādūs* at the Margins: Conversion at the Point of Sword and Enchantment.” *Aca'ib: Occasional papers on the Ottoman perceptions of the supernatural* 1, 21–48.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.26225/mwxa-w561>

to stereotypes with a long list of negative qualities attributed to them.¹ It is interesting to note that the characteristics attributed to the “Saracens”² in the literature of the “other side”, who are portrayed as arrogant, cowardly, self-indulgent, treacherous, foolish pagans who worship idols, match almost exactly how the Christians are portrayed in the Turkish warrior epics.³ In addition to these wicked qualities, the opponent is also accused of being the masters of devil’s art. In the case of the Turkish epics, it is not however the Christian enemy who are worthy of such accusation. It is more frequently the Muslims who self-impose the term *cādū*, ‘sorcerer’, through the voice of the enemy, or at least through a refracted imagination of it. Such accusations can be better

-
- 1 I have previously discussed this topic in my article, Z. Aydoğan, “Creating an Ideal Self: Representations of Infidels in the Late Medieval Anatolian Frontier Narratives”, *Other Places: Ottomans Traveling, Seeing, Writing, Drawing the World* – A special issue of the *OA* [in honor of Thomas D. Goodrich] 38 (2012), 101–119.
 - 2 The French name *Sarrasins* originally derived from the classic Latin name of an Arab tribe “Sarraceni” which meant, in medieval French epic songs, any people whose religion was other than Christianity. W. W. Comfort, “The Literary Role of the Saracens in the French Epic”, *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 55:3 (1940), 629–630. For the origin of the word and how it came to be applied to Muslims, see J. Tolan, ““The Geographers” World: From Arabia Felix to the Balad al Ifranc (Land of the Franks)”, in J. Tolan, G. Veinstein and H. Laurens (eds), *Europe and the Islamic World: A History* (Princeton – New Jersey 2012), 12–13.
 - 3 There are a number of studies that tackle the issue of perception and representation using examples from the Byzantine literature, Spanish poems, and the *chansons de geste*. However, only a few works have dealt with the Muslim perception of Byzantium and other Christian domains, while the Turkish perspective from the late medieval Turco-Byzantine frontiers remains understudied. For an excellent survey of the studies on the representation of Muslims in western literature, see D. R. Blanks, “Western Views of Islam in the Premodern Period: A Brief History of Past Approaches”, in D. R. Blanks and M. Frassetto (eds), *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Perception of Other* (New York 1999), 11–55. For some pioneering studies on cultural perception in cross-cultural encounters, see N. M. El-Cheikh, “Byzantium through the Islamic Prism from the Twelfth to the Thirteenth Century”, in A. E. Laiou and R. P. Mottahedeh (eds), *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, (Washington D.C. 2001), 53–69; T. Abdullah, “Arab Views of Northern Europeans in Medieval History and Geography”, in D. Blanks (ed.), *Images of the Other: Europe and the Muslim World Before 1700* (Cairo 1996), 73–80; W. M. Watt, *Muslim-Christian Encounters: Perceptions and Misperceptions* (London – New York 1991); A. Maalouf, *The Crusades through Arab Eyes*, trans. J. Rothschild (New York c1984). Also see B. Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York c1982); F. Gabrieli (ed.), *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (Berkeley 1969).

understood in the historical setting of medieval Anatolia that witnessed a complete upheaval of political and cultural institutions as a result of continuous warfare, and gradual religious conversion, which eventually led the Muslim minority to become the majority of the population. A logical explanation in the sources for such transformation seems to be through “enchantment” where the Christians willingly or forcefully accepted conversion under the spell of mighty sorcerers: the Muslims.

Aside from Muslims being labeled as *cādūs* as part of their religious identity, there are actual *cādū* figures against whom the Muslims engage in continuous *gazā* warfare.⁴ Although similar epithets such as “soothsayer”, “magician” or “enchanter” are attributed to the Saracens in western literature,⁵ the emphasis on the *cādū* element in the Turkish warrior epics needs to be considered from the perspective of Turkish folklore: influences from ancient Turkic demonology found their way into the oral traditions of the frontier warriors. *Cādū* figures such as Hilāl Cādū and Ra’d Cādū are only a few of the many fantastic elements transferred from one epic to another. Just as with infidels, these figures are presented in the narratives as the sworn enemies of the Muslims with similar physical and moral attributes.

Supernatural imagery can be sought in popular tradition and folklore, however, because such diffusion of narratives occurs largely through oral transmission it is difficult to trace how certain motifs and themes were adapted and orally transmitted from one tradition to another before they became crystallized in literature. Despite this limitation, we are at the same time fortunate enough to have written versions of possibly earlier layers of this orally transmitted lore embodied in a set of Turkish warrior epics originating from the frontier zones of medieval Anatolia. The sources can, therefore, be treated as possible carriers of rich supernatural imagery that drew on Turkic lore and local Arab–byzantine frontier traditions interwoven around themes and motifs drawn from Persian epic romances.

Medieval narratives of the supernatural tend to be taken for granted as a ubiquitous feature of pre-modern societies. However, the potential for

4 I rely on Cemal Kafadar’s definition of *gazā*, according to which the term “implied irregular raiding activity whose ultimate goal was (or at least the warriors and their supporters could imagine that it was) the expansion of the power of Islam”. C. Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley 1995), 80.

5 Comfort, “The Literary Role of the Saracens”, 652.

approaching the supernatural imagery from a more historicized perspective, by seeking to look beyond folkloric patterns, can extend our understanding of historical identities and their dynamic nature. Against the background of the cultural transformation that occurred in Anatolia between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries, I will examine the *cādū* element as a marker of difference during this period of formation (at the same time confusion) of distinct cultural identities. By analyzing the vocabulary of motifs correlated with various *cādū* figures I aim to provide an understanding of the strategies of inclusion (or exclusion) that the sources might have offered to non-Muslims or new converts.

Sources: an overview

The three warrior epics being studied, namely the *Battālnāme*, the *Dānişmendnāme*, and the *Saltuknāme*, constitute the early examples of Anatolian Turkish literature.⁶ The sources are based on the existing Arab–

6 The *Battālnāme* is the Book of Seyyid Battāl, the legendary Arab warrior from the late Umayyad period. Although the oral roots of the *Battālnāme* can be traced back to the late eleventh century, the text was first patronized by the Seljukid ruler 'Alā'eddīn Keykubād (r. 1220–37). The earliest manuscript that we know of today is dated 1436–37. Yorgos Dedes has edited a critical edition of the *Battālnāme* including an introduction, English translation, Turkish transcription and commentary along with the facsimile: *Battālnāme*, facsimile edited by Şinasi Tekin and Gönül Alpay Tekin with an introduction, English translation, Turkish transcription and commentary by Yorgos Dedes (Cambridge 1996).

The *Dānişmendnāme* is the heroic epic devoted to the founder of the Danişmendid dynasty, Melik Dānişmend. Based on an earlier composition (now lost) for the Sultan 'İzzeddīn (Keykāvus II, d. 1279) by a certain Mevlānā ibn 'Alā (c. 1244–45), the manuscript that has survived today is the copy of another version by 'Ārif 'Alī, the governor of Tokat. According to his own account, 'Ārif 'Alī discovered the text in 1360–61 and adorned it with verses. There are two editions of the *Dānişmendnāme* consulted in this study. Along with the French edition by Irène Mélikoff, the main edition used is a more recent publication of Necati Demir, which also includes the facsimile. I. Mélikoff, *La geste de Melik Dānişmend: Étude critique du Dānişmendnāme*, 2 t. (Paris 1960); N. Demir (ed.), *Dānişmend-nāme*, 4 vols. (Cambridge 2002).

The third of the warrior epics, the *Saltuknāme*, the legendary account of the life and deeds of the thirteenth-century dervish-warrior Sarı Saltuk, is a collection of legends that were in circulation among the gāzī-dervish circles of Rumelia since at least the late thirteenth century. While guarding the Balkan frontiers in Edirne Prince Cem became interested in the well-known stories about Sarı Saltuk in the area and asked Ebū'l-Hayr-i

Byzantine frontier traditions and the orally transmitted Turkic lore, and bear chronological and thematic continuity. The historical backgrounds of both the *Dānişmendnāme* and the *Saltuknāme* follow chronologically the period in which the *Battālnāme* is set. As with Dānişmend Gāzī, Sarı Saltuk (whose original name is Şerīf) is a descendant of Seyyid Battāl and both are modeled after their ancestor. All three have perfect knowledge of the rival's language and religion. Disguised as Christians, they can easily deceive the enemy and break into its castles. No one can outmatch the protagonists in physical beauty, wisdom or martial skills.

All three works share the same subject matter: *gazās* against the “infidels”.⁷ The opening story is an account of the earlier achievements of the most prominent *gāzīs* of the Muslim world followed by a plethora of descriptions of the land of Rūm, i.e. the Byzantine Empire, whose entire conquest is the overarching goal. The three works share a variety of themes and motifs. In all three, for example, the future achievements of the respective hero are prophesied before or soon after his birth. The hero always has a companion, a former “infidel” whom he converts and to whom he gives a new Muslim name; that is a new identity. Beautiful Byzantine princesses or handsome and brave warriors to whom the author/narrator has aroused interest ultimately convert to Islam. The *gazā* activities are always sanctioned by the Caliph who showers the warriors with gifts for their successful military ventures. Dream apparitions of the Prophet of Islam or in the *Dānişmendnāme* and the *Saltuknāme* of Seyyid Battāl himself are very common. While Melik Dānişmend appears mostly as a military leader, Seyyid Battāl and Sarı Saltuk are also venerated as important religious leaders. Fantastic elements abound in the narratives devoted to these latter two, where the historical accounts of the warriors coexist with reports of their miraculous deeds and encounters with the marvelous.

The *gazā* activities are not only directed towards the Christians. Aside from the “infidels”, the hero fights relentlessly against various *dīvs* ‘demons’,

Rūmī, a member of his court, to compile them into a book. Ebū'l-Hayr-i Rūmī traveled in the Balkans for seven years to collect the stories from oral tradition and completed the text ca. 1480. Ebū'l-Hayr-i Rūmī, *Saltuknāme*, ed. F. İz (Cambridge 1986). Akalın's edition is published in three volumes; the text is transcribed into Latin alphabet. Ebū'l-Hayr-i Rūmī, *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Ş. H. Akalın, 3 vols. (Ankara 1990).

7 For an overview of the common features shared by these three epics, see Yorgos Dedes' discussion in the Introduction to the first volume of the *Battālnāme*, especially pp. 48–51.

cādūs ‘sorcerers’, *cānvars* ‘beasts’, *ejderhās* ‘dragons’, and *cinnīs* ‘jinns’ (of course the non-Muslim ones). Like the sharp distinctions between the believer and infidel, the world of *cādūs* and *divs* also belongs to the evil unless they accept to convert to Islam. The binary division of the world between “Muslims and the rest” is not restricted to humans but also pervades the world of these fantastic creatures, and as will be shown, this even applies to the wild and the “uncivilized”. The Muslim hero’s primary mission is to bring the light of Islam to those in the dark or in disbelief (*kufṛ*) and correct the wrongdoings of the “ignorant infidels” by showing them the right path.

By overcoming a mighty enemy, be it a two-headed dragon or a powerful Christian adversary is how the hero proves his supremacy (and the supremacy of Islam) and attracts more adherents to his retinue (or to Islam). However, even the power of a hero blessed by divine glory has its limitations. The hero may find himself in inextricable situations, which compels him to invoke God, and some Muslim genies who are servants of the Prophet Khidr arrive to help him.⁸ Through these examples, it is repeatedly, and probably consciously, underlined that the hero is humbled before God’s omnipotence, and he can perform miracles only after seeking God’s help through an intermediary force.

Irène Mélikoff who examined these sources in terms of intertextuality underlined various motifs and themes that were borrowed from Persian epic romances. Aside from the *Šāhnāme*-inspired romances and its various imitations such as the *Dārābnāme*, the books of *Abū Muslim*, *Kabramān-i Kātil*, *Kirān-i Habešī*, and *Cāmasb* seem to be quite popular among Turco-Muslim audiences, which is evidenced by the extant Persian manuscripts preserved in various libraries as well as their numerous translations into Turkish.⁹ The popularity of certain themes is also demonstrated by their transmission from one epic to another, such as the *cādū* figures Ra’d Cādū or Hilāl Cādū, the son

8 Al-Khaḍr (or al-Khiḍr) has a disputed status amongst scholars: some say he is a saint while for others he is a Prophet of Islam. He is assumed to be referred to in the Qu’ran, in sura Al-Kahf (18:66), specifically in an encounter with Moses. In the Turkish tradition, the name symbolizes the renewal of vegetation in spring. It is also believed that he comes to aid beings in distress and danger. *EP*, s.v. “al-Khiḍr” (A. J. Wensinck). For a comprehensive study on Khiḍr, see P. Franke, *Begegnung mit Khidr: Quellenstudien zum Imaginären im traditionellen Islam* (Beirut 2000).

9 The Persian influence to the genre is so extensive that Irène Mélikoff calls it “le conte épique turco-iranien”, I. Mélikoff, *Abū Muslim, le “porte hache” du Khorassan: dans la tradition épique turco-iranienne* (Paris 1962), 29–30.

of Güzendü Cādū in the *Battālnāme*.¹⁰ However, these figures acquired new characteristics and a new outlook in the Turkish adaptations of the stories. The extensive travels of both Seyyid Battāl and Sarı Saltuk in the regions inhabited by demons and *cādūs*, their flying over the Mount of Kāf or descent into the inner core of the earth, their combats along the frontiers with various *cādū* figures aided by “good” spirits such as Tāmūs-i Perī are some of the themes which Mélikoff classified as the Turkish contribution to the stories.¹¹

Cādūs as markers of difference

Certain skills are required in order to be considered a “cādū”. These skills that also constitute the basis of their occult powers are, to say the least, ominous and evil from an Islamic point of view. The most distinctive feature of the *cādūs* is that they can fly by riding big earthenware jugs, but not exclusively. In some examples, they mount marvelous creatures such as “winged lions” and dragons, and also wild animals such as tigers, bats, elephants, pigs, and rhinoceroses. By using snakes as their whip, the *cādūs* are capable of bestriding (both literally and metaphorically) animals, which are at all times at their disposal.

Evliyā Çelebi’s famous account on the battle of the *oburs* (a term that stands for ‘*cādūs*’ as explained by Evliyā himself) of the Circassian and the Abkhazian tribes riding all manner of household utensils, mats, and horse corpses has been previously brought to scholarly attention.¹² Marinus Sariyannis has questioned whether such descriptions of the *cādūs* can bolster

10 *Saltuknāme*, ed. İz, T348b–352a; *Saltuk-nāme*, Akalın (ed.), Vol. II, 164–169; Dedes (ed.), *Battālnāme*, A352. All quotations from the *Battālnāme* are from Dedes’ translation unless stated otherwise.

11 For Battāl’s first encounter with Tāmūs-i Perī see *Battālnāme*, A396. A comparative study focusing on the origins of these elements is not the primary concern of the present paper not only for the reductionist nature of such an undertaking but also because the main objective is to locate the *cādū* element in a historical perspective where it functioned more than just a literary motif. For more on a comparison between the Persian or Turkish origins of some of the themes and motifs in the epics see Mélikoff, *La geste*, 44–45.

12 Z. Aycibin, “Osmanlı Devleti’nde Cadılar Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme”, *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, 24 (2008), 55–70; M. Sariyannis, “Of Ottoman Ghosts, Vampires and Sorcerers: An Old Discussion Disinterred”, *ArchOtt*, 30 (2013), 195–220; cf. Y. Dağlı, S. A. Kahraman and R. Dankoff (eds), *Evliyā Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, Vol. 7 (Istanbul 2003), 279–280.

Carlo Ginzburg's controversial thesis on the shamanistic origins of the witches' Sabbath.¹³ According to the (now) widely accepted scholarly view, the records of the witch trials rather than reflecting the existing folkloric rituals were fabricated by the persecutors of the Inquisition.¹⁴ However, it is possible to speculate that the existence of similar descriptions in the Turkish warrior epics can in fact point to a common background of these folkloric elements. The fact that the compiler of the *Saltuknâme* collected the stories from oral tradition while traipsing around the Balkans might provide some clues as to how such transference may have taken place between these cultures (or at least about its whereabouts).¹⁵

What is even more interesting to note is that the *cādūs* in the epics are not necessarily gendered. Most of them are male characters presented to us as mighty warriors confronting the Muslim heroes: Ra'd Cādū, Hilāl Cādū, Güzendü Cādū, Rağdüş Cādū, Hirmās Cādū and Hādūs Cādū can be cited as examples. There are of course female *cādūs*. The most curious example is Şemāsīl Cādū who is a woman of power, an unwedded ruler picking up lovers. In this sense, she might function like the witches in Europe represented especially by women beyond child-bearing age.¹⁶ One does wonder if there is such a thing as too much coincidence as Şemāsīl is also portrayed as a ruler in the Lātīn country (*Lātīn diyāri*) or if the compiler/author/later copyists of the

13 After conducting extensive research on the European witch trials beginning in the sixteenth-century Friuli region, Ginzburg argued for a common folkloric and shamanistic background of the flying witches and battling over fertility, which was shared across different cultures extending from Europe to Siberia. See C. Ginzburg, *Les batailles nocturnes* (Paris 2010); and more comprehensively Idem, *Ecstasies* (London 1990); Idem, "Deciphering the Sabbath", in B. Ankarloo and G. Henningsen (eds), *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford 1990), 121-137; Idem, "Les origines du sabbat", in N. Jacques-Chaquin et M. Préaud (éds), *Le sabbat des sorciers, XV-XVIIIe siècles* (Grenoble 1993), 17-21; all cited in Sariyannis, "Of Ottoman Ghosts", 197, fn. 14.

14 Sariyannis, "Of Ottoman Ghosts", 197, fn. 14.

15 See note 6 above. For the compiler's own account on how he collected the stories see *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, T617a-b; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. III, 365-366.

16 I will return to this figure further down. For Şemāsīl, "bir 'avrat beği var karıdır/bir karı 'avrat pādīşāh olmuştur", see *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, T61b; *Saltuk-nâme* ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 98; Another female figure, Cādū Karı is portrayed having a more settled lifestyle with two children although each from a different cādū. *Battāl-nâme*, A352.

text had knowledge of the fear of witches that was in place beginning from the fourteenth century onwards and spread throughout Europe gradually.¹⁷

In addition to flying there are other ways in which the *cādūs* challenge the laws of nature. They are fire-resistant, able to stand on water, and lead miraculously long lives. The oldest among them, the ancestor of all *cādūs*, who taught magic to those that followed, is 987 years old, “older than the Prophet” as further explained in the text in a somewhat reverential manner.¹⁸ This brings us to another characteristic of the *cādūs*: they do not die easily. It requires a great deal of courage, physical strength, knowledge of many prayers and even magical weapons to kill them. The following is an example of the hero’s encounter with a powerful *cādū* figure, equally exciting as extended fighting scenes from an action movie:

To the right of the Caesar [the Byzantine emperor] was Güzendü Cādū and his two sons, each with the appearance of a monster. The rest of the army of *cādūs* were busy, each with a different magic. Güzendü Cādū, that disgusting infidel, entered the battlefield. He was forty cubits tall, and he rode a rhinoceros wearing a black rag... The eyes of this cursed wretch became bloodshot and he reached and pulled a stone with burning flames out of his chest, recited some charms and threw it at Seyyid. Flames covered him and dragons appeared from among the flames and attacked him. Seyyid recited the prayer of the prophet Khidr and he witchcraft was canceled out... Seyyid took out one of the arrows [Khidr gave him], held his bow and threw the arrow in the air. Divine power made the arrow land on the right eye of Güzendü and come out of the back of his head. The cursed wretch screamed and came over to lift Seyyid from his belt but Seyyid hit another arrow in his left eye that also came out of the back of his head.¹⁹

All of this was insufficient to kill Güzendü Cādū. Battāl had to cut him into two pieces with the sword of Dahhāk.²⁰

17 The Lātīn country comprises the countries of Gedlān (Catalans), Firānçe (France), Milān, Cīnevis (Genoa), Firankāl (the country of the Franks) and Espān (Spain). *Saltuknāme*, ed. İz, T54b–55a, 61b–62a; *Saltuk-nāme* ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 88, 99.

18 *Saltuknāme*, ed. İz, T178b; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 299.

19 *Battālnāme*, A328–329.

20 In Turkish epic tradition Dahhāk is one of the four sons of Eslem or Keyümers, the son of Adam and ancestor of all sovereigns of the world. While Keyümers’ older sons are ancestor kings of Arabia, Persia and Rūm, Dahhāk is the ancestor of all Turkic sovereigns. Mélikoff, *Abū Muslim*, 43.

The *cādūs* are also gifted shapeshifters; they can physically change in form and transform others too. Shapeshifting is one of the oldest tropes that appears commonly in various myths and also in epic poems such as the epic of Gilgamesh and the Iliad and is still being used in modern fiction as can be seen from various adaptations of television series featuring werewolves.²¹ Shapeshifting and putting people (and animals) under their spell are considered the most important supernatural powers that distinguish the *cādūs* as masters of the devil's art (as not all of the supernatural powers are labeled as ominous in the texts). Through these qualities, the *cādūs* are able to interfere in and change the course of events. Such ambitious attempts to exercise control over nature, needless to say, must be prevented at all costs as it is overt defiance to God's omnipotence.

Paradoxically, the supernatural power of the hero are (also) tested by his ability to communicate with animals, from real or imaginary realms (although there is hardly such distinction in the sources), and to tame them. Battāl is able to talk to animals as in the case of the hospitable lion, which offers him mountain berries on a tray that he carries on his head (an important detail as he will not be using his hands). As a result of this amicable encounter Battāl even entrusts him with his horse, the most precious 'Aşkar.²² In the *Saltuknâme*, Kara Dāvūd who is one of Sarı Saltuk's *abdāls* (wandering dervishes) combines his forces with a *hinzir*, 'pig', to wage *gazā* in the Crimea and with this collaboration he is able to defeat an otherwise insurmountable dragon.²³ While the saintly character of the heroes and their wondrous deeds are beyond the scope of the present study and should be examined separately, suffice it to say that the phenomena of communicating with animals and transforming into animal forms is recorded in several *menākıbnāmes* (hagiographies). According to some scholars, this is a topos deriving from pre-Islamic Turkic

21 While Bram Stoker's *Dracula* or Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* can be cited as early examples of what came to be known as Gothic literature, the roots of this horror and fantasy fiction can be traced back to the publication of the novel, *the Castle of Otranto* by Horace Walpole in the eighteenth century. "The Castle of Otranto: The Creepy Tale that Launched Gothic Fiction", <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-30313775> (last accessed on 3rd June 2020).

22 *Battāl-nâme*, A103–104. 'Aşkar is the horse of Hamza, the uncle of Muhammad. The stories of Hamza were very popular among Turks in Anatolia as elsewhere in the region. The protagonists of both the *Battāl-nâme* and the *Saltuknâme* rode 'Aşkar. Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 63.

23 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İz, T100b–101b; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 162–163.

beliefs.²⁴ The testimonies on Barak Baba's exposure to such inquiry (two times) where he must prove his occult powers by taming animals demonstrates that this was not only a motif specific to the genre but also that such demonstration of skills was occasionally demanded of the saintly figures.²⁵ In the sources, the hero is able to perform miracles only after seeking divine help and is repeatedly reminded of his humble existence before God's omnipotence.²⁶ There is a thin line but this is also what distinguishes the hero from *cādūs*.

In classical Ottoman poetry, the *cādūs* are described in a manner similar to those in the epics; they mount earthenware jugs, stand on water and are fire-resistant.²⁷ This demonstrates that at least these three characteristics remained popular until the sixteenth century. Another usage of the term *cādū* in Ottoman poetry, and even more frequently, is as a metaphor that corresponds to distinct physical features of the beloved. Beauty spots, hair, and eyes are personified as *cādūs* invoking enchantment in the lover.²⁸

Having said that, there are evil, infidel temptresses determined to bring about the demise of the hero. Unsurprisingly these are referred to as *cādūs*. In the *Battālnāme*, Bayda, a daughter of the vizier Akraṭīs (a derivative from the Greek word Akrites, i.e. frontier warrior), is a *cādū* who is by the Byzantine emperor commissioned to kill Seyyid Battāl.²⁹ Such portrayal is in line with the archetypal motif of the woman as the temptress³⁰ and such temptation is used synonymously with magic. In another example, the companion of the Prophet, 'Abdū'l-Vehhāb, who miraculously lived long enough to gift Battāl

24 A. Y. Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Olarak Menâkıbnâmeler: Metodolojik Bir Yaklaşım*, (Ankara 1997), 70–93.

25 A heretic dervish with a controversial appearance Barak Baba is a disciple of Sarı Saltuk who gave him the honorific "barak" meaning 'hairless dog'. *Encyclopædia Iranica*, s.v. "Barāk Bābā" (H. Algar).

26 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İz, T408b–409a; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. III, 56–57.

27 H. Nayir, "Divan Şiirinde Cadı", *Prof. Dr. Mine Mengi Adına Türkoloji Sempozyumu Bildirileri, 20–22 Ekim 2011* (Adana 2012), 165. For more examples see Necâti's *Dīvân* completed in 1500, "standing on water" p441/4; "being non-flammable" p443/2. The electronic OTAP text based on Tarlan's edition of 1963 is available online at http://courses.washington.edu/otap/archive/data/arch_txt/texts/a_necati1.html (last accessed on 18th May 2020).

28 H. Nayir, "Divan Şiirinde Cadı", 166–168.

29 *Battālnâme*, A89.

30 J. Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, (Princeton – Oxford 2004), 111–116.

the Prophet's relics, falls madly in love with the daughter of the Byzantine emperor. In the below quoted passage, falling in love is described as a painful struggle between 'Abdü'l-Vehhâb's conscience (his faith) and bitter arrows of love that overburden it with unavoidable and crushing effects:

Now, this girl was so pretty and she was so playful that 'Abdü'l-Vehhâb got out of control and however much he tried not to lose his heart to her, it was to no avail. The poor old man could not help it and was seized by the fire of love. He held his chest out against the arrows of fiery love, but they came and sank deep inside, but he still patiently held out. For forty nights she came and displayed such magic tricks and sent 'Abdü'l-Vehhâb completely beyond himself making him fall madly in love.³¹

Losing yourself because of love is considered to be the work of the dark arts as love pushes the limits of the "normal". Such is also the case with Sarı Saltuk who, having drunk the love potion prepared by a Jewish physician, falls madly in love with the son of a shepherd and the Muslim community loses him for several years, during which he goes after his beloved, unfortunately, more as a stalker than a lover, much to his later regret.³²

The *cādū* element is not simply a literary motif adding a fantastic flavor to the stories. It has another function. Similarly to the "infidels", the *cādūs* also serve as markers of difference in religious identities. For instance, the infidels' defeat and their inferior status to the Muslims, in addition to many other shortcomings, result from their corrupt and immoral ways. These are produced in the texts by examples of their excessive indulgence in worldly pleasure. Lustfulness, greed, gluttony, and excessive alcohol consumption are some of the most repeated clichés attributed to Christians. The *cādū* figures are portrayed similarly, except that they are even more perverse. While some are described as partaking in drunken orgies with as many as 80 participants,³³

31 *Battāl-nâme*, A337. The passage echoes exactly the account of Abdürrezzak's apostasy, the Shaykh of San'ân, in Gülşehri's Turkish adaptation of 'Aṭṭâr's famous mathnawi *Mantiq al-Ṭayr*; 'Conference of the Birds' or 'Speech of the Birds.' For more see S. N. Yıldız, "Battling *Kufr* (Unbelief) in the Land of Infidels: Gülşehri's Turkish Adaptation of 'Aṭṭâr's *Mantiq al-Ṭayr*", in A.C.S. Peacock, B. de Nicola and S. N. Yıldız (eds), *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia*, (Burlington 2015), 329–347.

32 *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. İz, T26b–31b; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 44–51

33 *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. İz, T195b–196a; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 329–330.

others are able to sleep with anyone they desire by assuming the appearance of their target's marital partner.³⁴ Various female as well as warrior *cādū* figures such as Hilāl Cādū have an insatiable sexual appetite, especially for younger boys and girls.³⁵

The more the object of their desire is beautiful the more repulsive their physical appearance becomes, probably in an effort to create feelings of disgust in the audience. The sources ensure that graphic detail of their ugliness is provided: their faces are often covered with excessive hair as in the case of Şebşās Cādū “whose eyebrows drop like a curtain covering his entire face and beard hang like a donkey's tail, and whose wicked, shriveled existence never once disappointed the devil.”³⁶

By assigning “different” physical features (or animals to mount) the sources try to give an impression of the *cādūs* as distinct figures with particularities, each governing a different realm. This is perhaps a narrative prop that serves to underline (and counterpoise) the power they hold by purporting to give a more individualized account of each *cādū* figure and its specialization of skills to the degree of merit proper to their wickedness.

I believe that these descriptions are not accidental when we think of the effort of the authors/narrators of the stories for demonizing the “other” and likening the enemy to bestial creatures. In this sense, hair is an important denominator that separates humans from animals. It is interesting to note that in the *Dānişmendnâme*, the only epic that does not contain the “actual” *cādū* figures, the members of the opposing religious group, the monks, are described similarly to the *cādūs* in their physical appearance:

His hands never touched water in his whole life, his moustache covered his mouth, his beard was dense and interwoven and so long that it was hanging like a dog's tail. With his hideous figure he was so dreadful that he looked like a monster and even the devil could model himself after him.³⁷

34 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, T326b; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. II, 133.

35 *Battālnâme*, A337; *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, T196a; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 330.

36 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, 357b–358a; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. II, 178–179.

37 “Ömründe eline su degürmemiş, bıyığı agzını örtmiş, sakalı it kuyruğu gibi kapagulanmış gāyet uzamış. Bir şekl-i kabîh ve bir heybet idi kim şöyle kim bir dîve beñzerdi ve şeytân sûretin düzmege andan sebak alurdi”. *Dānişmendnâme*, ed. Demir, 114a.

Another description of the *cādūs* involves their ritualistic gatherings, in some of which they sacrifice and eat humans, preferably made of young flesh.³⁸ Although it may come as shocking, the Christians are also depicted in the sources as cannibals. However, this distinction only exists for the *Firenks*, “Frankish warriors”.³⁹ A similar reference can also be found in the popular imagination of the medieval Christian world, where Saracens are depicted as the embodiment of all evil who even eat their prisoners.⁴⁰

Aside from the *cādūs* there are references to a tribe in Africa called the *merdüm-hors*, *anthropophagi* or ‘cannibals’. In the *Saltuknâme* along with the *merdüm-hors* there are other marvelous creatures borrowed from Qazwīnī’s *Ajā’ib al-mahlūqāt* and other *acā’ib*-style cosmographies, such as for instance the *nīm-tens* ‘half-men’, *kelīm-gūş* ‘large-eared men’ or Gog and Magog.⁴¹ The *merdüm-hors* are described as having “enormous lips that each look like a fist. They are so ugly and dreadful that they had no other white spot than their teeth”. Sarı Saltuk’s astonishment before these creatures and his difficulty to categorize them either as humans or as beasts is disclosed by his reaction where he forcefully asks whether they reside in the cities or the wilderness (*siz şehirde mi yabanda mı olursuz, toğrı haber virün*).⁴² It is worthwhile to note that such distinction between the urban (or “civilized”) and the wild only exists when Sarı Saltuk travels to faraway lands such as Africa and India. In this sense, cannibalism must be the ultimate limit that establishes the boundary between being a human and a monster.

38 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İz, 179a–180a; T195b; T357b; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 300–301; 328; Vol. II, 178.

39 See, for instance, the people of *Türhāl* (*Türhāl kavmi*) in the *Dānişmendnâme* who prefer to “eat Muslim flesh (*kamumuz müsülmānlar eti yirüz*)” and who are “not loyal to Şattāt or Nestor” meaning that they are not under Byzantine rule. *Dānişmendnâme*, ed. Demir, 82b; also see Mélikoff’s note on cannibalism in Turkish epic literature. Mélikoff, *La geste*, pp. 136. I have argued in my dissertation that the ascription of cannibalism in the Turkish epics is not just a literary device but in fact can be linked to the cannibalistic acts committed (or not committed) by the Crusaders during the First Crusade and the remnants of these events preserved in the oral tradition.

40 J. A. H. M. Cruz, “Popular Attitudes towards Islam in Medieval Europe”, in D. Blanks and M. Frassetto (eds), *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York 1999), 56–58.

41 M. Sariyannis, “Ajā’ib ve gharā’ib: Ottoman Collections of Mirabilia and Perceptions of the Supernatural”, *Der Islam*, 92:2 (2015), 458.

42 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İz, T149a–150a; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 250–251.

As evident in the bulk of these examples, some of the darkest fears and fantasies, and taboo thoughts can be expressed around the *cādū* figure or the supernatural in general. On the other hand, the portrayals of the opponent as savages who even eat human flesh most certainly served to justify the use of extreme violence against the enemy and encouraged the warriors to undertake such violent actions without hesitation. In one particular example, Şattāt, the Byzantine ruler of Amasya (Amaseia), refusing to convert, is hanged from his feet “like a dog carcass” (*it leşi gibi*). Şattāt’s own daughter Efromiya shoots the first arrow and “the Muslims then shoot so many arrows that his skin turns into a hedgehog, or even cribriform” (*şol kadar ok urdular ki teni kirpiye döndü dahi kalbur gibi delik delik oldu*).⁴³ In some other examples, hit by mace the infidel’s brain “sprinkles like a raw egg”,⁴⁴ or decapitated by a single sword blow his head rolls like a ball hit by *çevgān* (polo-stick).⁴⁵

Not only do infidels (and by extension *cādūs*) deserve to die in the most horrific ways, but the detailing of such scenes with comic undertones demonstrates that their suffering evokes amusement and mockery, and to add insult to injury their lamentations are described being akin to animals:

‘Atūş [the Frank warrior] was informed that Melik killed his brother Kibriyanos. Upon hearing this ‘Atūş plunged into the Muslim army like a crazy monster, screamed like a bear, brayed like a donkey, squealed like a pig.⁴⁶

43 *Dānişmendnâme*, ed. Demir, 214b. The same phrase is also found in the *Saltuknâme*: “şol kadar ok urdular kim gövdesi görünmez oldu, kirpiye döndü”. *Saltuknâme*, ed. İz, T91b; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 145–146.

44 *Dānişmendnâme*, ed. Demir, 207a.

45 *Dānişmendnâme*, ed. Demir, 102a. *Çevgān* or *çöğen/çevken* is a war game played on horseback using a stick and a ball with the objective to score goals. Although its origins are a point of contention among scholars, it was very popular in medieval Central Asia and Iran, and also in Anatolia as can be detected from this example. In many sources of the era, *çevgān* is confused with *cirit* (jereed). However, it should be pointed out that the former was training for mastering the use of lance on horseback while the latter of the sword. For more details, see T. Karabey, “Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesinde Gûy u Çevgân Oyunu”, *Turkish Studies*, 7:1 (2012), 81–86.

46 “‘Atūş’a haber kıldı ki ‘Kardaşın Kibriyānōs, Melik elinde helāk oldu’ dedi. ‘Atūş la’în çün anı işitdi bir delürmis dīv gibi İslām çerisinün arasında düşdi; ayu gibi bagırdı, eşek gibi ağırdı, toñuz gibi hortladı.” *Dānişmendnâme*, ed. Demir, 145a–b. For more on how similar examples that ridicule the enemy were used to trigger certain emotions among the audiences, see S. Yılmaz Önder, “Vengeance in the Chronicles Written in Old Anatolian Turkish”, *Acta Turcica*, 1:2 (2011), 173–211.

‘Bewitched’: conversion under the spell of Muslims

While the sources normalize the use of extreme violence by demonizing the enemy and likening them to animals, it is rather the Muslims who are persistently referred to as *cādūs* ‘sorcerers’ whenever the infidels are given a voice. Accordingly, Islam is referred to as the religion of *cādūs*.⁴⁷ In the *Dānişmendnâme* in the absence of “real” *cādū* figures, Muslims are almost exclusively and repeatedly called *cādū* by the infidels as a counterpoint to their religious identity.⁴⁸ When accused of being a *cādū*, Melik Dānişmend responds with an immediate definition of his religious creed: “*Hāşā ki cādū olam, müslimānam* (‘God forbid I am sorcerer! I am Muslim’)”.⁴⁹

The Muslim warriors are referred to as *cādūlar çerisi*, ‘army of wizards’.⁵⁰ The term is positively connoted here and there is a sense of pride concealed behind being labeled as *cādū*. Exaggeration of the enemy forces is an important motif in the epics. To give one example, the Byzantine emperor in the *Battālnâme* who raised a massive army against the Muslims had to be seated on horseback for seven days to greet the armies setting out on a campaign and passing in front of him.⁵¹ The numerical advantage of the enemy is of course offset by the superior bravery of the Muslims, which makes the enemy think that a supernatural force must have been at play. This is also what earns the Muslim warriors the title of *cādūlar çerisi*. The victory, which is achieved against all odds, is a sign that they have God on their side.

A major occurrence that characterizes well the cultural transformation that took place in Anatolia between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries was conversion, which came along with conquest. In the Turkish warrior epics, conversion takes place through various means. While in most cases Christians become Muslim under threat of death, the conversion could also occur through persuasion, though backed by some incentive or compulsion. In this respect, dream apparitions of the Prophet Muhammad or some of the most prominent *gāzīs* of the past, miracles or rescue missions of a kidnapped Christian maiden,

47 *Battālnâme*, A134.

48 *Dānişmendnâme*, ed. Demir, 53a, 54b, 87b, 191b, 203b, 245b.

49 *Dānişmendnâme*, ed. Demir, 13a.

50 *Dānişmendnâme*, ed. Demir, 20A.

51 *Battālnâme*, A170.

which also adds a romantic flavor to the narratives, are some of the most repeated topoi that result in the conversion of even the most ardent Christians against their own will.⁵² In addition to his miraculous deeds, the wisdom of the Muslim hero, his warrior skills, and physical appearance are also efficient reasons for the conversion of a Christian adversary to Islam.

In most cases, when an infidel is treated in an appreciative manner it means that his conversion is close at hand. The same is also true in the *chansons de geste*, for which Comfort notes: “The conventional outcome for a Saracen hero in whom the poet has aroused interest is to become converted.”⁵³

The “aesthetic” aspect of conversion seems to be an important one that must be taken into account before the hero embraces any infidel. The Muslim hero will not kill the beautiful or the brave. Tools that do not require the use of force will instead be put to use for their incorporation into the Muslim community, either to respect God’s creation⁵⁴ or perhaps to produce a beautiful blend.⁵⁵ From the viewpoint of the Muslim storyteller, the same applies to the infidels who in the end spare the lives of “*hüb süretlü*” Muslims – “lovely faces” or

52 Examples of conversion as a result of dream visions of the Prophet of Islam, see *Battālnāme*, A59, A99, A107, A143; and *Dānişmendnāme*, ed. Demir, 18a, 152a. Irène Mélikoff draws an interesting parallel between the apparition of Muhammad in dreams and the depiction of Christ in Byzantine mosaics teaching the newly converted the dogmas of their new religion, almost like in a Communion. Mélikoff, *La geste*, 141. To cite only a few examples for conversion as a result of a miracle, see *Battālnāme* A118–119; *Saltuknāme*, ed. İz, T22b–23b; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 36–37. In the *Dānişmendnāme*, there are only very few examples of conversion after the Muslim hero performs a miracle. *Dānişmendnāme*, ed. Demir, 225b–227b. For the kidnapping of the future wife of Melik Dānişmend, Gülnüş Bānū, and her much-negotiated conversion story, see *Dānişmendnāme*, ed. Demir, 168a–b, 195b–196a.

53 Comfort, “The Literary Role of the Saracens”, 645.

54 For appreciating God through the beauty of His creation, see S. Kuru, “The Literature of Rum: the Making of a Literary Tradition (1450–1600)”, in S. N. Faroqhi and K. Fleet (eds), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge 2013), 579.

55 It is especially the people of Bosnia who are worthy of such compliments in the *Saltuknāme*: “Then the Bosnian soldiers came.... They have beautiful men with hair shining like red gold. There is no other *tā’ifa* more pure-hearted and clean within the peoples of Rūm. ‘I wish this folk would become Muslim!’ said Seyyid... Şerif had no intention to kill them for no reason.” *Saltuknāme*, ed. İz, T48b; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 78. In another example, Melik Dānişmend spares the life of an infidel who convinces him that he would bring his handsome son under Melik’s command. *Dānişmendnāme*, ed. Demir, 27a.

“moon-faced angels” used interchangeably regardless of gender – for whom they instantly develop affection.⁵⁶

All these qualities (and fear of the sword) convince even the most ardent members of the rival religion to embrace Islam as their new faith. A new phrase is invented for the occasion: *cādūlamak*. The term is used synonymously for ‘conversion to Islam.’⁵⁷ In the *Saltuknāme*, the Muslims are famous for being experts in the dark arts (*Muhammediler sihride kāmīl olmuşlar*).⁵⁸ Given the multitude of Sarı Saltuk’s miraculous deeds, this conviction does not seem surprising. When Sarı Saltuk converts Alyon-ı Rūmī, an ardent Christian who will become his future companion-in-arms, the only possible way for this to happen seems to be through casting a spell upon him.⁵⁹

Of course, even in this idealized picture, there is room for some deviation. There are new converts who become renegades and spies who work for both sides. The underlining suspicion and identity confusion that characterize this transformative period is well reflected in the sources through numerous examples about spying activities and deception through the disguise, and reports of distrust shown to a stranger.

In the following example, Seyyid Battāl, disguised as a Christian, encounters a passer-by. It is important to note that even when a common man is suspected of being a spy, it is hard to tell which side he works for. The example also provides insights into the ways of approaching a stranger and the reactions that stem from them:

After one day or two days, just before noon, he saw a person going along with a broom in one hand and a grain sieve in the other. As he was going, he turned off

56 “*Beglerile çıka geldiler gördiler bir mabbüb oğlan aya benzer taht üstinde yatur* [He, i.e. Mihriyâyıl, came with his *begs* and found a lovely young handsome boy, beautiful as the moon, lying on the throne.]” *Battālnāme*, A11. “*Sunniler bunun gibi kadd ü kâmet ki gördiler hayrân oldılar* [The Sunnis were amazed when they saw how handsome and tall he (Sercâyıl) was.]” *Battālnāme*, A52. The same phrase also exists in the *Dānişmendnāme*, but this time the infidel warrior Serhâyıl is amazed by Melik Dānişmend’s physical appearance. *Dānişmendnāme*, ed. Demir, 52b. For more on the concept of *mabbüb*, see W. G. Andrews and M. Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society* (Durham 2005), especially 38–43.

57 *Battālnāme*, D^{28b}.

58 *Saltuknāme*, ed. İz, T6a; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 7.

59 *Saltuknāme*, ed. İz, T12b; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 19.

the road. Seyyid rushed in his direction, reached him, and said, “You are nothing but a Muhammedan and a spy, isn’t it?” That person answered, “God forbid, I am not what you just said, I am just a villager from around here. I am on my way to get some grain.”⁶⁰

Seyyid Battāl does not believe the man’s words and just as he is about to slay him, the man confesses that he is a spy for the Byzantine emperor on his way to deliver a letter to ‘Ukbā, the treacherous and evil *kādī* (Muslim judge) of the *Battālnāme* who secretly acts on behalf of the infidels. Indeed, in the period following the first Arab incursions into Anatolia, which was marked by a high degree of mobility and “identity confusion”, the fear of spies reached paranoid levels on the part of the Byzantine authorities who mistook many people for spies.⁶¹

In the sources, monk or priest is not the only disguise used by a Muslim hero to outsmart the enemy. Sometimes heroes push the limits of imagination to come up with a new appearance. The most extreme example in this respect is when Seyyid Battāl takes the skin of an infidel ruler off and literally wears it in order to claim his identity.⁶² The fact that this ruler is the king of the *kıl-baraks* or *kyno-kephaloi*, dog-headed people, brings another dimension to the story. The disguise of the hero hence appeals to another fantasy, which can be linked to the notion of shapeshifting.

The underlying theme of distrust in the epics is also personified in the *cādū* figures. By hiding their “real” identities the *cādūs* lead a double-life. A good example is Şemāsīl Cādū, who kidnaps the son of the Pope (leaving aside the fact that the Pope has a son, which is itself absurd). At night Şemāsīl takes her snake whip, jumps on her jug, and travels to her secret palace in the Mount of Kāf. She meets her abusive demon lover who first beats her and then takes her to bed after they consume a great deal of alcohol. Sarı Saltuk who hides in the room takes the underwear of Şemāsīl with him. At first glance, this might seem like a strange detail but it is of paramount importance since this

60 *Battālnāme*, A228–229.

61 N. Koutrakou, “Diplomacy and Espionage: Their Role in the Byzantine Foreign Relations, 8th–10th Centuries”, *Graeco–Arabica*, VI (1995), 131–132.

62 “*Ol gice bunun dahı derisin çıkardı tabbāğlık eyledi irtesi geydi daşra cıkdı* [that evening Seyyid flayed the skin of this one as well and hung it to dry. The following day he put it on and came out].” *Battālnāme*, A384.

is how Sarı Saltuk will expose the whole truth about Şemāsīl's true identity and the underwear (which is at the same time her most intimate apparel) will provide the hard evidence.⁶³ Considering that Şemāsīl is also the ruler of a Latin country,⁶⁴ this whole example brings to mind the idea of the witch as the “enemy within” in anthropological studies. As put forward by Michael Meeker: “the witch is associated with the sickening idea that something dreadful and horrible is at work in the central body of the community.”⁶⁵ And because she is an insider trusted by the members of the community, the identity of the witch becomes especially difficult to determine.

In addition to *cādūs* who appear in human forms there are other creatures referred to as *dīvs*; demons of great proportions and hybrid nature. Cengāl Dīv is for instance an extremely ugly and monstrous creature with the head of a pig, the claws of a lion, the body of a human, and the feet of a demon (“like an ox”, the author further explains probably referring to cloven hooves).⁶⁶ Another *dīv* figure, Karıdīv is similar to Cengāl Dīv except that she also has elephant ears and a dragon tail.⁶⁷ In order to kill *dīvs* one has to decapitate them but only with a single sword blow as a second blow creates a reverse effect.⁶⁸ *Dīvs* are also extremely sensitive to the sounds. High volumes have a devastating effect making *dīvs* lose their mind and collapse to the ground, or even worse accept the hero's invitation to join the faith in order to make him stop yelling.⁶⁹

There is a third category of beings, namely the *perīs*, which are neither humans nor jinn but are categorized as the *şād-kāmils*, perfect creatures. Unlike the *perīs* in classical Ottoman poetry which represent female lovers only, the *perīs* in the epics are of both sexes.⁷⁰ *Cinnīs* on the other hand, also in line with

63 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, T83a–88b; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 132–139.

64 See footnote 17 above.

65 Michael Meeker in an H-Net discussion list, <http://www.h-net.org/logsearch/> with keyword “Ottoman witchcraft”, quoted in Sariyannis, “Of Ottoman Ghosts, Vampires and Sorcerers”, 192.

66 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, T175a; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 294.

67 *Battālnâme*, A259–A260.

68 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, T175b; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 294. The same element also exists in the *Battālnâme* where Battāl, very wisely, does not listen to the infernal voice, which tells him to wield a second blow to Karıdīv. *Battālnâme*, A260.

69 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, T69b–T70a; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 112.

70 *Battālnâme*, A264; *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, T145b–146b; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 244–246.

the Islamic concept of jinn, are not demons as opposed to angels. They are a third category of beings that live in their own parallel worlds and underworlds. Like humans they are rational beings with the capacity to judge. As opposed to the *cādūs* and *dīvs* who are inherently evil, the *cinnīs* are treated as having more potential for choosing the right path that is Islam.⁷¹ *Cādūs* are the children of the demons (*iblis*) who work under the service of the devil (*şeytān*).⁷² The fact that *perīs*, *cādūs* and *dīvs* are sometimes used interchangeably, probably caused by their treatment under the general category of jinn, creates even more confusion.

Identifying these beings in different categories seems to be an issue also for the authors/narrators/compilers of the stories. In one example from the *Saltuknāme* Sarı Saltuk is perplexed about the true nature of a person who has been living in disbelief (with infidels) for more than seven hundred years but at the same time presents himself as Safhāyil, “the head of all celestial spirits (*re’īs-i rūhāniyā*)”: “What if this person is the devil (*şeytān*) himself”, he asks himself. In order to identify this creature as *şeytān*, jinn or *cādū* Sarı Saltuk goes on to recite a number of prayers, but to no avail. Only after the person pulls wings out of his robe is Sarı Saltuk finally convinced that he is an angel.⁷³

Fighting superstition and disbelief

As previously mentioned, in the sources, the Christians constantly accuse Muslims of being *cādūs*.⁷⁴ The sources provide “logical” explanations for such accusations in their own way. In the following example, the hero demonstrates

71 There are some exceptions to this as there is mention of a Muslim *dīv* with the head of a lion and of another female *dīv* with white hair whom Sarı Saltuk calls mother. *Saltuknāme*, ed. İZ, T69a, T77a; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 111, 123.

72 There seems to be some ambiguity concerning the use of the term *iblis*. “Iblis” is often identified with the devil (Shaitan) in Islamic traditions. However, in the *Saltuknāme* there are many *iblis* figures who work as subordinates to *Şeytān* standing more for demon-like creatures but who are higher in hierarchy than *dīvs*. As with God the hero does not get to see or hear *Şeytān* directly. For Rağdüş Cādū kissing the *iblis* named Sarsar’s hand and calling him father. *Saltuknāme*, ed. İZ, T513b–T514b; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. III, 219–220.

73 *Saltuknāme*, ed. İZ, T220a–220b; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 370.

74 “*Türkler sibr bilürler oda yanmazlar* (Turks are fire-resistant as they practice sorcery).” *Saltuknāme*, ed. İZ, T21b; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 34.

all of the skills attributed to *cādūs*; he flies in the sky, escapes death by burning and transforms his shape. All of these however result from a collaboration where Sarı Saltuk joins forces with the mythological bird *Simurg*. According to the story, Sarı Saltuk saves *Simurg*'s newborns from being eaten by a dragon.⁷⁵ *Simurg* who speaks “human language fluently (*fasih âdem dilini bilürdi*)” receives Sarı Saltuk with great hospitality.⁷⁶ These sections have been subject to previous research and have been analyzed in terms of their close ties to some of the symbols and motifs embedded in ancient mythologies of the Near East, which astonishingly found their way into the *Saltuknâme*.⁷⁷ *Simurg* offering her wing to canopy Sarı Saltuk from the sun's burning rays when she sees him lying asleep under the plain sun and their setting out for Şu'â Mountain—which is described as a ‘burning mountain,’ *oddan yanar tağdur*—have been interpreted as a journey to the home of the sun with reference to the myth of Solomon, the sovereign of the skies and the sun.⁷⁸ During this journey, Sarı Saltuk slays another mythological creature, *semender*, in order to wear his skin, which is fire-resistant. Described as a monster with the appearance of a winged horse, this must be the legendary salamander; a common topos in various traditions, which is usually ascribed an affinity with fire. Wrapped in the salamander's skin, *Simurg* is able to carry Sarı Saltuk to great heights in the sky without being burned by the Sun. Imagining such great heights Sarı Saltuk cheerfully declares: “the world looks like a kernel (*gördi kim bu dünyâ gözine bir harman kadarı göründi*)”.⁷⁹

Either through divine intervention, or as a result of a chain of incredibly lucky events, or due to a simple misunderstanding, the hero is able to overcome

75 A rapprochement with the supernatural is at hand in these parts of the text. Sarı Saltuk is taken to the residence of *Simurg* by a family of *düvs* who want to make it up to Sarı Saltuk for having eaten his horse. Afraid of being killed by Sarı Saltuk, the *düvs* apologize to him and ask to become his blood brothers (“*dünyâ ve âhîret kardaşumuz ol*”). *Saltuknâme*, ed. İz, T77b–T78a; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 124.

76 *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 126. In the Topkapı manuscript the phrase is put slightly differently: “the bird spoke like a human (*kuş âdem gibi söyleridi*)”. *Saltuknâme*, ed. İz, T79a.

77 S. Kocaer, “*Simurg*'un Gölgesinde”, in O. Kolbaş and O. Üçer (eds), *Âb-ı Hayât'ı Aramak: Gönül Tekin'e Armağan* (Istanbul 2018), 555–564.

78 Kocaer, “*Simurg*'un Gölgesinde”, 560; cf. G. Tekin, “Yakın Doğu Mitolojisinde Kartal ve Güneş”, *Türklik Bilgisi Araştırmaları/Journal of Turkish Studies*, 28:II (2004), 85–111.

79 *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 128; *Saltuknâme*, ed. İz, T80b.

the threat of impending death and vanquish the infidels on many impossible occasions as in this example. All of these victories are attributed by the ‘foolish’ infidels to the hero’s excellent ‘sorcery’ skills, which by the conclusion win their appreciation too. Even in cases when the victory is purely coincidental, the sources make the infidels admit the superiority of the Muslim hero, and by extension of Islam. The infidel warrior Gebriyānos expresses his exasperation towards Battāl’s invincibility as follows:

O Battāl, are you a sort of wheat bud? What is the story with you? They kill you and you are resurrected, they arrest you and put you to prison and you get out again. God, you must be quite an experienced witch.⁸⁰

In one example, Battāl fell for a Byzantine princess, Ketāyūn. While Battāl is an ideal *gāzī* in many aspects he has one major defect that sometimes puts him at great difficulty: He is a womanizer who knows no boundaries when it comes to love (except the religion barrier, which can be easily overcome by conversion). But Battāl’s falling for Ketāyūn is especially complicated because Ketāyūn is at the same time the sister of one of his wives, Meh-Pīrūz who is another daughter of the *Kayser*, the Byzantine emperor. Battāl had met Meh-Pīrūz while on a rescue mission for his other wife Zeynep who was kidnapped by the Byzantines to lure Battāl into the palace and kill him there. Going back to Ketāyūn’s story, Battāl is unable to win Ketāyūn’s heart. In fact, due to her deception, Battāl is taken prisoner. In this difficult situation he invokes God:

‘Listen God, I am not worried about my own death, I am only concerned lest the Muslims are trampled under the foot of the infidel.’ Just as he was saying that a snake that looked like a flag staff came down from the treetop. Candles were burning and the pots were up to the top with food and those dogs were lying around drunk. Seyyid noticed that the snake ate a little from those pots, then dipped its head in one of them and went back to its place.⁸¹

This divine intervention remains unnoticed among the infidels who at some point resume the feast. Before an hour had passed, the infidel lords begin to tremble and all 72 of them who attended the feast die that night (*şişdi çatladı*

80 *Battāl-nāme*, A147. For more similar examples, see *Battāl-nāme*, A208, A211, A312; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. İZ, T251a; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. II, 32.

81 *Battāl-nāme*, A292–293.

öldi). Having no clue on how this happened the infidels accuse Battāl of having bewitched them (*Yā Battāl veyā Kattāl heb uşbu işleri sen itdüñ bunları cāduladüñ tiz eyitkim bunlara neyledüñ?*), which given the situation seems to be a reasonable reaction.⁸²

All these accusations about the Muslim hero being a *cādū* as he saves himself from impossible situations by using his 'sorcerer' skills are taken as preposterous (and ridiculous) claims that the sources link to the ignorance of the enemy and superstitious beliefs inherent in their religion and culture. For instance, in the *Battālnāme*, the infidels are afraid to spill the blood of Battāl on the earth as: "it will mix with it and a plant shall grow. Then a lamb shall eat this plant and whoever eats from that lamb will be overcome by lust and from this lust Battāl will come forth again."⁸³

In another example from the *Saltuknāme*, Sarı Saltuk manages to outlive the two leaders of the rival religion in intelligence.⁸⁴ After he is saved from burning by the "Sunnite" jinn Minū-çihr,⁸⁵ Sarı Saltuk goes to meet the Tekūr

82 *Battālnāme*, P^{139b}.

83 *Battālnāme*, A294–295.

84 The leader of the infidels of Rüm is *Tekūr* (*tekfür*, the Byzantine emperor) with his throne in Konstantiniyye (Constantinople). The head of all the infidel countries in the *Firengistān* is *Filyon Firenk*, a term used interchangeably with *Pāp* ('Pope') whose seat is in Aromāy (probably referring to Rome). *Saltuknāme*, ed. İz, T11b–12a, T88a, T57b; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 16–18, 92, 138–139.

According to Ahmet Karamustafa, while the text employs *filyon* for patriarch, the term *filyon firenk* is used to refer to a Frankish king. Against Karamustafa's proposal, the term probably derives from "Fillioque", one of the most important denominators of the divide between western and eastern Christianity, which recognized or did not recognize the supremacy of the Pope. As stated several times in the text, the term is indeed used to refer to the Pope. A. Karamustafa, "Islamization through the Lens of the Saltuk-name", in A.C.S. Peacock, B. De Nicola and S. N. Yıldız (eds), *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia* (Burlington 2015), 355 fn. 19, 359. For "Fillioque", see C. Imber, *The Crusade of Varna: 1443-45* (Aldershot 2006), p.8; cf. H. Jedin and J. Dolan (eds), *History of the Church*, Vol. IV (London 1980), 474–484.

85 Earlier in the text, Minū-çihr, who was on his way to visit Hızır (Khidr), ran into Sarı Saltuk in the sky as he was cast into a firebrand by a catapult, and saved him. This was Sarı Saltuk's first encounter with Minū-çihr, who taught Sarı Saltuk a prayer to summon him whenever he needed help. *Saltuknāme*, ed. İz, T20b–T21a; *Saltuk-nāme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 32–33. Minū-çihr of the *Saltuknāme* is probably inspired from the Persian mythological King Manūchihir, the grandson of Farīdūn in the *Shahnāma*. V. S. Curtis, *Persian Myths* (Austin 1993), 36.

(the Byzantine emperor) and Pāp (the Pope) and introduces himself as the son of a Serbian priest. As he goes up to the pulpit and reads from the Bible, all the clergymen including the Tekūr and Pāp burst into tears:

Şerif descended from the pulpit [*minber*], kissed the hands of the Tekūr and Pāp and said: “One of you is the Caesar of Rūm and the other is the Filyon of all the Firenks. Once you are devout [*kā'im*] the livers of all the Turks will be smashed.” He prayed and continued: “O rulers! Know that last night the Messiah [*Mesih*] appeared in my dream and told me: ‘Kick my people [*ümmet*] with the foot of my donkey and slap their nape. Those you hit stronger will go to heaven in advance.’ It turned out that the donkey’s foot was hung within a coffer made of ebony in the great church of that city. They brought the coffer to Şerif. Şerif slapped his hands and they took out the donkey’s foot; which was covered with silver on the back. He [Sarı Saltuk] recited the Bible with his beautiful voice and cried. And all the infidels [*kāfirs*] there shed tears. Şerif said: “O people [*iy kavm*]! I am going up to the sky to meet Jesus [*Hazret-i İsa*]. If you do not believe me watch that: With the blessing of this foot I will fly up to the dome of this church.” Then he read out the prayer that Minū-çih̄r had taught him. And the genie [*perī*] arrived right away. Şerif said: “Take me to the dome.” The *kāfirs* watched Şerif fly and hover in the sky. Then he landed back and said: “Do you believe me now?” All the *kāfirs* prayed⁸⁶ and said: “We believe you, O you the supreme of religion [*dīn ulusı*]! You are the sanctioned companion of the Messiah. Be gracious and beg the Messiah to forgive our sins.” Sarı Saltuk replied: “From now on I will not serve you [*hürmet itmezem*]. Just give me one gold coin per person and I will hand them to *Hazret-i İsa*.” These foolish and uncomprehending people [*akulsız ve idraksız kavm*] came en masse, man and woman. Şerif hit their nape with the donkey’s foot so harshly that blood came out from their nose and mouth, and most of them lost their mind.⁸⁷

Sarı Saltuk creates a profitable business by fooling the infidels. It is also worthwhile to note that the passage combines two religious traditions in one example. It first refers to the “Messiah’s Donkey” of the Old Testament, upon which the Messiah was believed to arrive one day. Secondly, through the trope of disguise, it also refers to the false Messiah in the Islamic tradition where it

86 The ancient Turkic term *baş açmak* is translated as “to pray”. For more information, see H. Develi, “Dua ve Yas Motifi Olarak ‘baş aç-’ Tabiri”, *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, 20 (1997), 85–111.

87 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İz, T22a–T23a; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 36–37.

was rather “the Impostor”, *al-Dajjāl*, who came by donkey, not the Messiah.⁸⁸ Sarı Saltuk acted the part attributed to the impostor while also playing with the concept of “Messiah’s donkey”.

As is evident in the bulk of these examples, the infidels are portrayed as a bunch of ingenious fools who need to be taught the right path; that is Islam. The hero has thus one overarching mission: to spread Islam by gaining as many adherents as possible. No one can escape from the hero’s wrath in this endeavor. Every single creature is within the scope of his mission where even the *cādūs* and various demons and beasts are invited to join the fold of Islam one by one. When the new converts lapse back to their previous faith and become renegades “they lapse back to ignorance (*girü cāhil oldular*)”.⁸⁹ The term must be related to the Quranic use of the word *jāhiliyyah*, which was originally used in connection with Arabian culture prior to the advent of Islam for referring mostly to nomadic tribes in the Arabian peninsula. However, its meaning extended in time to include all the non-Muslims in general, and in the case of the Turkish warrior epics, the nomadic Turcomans who must have constituted the target audience of the epics in addition to the local ex-Christians.

The sources provide many examples where the wise and the literate constantly affirm the superiority of Islam. Even the Pope once confesses to Sarı Saltuk that he has always had an inner desire to become Muslim; but has feared the reaction of ‘the infidels’: “They performed noon prayer together. Şerif led the prayer. They recited the Quran and when they finished they sat. Şerif asked the Pope: If you believe in this faith why do not you raise to the rank of becoming Muslim?”⁹⁰ After the Pope explains Sarı Saltuk his responsibilities as the leader of the rival religion, he quotes Ali in Arabic and tells Sarı Saltuk about the popes and Byzantine emperors who had been secret adherents of Islam for centuries, including the emperor Herakleios.⁹¹ This narrative element can be directly traced back to the earliest Islamic tradition recorded in ibn Ishaq’s *Life of Muhammad*. According to this account, Muhammad writes a letter to the Byzantine emperor of his day, Herakleios (r. 610–641). The emperor expresses

88 B. Catlos, *Infidel Kings and Unholy Warriors: Faith, Power, and Violence in the Age of Crusade and Jihad* (New York 2015), 209.

89 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, T174b; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 293.

90 *Saltuknâme*, ed. İZ, T60b; *Saltuk-nâme*, ed. Akalın, Vol. I, 97.

91 *Ibid.*

his desire to become a follower of Islam because of a dream vision he had. However, the great men of his court prevent him from acting on it.⁹² Another similar tale also exists in an account of the correspondence between the caliph Umar II (r. 717–720) and the emperor Leo III (r. 717–741).⁹³

Conclusion

Various *cādū* figures with graphic details about their distinct physical and moral attributes reveal a rich supernatural imagery reflecting diversity and heterogeneity proper to frontier zones of Anatolia and the Balkans. The frontiers provided refuge for culturally and ethnically diverse people, including local Christian peasants, warriors in search of booty and adventure, and nomadic Turcomans. Marginal groups, political dissidents and religious heretics could also find shelter in these areas. This was a period during which the Muslims were once more a minority. The Qurānic verses and hadiths calling on the believers to gain as many converts as possible were derived from more pressing, but at the same time, practical needs. The ‘cultural’ range of new adherents and the spectrum of their ‘species’ is only more extensive in the Anatolian context and also includes the natural and supernatural realms, although the distinction between the two was not so clear; infidels of all faiths and creeds (even those having cannibalistic tendencies), wild beasts, savages, jinns, *cādūs* and *dīvs*. The Muslim hero patiently and tirelessly invites each of these creatures to join the fold of Islam, which demonstrates the inclusion that the sources offered to the Christian enemy upon conversion.

Aside from the “real” *cādūs* the Muslims are also referred as *cādūs* and the term *cādūlamak* is used synonymously for ‘conversion to Islam’. Given the multitude of the hero’s miraculous deeds this conviction does not seem surprising. Is he a magician casting spells on Christians, a friend of God (*velī*) performing miracles or a false prophet? Is he a trickster (*‘ayyār*), a master of cunning? What sets the limits between these labels, between being a human

92 Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation Ishāq’s Sirat Resūl Allāh with Introduction and Notes by A. Guillaume* (Pakistan 1967), trans. 1560–67, 652–656.

93 R. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton – New Jersey 1997), 490–501; quoted from G. Fowden, *Qusayr ‘Amra: Art and the Umayyad Elite in Late Antique Syria* (Berkeley 2004), 211.

or a monster or between the human, preternatural and natural worlds and underworlds? These questions are repeatedly raised by the sources themselves, which also illustrates the fluid and rapidly shifting nature of identities in frontier regions, where around the supernatural and the wondrous there is room for the suspension of rules and limitations of religious identities.