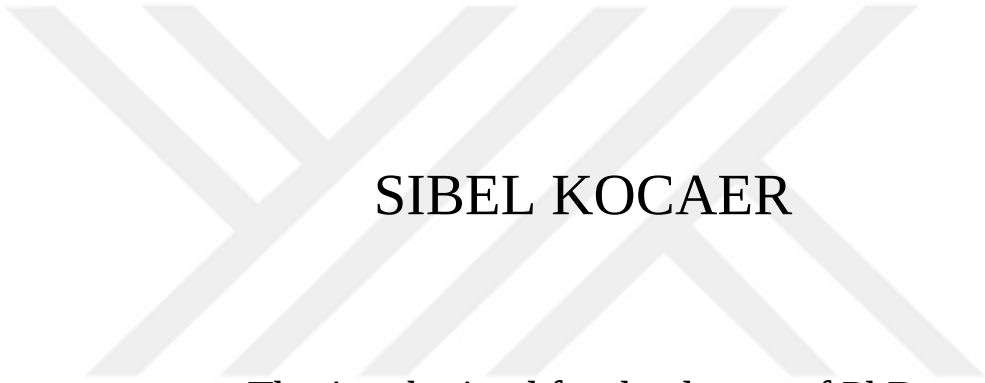


The Journey of an Ottoman
Warrior Dervish:
The Hızırname (Book of Khidr)
Sources and Reception



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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines a work of considerable significance for early Anatolian Turkish literature and Ottoman history, the *Divan-ı Şeyh Muhyiddin* (880/1476), written by Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi (d. 898/1493-4) who was a sheikh at the Zeyni dervish lodge in Eğirdir. In scholarship the work is known as the *Hızırname* (*Book of Khidr*), although this was not the title given by the author himself.

The text narrates the travels of a warrior dervish figure in the heavenly realm and to various territories on Earth under the guidance or the spiritual blessing (*himmet*) of Khidr. Another important figure of Ottoman sufism, Hacı Bektaş, also plays a prominent role in some sections of the narrative, especially as he appoints the dervish the head of the Ottoman army. The dervish defeats the enemy in a battle on the Eastern borders of the Ottoman Empire.

Even though the *Hızırname* has been presented as unique in Turkish literature in terms of genre and content, not much attention has been paid to its particular characteristics. This thesis reassesses this claim in the light of recent scholarship and identifies the main strands of a wide range of textual references to other sources. Amongst the peculiar features of the *Hızırname* that this study focuses on and examines are two intertwined aspects of the text - the identity of the narrator, who is the protagonist himself, and variations in the route of the journey.

The ascension (*miraj*) journey of the dervish figure, accompanied by Khidr, and the narration of this journey by the first-person narrator, distinguish the *Hızırname* from similar Anatolian Turkish works. This study proposes that these special features of the *Hızırname* relate the text to *Ishraqi* literature, and to the writings of Ibn ‘Arabi and his followers in Anatolia. Hacı Bektaş on the other hand, having a political role in the *Hızırname*, links this text to the frontier literature of the warriors. Having been written in Eğirdir, a frontier Muslim border zone between the Ottomans and the Karamanids, and in the vicinity of Konya, the *Hızırname* combines the literature of both frontier regions and dervish lodges within one text, as represented by the warrior dervish, namely *eren*, identity of the poet.

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INTRODUCTION

1. Text and Author

The *Divān-ı Şeyh Muhyiddin* by Şeyh Mehmed b. Şeyh Muḥammed Pīrī Halife el-Hoyī¹ (d. 898/1493-4) was composed in 880/1476 in the Anatolian city of Eğirdir.² In secondary sources it is also referred to and known as the *Hızırnâme*³ (*Book of Khidr*).⁴

Eğirdir was, at one time, the capital of the Hamidoğulları principality (1301-1423) but then it became a frontier zone between the Ottomans and the principality of Karamanoğulları.⁵ The author Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi was the elder (*postnishin*)⁶ in the *tekke* (*dervish lodge*) of the Zeyniye order⁷ in the city. In the setting of the text the region is referred to as Hamid-ili (*the province of Hamid*).

¹ From now on Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi. Also referred to as Şeyh Mehmed Dede Sultan in some sources, for example see Vasfi M. Kocatürk, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, p. 283.

² Today Eğirdir is in the province of Isparta, which is on the northern side of the Mediterranean region.

³ For example, see the chapter “Hızırname” by Ahmet Yaşar Ocak.

⁴ Khidr is an Arabic word which means ‘the verdant one’ and it is spelt as ‘خضر’. In Turkish sources it is spelt as Hızır and Hıdır. In various sources it is spelt in different ways, such as, Khadr, Khadir, Khedr, Khizr, Hazur, Kezr, Xezr or Khezzr. It is also mentioned as Chadir, Chadur and Chederle.

⁵ Circa 707/1307-8, Feleküddin Dündar Beg declared Eğirdir the capital city of the Hamidoğulları principality and then gave his name to the city. It became known as ‘Felek-abad’. The new name of the city was printed on the coins he issued for the Ilkhanid prince Olcaytu Muhammad. For information about the Hamidoğulları principality, see Sait Kofoğlu, *Hamidoğulları Beyliği*. On the coins and also for their iconography see p. 154-157. On the history of pre-Ottoman Anatolia also see Charles Melville, “Anatolia under the Mongols”; Gary Leiser, “The Turks in Anatolia before the Ottomans”.

Eğirdir first became an Ottoman city in 793/1391, during the reign of Bayezid I. After the Ankara War (1402) between Bayezid I and Timur, the Ottomans lost the city. It was Murad II who took the city again after the Interregnum period.

⁶ A Persian compound which literally means ‘seated on a sheepskin’. As a term it means ‘established in an office of dignity; occupying the post’, see J. W. Redhouse, *Turkish and English Lexicon*, p. 457.

⁷ The Zeyniye order was established by Zeyn-i Hafi [Zayn al-Din Khafi] (d. 838/1435) in Herat. It was linked to the Suhrawardiyye order, founded by Abu Hafs ‘Umar al-Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234). On the Zeyniye order see Reşat Öngören, *Tarihte Bir Aydın Tarikatı Zeyniler*; “Zeyniyye”. On the Suhrawardiyye order see Erik S. Ohlander, *Sufism in an Age of Transition*, ‘Umar al-Suhrawardi and the Rise of the Islamic Mystical Brotherhoods and Reşat Öngören, “Sühreverdiyye”.

In the best available edition by Mehmet N. Bardakçı, based on the earliest manuscript, the *Hızırname* consists of a prose opening section in Arabic and eighty poems with Persian rubrics, mostly written in the *masnavi* form, but also, intriguingly, in other forms such as the *ghazel* and *murabba*.⁸ Though the editor has not numbered the lines sequentially, his edition of the text contains, by my counting, nine-hundred and thirty-eight couplets and two-hundred and thirty-one stanzas in total.

Following traditional convention, at the end of each composition (and section of the larger work) the poet uses one of his two pen names (*mahlas*), either ‘Muhyiddin’ or ‘Dolu’.⁹ Both pennames symbolize his love for God and in some instances he uses both to refer to himself. The *Hızırname* is unique as a compilation (*divan*) in that it contains an extensive narrative but made up of a great number of short compositions compiled and presented together by the author or, perhaps, assembled at a later time, though there is nothing in the earliest manuscript to suggest that this is the case.

The narrative tells of the travels of a dervish figure in the heavenly realm and to various territories on Earth under the guidance and with the *himmet* (*spiritual blessing*) of Khidr, an enigmatic figure in Islamic literature. Another figure, Hacı Bektaş, the *pir*¹⁰ (*spiritual leader*) of the Bektaşî order, also plays a prominent role

⁸ For Mehmet N. Bardakçı’s edition which compares the earliest manuscript copy of the text with others, see *Eğirdir Zeyni Zaviyesi ve Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi Divanı*, p. 119-287. The quotations from the *Hızırname* will be made from this edition and hereafter it will be referred to as ‘Bardakçı’.

⁹ The literal meaning of ‘Muhiddin/Muhyiddin’ is ‘the one who revives the religion’. ‘Dolu’ is a derivative adjective. Turkish verb ‘dol-’ means ‘to get full’ and ‘dolu’ means full or complete. Thus, on a first reading, both pennames refer to the complete and never-ending love of the dervish for God.

¹⁰ As a term in the Sufi tradition, *pir* first became popular in Khurasan, especially among the Melamis in Nishabur, in the ninth and tenth centuries. In the eleventh century ‘sheikh’ too became a popular title like *pir*. For example, in *Kashf al-Mahjub (Revelation of the Veiled)* by

in some scenes of the narrative when he appoints the dervish Muhyiddin as head of the Ottoman army for the military campaign to the Eastern border.¹¹ The text introduces Hacı Bektaş as the guardian (*gözcü*) of the Ottoman lands (*Osman illeri*).¹² He is addressed as ‘hünkarım’ (*my lord, my master*) by the dervish figure throughout the narrative.

This thesis argues that taken as a single work the *Hızırname* clearly combines different literary traditions within one body. Amongst other things, the coexistence of the two pennames within one narrative reflects the variety in the sources of the text. On account of its diverse content, the *Hızırname* stands at the intersection between mystical treatises, epics and mythological narratives.

2. The Journey (Yol)

In poem three, the poet-narrator gives information about his journey and his sheikh.¹³ He describes himself as a follower of a path which he introduces as ‘the path of the invisible *erenler*’ (*gayb erenler yolu*).¹⁴ The followers of this path, who are mentioned as the ‘men of the path’ (*yol eri*) by the poet, are gifted with knowledge of the truth.¹⁵

Having stated that he first became a seeker by becoming a disciple of Zeyn-i Hafî, the poet states that he ended up on ‘this path’ (*bu yol*).¹⁶ He also describes the

Hujviri (d. 1077), the titles ‘*pir*’ and ‘sheikh’ were used interchangeably. For more information, see Safî Arpaguş, “Pîr”.

¹¹ Bardakçı, p. 222-224.

¹² Bardakçı, p. 216.

¹³ Bardakçı, p. 126-131.

¹⁴ Bardakçı, p. 130.

¹⁵ Bardakçı, p. 130.

¹⁶ Bardakçı, p. 130.

path he is following as the ‘path of ecstasy’ (*cezbe yolu*).¹⁷ Establishing the meaning of that ‘path’, referred to in the text by the Turkish word ‘*yol*’, is of significance in examining the identity of the narrator, who is the protagonist himself. Also, given the connotations of this key concept of ‘*yol*’ as ‘*journey*’, it is essential to examine the nature of the ‘*yol*’ (*path; route; way*) followed by the narrator-protagonist in his travels in order to understand the content and structure of the text better.

The journey of the dervish starts with his ascension (*miraj*) into the seven heavens (*heft asuman*). During his ascension, the secrets of the unseen world are unveiled to him and he meets with prophets and angels in the heavenly realm. He learns the secret of existence and witnesses the wonders of creation. The route of his journey then leads him to various mythological places, such as Mount Qaf,¹⁸ to religious sites, such as Mecca, or to the tombs of celebrated dervishes.

There are two main gatherings he attends en route, one which describes entering into a state of ecstasy by drinking and dancing, thus symbolizing the *sama*‘ rituals¹⁹ of the dervish groups, and the other which describes the meeting of all the warriors and the dervishes in Anatolia followed by a military campaign in the next poem. Both gatherings are significant in the narrative.

¹⁷ Bardakçı, p. 130.

¹⁸ Mount Qaf is a mythological mountain in Islamic literature which is said to surround the Earth and keeps it stable. According to al-Tabari (d. 923), one has to travel for four months in darkness before reaching Mount Qaf. The mountain is in green and blue and the colour of the sky comes from this mountain. The origin of Mount Qaf in Islamic literature is linked to Zoroastrian cosmology, according to which the Earth is divided into seven climates and it is Mount Alborz that keeps the Earth stable. For more information see Mary Boyce, “Alborz” and Kürşat Demirci, “Kafdağı”.

¹⁹ On the *sama*‘, see, Semih Ceylan, “Sema”; Leonard Lewisohn, “The Sacred Music of Islam: Sama‘ in the Persian Sufi Tradition”; Reşat Öngören, “Osmanlılar Döneminde Sema ve Devran Tartışmaları”. Öngören notes that although it is not certain when *sama* became a subject of controversy in the Ottoman era, the first record which mentions a discussion about *sema* dates to the time of Mehmed II, p 124.

The first gathering²⁰ is held in a pavilion on Mount Qaf, where all the men of truth (*erenler*),²¹ perfect (*kamil*) men²² and the community of the friends of God (*veliler zümresi*) drink and dance. The angels and the *qutb*,²³ and the people of Arab, Ajam and Rum, are also present.

In the second gathering for which a precise date is given, Friday night in the month of Dhu'l-qa'dah in 880/1476, the dervishes and warriors from Anatolia and the Balkans, called 'the friends of God' (*evliya*) in the heading of the poem, congregate.²⁴ In addition to the notion of the 'friend of God', the '*erenler*' and the 'invisible men' (*rical-i gayb*)²⁵ are used interchangeably as forms of address for people in the community. The poet mentions the names of the participants one by one and the list includes ninety names with various titles, such as *abdal*,²⁶ *baba*²⁷ and

²⁰ Bardakçı, p. 151-152.

²¹ 'Eren' is generally translated into English as 'the one who has attained sainthood'. Originally, it was the plural form of 'er' ('man') in Turkish, but it then lost its plural meaning, and came to denote both 'manliness' and 'dervish/sheikh'. With the Turkish suffix '-ler', it has been made plural again and has become a distinct concept in the heroic and religious literature of Anatolia. For brief information, see Süleyman Uludağ, "Erenler".

²² 'The perfect man' (*insan-ı kamil*) is a term in Islamic philosophy which denotes the last stage that can be reached in the spiritual journey and training of the soul. It was extensively discussed and elaborated on in the writings of Ibn 'Arabi (d. 1240). As a philosophical doctrine it dates back to pre-Islamic cultures and religions such as Manicheism, Mazdaism or Hinduism. For more information see R. Arnaldez "al-Insan al-Kamil" and Mehmet S. Aydın, "İnsan-ı Kamil".

²³ Literally means 'the pole' or 'the axis'. In Islamic literature it denotes the master of the perfect men - the most perfect human being who heads the saintly hierarchy. For more information and examples from early Islamic sources, see Süleyman Ateş, "Kutub" and F. de Jong, "al-Kutub". Ateş notes that the earliest notion of "qutb" is found in the writings of Muhammad b. al-Kattani (d. 322/934), see p. 498. According to Manzoor A. Bhat, "since Qushayri does not explain the word in his technicalities, it probably came into use about this time, and very likely Yusuf of Hamadan was the first person so called", see *Sufi Thought of Shaikh Sayyid 'Abdul-Qadir Jilani*, p. 78-79.

²⁴ Bardakçı, p. 216-221.

²⁵ In Islamic literature *gayb* [*ghayb*] refers to a specific realm of existence which cannot be comprehended by reason and senses, therefore, it is beyond human knowledge. The Koran mentions the word '*gayb*' sixty times and also, it includes some other words related to '*gayb*' which denotes 'secrecy' and 'hidden things', such as, '*sır*' (*secret*). The Koranic term '*mefatih al-ghayb*' has become a title for many books written by the dervishes, as in the example of Ibn 'Arabi (d. 1240) and Konevi (d. 1274). On the 'gayb', for its different connotations and for its usage in Islamic literature, see İlyas Çelebi, "Gayb".

²⁶ The use of '*abdal*' in literature dates back to the twelfth century and it connotes a particular mystical experience. Ibn 'Arabi calls the seven *qutbs*, who stay in the seven climates, as '*abdal*',

*dede*²⁸ as well as *gazi*²⁹ and *veli*.³⁰ Surprisingly, the first name mentioned in this community is neither Hacı Bektaş nor one of the popular figures in the literary canon,

see Ateş, “Kutub”, p. 498. In the fourteenth century it was used as a title for the Qalandari dervishes or generally for those who performed unruly acts in society. In the fifteenth century it also meant beggar and vagrant. It was more common in Anatolia than in Iran as a title for the dervishes. On the ‘*abdāl*’ in literature see Orhan Köprülü, “*Abdal*”; Hussein La-Shay and Negahban Farzin, “*Abdal*”. According to Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, the Babai dervishes were known as the *abdals* of Rum in the beginning of the fourteenth century, see “Babiler İsyanından Kızılbaşlığa: Anadolu’da İslam Heterodoksisinin Doğuşu ve Gelişim Tarihine Kısa Bir Bakış”, p. 76-78; “*Din*”, p. 123.

In the fifteenth century, Aşıkpaşazade (d. 889/1484) mentioned ‘*Abdalan-ı Rum*’ (*The Abdals of Rum*) as one of the four dervish communities in Anatolia, see Kemal Yavuz and Yekta Saraç, *Osmanoğullarının Tarihi: Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*, p. 486. Ahmet Karamustafa explains the reason for Aşıkpaşazade’s grouping ‘*Abdalan-ı Rum*’ with the linguistic difference: “as opposed to other dervish groups, [...] who most probably spoke Persian, at least during the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, the *abdals* of Rum spoke Turkish”, see “Kaygusuz Abdal: A Medieval Turkish Saint and the Formation of Vernacular Islam in Anatolia”, p. 330.

²⁷ “*Baba*”, which literally means ‘father’, is a common title in dervish groups and dates back to as early as the tenth century. Baba Tahir Uryan (d. 447/1055), for example, is a famous dervish from the eleventh century. In the twelfth century, it became a popular title in Yasavi circles since it also meant ‘ancestor’ (*‘ata’*). The master of Ahmed Yasavi for example, is famous for the name Arslan Baba. For more information, see Süleyman Uludağ, “*Baba*”.

²⁸ ‘*Dede*’ is a Turkish noun, which literally means ‘grandfather’. It was also used as a hierarchical title signalling the status of a respected man in the community as in the example of the celebrated Turkish epic *Dede Korkut*. As a term in the Anatolian Sufi tradition, especially in the Bektaşî and Mevlevî orders, it is a title which denotes the position of a dervish in the community. For more information, see Süleyman Uludağ, “*Dede*”.

²⁹ ‘*Gazi*’ is one of the contested titles in Turkish historiography. For an elaborative analysis of the term in Turkish sources and the diachronic changes in the meaning of ‘*gazi*’, see Şinasi Tekin, “Türk Dünyasında Gaza ve Cihad Kavramları Üzerine Düşünceler”.

‘*Gazi*’ was a key title in the renowned ‘ghaza-thesis’ by Paul Wittek, which explains the rise of the Ottoman Empire in terms of a Holy War, see, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire*.

For a reassessment of secondary sources on the ghaza-theory and an analysis of the Turkish frontier epics in the early Ottoman era, see Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*. On the discussion about the terms ‘*gaza*’ and ‘*gazi*’ in early Ottoman sources, also see, Heath W. Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*.

For different contexts in which the term was applied, see Linda T. Darling, “Contested Territory: Ottoman Holy War in Comparative Context”.

For the critical edition of an Anatolian Turkish text on the etiquette of *gazis* dated to the fourteenth century, see Ş. Tekin, “XIV. Yüzyılda Yazılmış Gazilik Tarikası: ‘Gaziliğin Yolları’ adlı Bir Eski Anadolu Türkçesi Metni ve Gaza/Cihad Kavramları Hakkında”.

³⁰ *Veli* is one of the names of God mentioned in the Koran. In Islamic literature it denotes proximity to God. According to one opinion, the dervishes who are called *velis* should be considered eternal like God, since the title *veli* is one of His names, see Eyüp Öztürk, *Velilik ile Delilik Arasında*, p. 197-198. On ‘*veli*’ as a term in literature and its connotations, see, Bekir Topaloğlu, “*Veli*”; Süleyman Uludağ, “*Veli*”; Ahmet Karamustafa, “*Walāya* according to al-Junayd (d. 298/910)”, B. Radtke and J. O’Kane, *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism* and John Renard, *Friends of God: Islamic Images of Piety, Commitment and Servanthood*. In the eleventh century, the concept of *veli* (friend of God) had already transformed to a social category, see Nile Green, *Sufism: A Global History*, p. 60.

but Dediği, a much less well-known figure. Clearly the cult of Dediği Sultan, or Dediği Dede, was influential among the warriors in the region of Hamidoğulları and Karamanoğulları at that time, as there were several shrines dedicated to his name in the region.³¹ As this thesis demonstrates, when read within the context of Ottoman-Karaman rivalry, the remarkable position of Dediği in this gathering becomes clear as a popular figure among the Turcoman groups living in the Karamanid lands.

Amongst those who join the great gathering are well-known dervishes and heroes of the former Seljukid and Ottoman lands, such as Seyyid Battal,³² Ahi Evren,³³ Mevlana (d. 672/1273)³⁴ and Sarı Saltuk,³⁵ as well as the local warriors and

Devin DeWeese points to the significant development in the concept of ‘being a *veli*’ from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, “culminating in the assertion that sainthood is prior to and superior to prophethood”, see “An ‘Uvaysi’ Sufi in Timurid Mawarannah”, p. 1. Similarly, Shahzad Bashir also notes that, in Central Asia and Iran during this period, “more accomplished Sufi masters became acknowledged as great friends of God who mediated between the divine and the earthly realms”, see *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam*, p. 13.

³¹ The life story (*menakıb*) of Dediği Sultan, in poetry form, has recently been published by Ahmet Taşğın, see *Dediği Sultan ve Menakıbı: Konya ve Çevresinde Ahmet Yesevi Halifelerinin İzleri*.

On the shrines of Dediği Sultan, see Ömür Bakırer and Suraiya Faroqhi, “Dediği Dede ve Tekkeleri”.

³² The *Battalname* (*Book of Battal*) is the life story and deeds of Seyyid Battal Gazi and is the earliest text of the frontier epic cycle in Turkish Literature. It is followed by the *Danışmendname* and the *Saltukname*. On the prose version of the narrative, its contextual analysis, transcription and English translation see Yorgos Dedes, *The Battalname, An Ottoman Turkish Frontier Epic Wondertale*.

On the poetic version of the *Battalname* attributed to a certain Tütabi and its transcription see, Abdülkadir Çolak, “Tütabî’nin Manzum Battalname’si: İnceleme/Metin”. The text is undated and copied by Şeyh Ahmed Oğlu Mustafa Behçet in 1272/1855-1856.

³³ For example see Franz Taeschner, *Gülschehris Mesnevi auf Achi Evran*.

Also see Mikail Bayram *Ahi Evren –İmanın Boyutları (Metail’ü’l-ıman)*, which is the translation of a treatise attributed to Ahi Evren. M. Bayram argues that ‘evren’ is the correct spelling for the name Ahi Evren, not ‘evran’, which is common in scholarship. According to Bayram, the root of ‘evren’ is the verb ‘eviril-’ and the noun form ‘eviren’ is derived from this root. Later the vowel ‘-i’ was dropped and it became ‘evren’. Therefore, as Bayram states, the ‘elif’ letter after the letter ‘r’ is for the Turkish sound ‘e’ and should not be read as a long vowel. For Bayram’s claim and explanation, see *Ahi Evren ve Ahi Teşkilatı’nın Kuruluşu*, p. 73-80.

³⁴ Mevlana [Mawlana; Maulana] Jalal ad-Din Rumi (605-672/1207-1273) is famous as Rumi in Western scholarship. In Turkish sources he is known and referred to as Mevlana and sometimes as Molla Hünkar. In the *Hızırname*, he is referred to as Monla Hünkar.

³⁵ The life story of Sarı Saltuk was compiled in seven years and written by Ebu’l-Hayr Rumi in 1480. The facsimile of the manuscript dated 1000/1591 was published by Fahir İz, see,

the Zeyni dervishes. Some of the names from the local community, such as Şeyh Murad, Sureti Baba, Kara Dede and Palas Abdal, can only be traced through inscriptions on shrines or from the narratives and documents that mention those buildings which no longer survive.³⁶

Following this gathering, upon the order of and with the blessing of Hacı Bektaş, the dervish Muhyiddin leads the army of the Ottomans in a military campaign to the East. With the support of the *erenler* and by reciting the name of Khidr, he wins the battle. Later on, he continues his journey accompanied by Khidr and mentions his meetings with the invisible men en route. After explaining the importance of the break of dawn and the stage of the *ghawth*,³⁷ he begins to describe a state which befell him on the Night of Glory.³⁸ From then on, the setting of the narrative remains the heavenly realm where the dervish sees the angels and other marvellous creatures and places. As a final significant destination, the dervish visits the realm of the water of life (*ab-ı hayat*) with Khidr. The poems that follow continue to describe the heavenly realm; however they mainly repeat the previous ones in terms of content.

Although each poem has a rubric in Bardakçı's edition, there is no internal reference as to the order of these poems and therefore it is hard to account for the order in which the journeys are described. As Chapter I points out, when discussing

Saltukname. Also, Şükrü H. Akalın has published the *Saltukname* in the modern Turkish alphabet by comparing several manuscript copies; see Ş. H. Akalın, *Saltuk-name*.

³⁶ For brief information about the local people mentioned in the *Hızırname*, see for example, Mehmet Altunmeral, "Hızırname'de Eğirdir ve Eğirdirli Veliler".

³⁷ *Ghawth* refers to a friend of God who has attained the station of *qutb* and from whom others ask for spiritual blessing and help, see Ateş, "Kutub".

³⁸ This is the night when the Koran was first revealed and its importance is explained in the Sura of the Glory (97: 1-5). For the English translation of the verses see Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'an*, p. 599: "We sent it down on the Night of Glory. What will explain to you what that Night of Glory is? The Night of Glory is better than a thousand months; on that night the angels and the Spirit descend again and again with their Lord's permission on every task. Peace it is until the rising of the dawn".

the structure of the plot, it is possible that there may have been alterations in the order of some poems in later copies of the text. Alternatively, the author may not have followed a specific pattern while describing his heavenly journey. The narrative closes with the advice of the poet to his audience.

The first-person narration in the text presents the experiences of the dervish figure as an autobiographical work. This feature of the narrative, which is addressed in Chapter I, distinguishes the *Hızırname* from similar works in Anatolian Turkish literature.

3. The Life and Times of Mehmed Çelebi

a. Historical and Socio/Political Conditions: Eğirdir as a Frontier Zone between the Ottomans and the Karamanids

In 733/1332-33, in the month of Ramadan, Ibn Battuta visited the city of Eğirdir and stayed in the Taş Medrese,³⁹ and in his famous travel book, he noted the name of the city as اکریدور (Egridur).⁴⁰ After the Battle of Ankara (1402), Karamanoğlu Mehmed Beg spelled the name of the city as ‘Egirdir’ on the silver coins he minted for Timur.⁴¹ In a Greek inscription which was discovered in a castle in 1930, the name of the city is written as ‘Akrotiri,’ (*promontory*) referring to its

³⁹ It was originally a resting house built by Gıyaseddin II in 634/1236. In 701/1301 it was converted to a madrasah by Dündar Bey. For Taş Medrese, see İbrahim H. Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Kitabeleri*, p. 228-230.

⁴⁰ Metin Tuncel, “Eğirdir”, p. 494. It is spelt as ‘Akridur’ in its English translation, see David Waines, *The Odyssey of Ibn Battuta*, p. 91.

⁴¹ Uzunçarşılı, *Anadolu Kitabeleri*, p. 226.

prominent location on lake Eğirdir.⁴² In the period concerned it was very much a city on the borderzone.

Eğirdir was the second capital of the Hamidoğulları dynasty, which was founded by Hamid Bey circa 697/1297-98. The second governor of the Hamidoğulları, Dündar Bey Feleküddin, declared Eğirdir as the new capital and gave his name to the city, calling it Felek-abad. In 1324, the city was occupied by the Ilkhanids. When the Ilkhanid governor Timurtaş fled to Egypt in 1328, Hızır Bey, who was the son of Dündar Bey, took the city back. In the second half of the fourteenth century, the city was attacked by the Karamanids several times. After the rise of the Ottomans in the region some lands belonging to the Hamidoğulları were given to the Ottomans, however, Eğirdir remained part of the Hamidoğulları dynasty until 792/1390, when Bayezid I took the city.⁴³

In 1391, Bayezid I appointed Mustafa Bey as the governor of Hamidili. In 1402-03, Timur invaded the island of Nis in lake Eğirdir, which was where the people in the city stayed during the Battle of Ankara. During Timur's long stay in Anatolia, the principalities of Karaman, Germiyan, Menteşe, Aydın, Saruhan and Canik were re-established.⁴⁴ When leaving Anatolia, Timur gave the city to Karamanoğlu Mehmed II and Mehmed Bey minted coins in the name of Timur in Eğirdir as well as in Konya, Kayseri and Larende. The Ottoman sultan Murad II took the city back from the Karamanoğulları in 1425-6. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Eğirdir was affiliated to the *sanjak* of Hamidili, which was one of the

⁴² Süleyman S. Yiğitbaşı, *Eğirdir –Felekabad Tarihi*, p. 60.

⁴³ On the history of Hamidoğulları see Kofoğlu, *Hamidoğulları Beyliği*; Yiğitbaşı, *Eğirdir-Felekabad Tarihi*.

⁴⁴ On the Interregnum period and a reassessment of secondary literature on this period, see Dimitris J. Kastritsis, "The Ottoman Interregnum (1402-1413): Politics and narratives of dynastic succession".

fourteen *sanjaks* in the province of Anatolia (*Anadolu Vilayeti*) in the Ottoman state.⁴⁵

As this brief summary of the important dates in the history of Eğirdir reveals, being a frontier region Eğirdir experienced a good deal of instability over a long period of time. When Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi completed his *Hızırname* in 1476, Eğirdir had already been an Ottoman city for almost fifty years. However, as Halil İnalcık observes, the Ottomans becoming neighbours constituted a serious threat for the Karamanids and their key city of Konya.⁴⁶ For this reason, even after its conquest by the Ottomans, Eğirdir was attacked by the Karamanids until the conquest of their lands by Mehmed II. In addition to the tension caused by the Ottoman-Karaman rivalry in the region, the collaboration of the Karamanids with the Eastern neighbours of the Ottomans, in particular with the Akkoyunlu, made the situation even more problematic for the Ottoman side and affected Eğirdir, it being situated on the border zone between the Ottomans and the Karamanids.

In 1464, a struggle took place between the heirs of the Karamanid throne and the then ruler of the Akkoyunlu state, Uzun Hasan, intervened on the side of the candidate not backed by the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II. In 1466, Mahmut Paşa, the grand vezir of Mehmed II, commanded a military campaign in the region and tried to eliminate the power of the Turcoman groups who were rebelling against the Ottomans. The members of the Turgud group fled to Mount Bulgar which was part of the Mount Taurus range.⁴⁷ Two years later, in 1468, Mehmed II finally managed to take over all the Karamanid lands. However, even after this conquest, it took a long time for the Ottomans to establish full control in the region; fifty years is Halil

⁴⁵ Kate Fleet, "The Ottomans, 1451-1603: A political history introduction", p. 22-26.

⁴⁶ Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ*, p. 20.

⁴⁷ Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, p. 80.

İnalcık's estimate.⁴⁸ In particular, the Turgud group of the Turcomans, as supporters of the Karamanids, continued to be a problem for the Ottoman state.⁴⁹

During this time of Ottoman-Karaman rivalry, as the Ottomans became more powerful in the region and the Karamanids lost their power, so the relationship between the Ottomans and the Akkoyunlu worsened and by 1471 Uzun Hasan had become the greatest enemy of the Ottomans in the region.⁵⁰ He was backed by several Turcoman groups but the Turgud group was one of the main supporters of Uzun Hasan against Mehmed II.⁵¹ During the two year period, from 1471 to 1473, the tension between Uzun Hasan and Mehmed II continued. In 1473, the increasing conflict between the two states came to a head with a large military campaign led by the Ottomans to the Eastern border. In the month of Dhu'l-Qa'da in 877/1473, the Ottomans sent a considerable number of *akinci* forces to the Ottoman-Akkoyunlu frontier. Then Mehmed II, with the janissary forces under his command, headed to central Anatolia. With the joining of the provincial military forces of Anatolia and Rumeli, a large Ottoman army headed to the Eastern border. Meanwhile, some of Uzun Hasan's forces stayed in Erzincan. In the end, the Ottoman army, which was superior to the Akkoyunlu army in terms of both manpower and technology, defeated the Akkoyunlu forces and gave chase.⁵² The long-lasting tension between the Ottomans and the Akkoyunlu thus resulted in a victory of the Ottomans in a battle at their Eastern border. In secondary sources this is referred to as the 'Battle of Otlukbeli'.

⁴⁸ İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ*, p. 20.

⁴⁹ Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, p. 80.

⁵⁰ İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ*, p. 33.

⁵¹ Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, p. 80.

⁵² John E. Woods, *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire*, p. 110-120.

The year in which the *Hızırname* was written, 1476, comes just after the long-lasting Ottoman-Karaman conflict and the Ottoman-Akkoyunlu rivalry. This resulted in war and instability in the region and ended up with the victory of the Ottoman state. The names of the warrior dervishes mentioned in the *Hızırname* therefore become significant when the text is read within the context of the tension in the Eğirdir region.

b. The Zeynis in Anatolia and Other Groups

The poet in the *Hızırname* openly tells that he follows the teachings of Zeyn-i Hafi (Zayn-i Khafi/Zayn al-Din Khafi):

We have started [the journey] by following the teachings of Zeyn-i Hafi
[And then] we ended up on this path⁵³

Zeyn-i Hafi was born in 757/1356 in the city of Khaf in Khurasan and he was educated in Egypt. Having spent some years travelling to various cities, he finally returned to Herat in 812/1409-10, settled down there, founded the Zeyniye order and established a dervish lodge in the city. He died in Herat in 838/1435. According to his *silsilah*, Zeyn-i Hafi is linked to ‘Umar al-Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234), and, therefore, the Zeyniye order is considered to be a branch of the Suhrawardiyye order.⁵⁴ Some sources also point to the links between the Zeynis, the Rifais and the Halvetis. Likewise, with reference to Zeyn-i Hafi’s works, especially to his short Arabic treatise entitled the *Mirat al-Talibin*, H. T. Norris mentions the reputation of

⁵³ Bardakçı, p.76. The original text is as follows:

Zeyn-i Hafi mesleğinde ibtida / Eyledik bu yola bulduk intiha

⁵⁴ On the Suhrawardiyya order, see Ohlander, *Sufism in an Age of Transition*, ‘Umar al-Suhrawardi and the Rise of the Islamic Mystical Brotherhoods and Öngören, “Sühreverdiyye”.

the Zeyni works in Khurufi⁵⁵ and Bektashi circles.⁵⁶ According to Central Asian sources dating to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Zeyniye order was one of the four influential Sufi orders in the region of the Transoxiana.⁵⁷

Regarding the initiation of Zeyn-i Hafi into the realm of the friends of God, some sources claim that he was spiritually initiated into the mystical realm by Ibn ‘Arabi (d. 1240).⁵⁸ On the other hand, the severe criticism by Zeyn-i Hafi of the followers of Ibn ‘Arabi in a treatise entitled the *Manhaj al-rashad* (*The Method for Salvation*), dated 821/1428, raises questions about the reception of Ibn ‘Arabi among the Zeyni circles in Herat.⁵⁹ According to anecdotal evidence in Naqshbandi sources, Zeyn-i Hafi and his followers are said to have practiced vocal *zikr* (*repeating the name of God, remembrance*) in their rituals. This practice of the Zeynis is described as erroneous by the Naqshbandis who advocated the silent *zikr*.⁶⁰ Despite their negative portrayal, the fact that there is significant mention of the Zeynis in the Naqshbandi sources from Khurasan is indicative of the fame and influence that the Zeynis had in the region.

⁵⁵ For the history of the Khurufi order in Iran and Anatolia, see Fatih Usluer, *Hurufilik: İlk Elden Kaynaklarla Doğuşundan İtibaren*.

⁵⁶ H. T. Norris, “The ‘Mirat al-Talibin’ by Zain al-Din al-Khwafi of Khurasan and Herat”, p. 59. For the translation of the text, see, p. 62-63. Also see, Shahzad Bashir, *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam*, p. 73.

⁵⁷ Devin DeWeese, “The Masha’ikh-i Turk and the Khojagan: rethinking the links between the Yasavi and Naqshbandi Sufi traditions”, p. 180.

⁵⁸ Özgören, *Tarihte Bir Aydın Tarikatı: Zeyniler*, p. 74-75.

⁵⁹ For information about the *Manhaj al-Rashad*, see, İlker E. Binbaş, “Sharaf al-Din ‘Ali Yazdi (ca. 770s-858ca./1370s-1454): Prophecy, Politics, and Historiography in Late Medieval Islamic History”, p. 120-129.

⁶⁰ In one anecdote for example, Shams ad-Din Ruji, a Naqshbandi master, before he is initiated into the Naqshbandi order, he is recommended to be a follower of Zeyn-i Hafi. However, when he learns that Zeyn-i Hafi and his followers are practicing vocal *zikr*, he immediately changes his mind and becomes a follower of the Naqshbandi path, since he is impressed by the silent *zikr* practiced in this order, see, Bashir, *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam*, p. 71.

The first representatives of the Zeyni order in Anatolia were Şeyh Muhammed (d. before 1456), Abdurrahim-i Rumi/Merzifoni (d. after 1461)⁶¹ and Abdüllatif Kudsi (d. 1452). Amongst these figures Abdullatif Kudsi, also known as Abdullatif Makdisi, is the most celebrated and influential sheikh of the Zeynis in Anatolia. Makdisi left Damascus in 1447 for his second trip to Anatolia and he arrived in Konya in 1448. He then stayed in the Konevi library for a while and had many disciples there. Amongst them the Ottoman chronicler Aşıkpaşazade (d. after 1484) and Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi's father Pir Muhammed are two important figures for this study. In 1451 Makdisi moved to Bursa and after his death in the following year, his disciple Karamani Taceddin Ibrahim became the new sheikh of the Zeynis in the city. During the time of Mehmed II the Zeyniye order became popular in Istanbul through Muslihuddin Mustafa (d. 896/1491) who is famously known as Şeyh Vefa. Muslihuddin Mustafa is accepted to be the founder of the Vefaiye branch of the Zeyniye order in Istanbul.⁶² As Hasan Karatas observes, the Zeynis had close relations with the *'ulema* and the leading statesman until the reign of Bayezid II. For example the Zeyni sheikh Molla Ayas (d. 861/1457) was one of the tutors of Mehmed II and these good relations led the Zeyni order to have much more influence and power than other Sufi organisations in Istanbul. After the death of

⁶¹ Hasan Karatas notes that Abdürrahim-i Merzifoni came back from Khurasan towards the end of the 1430's and that he "became the first local Sufi in Amasya region with a known affiliation and a direct dynastic patronage", see "The City as a Historical Actor: The Urbanization and Ottomanization of the Halvetiye Sufi Order by the City of Amasya in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries", p. 76.

⁶² Reşat Öngören, "Muslihuddin Mustafa". He was born in Konya during the time of the Karamanoğulları. He started his education in Konya, then moved to Edirne with his father, which was the capital city of the Ottomans at that time. Afterwards he became a disciple of Abdullatif Makdisi in Konya. Karamanoğlu İbrahim Bey erected a mosque and a khanqah for him in Konya. Although it is not certain when he moved to Istanbul, according to Öngören, he must have left Konya after the death of İbrahim Bey in 868/1464. Mehmed II has built a mosque and a bath house (hamam) for him in Istanbul, which was in the neighbourhood named after him today, known as 'Vefa'.

Mehmed II, however, with the support of Bayezid II the Halvetis challenged the influence of the Zeynis in the capital city of the Ottomans, and, gradually, the Zeynis lost their power in the Ottoman lands.⁶³ The most important centres of the Zeyni order in the Ottoman Empire were Amasya,⁶⁴ Bursa, Edirne, Eğirdir, Ferecik (today in Greece) and Istanbul.⁶⁵

In the first half of the fifteenth century the governor of Hamidili erected a *zawiye* in Eğirdir for Pir Muhammed's father-in-law, Şeyhülislam Berdai who became the first Zeyni sheikh in the city. After his death, Pir Muhammed, who was also known as Piri Halife (d. 1460), became the second Zeyni sheikh in Eğirdir. He was succeeded, as sheikh, by his son Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi, the author of the *Hızırname*.⁶⁶

As third sheikh of the Zeynis in Eğirdir, Mehmed Çelebi became the leader of one of the recently established Sufi organisations in Anatolia. Another group which emerged during the fifteenth century was the Halvetis, who were, originally founded in Tabriz by 'Umar (Ömer) al-Halveti (Khalwati) (d. 800/1397). The first centre of the Halvetis in Anatolia was Amasya, and since the city was also a Zeyni centre, both groups became rivals in the region.⁶⁷ The emergence of the Zeynis and

⁶³ See Karatas, "The City as a Historical Actor: The Urbanization and Ottomanization of the Halvetiye Sufi Order by the City of Amasya in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries", 87-91.

⁶⁴ On the history of the Zeyni order in Amasya and the rivalry between the Zeynis and the Halvetis in the city, see, Hasan Karatas, The City as a Historical Actor: The Urbanization and Ottomanization of the Halvetiye Sufi Order by the City of Amasya in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries".

⁶⁵ For a general survey of the Zeynis in Anatolia, see, Öngören, *Tarihte Bir Aydın Tarikatı: Zeyniler*.

⁶⁶ On the *silsilah* of the Zeyni order in Eğirdir and for the legendary biographies of the Zeyni sheikhs from Eğirdir, see Sadık Yazar, *Eğirdirli Münevver Bir Ailenin Hikayesi: Şerif Mehmed'in Menakıb-ı Şeyh Burhaneddin'i*.

⁶⁷ For brief information about the Halvetis, see Alexander Kynsh, *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History*, p. 264-271; on the Halveti-Zeyni rivalry, first in Amasya, and then in Istanbul which resulted with the rise of the Halvetis as the powerful Sufi organization during the time of

the Halvetis in the fifteenth century was matched in Anatolia by the rise of other Sufi groups in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, such as the Naqshbandiye, and the Bayramiye.⁶⁸ The latter group was established by Hacı Bayram-ı Veli (d. 833/1429) in Ankara. There were, also, the wandering dervishes famous as the Kalenderis, and the Haydaris, who are considered to be an extreme branch of the Kalenderis. While these groups were emerging in the Sufi landscape of Anatolia, there were also previously established Sufi groups in the region, such as the Rifais, an order founded by Ahmed el-Rifai (d. 578/1181) in Iraq, and the Mevlevi, probably established during the time of Sultan Veled, the son of Mevlana. The last group to be mentioned here are the Bektashis, brought into being as an order by Balım Sultan during the reign of Bayezid II but whose origins date back to earlier times, while the name of Hacı Bektaş is mentioned in two works composed in the fourteenth century.⁶⁹

In fact, starting from the second half of the thirteenth century, Anatolia welcomed several new groups and experienced a considerable rise in the number of dervish lodges. For example, as Ethel S. Wolper observes, in this period, especially between 1240 and 1350, at least fifteen dervish lodges were built in Sivas, Tokat and Amasya by amirs and Akhi leaders.⁷⁰ The Akhis were one of the principal groups in Anatolia who had an influence not only on the social life of the craftsmen and the tradesmen, but also on the dervish orders and mystical movements. In his celebrated travelogue, the fourteenth century traveller Ibn Battuta gives a description of the akhi

Bayezid II, see Karatas,; “The City as a Historical Actor: The Urbanization and Ottomanization of the Halvetiye Sufi Order by the City of Amasya in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries”.

⁶⁸ On the Bayramiye order, see, *Bayramiye Tarikatı Menakıbı: Hacı Bayram Veli ve Halifeleri*.

⁶⁹ Alexander Kynsh, *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History*, p. 264-280.

⁷⁰ For more information about these lodges and for an analysis of their function and influence in the city life, see, Ethel S. Wolper, *Cities and Saints: Sufism and the Transformation of Urban Space in Medieval Anatolia*.

lodges in which he stayed while in Anatolia. The organisation was originally linked to the *futuwwat* movement, which was initiated by the Abbasid caliph Nasir and introduced to Anatolia by ‘Umar Suhrawardi.⁷¹ Mikail Bayram argues that the Akhi organisation (*Ahilik teşkilatı*) in Anatolia was first established in 622/1205 in Kayseri by Ahi Evren, and then again in Konya. Subsequently the akhi groups spread to other cities in Anatolia. According to Bayram, after the Seljukid sultans began to be ruled by the Mongols, the city rulers assigned the lodges belonging to the akhis to the Kalenderis and the Mevlevis. Consequently, by the end of the thirteenth century, a great number of Kalenderi lodges appeared in Konya. The rivalry between the akhis and the Mevlevis in Konya resulted in the migration of Ahi Evren from Konya to Kırşehir.⁷²

As stated before, the Zeyni order was considered to be a branch of the Suhrawardiye order which was founded by ‘Umar Suhrawardi, and Suhrawardi also introduced the *futuwwat* movement to Anatolia. What could such a link between the *futuwwat* and the Zeynis reveal about the *Hızırname*? In his analysis of the history of the *futuwwat*, Lloyd Ridgeon points out the relationship between the notion of *futuwwat* and Sufism, and explains how the celebrated sufis al-Hallaj, Abu’l-Hasan Kharaqani (963-1033), and Ibn ‘Arabi perceived and elaborated the notion of *futuwwa* in their writings. What is of relevance and intriguing for the *Hızırname* are Kharaqani’s and Ibn ‘Arabi’s depictions of *futuwwa*. According to Kharaqani, it was a spiritual wayfaring experienced by the select, and denoting the “closest proximity to God”. Likewise, Ibn ‘Arabi also considered *futuwwa* to be an “extremely lofty spiritual station, attained only by a select few”, and he addressed this topic in three

⁷¹ On the history of *futuwwat* see Lloyd Ridgeon, *Morals and Mysticism in Persian Sufism: A History of Sufi-futuwwat in Iran*. For Ibn Battuta’s descriptions, see p. 80-82.

⁷² See Mikail Bayram, *Selçuklular Zamanında Konya’da Dinî ve Fikrî Hareketler*.

different chapters in his renowned *Futuhāt al-Makkiyyah* ('*The Meccan Revelations*').⁷³ As this thesis observes and discusses in Chapter III, Ibn 'Arabi is one of the authors who may have influenced the composition of the *Hızırname*. Therefore, when addressing the portrayal of the dervish figure in the *Hızırname*, who tells of his own spiritual experiences, the notions of *futuwwat* and *akhi* in Anatolia, and how these notions are represented in Sufi literature, becomes crucial. In the *Hızırname*, these notions seem to be mentioned and referred to under the *eren* identity.

c. The Biography of Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi: An Unruly Dervish or a Warrior?

The *Hızırname* itself does not include any information about the life of Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi other than his spiritual lineage to the Zeyniye order. However, in some manuscript copies of the *Hızırname* which are dated to the seventeenth century and onwards, the text is followed by, or kept, with a short biography of the author Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi. This work, a *menakıbnâme*⁷⁴ in its own right, is in fact part of a larger work, a collection of the miraculous life stories of the Zeyni sheikhs in Eğirdir,⁷⁵ which survives in two recensions. Both recensions are dated to the

⁷³ See Ridgeon, *Morals and Mysticism in Persian Sufism: A History of Sufi-futuwwat in Iran*, especially p. 28-60.

⁷⁴ '*Menakıbnâme*' is often translated into English as 'hagiography'. However, this translation does not thoroughly correspond to the meaning of the '*menakıbnâme*' as these two titles belong to different literary traditions. By pointing out the lack of comparative studies between the Christian concept of 'saint' and the Islamic concept of the 'friend of God', Şevket Küçük Hüseyin states that "in contrast to the Christian tradition, the Muslim cults of the 'friends of God' are not rooted in the cult of martyrs", see "Some Reflections on Hagiology with Reference to the Early Mawlawi-Christian Relations in the Light of *Manaqib al-'arîfîn*", p. 242.

⁷⁵ Regarding the *menakıbnâmes* in the Ottoman era, noting that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there had been some changes in their content, Hatice Aynur observes that "a novelty of the eighteenth century was the emergence of biographical collections covering dervish sheikhs exclusively: previously saint's vitas had either discussed single individuals or else they were part of larger biographical dictionaries also encompassing scholars", see, "Ottoman Literature", p. 491-492.

seventeenth century and their authors, Şerif Mehmed Efendi (d. 1631) and Seyyid Hüseyin (d. after 1644) are from the same family. In his recension, Şerif Mehmed tells us that there was, in fact, an earlier version of the collected biographies of the Zeyni sheikhs in Eğirdir compiled by a certain Halifizade.⁷⁶ Referring to six manuscript copies in total, Sadık Yazar has published a critical edition of the text based on Şerif Mehmed's recension, by also comparing Şerif Mehmed's and Seyyid Hüseyin's versions.⁷⁷

Şerif Mehmed Efendi, who was a member of the *ilmiyye* in the Ottoman Empire, experienced the reign of six sultans: Murad III (r. 1574-1595); Mehmed III (r. 1595-1603); Ahmed I (r. 1603-1617); Mustafa I (r. 22 Nov 1617-26 Feb 1618 and 10 May 1622-10 Sept 1623); Osman II (r. 1618-1622) and Murad IV (r. 1623-1640). In his recension he introduces Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi as his great grandfather ('*ceddümün ceddi*').⁷⁸ In the text he also praises the Valide Sultan, Mehmed III's mother, thereby giving clues to his relationship with the palace.⁷⁹ Seyyid Hüseyin's version on the other hand, according to Sadık Yazar, must have been written after 1644. Compared to Şerif Mehmed's version, Seyyid Hüseyin's text narrates the events in more detail and it also includes some episodes which do not exist in Şerif Mehmed's recension. There are also some extra episodes in Şerif Mehmed's text

⁷⁶ Sadık Yazar, *Eğirdirli Münevver Bir Ailenin Hikayesi: Şerif Mehmed'in Menakıb-ı Şeyh Burhaneddin'i*, p. 83-85.

⁷⁷ See Yazar, *ibid*. Neither Şerif Mehmed nor Seyyid Hüseyin gave a title to their recensions. Yazar however, has given the title *Menakıb-ı Şeyh Burhaneddin* to his edition. Yazar notes that since Şerif Mehmed talks about Halifizade's text as "the compiled *menakıb* of Şeyh Burhaneddin", he preferred to refer the text he edited under that title, see, p. 7, 83-85.

⁷⁸ Yazar, *ibid*, p. 124-125.

⁷⁹ Yazar, *ibid*, p. 64-66.

which are missing in Seyyid Hüseyin's version. Other than these differences, both recensions are almost the same in terms of content.⁸⁰

Şerif Mehmed Efendi tells us that although he could not be a follower of the Zeyniye order, he would read the *Divan* of Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi and the stories about his grandfather, Şeyh Burhaneddin, whenever he had an opportunity.⁸¹ With information it provides, this seventeenth century work therefore appears to be not only an important source about Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi and his *Divan*, but it also gives information about the later reception of the *Divan*, or the *Hızırname*, by pointing out its audience in the seventeenth century and, at the same time, indicating the earlier circulation of the text.

In the *menakıbnâme* there are several episodes about Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi which portray him in his different aspects. One of these episodes provides interesting details about the character of Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi and is critical of him. The episode exists in both recensions, though with differences in its content. According to Şerif Mehmed's version, in one of his visits to Bursa, Hacı Ivaz visits the Zeyni *tekke* in the city and its sheikh, Şeyh Taceddin. In their meeting, the sheikh gives advice to Hacı Ivaz and tells him not to be so attached to this world. He also tells him to spend his time with the friends of God. Hacı Ivaz, however, responds to him by saying that there is not such a person in his region. Upon this, the sheikh replies to Hacı Ivaz by asking "what happened to Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi, the son of Piri Halife?" Hacı Ivaz answers the sheikh's question by telling him that "I don't have any faith in him. He wears good clothes and rides strong horses, and girds himself

⁸⁰ For more information about Seyyid Hüseyin's version see p. 91-101.

⁸¹ See Yazar, *ibid*, p. 124-125.

with a sword. He does not have the *dervish-hood* you have mentioned.”⁸² The sheikh, however, objects to Hacı Ivaz and tells him that he should not deny Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s *dervish-hood* as this could land him in trouble since Mehmed Çelebi is the *qutb-ı ‘alem*.⁸³

Seyyid Hüseyin’s version tells the episode differently. According to this version, although Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s father and grandfather were highly respectable people and they initiated many unruly people into their order, Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi did not follow his father’s and grandfather’s path. He, instead, had outings on majestic horses wearing fur clothes and carrying hawks, and was also in the company of beautiful youth. At the end of the episode, Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi responds to the people who do not consider him a dervish by stating that “the bottom of the matter (*‘nihayetü’l-emr’*) is that one should accept people as they are, mistakes (*‘ayb*) and all, warts and all”.⁸⁴

Although both episodes criticize the appearance and habits of Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi, with a particular focus on living a life of luxury, the mention of ‘girding a sword’ in Şerif Mehmed’s version carries the implicit connotations of what are called chilvarous acts. The identity and appearance of dervishes in society has, in fact, always been a popular subject since the formative period of Sufism. Whether a dervish should live a poor or rich life and whether he can perform miracles or not are the two main questions that have created debate for centuries. What is interesting in Şerif Mehmed’s and Seyyid Hüseyin’s recensions however, is that Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi is not being criticized for his supernatural claims about his ascension journey,

⁸² The original text is as follows: “Aña i’tikādum yok. Eyü şūflar geyer ve eyü atlara biner ve eyü kılıç kuşanur anda eyle dervişlik añlamadum”, see Yazar, *ibid*, p. 158-159.

⁸³ Yazar, *ibid*, p. 158-159.

⁸⁴ Yazar, *ibid*, p. 99.

which he explains in detail in the *Hızırname*, but instead he is being criticized because of his appearance. A common feature in both versions is that riding a horse is considered to be against *dervish-hood*. In the *Hızırname* on the other hand, as will be discussed in Chapter IV, the warrior identity of the dervish is portrayed by describing him climbing up onto the horse of Hacı Bektaş and joining the battle to protect the Ottoman lands. The *Hızırname* does not include any conflict between the spiritual acts and heroic deeds of the narrator-poet, rather, by describing him both as a dervish and a warrior it merges the spiritual and heroic within one character. The change in the notion of *dervish-hood* then, found in the seventeenth century recensions of the biographies of the Zeyni dervishes, must have been related to the new historical and regional context of these stories which had been retold for centuries.

4. Manuscripts and Secondary Sources

Twelve manuscript copies of the *Hızırname* survive today. Some of the copies from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are bound together with the biography of the author, Mehmed Çelebi. The attached biography of the author in these copies is in fact part of a larger work, a collection of the life stories of Zeyni sheikhs in Eğirdir, which was mentioned in the previous section. Among these twelve manuscript copies, Mehmet N. Bardakçı gives information about nine manuscript copies of the text. The copy mentioned as the earliest one, amongst others, is undated and housed at the library of Istanbul University. The copy housed at the library of Türk Dil Kurumu is dated 1110/1698, the copy kept in the Yapı Kredi Sermet Çifter Araştırma Kütüphanesi is dated 1135/1723 and the copy at the

Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi is dated 1202/1788. Two other copies housed at Konya Bölge Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi are dated 1225/1810 and 1227/1812.⁸⁵ In addition to these nine copies, another copy of the *Hızırname* is housed at the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. This copy is also bound together with the biography of Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi.⁸⁶ Another copy is referred to by Fatih Bayram and this is lodged at the Topkapı Palace.⁸⁷ The last copy to be noted here is mentioned by Zeynep Yürekli and it is in a private collection.⁸⁸

The *Hızırname* and its textual features were first introduced to scholarship by Fuad Köprülü in his 1919 work, *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar*.⁸⁹ Based on the evidence in the text itself, Köprülü claims that the founding of the Bektashi order should be dated to at least a half century or a century earlier than the beginning of the sixteenth century.⁹⁰ After Köprülü, several books and chapters on the history of Turkish literature have mentioned Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi and his work with regard to the content and importance of the *Hızırname*.⁹¹ These studies introduce this poetic work as being one of the renowned religious and mystical texts of Turkish literature in the fifteenth century. However, despite Köprülü's thought-provoking statement on

⁸⁵ See Bardakçı, *Eğirdir Zeyni Zaviyesi ve Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi Divanı*, pp. 101-105.

⁸⁶ For brief information about this copy, see Patrick Franke, *Begennung mit Khidr*, p. 225-233.

⁸⁷ See Fatih Bayram, "Zaviye-Khankahs and Religious Orders in the Province of Karaman: The Seljukid, Karamanoğlu and the Ottoman Periods", p. 65. In this study, Bayram does not give information about the manuscript or its content; he refers to this copy in relation to the sheikhs of Karaman. By comparing the sheikhs mentioned in the *Hızırname* and the *Defter-i Evkaf-i Vilayet-i Karaman ve Kayseriyye* ('*The Register of Pious Foundations of the Provinces of Karaman and Kayseri*') dated 888/1483, he lists the sheikhs common to both texts.

⁸⁸ Zeynep Yürekli, *Architecture and Hagiography in the Ottoman Empire: The Politics of Bektashi Shrines in the Classical Age*, p. 5.

⁸⁹ For the English translation of Köprülü's book by Gary Leiser and Robert Dankoff, see *Early Mystics in Turkish Literature*.

⁹⁰ Köprülü, *Early Mystics in Turkish Literature*, p. 122. Here Köprülü refers to the claim of G. Jacob, who dated the founding of the Bektashi order as the beginning of the sixteenth century.

⁹¹ For example, see Vasfi M. Kocatürk, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, p. 283-288; Günay Kut, "Anadolu'da Türk Edebiyatı", p. 40; Gönül A. Tekin, "Turkish Literature", p. 357; "Fatih Devri Türk Edebiyatı", p. 207.

the history of dervish orders in Anatolia and the other literary studies that point to the *Hızırname*, the text still awaits to be read within the context of the fifteenth century and to be analysed in terms of its textual structure, narrative features, intertextuality and its sources. In general, secondary sources focus on or refer to the *Hızırname* in relation to three main subjects: its relation to Bektashi literature and other Sufi orders,⁹² its theme, style and genre⁹³ and its critical edition.⁹⁴

The most recent edition of the *Hızırname*, by Bardakçı, is based on the earliest (undated) manuscript copy which is housed at Istanbul University Library and is a reliable version of the text compared to earlier studies. In this edition, Bardakçı consults four additional copies⁹⁵ and compares them with the earliest one. The study of Bardakçı also includes information about the history of the Zeyni sheikhs in Eğirdir and a discussion about the content of the *Hızırname*, however, it does not identify the peculiar features work and it neither focuses on its genre nor addresses its sources by reading it within the context of fifteenth century Anatolian

⁹² For example, by focusing on the importance of Khidr in the text, A. Y. Ocak claims that the author Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi must also have been a follower of the Hızıryye order, see “*Hızırname*”, p. 418.

Köprülü’s claim has been rejected by some scholars and researchers, see for example, A. Y. Ocak, “*Hızırname*”, p. 418; Mehmet Altunmeral, “*Hızırname*’de Eğirdir ve Eğirdirli Veliler”, p. 506. However, these works do not provide any textual evidence for their claim; they neither refer to the *Hızırname*, nor to any work from Bektashi literature.

On the other hand, in his article which focuses on the cult of Khidr and Hacı Bektaş in the *Hızırname* and in Bektaşî literature, Saffet Sarıkaya agrees with Köprülü’s claim. By quoting two poems from the *Hızırname* relating to Hacı Bektaş, Sarıkaya states that Köprülü was right in his argument about the date of the foundation of the Bektaşî order, see “*Hızırname*’nin Bektaşîliğe Dair Malumatı ve Bektaşî Kültüründe Hızır İnancı”.

⁹³ See, H. Ayan, “*Hızır-name ve Muhiddin Dolu*”; V. M. Kocatürk, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, p. 283-288; Ocak, “*Hızırname*”; Ahmet A. Şentürk and Ahmet Kartal, *Eski Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, p. 207; Gönül A. Tekin, “*Turkish Literature*”, p. 357; “*Fatih Devri Türk Edebiyatı*”, p. 207.

⁹⁴ There are four MA theses that provide a transcription of the text: Muhammet A. Bulut, “*Eğirdirli Şeyh Mehmet Dede Sultan’ın Hızırname’si*”; Ruken Karaduman “*Eğirdirli Şeyh Muhiddin Dolu ‘Hızırname’*”; Zehra Alay, “*Muhyiddin Çelebi’nin Hızır-namesi (İnceleme-Metin)*”; Elif Erturan, “*Muhyi’-d-din Çelebi’nin Hızır-name Adlı Mesnevisi (Dil İncelemesi-Metin-Sözlük)*”.

⁹⁵ Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Hacı Mahmud Efendi, nr. 3414; Konya Bölge Yazma Eserler Kütüphanesi, nr. 3725; Yapı Kredi Sermer Çifter Araştırma Kütüphanesi, nr. 921 and Milli Kütüphane Türk Dil Kurumu Kitaplığı, nr. 288.

Turkish literature. The study generally gives a detailed outline of the narrative and provides information about the major figures in the text.

5. What's in a Title?

The last issue that should be considered about the *Hızırname* is its reception by some scholars which can be traced through the change in its title. As pointed out earlier, although the title *Hızırname* was not assigned by the author, today it is better known under this title.⁹⁶

“Name” is a compound-forming word in Persian that can denote ‘a book’ (pertaining to a certain category or specific protagonist). It can also be used generically to denote a whole genre of similar works, and this practice is particularly widespread in Turkish literary history: for example *şahname* refers to the genre of writings in the style of Ferdowsi’s *Shahname*, while *nasihatname* (*book of advice*) can refer to the ‘mirror for princes’ genre. However, ‘*hızırname*’ was not used as a title to refer to a genre or to a specific group of texts in the Ottoman period.

⁹⁶ According to the records available to us, Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s work was first introduced to scholarship under the title *Hızırname* by F. Köprülü in *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar*. There is one more text under the title *Hızırname*, see Baki Y. Altınok, *Hızırname – Alevî Bektaşî Adab ve Erkanı (Buyruk)*. Its author is mentioned as being es-Seyyid Alizade Hasan b. Müslim and the only information about him is that he lived in Amasya. The text is mainly about the love for the *ehl-i beyt* (the family of the Prophet) and gives some information about the ‘twelve imams’. The first part of the text is composed of questions and answers between the Prophet Muhammad, Ali, İmam Cafer Sadık (d. 702-765), Şeyh Safi (d. 1334) and Khidr and these questions are about the Alevi-Bektaşî doctrine and the social codes of the order. The only manuscript copy of the text is dated 1848. Altınok compares this text with Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s composition in terms of the social codes of the Alevi-Bektaşî literature and concludes that the *Hızırname* by Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi is not one of the literary works from Alevi-Bektaşî literature, p. 19-22.

For information about the content of the ‘*buyruk*’, see R. Yıldırım, “Inventing a Sufi tradition: The use of the Futuwwa ritual gathering as a model for the Qizilbash djem”. Yıldırım notes that “the creators of the buyruq texts inherited the models of the Futuwwa tradition”, p. 167.

Also, unlike other works with similar titles - for example Iskender in *Iskendernames* or Sarı Saltuk in the *Saltukname* - Khidr is not the protagonist of the narrative. Although he and his virtues are mentioned in certain poems, the text itself is not about Khidr. Just as he is the companion of Iskender and Sarı Saltuk in these texts, so too he is the companion of the dervish figure in the *Hızırname*. In other words, he has the same secondary role and function in this text as he has in the canonical works of Anatolian Turkish literature. How then could this change of title have happened?

On a first reading, this change can be explained by the fact that the core of the narrative is the journey of a dervish into the seven heavens, to mythological places, to religious lands and to various territories under the guidance of Khidr, who thus has a vital role and function in the plot of the narrative. According to Ahmet Y. Ocak, the text is widely known as the *Hızırname* because, in the last couplet of each section/poem which mentions the penname of the poet, the name of Khidr is repeated.⁹⁷ Therefore, it seems that five hundred years after its composition the role of the Khidr figure in this narrative must have led its later audience to give it the title of *Hızırname*. On the other hand, the existence of two titles sheds insight into how this work was firstly perceived by the author and then by a later audience. While the author has designed his work as a collection of spiritual experiences, some readers perceived it to be a work on Khidr, thus erasing the subject nature of the work. This also reveals the partial reading of the text by some scholars, as it ignores not only the protagonist of the narrative - therefore changes the reception of the text totally and

⁹⁷ See Ocak, “Hızırname”, p. 418.

affects the discussions on its content - but also other figures in the narrative, such as the leader of the warrior dervishes, Hacı Bektaş.

Despite the importance attributed to the figure of Khidr for the text in secondary sources, there is yet no study that examines his role in the narrative and the relationship between Khidr and the narrator-protagonist, the warrior dervish, who calls himself Muhyiddin and Dolu throughout the text.

6. Outline of Thesis Chapters

Amongst the peculiar features of the *Hızırname* this thesis focuses on and examines are the two intertwined aspects of the text: the identity of the narrator, who is the protagonist himself, and the diversity in the route of the journey. The aim is to question the sources of the text that have influenced its composition and also to look at the textual relations in a particular region in fifteenth century Anatolia.

The identity of the narrator, who is a warrior dervish, is represented by three figures in the *Hızırname*: Khidr, Iskender and Hacı Bektaş. While Iskender is referred to in relation to the route of the journey, the text portrays a distinction between the roles of Khidr and Hacı Bektaş: Khidr represents the spiritual aspect of the poet and Hacı Bektaş represents his military deeds. In this case, how can we read the merging of the stories of these figures within one narrative? And, how can we situate the *miraj* of a warrior dervish within these stories?

Based on all these questions concerning the textual sources and the historical context that shaped the portrayal of the warrior dervish in the *Hızırname*, the structure of the present study is designed as follows:

Chapter I focuses on the structure, content, style and main themes of the *Hızırname*. It also provides a summary of the narrative, focusing on the travels of the poet-narrator, in order to clarify the route of the journey which reflects the portrayal of the warrior dervish and, thus, the diversity in the sources of the text. In addition, this chapter includes a section on the discussion about the content and genre of the text by looking at the debate and ambiguity surrounding the definition of ‘*menakıbnâme*’ and the complex structure of genres in early Anatolian Turkish literature. The chapter ends with a discussion which questions the unique features of the *Hızırname*.

Chapter II examines the representations and role of the figure of Khidr in different genres. It then assesses the controversy over the contested identity of Khidr. Being a multi-faceted figure, Khidr is described as a ‘syncretic figure’ shaped by the amalgam of different literary traditions and religious beliefs in Anatolia. However, this description fails to account for the role and function of Khidr in the *Hızırname*, since the approach used to examine the figure ignores the context and, as a result, erases the textual lineages that shaped the figure in a certain context. The chapter also addresses the ambiguous relationship between Khidr and Ilyas, which in some texts confuses the reader as to whether they represent two people or one single person. Lastly, the chapter makes mention of two journeys by Khidr which can also be traced in different literary traditions: the journey of Khidr with Iskender and the journey of Khidr with Moses based on the Koran.

Chapter III examines the ascension journey of the dervish figure. The heavenly journey in the *Hızırname* can be read in relation to the visionary and experiential writings of Ibn ‘Arabi and his followers in Anatolia and to *Ishraqi*

literature of Suhrawardi. This journey includes the visits to Mount Qaf and to the realm of the water of life as a part of the notions of ‘becoming Khidr’ and ‘becoming a perfect man’. Before addressing the ascension journey of the dervish in the *Hızırname*, the chapter first considers the role and depiction of Khidr in early Anatolian *masnavis*, which predate the *Hızırname*, in order to provide a better understanding of the description of Khidr in Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s text. The two *masnavis* that will be examined are the *Masnavi* by Mevlana and the *Garibname* by Aşık Paşa. The second section of this chapter then turns to the experiential writings of Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi and to the *ishraqi* literature, by mentioning the philosophical and mystical works of Suhrawardi. These reveal the textual sources of the non-prophetic ascension journey including the visits of the dervish to Mount Qaf and to the realm of the water of life. The chapter also refers to the writings of Zeyn-i Hafi in Herat, who was the founder of the Zeyniye order. As the chapter points out, although the *Hızırname* follows the literature of Ibn ‘Arabi and his followers in Anatolia, Zeyn-i Hafi criticizes Ibn ‘Arabi’s followers in his works, by calling them unbelievers.

Chapter IV addresses the military deeds of the dervish Muhyiddin, and, therefore, the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in the narrative. By examining the relationship between Hacı Bektaş and the *erenler* in Rum in several sources including the biographies of Dediği Sultan and Seyyid Harun, the *Saltukname* and the *Velayetname*, this chapter questions the intrinsic role of Hacı Bektaş in the *Hızırname*, where he is presented as the guardian of the Ottoman lands. Also, the identification of Hacı Bektaş with Khidr in the *Velayetname* will be examined in terms of the warrior dervish identity in fifteenth century Anatolia. With the aim of

reading the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in the *Hızırname* using a comparative perspective for a better understanding, the chapter will also look at the chronicle of Aşıkpaşazade, with a particular focus on the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in his work. Both Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi and Aşıkpaşazade were Zeyni sheikhs. Like Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi's father, Aşıkpaşazade himself was initiated into the Zeyni order in Konya, by Şeyh Makdisi. However, being a sheikh of the Zeyni dervish lodge in Istanbul, Aşıkpaşazade has a negative attitude towards Hacı Bektaş in his chronicle. Therefore, this chapter will ask whether or not the variation in the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in the *Hızırname*, and in Aşıkpaşazade's chronicle, is a result of their different contexts, one being from Eğirdir, a Muslim frontier zone and the other being from Istanbul the capital of the Ottoman Empire.

Ultimately an argument is presented that the *Hızırname*, having been written in Eğirdir, a border zone between the Ottomans and the Karamanids and in the vicinity of Konya, an education centre for dervishes at that time, combines the literature of both the frontier regions and the dervish lodges in Anatolia - especially the Konevi library - within one text, as represented by the warrior dervish, namely *eren*, identity of the narrator.

CHAPTER I

THE *HIZIRNAME*

1. Style and Poetic Tradition

The third poem of the *Hızırname* is the *sebeb-i telif* (the reason for composing the text).⁹⁸ Stating that he has experienced states of ecstasy and that the knowledge of truth has been unveiled to him, the poet declares that he is composing this text in Turkish, “*söylene Türki dilince bu kelam*” (these words shall be said in Turkish),⁹⁹ for the benefit of the people. It will be useful to consider the implications of this statement, typical for works of the period, and how it should be understood in terms of the language of the work and the meaning conveyed to the audience.

The *Hızırname* is a poetic work from fifteenth century Anatolia and as Saliha Paker notes, “*Türki suretinde söylemek*” (to say it in the Turkish style) is a common metaphor used in translated¹⁰⁰ poetic works in fourteenth century Anatolian Turkish literature.¹⁰¹ In the *Hızırname* however, neither the *sebeb-i telif* part of the text, nor other parts include any clues which alert us to the fact that this poetic work is a

⁹⁸ For information about the *sebeb-i telif* in Anatolian Turkish *masnavis*, see Hasan Kavruk, *Türkçe Mesnevilerde Sebeb-i Te’lif (Eser Yazma Sebebi)*.

⁹⁹ Bardakçı, p. 128.

¹⁰⁰ Unlike the contemporary meaning of the notion of ‘translation’, in early Anatolian Turkish literature it was mostly a rewriting process based on the source text. For a discussion about the literary character of the author and translator and different types of translations in Ottoman literature, see Zehra Toska, “Evaluative Approaches to Translated Ottoman Turkish Literature in Future Research”. For a particular focus on poetry, see Saliha Paker, “Translation as *Terceme* and *Nazire* Culture-bound Concepts and their Implications for a Conceptual Framework for Research on Ottoman Translation History”. For the concept of ‘originality’ with regard to translation, adaptation and composition in Anatolian Turkish works see S. Paker, “*Terceme*, *te’lif* ve özgünlük meselesi”. For information about the relationship between the translations and commentaries and examples from early Anatolian Turkish works which show how the authors perceived the work of translation and how they described the features of the new work, see Selim S. Kuru, “Anlamı aydınlatan kara yazı: metin ve halleri”.

¹⁰¹ Saliha Paker, “*Terceme*, *te’lif* ve özgünlük meselesi”, p. 44.

translation or an adaptation from another work. Nevertheless, the emphasis on composing this work in Turkish, and not in another language, may still point to other works with a similar content but composed in a different language other than Turkish. If this is the case, could this eccentric text in Turkish literature, which is referred to as ‘unique’ in some secondary sources, be an attempt to compose a Turkish version of a text or texts originally written in a different language?

The rich intertextuality in the *Hızırname* suggests a combination of various oral and written sources within one narrative. However, the text does not refer to any other work as its source, with the exception of a mention of the early Ottoman poet Aşık Paşa (d. 1333). In poem forty-six, the poet introduces Aşık Paşa as ‘*perverde-yi Hızır han*’ (a disciple of Khidr khan) and informs us that Aşık Paşa is the one who tells him about Khidr.¹⁰² Indeed, in Aşık Paşa’s voluminous *Garibname* (1330),¹⁰³ there is a lengthy chapter on Khidr, which is one hundred and eighty couplets long, and the couplets on the features of Khidr in the *Hızırname* have similarities with this chapter in terms of both content and style. However, other than the relationship between Khidr and Aşık Paşa, the *Hızırname* does not cite any of Aşık Paşa’s works; rather, being the disciple of Khidr, Aşık Paşa is introduced with his dervish persona in the narrative, not as a poet.

There are two questions to be asked about the poet’s statement “*these words shall be said in Turkish*” (*söylene Türki dilince bu kelim*) and these relate to the composition and sources of the *Hızırname*: (1) in what way does the poet render his

¹⁰² Bardakçı, p. 229-230.

¹⁰³ On the *Garibname* and its transcription see Aşık Paşa, *Garib-name*. For a comparison of the *Garibname* with *Mantuku’t-tayr* (1317) by Gülşehri and *Süheyl ü Nev-bahar* (1350) by Hoca Mesud with a particular focus on the *masnavi* form in early Anatolian Turkish literature, see Selim Sırrı Kuru, “Destanı mesnevîde anlatmak: Gülşehrî, Aşık Paşa ve Mes’ûd’un eserleri hakkında gözlemler”.

work in Turkish? That is, how can we describe the language features of the text and its style? (2) what are ‘these words’ said in Turkish? That is, what are the source text(s) for the *Hızırname* that were re-composed in Turkish? Both questions address the composition process of the text and therefore they are also linked to the debates concerning the originality of the work and its intrinsic features.

As Gönül Tekin argues, its linguistic and prosodic features put the *Hızırname* into the category of the so-called ‘Yunus-style’ texts in Turkish literature. There existed a number of works in early Anatolian Turkish literature which may be considered ‘Yunus-style’ texts on account of displaying the features of the *tekke* poetry influenced by Yasavi dervishes in Anatolia. According to this approach, by adapting the Central Asian prosodic forms brought to Anatolia by the followers of Ahmed Yasavi (d. 561/1166), Yunus Emre (d. 720/1320?) created his famous ‘Yunus-style’.¹⁰⁴

The most comprehensive account of the life of Yunus Emre which survives is in the *Velayetname* of Hacı Bektaş,¹⁰⁵ and the *Velayetname* explains the origins of the Bektashi tradition in relation to its Yasavi lineage. Based upon this evidence, and following Fuad Köprülü’s works, especially *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar*, secondary sources have described the so-called ‘Yunus-style’ in Anatolian Turkish poetry in terms of the influence of the Yasavi dervishes in Anatolia. In recent studies, however, the relationship between Ahmed Yasavi and his followers and the

¹⁰⁴ See Gönül A. Tekin, “Turkish Literature”. G. A. Tekin examines the *tekke* poetry inspired by Yunus Emre in three groups: ‘Sunni Sufi poetry’, ‘Malami-Hamzawî Poetry’ and ‘Alawi-Bektashi (Qızılbaş) poetry’. In this schema, Tekin mentions the *Hızırname* as one of the works of the ‘Sunni-Sufi poetry’, p. 357.

¹⁰⁵ See Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, *Vilayet-name – Menakıb-ı Hünkar Hacı Bektaş Veli*, p. 47-48.

Anatolian dervishes has been questioned and challenged in various ways.¹⁰⁶ But, for the historiography of Turkish literature, this subject awaits to be addressed and revisited based upon new findings.

Likewise, the identity of Yunus Emre and the poems attributed to him are open to controversy among scholars as his *Divan* has been edited several times. A number of the poems in different manuscript copies and editions of the *Divan* vary from each other.¹⁰⁷ While this confusion reveals the popularity of the so-called Yunus-style in Anatolia, it also suggests that the ambiguity surrounding the authors of these poems results from their circulation not only in written but also, often, in oral form. As a result of this, as argued by Annemarie Schimmel, “[a]lthough it is

¹⁰⁶ On the controversy around the role of Ahmed Yasavi in Anatolia and the review of Turkish and Iranian historiography on this subject, as well as the Western approach to Central Asian studies, see Devin DeWeese, “The *Masha’ikh-i Turk* and the Khojagan: Rethinking the Links Between the Yasavi and Naqshbandi Sufi Traditions”, especially p. 180-185. As a significant finding, DeWeese points out that “much of our understanding of the Yasavi tradition has been based upon the sources produced within Naqshandi circles, with virtually no critical analysis of these sources’ accounts”, p. 185.

On the history of the Yasavi order also see the following articles by D. DeWeese: “A Neglected Source on Central Asian History: The 17th Century Yasavi Hagiography”; “Yasavi Sayhs in the Timurid Era: Notes on the Social and Political Role of Communal Sufi Affiliations in the 14th and 15th Centuries”; “Sacred Places and ‘Public’ Narratives: The Shrine of Ahmad Yasavi in Hagiographical Traditions of the Yasavi Sufi Order, 16th-17th Centuries”.

For a discussion on the influence of Ahmed Yasavi on Anatolian dervishes with a particular focus on the notion of *qutb* in Bektashi literature, see Rıza Yıldırım, “Rum’da Öksöğü Tutan Kimdi?”. Yıldırım notes two sources which link the Bektashi tradition to Ahmed Yasavi: the *Velayetname of Hacı Bektaş* and the *Velayetname of Hacım Sultan*. Other texts of Bektashi literature on the other hand, such as the *Divan* of Sadık Abdal, do not mention Ahmed Yasavi, see p. 626. Based on this evidence, Yıldırım underlines the need for further research on the links between Ahmed Yasavi and Bektashi literature.

On the history of dervish orders in Anatolia see also, Ahmet Karamustafa, “Origins of Anatolian Sufism”. By addressing Köprülü’s claims about the migration of Yasavi dervishes to Anatolia, Karamustafa argues that Hacı Bektaş cannot be seen as a Yasavi dervish, although it is likely that he did have contact with Ahmed Yasavi.

¹⁰⁷ For different editions of Yunus Emre’s *Divan* see Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı; *Yunus Emre: Hayatı ve Bütün Şiirleri*; Faruk K. Timurtaş, *Yunus Emre Divanı*; Mustafa Tatçı, *Yunus Emre Divanı*. Annemarie Schimmel notes that “in his later studies and editions Gölpınarlı has become more and more critical, and excludes many of the well-known poems”, see “Yunus Emre”, p. 80.

next to impossible to reconstitute an authentic text of [Yunus Emre's] poetry, his very name has become a catchword for a whole genre of mystical poetry".¹⁰⁸

The following couplets from the *Hızırname* parallel one of the well-known poems attributed to Yunus Emre.¹⁰⁹ The *radif* (repeating final rhyme) in both texts is "*bana seni gerek seni*" (you are the one I need, you are the one I crave). While pointing to the circulation and popularity of these poems, these couplets also exemplify the poetic features and style of the *Hızırname*:¹¹⁰

Oh, the true man of the world, you're the one I need, you're the one I crave
You made me fall in love with you, you're the one I need, you're the one I crave [....]
The moment I arrived they saw me and hanged me like Mansur
They scattered my ashes from the ground to the sky, you're the one I need, you're the one I crave [....]
Dolu is in Hamid-ili and always repeats the name of God
He always follows the path of Khidr, you're the one I need, you're the one I crave¹¹¹

As stated in the last couplet, which mentions the pen name of the poet, in this version the author of the poem is Dolu. The name of Yunus Emre is not mentioned

¹⁰⁸ Annemarie Schimmel, "Yunus Emre", p. 59.

¹⁰⁹ For the poem, see Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, *Yunus Emre – Hayatı ve Bütün Şiirleri*, p. 139. Some couplets from the poem are as follows:

Aşkın aldı benden beni bana seni gerek seni / Ben yanarım dün ü günü bana seni gerek seni
Ne varlığa sevinirim ne yokluğa yerinirim / Aşkın ile avunurum bana seni gerek seni [....]
Eğer beni öldüreler külüm göğe savuralar / Toprağım anda çağıra bana seni gerek seni
For the English translation of the poem, see Talat S. Halman, *Yunus Emre, Selected Poems*, p. 53-55. The translation of the poem is as follows:

Your love has wrested me away from me, you're the one I need you're the one I crave / Day and night I burn, gripped by agony, you're the one I need you're the one I crave
I find no great joy in being alive, if I cease to exist, I would not grieve / The only solace I have is your love, you're the one I need, you're the one I crave [....]

Even if, at the end, they make me die and scatter my ashes up to the sky / My pit would break into this outcry: you're the one I need, you're the one I crave

¹¹⁰ The translations of the couplets from the *Hızırname* are mine. In this excerpt, the translation of "*bana seni gerek seni*" is quoted from the translation of Yunus Emre's poem by T. S. Halman.

¹¹¹ Bardakçı, 276-277. The original text is as follows:

Hey alemün gerçek eri bana seni gerek seni / Sen mübtela kıldun beni bana seni gerek seni [....]
Varduğum anda gördiler Mansur-veş dara urdılar / Yirden külüm göğe savurdılar bana seni gerek seni [....]

Dolu Hamid ilindedir hem ism-i Hakk dilindedir / Daim Hızır yolundadır bana seni gerek seni

here. However, whether the couplets under discussion belong to a certain author or not, they are written in a particular style and are similar in content; they are parallel poems. On the other hand, as in the case of Aşık Paşa, the *Hızırname* does not refer to the poet persona of Yunus Emre at all; being one of the *erenler* in the narrative, he too is introduced in the text under his dervish-persona.

In addition to its links with Ahmed Yasavi, the ‘Yunus-style’ in Anatolian Turkish poetry is also linked to Mevlana’s poetry¹¹² and is considered to have been later enhanced by the works of Aşık Paşa.¹¹³ The poetic style of the *Garibname* by Aşık Paşa, which was written almost one hundred and fifty years before the *Hızırname*, is accepted as being one of the significant works of Turkish literature written in the Yunus-style.¹¹⁴ Yet, the similarities between the poems attributed to Yunus Emre and Aşık Paşa have created confusion and debate in secondary sources regarding their authenticity and authorship, leading some to even claim that ‘Yunus Emre is in fact Aşık Paşa himself’.¹¹⁵

¹¹² The following couplet in the *Hızırname* parallels the opening section of the *Masnavi* by Mevlana:

My heart and soul have grieved over separation / And have narrated everything one-by-one seen in this land of love

The original text is as follows:

Can u gönül bu hecr elinden çok şikayet eyledi / Bu aşk ilinde gördüğün bir bir hikayet eyledi
Bardakçı, p. 258.

The opening couplet of the *Masnavi* is as follows:

Listen to this reed as it is grieving / It tells the story of our separations. For the translation see Alan Williams, *Spiritual Verses*, p 7.

Schimmel points out the similarity between the poetry of Yunus Emre and Mevlana in terms of poetic style and prosodical features. Schimmel notes that in the poems written in the classical quantitative meters, “[Yunus Emre] follows, probably unconsciously – in this respect – Maulana Rumi who also prefers metres where the hemistich can easily be split by a caesura into two units that can rhyme internally; thus the verse looks almost like a Turkish folk song with the rhyme scheme *ababa/xxxb/yyyb*”, see “Yunus Emre”, p. 63.

¹¹³ Gönül A. Tekin, “Fatih Devri Türk Edebiyatı”, p. 307-309.

¹¹⁴ Günay Kut, “Anadolu’da Türk Edebiyatı”, p. 29.

¹¹⁵ For the discussion about the similarity between the poems of Yunus Emre and Aşık Paşa, see, A. Gölpınarlı, *Yunus ile Aşık Paşa*.

On Yunus Emre’s poetry also see, Andreas Tietze, “Yunus Emre and His Contemporaries”.

Another subject of controversy concerns the educational background of the dervishes who composed the poems in the Yunus-style. There is a tendency among some scholars to accept the premise that these poets were either illiterate, or lacked a proper education. This approach reflects the reading of Turkish literature based on binary opposites and divides authors into categories such as ‘high’ or ‘low’ class, ‘educated’ or ‘uneducated’ and ‘orthodox’ or ‘heterodox’.¹¹⁶

Also, the claim by these poets themselves in their own works that they are illiterate is another reason that has led to some scholars describing them as uneducated. Focusing on Yunus Emre’s poetry, Schimmel refers to this debate and explains that since the poems under discussion require a deep and sound knowledge of Islamic literature, including classical Persian literature, as well as Ibn Arabi and his commentaries, the claim by dervishes to be *ümme* (illiterate) is a “traditional *topos*”.¹¹⁷

In the *Hızırname*, the poet mentions the names of more than one hundred people from a wide geographical area. Amongst them are prolific writers such as Ibn ‘Arabi, Konevi and Mevlana, legendary heroes and dervishes such as Seyyid Battal, Sarı Saltuk and Hacı Bektaş, as well as Zeyni dervishes and people from the local community. How did the author Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi get to know about all these people? Only through stories about them circulating in both oral and written form

¹¹⁶ Following Köprülü’s studies, these binary opposites have dominated and shaped the historiography of Turkish literature. On the dichotomies in Köprülü’s writings, for an overview of the problematic issues in the way Köprülü uses them and their influence on secondary sources, see Markus Dressler, “How to Conceptualize Inner-Islamic Plurality/Difference: ‘Heterodoxy’ and ‘Syncretism’ in the Writings of Mehmet F. Köprülü (1890-1966)”.

Andrew C. S. Peacock and Sara N. Yıldız notes the influence of Durkheim’s approach on Köprülü’s writings, in an effort to trace the “timeless ‘national character’ of the Turks and that had their origins in Central Asia”, see “Introduction”, p. 10-11. Also, they point to the dichotomy of Sunni Islam and popular/folk Islam in the studies which followed the Köprülü-Ocak line.

Also see Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, “The Vefa’iyye, the Bektashiyye and Genealogies of ‘Heterodox’ Islam in Anatolia: Rethinking Köprülü’s Paradigm”.

¹¹⁷ Schimmel, “Yunus Emre”, p. 61.

and through different sources that make mention of these people and their works. Or, for example, did he read Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi’s Arabic works and Mevlana’s Persian poetry?

Just as in the case of Aşık Paşa and Yunus Emre, the *Hızırname* does not cite any of the works of Mevlana, Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi either. In fact, the main text does not refer to any particular work in any context. However, the Arabic introductory part of the text and the Persian headings for the eighty poems, as well as the content of the whole work, suggest knowledge not only of these two languages, but also of certain textual sources which are not openly mentioned in the text.

At this point, while the answer to the first question of how the poet renders this text in Turkish, is clear, that is, the text belongs to the poetic tradition of the so-called Yunus-style, thus to the vernacular Anatolian Turkish poetry, the second question, which addresses the non-Turkish sources of the text, needs further investigation. What is being said in Yunus-style in this narrative?

In poem thirty nine, the poet mentions Ibn ‘Arabi and introduces him as a “true man” (*girçek er*).¹¹⁸ The influence of Ibn ‘Arabi on Anatolian dervishes and on early Anatolian literature is frequently referred to in scholarship and yet, up to this time, there are only a few studies which have sought to examine this influence thoroughly.¹¹⁹ However, as Chapter III will elaborate further, the content of the

¹¹⁸ Bardakçı, p. 210.

¹¹⁹ By focusing on the history of Sufism, A. Y. Ocak notes the lack of studies on Ibn ‘Arabi and his influence in Anatolia, see, “Türkiye Tasavvuf Yazıcılığında Melamîler: yaklaşımlar, katkılar, sorunsallar”, p. 809. Ekrem Demirli points to the relationship between the Ekberi-Konevi school and Turkish literature in Anatolia, especially the poetic works written in the vernacular language, see *Sadreddin Konevi: Nazari Tasavvufun Kurucusu*, p. 140. The corpus of literature consists of Ibn ‘Arabi’s and Konevi’s works and those which follow Arabi’s and Konevi’s writings is commonly referred to as the ‘Ekberi-Konevi school’ in Turkish secondary sources. As an example of the studies on the relationship between Ibn ‘Arabi’s works and Turkish literature, see Deniz Çalış-Kural, *Şehrengiz, Urban Rituals and Deviant Sufi Mysticism in Ottoman Istanbul*.

Hızırname does reveal strong similarities with *ishraqi* literature and with Ibn ‘Arabi’s writings. This aspect of the text suggests a sound knowledge of a certain corpus of literatures by the author himself.

Before turning to the peculiar characteristics of the *Hızırname*, the following sections in the present chapter will introduce the content of the narrative and the major vocabulary used by the author in order to provide a better understanding of the text.

2. The Structure of the Plot, Main Themes and Key Vocabulary

a. Content and Structure

The text opens with an Arabic prose part with the statement ‘This is the *divan* of Şeyh Muhyiddin Çelebi’. In fact, this part is a short paragraph which consists of a couple of sentences and it includes information about the heavenly wonders that can be experienced by the servants of God. This part thus functions as an introduction to the heavenly journey of the dervish by claiming that, as long as he is allowed, a person can observe the signs of God and the heavenly creatures in the Realm of Power.

After the prose introduction to the main body of the text, there comes the first poem in the *Hızırname*. Consisting of thirteen couplets this poem also functions as an introduction to the journey of the narrator-protagonist, however this time not in prose but in verse. This poem is mainly about the love between God and His servants and the special knowledge endowed by God, known as *ilm-i ledün*. The poem also

Çalış-Kural reads the *şehrengiz* works in relation to Ibn ‘Arabi’s notion of the ‘realm of images’ (*‘alem-i misal*).

mentions the stages on the way to *ilm-i ledün*, such as *'ayne'l yakin* ('eye of certainty') and closes with the prayer of the dervish for seeing God face-to-face.

The text then continues with the praise of the prophet Muhammed in seventeen couplets. Regarding the miracles of the Prophet, the verses from the Koran about the ascension journey which describes the moment he meets God, "His sight never wavered"¹²⁰ and "nor was it too bold"¹²¹ are mentioned, again to tell the audience that other people can also meet God if they follow the Prophet.

The third poem is the longest one in the *Divan* with sixty-six couplets. By providing brief information about his journey and mentioning what he has experienced, the poet-narrator states that the text is written in Turkish so that everybody can receive benefit from it. In this poem the poet-narrator first talks about the chosen servants of God who are allowed to discover the truth and, because of this, can learn the essence of existence. He then states that he became one of those chosen servants and so has experienced the wonders of the heavens. He has watched the revolving of nine heavens, has watched the stars, and has learnt the language of animals and all nations. He has traversed great distances (*tayy-ı cismani*) and the secrets of creation have been unveiled to him. By stating that he is telling the 'taste' (*zevk*) of his experience according to the order of God, he is alerting his audience to the fact that his words should not to be taken lightly since he is speaking the truth. In this poem, the path followed by the dervish is described as 'the path of the *erenler*' and 'the path to ecstasy'. Then he notes the features of the *erenler*, such as they are 'the powerful hand of God' and they have the power to change the essence of things. He also mentions the name of his sheikh in this poem by stating that he was first

¹²⁰ 53:17.

¹²¹ 53:17.

initiated into this path as a follower of Zeyn-i Hafi. The poem ends with the claim of the dervish that he has united with God.

The fourth poem mentions Khidr for the first time with an emphasis on his *himmet* ('spiritual blessing'), which is the only way to reach the sea of love; that is, to experience the heavenly wonders and learn the essence of the truth. Also, by calling out his name at the end Muhyiddin reminds himself to recite the name of Khidr in order to be able to travel the world continuously.

After all this information about the journey of the dervish himself, about the features of the *erenler* and the *himmet* of Khidr, with poem five the text turns once again to the praise of the Prophet. It is a short poem with nine couplets and mentions the ascension journey of the Prophet one more time. The poet also praises Ali by mentioning his *himmet* in this journey.

Poems six, seven and eight, which are twenty-seven couplets in total, continue with the Prophet's blessing and relate how the dervish is initiated into the heavenly journey by the Prophet himself. In poem six the dervish tells us that the Prophet came to his room and told him to set off at the break of dawn. With this poem then, the narration of the journey of our warrior dervish begins. In the seventh poem the Prophet takes the dervish's hand and pulls him outside. He places his gaze upon the dervish and, with the Prophet's gaze, the dervish is initiated into the heavenly journey. The following poem, which is the eighth in Bardakçı's edition, mentions that the *Names* ('*Esmâ*') have appeared and thus the secret of God has been unveiled. This poem ends with a couplet which describes the ascension of the dervish by using the metaphor of 'the bird of the heart' (*gönlüm kuşu*). The poems from five to nine, therefore, can be read as an introduction to the *miraj* journey of the

dervish which legitimizes this unusual journey with the arrival of and the approval of the Prophet himself.

In the first couplet of the next poem, which is the ninth poem in the text, we see the dervish in the heavens, describing the prophet Adam surrounded by angels and praying. Then Isa (Jesus) takes his hand and shows him the universes. The following couplets include the descriptions of what the dervish sees in the heavens, such as birds like a high mountain and the angels. The next poem also continues with the description of the heavens and the meeting of the dervish with prophets. He visits the Lote Tree (*Sidre*) and sees the prophets Idris, Moses and Yahya there. In poem eleven he mentions the names of nine prophets he has met in the heavenly realm. The dervish describes himself as the companion of the invisible men and he states that he has reached the highest heaven. Poem twelve is also a part of this *miraj* journey. In this poem, the dervish talks about a mirror in the highest heaven. The archangel Gabriel tells the dervish that the name he sees on the mirror is the supreme name of God. By addressing himself as Muhyiddin again, the dervish states that he has been trained in the station of Khidr and thanks to the *himmet* of Khidr Ilyas, he has managed to obtain the special knowledge (*ilm-i ledun*). Thus, the four poems following each other, from nine to thirteen, describe a non-prophetic *miraj* journey.

With poem thirteen, the dervish begins to describe his travels to Mount Qaf. He mentions a city built of gold and silver and served by thousands of angels. He also mentions the throne of Solomon and the place of the prophet Adam at Mount Serendib. He states openly that he has travelled all over Mount Qaf in the company of Khidr.

Poems fourteen and fifteen are about the *qutb* and make mention of the figures under his rule, such as the *threes*, the *sevens* and the *forties*, the invisible men and the angels. The place of the highest *qutb* is at Mount Qaf and he is called ‘khan’ when he is visible. These two poems also include information about the features of the *qutb*: he is ‘the powerful hand of God’, ‘all long distances are near for him’ and ‘the East and the West are the same for him’.

Having introduced the *qutb* and having mentioned that he mostly stays at Mount Qaf, poem sixteen continues with the travels of the dervish at Mount Qaf. This poem includes the first significant gathering in the narrative which has already been briefly referred to in the ‘Introduction’. As the dervish tells us, he arrives at a white pavilion and all the *erenler* are drinking wine and having a feast there. The perfect men and the friends of God are also there. All the strong men are in a state of ecstasy. The people of Rum, Arab and Ajam are there too. The angels are also present at the gathering, and they are sitting and talking. The *qutb* too is present in the gathering. Then, the dervish drinks from a ruby jug. The attendees of the gathering stand up and begin to dance. Everybody in the gathering, including the sheikhs and the disciples, are in a state of ecstasy. The dervish describes his experiences in this gathering as the ‘secret of Khidr’.

In the seventeenth poem, the dervish points to the contradiction between reason and love and claims that it is not possible to understand the secret of his experiences using reason. He also notes that he stays in Hamidili. Then, poem eighteen continues with the travels of the dervish through the heavens, in the realm of the Lote Tree. This section also includes the praise of Khidr. Also, the dervish mentions once again that he has learnt the supreme name of God and experienced the

state of ecstasy. By stating that the angels gather at the Lote Tree and the *erenler* visit this realm with the *himmet* of Khidr, he begins to tell of the virtues of Khidr. Intriguingly, the features of Khidr introduced by the poet in this section are the same as the features of the *qutb* mentioned in poems fourteen and fifteen: He is the ‘powerful hand of God’, ‘all far distances are near for him’ and he is the ‘khan’ of the universe. Additionally, the dervish tells us that Khidr is known as Ebu’l-Abbas on Mount Qaf, he helps those in need and he has the knowledge of existence (*‘ilm-i ledün*). Poem nineteen repeats the same virtues mentioned in the previous poem, which are ‘the powerful hand of God’, ‘traveling from the East to the West’, and ‘traversing great distances’, but not, this time, for the *qutb* or Khidr, but for the *erenler*. With these repeating descriptions, certain features of the *qutb*, Khidr and the *erenler* significantly intersect with each other, making their identities more complicated and vague.

Poem twenty is a summary of the stages that a seeker will experience to become the companion of Khidr. As this poem reveals, to be the companion of Khidr means, for example, to be in service of the *qutb*, to know the supreme name of God, or to reach the stage of *ayn el-yakin* (*eye of certainty*) and *Hakk el-yakin* (*the truth of certainty*). In poem twenty-one, the journey of the dervish continues in the heavenly realm to the Divine Tablet and Pen (*Levh u Kalem*) and this poem mentions the time of the heavenly journey for the first time: the dervish is travelling into the heavens on the Night of Glory. The poem includes a description of the wonders he experienced on the Night of Glory, such as walking trees and stones and the arrival of the *qutb* and all the invisible men. In poem twenty-two, the dervish claims that if

someone becomes a perfect man, his body can partake in the heavenly journey. The poem also mentions that the *erenler* travel to Mecca to perform their prayers.

In poem twenty-three the visit of the dervish to the Lote Tree is described once again. He joins a gathering at that realm. He is offered a cup and when he drinks from it, the secrets of that realm are unveiled to him. The perfect men, the *erenler*, the highest *qutb* and his servants are present at the gathering. Then the poem describes the features of the perfect man. Significantly, the perfect man also shares the same virtues with the *qutb*, Khidr and the *erenler*: ‘all far distances are near for him’, ‘he rules over both the East and the West’ and ‘he helps those in need by traversing distances’. He also can reach the birds flying in the sky and can catch the arrows that are launched. In poem twenty-four the dervish states once again that he is the servant of Khidr and he is one of the chosen servants of God.

Poem twenty-five is on the virtues of Khidr. In this thirteen-couplet poem the dervish gives previously unmentioned information about Khidr, such as that he dresses in green, he has a dune-coloured horse, he appears as different personalities and he can walk all over the world and in the sky. This poem also includes the visit of the dervish to the western lands and mentions that the Magrib has lots of friends of God. In his travel to the Magrib the dervish sees a marvellous island in the sea and there is the dwelling place of Ilyas in a high mountain on that island. Poem twenty-six continues with the journey of the dervish to the first heaven. Having told that he ascended into the heavens sitting at the front of Khidr’s horse at the break of dawn, the dervish continues to mention the virtues of Khidr. As he states, Khidr rules over everything, knows all languages, owns the special knowledge (*ilm-i ledun*) and can change the essence of something by placing his gaze upon it. A poor man, for

example, becomes someone respected. In poem twenty-seven, the dervish states once again that he was trained by Khidr and, thus has reached the knowledge of the *ilm-i ledun*, and that he is the companion of the *erenler* and the invisible men, who are the servants of the *qutb*.

Poem twenty-eight mentions Hacı Bektaş for the first time in the text and describes him coming from Mount Bulgar with his uncountable number of soldiers. Mount Bulgar is the dwelling place of the strong men and only the friends of God can reach that mountain. The poem also describes the *erenler* traversing distances with Seyyid Gazi and visiting Veysel (Uways el-) Karani. Then, in poem twenty-nine, the journey of the dervish continues to the origins of the Nile and the Euphrates and to the deepest ocean (*Bahr-i Muhit*).¹²² The origin of the Nile is at Mount Qaf and its source is a dome. The place of Mount Qaf is described as being on the way to Khidr.

With poem thirty, the setting of the narrative shifts from the heavenly realm and Mount Qaf to the holy lands of Islam. This poem consists of twenty-eight stanzas and it is one of the longest in the text. It includes a detailed description of the visit of the dervish to Mecca and Medina and his circumambulation of the Kaba. Poem thirty-one is also about the visit of the dervish to the holy lands and describes

¹²² In the *Acaibu'l-mahlukat*, Qazwini describes '*bahr-i muhit*' as the largest ocean that encircles the world. Mes'udi refers to it as being 'the greatest ocean' and 'green sea/ocean', see Mustafa L. Bilge, "Okyanus". In the treatise "The Furthestest Goal", Aziz Nasafi describes the four oceans during the ascension of the dervish as follows: "The first ocean is the essence of God Most High and Holy. The second ocean is the Attributed Spirit which is the first substance of macrocosm, and several times it has been said that the Attributed Spirit has many names: the first substance, the first intelligence, the Muhammadan Spirit, the greatest light, the Muhammadan light. The third and fourth oceans are the realms of Mulk and Malakut. The existents are no more than this", see Lloyd Ridgeon, *Persian Metaphysics and Mysticism: Selected Treatises of 'Aziz Nasafi*, p. 117.

his visit to the tomb of the Prophet in Medina. In this poem, the dervish tells us that since he has reached the stage of Khidr now, for him too, 'near and far are the same'.

In the next poem, the setting of the narrative changes to Damascus, Jerusalem and the Dome of the Rock. The dervish visits all these places by traversing distances in the blink of an eye. Intriguingly, after visiting the Dome of the Rock, he goes to Mount Qaf again and describes the wonders he sees there.

Poem thirty-three describes the visit of the dervish to a sublime realm, where he arrives at a high mountain whose essence is light. Afterwards he arrives at a green sea and sees the angels at its coast. The invisible men, the *qutb* and the *ghawth* also come to that realm. Poem thirty-four is again about the journey of the dervish to Mount Qaf. The poem also includes his visit to Mount Serendil, to Rum, to Hitay and to Mount Hoten. In this poem, the dervish mentions that he has followed the path of Iskender. The next poem is about the travels of the dervish to Mount Billur in thirty-two stanzas. This poem is also one of the longest in the text and includes a detailed description of the wonders that he saw at Mount Billur. This place is also in a sublime realm and only angels exist on that mountain, humans and jinns do not exist there. In poem thirty-six, the dervish continues to travel in the heavenly realm where he witnesses countless marvels. Poems thirty-seven and thirty-eight are again about the travels to Mount Qaf and the dervish tells of his visits to the sunrise, to the water of life, to the tree of life and to the minaret and makes mention of Gog and Magog. Thus, starting from the last part of poem thirty-two until poem thirty-nine, the dervish travels in the heavens, including Mount Qaf.

With poem thirty-nine, the setting of the text shifts to Ajamistan. In this poem the dervish mentions the names of the friends of God from the lands of Ajam

and Arabia, such as Şeyh İbrahim, Ahi Çoban, Abdülkadir Gilani and Kazeruni (Qazeruni). He talks about Ibn ‘Arabi as a ‘true man’ (*girçek er*) in this poem. In poem forty, the source of the Euphrates and Gog and Magog are mentioned again. In this poem, the dervish goes to several places, such as to the Red Sea, to Russia and to Crimea. The next poem is about the journey of the dervish into the depths of a sublime sea in the company of Sarı Saltuk, Tapduk and Yunus Emre. The sea community has human heads but animal bodies.

Poem forty-two tells of the great gathering of all the warriors and dervishes in Anatolia in sixty-one couplets. As pointed out in the ‘Introduction’, the first name mentioned in the poem is Dediği, and then comes Hacı Bektaş. The dervish gives the names of ninety people who joined the gathering and Hacı Bektaş is introduced as guarding the Ottoman lands. Also, unlike his heavenly journey which takes place on the Night of Glory, the dervish gives a precise and different date for this meeting, which is Friday night in the month of Dhu’l-qa’dah in 880/1476. The meeting takes place outside Barla, which is in Eğirdir, and thousands and thousands of the *erenler*, the angels, the *qutb*, and Khidr and Ilyas join them. They all form a circle and the dervish makes mention of a beautiful *meczub* (*a person in state of ecstasy*) who is incomparable in beauty. After describing the great gathering of warriors and dervishes which takes place in Hamidili, in the next poem, the dervish describes the arrival of Hacı Bektaş on horseback with his ten thousand white banners. Then, Hacı Bektaş lifts our dervish onto his horse and appoints him the head of the Ottoman army and orders him to go to Erzincan immediately and defeat the enemy. By reciting the name of Khidr and with the help of the soldiers under his command, the dervish wins the battle. Poems forty-four and forty-five are about the *erenler* and

their virtues, such as ‘they traverse great distances’, ‘they can reach the birds flying in the sky’, ‘they help those in need’ and ‘they can catch the arrows that are thrown’. These features of the *erenler* are mentioned as ‘the works of Khidr’ in poem forty-four.

Poem forty-six is about Aşık Paşa who is introduced as the ‘disciple of Khidr’. Also, the dervish tells us that he was informed about Khidr by Aşık Paşa. Poem forty-seven is about the visit of the *erenler* to Jerusalem, to the Dome of the Rock and Masjid al-Aqsa and to Medina by traversing distances. Poem forty-eight is about the visit of the dervish to the Nile in the company of Khidr. In this poem, the dervish tells us that Khidr lifted him up onto his horse and then, in his company, he went into the sea. The next poem makes mention of the arrival of Khidr at the break of dawn. When Khidr walks on the sea everywhere becomes covered in light.

With poem fifty, the setting of the narrative turns to Mount Serendil and China again. This is a short poem in nine couplets and the dervish mentions his journey in the region of the jinns, and that he ascended to the throne of the *erenler*. Poem fifty-one mentions once again the visit of the dervish to Mount Qaf. In this poem, the dervish describes himself as having the abilities of the *erenler* or of Khidr mentioned before: he can ‘reach the flying bird’ and he can ‘catch the arrows that are launched’. Poem fifty-two returns to the episode of the dervish meeting with Khidr at the break of dawn. Poems fifty-three and fifty-four are about the virtues of the *ghawth*. As was the case for the perfect men, the *erenler*, the *qutb* and Khidr, the *ghawth* is also the ‘powerful hand of God’. The poem repeats some features of the *erenler* mentioned in the previous poems. In poem fifty-five, the dervish mentions the Night of Glory again and tells of his heavenly journey that took place on that

night. Poem fifty-six repeats again that Khidr opened the way to the heavens for him and that he journeys in the company of Khidr. In Poem fifty-seven, the dervish describes his visit to the realm of the water of life with Khidr. The *erenler* also visit this realm. Referring to the failure of Iskender on his quest to the water of life, the dervish explains how only perfect men can visit this realm.

The ten poems which follow poem fifty-seven are mainly short poems, consisting of five to nine couplets or stanzas and describing the ecstatic states of the dervish that he experienced during the journey. Poem fifty-eight, which is nine couplets, makes mention of the visit of the dervish to Damascus and the *himmet* of Seyyid. In poem fifty-nine, which is five couplets, the dervish repeats that only the *erenler* and the perfect men can understand the secret of God. In poem sixty, the dervish mentions the stages of his journey. In poem sixty-one, he describes a helper mounted on horseback on the sea, who protects people. Though the poem does not mention it explicitly, that man is clearly Khidr. Poems sixty-two to sixty-seven tell of the ecstatic states the dervish has experienced with the *himmet* of Khidr.

Poem sixty-seven turns once again to the Night of Glory and describes the wonders experienced by the dervish on that night in the month of Ramadan. With this poem, the time of the heavenly journey is emphasized as the Night of Glory for the third time. This is the last long poem which includes the description of the experiences of the dervish before the text closes. Poem sixty-eight mentions the journey to the Lote Tree and to the realm of the angels again. In this poem, the dervish tells us that he visited Khidr and thanks to the help of Ilyas, he was able to reach the Lote Tree.

Poem sixty-nine is a eulogy for the Prophet and it consists of five couplets. Poem seventy repeats once again the *himmet* of Khidr for becoming a perfect man. In Poem seventy-one, the dervish states once again that he has reached Mount Qaf, where perfect men stay. Poems seventy-two to seventy-nine repeat and describe the ecstatic states which befell the dervish with the *himmet* of Khidr. Poem seventy-nine, which consists of twenty-five couplets, contains the advice of the dervish to the audience. With poem eighty, this is the last poem in the text consisting of nine couplets, the text closes with a poetic description of uniting with God, symbolized by a drop reaching the ocean.

As is clear from this outline there is quite a lot of repetition and covering of the same ground in the different poems which make up the separate sections, while the structure which is revealed is extremely convoluted. The work taken as a large composition opens and closes according to a certain pattern. The Arabic prose preface mentions the possibility of heavenly experiences by people chosen by God, thus contextualizing the *miraj* journey. Then, the first eight poems function as an introduction to the journey of the dervish, by legitimizing his ascension as initiated by the Prophet himself. The last couplet in Poem eight marks the beginning of the journey elegantly: "Here Muhyiddin's soul is so full of desire for God that the bird of the heart flaps its wings rapidly and my direction is always towards You". The poems describing the ascension of the dervish also follow a certain sequence. Starting from his travels to Mount Qaf however, it is not possible to talk about a specific pattern in the narration of his destinations. The last two poems, poems seventy-nine and eighty, round off the compilation with the spiritual advice of the poet to the audience.

The main themes and specific points revealed through the outline of the text are as follows:

1. The visit of the dervish to Mount Qaf is constantly repeated throughout the text in different poems. Even in poem thirty-two, after visiting Damascus, Jerusalem and the Dome of the Rock, he goes to Mount Qaf again.

2. While it is only in one poem, poem forty-three, that the dervish makes direct mention of a military campaign, the preceding long poem which describes the great gathering of the warriors and dervishes can be read together with the battle scene, as the dervish joins the battle with the soldiers of Hacı Bektaş under his command and wins the battle with the support of the *erenler*.

3. Hacı Bektaş is mentioned in three poems in the text: poems twenty-eight, forty-two and forty-three. He retains a distinct prominence; however, being the head of the *erenler* and the guardian of the Ottoman lands, the political and military aspect of the text is represented through Hacı Bektaş.

4. The poet gives two different dates for the heavenly journey and for the battle: the heavenly journey takes place on the Night of Power in the month of Ramadan, whereas the great gathering of the warriors and dervishes, which is followed by the battle at the Eastern border of the Ottoman Empire, takes place in the month of Dhu'l-qa'dah in 880/1476. After the battle scene, the text continues to describe the heavenly journey of the dervish that takes place on the Night of Power.

5. The dervish uses the same descriptions for the *erenler*, the friends of God (*evliya*), the *qutb*, the *ghawth*, the perfect men (*insan-ı kamil*) and Khidr, such as 'the powerful hand of God', 'near and far are the same for them' or 'helping those in

need'. With these interchangeably used repeating features, the text portrays an identification of these figures with each other.

b. Key Vocabulary

There are a number of repeated words and expressions in the text and a good deal of the stock vocabulary of sufi literature is found throughout: *keşf* (*kashf*) (*unveiling*), *cezbe* (*attraction*), *zevk* (*dhawq*) (*tasting*), *fetih* (*revelation, opening*), *ledün ilmi* (*special knowledge endowed by God on the nature of existence*), *'ilme'l-yakin* (*knowledge of certainty*), *gayb* (*invisible*), *tayy* (*traversing great distances*), *nazar* (*gaze, look*), *meczub* (*majdhub*) (*a person in a state of ecstasy*), *gevher* (*essence*), *sır* (*secret*), *gizli* (*hidden*), *aşikar* (*apparent*), *acaib* (*wonder, marvel*), *Esmâ* (*the Names of God*), *himmet* (*spiritual blessing*), *vasl* (*reunion*), *mahbub* (*beloved*), *sancak* (*banner*) and *leşker* (*soldier*).

Amongst these words, '*keşif*' stands out as a key word in the narrative. It refers to the sight and experiences of the dervish and throughout the journey the poet tells of the wonders and signs of God he saw in the heavenly realm by using the expression '*keşfolundu*' (*unveiled*).

In his "Introduction" to Ibn 'Arabi's *Fusus al-Hikam*, which is accepted to be a separate work since it explains the terminology and doctrine of the *Fusus*, the first Ottoman *müderris* Davud el-Kayseri (d. 751/1350) explains the meaning of '*keşf*' as follows:

Know that *kashf* lexically signifies removal of a veil [....] Technically, it signifies gaining awareness of hidden meanings and existential realities from behind a curtain, existentially or through witnessing; it

occurs in meaning and in form. What I mean by “in form” is that which occurs in the Imaginal World through the five senses.¹²³

This meaning of the word *keşf* in the explanation by el-Kayseri, which was already a fixed term in the fourteenth century within a certain corpus of literature, provides an important clue to reading the *Hızırname*, since it puts the meaning of the text in a context and also points to the textual relations and non-Turkish sources of the narrative.

Another key concept in the *Hızırname* is expressed by the keyword ‘*Esma*’ (‘the Names’), through which the secret of creation manifests itself. As explained by el-Kayseri, the doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabi is based upon the meaning of divine names and the relationship between these names and the Essence: “The Essence together with a specific attribute and under the aspect of its particular theophany is called a ‘name’”.¹²⁴ The statement, repeated by the dervish throughout the narrative, in which he says that ‘the *Esma* has been unveiled’ or ‘the *Esma* appeared’ becomes meaningful when read within the terminology and experiential doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabi and his followers.

While discussing different types of knowledge, Ibn ‘Arabi mentions one category called ‘the knowledge of tasting’ (*zevk ilimleri*).¹²⁵ This type of knowledge connotes the experience itself.¹²⁶ The claim of the poet in the *Hızırname* that “it would do no harm to talk about the taste (*zevk*) of this experience”¹²⁷ should, therefore, also be read within the context of this discussion on the nature of knowledge.

¹²³ Mukhtar H. Ali, *Foundations of Islamic Mysticism: Qaysari’s Introduction to Ibn ‘Arabi’s Fusus al-hikam*, p. 144.

¹²⁴ Ali, *ibid*, p. 56.

¹²⁵ Ekrem Demirli, *Sadreddin Konevi, Nazari Tasavvufun Kurucusu*, p. 134.

¹²⁶ Demirli, *ibid*, p. 135.

¹²⁷ Bardakçı, p. 129.

When looking at the overall vocabulary of the *Hızırname* and the terminology used in the text, ‘*keşf*’ stands out as the key notion in being able to read and understand the non-prophetic journey in the narrative. Being fundamental to gaining knowledge in the Ekberi-Konevi school, examining the idea of ‘*keşf*’ in its fifteenth century connotations helps us put the text in context and it reveals the textual links to and the textual references of the *Hızırname*. Despite this relationship between the experiential literature and the *Hızırname* however, it is significant that while Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi mention and describe their own experiences in their own works, the commentaries written on those works follow a different style of narration in Anatolia: the commentators do not talk about their own experiences; but instead, they refer to Ibn ‘Arabi’s and Konevi’s opinions.¹²⁸ Intriguingly however, Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s work, as a text narrating an experiential journey by a dervish himself, and using the terminology and vocabulary of the *ishraqi* literature, follows the primary texts of this literature and also the Ekberi-Konevi school in Anatolia.

3. The Protagonist, Variety in the Route of the Journey and Genres

a. Portrayal of the Protagonist

The brief outline on the content of the *Hızırname* reveals different roles which may seem to be unrelated, such as the ascension of the dervish figure into the heavens, his leadership in battle and his travels to Mount Qaf or to the realm of the water of life. At this point, two immediate questions can be asked regarding the experiences of the protagonist and the diverse routes of his travels - one addresses his identity and the other the genre of the text. The first is who is Muhyiddin, or

¹²⁸ E. Demirli, *Sadreddin Konevi, Nazari Tasavvufun Kurucusu*, p. 129.

Dolu, in the narrative? Is he a person in a state of spiritual ecstasy or a warrior fighting in a war resulting from political instability? Or perhaps a wanderer travelling in search of something longed for? The portrayal of the protagonist in the plot combines in one person the characteristics of both a mystic and a warrior, thus complicating the plot further.

As already mentioned, the use of two different pen names to represent the identity of the narrator-protagonist, one of Arabic origin, Muhyiddin, and one of Turkish origin, Dolu, is a significant feature. In addition to the religious and spiritual meaning that is conveyed by these pen names, their use together suggests to the audience more than just devotion to God: the complex structure of the identity of the protagonist reveals an amalgam of sources in the construction of his identity and these two pen names can be read as representing different text groups and literary traditions that the *Hızırname* is linked to. In other words, the *eren* identity of the warrior dervish seems to be represented by the coexistence of Muhyiddin and Dolu in the text.

b. Genres and Textual Relations

The second question concerns the genre of the text and parallels the first question about the identity of the protagonist in the narrative: the variety in the destinations of the dervish Muhyiddin represent the combination of different genres from Turkish literature within one story, namely the *mirajnames* (*Book of Ascension*), frontier epics, *Iskendernames* (*Book of Iskender*) and *menakıbnames* (*book of menakıb*).

The *mirajnames* are a specific group of texts, which narrate the night journey and the ascension of the prophet Muhammad into the heavens, where he meets with angels and other prophets. A *mirajname* can either be a separate work or can form a poem within different kinds of compositions.¹²⁹ The first destination in the *Hızırname*, to the seven heavens, seems to be modelled on, or inspired by, the *mirajnames*; as in the Prophet's journey, the poet also meets with other prophets and angels in the heavens. Also, in the plot, his ascension is initiated by the visit of the Prophet to his room. This scene not only presents explicit evidence for the link between the *Hızırname* and the *miraj* narratives, but it also legitimizes the heavenly journey of the protagonist in the text, since it depicts it as a journey that has the approval of, and was initiated by, the Prophet himself.

The frontier epic sequence from Anatolia on the other hand, which focuses on the legendary fights of the Muslim warriors against their enemies, also exhibits some major links and similarities with the *Hızırname*. Defeating the enemies with the support and *himmet* (*spiritual blessing*) of Khidr at critical moments is a common motif in this epic cycle and Khidr plays a decisive role at the turning point of events, as he does in the *Hızırname* by initiating and guiding the spiritual journey of the protagonist. This sequence consists of a chain of stories about three popular heroes in fifteenth century Anatolia, namely Battal Gazi, Danişmend Gazi and Sarı Saltuk.

¹²⁹ On the *mirajnames* in Turkish literature and examples from poetry, see Metin Akar, *Türk Edebiyatında Manzum Mirac-nameler*. For an example of a *mirajname* work from the early Ottoman period, see Hayati Develi, "Eski Türkiye Türkçesine Ait Manzum Bir Mirac-name". On the narration of *miraj* in the *masnavis* composed in Anatolia, see Hasan A. Esir, "Anadolu Sahası Mesnevilerinde Miraç Mevzuu". For an analysis of the *mirajnames* in early Anatolian Turkish literature, which looks at the function of the *miraj* chapters in various genres by examining the alterations in the content, see Selim S. Kuru, "Pious Journey, Sacred Desire: Observations on the *Mi'rāj* in Early Anatolian Turkish Verse Narratives". For general information about the *mirajnames* in Islamic literature and its illustrations, see Christiane J. Gruber, "The Prophet Muhammad's Ascension (*Mi'rāj*) in Islamic Art and Literature, ca. 1300-1600" and *The Ilkhanid Book of Ascension: A Persian-Sunni Devotional Tale*.

These texts – entitled the *Battalname*¹³⁰ (*Book of Battal*), the *Danişmendname*¹³¹ (*Book of Danişmend*) and the *Saltukname*¹³² (*Book of Saltuk*) – are genealogically and chronologically linked to each other by means of their protagonists.¹³³ Sarı Saltuk for example, introduces himself as the descendant of Seyyid Battal in the early pages of the narrative. The importance of Seyyid Battal in this epic chain is reflected in the *Hızırname*, as it includes a separate poem under the title “The Descending of the Power of Heaven and the *Himmet* of Seyyid Gazi”.¹³⁴ Also, along with Danişmend Gazi and Sarı Saltuk, he too is mentioned as being among the friends of God who join the great gathering of the warriors and dervishes.¹³⁵

The *Saltukname* was compiled by Ebu’l-Hayr Rumi¹³⁶ at about the same time as the *Hızırname*; although *the Hızırname* predates the completion of Ebu’l-Hayr’s compilation by four years, it took seven years to compile the stories of Sarı Saltuk, thus, the composition of these texts intersect with each other. A comparative reading of the protagonists in these frontier epics shows, therefore, that Sarı Saltuk more closely resembles the dervish Muhyiddin than does either Seyyid Battal¹³⁷ or

¹³⁰ See Dedes, *The Battalname, An Ottoman Turkish Frontier Epic Wondertale*.

¹³¹ For the transcription of the *Danişmendname*, see Irène Mélikoff, *La Geste de Melik Danişmend: étude critique du Dānişmendnāme*.

¹³² See F. İz, *Saltukname*; Ş. H. Akalın, *Saltuk-name*.

¹³³ In his analysis Y. Dedes notes that the *Battalname* and its sequels are “clearly modelled on the Persian prose epic narratives”, see, *The Battalname, An Ottoman Turkish Frontier Epic Wondertale*, p. 34.

¹³⁴ Bardakçı, p. 254. The poem consists of nine couplets.

¹³⁵ Bardakçı, p. 217.

¹³⁶ Based upon the evidence in the *Seyahatname* by Evliya Çelebi (d. after 1682), A. Y. Ocak notes two more *Saltuknames*, one by Yazıcıoğlu Mehmed (d. 1451) and the other one is by Kenan Paşa (d. 1659), but they have not survived, see *Sarı Saltuk: Popüler İslam’ın Balkanlardaki Destani Öncüsü (XIII. Yüzyıl)*, p. 5. On Sarı Saltuk in Evliya Çelebi’s work also see Hatice Aynur, “Seyahatname’de Türkçe edebî ve biyografik eserler”, p. 260-261.

¹³⁷ The earliest manuscript copy of the *Battalname* is dated to the fifteenth century. Ali Anooshahr opposes the dating of the composition of the text by some scholars to the twelfth or thirteenth century and claims that “it would be safest to assume that the date of the earliest manuscript copy is also the date of the composition of the Turkish *Battalname* in its present form”, see *The Ghazi Sultans and the Frontiers of Islam*, p. 143. However, in his claim, Anooshahr only focuses on the concept of ghaza in the *Battalname*, thus ignores its other

Danişmend Gazi. Again, like him, the character of Sarı Saltuk also embodies a combination of both saintly and chivalrous deeds.¹³⁸ For example, like the dervish Muhyiddin, Sarı Saltuk also travels to various places, including Mount Qaf, and he also becomes a friend of God with the blessing of Khidr.¹³⁹ The identical motifs and the shared subjects and figures in these texts all indicate a popular story, common to both the frontier epics and the *Hızırname*, which was being circulating among certain groups at that time and rewritten by the same audience.

Another genre or group of texts to which the *Hızırname* is linked are the *Iskendernames* (Islamic Alexander romances), which narrate the travels, heroic deeds and conquests of the great warrior Iskender. Due to the popularity of Iskender as a hero and as a traveller, his stories were circulated across a broad geographical area, both orally and in written form, leading to variations in the stories according to the different literary traditions from which they came.¹⁴⁰ The quest of Iskender, with

features and does not examine the text as a whole. Certain features, motifs and episodes in the *Battalname* definitely belong to earlier periods and a comparative reading of the *Battalname* with the *Danişmendname* and the *Saltukname* distinguishes the former work from the latter ones. The alterations in the depictions and roles of Khidr in these texts can be noted as one example which highlights the different contexts and time periods in which they were composed. In the *Battalname* and the *Danişmendname*, Khidr is a key figure at the turning point of the narrative; when the hero is about to be defeated, Khidr himself or the prayer of Khidr recited by the hero helps him to win the battle. In the *Saltukname* on the other hand, Khidr is more like a spiritual companion, although his role as the helper of warriors remains. The development, over time, of the role of Khidr relates to the spread of the dervish lodges in the region. Instead of fixing the composition of the text to the time when the manuscript was copied, different layers in the narrative should be examined.

¹³⁸ In her analysis, Zeynep Aydoğan points out the different layers that have been developed over time and interwoven in the *Saltukname* by Ebu'l-Hayr Rumi, see, "An Analysis of the *Saltukname* in its Fifteenth Century Context". Ebu'l-Hayr Rumi's text was commissioned by Cem Sultan and the patronage relations form one of the layers in the text. The latest layer mentioned by Aydoğan is formed by the sixteenth century copiests of the *Saltukname*.

¹³⁹ For the English translation of this scene in the *Saltukname*, see Ahmet Karamustafa, "Sarı Saltuk becomes a Friend of God".

¹⁴⁰ For example see Hendrik Boeschoten, *Alexander Stories in Ajami Turkic*. On the stories of Iskender in Arabic literature see Faustina Doufikar-Aerts, *Alexander Magnus Arabicus: A Survey of the Alexander Tradition through Seven Centuries, from Pseudo-Callisthenes to Suri*; David Z. Zuwiyya, "The Alexander Romance in the Arabic Tradition". For Persian literature see William L. Hanaway, "Eskandar-nama"; Richard Stoneman, "Persian Aspects of the Romance Tradition".

Khidr, for the source of life is a major subject of these narratives. According to the story, while they are searching for the water of life, Iskender loses his way in the land of darkness but Khidr finds the spring of eternity and becomes immortal. The visit of the dervish to the source of life in the *Hızırname* is directly linked to the story of Iskender and Khidr: The dervish openly admits that Iskender had searched for the water of life, but could not find it.¹⁴¹ Also, he describes the route of his journey as ‘the route of Iskender’.¹⁴²

These two explicit references to the stories of Iskender, as well as the common destinations of the journey, connect Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s work to the Iskender narratives, while, at the same time, raising the question about the identity of the narrator-protagonist in the *Hızırname*. Might Iskender be the role model for the construction of the identity of the dervish Muhyiddin? And, if this is so, might the *Hızırname* be modelled on the stories of Iskender?

The fame of Iskender as a great leader and warrior in Ottoman literary circles through Ferdowsi’s *Shahnameh* and Nizami’s *Sekandernameh* is well-known. Also, he became a role model for the Ottoman sultans and in several works the sultans were even compared to him by emphasizing their superiority over Iskender.¹⁴³

For an analysis of the fourteenth century *Iskendername* composed in Anatolia see, Caroline Sawyer, “Alexander, History and Piety: A Study of Ahmedi’s 14th Century Ottoman Iskendername”. On the prose *Iskendername* dated to the fourteenth century and attributed to Hamzavi, Ahmedi’s brother, see H. Boeschoten, “Adventures of Alexander in Medieval Turkish”.

¹⁴¹ Bardakçı, p. 253.

¹⁴² For example, see the following verses in Bardakçı, p. 193-194.

Şol İskender yolundan vardı dirler / İnüb umman kenarın gezdi dirler
Girüb umman içinde yüzdi dirler / Dil u can seyr ider subhile şam

The translation is as follows:

They say that he has reached there through the path of Iskender / and he went down and wandered along the sea shore

They say that he went into the sea and swam there / This heart and soul journeys day and night

¹⁴³ Tijana Krstic notes that Mehmed II saw himself in the image of Iskender and he owned the “standard biography” of Iskender in his library, which was copied in 1460 for the palace, see “Of

However, the circulation of the narratives of Iskender outside the sultanic courts and in the pre-Ottoman period, as well as the reception and portrayal of his image in Anatolian Turkish works composed in different regions as in the example of the *Hizurname* still await to be studied.¹⁴⁴

For example, and perhaps tellingly for our work, architectural evidence from Eğirdir dating to the thirteenth century does reveal the popularity of Iskender in the region. In 635/1237-38, the Seljukid Sultan Kayqubad I (r. 1220-1237) built a resting house (*han*) in Eğirdir which contains an inscription mentioning the names of the Seljukid sultans. The two epithets used for the sultans in this inscription are “the second Iskender” and “the Dhu’l-Qarnayn of the present time”.¹⁴⁵ Because of the intermingling of the Koranic story of Dhu’l-Qarnayn with the popular stories of Iskender, Dhu’l-Qarnayn¹⁴⁶ is considered to be the second or other name of Iskender in Islamic literature.¹⁴⁷

Translation and Empire: Sixteenth-century Ottoman imperial interpreters as Renaissance go-betweens”, p. 134-135.

By examining the miniatures in two *Shahnameh* translations into Turkish, Serpil Bağcı discusses the likeness between the portrait of Iskender and Mehmed II in these works. The two miniatures under discussion depict the scene “Qaydafa recognizes Iskender by his portrait” and they are dated 1560-70 and 1616-20, see “From Iskender to Mehmed II: Change in Royal Imagery”.

Iskender was a role model not only for the Ottoman sultans, but also for other sultans of the Muslim world as well, before the Ottoman times, see A. Anooshahr, *The Ghazi Sultans and the Frontiers of Islam*, p. 86-100.

¹⁴⁴ For information about the secondary sources on Turkish *Iskendernames* see, İsmail Avcı, *Türk Edebiyatında İskendernameler ve Ahmed-i Rıdvan’ın İskendername’si*, p. 152-160.

¹⁴⁵ On the inscription, see S. Yiğitbaşı, *Eğirdir-Felekabad Tarihi*, p. 24-27.

¹⁴⁶ 18: 83-98. Dhu’l-Qarnayn literally means ‘the two-horned one’ and the story of Dhu’l-Qarnayn in the Koran follows the story of Moses with the unnamed man, who is considered to be Khidr in Islamic literature. As is mentioned in the Koran, Dhu’l-Qarnayn first travels to the setting of the sun, where the sun sets into a muddy spring and then he moves on towards the rising of the sun. He travels further and reaches a place between two mountain barriers which have been destroyed by Gog and Magog (Yajuj and Majuj). He erects a fortification between the people who live there and Gog and Magog.

¹⁴⁷ On the discussion about the identity of Dhu’l-Qarnayn, see Kevin Von Bladel, “The Alexander Legend in the Qur’ān 18:83-102”; İskender Pala, “İskender mi Zülkarneyn mi?”; Salvador Pena and Miguael Vaga, “Who is ‘The Warrior’ on Western Islamic Copper Coins?”. H. Boeschoten notes that “in the Turkic case the earliest mention of Alexander/Dhu’l-qarnain is

In addition to his fame as a great warrior, conqueror and leader, a typical characteristic of Iskender in stories about him is his desire to travel to as many destinations as possible.¹⁴⁸ Likewise, as a traveller, the dervish in the *Hizirname* travels to all possible destinations, including imaginary ones and to those that exist in the literary tradition of the time: from the highest heaven to the depths of the ocean or from Mount Qaf to the holy places of Islam. In addition to the places visited by Iskender, such as the region where Gog and Magog (Yajuj and Majuj) live, he also visits the realm of the spring of eternity which Iskender had failed to reach. It is with this visit that the protagonist of the *Hizirname* surpasses Iskender in his struggle to reach the realm of the water of life. What makes this destination more intriguing is that it is not only being visited by the dervish himself and Khidr, but the *erenler* are also visiting this realm.

The notion of *erenler* in the *Hizirname* takes us back to the first question about the identity of the narrator-protagonist in the text. In the narrative, the *erenler* are portrayed as the ones who had completed the journey that is being made by the dervish Muhyiddin. Through meeting the *erenler* at different stages during his

found in Mahmud Qashghari's famous dictionary", see "Adventures of Alexander in Medieval Turkish", p. 124.

Al-Tabari (d. 923) considers Iskender and Dhu'l-Qarnayn as two different people. However, in al-Tha'alabi (d. 1036)'s work, they are identical, see, Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*, p. 156-158.

¹⁴⁸ Campbell Dodgson examines two manuscript versions of western Alexander narrative which include his ascent into the sky. On these texts, as well as on the miniatures that depict Alexander's attempt to ascend into the sky, with the help of the birds in one version and by means of the griffins in the other, see "Alexander's Journey to the Sky: A Woodcut by Schaufelen".

On the portraits of Iskender in Persian sources, such as a king, a sage, a warrior or a prophet, as well as his negative depiction as a cursed one in Zoroastrian texts, see Minoo S. Southgate, "Portrait of Alexander in Persian Alexander Romances of the Islamic Era". For a discussion about the change in the image of Iskender in Persian sources after the Islamisation period, see Richard Frye, "The Pahlavi Alexander Romance" in "Two Iranian Notes". Also see, Josef Wiesehöfer, "The 'Accursed' and the 'Adventurer': Alexander the Great in Iranian Tradition". For an example of the pre-Islamic image of Iskender in Persian sources, see Nimet Yıldırım, *Ardavirafname*, p. 75-76.

journey and by visiting the realm of the water of life, which is described as a place that can only be visited by the *erenler*, the poet also portrays himself as one of them. Who then are the *erenler*?

The concept of ‘*eren*’ in Anatolia is considered the equivalent of ‘*rajul*’ or ‘*feta*’ in Arabic and ‘*mard*’ or ‘*jawanmard*’ in Persian and generally denotes the warrior dervishes.¹⁴⁹ In the *Velayetname of Hacı Bektaş*, dated circa 1500,¹⁵⁰ which is the core text of Bektashi literature, they are the ones who fight for the cause of Islam upon the order of their *pir*, Hacı Bektaş. The *Velayetname* includes motifs, features and figures in common with the *Hızırname* in terms of the notion of *erenler*. For example, as with his portrayal in the *Hızırname*, in the *Velayetname* too, Hacı Bektaş is portrayed as the head of the *erenler*. Just as he sends the dervish Muhyiddin to join the war at the Eastern border of the Ottomans, so too in the *Velayetname* Hacı Bektaş sends his dervishes to fight against the infidels. Furthermore, the descriptions of the *erenler* are similar in both the *Hızırname* and the *Velayetname* and some dervishes mentioned in the *Hızırname* participate in the stories of the *Velayetname*.

All these common elements in these texts serve to indicate a shared story being rewritten by the same audience but with alterations and new layers added depending on the context. Indeed, in his pioneering work on the history of dervish

¹⁴⁹ See S. Uludağ, ‘Erenler’. On the concept of ‘*jawanmardi*’, see Arley Loewen, “The Concept of Jawanmardi (manliness) in Persian Literature and Society”; Lloyd Ridgeon, *Jawanmardi: A Sufi Code of Honour*. Ridgeon’s study includes the translations of three Persian treatises related to the etiquette of Sufi groups.

¹⁵⁰ On the *Velayetname*, see Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, *Vilayet-name – Manakıb-ı Hünkar Hacı Bektaş Veli*. Gölpınarlı argues that the *Velayetname* must have been written before 1501, see p. XXIII.

According to Rıza Yıldırım, it must also have been written at least twenty years after the *Saltukname*, see “Rum’da Öksöğü Tutan Kimdi?”, p. 622-625.

orders in Anatolia, *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar*, based on the figures common to both the *Hızırname* and the *Velayetname*, Fuad Köprülü refers to the *Hızırname* as one of the earliest examples of the Bektashi tradition, pointing to the very early period or establishment of Bektashi literature. Those Köprülü mentions include Mevlana, Yunus Emre, Sarı Saltuk and Ahi Evren.¹⁵¹ In addition to these figures, Dediği - whose name is first mentioned in the context of the great gathering of the friends of God in the *Hızırname* - can also be cited as a common figure in both the *Hızırname* and in Bektashi literature. In the biography of Dediği Sultan¹⁵², both he and Hacı Bektaş are introduced as first cousins, the sons of two brothers.¹⁵³

This special relationship between Hacı Bektaş and the *erenler* in Rum¹⁵⁴ highlights the last corpus of texts with links to the narrative structure of the *Hızırname*, which were being circulated among the warrior dervishes of Anatolia. As will be discussed in the following sections, the genre of these texts is the subject of controversy in secondary sources. However, the *velayatnames* of Bektashi literature can loosely be defined under the contested genre ‘*menakıbnâme*’ which is related to the genre of biography and includes narratives about the heroic and miraculous deeds of the Anatolian dervishes.

¹⁵¹ F. Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar*, p. 245-246, 262.

¹⁵² This work survives in two copies; dated 1229/1813-4 and 1277/1861. On this work see Ahmet Taşgın, *Dediği Sultan ve Menakıbı: Konya ve Çevresinde Ahmet Yesevi Halifelerinin İzleri*. Taşgın’s study also includes the publication of the latter copy in the present-day Turkish alphabet.

¹⁵³ See Paul R. Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, p. 79-80; A. Taşgın, *Dediği Sultan ve Menakıbı*, p. 227.

¹⁵⁴ ‘Rum’ refers to Anatolia and the Balkans in early Anatolian Turkish texts. For its different connotations and its use in different textual sources, see Salih Özbaran, *Bir Osmanlı Kimliği: 14.-17. Yüzyıllarda Rûm/Rûmî Aidiyet ve İmgeleri*; Cemal Kafadar, “A Rome of One’s Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum”.

4. A Unique Work?

As this introduction to the content of the *Hızırname* reveals, the structure of the plot and the identity of the protagonist are complex as a result of the intermingling of narratives from different text groups. Therefore a thorough analysis of the text is required in order to define both its genre and the character of the protagonist. This has not yet been attempted. The gaps in connections between the sections, figures and other literary features of the *Hızırname* have resulted in ambiguous claims about its content and genre by some scholars who emphasize its uniqueness amongst texts in Turkish literature in the Ottoman era, but offer no explanation for the extraordinary features that distinguish this text from other works.¹⁵⁵

Although no study exists that identifies its distinctive features, the text does indeed have some eccentric aspects which distinguish it from other similar works in Turkish literature. The first of these unusual features is the *miraj* journey of the protagonist. In the *Hızırname* we see a dervish figure who ascends into the heavens and meets with angels and prophets there. However, in early Anatolian Turkish literature it is accepted that the only person who made the ascension journey is the prophet Muhammad and therefore, the Turkish *mirajnames* solely narrate his journey and his meetings with other prophets and angels in the heavens.

Another intrinsic feature of the *Hızırname* is the first person narrator as the text has been composed in an autobiographical style. As is reflected in the Turkish proverb, “the sheikh does not fly but the disciple makes him fly” (*şeyh uçmaz mürit uçurur*), in Anatolian Turkish works the miraculous deeds of the sheiks were

¹⁵⁵ For example see Ocak, “Hızırname”; Hüseyin Ayan, “Hızır-name ve Muhiddin Dolu”.

narrated by a third person, often by a disciple of the sheikh, after his death, or by one of the followers of the same Sufi order. In the *Hızırname*, on the other hand, we find a dervish figure telling how he flew to the heavens and what happened to him there.

Since the *Hızırname* is presented as an autobiographical work, to establish the relationship between this text and other contemporary Turkish works of a similar kind requires a definition of the relationship between the identity of the narrator and the author both in the *Hızırname* and other Turkish sources of the same era. Again, this is a fundamental subject that has yet to be addressed by scholars. Nevertheless, the two interventions by the poet in the *Hızırname* about the truth and accuracy of his words, which he states before he begins to tell of the journey he has experienced, should be noted with respect to the entwined identities of the narrator in the text and the author.

The first intervention is in Poem Three. Here, the poet explains the reason for composing the work and declares that “my words are telling the truth and thus they should not be taken lightly” (*yok durur sözümde hiç mizah-heva*).¹⁵⁶ Then in Poem Eight, he repeats this claim by saying that “The only thing I am telling [here] is what I have seen” (*gördüklerimdür didiğim*).¹⁵⁷ These attempts by the poet to persuade the audience about the reality of his words suggest an awareness and concern by the author regarding the unusual character of the content of the text. This way the first-person typical of the shorter compositions like the *ghazel* is used to great effect for the persuasive telling of a longer narrative. Third-person narration would have deprived the story of its immediacy. In fact even in works narrated about an

¹⁵⁶ Bardakçı, p. 130.

¹⁵⁷ Bardakçı, p. 138.

ostensibly historical figure like the *Battalname*, occasionally switch to first-person narration for dramatic effect.

The limited number of autobiographical works in the Ottoman period is not something peculiar to the writings of the dervishes; for other genres too, secondary sources mention only a small number of autobiographical works which were composed during the pre-eighteenth century Ottoman era.¹⁵⁸ Yet, referring to works contemporary to the *Hızırname*, Selim Sırrı Kuru points out that “a remarkable body of works that combined autobiography and discussions of love appeared in the late fifteenth century”. As examples, he mentions two poetry texts: the *Fürkatname* (*Book of Separation*) dated 1461 and the *Hevesname* (*Book of Desire*) dated 1493.¹⁵⁹ By noting that until the *Fürkatname* the first-person narrator appears in the *ghazel* form, Kuru considers the *Fürkatname* as a turning point for the narration of love stories in the *masnavi* form and he emphasizes the realistic aspect of both *masnavis* in terms of plot and the setting. Unlike the popular love stories, these works for example do not include legendary figures, superficial events and battles. Both in the *Fürkatname* and the *Hevesname* the focus of the narrative is the state of love

¹⁵⁸ In “Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature”, Cemal Kafadar notes the general opinion about autobiographies in Ottoman literature, which is: “Despite the recognition that there are bountiful Ottoman biographies continuing the Islamic tradition, the general assumption is that there are no sources of autobiographic nature, no diaries, memoirs, or personal letters prior to the Tanzimat period”, p. 124. As examples which challenge this assumption by proposing that researchers should re-analyze the Ottoman sources, Kafadar examines the first person narrator in the seventeenth century sources by focusing on two texts; namely a diary entitled the *Sohbetname* (1661-1665) and a notebook which consists of letters written in 1641-1643 by a woman called Asiye Hatun to her sheikh. For the analysis of these texts, see “Self and Others” and “Mütereddid Bir Mutasavvıf: Üsküplü Asiye Hatun’un Rüya Defteri 1641-1643”.

¹⁵⁹ Selim Sırrı Kuru, “The literature of Rum: The making of a literary tradition (1450-1600)”, p. 573. For more information about the *masnavi* works and the narration of love, see the section “Mesnevi: Stories of love”, p. 572-576.

For an analysis and comparison of these texts see “Mesnevi biçiminde aşk hali: birinci tekil şahıs anlatılar olarak Fürkat-name, Heves-name üzerinden bir değerlendirme” by the same author.

experienced by the poets and thus, these works include the depictions of the attempts and adventures of the poets to reach their beloveds.¹⁶⁰

As a narrative about the experiences of a warrior dervish figure, the primary concern in the *Hızırname* is the initiation journey of the dervish into the realm of the truth of the universe. As is stated explicitly in the text, to be able to reach the last stage in the journey, where the water of life exists, one must have become ‘the perfect man’ (*insan-ı kamil*).¹⁶¹ But along with the descriptions of the places he visits, the poet also mentions several times throughout his journey that he is longing to be united with God and expresses the sorrow that he feels because of the separation. The love for God is therefore one of the main themes in the *Hızırname* and this is emphasized in the first poem which opens the poetic body of the text. By addressing God, the poet tells us that in the *Feast of Alast* (*bezm-i elest*)¹⁶² God “put his gaze on the people with love” (*kıldın muhabbetten nazar*) and adds that God is the one who “first loved us” (*bizi sevdin evvela*).¹⁶³ The *Feast of Alast* is the great gathering of all souls when they altogether have confirmed that they believe in God. According to Islamic poetry, the lovers fell in love with their beloveds at this gathering. In the *Hızırname* then, God’s love is the motivator behind the experiences of the dervish and he finishes this poem by praying to God for letting him see His face close-up.¹⁶⁴

The experiences of Muhyiddin or Dolu, on his journey to divine love expressed in an autobiographical style, may be linked to other autobiographical works of the time in terms of the first-person narrator. However, this is not sufficient

¹⁶⁰ Kuru, “Mesnevi biçiminde aşk hali: birinci tekil şahıs anlatılar olarak Fırkat-name, Heves-name üzerinden bir değerlendirme”, p. 174-178.

¹⁶¹ Bardakçı, p. 252-253.

¹⁶² Koran, 7:72. See Yusuf Ş. Yavuz, “Bezm-i Elest” and İskender Pala, “Bezm-i Elest”.

¹⁶³ Bardakçı, p. 122.

¹⁶⁴ Bardakçı, p. 123.

to explain the attempts mentioned above by the poet in the *Hızırname* to persuade his audience of the unusual character of his experiences.

The distance between the *Hızırname* and other Turkish autobiographical works of its era suggests that the unusual character of the *Hızırname* results primarily from the *miraj* journey of the dervish figure in the text. The first-person narrator on the other hand, ie., the narration of this extraordinary journey by the protagonist himself, considerably complicates our understanding of this fifteenth century text. This is further hampered by the lack of reliable information on the books circulating in that period, which both influenced the composition of this text and were composed not only in Turkish but in Arabic and Persian too, these two languages being the medium for religious, philosophical and poetic works.

Thus, as a result of these two intrinsic features, that is, the *miraj* journey and its narration by the protagonist himself, some aspects of the *Hızırname* remain outside other Anatolian Turkish texts and lead us to search other literary traditions for its possible sources.

5. Discussions about the Content and Genre of the *Hızırname*

a. Content and Genre

The genre of the *Hızırname* has been subject to considerable debate and controversy. Vasfi Mahir Kocatürk, the author of one of the more reliable histories of Turkish literature (1964) qualifies the *Hızırname* as a (religious) ‘epic’ (*dastan*) and not a didactic work, with interesting and unique characteristics compared to

similar kinds of works.¹⁶⁵ By claiming that “its features are unique to the text itself”, in his article on the *Hızırname* and its author, Hüseyin Ayan, describes the text as “neither a divan nor a story book; but it is the expression of a kind of religious heroism and spiritual superiority that its owner [author] has experienced in a state of ecstasy”.¹⁶⁶

According to Mehmet Bardakçı, the *Hızırname* reminds one of the *Futuhât al-Makkiyyah*¹⁶⁷ by Ibn ‘Arabi in terms of the concepts of the invisible men and the *qutb* and of the spiritual ascension in *Mantiq al-Tayr* by Farid al-din ‘Attar (d. 617/1120)¹⁶⁸ or in *Tarjuman al-ashwaq* by Ibn ‘Arabi.¹⁶⁹ Bardakçı’s study defines the text by comparing it to others according to certain themes, but it does not examine the whole content and the structure of the text itself.

In another argument relating to its genre, Ahmet Yaşar Ocak describes the *Hızırname* as “the only example of its genre”,¹⁷⁰ but he does not explain the features that make the text unique. Since Ocak does not clarify what “genre” means in his argument, this description is not very helpful to our understanding of what kind of a text the *Hızırname* is.

¹⁶⁵ Vasfi Mahir Kocatürk, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, p. 283-288.

¹⁶⁶ Ayan, “Hızır-name ve Muhiddin Dolu”, p. 33.

¹⁶⁷ For the Turkish translation of all volumes of the *Futuhât al-Makkiyyah*, see Ekrem Demirli, *Futuhât-ı Mekkiyye*.

¹⁶⁸ On the *Mantiq at-Tayr* and for its English translation by Afkham Darbandi and Dick Davis, see Farid ud-din ‘Attar, *The Conference of the Birds*.

¹⁶⁹ Bardakçı, *Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi ve Divanı*, p. 111.

For the English translation of the *Tarjuman al-ashwaq* by Reynold A. Nicholson, see Ibn ‘Arabi, *The Tarjuman al-ashwaq: a collection of mystical odes*. Upon the debate on the content of this work during his time, Ibn ‘Arabi had to write a commentray on it explaining that the work does not deal with sensual love. For a discussion about the content of the *Tarjuman al-ashwaq* with reference to Ibn ‘Arabi’s terminology, William Chittick, *Imaginal Worlds: Ibn al-‘Arabi and the Problem of Religious Diversity*, p. 67-82. The *Hızırname* does not include references to sensual love.

¹⁷⁰ Ocak, “Hızırname”, p. 417.

On the other hand, defining the genre of a text is problematic in scholarship. In the histories of Turkish literature, the genre of a text is mainly described according to its themes and, therefore the texts are grouped under general and ambiguous titles which cannot be distinguished from one another in many cases. For example, in one of the recent literary histories by Ahmet Atilla Şentürk and Ahmet Kartal entitled *Eski Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* (*The History of Classical Turkish Literature*), the *Hızırname* is described as “a text which is about the friends of God who are known as the invisible men”¹⁷¹ and it is categorized under the title “Dini-Ahlaki-Tasavvufi Mesneviler” (*Religious-Moral-Mystical Masnavis*).¹⁷² This group of texts comes under the chapter entitled “The Fifteenth Century Ottoman Masnavis” which also includes another set of texts under the title “Tarihi, Destani ve Menakıbevi Mesneviler” (*Historical, Epic and Menakıb-like Masnavis*). This group includes *menakıbnames*, *gazavatnames* (*book of ghaza*) and *Iskendernames*.¹⁷³ Since the *Hızırname* has been defined as an epic by, for example, Kocatürk, and since it also belongs to *menakıbname* literature, it fits well into this category too. As discussed in the ‘Introduction’ chapter of the present study, the *Hızırname* is also related to the narratives of Iskender, an example of which is the *Iskendername* (792/1390) by Ahmedî (d. 815/1412). Albeit in prose, another related work is the *Saltukname* (c. 1480), a text which can be defined as both a *menakıbname* and an epic, compiled by Ebu’l-Hayr Rumi.

The ambiguity surrounding the genre of the *Hızırname* seems to result from two main questions: (1) how to define the genre of a text, and (2) what does

¹⁷¹ See Ahmet Atilla Şentürk and Ahmet Kartal, *Eski Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, p. 207.

¹⁷² For more information about the literary works of fifteenth century Anatolia which are grouped together under the title “Dini-Ahlaki-Tasavvufi Mesneviler”, see p. 204-212.

¹⁷³ See Şentürk and Kartal, *Eski Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, p. 215-220.

menakıbnâme denote as a term in those literary and historical studies that focus on the works of the Ottoman era.

The first question on how to define the genre of a text, and the problems this entails is not peculiar to Turkish literature; it is a fundamental subject in the field of literary criticism. For example, Graham Allen points to the “confusion between modes and genres” by referring to Gerard Genette’s argument on this issue. In the words of Allen, he quotes, “Genres are essentially literal categories. Modes, on the other hand, are ‘natural forms’, or at least aspects of language itself, and can be divided into narrative and discourse”.¹⁷⁴ In Genette’s approach to texts on the other hand, we find the notion of “architexts”; the unchanging building blocks needed to establish a stable poetics of theme, genre and mode, which are, according to Allen, not something that’s possible.¹⁷⁵ Allen describes Genette’s claims as follows:

Genette’s main point here is that the traditional modal triad of narrative, dramatic and epic can be viewed either in terms of mode or in terms of generic categorization. Once again, however, there is often a confusion between generic and modal definitions. [...] unless we distinguish between modes and genres, poetics will forever find itself unable to stabilize its presentation of the system of literary conventions.¹⁷⁶

The difficulty in defining the genre of a text results from the unclear definitions between the modes and generic categories, creating lack of clarity about what a genre is and thus, leading to more than one definition about the genre of a text.

In addition to the central problem of defining the nature of the genres, the diachronic changes in the content and structure of the texts throughout history also create another difficulty and level in the grouping of texts. When trying to define the genre of a text from the early period of Anatolian Turkish literature for example, the

¹⁷⁴ Graham Allen, *Intertextuality*, p. 98.

¹⁷⁵ Allen, *ibid*, 98-99.

¹⁷⁶ Allen, *ibid*, 98.

groupings are seriously problematic, because many texts from this period seem to contain different modes and genres within a single work. In the frontier epics for example, the heroic and miraculous deeds of the protagonist complement the conversions, conquests, travels, mythological elements and the descriptions of the wonders of the World. The *Iskendername* by Ahmedi is a typical example from this period which shows complex themes and modes within one composition. It is a “book which is on the subjects of religion, codes of morality, mysticism, philosophy, history, geography, astronomy, medicine, politics, as well as the legendary biography of Iskender and its instructive aspect dominates the others”.¹⁷⁷

The characteristics of Anatolian Turkish texts have lead scholars to look for suitable approaches with which to define and categorize these texts. In one of the recent attempts to introduce and group the *masnavi* works of Classical Turkish literature¹⁷⁸ by Ahmet Kartal, the masnavis are grouped according to the aim of the text/author (*yazılış amaçları*), making use of the earlier suggestion of İsmail Ünver. According to this categorization, there are four groups of *masnavis* in Anatolian Turkish Literature¹⁷⁹: in the first group are those which aim to instruct the audience

¹⁷⁷ İsmail Ünver, *Iskendername*, p. 9. For the transcription of Ahmedi’s *Iskendername*, see Hasan Akçay, “Ahmedi’nin İskender-namesi, Transkripsiyonlu Metin”. By noting the lack of studies on genres during the Ottoman era, Hatice Aynur examines the vocabulary of three Ottoman *tadhkira* (*biography of the poets*) books dated to the sixteenth century, with a particular focus on the adjectives used to define the works of the poets included in these books. Aynur notes that certain adjectives are used interchangeably while explaining the nature of the works, see “Sehî, Latîfî ve Aşık Çelebi tezkirelerine göre türler”.

¹⁷⁸ On the masnavis in early Anatolian Turkish literature until the fifteenth century, see Amil Çelebioğlu, *Türk Mesnevi Edebiyatı: 15. yy. 'a Kadar (Sultan II. Murad Devri 824-855/1421-1451)*; for a comprehensive study which includes the summaries of Turkish masnavi works written in 1200-1512, see, Günay Kut, “Osmanlı (Batı Oğuz) Sahası, Erken Dönem (1200-1512): Nazım, XIII-XIV. Yüzyıl”. For a general survey of the period see Hasibe Mazioğlu, “Türk Edebiyatı, Eski”, p. 83-111 and Gönül Tekin, “Türk Edebiyatı: 13-15. Yüzyıllar”. For the works of mystical literature, also see Ömür Ceylan, “Tasavvufî Edebiyat” and for a general analysis of the period with a particular focus on the social and cultural life, see A. Y. Ocak, “Social, cultural and intellectual life, 1071-1453”.

¹⁷⁹ Ahmet Kartal, “Eski Türk Edebiyatında Mesnevi”, p. 354.

(this group includes religious and mystical works and encyclopedia-like books), such as ‘*evliya menkıbeleri*’ (the stories of the friends of God); in the second group are the epics which address the heroic feelings of the audience and are based on history, such as the *Battalname*. The third group addresses the artistic pleasures of the audience and includes the *masnavis* that narrate love stories. Lastly, in the fourth group are descriptive works which narrate the anecdotes of life, places and people, such as *şehrengiz*.¹⁸⁰ However, this grouping, which is based on the aim of the text/author, is also not entirely satisfactory in accounting for the genre of texts like the *Hızırname* which can be listed under more than one of the categories listed by Kartal.¹⁸¹ It includes the adventures of a dervish, is a work about divine love, has an epic character, and includes descriptions of the places visited by the protagonist during his travels.

The second issue that complicates the issue of the genre of the *Hızırname* is related to the discussion on the definition of “menakıbname”. *Menakıb(name)* is a broad term often referred to in the fields of both literary studies and history and what it denotes in terms of terminology and its relation to the genre of a text is a subject that has yet to be fully addressed. As a result of this, the answers to the following questions, for example, remain uncertain: what do the descriptions “destani masnavi” (epic masnavi) and “menkabeve masnavi” (*menakıb-like masnavi*) mean in literary histories? Why are *menakıbnames* separated from the group of texts headed “religious and mystical works” in some studies but not in others? Does

¹⁸⁰ On the *şehrengiz* as a genre in Turkish Literature, see Barış Karacasu, “Türk Edebiyatında Şehrengizler”. The article includes a literature review and a list of the literary works of this genre in the Ottoman period.

¹⁸¹ The methodologies used in defining the genres or grouping the texts in Turkish literature and their outcomes are beyond the present study and the subject forms another research project.

menakıbnames denote the narration of historical facts or does it refer to the miraculous deeds of the dervishes? Or does it imply the narrative style of a text?

b. *Menakıbnames* in Turkish Literature and the Contested Genre of the *Hızırnames*

For historians, *menakıbnames* have been defined in terms of their relation to historical facts. To date, the only extensive study on Turkish *menakıbnames* is the book entitled *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler (Menakıbnames as a Source of Cultural History)* by Ocak.¹⁸² As its title suggests, this study approaches the *menakıbnames* as a source for historical studies. Ocak divides the texts he identifies as *menakıbnames* into two groups: (i) the *menakıbnames* which are based on historical fact, and (ii) the imaginary ones. However, for the first group of texts, Ocak notes that the facts in these texts are manipulated by “*menakıb-like*” motifs.¹⁸³ This statement implies that the definition of the term is based on the factual and imaginary aspects of the narratives. For the purposes of our study, the generic category ‘*menakıbnames*’ includes the frontier epics of Anatolia as well as the stories about the dervishes. The works of Bektashi literature are also described as *menakıbnames* in this grouping, but are also referred to as *velayetnames* (such as *Bektaşî velayetnameleri*) in some accounts.

Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı begins his “Introduction” chapter to the *Vilayetname-i Hacı Bektaş* with this question: “What kind of text is the *Vilayetname*?” and adds that this work is known under two different names: *Vilayetname-i Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli* or *Menakıb-ı Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli*. Gölpınarlı argues that this text is one of the rings in

¹⁸² In a recent article Ocak addresses the *menakıbnames* again, however, this article is mostly the summary of the book, see “Evliya Menakıbnameleri”.

¹⁸³ Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler*, p. 34-36. In this study, Ocak lists the typical features of the menkabevi narratives of the Ottoman period.

the chain of religious Turkish literature, which starts with the *Kitab-ı Dede Korkut* (*The Book of Dede Korkut*) and continues with several texts including the *Battalname*, the *Danişmendname*, the *Saltukname*, and then *Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli Vilayetnamesi*. However, despite their close relationship, Gölpınarlı also points to some features that distinguish these texts from each other, such as the religious aspect or heroic deeds.¹⁸⁴

However, the relation of the religious aspect to the portrayal of the protagonist's heroic deeds is another criterion that remains problematic when grouping these texts, since religion and heroism cannot be separated from each other in these works. The abovementioned grouping in *Eski Türk Edebiyatı*, which describes the *Hızırname* under the title “Religious Masnavis”, but not one of the “epic and menakıb-like” ones, reflects this conflict and ambiguity which results from accepting religion and heroism as two separate aspects.

On the other hand, in contrast to the all-inclusive definition by Ocak, Tijana Krstic groups relevant texts from the early Ottoman period into “epics about Ottoman warrior-saints (*vilayetnames*), spiritual biographies of holy men (*menakıbnames*), accounts of military campaigns (*gazavatnames*), and the earliest Ottoman chronicles (*Tevarih-i Al-i ‘Osman*)”.¹⁸⁵ In Krstic's categorization, *menakıbname* is related to biography, but to the spiritual one, rather than to historical events and is separated from the heroic narratives. Although the relation between the genre of biography and *menakıbname* is notable here, this scheme takes us once again back to the discussion on the complex structure of early Anatolian Turkish

¹⁸⁴ Gölpınarlı, *Vilayet-name – Manakıb-ı Hüsnâ Hacı Bektaş Veli*, p. VII-XXXIX.

¹⁸⁵ See “Conversion and Converts to Islam in Ottoman Historiography of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries”, p. 1.

texts and to the same problem about their grouping and how to define the content and genre of these texts.

As Yorgos Dedes notes with regards to the *Battalname*, some scholars have pointed out significant similarities between frontier epics, stories of the friends of God (*evliya menakıbnameleri*) and the first anonymous Ottoman chronicles. However, as Dedes points out, despite these similarities, some studies group the *Danişmendname* and the *Saltukname* under “historical romances” or “hagiographical narratives (vita) of a historical nature”, and, this grouping excludes the “works of very much the same genre”, such as the *Battalname* and the *Hamzaname*.¹⁸⁶ The objection by Dedes to the restriction in the grouping of the frontier epics, by ignoring their textual links, highlights and exemplifies how these texts are approached and examined in literary studies and how this approach differs in the field of history. These two different approaches, on grouping and defining the texts according to historical fact versus textual relations, determine how the term *menakıbnama* is defined and applied in these fields.

All these ambiguous and contradictory groupings and definitions surrounding the works which come under the general title ‘*menakıbnama*’ indicate that there is no consensus in secondary sources on what kind of texts the term *menakıbnama* denotes. The majority of the definitions are based on the blurred lines between fact and imagination or heroism and the religious. At this point, the question that needs to be asked is what did *menakıb* mean in previous centuries and is it possible to trace the diachronical changes in its semantic meaning and, therefore, to trace the confusion in scholarship?

¹⁸⁶ For more information about this discussion see Dedes, *The Battlname, An Ottoman Turkish Frontier Epic Wondertale*, p. 18-20.

The plural form of “*menkabe*”, which is “*menakıb*”, has been in use since the ninth century in the hadith collections and it refers to the virtues of the Prophet, his family and friends. Later on it was used for other people too and, since the ninth century at the earliest, it has also been used to describe short stories which narrate the miraculous deeds of the dervishes. Certain works which describe cities were also called *menakıb*. Later on in some works, *keramat*¹⁸⁷ and *menakıb* were used interchangeably, like the thirteenth century Turkish text *Keramat-ı Ahi Evran*.¹⁸⁸ The *Hızırname* uses the word *keramet* to refer to the unusual experiences of the dervish, but does not use the word *menakıb* in any context to refer to the textual features of the work. As we have seen, the work is titled *divan* (*collection*) in its manuscript copies. This title gives information about the format of the text, but it does not include explicit information about its content or genre. However, given that the semantic coverage and use of the word *menakıb* at the time referred to the virtues and experiences of dervish or other figures, the *Hızırname* could be defined as a *menakıbnamede*.

¹⁸⁷ The plural form of *karama*. Ahmet Karamustafa notes the discussion on *mu'jiza* and *karama* and explains these terms as follows: “The idea of a company of saints appointed directly by God gave rise to a number of difficult questions that included (1) the exact nature of the relationship between the awliya and God, (2) the role of the awliya in history and society, (3) the relationship between the awliya and the prophets. These questions were discussed and debated among proto-Sunnis from the second/eighth century onwards in the form of concrete issues [...]”, see *Sufism: The Formative Period*, p. 128.

Öztürk points out the change in the notion of *karama* in the thirteenth century. In the early years of Islam, the *karama* was a virtue of the dervishes gained and developed by practicing the obligations of Islam and living an ascetic life. In the thirteenth century on the other hand, the friend of God began to refer to someone chosen by God, so it lost its meaning as a higher spiritual state gained by the person himself by his lifestyle and religious life. The *karama*, thus, also became a privilege endowed by God to the chosen person. Öztürk notes that the book of al-Sarraj, which is about the lives of the dervishes since the early years of Islam, reflects this change well. For more information see, *Velilik ile Delilik Arasında*, p. 199.

¹⁸⁸ Ocak, *Kültür Tarihi Kaynağı Olarak Menakıbnameler*, p. 27

For information about the *Keramat-ı Ahi Evran* and the text in Arabic script, see, Franz Taeschner, *Gülschehris Mesnevi auf Achi Evran, den Heiligen von Kirschehir und Patron der türkischen Zünfte*. For a recent edition of the text, also see Ahmet Kartal, “Keramat-ı Ahi Evran Mesnevisi Üzerine Notlar”.

On the other hand, there is some evidence that the authors of the period used the term *menakıb* to refer to their own compositions. The famous Ottoman chronicler, Aşıkpaşazade (d. after 1484), who interestingly was also the sheikh of the Zeyni lodge in Istanbul, refers to his work as a *menakıb*, as in the following couplets:

When he saw the castle of Bursa
The castle appeared to Orhan as a garden
He did not fight for the castle
Nobody got injured or died
He took the castle easily and became a *gazi*
I wrote this *menakıb* and made it a witness¹⁸⁹

Aşıkpaşazade describes his *menakıb* as a historical ‘witness’ (*bürhan*). He uses the same term when he dates his composition:

When this life reached the age eighty six,
And Bayezid Han headed to Bogdan
All the world heard about the attack on his state
When he departed from Istanbul
I took a notebook to write a *menakıb*
And I declared what I had witnessed¹⁹⁰

In these couplets too, the use of the word *menakıb* denotes a kind of historical record. Unlike the common use of ‘*menakıb*’ in secondary sources, we do not find any reference to supernatural events in Aşıkpaşazade’s use of the word. In their introduction to Aşıkpaşazade’s text, by underlining that the author himself used the word *menakıb* when referring to his work, Kemal Yavuz and Yekta Saraç note that secondary sources refer to the text under the titles *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman* or

¹⁸⁹ Yavuz and Saraç, *Osmanoğullarının Tarihi: Tevarih-i Al-i Osman / Aşıkpaşazade*, p. 300. The original text is as follows:

Çün kal’ayı ki Bursa anı gördi / Bu Orhan’a oldu bağ u bostan
Ne ceng itdi ne cidal itdi anda / Yarılmadı baş u dökülmedi kan
Asan aldı vü Bursa’yı oldu gazi / Menakıbı ki yazdum oldu bürhan

¹⁹⁰ Yavuz and Saraç, *ibid*, p. 306.

The original text is as follows:

Bu ‘ömür seksen altı oldugında / Bayezid Han Bogdan’a agdugında [...]
Hücum-ı devleti tutdı cihanı / Turup İstanbul’dan çıkdugında
Menakıb yazmaga defter çıkardum / Beyan itdüm nişanın buldugumda

Aşıkpaşazade Tarihi.¹⁹¹ However, despite the author's own statement and their own note, in their description Yavuz and Saraç also follow the contemporary meaning of the word in secondary sources and they hesitate to use the word *menakıb* when defining Aşıkpaşazade's work: "rather than call his work *menkıbe*¹⁹² or history, it [the text] could be described as historical stories which are based on fact".¹⁹³ This change in the title reflects the reception of the generic title *menakıb(name)* in scholarship, and therefore the changes in the meaning of the word *menakıb* over time.

On the other hand, in a similar way to Aşıkpaşazade's claim about the content of his own work, in the *Hızırname* too the poet emphasizes twice that his words are telling the truth and that he is telling in the text what he saw. In this case, how can we read the claims of these two Zeyni authors about the content of their works regarding 'reality'? Obviously this at least partly depends on what the work themselves narrate and their relation to perceived reality. Given the unusual features of the *Hızırname* when compared to other Anatolian Turkish works like Aşıkpaşazade's composition, it is imperative to put the text into context by identifying its textual sources in order to understand what it is trying to tell its audience. As has already been mentioned in the section concerning the key vocabulary used in the text, the *Hızırname* is written using the terminology of *ishraqi* sources and the Ekberi-Konevi school. The majority of the works in this corpus of literature discuss the 'nature of knowledge' and accept the heavenly experiences as the highest level of knowledge about the nature of existence. In his commentary on Ibn 'Arabi's *Fusus al-Hikam*, for example, Davud el-Kayseri

¹⁹¹ Yavuz and Saraç, *Osmanoğullarının Tarihi: Tevarih-i Al-i Osman / Aşıkpaşazade*, p. 36.

¹⁹² "Menkıbe" is the incorrect form of "menkabe", however widely used.

¹⁹³ Yavuz and Saraç, *ibid*, p. 36.

illustrates the nature of knowledge and how true knowledge can be gained with the following couplets:

No one knows love except one who suffers it
There is no burning except for one who becomes one with it¹⁹⁴

‘Experience’ is then, the only means to reach the knowledge about the essence of something in these works, and the *Hızırname* belongs to this corpus of literature: the text informs its audience about the knowledge of existence gained by the personal experience of the dervish. To be able to identify its genre correctly, therefore, first what the content of the text is, that is, what it actually narrates within its historical context, needs to be clarified. Focusing on the Ottoman *ghazel*, Selim Sırrı Kuru points out the lack of studies on the realms described by the Ottoman poets, by claiming that “Like parrots, the *ghazel* poets keep saying the same ‘ah’ and singe the sky. Although we know that it is not our sky, we are not interested in which sky it is”.¹⁹⁵ Acknowledging the lack of and the need for studies on the cosmology and epistemology in early Anatolian Turkish works, the next two chapters will address ‘the sky to which the dervish ascends’ accompanied by Khidr so as to put the experiential journey of the poet-narrator into context, and explore the non-Turkish sources of this journey, which led to this text being described as an unusual work in Anatolian Turkish literature.

¹⁹⁴ Ali, *Foundations of Islamic Mysticism: Qaysari’s Introduction to Ibn ‘Arabi’s Fusus al-hikam*, p. 194.

¹⁹⁵ Kuru, “Şiirin Aynasında: İshak Çelebi’nin Şiiri Üzerine Değınmeler”, p. 60.

CHAPTER II

KHIDR, ILYAS AND ISKENDER

Initiated into the heavenly journey by the Prophet himself, the poet ascends through the seven heavens and reaches the highest heaven in the company and with the blessing of Khidr. In poem twenty-six he tells us that when dawn broke he ascended into the heavens sitting in front of Khidr on his horse.¹⁹⁶ In poem forty-eight, which is about the visit of the dervish to the Nile, he tells us that Khidr lifted him up onto his horseback and they went into the sea together.¹⁹⁷ Also, in addition to his role as the companion and guide of the dervish, the gaze of Khidr is repeated throughout the narrative as a motif which initiates the poet into the heavenly realm and leads him to experience the wonders of creation. Without examining the role of Khidr as his companion and initiator, therefore, the heavenly journey of our dervish, which differs from other Turkish works in Anatolia, can not be fully understood.

Poem eighteen provides information about key aspects of Khidr: the angels call him Ebu'l-Abbas, a name he is known by during his frequent visits to Mount Qaf; he owns the special knowledge *ilm-i ledun*; he is the powerful hand of God; far and near are the same for him; and he is the head of the invisible men (*ricai-i gayb*) and khan of the universe. He is said to be alive.¹⁹⁸ Likewise, poem twenty-five also mentions some virtues of Khidr: He has a dune-coloured horse and wears green; he

¹⁹⁶ Bardakçı, p. 172.

¹⁹⁷ Bardakçı, p. 233.

¹⁹⁸ Bardakçı, p. 154-156.

sometimes appear as a young man, sometimes as an old one; he walks in the sky; he walks all over the world and he does not hide himself from his servants.¹⁹⁹

The narrator in the *Hızırname* tells us that his source of information on Khidr is Aşık Paşa, whom he introduces as the disciple of Khidr. However, although the *Garibname* by Aşık Paşa has a lengthy chapter on the features of Khidr, and indeed has other similarities with the *Hızırname*, it does not describe an ascension journey. Also, while Mount Qaf is at the centre of the visits of the dervish in the *Hızırname* being the place of Khidr, Aşık Paşa does not mention Mount Qaf at all and describes Khidr as ‘free from place’ (*bi-mekan*). These two major differences between the *Garibname* and the *Hızırname* thus, in terms of the features of Khidr, suggest additional sources other than the *Garibname* for the Khidr figure in *Hızırname*.

Most famously, in the literary tradition of the *Kıyasu’l-Enbiya* (*Qisas al-Anbiya*) (*Stories of the Prophets*) Khidr is either the companion of Iskender on his quest for the source of life or the companion of the prophet Moses on his quest for the special knowledge (*ilm-i ledun*). In the *menakibnames* and similar works, he appears as the mentor of the dervishes. Also, Khidr is usually associated with the theme of travelling and he commonly appears in the texts telling of the heroic or spiritual journey of a protagonist. However, in these texts, Khidr does not accompany the protagonist during the whole journey, he appears when he is needed and then disappears, as in the example of the *Battalname* or the *Saltukname*. In the *Hızırname* on the other hand, Khidr maintains his role repeatedly throughout the whole text as an initiator and a companion. With the aim of identifying the sources of our distinctive text, the figure of Khidr in literature, first of all, is introduced with

¹⁹⁹ Bardakçı, p. 169-170.

special reference to the controversy over his multi-faceted identity. Then, the journey of Khidr, as the companion of both Iskender and Moses, is examined so as to better understand his role in travel narratives.

1. The Figure of Khidr

a. A Multi-faceted Figure: Identity and Roles of Khidr

In Islamic literature Khidr appears in a wide range of texts belonging to different genres and of different contents and themes, such as love or war, journey narratives or cautionary tales and lyrical or epic poetry. He is mostly introduced as a friend of God (*veli*) in Islamic sources since he is accepted to be immortal, but he is also considered a prophet, in which case he would be a mortal human being.

In the *Kıyasu'l-Enbiya* by Rabguzi, for example, written in 710/1310, the prophet Moses asks God about the identity of Khidr, whether he is a prophet or not, by using the Turkic words 'savcı' and 'yalavaç': "Müsi aydı: İlahi ol kimesne yalawaç mu, sawcı mu turur? Yarlıg keldi: ol sawçılardan turur, sen yalawaçlardin turur-sen".²⁰⁰ Rabguzi clearly distinguishes between the two by claiming that God revealed to Moses upon his asking that Khidr was a *savcı* while Moses was a *yalavaç*, but the two words are interchangeable in the meaning of 'messenger' and 'prophet' with *yalavaç* (and therefore Moses as well) being more distinguished.²⁰¹

Similarly, the first Ottoman *müderris* Davud el-Kayseri (d. 751/1350) debates the identity of Khidr in a treatise entitled *The Examination of the Water of*

²⁰⁰ Rabguzi, *Kıyasu'l-enbiya*, p. 181.

²⁰¹ For the meanings of 'yalavaç' and 'savcı' see Gerard Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth Century Turkish*, p. 785, 921.

Life and Unveiling of the Secrets of Darkness.²⁰² In this Arabic treatise, el-Kayseri first mentions the ongoing debate about the identity of Khidr, which is about whether he is a prophet (*nebi*), or an angel, or a friend of God (*veli*) and whether he exists beyond this world or not. According to the general opinion, Khidr physically exists beyond this world since he drank from the water of life. According to others however, Khidr is a prophet, and therefore, he is not immortal, and the land of darkness in his journey is a metaphor for his spiritual state.

The discussion on the identity of Khidr, based upon the controversy whether he is dead or alive, in fact goes back to earlier times. As quoted by Ocak, Ebu'l Hasan eş-Şazili (d. 656/1258) for example, rejects the views which claim that Khidr is not alive anymore, by admitting that “There are two things I hate that the jurisprudents do: they assert that Khidr is dead and they call Mansur al-Hallaj infidel”.²⁰³ As this statement indicates, the debate concerning Khidr's immortality had already become an issue under discussion among the *'ulema* in the early thirteenth century, suggesting that it was a common debate dating back to earlier periods of Islamic history.

Along with the controversy on his identity regarding his nature Khidr also appears in different roles depending on the content and genre of the texts. Numerous people are said to have come into contact with Khidr in various works such as epics, biographies, or mystical treatises: they are helped by him, converted to Islam by him,

²⁰² See Davud el-Kaysari (d. 1350), “Tahkiku Ma'i'l-Hayat ve Keşfu Esrarı'z-Zulumat” in *Er-Resail*. As Mehmet Bayraktar notes, in some library catalogues, this treatise is recorded as “Risale fî Beyani Ahvali'l- Hızır” or “Risale fî Ahvali'l- Hızır”, see M. Bayraktar, *Davûd el-Kayserî*, p. 21.

The first Ottoman medrese was founded in İznik in 1331. Its building had functioned as a monastery. After the appointment of el-Kayseri the first müderris, the building became a medrese. See İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ*, p. 175.

²⁰³ Ocak, *İslam-Türk İnançlarında Hızır yahut Hızır-İlyas Kültü*, p. 103.

or initiated by him, that is, for example they become a friend of God through him. Also, Khidr is said to be the companion of several dervishes in mystical literature.

Helping those in need is one of the well-known roles of Khidr and this role of his is referred to in the *Hızırname*. In poem eighteen, which lists a number of features of Khidr, he is described helping the ones in need and he knows about everything on earth. Other than the *Hızırname*, the frontier epics of Anatolia, the *Hamzanames*, and the *Velayetname-i Hacı Bektaş* are some examples that can be noted with regard to the helper role of Khidr. In the frontier epics, as already mentioned in the ‘Introduction’, Khidr appears to the protagonist when he is about to be defeated or killed in his fight against the infidels, saves the hero and helps him to win the battle. Afterwards he disappears. Likewise, in the *Hamzanames* (*Book of Hamza*) too, Khidr often appears as the helper of Hamza in the narrative.²⁰⁴ Similarly, in the story of Saltuk in the *Velayetname*, Khidr appears to Saltuk during his fight with a dragon, when Saltuk finds himself in trouble and forgets to use his sword. At that moment Hacı Bektaş is sitting in the *tekke* with Khidr. When Saltuk calls for help, Hacı Bektaş sends Khidr to help him and thanks to Khidr, Saltuk cuts the seven heads of the dragon one by one with his sword.²⁰⁵ Likewise, the role of Khidr as a wise man and guide can be read in relation to his helper role, when he appears to the king or the protagonist in problematic moments and helps him to eliminate any of the troubles. As an example, the narratives of Iskender include several examples for Khidr’s role as a helper such as a wise man and adviser. For instance, in the

²⁰⁴ Metin And, *Minyatürlerle Osmanlı-İslam Mitologyası*, p. 70.

²⁰⁵ Gölpınarlı, *Vilayet-name – Manakıb-ı Hünkar Hacı Bektaş Veli*, p. 46.

Iskendername attributed to Hamzavi, Khidr appears as the great sage and helper and gives advice to Iskender about various subjects to solve the problems.²⁰⁶

Another role of Khidr is that in numerous texts Khidr converts people to Islam. In fact, we see Khidr in conversion stories since the early years of Islam as in the example of the renowned story of Ibrahim Adham (d. ca. 160/777 A.D.) from Balkh. Ibrahim Adham, who left his throne when he was king and chose an ascetic life, is one of the earliest Muslim mystics mentioned by al-Sulami (d. 412/1021) in the *Kitab Tabaqat al-Sufiyah* and by Qushayri (d. 1072) in his *Risala*.²⁰⁷ There are different versions of his story that narrate his encounter with Khidr. In Sulami's version, Ibrahim Adham encounters Khidr in a desert on his way to Mecca and Khidr teaches him the names of God. Likewise, another example is from the *Arabian Nights*. In the tale of the "City of Brass" in the *Arabian Nights*, Khidr appears within the context of conversion and teaches Islam to the people of the City of Brass.²⁰⁸ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak notes that the *Tezkire-i Satuk Buğra Han*²⁰⁹ is the earliest Turkish text that mentions Khidr, and in this text too, Khidr is introduced as the one who teaches Islam to non-Muslims.²¹⁰ Similarly, in the *Garibname* (1330), one of the

²⁰⁶ See Hendrik Boeschoten, "Adventures of Alexander in Medieval Turkish".

²⁰⁷ See, Süleyman Uludağ, "Basic Sources for Mystical Thought in the Ottoman Period", p. 23.

²⁰⁸ Andras Hamori, "An Allegory from the Arabian Nights: The City of Brass, p. 15.

²⁰⁹ Satuk Buğra Han (d. 959) is accepted to be the founder of the first Turkic-Islamic state. The narratives about his conversion later became to be known as the *Tezkire-i Satuk Buğra Han*, see G. Kut, "Osmanlı (Batı Oğuz) Sahası, Erken Dönem (1200-1512): Nazım, XIII-XIV. Yüzyıl", p. 304-305.

Deweese notes the existence of two types of works, one is entitled *Tadhkirah-i Bugra Khani* or *Tadhkirah-i Uvaysi*, and the other type is the "shorter works bearing similar titles, which, though clearly based in part on the earlier work". For more information see, "An 'Uvaysi' Sufi in Timurid Mawarannahr: Notes on Hagiography and the Taxonomy of Sanctity in the Religious History of Central Asia", p. 5

²¹⁰ Ocak, *İslam Türk İnançlarında Hızır yahut Hızır İlyas Kültü*. On the text and its transcription, see Mehmet T. Berbercan, "Buğra Tezkiresinden Parçalar (Transkripsiyon-Dil Özellikleri Üzerine Bazı Açıklamalar-Tercüme)". According to Berbercan this text must be copied in the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Khidr does not play an important role in the narrative, but is

features of Khidr among others is that he converts people to Islam.²¹¹ Also, in a certain version of Iskender narratives, Iskender is converted to Islam by Khidr. The Arabic *Sirat al-Iskandar*, for example, can be noted as one such example which includes the conversion story of Iskender by Khidr. As Doufekar-Aerts notes, “a sizeable portion of the *Sira* is given to the introduction of al-Khidr and al-Iskandar’s conversion”.²¹²

With a particular focus on buildings and space, Ethel Sara Wolper examines, in several works, the role of Khidr in relation to places which have undergone a conversion in function.²¹³ Referring to the story of an elephant that was sent as a gift to Charlemagne by the Abbasid caliph, Wolper introduces Khidr as a “figure of cross-cultural contacts”²¹⁴ who “alerted audiences to change and provided them with a way to understand the nature of that change”²¹⁵. In the stories about the history of Hagia Sophia, for example, we find Khidr mentioned in relation to the conversion of the building. After its conversion to a mosque during the time of Mehmed II, the sultan’s biographer Şemseddin writes that the divinely revealed plan of Hagia Sophia

only mentioned related to the conversion of Satuk Buğra Han: “Bir kimerse peydā bolup müselmāncılık-nı bizge şol kimerse örgetür dēp Hāzret-i Hızır āytıp ērdiler”, p. 434.

²¹¹ The original text is as follows:

Ol uludan her kime değse eser / Ermeniyse ol dem zünnar keser

(From that exalted man at whom touches a sign / If he is Armenian at that moment he cuts the cassock)

²¹² Doufekar-Aerts, *Alexander Magnus Arabicus: A Survey of the Alexander Tradition through Seven Centuries, from Pseudo-Callisthenes to Suri*, p. 204-213.

²¹³ See Ethel Sara Wolper, “Khidr, Elwan Celebi and the Conversion of Sacred Sanctuaries in Anatolia”; “Khidr and the Changing Frontiers of the Medieval World”; “Khidr and the Language of Conversion: Creating Landscapes of Discontinuity”; “Khidr and the Politics of Place: Creating Landscapes of Continuity”.

²¹⁴ See, “Khidr and the Changing Frontiers of the Medieval World”, p. 121.

²¹⁵ See, “Khidr and the Language of Conversion: Creating Landscapes of Discontinuity”, p. 267; “Khidr and the Changing Frontiers of the Medieval World”, p. 123-124.

was given to the church's architect by Khidr.²¹⁶ Likewise, in stories about the Umayyad Mosque, which was first a pagan site, then became a church, and finally was converted into a mosque, we find the figure of Khidr. Khidr was said to have visited the church in the eleventh century, when it was divided between Muslims and Christians. Also, some medieval Islamic sources write that Khidr was seen to attend the prayers in the Umayyad Mosque.²¹⁷

Another well-known role of Khidr is that he acts as an initiator. In fact, this role is similar to his role as the initiator of Islam leading non-Muslims to convert. The initiation of the warrior dervish in the *Hızırname* into *veli*-hood, which makes him one of the chosen ones, who are mentioned as the *erenler* in the text, is a typical example of Khidr's role as an initiator. Likewise Sarı Saltuk also becomes a friend of God with the blessing of Khidr in the *Saltukname*. Similarly, the *Iskendername* by Nizami can be noted as another example for the role of Khidr as an initiator. In the introduction to the *Iqbalnameh*, which forms the second part of the *Iskendername*, Nizami tells us that his poetic inspiration came from the mouth of Khidr and that he also wrote the history of Iskender as Khidr suggested he should.²¹⁸ Initiation to heavenly knowledge therefore, is a subject commonly associated with the blessing of Khidr in Islamic literature.

The narratives of Ibrahim Edhem can be noted as an example for the intertwined relationship between the roles of Khidr as an initiator of Islam and the

²¹⁶ On Khidr's anecdote in Şemseddin's account see Gülru Necipoğlu, "The Life of an Imperial Monument: Hagia Sophia after Byzantium", p. 198-201; Stefanos Yerasimos, *Kostantiniye ve Ayasofya Efsaneleri*.

²¹⁷ Khidr and the Language of Conversion: Creating Landscapes of Discontinuity", p. 271-273. On the role of Khidr in the narratives related to space also see, Patrick Franke, "Khidr in Istanbul: Observations on the Symbolic Construction of Sacred Spaces in Traditional Islam".

²¹⁸ See Franke, "Drinking from the Water of Life – Nizami, Khizr and the Symbolism of Poetical Inspiration in Later Persianate Literature".

initiator of *veli*-hood. In an Anatolian Turkish version of Ibrahim Adham's story for example, Ibrahim Adham encounters Khidr before he leaves his throne to seek for God. According to this version, while Ibrahim Adham is sleeping upon his throne on a silk mattress he has a dream. In his dream, he sees someone walking around on the roof and asks the man who he is. The man answers "I am your camel driver, I have lost a camel and I am looking for it". Upon hearing these words Ibrahim Adham gets angry, as you would not usually find a camel on a roof, and he therefore tells the man that he should not be looking for his camel on the roof. By asking Ibrahim Adham if someone who seeks God can find Him on a golden throne, the man says to him: "my looking for a camel here is just like your saying 'I am a servant of God'", and then he disappears. When Ibrahim Adham wakes up he feels scared and worried. He does not eat and drink anything for three days and his men get worried about him. After three days, a *kervancı* visits his palace and tells him that he will stay in the palace. Similar to what happened in his dream, after a short conversation, he disappears by telling Ibrahim Adham not to be attached to this world. Then the text mentions that the person who visited Ibrahim Edhem is Khidr Ilyas.²¹⁹ In this popular story of Ibrahim Adham, upon his encounters with Khidr, Ibrahim Edhem is initiated into an ascetic life and leaves his palace and throne to find God.

All these briefly noted examples indicate that in many cases 'an encounter with Khidr' causes a change or transformation in the life of the person who meets him. These stories can be read as different representations and variants of a mystical movement that took place in the ninth and tenth centuries in Khurasan, according to

²¹⁹ On the Anatolian Turkish version of Ibrahim Edhem's story, its transcription and translation into English, see David T. Zmijewski, "Critical Edition of a Turkish Legend of Ibrahim ibn Adham". Zmijewski's critical edition is based on two manuscripts dated to the nineteenth century, but the language is fifteenth century Anatolian Turkish. For a different edition of the text, also see Mehmet M. Söylemez, *Dastan-ı İbrahim Edhem*.

which Khidr is believed to appear in a dream to God seekers and to guide them on the path to God.²²⁰ Later on, the popularity of the encounter stories of the dervishes with Khidr formed into the idea of “a Khidr of the time”, as mentioned in Mevlana’s *Masnavi*: “Bayezid was longing and searching for that person, who was the Khidr of the time”.²²¹ Also, in addition to being the companion of the dervishes, Khidr became a figure related to the authority of a sheikh in a certain group. As Devin DeWeese notes, encountering Khidr during a visionary experience was counted as one of the modes of the legitimation of authority among the dervish groups between the twelfth to fifteenth centuries.²²²

Khidr’s role in the narratives about the Yasavi circles can be noted as one such instance. Ahmed Yasavi, for example, had been a companion of Khidr since childhood as had his father, Şeyh İbrahim, before him. This companionship was not something unique to Ahmed Yasavi and his father; Khidr, in turn, was also the companion of Şeyh İbrahim’s ten thousand disciples and Ahmed Yasavi’s parents got married thanks to the help of Khidr.²²³ According to the *Jawahir al-abrar min amwaj al-bihar* (1002/1593-4) by Hazini,²²⁴ one day Khidr says to Ahmed Yasavi: “I travel the seven climes seven times a day searching for a companion and there is no

²²⁰ See Anooshahr, *The Ghazi Sultans and the Frontiers of Islam*, p. 93. Anooshahr also mentions different versions of İbrahim Edhem’s story and other conversion stories modelled on the story of İbrahim Edhem, as in the example of Sebüktegin’s biography which also includes a dream about Khidr, p. 92-96.

²²¹ *Mesnevî 1-2*, trans. by Adnan Karaismailoğlu, c. 2215.

²²² DeWeese, “Orality and Master-Disciple Relationship in Medieval Sufi Communities (Iran and Central Asia), 12th-15th Centuries”. DeWeese mentions seven types of modes of legitimation by the sheikhs. In this categorization, claiming legitimacy by Khidr is the third mode among others, see p. 297.

²²³ Köprülü, *Early Mystics in Turkish Literature*, p. 57-59.

²²⁴ On Hazini’s work see DeWeese, “Sacred Places and ‘Public’ Narratives: The Shrine of Ahmad Yasavi in Hagiographical Traditions of the Yasavi Sufi Order, 16th-17th Centuries”, especially p. 358-359.

companion more capable and finer than you”.²²⁵ In this anecdote by Hazini, Khidr legitimizes the power and charisma of Ahmed Yasavi among his disciples and the dervish circles by confirming the latter’s superiority.

As a figure of helper and companion, Khidr is not unique to Islamic literature; he has counterparts in other literary traditions as well. For example, Khidr has been identified with the prophet Elijah²²⁶ (or Elias), Enoch,²²⁷ St. George²²⁸ and certain other saints in Christian literature - such as Saint Sargis²²⁹ - because of the parallels in their stories and features. In Jewish tradition Elijah is a prophet well-known from

²²⁵ Köprülü, *Early Mystics in Turkish Literature*, p. 23.

²²⁶ In Jewish literature and folklore, Elijah is an immortal prophet and a teacher of esoteric knowledge. He also helps innocent people and those who are in need. He is believed to have ascended to heaven and is associated with paradise. For more information, see Yoram Biru, “Dreamers in Paradise: The Worship of Prophet Elijah in Beit She’an”.

On the Biblical story of Elijah and his different representations in Greek homilies, see Francesca P. Barone, “The Image of Elijah in Ps. Chrysostom, The Greek Homilies”. Similar to the features of Khidr, in some homilies Elijah is depicted as an angel on Earth and he is associated with water, rain and heaven.

²²⁷ For example, see Daphna Arbel, “Elijah Lore and the Enoch Metatron Narrative of 3 Enoch”. Arbel points to the popularity of the belief in the ancient Mediterranean World that “the boundaries between divine and humans can be crossed by humans’ ascent to heaven” and also gives information about the early Jewish and Christian apocalypses, which include the variants of this notion.

²²⁸ See for example Ocak, “XIII-XIV. Yüzyıllarda Anadolu’da Dini Etkileşimler ve Aya Yorgi (Saint Georges Kültü). Also see O. Busbecq, *The Turkish Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq Imperial Ambassador at Constantinople 1554-1562*. Busbecq, a Dutch ambassador in the sixteenth century, visits a dervish lodge near Amasya and describes the similarities between St George and Khidr as follows: “Here is a famous establishment of Turkish monks whom they call dervishes from whom we learnt much about a hero called Chederle, a man of great physical and mortal courage whom they declare to be identical with our St George and to whom they ascribe the same achievements as we ascribe to our saint [...] The tales are laughable enough, but the following is still more deserving of ridicule: they declare that he was one of the companions of Alexander the Great!”, p. 54-55. This anecdote is of importance in tracing the interaction between the narratives of different cultures and regions as it shows how and where these stories were circulating.

For an analysis of Busbecq’s claims, see, Oya Pancaroğlu, “The Itinerant Dragon-Slayer: Forging Paths of Image and Identity in Medieval Anatolia”, especially p. 157-159.

On St George and how he became a nationalist icon in England in the sixteenth century, see, Jerry Brotton, “St George between East and West”.

For conversion and the cult of St George in Egypt, see, Michael Brett, “Population and Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period”, for St George see p. 17.

²²⁹ For the shared features of Khidr with St. Sargis in Armenian folk beliefs and stories, such as raising the dead, being the patron of grains and fertility, wish-maker, having power over water, being the symbol of the rebirth of nature, showing the right path to travellers, helping people in need, see Hasmik Tovmayan, “St. Sargis and al-Khidr”.

the Bible, the Talmud and midrashic literature, encountered in dreams or in long journeys. He appears in Jewish ritual and indeed is one of the more prominent holy persons of Judaism venerated in shrines, especially in greater Syria. Elijah, believed to have operated miracles, was also endowed by the power to give eternal life.²³⁰ The Byzantine Emperor Cantacuzenus (d. 1380) was cited by F. W. Hasluck as one of the earliest sources linking the identification of Khidr with Elias.²³¹ In the Anatolian case, the resemblances between Christian Orthodox figures and Khidr are a result of the interaction between the narratives of Christian literature and Islamic literature in the region.

The popularity of the tales of Khidr can be traced in the literatures of other regions as well. An example is in one of the well-known works of English literature, the late fourteenth century narrative poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, where some typical features of the figure of the ‘Green Knight’ may be accounted for in relation to Khidr. According to Su F. Ng and Kenneth Hodges, one of the possible explanations for the distinctive features of this figure could be that, “the Green Knight combines a Celtic tradition with Islamicized legends of St. George”. The interaction between these two figures is explained by the popularity of the stories of Khidr and the long-term links between England and the eastern Mediterranean powers.²³²

²³⁰ Meri, “Re-appropriating Sacred Space: Medieval Jews and Muslim Seeking Elijah and al-Khidr”, p. 238. For information on the sanctuaries connected with Elijah and their veneration by Jews and others, see, p. 239-253

²³¹ Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, I: 322.

²³² Su F. Ng and Kenneth Hodges, “Saint George, Islam, and Regional Audiences in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*”. The article defines the text as a border poem and argues that the *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* may have been shaped by the literary exchanges resulting from international contacts.

The widespread popularity of Khidr, both in religious literature and in literary works, has made this figure the subject of discussion in numerous studies in terms of his identity and origin.²³³ To date, the majority of the studies on Khidr have sought to discover the origins of the figure by focusing on the interaction between different cultures and through examination of his identity in Abrahamic and other religions, as well as in cultural and folkloric practices.²³⁴ In all of these studies Khidr is seen as a multi-faceted and ubiquitous figure who appears in different roles and whose identity has been shaped and developed in relation to the interaction of societies via conversion, migration and translation activities.

b. Khidr and Ilyas

In addition to the intrinsic characteristics of Khidr, an additional puzzling feature is that he does not always appear alone. In some texts Khidr appears together with the equally elusive figure of Ilyas. In other texts, it cannot be ascertained whether Khidr Ilyas refers to a single person or to two different people. An Uighur inscription on the Christian mausoleum of Mar Behnam, a Sassanian era martyr,

²³³ For instance, see, J. Wensinck, “al-Khidr”; Anna Krasnowolska, “Kızıl”; Ocak, *İslam-Türk İnançlarında Hızır yahut Hızır-İlyas Kültü*; Pertev Boratav, “Türklerde Hızır”; Partrick Franke, *Begegnung mit Khidr*; John Renard, “Khaḍir/Khidr”; İlyas Çelebi, “Hızır”; Cemal Kurnaz, “Hızır”; Süleyman Uludağ, “Hızır”; Pervin Ergun, “Halk Anlatmalarında Hızır”; A. K. Coomaraswamy, “Khwaja Khadir and the Fountain of Life in the Tradition of Persian and Mughal Art”; Paul Smith, *Khidr in Sufi Poetry: A Selection*.

²³⁴ Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, I: 319-336”; J. P. G. Finch and F. B. P. Lory, “St. George and El Khidr”; H. S. Haddad, “Georgic Cults and Saints of the Levant”; A. Y. Ocak, “XIII-XIV. Yüzyıllarda Anadolu’da Dini Etkileşimler ve Aya Yorgi (Saint Georges Kültü); İsmet Çetin, “Türk Mitinde Kut İyesi Kızır ve Medeniyet Değişikliğinde Kızır’dan Hızır’a Geçiş”; Hüseyin Türk, “Hatay’da Müslüman-Hıristiyan Etkileşimi: St Georges ya da Hızır Kültü”; Felix Jones, “St. George and el-Khidr”; Sorour Soroudi, “The Sofreh of Elijah the Prophet: A Pre-Islamic Rituel?”; Hasmik Tovmayan, “St. Sargis and al-Khidr”; Warren S. Walker and Ahmet E. Uysal, “An Ancient God in Modern Turkey”; Mary Boyce, “Bibi Sharbanu and the Lady of Pars”; Jerry Brotton, “St George Between East and West”; Irfan Omar, “Reflecting Divine Light: al-Khidr as an Embodiment of God’s Mercy (rahma)”.

provides an interesting example relating to this debate, as it mentions Khidr-Ilyas: “May the happiness and praise of Khidr Elias befall and settle on the Il-Khan and the nobles and the noblewomen!” The inscription is on the monumental façade of the mausoleum. According to the Arabic and Syriac inscriptions on the inside and outside of the building, the mausoleum dates to the end of the thirteenth century. A. Harrak and N. Ruji therefore ask the obvious question: “How did an Uighur inscription make its way on to a Christian mausoleum in Mesopotamia?” In their investigation they link the answer to the Mongol invasion of the monastery in 1295. They also describe the appearance of ‘Khidr Ilyas’ in the inscription as a “double-name conveniently given to Mar Behnam probably at the end of the 13th century”.²³⁵ The inscription gives no clues as to whether Khidr and Ilyas are two different people or not. Likewise, Ibn Battuta in his travel account dating to the thirteenth century, mentions a *ribat* named after Khidr Ilyas at Abbadan on the route to Persia. The *ribat* was located on the banks of a waterway, three miles from the town and it was next to the *zawiya* where Ibn Battuta stayed.²³⁶

The popularity of the Khidr-Ilyas stories in the region, and their relationship with places and buildings, was also reflected in literary compositions. As an example from an Anatolian Turkish work, the fourteenth century Turkish masnavi *Hurşidname* (789/1387) by Şeyhoğlu Mustafa (d. 803/1401), also known as the *Hurşid u Feraḥşad*, mentions a sanctuary (*teferrücgah ve ziyaretgah*) called Khidr-Ilyas. The narrative consists of four stories, but all are linked to the female protagonist Hurşid. In one of them, Hurşid’s father Siyavuş, who is a king in the land

²³⁵ See Amir Harrak and Niu Ruji, “The Uighur Inscription at the Mausoleum of Mar Behnam, Iraq”. The original text is transliterated as follows: “qīdīr alīyas-nīng qut-ī alqīš-ī ilqan-qa bāg-lār qatun-lar-qa qon-zun ornaš-zun”, see p. 67. For its translation see p. 68.

²³⁶ Waines, *The Odyssey of Ibn Battuta*, p. 140.

of Ajam, sends four of his servants to the castle of Hurşid in order to kill her. However, the servants fall in love with Hurşid and one of them dies from love-sickness. When Hurşid learns what has happened to him, she builds a huge dome at his graveyard and turns the place into a *teferrücgah ve ziyaretgah*, and names it Khidr-Ilyas.²³⁷

The pairing of Khidr and Ilyas can also be traced in Turkish folk stories circulating often in oral form as they used to be narrated at gatherings. As a result of their oral transmission these stories would include repeating themes and motifs, but with alterations. For example, a common motif in these texts is that the protagonist has a dream in which Khidr-Ilyas gives him a love drink. This drink makes the protagonist fall in love with a beauty.²³⁸

With regard to the twinning of Khidr and Ilyas, the *Iskendernames* are important texts in which to seek for the traces of these figures as they are a rich source of stories of Khidr. Two well-known narratives of Iskender in Persian literature, one in the *Shahnameh* (c. 977-1010) by Ferdowsi (d. 1020), and the other written by Nizami (d. 1209), reveal the variety in this tradition in terms of the role played by the figures of Khidr and Ilyas in their plot. In the *Shahnameh*, Ilyas does not appear in the story of Iskender and, at the end of the journey, Khidr is the one who reaches the fountain of life.²³⁹ On the other hand, in his *Sekandarnama*, Nizami

²³⁷ On the *Hurşidname* and for its summary, see Günay Kut, “Osmanlı (Batı Oğuz) Sahası, Erken Dönem (1200-1512): Nazım, XIII-XIV. Yüzyıl”, p. 463-481.

G. Kut notes that, in terms of the characters, this masnavi was inspired by the *Shahnameh* of Ferdowsi, p. 481.

For summary of the work see V. M Kocatürk, *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi*, p. 116-120.

²³⁸ İlhan Başgöz, “Turkish Folk Stories about the Lives of Minstrels”, p. 332.

²³⁹ Ferdowsi, *The Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings*, p. 511-513.

writes that Khidr and Ilyas searched for the water of life together and at the end of their journey, they found the source of eternity and both became immortal.²⁴⁰

Nizami, however, narrates two different stories in the *Sekandarnama*, by noting that when Khidr has reached the source of life, on account of Sikandar's disappointment Khidr became hidden from him, and the old men of Rum have recited this tale in another way.²⁴¹ Whether this twist in the plot points to earlier versions of the story or whether it is the innovation of Nizami needs further analysis. But, as in the variations in the narratives of Iskender regarding the figures Khidr and Ilyas, O. Eravşar points to similar variations in the depictions of these figures in Ottoman miniatures. While in some miniatures Khidr and Ilyas appear together, in others we do not see Ilyas. Eravşar suggests that the depiction of Khidr and Ilyas together in some miniatures may be because they were united in later period.²⁴²

In fact, the debate on the origin and identity of Khidr and Ilyas dates back to as early as the very first Koran commentators. According to al-Tabari (d. 310/923), for example, Khidr lived during the time of the King Afridhun and he is of royal blood. As al-Tabari quotes from a certain 'Abdallah b. Shawdhab, Khidr is said to have been from Persia, while Ilyas was an Israelite and they meet "every year during

²⁴⁰ Nizami, *The Sikandar-nama*, p. 802-804.

²⁴¹ Nizami, *ibid*, p. 802-803. The text is as follows:

Through intelligence Khizr knew / That Sikandar would be void (of a share) of the fountain
on account of his (Sikandar's) disappointment – not (on account of) his anger, / He Khizr
became, like the fountain, concealed from his eye

As to this account, the old men of Rum / Have recited this tale in another way

Saying: Ilyas was fellow-traveller with Khizr, / To that fountain which was on the path

When they came, - with mutual salutation / They descended into that water of the fountain

²⁴² Osman Eravşar, "Miniature Paintings of the Prophet Elijah (Ilyas) and Al Khodor (Hıdır) in the Ottoman Period", p. 141.

For more miniatures depicting the journey of Khidr also see, Metin And, *Minyatürlerle Osmanlı-İslam Mitologyası*, p. 202-206.

the annual festival season”.²⁴³ Likewise, in the *Treatise on Mystical Love* by Daylami (d. c. 983-1002) too, Khidr is of Persian blood. The text also mentions that both Khidr and Ilyas are said to have been Israelites and they used to meet once a year.²⁴⁴

By examining the depiction of Ilyas in the Turkish works *Dürr-i Meknun* (*Hidden Pearl*),²⁴⁵ a Turkish prose work dated to the second half of the fifteenth century, and *Acaibü'l-mahlukat*²⁴⁶ (*Wonders of Creation*), Gönül Tekin introduces Ilyas as a sun-god. Accordingly, the symbol of the sun-god, which is a bird, is also linked to the depiction of Ilyas in these texts. Khidr on the other hand, is related to the storm-god.²⁴⁷ As a different view on the other hand, Ahmet Demirtaş, for example, in his edition of *Dürr-i Meknun*, describes Khidr as the nickname of Ilyas and notes that Ilyas is also referred to as Khidr-Ilyas.²⁴⁸

²⁴³ See the chapter “The Tale of al-Khidr and His History” in *The History of al-Tabari*, by al-Tabari, especially p. 1-5.

²⁴⁴ See al-Daylami, *A Treatise on Mystical Love*, p. 188-189.

²⁴⁵ The *Dürr-i Meknûn* is a cosmological and encyclopedic work and it includes information about a wide range of subjects, such as the wonders of creation; the history of the prophets; the science of climes, days and hours; the construction of the temple of Solomon or the Kaaba in Mecca.

For an edition of the text see A. Demirtaş, *Yazıcıoğlu Ahmed Bican, Dürr-i Meknûn*. This study includes information about the work, its manuscript copies and its critical edition based on some copies.

On the *Dürr-i Meknûn*, also see, Şahin Kaya, “Constantinople and the End Time: The Ottoman Conquest as a Portent of the Last Hour.” In this article Kaya focuses on the theme of apocalypticism in the *Dürr-i Meknun*. For a discussion about its authorship and composition date see p. 335-339.

²⁴⁶ On the *Acaibu'l-mahlukat* works and for a facsimile of a Turkish *Acaibu'l-mahlukat*, see Günay Kut, *Acaibü'l-mahlukat ve Garayibü'l-mevcutat*.

Also see Feray Coşkun, “An Ottoman Preacher’s Perception of a Medieval Cosmography: Mahmed al-Hatib’s Translation of Kharidat al-‘Aja’ib wa Faridat al-Ghara’ib”; Travis Zadeh, “The Wiles of Creation: Philosophy, Fiction and the ‘Aja’ib Tradition”. Coşkun’s work also includes a discussion on the Turkish translation of *Kharidat al-‘ajaib* in the sixteenth century.

²⁴⁷ Gönül A. Tekin, “Sevgililer Hep Bahçede Buluşur”, p. 54-55.

²⁴⁸ Ahmet Demirtaş, *Yazıcıoğlu Ahmed Bican, Dürr-i Meknûn*, p. 397.

Hidrellez

In folkloric practice, the joining of Khidr with Ilyas has formed the basis of the cult of *Hidrellez*²⁴⁹, a festival celebrated in Anatolia and the Balkans on the 6th May according to the Gregorian calendar adopted in the area, and on the 23rd April, according to the Julian calendar, which is the name day of St. George. On the day of *Hidrellez*, Khidr and Ilyas meet and make the wishes of the people come true. As with the twinning of Khidr and Ilyas, the reason why these figures reunite on this day every year is also one of the questions under debate in secondary sources. Because of its occurrence on the same day as St George's Day, some scholars explain the origin of *Hidrellez* as an Islamicized version of this Christian tradition.²⁵⁰

Since "khidr" means 'the verdant one' and therefore connotes nature and spring, several studies have suggested a connection between this figure and religious and cultural festivities. Anna Krasnowolska, for example, discusses its relation with popular Iranian beliefs. As she points out, in the Iranian tradition Khidr is connected to the winter-spring ceremonial cycle and particular days are dedicated to and named after him, such as Bahman/Esfand, and these days coincide with the Nouruz festival (vernal equinox). Khidr is also related to some Iranian legends, such as the popular Old Woman (ajuze) cycle and, he is believed to be the patron of agriculture or of animals. Some of these beliefs are the continuation of Zoroastrian pastoral festivals

²⁴⁹ Turkish compound word formed of Hıdır/Hızır and Ilyas.

²⁵⁰ P. N. Boratav, "Khidr-Ilyas"; A. Krasnowolska, "The Prophet Xezr-Elias in Iranian Popular Beliefs: With Some Slavic Parallels"; Joseph W. Meri, "Re-appropriating Sacred Space: Medieval Jews and Muslims Seeking Elijah and Al-Khadir"; D. R. Howell, "Al Khadr and Christian Icons"; Kemal Güngör, "Anadolu'da Hızır Geleneği ve Hidrellez Törenlerine Dair Bir İnceleme"; A. Y. Ocak, "Hidrellez"; Turan Gökçe, "Hızır İlyas Kültürünün Yerleşim Birimlerine Yansıması: Osmanlı Döneminde Anadolu Şehir ve Kasabalarında Hıdırlık"; Necip F. Duru, "Kosova Türklerinin Baharı Karşılama Ritüelleri"; Armağan C. Elçi, "Bulgaristan/Deliorman Aleviliğindeki Kırklar Bayramı (Nevruz) ve Hidrellez"; Seval Kasımoğlu, "Cumhuriyet Döneminde Geleneksel Kutlama Bağlamında Hidrellez Geleneği".

and in some areas have kept the character of ancestral souls.²⁵¹ There are also resemblances between Khidr- Ilyas and the Zoroastrian patrons of waters and plants, Haurvatat - Ameratat.²⁵²

Based on Sumerian literature, on the other hand, Gönül Tekin suggests that the meeting of Khidr and Ilyas on the day of the *Hidrellez* in fact symbolizes the meeting of the storm-god with the sun-god. The day when they meet is the time when the Sun is on the constellation of Taurus, which is the symbol of the storm-god. In Sumerian literature, this day was celebrated as the day of the sacred marriage of the god Tammuz to the goddess Ishtar. Because of the relationship between the Sumerian god Tammuz and Khidr, Tekin introduces Khidr as the storm-god. Ilyas, on the other hand, is the sun-god. Thus, on the day of the *Hidrellez*, when the Sun is on Taurus, the meeting of Ilyas with Khidr symbolizes the meeting of the sun- god with the storm-god, the sacred marriage in Sumerian literature.²⁵³

Ilyas in the *Hızırname*

Although Ilyas does not figure prominently in the *Hızırname*, Khidr and Ilyas are mentioned together at least eight times in different poems. However, while in some poems they are referred to as two different people, in others whether Khidr

²⁵¹ In the article “Anahita and Alexander”, W. Hanaway, analyses the *Darab-name* by Abu Taher Mohammad al-Tarsusi. As Hanaway mentions, the *Darab-name* is formed of two romances, the Darab romance and the Alexander romance. The story of Alexander is the Iranian variant of the Pseudo-Callisthenes Alexander romance. In al-Tarsusi’s text, Alexander marries the daughter of Darius III, Buran Dokht and after the wedding he begins his journey to find the spring of life. In the narrative, Buran Dokht is closely associated with water, divinely protected from fire and wind. Besides, she is the main support of the Persian army in India. Hanaway points to the resemblances between Buran Dokht, Anahita - who is the goddess of fertility and water - Khidr and Loqman.

²⁵² See Anna Krasnowolska, “The Prophet Xezr-Elias in Iranian Popular Beliefs: With Some Slavic Parallels”.

²⁵³ Tekin, “Sevgililer Hep Bahçede Buluşur”, p. 56.

Ilyas is one person or not is not clear. In poems twelve and thirteen, the poet talks about the *himmet* (blessing) of Khidr Ilyas, which unveiled the secrets of creation before him and, therefore leading him to travel in the heavenly realm. In Poem Thirty, which is about the circumambulation of the Kaabe in Mecca, the poet mentions that there is a place for Khidr in the Harem, and for the prophet Ilyas too. In Poem Thirty-three, which is about the journey of the poet in the heavens and his encounters with the angels, the *qutb* and the *ghawth*, he mentions that Khidr and Ilyas came too and joined them. In Poem Forty-one, the poet travels to the depths of the ocean and tells us that Khidr showed him around with Ilyas. In poem forty-two, which is about the great gathering of the friends of God, the prophets Khidr and Ilyas also join the gathering. In poem sixty-eight, which is entitled ‘Meeting Khidr Ilyas and the *Qutb* of the Universe’, the poet tells us that he visited Khidr and since the prophet Ilyas said “amen” to his prayer, he was able to reach the edge of the Heaven (*sidre*). In poem seventy-two, the poet mentions Khidr Ilyas as if they are one person. In poem seventy-six, he calls them the two sultans and meets them at the waterside.

Only in one poem, (twenty-five), is Ilyas mentioned alone. In this section the poet describes the dwelling place of Ilyas, which is in a mountain on an island. Intriguingly, we find the same description for Ilyas in the *Battalname* too: “That mountain over there in the middle of the sea is Ilyas’s spot, and that’s where the exalted prophet is”.²⁵⁴ On the other hand, this is also the description of the dwelling place of Khidr in the *Qisas al-Anbiya* texts. In Rabguzi for example, when Moses asks God whether there is another one who has the same knowledge he has, God tells him that he has a servant living in an island in the seas and his knowledge is only a

²⁵⁴ Dedes, *The Battalname, An Ottoman Turkish Frontier Epic Wondertale*, p. 210.

drop of ocean compared to that servant's.²⁵⁵ Although different from text to text, relating to either Khidr or Ilyas, the shared description for their dwelling places shows the mixing of their stories circulating both in oral and written form with each other, pointing to the confusion about their identities, as well as their popularity in the region. The similar description for the place of Ilyas both in the *Battalname* and the *Hızırname* however, strongly suggests a textual link between two works.

When compared to the role of Khidr, Ilyas does not figure prominently in the plot of the *Hızırname*. Khidr is the one who is praised throughout the text and whose virtues are repeatedly mentioned, being the initiator of the experiential journey of the dervish and his companion in the heavenly realm.

c. Discussions on the Identity of Khidr in Anatolia: The Concept of 'Syncretism'

The studies that examine the figure of Khidr in Anatolia describe Khidr as a 'syncretic' figure. Therefore, this section will present a brief overview of the concept of syncretism, with a particular focus on the discussions on the syncretic aspects of Khidr.

In the secondary literature, 'syncretism' is a general concept used to explain the shared characteristics amongst groups from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Anatolia is one of the most intriguing regions in which to trace the elusive development and transformation of the figure of Khidr, as the region has experienced various transition periods throughout the centuries. Amongst the studies that focus on Anatolia, the two scholars of major importance are F. W.

²⁵⁵ Rabguzi, *Kıyasu 'l-Enbiya*, p.181.

Hasluck and F. Köprülü, as they have influenced numerous works which have followed them in terms of methodology and sources.

The focus of Hasluck's study is the resemblances between Khidr, Elias and St. George. For example, the grey horse of Khidr, which is mentioned by George of Hungary who spent a long time in captivity in Anatolia in the early fifteenth century, is described as a "trait borrowed from the Christian St. George, whose horse is invariably depicted as white or grey".²⁵⁶ Another example of the similarities between these figures, is what Hasluck refers to as the "conception of the protector of travellers", which is typical of both St. George and Khidr.²⁵⁷ Likewise, Khidr's association with travel is linked to Elias' wandering life, as Elias is also an eternal wanderer.²⁵⁸

Hasluck's study also includes shared stories common to both Christians and Muslims, as well as the shared sacred places which are described as 'converted' areas after the settlement and expansion of the Muslim population in Anatolia and the Balkans. In accordance with this approach, the *Khidirlik* (place of Khidr) sites of the Ottoman settlements are described in these terms too. *Khidirlik* sites were located mostly on a hill nearby a village and usually were green areas near to water. They also had several functions. For example, some of the *Khidirlik* sites were used as *namazgah* (a place for prayer) and during the urbanization of the villages, these sites were converted into neighbourhoods in the towns.²⁵⁹ Hasluck mentions these sites in

²⁵⁶ Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, p. 322. For the chapter "el-Khidr", see p. 319-336.

²⁵⁷ Hasluck, *ibid*, p. 323.

²⁵⁸ Hasluck, *ibid*, p. 334.

²⁵⁹ On the *Khidirlik* sites in the Ottoman era, see Turan Gökçe, "Hızır İlyas Kültünün Yerleşim Birimlerine Yansıması: Osmanlı Döneminde Anadolu Şehir ve Kasabalarında Hıdırlık". For example Hıdırlık Mahallesi in Birgi and Hıdırlık Mahallesi in Seferihisar, İzmir. In Birgi, the

relation to their Christian roots, by noting that “in many places the name *Khidrlik* (*place of Khidr*) is given to hills or ‘high places’ from which the Christian traditions, if any ever existed, have disappeared”.²⁶⁰ Hasluck’s works also investigate the connection of Khidr to religious orders and shrines. As an example of what he calls “ambiguous sanctuaries”, he notes that in some regions St. Sergius is identified with Khidr and in those places people make pilgrimages both to the sanctuaries of Khidr and to the churches of St. Sergius.²⁶¹

Fuad Köprülü, on the other hand, uses different sources to those of Hasluck, and therefore, in his writings, he has a different story to tell of the history of the region. The data examined by Hasluck came mostly from historical sites that he visited in the nineteenth century.²⁶² Köprülü on the other hand, examined the available Turkish sources and carried out textual analysis in order to explain the history of Islam and its literature in Anatolia. Köprülü explained the establishment and development of Islam and dervish orders in Anatolia, as well as the emergence of Turkish works written in the vernacular language, in relation to the movement and settlement of Yasavi dervishes in the region.

Khidrlik site became a neighbourhood in the sixteenth century. In 1529, Hıdırlık Mahallesi was the most populated part of the town of Seferihisar, see, p. 62-74

²⁶⁰ Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, I: 328. On the other hand, unlike Hasluck’s claims, the rituals of *Hidrellez* also show close parallels with the Persian celebrations of the *Abangan* day. This day is associated with water and is the day of Anahita. Similar to the *Hidrellez* rituals, on this day women visit the places near to water and pray God for their wishes. On the day of Abangan and its association with water and Anahita, see Nimet Yıldırım, “İran Mitolojisinde Su”, p. 15.

²⁶¹ See Hasluck “Ambiguous Sanctuaries and Bektashi Propaganda”, p. 101-102, or *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, II: 570-71.

On the conversion of some Zoroastrian shrines to the shrine of Khidr or Ilyas, see, Mary Boyce, “Bibi Shahrbanu and the Lady of Pars”.

Also see Tijana Krstic, “The Ambiguous Politics of ‘Ambiguous Sanctuaries’: F. Hasluck and Historiography on Syncretism and Conversion to Islam in 15th and 16th Century Ottoman Rumeli”.

²⁶² On Hasluck’s research and approach see, Keith Hopwood, “Christian-Muslim Symbiosis in Anatolia”; David Shankland, “The Life and Times of F.W. Hasluck (1878-1920)”.

Based on the works by Hasluck and Köprülü, Ahmet Yaşar Ocak has published the only extensive study on Khidr.²⁶³ This study examines a wide range of sources and approaches Khidr as a cult figure by pointing out the similarities between Khidr and the Christian saints (especially St. George²⁶⁴), the Shi'a *imams* (especially 'Ali) and pre-Islamic Turkic beliefs. The study concludes that Khidr is a syncretic figure from Anatolia and describes Khidr as follows: "This syncretic figure is a combination of an ordinary human being, a prophet, a friend of God (*veli*) and a heavenly creature with unique features".²⁶⁵

However, the explanation of the similarities between cultures and literatures that have occurred as a result of syncretism has created challenges in the analysis of both the shared or parallel elements and in the historiography. The discussion on the depiction of Khidr on horseback for instance, becomes problematic should this typical feature of Khidr be explained by syncretism alone. According to Hasluck, this is a feature borrowed from a Christian saint, St. George.²⁶⁶ According to Ocak on the other hand, the figure of Khidr on horseback is linked to pre-Islamic Turkic beliefs, especially to Shamanism, because, in the Shaman tradition, the shamans always had a grey or dune-coloured horse and they always rode these horses on their journey to talk with God (*Gök Tanrı*). Parenthetically, the Shamanistic custom also stipulated that the best horses to sacrifice were either dun-coloured or grey ones. Regarding the depiction of Khidr on horseback in Turkish sources, Ocak mentions the Turkish epic *Dede Korkut* as an example.²⁶⁷ On the other hand, Ocak does not

²⁶³ See Ocak, *İslam-Türk İnançlarında Hızır yahut Hızır-İlyas Kültü*.

²⁶⁴ Also see Ocak, "XIII.-XV. Yüzyıllarda Anadolu'da Türk-Hristiyan Dini Etkileşimler ve Aya Yorgi (Saint Georges) Kültü".

²⁶⁵ Ocak, *İslam-Türk İnançlarında Hızır yahut Hızır-İlyas Kültü*, p. 90.

²⁶⁶ Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, p. 322.

²⁶⁷ Ocak, *İslam-Türk İnançlarında Hızır yahut Hızır-İlyas Kültü*, p. 122.

underestimate the argument of Hasluck, who links Khidr to St. George, and concludes that the depiction of Khidr on horseback in Anatolia is a syncretic figure composed of all these different traditions.²⁶⁸ Thus, while in Hasluck's argument, Khidr is a syncretic figure of Christian and Muslim narratives only, in Ocak's description, the pre-Islamic Turkic elements are also imported into the syncretic identity of the figure and the figure appears as a mixture of everything which partakes of the history of Anatolia.

An argument that puts the figure of Khidr in the *Hızırname* in its contemporary historical context, by connecting it to the 'gazi ideology', is one that links it to Persian texts. Sawyer, in her analysis of the *Iskendername* (792/1390) composed by Ahmedi (d. 815/1412), describes the Khidr figure on horseback in Anatolia as having "possible ties to the gazi ideology", by noting that "it is possible that Ahmedi develops Hızır's role in order to link his narrative to popular tradition, strengthening the gazi ideals within this essentially literary work".²⁶⁹ Although Sawyer's approach is significant for the better understanding of the depiction of the figure in a certain literary text, another work, which predates Ahmedi's *Iskendername*, should be mentioned here as it challenges Sawyer's argument. In the *Sekandarnama* by Nizami, Khidr was already depicted on horseback during his

In the *Book of Dede Korkut*, Khidr appears only in the story of Boğaç Han. In this episode, when Boğaç Han gets injured because of his father's arrow, Khidr on horseback comes, cures the wound, and then disappears. For the episode see Muharrem Ergin, *Dede Korkut Kitabı* and Semih Tezcan and Hendrik Boeschoten, *Dede Korkut Oğuznameleri*.

On the *Book of Dede Korkut*, also see, Semih Tezcan, *Dede Korkut Oğuznameleri Üzerine Notlar*; Gottfried Hagen, "Heroes and Saints in Anatolian Literature"; Anthony Bryer, "Han Turali rides again".

On horse sacrifice in the early Ottoman narrative sources see Oscar A. Mandujano, "Recalling Sacrifice: Orality and Horse Slaughter among the Early Ottomans". This study examines the Turco-Mongolian funerary rites, with a particular focus on the representation of the horse sacrifice in the epic tales of *Dede Korkut*.

²⁶⁸ Ocak, *İslam-Türk İnançlarında Hızır yahut Hızır-İlyas Kültü*, p. 122.

²⁶⁹ Caroline Sawyer, "Alexander, History and Piety: A Study of Ahmedi's 14th Century Ottoman *Iskendername*", p. 191-192.

journey to the quest for the water of life. P. Franke notes that “the peculiarity that Khizr bathes his horse in the fountain is not found in any other version of the legend” and questions the reason why Nizami describes the horse of Khidr as becoming immortal at the fountain. Franke answers this question by using the popularity of Khidr as a “horseman mounted on a grey”, and by claiming that “with the addition of this detail, [Nizami] might have wanted to offer a mythological explanation” for his well-known image.²⁷⁰

In addition to the above briefly mentioned problems, the concept of ‘syncretism’ has been challenged in some recent studies which focus on the acts of conversion in the Ottoman era and also in others which examine similar elements shared by Christians and Muslims in the former Ottoman lands. The ongoing debate on ‘syncretism’ in contemporary scholarship generally points out the following issues: (a) the methodological problems, (b) the political motivations that have shaped the approaches to examining the shared elements and (c) the ideological concerns that have affected the historiography relating to this subject.

Regarding the methodological issues, in several of his works Yuri Stoyanov discusses the problems with syncretism in secondary sources.²⁷¹ For example, by focusing on “the state of research on Manichaean and/or Eastern Christian layers or elements in Alevism/Bektaşism”, Stoyanov asks “what elements of the systems of these heterodox movements/communities can be treated as truly syncretistic?” Referring to the words of Irene Melikoff, who describes the region as “a melting-pot

²⁷⁰ Franke, “Drinking from the Water of Life – Nizami, Khizr and the Symbolism of Poetical Inspiration in Later Persianate Literature”, p. 110.

²⁷¹ See the articles by Stoyanov: “On Some Parallels between Anatolian and Balkan Heterodox Islamic and Christian Traditions and the Problem of Their Coexistence and Interaction in the Ottoman Period”; “The Question of the Existence of Dualist Layers in Alevi/Bektaşî Syncretism and their Central Asian, Anatolian or Balkan Provenance”; “Early and Recent Formulations of Theories for a Formative Christian Heterodox Impact on Alevism”.

where people and creeds have been subjected to a permanent procedure of catalysis”, Stoyanov highlights the difficulties and problems in the “dating and identification” of “locally derived elements”. Another problem highlighted is to do with the method of differentiating the locally adopted elements from the archaic ones. Related to these difficulties which result from the history of the region, the article also notes the possibility of the “simultaneous presence of Iranian traditions in this pre-Islamic stratum, Zoroastrian and otherwise, which the westwards-driven Turkic tribes had variously encountered during their migrations in Central Asia” within the elements and layers under examination.²⁷²

In addition to these challenges about the ways to investigate the layers and elements in the region, Stoyanov readresses “the problem of the purported existence of earlier dualist layers in Ottoman Alevism/Kızılbaşism and Bektahsism”, by referring to the phenomenon “Alevi/Bektaşî syncretism”. As the article notes, “Alevi/Bektaşî indigenization and Islamic-Christian heterodoxy continuity theses” referred to in some studies is also problematic as they are “replete with major factual errors, ahistorical and anachronistic assertions and contentions underpinned by simplistic and outdated methodologies”. Also, in some works, “fragments of medieval source texts have been misused and mistranslated to prove a supposed direct continuity between Anatolian Paulicianism and Alevism”.²⁷³ The lack of direct

²⁷² Stoyanov, “On Some Parallels between Anatolian and Balkan Heterodox Islamic and Christian Traditions and the Problem of Their Coexistence and Interaction in the Ottoman Period”, p. 91.

²⁷³ Stoyanov, “The Question of the Existence of Dualist Layers in Alevi/Bektaşî Syncretism and their Central Asian, Anatolian or Balkan Provenance”, p. 147-148. Also, see “Early and Recent Formulations of Theories for a Formative Christian Heterodox Impact on Alevism”.

or circumstantial evidence is also another problem that can be found in some of these studies.²⁷⁴

The examples mentioned in secondary sources to criticize the concept of syncretism are mostly about the rituals, religious practices, social customs and the places related to them. However, a reassessment of the concept of syncretism in literary studies, based on textual analysis, awaits to be done.

Two translated works by Lami'i Çelebi in the sixteenth century can be mentioned as an example of different representations of the Khidr figure in different text groups. In the translation of *Salaman u Absal* for example, which is a *masnavi*, Khidr appears in different scenes in the helper role. He rescues people from accidents and fatal situations, both in the seas and on land.²⁷⁵ In the translation of *Nefahatü'l-Üns*²⁷⁶ on the other hand, Khidr is depicted as having different features: he has a special status among other invisible men, he often gets sick, but heals himself, and he is in the service of the *qutb* and follows him during the prayers.²⁷⁷ Both of the texts were translated by Lamii Çelebi and, thus, they are products of a single author of a given era in the Ottoman context. However, the variations in the

²⁷⁴ See Stoyanov, "The Question of the Existence of Dualist Layers in Alevi/Bektaşî Syncretism and their Central Asian, Anatolian or Balkan Provenance", p. 133-137; "Early and Recent Formulations of Theories for a Formative Christian Heterodox Impact on Alevism", p. 262-264. Also see, Ocak, "Anadolu'da İslam"; "Balkanlardaki Halk İslamının Mahiyet ve Temelleri Meselesine Dair".

Krstic also highlights the lack of evidence in some studies, and notes that in secondary sources those places are regarded as the "loci of religious blending and coexistence that frequently resulted in conversion to Islam, largely without any evidence based on nonhagiographic material", see, *Contested Conversions to Islam*, p. 16-17.

²⁷⁵ See Lami'i Çelebi, *Salaman ve Absal*.

²⁷⁶ This book of Lami'i Çelebi (d. 1532) is the translation of Cami's (d. 898/1492) *Nefahatü'l-üns min hadarati'l-kuds*. Cami's book is also a translation from Herevî's (Hacı Abdullah Ensârî, d. 481/1088) book. Herevî translated Sülemî's (ö. 412/1021) *Tabakatu's-sufiyye* from Arabic into Persian, which is not a literal translation, but a rewriting of the old one with new additions. This is the first *tabakat* book that was translated into Persian. Cami then translated this book adding his own changes. Unlike Cami's text, Lami'i writes a longer introductory part, gives information about the Halveti and Zeyni orders and mentions some of the dervishes of Anatolia.

²⁷⁷ Lami'i Çelebi, *Evliya Menkıbeleri [Nefahatü'l-üns]*, p. 86

features of Khidr in these two works point to the relationship between the depictions of Khidr and the genre of the texts, by highlighting the need for the figure to be put into context for a sound and accurate examination and analysis.

2. The Journey of Khidr: Two Stories, One Figure

There are two major narratives about the journey of Khidr: (1) his journey with Iskender, (2) his journey with Moses.

a. Iskender Narratives

As mentioned in the ‘Introduction’, the stories about the journey of Iskender and Khidr are based on their quest for the water of life; Iskender’s failure but Khidr’s success in attaining immortality at the end. However, although this is the basic scheme for the water of life stories, in different Iskender narratives the episodes about the search for eternity vary from each other in many ways. Also, not all *Iskendernames* include the story of the quest for the water of life. In the *Sedd-i Iskenderi* by Ali Şir Nevai (d. 1501) for example, the episode about the journey of Khidr and Iskender to the land of darkness and to the source of eternity, is not included.²⁷⁸

The adventures of Khidr and Iskender, thus their portrayals, also vary from each other in Iskender narratives depending on the textual lineages. Two *Iskendernames* from Anatolia dating to the fourteenth century, for example, one by Ahmedi, and the other one attributed to his brother, Hamzavi, stand out as a significant illustration of how to trace the alterations and differences in the stories of

²⁷⁸ On the *Sedd-i Iskenderi* and its transcription by Hatice Tören, see, Ali Şir Nevai, *Sedd-i Iskenderî*.

Iskender and Khidr. Including twelve episodes about Khidr, Hamzavi's prose-verse mixed work²⁷⁹ is a rich source in terms of Khidr stories.²⁸⁰ Unlike the depiction and role of Khidr in Ahmedî's verse *Iskendername*, in Hamzavi's text, Khidr appears as the one who protects Iskender from the misleading actions of Iblis.²⁸¹ In Ahmedî's work, on the other hand, Khidr is not only portrayed as the most knowledgeable sage who gives advice to Iskender, but he also tells of the history of the world after Iskender.

Regarding the variations in Iskender narratives, F. Doufîkar-Aerts groups Arabic *Iskendernames* under certain categories according to specific themes and motifs that they include. In this grouping, the 'Dhu'l-qarnayn tradition' forms one category which consists of motifs such as the wall built against Gog and Magog or the journey in the land of darkness and to the realm of the water of life. These texts

²⁷⁹ On Hamzavi's *Iskendername*, see Boeschoten, "Adventures of Alexander in Medieval Turkish". The manuscript copy that Boeschoten examines is about 900 pages and it represents about one third of Hamzavi's work.

²⁸⁰ For brief information on the Khidr episodes see İsmail Avcı, "İskendernameelerde Ölümsüzlüğe Yolculuk", p. 36-39. The roles of Khidr in these episodes are as follows: (1) He is introduced as an Arab and shows how to build a bridge; (2) He gives advice to Iskender about how to defeat his enemies; (3) He gives advice to Iskender on various subjects. In this episode too, he is introduced as an Arab; (4) He helps Iskender in a battle against the Indian army, (5) His name is not mentioned, but he appears as a helper, (6) He helps Iskender-i Zulkarneyn; (7) He puts his prayer carpet on the sea and sits on it; (8) He appears as a bird who is light and saves the life of Iskender when he is about to drown in the sea; (9) He warns Iskender about a dangerous situation; (10) He gives advice to Iskender; (11) He again gives advice to Iskender; (12) He tells Iskender that the world is an illusion.

²⁸¹ See H. Boeschoten, "Adventures of Alexander in Medieval Turkish", p. 123.

We find a similar depiction of Iskender and Khidr in the *Sirat al-Iskandar*: "A second attempt to save al-Iskandar was made by al-Khidr, who goes to court and meets the king. Iblis, however, makes him out to be a magician and he is imprisoned. Then al-Khidr is freed by an angel, via the roof, and taken to a mountain. [...] Eventually, al-Iskandar, convinced by al-Khidr, understands that he has been misled by the devilish greybeard". See F. Doufîkar-Aerts, *Alexander Magnus Arabicus: A Survey of the Alexander Tradition through Seven Centuries, from Pseudo-Callisthenes to Suri*, p. 212-213.

also portrays Iskender as a monotheistic hero and a missionary king and they are related to the *Qisas al-Anbiya* literature.²⁸²

Because of its popularity for centuries over a wide geographical area, it is not possible to talk about one specific reference story for Iskender and Khidr, without mentioning the transformations and alterations in the narrative structure and also without referring to the textual lineages to which the certain variant under examination is attached. The failure of Iskender however, and the immortality of Khidr, are two key motifs in these stories upon which the structure of the search for the water of life episode is based.

b. The Koranic Story

The journey of Khidr and Moses on the other hand, is based on a Koranic story in the Sura of the Cave. Therefore, although its narration also appears with alterations, depending on the context and genre of the text in which it is included²⁸³, the reference story always remains the same.

The name of Khidr is not mentioned in the Koran; however, the servant of God in the Sura of the Cave has been identified with Khidr in Islamic literature. A synopsis of the narrative in the Koran is as follows: Moses says to his young companion that he will not stop until he reaches the place where the two seas meet. When they reach this spot, they absent-mindedly leave their fish there and the fish

²⁸² “Sirat al-Iskandar: An Arabic Popular Romance of Alexander”, p. 506. Also see Alexander Magnus Arabicus, especially pages 69-70.

²⁸³ In Rabguzi’s *Kıyasu’l Enbiya* (1310) for example, written in Khwarezmian Turkish, the length of the journey of Khidr and Moses is mentioned as eighteen days. The episode also includes conversations between Moses and Khidr and the descriptions of their facial expressions during these conversations. These details are not included in the Koranic story. See, Rabguzi, *Kıyasu’l-Enbiya*, p. 181-184.

For a different narration of the Koranic story, which also includes some specific details that are not mentioned in the Koran, see, Sultan Veled, *İbtida-name*.

flows into the sea. When it is lunch time the young companion realizes that he has left the fish at the place where they stopped. Moses says that this is the sign that he has been looking for and they go back by retracing their footsteps. Once there they come across a man who is introduced as “a servant from Our servants”.²⁸⁴ Moses asks the unnamed guide’s permission to follow him. At first the man rejects this request telling Moses that he does not have the patience required to follow him without asking any questions. Moses promises not to ask anything but, during their journey, he is unable to keep his promise. The nameless man forgives him twice but after the third time he tells him that they will have to part now and he explains to Moses the causes of his deeds. The three deeds that Moses has questioned and the nameless man finds inappropriate are: (1) the servant of God opens a hole in the ship that they are on, (2) he kills a child and (3) he repairs a wall without asking for any money.

Beginning with the formative period of Sufi orders in Basra and Baghdad, the relationship between the prophet Moses and the unnamed guide in the Koran has been used as a reference mostly in those works aiming to explain the rules of religious and social life to the disciples in dervish circles. Taking Qushayri’s work as an example, Ahmet Karamustafa claims that the analogy of the relationship between Khidr and Moses must have been carrying a message to the addressee, a message which says that “the Sufi sheikhs, like Khidr, are endowed with special mercy and knowledge directly from God that are denied even to the prophet Moses”.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁴ Koran, 18: 65. At this point, the young companion disappears from the story. Salman N. Bashier explains this as “an indication of the imaginal or *barzakhi* nature of the encounter with sainthood in which Moses was about to be involved and in which Yusha bin Nun, due to his lesser spiritual rank, was not capable of partaking”, see *The Story of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 103.

²⁸⁵ Karamustafa, *Sufism: The Formative Period*, p. 118-119.

To give another example from a different group of texts, Hugh Halman examines the explanation of the Koranic story of Moses by three medieval Koran exegetes, namely Abu'l-Qasim al-Qushayri (d. 1072), Ruzbihan Baqli (d. 1309) and 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Qashani (d. 1329). As Halman's study reveals, while the early Koran interpreters, such as al-Tabari (d. 310/923), do not refer to any similarity between the master-disciple relationship and the Koranic story in their works, along with the formation and development of Sufi orders, the relationship between Moses and Khidr becomes an integral part of the commentaries on the Koran in order to exemplify the rules of the master- disciple relationship, though with alterations.²⁸⁶

It, therefore, seems that as the dervish groups became more organised and the etiquette in Sufi orders more developed, so reference to the Koranic story of Khidr was referred to more often in their works.

²⁸⁶ See Hugh T. Halman, *Where the Two Seas Meet: Al-Khidr and Moses – The Qur'anic Story of al-Khidr and Moses in Sufi Commentaries as a Model for Spiritual Guidance*.

CHAPTER III

KHIDR IN THE SUFI TRADITION AND THE *HIZIRNAME*

This chapter examines the journey of the dervish with Khidr in the heavenly realm and questions the links between his *miraj* journey and his visit to the water of life with Khidr, as well as his experiences in the heavens and at Mount Qaf. As was pointed out in Chapter I, the heavenly experiences in the *Hızırname* are written using the vocabulary of the Ekberi-Konevi school in Anatolia and of *ishraqi* literature. By discussing the textual links between these works and the *Hızırname*, the present chapter proposes that the experiential journey of the dervish, the role of Khidr in this journey and the first-person narrator in the text are linked to the works of Ibn ‘Arabi and his followers in Anatolia and also to the works of *ishraqi* literature.

The chapter first focuses on the Anatolian traditions and examines two *masnavis* from Anatolia written before the *Hızırname*. By examining the depictions and role of Khidr in the *Masnavi* by Mevlana and in the *Garibname* by Aşık Paşa the aim is to place the Khidr figure in the context of Anatolian works. The chapter then turns to the *Hızırname* itself and addresses the Persian and Arabic sources of the narrative. Reference will be made to the works of Ibn ‘Arabi, in which he describes his own ascension, and to his renowned work the *Fusus al-Hikam*, which explains the relationship between the seven heavens, the prophets and the divine names. The works of Suhrawardi, who explains the doctrine of *ishraqi* philosophy in his famous book the *Hikmat al-Ishraq (Philosophy of Illumination)*, will then be referred to in order to reveal the possible sources of the Khidr figure and repeatedly mentioned travels of the dervish to Mount Qaf, being the ‘place of Khidr’ in the *Hızırname*.

1. Khidr in Early Masnavis of Anatolia

a. The *Masnavi*

Jalal al-din Rumi's *Masnavi* opens with the story of a king who falls in love with a slave girl and seeks a cure for her illness.²⁸⁷ In the story, when the king sees the slave girl, his soul becomes her servant and he buys her straight away. But, for some reason, the girl falls ill. The king then brings healers from all distant lands and says that his life is over until she is well again. Since, out of their arrogance, the healers do not say "God willing", God reveals through them the powerlessness of mankind. When the king realizes that the girl has become even thinner than a strand of hair and that the drugs of the healers make her even more ill, he runs barefoot to the mosque, starts to pray and falls asleep in tears. In a dream, an old man tells him that the next day a stranger, who is their man, will come and help to treat her illness. As told in the dream, the stranger appears the next day. The king greets the stranger and realizes that the one he loves is not the girl, but the stranger. He kisses his hand and forehead and enquires about his home and family, and tells him that he is ready to serve him until the end of his life. He then takes him to the girl and explains her sickness. In order to be able to ask her some questions, the man requests to be left alone with the girl and after a while he discovers the mystery of her illness. The girl is sick because she has been separated from the man she loves, a goldsmith from Samarkand.

When the man learns the reason for her illness, he finds out from the girl where the goldsmith lives and warns her not to tell this to anybody, not even to the

²⁸⁷ For the English translation of the story by Jawid Mojaddedi see Rumi, *The Masnavi, Book One*, p. 6-19; for its Turkish translation by Adnan Karaismailoğlu see Mevlana, *Mesnevî 1-2*, p. 42-53.

king. After his conversation with the girl, he meets the king and tells him to find the goldsmith and bring him to the palace by tempting him with the offer of gold. Two of the king's men bring the goldsmith from Samarkand and the king gives him the gold. Following the goldsmith's arrival, the man tells the king to marry the girl to the goldsmith in order to treat the illness of separation. The king obeys the man's words. The girl gets well again within six months.

When the girl has completely recovered, the man prepares a poisonous drink and gives it to the goldsmith. As a consequence of drinking the poison, the goldsmith loses his youthfulness, getting sicker with each passing day. Finally he becomes a very ugly and old man. The girl's heart grows cold and her love fades away. At the end of the story, the man dies and the girl is purged of both love and pain.

Although, at first, Mevlana's *Masnavi* opens with a typical love story of someone falling ill because of the sorrow of separation, there is an immediate twist in the plot and it ends with thrill and paradox. The man, who has been sent to help the king, kills an innocent person for apparently no reason. The tearful king, who was seeking a cure for his beloved's illness, understands, when he sees the man, that what he felt for the girl was not true love after all. However, the shocking part of the story is the paradox, the complete absence of any separation between giving help and committing murder; the one who gives life and the one who takes it is the same person. Who is this man then and what could this story be telling the audience as the opening story of the *Masnavi*?

What follows sheds light on the paradox by explaining the cause of the man's action; that is, he killed the goldsmith not because of his own passions but under God's instruction. Here, the name of Khidr is declared for the first time by referring

to the story of Moses in the Sura of the Cave.²⁸⁸ Hence, this story is presented as an analogy of the journey of Moses with the servant of God, who is introduced in the Koran as the one “to whom we had given mercy from Us and had taught him from Us a [certain] knowledge”.²⁸⁹ The second story of the *Masnavi* also follows the theme of the first one and when the two stories are read in sequence, the first one stays as the introduction to the notion of the ‘friend of God’ and the second one explains the features of the friends of God, with a short and ironic episode about the parrot of a grocer who spills oil on the floor of his owner’s grocery store. The parrot thinks himself equal to the God’s chosen friends and the people laugh at him because of his ignorance.²⁹⁰

With these two stories, which complement each other, the *Masnavi* prepares the ground for a discussion about, and an introduction to, what a friend of God is. The Koranic story is referred to in later episodes of the *Masnavi* as well but for different purposes – to explain the master-disciple relationship and to explain the need for a special servant of God in spiritual training.²⁹¹ But, all in all, each episode functions as an explanation for a different aspect of a friend of God. On the other hand, the search for immortality, which is the most popular episode in Khidr stories, is not ignored in the *Masnavi*, but it is included in the book without making any reference to the journey of Khidr and Iskender. The episode concerns a man who seeks a tree whose fruits will give eternal life. The man travels for many years to find such a tree, but he cannot find it and decides to return home. On the way, he meets a sheikh. When he tells the sheikh the cause of his despair, the sheikh laughs

²⁸⁸ *The Masnavi, Book One*, p. 17-18.

²⁸⁹ 18: 65.

²⁹⁰ *The Masnavi, Book One*, p. 264-265.

²⁹¹ *The Masnavi, Book One*, p. 182-183.

at him and explains that the tree he is looking for is “the knowledge which the mystics gain” and suggests that he seeks not the name but the essence of a thing.²⁹² In this episode too, mention is made of another aspect of the friends of God: that they are the ones who have the special knowledge about the nature of existence.

As these briefly mentioned episodes about Khidr and his special knowledge he has reveal, the *Masnavi* approaches the Koranic story and the narratives related to Khidr from the notion of the ‘friend of God’, which is a social phenomenon and a later phase in the history of Islamic mysticism.²⁹³ When the *Masnavi* is read in its historical context, the reasons for the emphasis on the idea of ‘being a friend of God’ and for attempting to define the status and nature of the friends of God, become clearer. This was a period of uncertainty and distress, as a result of the Mongol invasion, and even the sultans in Anatolia were in the service of the Mongols.²⁹⁴ As Andrew Peacock points out in his analysis of the relationship between the Seljuk elites and the dervishes in Konya through examining the letters of Mevlana, by asking for protection, employment and worldly benefits from the rulers, Mevlana in these letters is expressing the wishes of the dervishes with regard to the patronage of the elites.²⁹⁵ In this context, the opening story of the *Masnavi*, which is an analogy of the Koranic story of Khidr, seems to seek to legitimize the status of the dervishes in the society by portraying them as owning the special knowledge, the divine power, which cannot be challenged by others including the rulers.²⁹⁶

²⁹² Rumi, *The Masnavi, Book II*, p. 216.

²⁹³ On the history of Sufism see Karamustafa, *Sufism: The Formative Period*.

²⁹⁴ For a survey of the period, see, Charles Melville, “Anatolia under the Mongols”.

²⁹⁵ Peacock, “Sufis and the Seljuk Court in Mongol Anatolia: Politics and Patronage in the Works of Jalal al-Din Rumi and Sultan Walad”, p. 208-211.

²⁹⁶ Some scholars consider the *Masnavi* as a long poem without any organizational plan. Jawid Mojaddadi addresses these claims and by referring to the analysis of Nicholsan on the structure

b. The Garibname

As pointed out in Chapter I, the poet-narrator in the *Hızırname* mentions that Aşık Paşa is the one who tells him about Khidr, but he does not refer to any of his works. However, the reference to Aşık Paşa, with regards to Khidr, can be noted as an evidence for the textual relations between the *Garibname* (1330) and the *Hızırname* (1476), as the *Garibname* includes a section about the features of Khidr which is one hundred and eighty couplets long.

Amongst the early works of Anatolian Turkish literature, the figure of Khidr features at length in the *Garibname*, which is considered one of the well-structured works in Turkish literature. It consists of ten parts (*bab*) and each part is further divided into ten sections (*destan*).²⁹⁷ The section on Khidr is the eighth section in the fourth part.²⁹⁸ Since Khidr is introduced in the eighth section, the contents of this section accord with the structure of the text and, thus, the characteristics of Khidr are explained in eight different groups. In this part, Aşık Paşa acknowledges Khidr as his sheikh and reasons that since it is a good thing to tell everyone about the virtues of his sheikh, he has written this part.

The first group of the features of Khidr in the *Garibname* are about his identity and his residence. He is described as “*bi-nişan, bi-mekan and bi-makam*” (free from sign, place and position). Therefore, he can appear everywhere; for instance he can be physically present, or he can appear in dreams or on the water. It is never certain where he is; he sometimes ascends into the sky and sometimes he

of the *Masnawi*, he points out its organizational plan, see “The Ebb and Flow of ‘The Ocean inside a Jug’: The Structure of Book One of Rumi’s Mathnawi Reconsidered”.

²⁹⁷ Kemal Yavuz notes that the number of couplets vary from each other in different manuscript copies, such as 10015, 10312, 10293. The edition of Yavuz consists of 10613 couplets, see *Garib-name: tıpkıbasım, karşılaştırmalı metin ve aktarma*.

²⁹⁸ See the couplets 6000-6180.

comes back down to the earth. He is not from anywhere in this world and neither has he a specific place to live. Nobody knows if he walks or flies and what he eats. Nobody can understand his mysteries. He can appear with a white beard, in green attire or with his dune-coloured horse or sometimes he can appear as a bird. He is both a *nebi* ('*prophet*') and a *veli* and he is the hand of God.

The second group of features of his miracles are to do with the mosques. As the text elaborates, Khidr is always ready in all mosques to join in the prayers with the congregation. However, how he is able to join all prayers all over the world at the same time is a mystery to everyone. The third group concerns his miracles relating to the water of life. In this section, it is stated that Khidr is free from the rule of the angel of death, 'Azrail, and, thus, he will not be questioned on the Day of Judgement. The fourth type of miracles is about the '*ilm-i ledun*', the special knowledge endowed by God. This part explains the Koranic story of Khidr in forty-two couplets. The fifth group relates to those features of Khidr pertaining to time and space. He is described as "*bi-mekan*" and "*bi-zaman*" (he does not belong to anywhere and his existence does not depend on time). Since he is omnipresent, whenever somebody needs help he appears immediately. Similarly, he always helps people in peril on the seas. Likewise, he helps people to get out of prison, directs misled people, or those who have lost their way, on to the right path. If somebody genuinely calls for help when in need, God sends Khidr to him since he is the hand of God.

The sixth group of features are about the relationship between Khidr and non-Muslims. He knows the languages that all the peoples of the world speak and he speaks to everybody in their own language. Non-Muslims also believe in him. The seventh section is about the concept of "*nazar*" (gaze/look) of Khidr. Whoever he

places his gaze upon becomes a respected person, and at the same time, becomes privy to the secrets of the unknown world. The eighth section, which is the final group, introduces the invisible men (*gayb erenler*). The invisible men, who are the *ones*, the *threes*, the *fives*, the *sevens*, the *forties* and the *three-hundreds*, are all under the rule of Khidr. In this part, the features of the invisible men are described by referring to the numbers after which they take their name. *Bir* (the one) for example, is the *qutb*, and, therefore, the invisible men are his soldiers.

Although the close textual links between the *Garibname* and the *Hızırname* are obvious, when compared to the *Garibname* there are some absent parts and differences in the role and depiction of Khidr in the *Hızırname*. Regarding the first group, which introduces Khidr as being free from place, he appears omnipresent, both in the sky and on the ground, the *Hızırname* describes Khidr with the same features. The second group of miracles, however, about the presence of Khidr in the mosques, is not a subject dealt with in the *Hızırname*.

The third group is about the water of life and Khidr's eternity. This part describes Khidr free from the rule of 'Azrail and not even in need of Israfil's last trumpet call on the day of reckoning. This means that Khidr will not be resurrected as he is immortal. The metaphor of the scales (*terazu*) in this part, which refers to the Day of Judgement by implying that Khidr will not be questioned about his deeds, is also significant as it discloses the possible audience of the text. The aim of the text, as is stated by Aşık Paşa, is to teach the rules of Islam in Turkish. The metaphor of the scales thus resonates with the aim of the text as being a simple and popular example concerning the obligations and afterlife in Islam. The *Hızırname* does not aim to instruct its audience about Islamic rules, and it distinguishes itself from the

Garibname in this respect. The fourth group of miracles in the *Garibname* is about the special knowledge ‘ilm-i ledunn and it includes an explanation of the Koranic story of Moses. The *Hızırname* does not make mention of Moses with regard to the Koranic story, however, throughout the narrative it does repeatedly mention Khidr as having the *ilm-i ledun*.

The features of Khidr in the fifth group are similar to his depictions in the *Hızırname*, again referring to his ability to be omnipresent. Some features of Khidr mentioned in this section, such as helping people travelling on the seas, are attributed to Ilyas in some texts. Likewise, in the *Hızırname* too, Ilyas is described walking on the seas, while Khidr walks on the sky. Intriguingly, Ilyas is absent in the *Garibname*.

The sixth type of miracles is not present in the *Hızırname*, but can be found in other texts that the *Hızırname* is intertextually related, such as the frontier epic the *Battalname*. This part is about the relationship between Khidr and non-Muslims. Khidr is introduced knowing all the languages in the world and is followed by non-Muslims as well. Likewise, in one of the scenes in the *Battalname*, Khidr communicates with a group of non-Muslims. When they reject Battal’s call to convert to Islam, Khidr is the one who speaks to them and the non-Muslim people trust Khidr’s words. Khidr also persuades Battal not to kill them, thus he functions as an intermediary between the non-Muslim community and Battal. In the end, they are converted to Islam.²⁹⁹ Although the *Hızırname* mentions the name of Battal in different poems, there is no reference to his stories about conversion.

The seventh type of miracles, which is about the gaze of Khidr, is his most important feature in the *Hızırname* as it illustrates the manner of the initiation of the

²⁹⁹ For this episode see Dedes, *The Battalname, An Ottoman Turkish Frontier Epic Wondertale*, p. 209-210.

dervish. As already mentioned, the ascension of the dervish starts after Khidr places his gaze on him, and Khidr's gaze is repeatedly mentioned in the text as being the cause of the mystical experience. In the eight part of Khidr's miracles, which is the last part, the invisible men (*gayb erenler*), who are under the rule of Khidr, are introduced. The *Hızırname* also mentions the invisible men using similar descriptions.

A comparative reading of the two texts thus reveals that although the *Hızırname* shows its source on Khidr as being Aşık Paşa, it does not include all the features of Khidr mentioned in the *Garibname*, but refers only to some certain features of his which are related to the experiential journey of the poet dervish. The two significant features of Khidr which are absent in the *Hızırname*, but take an important place in Aşık Paşa's text are: (i) the Koranic story of the prophet Moses, and, (ii) his relationship with non-Muslims.

There are also two remarkable features of Khidr in the *Hızırname* which are absent in the *Garibname*: (1) while the *Hızırname* mentions Khidr together with Ilyas in several poems, the *Garibname* does not make mention of Ilyas at all. (2) the water of life motif is included in the *Hızırname* through the visit of the dervish to the heavenly realm accompanied by Khidr and the story is referred to by mentioning Iskender's failure in his quest for the source of eternity. The *Garibname* however, does not refer to the story of Khidr and Iskender.

As a last but significant note concerning the sources of both texts, while the *Garibname* describes Khidr as free from place (*bi-mekan*), the *Hızırname* clearly describes the place of Khidr as Mount Qaf. Since the visits of the dervish to Mount Qaf are repeatedly mentioned in the text putting it at the centre of the narrative, this

crucial difference between two texts leads us to seek other sources of the *Hızırname* than the *Garibname*, which influenced and shaped the plot and structure of the narrative concerning the role and depictions of Khidr.

2. Khidr and the Experiential Journey in the *Hızırname*

The *Hızırname* poet mentions three times, in poems twenty-one, fifty-five and sixty-seven, that his heavenly journey took place on the night of Glory. In poem twenty-one he tells us that on that night he met with the invisible men, a path opened to the heaven, and both East and West became visible. The dervish describes himself a seeker on the land of love in this poem. Similarly, by stating that he fell into a state of ecstasy, in poems fifty-five and sixty-seven he tells of his experiences which befell him in the heavenly realm on the night of Glory in the month of Ramadan.

After the second description about the date of his journey as the Night of Glory in an ecstatic state, following the same theme, poem fifty-seven starts with the statement of the poet that he feels ill, although he hardly ever does. Then all the *erenler* gather, the invisible men and Khidr arrive, and the angels speak to him. When the road leads him to the land of darkness, Khidr takes his hand. Afterwards, he sees the water of life which is like the light of the Sun. To reach this realm is mentioned to be the secret of Khidr and only the perfect men, who can traverse great distances, can visit this realm. In fact, this is not the only part in the text that makes mention of the water of life. Poem thirty-seven, which is about the journey of the dervish to Mount Qaf includes his visits to the Sunrise, to the water of life and to the tree of life: In the land of Qaf, the sun rises and sets from a door whose sides reach

the sky and in that realm there is a sublime mountain made of either golden or silver. The source of life springs from that mountain.

With the descriptions in poems thirty-seven and fifty-seven, the *Hızırname* mentions the dwelling of the water of life at Mount Qaf and clearly describes its place as a heavenly realm. In poems twenty-one, fifty-five and sixty-seven, the dervish declares the time of his heavenly journey as the Night of Glory. Therefore, the ascension journey of the dervish at the beginning of the narrative, his visits to Mount Qaf and his visit to the realm of the water of life are all connected to each other in the plot: this is a heavenly journey which takes place in the holiest night according to Islam. Also, the dervish describes his journey by using some key expressions, such as, ‘I have journeyed into the seven heavens until the highest one’ or ‘my place is now the stage of Khidr (*Hızır katı*)’. The realm he is travelling, therefore, is associated with Khidr.

With the aim of examining the travels of the dervish and the role of Khidr in this journey, this section will focus on the works of Ibn ‘Arabi, as well as the works of his disciple Konevi, which can be read together due to their compact influence in Anatolian literature. Lastly, the works of Suhrawardi, the sheikh al-ishraq, will be referred to with a particular focus on the role of Khidr in the journey of the dervish, in order to reveal the links between the *Hızırname* and *ishraqi* sources.

a. The Ascension (*Miraj*) of the Dervish into the Heavens and the Realm of the Water of Life (*Ab-ı Hayat*): An Unusual Narrative in Turkish Literature?

The works of Anatolian Turkish literature distinguish themselves from the *Hızırname* in two main points: (1) the lack of a description of non-prophetic

ascension journey modelled on the Prophet's ascension, and, (2) the lack of the explicit description of the water of life (*ab-ı hayat*) in heaven. The *Hızırname* combines these two subjects within one narrative.

Regarding the first, the start of the ascension journey in the *Hızırname* is marked by the metaphor of 'the bird of the heart': "Here Muhyiddin's soul is so full of desire for God that, the bird of the heart flaps its wings rapidly and my direction is always towards You". In fact, as a metaphor for the soul, the bird is an ancient symbol dating back to Assyrian-Babylonian times and it implies that the soul can ascend into the sky. As Gönül Tekin points out and suggests with particular focus on a Turkish *masnavi* work entitled the *Şem' u Pervane* (c. 1603) by Feyzi Çelebi, this ancient symbol for the soul became a part of Islamic literature through Christian writings in Syria. Later on, this metaphor was elaborated in several Persian and Arabic works, such as the *Risalet al-tayr* by Ibn Sina (d. 1037), some treatises of Suhrawardi (d. 1191), such as the *Treatise on Birds*,³⁰⁰ and the *Mantiq al-tayr* by 'Attar (d. c. 1221). Afterwards, it became a metaphor for the soul in Classical Turkish literature as well, and as Tekin notes, "in Classical Turkish literature, the soul (*ruh*), in fact, the heart (*gönül*), became a bird captured in a cave".³⁰¹ Thus, as an image, the ascension of the soul was already re-worked and elaborated through centuries in the region before the formative period of Anatolian Turkish literature. Despite this however, the description of a non-prophetic ascension journey did not become a subject in Turkish works. The Arabic and Persian sources on the other hand, include non-prophetic ascension narratives.

³⁰⁰ On this treatise see, Aminrazavi, "The Significance of Suhrawardi's Persian Sufi Writings in the Philosophy of Illumination" p. 271-274.

³⁰¹ On the 'bird' as a symbol for the ascension of the soul and for information about the structure of the spheres during the ascension, see Gönül Tekin, "Feyzi Çelebi'nin Şem' ü Pervanesi".

Before noting the ascension narratives modelled on the Prophet's *miraj* journey, to mention a pre-Islamic example of Persian literature is of significance so as to contextualize the subject clearly. A Zoroastrian text entitled the *Ardavirafname*, dating back to the Sassanian period, is about the journey of a religious man called Ardaviraf to heaven, purgatory and hell and tells of his experiences during this journey. In the company of two angels, the journey of Ardaviraf takes seven days and on the seventh day, just before he returns to the world, Ardaviraf meets with God.³⁰² When examining the history of *miraj* narratives in Persian sources and in other texts related to Persian works, it needs to be kept in mind that the narration of a *miraj* journey is not associated with the Prophet only in these sources and it dates back to pre-Islamic times.

After Islamisation, modelled on the Prophet's *miraj* journey, non-prophetic ascension accounts appeared in Arabic and Persian sources in the region. Al-Bistami (d.ca.264/878), for example, wrote a narrative about his personal ascension. Likewise, Qushayri (d.465/1073), in his *Kitab al-Miraj*, discusses the possibility of non-prophetic ascensions. Ibn Sina is also said to have written a *Mirajname* in order to explain the Prophet's ascension in which he discusses how the soul can ascend into the heavens. Later on Suhrawardi and Ibn 'Arabi wrote several works describing their own ascensions in the thirteenth century.³⁰³

³⁰² See, Nimet Yıldırım, "Ardaviraf ve Ardavirafname" and *Ardavirafname*. For the Turkish translation of the text, see *Ardavirafname*.

³⁰³ On the nonprophetic *miraj* accounts and for the translation of the *Mirajname* attributed to Ibn Sina, see, Peter Heath, *Allegory and Philosophy in Avicenna (Ibn Sina), with a Translation of the Book of the Prophet Muhammad's Ascent to Heaven*, especially p. 109-138. Also see C. Gruber, "The Prophet Muhammad's Ascension (*Mi'rāj*) in Islamic Art and Literature, ca. 1300-1600". On Qushayri's book, see, Qassim al-Samarrai, *The Theme of Ascension in Mystical Writings: A Study of the Theme in Islamic and non-Islamic Mystical Writings*.

Another example is from a Central Asian text entitled the *Hasht Hadiqa* (*Eight Gardens*) dated to the fifteenth century. As narrated in this text, one day, while Ahmad Bashiri is sitting under a tree, he gets into a state of ecstasy and experiences an ascension journey which takes sixteen days. In his journey, he first goes through the layers of Hell and feels the burning of his body. Then he reaches the sources of fire and sees a beautiful person there, who is the prophet Muhammad. In the company of the Prophet, Ahmed Bashiri visits God's throne and afterwards, he and the Prophet circumambulate God's throne together. He also meets other dervishes during his ascension who had completed the same journey before him. After sixteen days Ahmad Bashiri comes out of the state of ecstasy and realizes that his body had covered with dust.³⁰⁴

Similar to these examples noted briefly, poems nine to thirteen in the *Hızırname* explicitly describes a non-prophetic ascension journey: the dervish Muhyiddin ascends into the seven heavens initiated by the Prophet himself, he meets with other prophets there, and he encounters the angels including Gabriel. He also sees the supreme name of God written on a mirror. The meetings and encounters of the dervish Muhyiddin with the prophets, other than the prophet Muhammed, and with the angels, echo the Prophet's *miraj* narratives but by only focusing on certain parts of these works and ignoring or changing the rest. For example, the *Hızırname* does not make mention of anything related to the obligations of Islam, which is a common subject in Turkish *mirajnames*. On the other hand, it should be clarified that even for the Prophet's ascension we do not have a standard narrative; the description

³⁰⁴ See Bashir, *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam*, p. 94-95.

of the Prophet's *miraj* journey differs from text to text depending on the context and textual relations.³⁰⁵

After the *miraj* journey, poem thirteen continues with the visit of the dervish Muhyiddin to Mount Qaf. As already mentioned, Mount Qaf is described as a heavenly place and it is also said to be the place of Khidr in the narrative. The water of life exists at Mount Qaf. Thus, in the *Hızırname*, the *miraj* journey of the dervish, his visits to Mount Qaf and to the realm of the water of life are all connected to each other and the date of this heavenly journey is given as the Night of Power three times in the text. When compared to Anatolian Turkish sources, the route of the heavenly journey of the dervish seems to be unusual. In Turkish sources the quest for the water of life is generally a subject associated with Iskender's journey and in these works, the place of the water of life is not explicitly mentioned as being in heaven: it is generally depicted by referring to the land of darkness, since Khidr reaches the source of life after he passes this realm and Iskender fails to find the source as he gets lost there.

The verse translation of the *Shahnameh* into Anatolian Turkish is one such example that describes the realm of the water of life beyond the land of darkness only. Also, another significant feature regarding the water of life in this text is the

³⁰⁵ In Hakim Ata's *mirajname* for example, the Prophet sees the angels in the first and second heaven. He sees Jesus in the fourth heaven and Moses in the fifth. In the sixth heaven he sees headless angels, and in the seventh numerous angels. For the text, see, Abdurrahman Güzel, *Süleyman Hakim Ata'nın Bakırgan Kitabı Üzerine Bir İnceleme*, p. 446-457. According to the common structure of the ascension journey on the other hand, the Prophet meets with Adam in the first heaven, with the prophets Jesus and Yahya in the second, with Joseph in the third, with Idris in the fourth, with Harun in the fifth, with Moses in the sixth, and, with Abraham in the seventh heaven. See, Metin And, *Minyatürlerle Osmanlı-İslam Mitologyası*, p. 146. For an analysis of how the *miraj* story was narrated in different genres in Anatolian Turkish literature, see Kuru, "Pious Journey, Sacred Desire: Observations on the Mi'raj in Early Anatolian Turkish Verse Narratives". Kuru focuses on the alterations in the description of the *miraj* journeys and examines the relationship between the variations in the *mirajnames* and the message conveyed by the journey, such as, the obligations of Islam or the Prophet's desire to see God.

emphasis on destiny, which makes the content of the text more religious. The translation was done by Şerifi (d. 1514) in Egypt. It was completed in ten years and dedicated to the sultan Kansu Gavri in 916/1510.³⁰⁶ The translation is based on Ferdowsi's *Shahname*, however, as Şerifi states in the text, some parts of the journey of Iskender are translated from Nizami's *Sekandarname*.³⁰⁷

In the section about the quest of Iskender for the source of life, Şerifi first depicts the setting of the journey. We see Khidr and Iskender on their way in very stormy conditions. The weather is so terrible that after a while even Iskender abandons his desire to find the water of life. The text then tells us that the road split into two and Khidr followed one and Iskender the other. Afterwards, Khidr reached the place with the water of life and drank from it, since God had granted it to him. There is a strong emphasis on destiny in the following seven couplets which repeat that Khidr was able to find the water of life because it was destined to him.³⁰⁸ Other than describing the land of darkness and contextualizing the setting of the journey in a stormy weather, the only description given by Şerifi about the place of the water of life is that it is on the path Khidr chose to follow. The text does not include any other description about its realm, nor is there a clue whether the water of life exists on Earth or in the heavens. This aspect of the text raises a question concerning the place of the water of life in the source text composed by Ferdowsi, as well as its description in other non-Turkish works, so as to trace the alterations in the story when it was re-written in a different context and language.

³⁰⁶ For the edition of Şerifi's *Şahname* by Zuhul Kültüral and Latif Beyreli based on the manuscript housed at the Topkapı Palace (Hazine 1519) and for information about the text and the *Shahnameh* translations into Turkish, see, Şerifi, *Şehname Çevirisi*.

³⁰⁷ See the couplets 42557-42559.

³⁰⁸ See the couplets 41998-42005. The text uses the words 'nasib' and 'kısmet' to explain that it was Khidr's destiny.

Intriguingly enough, in the source text by Ferdowsi, the place of the water of life is described with reference to heaven on two different occasions. The first one is when Iskender gets informed about the water of life for the first time. In this part of the narrative, the wise man, who tells Iskender of the source of life, describes the place as follows: “How can anyone die, if he drinks the water of life? The water there comes from heaven, and the man who bathes there washes away all his sins”.³⁰⁹ Although this description does not say where the realm of the water of life exactly is, it mentions it originating from heaven. The second mention of the water of life in the text, which narrates the moment when Khidr finds it, clearly describes its realm as being in the heavens:

The road split into two the following day
And in the dark Sekandar lost his way
Khezr journeyed on; his head reached Saturn’s sphere
And when he saw life’s glittering stream appear
He bathed his head and body there, and prayed³¹⁰

With a reference to Saturn’s sphere, Ferdowsi openly tells us that the water of life exists in the heavens, not on earth. On the other hand, unlike Ferdowsi, Nizami’s text, which is the second source for the chapter about Iskender in Şerifi’s *Şahname*, does not describe the place of the water of life explicitly, leaving its place ambiguous for the audience. Şerifi then, seems to have followed Nizami in this respect, by narrating the story of Iskender and Khidr in a more religious context. The alterations between the depictions of the place of the source of eternity in these texts suggest a shift in the narration of Khidr and Iskender’s journey after the Islamisation period. The *Hızırname* however, with the mention of the water of life in heaven, follows the

³⁰⁹ Ferdowsi, *Shahnameh, the Persian Book of Kings*, p. 511.

³¹⁰ Ferdowsi, *ibid*, p. 512-513.

textual lineage of the *Shahnameh* by Ferdowsi who used the pre-Islamic Persian narratives as its major source.

Of course, the water of life motif and its relation to travel is an ancient theme that goes all the way back to the epic of *Gilgamesh*. This Mesopotamian poem is about the quest of Gilgamesh for the source of immortality upon the death of his friend, Enkidu.³¹¹ Later on we see the same theme in Alexander romances, and in these texts, the companion of Alexander, who is his cook, appears as the one who drinks from the water of immortality. In different versions of the Alexander narratives, along with the theme of the water of life, Alexander's travels include his search for heaven/paradise, which was a popular theme in Western literature at that time, relating the source of the Nile or other rivers with heaven. As Alessandro Scafi notes, in the twelfth century for example, in one version of the Alexander legend, heaven is considered to be reached by following up a river stream in India. As another example, in a popular epic poem *Alexandries* by Walter of Chatillon, the Nile is described as a heavenly stream. Likewise, the legend of Saint Macarius of Rome is another narrative which is about the search of the Garden of Eden. In the narrative, three monks travel to Persia and India to find paradise and on the way Macarius informs the monks that it is only twenty miles further on, but no mortal is permitted to enter.³¹² The discussion on the place of paradise, whether it is possible to find it on Earth or not, also dates back to earlier periods. In the fifth century for example, paradise was considered to be located at the equator, and "for the whole of

³¹¹ On the *Gilgamesh*, see Andrew George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*.

³¹² Alessandro Scafi, *Mapping Paradise: A History of Heaven on Earth*, p. 51-52.

the thirteenth century the issue of whether paradise was at the equator or south of it remained an unresolved and much debated topic”.³¹³

While there is a considerable corpus of literature in European sources discussing the place of heaven, heavenly waters and eternity, in Islamic literature Khidr is accepted to be the one who becomes immortal by discovering the place of the water of life. As already exemplified in the previous sections, there are different versions of the narratives of Khidr and also, there are various descriptions for the place of the water of life. The *Hızırname* seems to be textually related to Persian sources in terms of the depiction of the water of life in the heavens as in the example of the *Shahnameh*. On the other hand, other than the relationship between the heavens and the water of life, in the *Hızırname* Mount Qaf also takes an important place being the place where the water of life exists and it is repeatedly mentioned in the text by the poet-narrator. What is more significant in the narrative is that the journey to Mount Qaf appears as a part of the ascension journey of the dervish Muhyiddin in which he meets with prophets and angels, making this text unusual among similar works in Turkish literature. At this point, a new question arises concerning other source texts of the *Hızırname*, which include a non-prophetic miraj journey told by a first-person narrator and which describe the realm of the water of life at Mount Qaf in the heavens. Although secondary sources do not make mention of a similar *miraj* journey by a dervish in Anatolian Turkish literature, in other literary traditions there are several texts narrating or telling of the possibility of an ascension into the heaven by others than the Prophet, and these were circulating in Anatolia in the fifteenth century and before.

³¹³ Scafi, *Mapping Paradise: A History of Heaven on Earth*, p. 179. For the discussion on whether paradise is on or beyond the Equator, see p. 173-176.

b. The Ekberi-Konevi School and the ‘Experiential Knowledge’

The prolific writer Ibn ‘Arabi (d. 1240), who is famous for his influence on the Anatolian dervish groups and their literature, tells of and explains his own *miraj* and his meeting with God in four narratives, namely: (i) *al-Isra’ ila al-Maqam al-Asra* dated 594/1197, which is also known as the *Kitab al-Miraj* (‘Book of Ascension’); (ii) *Risalat al-anwar* (‘Letter on the Lights’), then renamed as *Journey to the Lord of Power* dated 602/1205-6, (iii-iv) and the two chapters in the *Futuh al-Makkiyah* (‘The Meccan Revelations’) which was written between 598/1202 and 629/1232 and exists in two editions: “Chapter 37” and “Chapter 167”.³¹⁴

The earliest of these works is famous for the name *Kitab al-Miraj*, whereas the original title is ‘*al-Isra’ ila al-Maqam al-Asra*’, and it was written in Fez in 594/1197. It is a mixed work, written both in verse and prose. Claiming that he wrote this work “particularly for the benefit of the Sufis”,³¹⁵ Ibn ‘Arabi first tells of his journey from Andalusia to Jerusalem. In this part of his journey “a youth of spiritual nature” sent by God accompanies him. Then, the text continues with the ascension of Ibn ‘Arabi, in the company of a different guide, who is referred to as “the envoy of Divine Grace”.³¹⁶ The *Kitab al-Miraj*, consisting of thirty eight sections, is described by Habibur Rahman Chowdhury as a work “full of illusions to all sorts of stories, true or imaginary” so that “unless one is familiar with all the superstitious stories

³¹⁴ On these works and for the translation of “Chapter 367” in the *Futuh* and the translation of a passage from the *Kitab al-Isra’*, see James W. Morris, “The Spiritual Ascension: Ibn ‘Arabi and the Mi’raj, Part I” and “The Spiritual Ascension: Ibn ‘Arabi and the Spiritual Mi’raj, Part II”. On the *Kitab al-Isra’* also see A. B. M. Habibur Rahman Chowdhury “Three treatises on the theme of al-Isra’ wa’l-mi’raj: being an edition of Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Kitab al-Isra’ ila al-maqam al-asra*, Ibn Sawdakin’s *Kitab al-najat* and al-Ghaiti’s *Kitab al-ibtihaj*”.

Also see, Brooke O. Vuckovic, *Heavenly Journeys, Earthly Concerns: The Legacy of the Mi’raj in the Formation of Islam*, especially p. 125-133.

³¹⁵ See Chowdhury “Three treatises on the theme of al-Isra’ wa’l-mi’raj: being an edition of Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Kitab al-Isra’ ila al-maqam al-asra*, Ibn Sawdakin’s *Kitab al-najat* and al-Ghaiti’s *Kitab al-ibtihaj*”.

³¹⁶ Chowdhury, *ibid*, p. 47.

that were current then in the Muslim world, it will be impossible for one to understand the work well.”³¹⁷ Making this work significant for the *Hızırname* in terms of its sources, according to the recital (*sama*‘) record in the manuscript, this copy was ‘authorized’ by reading before Ibn ‘Arabi himself in 1235, and today it is housed at the Beyazıt Library in Istanbul.³¹⁸ How this manuscript copy found its way to Istanbul is not clear but after the death of Ibn ‘Arabi (1240) in Damascus, his disciple Sadreddin Konevi took some of his books to Konya. After the death of Konevi in 1274, the books owned by him were donated to the library built in his honour and dedicated to his name.³¹⁹ What is of importance for Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s work is that, having been written in the vicinity of Konya, it is possible that this work of Ibn ‘Arabi book could have been read or known about by Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi.

The second work of Ibn ‘Arabi which describes his own ascension is dated 602/1205-6. It is famous under the title *Risalat al-anwar*, but it is also known as the *Journey to the Lord of Power*. Although this work is also about a non-prophetic *miraj* journey, in terms of content it differs from the previous work of Ibn ‘Arabi, the *Kitab al-Miraj*. This work is about the rules and spiritual states of a wayfarer on his journey to God and it explains what to do in order to ascend to a higher stage. It also mentions the states which befall the seeker of God during the journey and

³¹⁷ Chowdhury, *ibid*, p. 51.

³¹⁸ Veliyüddin Efendi Koleksiyonu, nr. 1628. The record is by Ibn Sevdekin [Sawdakin], who was the disciple of Ibn ‘Arabi for more than thirty years. He read many of Ibn ‘Arabi’s books before him and also, he did copy his books. For information about Sevdekin’s life and the works copied and read by him before Ibn ‘Arabi, see, Veysel Akkaya, “Bir İbn Arabî Takipçisi: Şemsüddîn b. Sevdekîn”.

³¹⁹ On the Konevi library, see Mikail Bayram, “Sadru’d-Dîn Konevî Kütüphanesi ve Kitapları”.

describes the wonders that the seeker will experience, such as traversing great distances, crossing the Earth and walking on water.³²⁰

In addition to these works on the ascension of the soul and the chapters “Chapter 37” and “Chapter 167” in the *Futuhat*, the *Hızırname* can also be read with other works by Ibn ‘Arabi in mind, especially the *Fusus al-Hikam* (*The Bezels of Wisdom*) dated 627/1229-30. At the beginning of the *Fusus* Ibn ‘Arabi states that its content was revealed to him by the Prophet in his dream and the book is about the twenty-seven prophets - therefore consists of twenty-seven chapters - and explains the positions of the prophets in the seven heavens.³²¹ It became so famous in Anatolia that the commentaries written on it formed another corpus of literature.³²² In fact, Ibn ‘Arabi himself wrote a shortened version of the *Fusus* in 627/1230, entitled the *Naqsh al-Fusus*. Later on, Konevi wrote the first commentary on the *Fusus* and according to Ekrem Demirli, this work has determined the reception of the *Fusus* and the content of the commentaries written on the *Fusus* itself.³²³ Demirli defines the era in Anatolia following the *Fusus* as ‘the era of commentators’ (*şarihler dönemi*) and notes that the commentaries on the *Fusus* have formed a new corpus of literature based on mysticism, which consists of different kinds of works, including the poetic works written in the vernacular language.³²⁴ The well-known commentaries on the *Fusus* written before the *Hızırname* are as follows: (1) by Konevi (d. 673/1274),³²⁵ (2) by al-Jandi (d. 700/1300), (3) by al-Qashani (d.

³²⁰ See, Ibn ‘Arabi, *Journey to the Lord of Power: A Manual on Retreat* by Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi.

³²¹ On the *Fusus al-Hikam* and its translation into Turkish, see Ekrem Demirli, *Fusûsu’l-Hikem İbnü’l-Arabî*.

³²² On the commentaries of the *Fusus* see Demirli, *Nazari Tasavvufun Kurucusu Sadreddin Konevi*.

³²³ Demirli, *ibid*, p. 129-130.

³²⁴ Demirli, *ibid*, p. 141.

³²⁵ On Konevi’s work and its translation into Turkish, see, Demirli, *Fususu’l-Hikem’in Sırları*.

730/1330), (4) by Davud el-Kayseri (d. 751/1350), who was the disciple of al-Qashani,³²⁶ (5) by al-İzniki (d. 855/1450) and, (6) by Yazıcızade Muhammed (d. 855/1451).³²⁷ Also, the father of Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi, Piri Halife (d. 1460) wrote a commentary in Arabic, entitled the *Zübdetü't-tahkik ve Nüzhetü't-Tevfik*, on the *Nusus* by Konevi, which was a summary of his ideas that he elaborated and explained in his other works.³²⁸ Then, according to the biography of Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi by Seyyid Hüseyin, Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi wrote a commentary on his father's work. However, no copy of this work has yet been found.³²⁹

Other than these figures which include the first Ottoman müderris, Davud el-Kayseri, several dervishes are also known to have written commentaries on, or other works related to the *Fusus*, highlighting its popularity in Anatolia and its circulation in different groups. Şeyh Bedreddin (d. 1414-1420?) for example, who was educated as a judge and then became one of the prominent figures in Ottoman history, refers to the *Fusus* in his work the *Varidat*.³³⁰ As Şeyh Bedreddin writes, one Friday night in the first ten days of Jamada al-akhir in 810, he saw Ibn 'Arabi in his dream. In the dream Ibn 'Arabi tells him that he wanted to send away the devil to another world, and he managed to do it. Having mentioned his dream, Şeyh Bedreddin proceeds to

³²⁶ For the English translation of Kayseri's Introduction to his commentary on the *Fusus*, see Mukhtar Ali, "Qaysari's Introduction to Ibn 'Arabi's *Fusus*". Kayseri explains the key concepts and terminology of the *Fusus* in twelve sections, such as the levels of unveiling, the Throne, the Footstool, the seven heavens, division of the names, the supreme Name and divine realities.

³²⁷ According to some biographers, it was his brother, Ahmed-i Bican, who wrote the commentary, see, Mustafa Tahrali, "A General Outline of the Influence of Ibn Arabi in the Ottoman Era".

³²⁸ Piri Halife's work survive in several copies, see S. Yazar, *Eğirdirli Münevver Bir Ailenin Hikayesi*, p. 144-145.

³²⁹ See Yazar, *Eğirdirli Münevver Bir Ailenin Hikayesi*, p. 31-32 and 144-145.

³³⁰ Şeyh Bedreddin was a well-educated scholar, especially on the Islamic law, for more information about Şeyh Bedreddin's life and his mystical doctrine, see Michel Balivet, *Şeyh Bedreddin, Tasavvuf ve İsyân*.

Also see Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ*, p. 197; Dimitris Kastritsis, "The Ottoman Interregnum (1402-1413): Politics and narratives of dynastic succession", especially p. 11; 297-298.

its interpretation. He tells us that the Sheikh (Ibn ‘Arabi) has explained the essence of ‘oneness’ in his works, especially in the *Fusus*, and he saw this dream as a warning since he was reading the *Fusus* at that time.³³¹ In fact, the *Varidat* itself is a work textually related to the *Fusus*, as stated in the description of Niyaz-i Mısri in the seventeenth century: it is a stream from the ocean of the *Fusus*.³³²

The *Miftah al-ghayb* by Konevi is also another significant book in the era, which has also, according to Ekrem Demirli, highly influenced the commentaries written on the *Fusus* and the works of experiential (*nazari*) mysticism. In the *Miftahu’l-ghayb*, Konevi explains the context of the *Fusus* and how to read it, therefore, as Demirli argues, it is the best reference source in order to read and understand the *Fusus* correctly.³³³ In terms of content, it resembles the *Metaphysics* by Ibn Sina.³³⁴

Ibn ‘Arabi (d. 1240) and his disciple Konevi (d. 1274) are two prominent figures and two prolific writers who significantly influenced the early Ottoman ‘ulema and dervish literature in Anatolia. Indeed a corpus of literature referred to as the ‘Ekberi-Konevi school’ came into existence. The idea in the works of Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi concerning the non-prophetic ascension which defines it as the ultimate means to gain knowledge about the essence of existence provides a well-established literature for the *Hızırname*. The claims of the poet-narrator in the text is that he is explaining his ‘zevk’ (*tasting*) and he is writing this text ‘for the benefit of people’ parallel the claims and terminology of Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi in their works. As Ekrem Demirli observes, ‘the knowledge of tasting’ (*zevk ilimleri*) is one category in

³³¹ For a Turkish translation of the *Varidat*, see, Şeyh Bedreddin, *Varidat*.

³³² Demirli, *Ibn Arabi, Fususu’l-Hikem*, p. 16.

³³³ Demirli, *ibid*, p. 12.

³³⁴ Demirli, *Nazari Tasavvufun Kurucusu Sadreddin Konevi*, p. 26-32.

Ibn ‘Arabi’s description about the types of knowledge. The spiritual states and personal experiences are considered under this category.³³⁵ Likewise, in Konevi’s works too, the ultimate knowledge can only be obtained by experience.³³⁶ Being the first commentator of the *Fusus al-Hikam (Bezels of Wisdom)* by Ibn ‘Arabi, in his works Konevi himself even tells us that ‘he had the same taste (*zevk*) as Ibn ‘Arabi did’,³³⁷ referring to the knowledge gained by experience by Ibn ‘Arabi himself. Based on the idea that the only means to learn the essence of something is experience itself, Konevi developed a methodology to reach the knowledge of existence in which he explains what the ‘Truth’ is and how we can reach the Truth.³³⁸ Referring to this new methodology, Ekrem Demirli introduces Konevi as the founder of the ‘*nazari tasavvuf*’ (*experiential mysticism*) in Anatolia.³³⁹

Although the influence of Ibn ‘Arabi on Konevi’s understanding of knowledge and mystical states is obvious, the relationship between Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi is controversial. The main reason for this controversy is that we do not have much information about the life of Konevi, since he does not provide information about his life, his masters or the books he read. Instead, Konevi’s works consist of metaphysical discussions.³⁴⁰ The works of Ibn ‘Arabi on the other hand, are intertwined with his life story and thus, they include anecdotes from his life; about his masters, disciples, friends and travels. It is a common view that Konevi is the

³³⁵ Demirli, *Sadreddin Konevi Nazari Tasavvufun Kurucusu*, p. 134-135.

³³⁶ Demirli, *ibid*, p. 155-157.

³³⁷ Demirli, *Fusus al-Hikem’in Sırları*, p. 12.

³³⁸ Demirli, *Sadreddin Konevi Nazari Tasavvufun Kurucusu*, p. 127-128.

³³⁹ See, Demirli, *ibid*.

³⁴⁰ Konevi was born circa 1200 in Malatya. His father was the master of Seljukid princes. The life story of Konevi includes contradictory information, some sources say his mother was the sister of the sultan, some others say she was the slave of the sultan. But, all sources point to the links between his father and the Seljukid palace. For more information, see, Demirli, *Sadreddin Konevi Nazari Tasavvufun Kurucusu*, p. 15-23.

On Konevi’s life and times and his works also see, Richard Todd, *The Sufi Doctrine of Man*, *Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi’s Metaphysical Anthropology*.

step-son of Ibn ‘Arabi, however, this assumption has been challenged in several studies, as there is no textual evidence which may lead us to claim such a relationship between Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi. Comparing the chronological events in both Ibn ‘Arabi’s and Konevi’s life time, Hüdavendigar Adam argues that the strongest possibility about the date when Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi met is the time when Konevi went to Damascus for his education. Then Konevi stayed in Damascus until the death of his master. When Ibn ‘Arabi died in 1240 in Damascus, Konevi was 35 years old. After his master’s death, Konevi took Ibn ‘Arabi’s books to Konya.³⁴¹

The Konevi Library

The region of Eğirdir, being in the vicinity of Konya, had close connections with the literary heritage of the former Karamanid capital, and therefore quite likely with the books of the Konevi library. As in the example of Aşıkpaşazade and Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s father, the Konevi complex functioned as a center for the education of the dervishes. Both dervishes became a disciple of the Zeyni sheikh Abdüllatif Makdisi during his stay in the Konevi complex and Aşıkpaşazade was initiated into the Zeyni order by him, and then he spread the teachings of the order in Istanbul through the dervish lodge he established there. Also, el-Firuzabadi (d. 1414),

³⁴¹ On the chronological history of the visits of Ibn ‘Arabi to Anatolia and the relationship between Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi, see Adam Hüdaverdi, “The Relationship between Muhyiddin Arabi and Sadreddin al-Konevi”. By examining the biographies of Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi, unlike the general opinion in secondary sources, Adam argues that Konevi cannot be the step-son of Ibn ‘Arabi.

Likewise, Demirli also does not consider Ibn ‘Arabi as Konevi’s step-father, see, *Sadreddin Konevi Nazari Tasavvufun Kurucusu*, p. 19-21.

For chronological information about Ibn ‘Arabi’s travels to Konya, Mosul, Malatya, Mecca, Jerusalem, Egypt and Syria, also see, Sara N. Yıldız and Haşim Şahin, “In the Proximity of Sultans: Majd al-Din Ishaq, Ibn ‘Arabi and the Seljuk Court”, especially p. 183-187.

For the biography of Ibn ‘Arabi, also see, Erol Kılıç, “İbnü’l-Arabî, Muhyiddin”.

Molla Abdurrahman-ı Cami (d. 1492), and Akşemseddin (d. 1459) can be cited as well-known figures in the Ottoman Empire who visited the Konevi library to study.³⁴² When reading the *Hızırname*, and addressing its sources, therefore, the books in the Konevi library need to be considered in order to situate the *Hızırname* in its proper context.

Just before he died, Konevi wrote a two-page will concerning the books he owned, explaining which book he wanted to be donated and to where. Some of Konevi's requests are as follows: (1) The books on philosophy will be sold and the money earned from those books will be given to the poor Muslims, (2) The books on medicine, law, exegesis and hadith will be sent to Damascus to be used by those who study these subjects, (3) The books written by himself will be given to his son-in-law, (4) After he dies nobody will seek for esoteric meanings in either Ibn 'Arabi's books or in his own, nor will they write commentaries on them, because that path will be closed after his death.³⁴³

As Mikail Bayram notes, however, after Konevi passed away his friends and relatives did not follow his will; they did not let Konevi's books to be sold to other people nor did they send any of his books to Damascus. Instead, in the year he died, in 1274, they built a library between his tomb, his *madrassa* and the mosque, and they donated all of his books to this library. In later periods the number of books in the Konevi collection changed due to new books being donated to the library, or because of the loss of the books left by Konevi for various reasons. The books belonging to Konevi himself had his signature on them authenticating his ownership. In addition, several books in the collection had recital (*sama'*) records which tell us when they

³⁴² Bayram, *Zaviye-Khankahs and Religious Orders in the Province of Karaman: The Seljukid, Karamanoğlu and the Ottoman Periods, 1200-1512*, p. 59.

³⁴³ Mikail Bayram, *ibid*, p. 892.

were read and before who. The collection also included Ibn ‘Arabi’s books, which Konevi brought from Damascus after he died. Some of them were written by Ibn ‘Arabi himself. In 1926 the books in the Konevi collection were moved from the Konevi Library to another library in Konya, which is the Yusufaga Library.³⁴⁴

Although the books owned by Konevi were recorded after he passed away, there is no list surviving which shows how many books Konevi had and what they were. Following the conquest of the Karamanids by the Ottomans the books in the library were recorded in the Register of Pious Foundations of the Province of Karaman (*‘Evkaf Defteri’*) dated 880/1475-76. According to this register, there were more than two hundred books in the library at that time. According to a later record, however, in the register of 888/1483, the amount of books in the Konevi collection seems to have decreased. The register cites one hundred and seventy books in the library.³⁴⁵ As pointed out by İsmail Erünsal, this inventory of the books in the Konevi library includes certain details that we do not find in other library catalogues. For example, the list mentions the autographed copies. The works whose titles are unknown are mentioned as *‘gayr-ı malum’* (unknown).³⁴⁶ According to the inventory, amongst the books in the Konevi library there were Ibn ‘Arabi’s works such as the *Fusus al-Hikam* copied by Konevi himself and the autographed copy of the *Futuhât* by Ibn ‘Arabi. The works of early Muslim scholars, historians and dervishes, such as al-Tabari, al-Ghazali and Kushayri were also cited in the list. Some of these books were noted as existing in multiple volumes, such as the *Futuhât*. The whole list includes books on a wide range of subjects, such as exegesis, *hadith*, history,

³⁴⁴ Bayram, “Sadru’d-Dîn Konevî Kütüphanesi ve Kitapları”, p. 892.

³⁴⁵ İsmail E. Erünsal, *Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri Tarihi Gelişimi ve Organizasyonu*, p. 70.

³⁴⁶ Erünsal, *Ottoman Libraries: A Survey of the History, Development and Organization of Ottoman Foundation Libraries*, p. 147; *Türk Kütüphaneleri Tarihi II: Kuruluştan Tanzimat’a Kadar Vakıf Kütüphaneleri*, p. 216.

medicine or mysticism.³⁴⁷ According to the note of Mikail Bayram, today in the Konevi collection, there are one hundred and eighty-eight books. Surviving for more than seven hundred years, there have been several changes in the collection throughout the centuries, and some books from the Konevi collection made their way to other libraries. The manuscript copy of Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Futuhāt* kept at the İslam Eserleri Müzesi in Istanbul is one instance of such a change to the Konevi collection.³⁴⁸ Similarly, the *Kitab al-Miraj* by Ibn ‘Arabi, which is kept at the Beyazıt Library in Istanbul today, seems to be another instance of such a change.

On the other hand, while the books in the Konevi collection, which are the primary texts of the Ekberî-Konevî school, reveal the possible textual sources for the peculiar features of the *Hızırname*, there are definitely more texts which influenced its composition. The frontier epic chain in Anatolia, the *Qisasu’l-Anbiya* works, or the biographies of the dervishes (*menakıbname*) for example, can be considered among the possible sources of the text. The question raises the point of whether we can trace the circulation of those books in Eğirdir in the fifteenth century.

The history of the libraries and the book-sellers (*sahhaf*) in Anatolia is an essential subject to be able to establish the textual links of Anatolian Turkish works with one another, and also the links between those and non-Turkish works circulating in the region. To date, the studies by İsmail Erünsal are the only research in the field that we can refer to. Erünsal has published his findings on the history of libraries and booksellers in the Ottoman era in several works,³⁴⁹ yet there is not

³⁴⁷ Fatih Bayram, “Zaviye-Khankahs and Religious Orders in the Province of Karaman: The Seljukid, Karamanoğlu and the Ottoman Periods, 1200-1512”, p. 18-20; 59.

³⁴⁸ Mikail Bayram, “Sadru’ d-Dîn Konevî Kütüphanesi ve Kitapları”, p. 896.

³⁴⁹ See Erünsal, *Osmanlılarda Sahafik ve Sahafılar*; *Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri Tarihî Gelişimi ve Organizasyonu*; *Ottoman Libraries: A Survey of the History, Development and Organization of Ottoman Foundation Libraries*; *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihinin Arşiv Kaynakları* (*The Archival*

much information about the early years of book circulation in the Ottoman era. However, some details that we can gather from the later Ottoman period can still provide some clues to make general assumptions regarding the early Ottoman period and before.

Erünsal examines the *tereke* records of the booksellers in different cities of Anatolia, such as Bursa, Edirne or İstanbul, and notes some of the books which were cited in those records. According to one *tereke* record for example, dated 1503, there were one hundred and twenty-five books in a book shop in Istanbul, which were owned by a certain Muslihiddin Abdi. Amongst the books he had were the *Tarih-i Taberi*, the *Şehname*, the *Mihr ü Müşteri* and the *Hamse-i Nizami*. Some of the works existed in multiple copies. According to another *tereke* record from Edirne on the other hand, dated 1680, the books owned by a certain Ahmed Hoca b. Abdullah distinguish themselves from those in Istanbul in terms of content and genre. Some titles from this shop are the narratives of *Kesik Baş*, *Tezkiretü'l-evliya* and *Danışmend Gazi*. Also, the number of books which are about religious stories, folk stories and epics in this bookshop outnumbers the ones in other bookshops in other cities. This bookshop had, for example, twenty-four volumes of the *Şahname*, five volumes of the *Saltukname*, three volumes of *Kırk Vezir Hikayesi*, twenty-one volumes of the *Ebu Muslimname*, sixteen volumes of the *Iskendername*, four volumes of the *Battalname* and one hundred and twenty-five volumes of the *Hamzaname*.³⁵⁰

Sources of Turkish Literary History); *Türk Kütüphaneleri Tarihi II: Kuruluşları Tanzimat'a Kadar Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri*.

For a survey of the libraries in the medieval Islamic world, see, *Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphaneleri Tarihi Gelişimi ve Organizasyonu*, p. 1-74.

³⁵⁰ Erünsal, *Osmanlılarda Sahafılık ve Sahafılar*, p. 55-66.

The difference between the booksellers in Edirne and in Istanbul, according to Erünsal, resulted from the location of these cities. The booksellers in Edirne, which was a city linked to the frontier cities of the Ottomans in the Balkans, had books mostly on heroism and they had them in multiple copies, in order to sell those books in the frontier cities so as to propagate heroism among the soldiers and the people living in the borderzones.³⁵¹ The frontier context of Edirne thus, seems to have influenced the content of the books circulating in the region through the booksellers. In this respect, being a frontier city between the Ottomans and the Karamanids, Eğirdir can also be considered to have had a similar book circulation, including books on heroism and war. Indeed, the references to the heroes of the frontier epics of Anatolia, namely Seyyid Gazi and Melik Danişmend, or, for example, the references to the life story of Ibrahim Adham in an epical manner, can be related to the written sources circulating in the region, as well as their oral stories.

Another important point revealed in the study of Erünsal is the identity of the customers of the booksellers. While the members of the *ilmiye* forms the first group, the members of the *tekkes* formed the second group all over the Ottoman lands. Also, the majority of the *tekkes* had their own libraries and according to the *tereke* records of the *tekke* members, those people had a considerable amount of books in their own libraries. This also shows the close relationship between the booksellers and the members of the *tekkes*. The first library established in Istanbul was founded by a dervish named Şeyh Muhammed b. Şeyh Hasan Geylani, in 858/1454. As another example, one of the dervishes during the reign of Mehmed II, named Mesud Halife, founded a library in a *tekke* in Edirne and donated his own books to this library. We

³⁵¹ Erünsal, *ibid*, p. 140.

can find similar *tekke* libraries in Bursa as well.³⁵² While the history of booksellers in Eğirdir awaits to be studied in new research projects, being a frontier city and in the region of former Karamanid lands, the cultural and literary heritage of the city seems to have provided a rich diversity of sources for the *Hızırname*, which was indeed written by a *tekke* member, who merged his *tekke* education with the heroic literature.

Khidr in Ibn ‘Arabi’s Works

The role of Khidr in the experiential journey of the warrior dervish in the *Hızırname*, along with his visits to Qaf, are two peculiar features of the text which depend on sources other than the four works of Ibn ‘Arabi about his ascension, including the *Kitab al-Miraj* and, other than the *Fusus* and its commentaries. In these works, neither does Khidr appear as the companion of Ibn ‘Arabi or Konevi, nor does he guide their journey or help them. Also, in the *Fusus* for example, Khidr is not cited among the twenty-seven prophets, rather he is mentioned in the chapter about Moses with regard to his role in the Koranic story.³⁵³

On the other hand, based on the encounters of Ibn ‘Arabi with Khidr, which he recounts in the *Futuhāt*, some scholars attributed a significant role to Khidr in Ibn ‘Arabi’s training.³⁵⁴ Referring to the “mantle of Khidr”, Henry Corbin claims that

³⁵² Erünsal, *ibid*, p. 146-147.

³⁵³ For a discussion on Khidr in the *Fusus*, see, Ian Netton, “Theophony as Paradox: Ibn al-‘Arabi’s Account of al-Khadr in his *Fusus al-Hikam*”.

³⁵⁴ The first meeting takes place in Seville. When Ibn ‘Arabi rejects to obey his master, he encounters Khidr and Khidr warns him to listen to his master’s words. The second meeting takes place at night in the middle of the sea when Ibn ‘Arabi is travelling on a ship. He sees Khidr walking on the sea and coming towards him. The third encounter takes place in a mosque. Khidr performs the prayer in the air in order to show a miracle to Ibn ‘Arabi’s friend who denies miracles. On Ibn ‘Arabi’s encounters with Khidr see, Claude Addas, *Quest for the Red Sulphur*, p. 75-126; Stephen Hirtenstein, “The Mantle of Khidr: Mystery, Myth and Meaning According to Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi”, p. 187-190

“this suggests what it means to be the disciple of Khidr”³⁵⁵ and he talks about Ibn ‘Arabi as “above all the disciple of Khidr”.³⁵⁶ Claude Addas however, opposes Corbin by noting that in the *Futuhāt*, Ibn ‘Arabi claims Jesus as “his real ‘first teacher’”. Likewise, James W. Morris also notes that “the special role of Jesus in the beginning of Ibn ‘Arabi’s own spiritual path is alluded to repeatedly in the *Futuhāt*”.³⁵⁷ Addas however, does not reject the role of Khidr in Ibn ‘Arabi’s spiritual training totally, but defines it as having “occurred much later and was considerably less decisive”.³⁵⁸ Stephen Hirtenstein on the other hand, following Corbin’s opinion, claims that the *khirqā* is a symbol for the initiation of Ibn ‘Arabi into Khidr’s realm and he argues that it also symbolizes ‘becoming Khidr’: “this ceremony identifies the recipient with the spiritual state of Khidr, so that he not only meets Khidr in person but in some sense actually becomes or represents him”.³⁵⁹

Whatever the claims concerning the prominence of Khidr in Ibn ‘Arabi’s life, the spiritual rank attributed to Khidr by Ibn ‘Arabi is open to controversy in the *Futuhāt*. In his third encounter with Khidr for example, at a mosque, Ibn ‘Arabi mentions another man in the community whose rank is higher than Khidr.³⁶⁰ The portrayal of Khidr, therefore, by Ibn ‘Arabi, at least in the *Futuhāt*, differs from the portrayal of Khidr in the *Hizirname*, which puts him at the highest stage having the knowledge of existence and leading the dervish to meet with God under his blessing. The notion of ‘becoming Khidr’ suggested by Stephen Hirtenstein, however, is of

³⁵⁵ Henry Corbin, *Alone with the Alone*, p. 60.

³⁵⁶ Corbin, *ibid*, p. 32. Stephen Hirtenstein also proposes the same idea Corbin did before and reads “the mantle of Khidr” as a symbol for his relationship with Khidr.

³⁵⁷ Morris, “The Spiritual Ascension: Ibn ‘Arabi and the Miraj Part I”, p. 637.

³⁵⁸ Addas, *Quest for the Red Sulphur*, p. 39.

³⁵⁹ See Hirtenstein, “The Mantle of Khidr: Mystery, Myth and Meaning According to Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi”, p. 190.

³⁶⁰ Addas, *Quest for the Red Sulphur* p. 125.

significance for the role and portrayal of both Khidr and dervish Muhyiddin in the *Hızırname*. As already mentioned in Chapter I, the features attributed to Khidr in the *Hızırname* are used interchangeably for the perfect men, for the friends of God and for the *erenler*, as if the poet-narrator is talking about the same people. Also, in different poems of the narrative, the dervish describes himself with the same features too, suggesting that he has become one of them. This also means that he has ‘become Khidr’, as he gained the special knowledge (*ilm-i ledun*) and therefore he had similar abilities with Khidr. In poem thirty-one for example, he explicitly tells us that “since he has reached the stage of Khidr, now, for him too ‘near and far are the same’”. Therefore, the journey of the dervish Muhyiddin can also be read as a journey which tells of his ‘becoming Khidr’, which throughout the narrative is taken to be the same as becoming one of the *erenler* or becoming a perfect man (*insan-ı kamil*).

Although it is not easy to trace the role of Khidr in the spiritual training of a dervish with reference to Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Fusus*, the *Futuhāt* and ascension narratives, another author from the same era and contemporary of Ibn ‘Arabi, Aziz Nasafi, for example, openly describes the identification of the perfect man with Khidr in his Persian treatises. Similar to the works of Ibn ‘Arabi and Konevi, Aziz Nasafi’s treatises are also about the ultimate knowledge, the knowledge of existence, and about the states which a person experiences on his journey to God. These works tell of, for example, who the traveller is, what the path is, how many waystations there are on the path, the perfect man, the companionship, the five senses, the human ascents or the four oceans. As the treatise entitled *The Furthest Goal* explains, the perfect man is also known as Khidr:

Know that the Perfect Man has been remembered under different names as a result of attribution of names and interpretation, and all

of them are correct. He has been called Shaykh, Leader, Guide, the Mahdi, the Wise Man [...]. He has been called Jesus because he revived dead, Khidr because he drank the water of life, and Solomon because he knew the language of the birds.³⁶¹

The identification of the perfect man with Khidr then, was already developed as a notion in the thirteenth century which can be followed in several works telling of the experiential journey of the dervishes.

All the works cited in this section with regard to the *Hızırname* are linked to one or more peculiar features of the text, such as the first-person narrator, the non-prophetic ascension journey, the notion of the perfect man, and the identification of the perfect man with Khidr through becoming Khidr by experiencing a heavenly journey. Another peculiar feature related to the journey of the dervish however, Mount Qaf, which is described as the place of Khidr in the text, still needs to be explained as it seems to be unconnected to the works cited in this section.

It is the text written by Abd al-Karim al-Jili (d. between 1408-1417), a treatise entitled *The Journey of the Stranger and the Conversation with Khizr*, which describes Khidr with the same features in the *Hızırname*, not only by pointing out the relationship between Khidr and the perfect men, but also mentioning his dwelling place as Mount Qaf. Al-Jili, who is famous for his book entitled *al-Insan al-Kamil* (*The Perfect Man*), is a well-known follower of Ibn ‘Arabi in the late fourteenth-early fifteenth century and he wrote a commentary on Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Journey to the Lord of Power*.³⁶² In his treatise about the journey of a stranger to a sublime realm, he describes a country governed by Khidr. It is a country called Yuh. It is in heaven

³⁶¹ On the life and works of Aziz Nasafi and for the English translation of his four treatises, see Lloyd Ridgeon, *Persian Metaphysics and Mysticism: Selected Treatises of ‘Aziz Nasafi*. For the quotation, see, p. 49-51.

³⁶² For more information about al-Jili’s life and works, see, Nafiz Şahinoğlu, “Abdülkerim el-Cili”.

and it is the country of the invisible men (*rical-i gayb*). A striking similarity of this text to the *Hızırname* is that the journey of the stranger is narrated in the first-person. As narrated in the treatise, when the stranger enters in Khidr's presence, he asks a question about his sublime situation, and Khidr introduces himself as such:

I am the secret of man in his act of existing, and I am that invisible one [...] who is the object of worship. [...] I cause myself to be in every concept and to be manifested in every dwelling. [...] My condition is to be esoteric, unusual. My situation is to be the stranger, the traveller. My permanent dwelling place is the mountain Qaf. [...] I am he who stands at the confluence of the two seas, the one who plunges into the river of Where, the one who drinks from the source of source. I am the guide of fish in the sea of divinity. [...] I am the initiator of Moses. [...] I am the unique Pole that is the sum of all. I am the Light that scintillates. [...] I am the desire of the seekers. Only the Perfect Man (*al-insan al-kamil*), the ingathered Spirit, reaches and finds access to me. [...]³⁶³

This treatise by al-Jili preceeds the *Hızırname* by almost a hundred years, and may also well have been one of the source texts of the *Hızırname*, linking the *Hızırname* to the works of the Ibn 'Arabi and his followers.

The Reception of Ibn 'Arabi in Eğirdir

The poet in the *Hızırname* uses the penname 'Muhyiddin', which now, having revealed the textual links between the *Hızırname* and Ibn 'Arabi's works can be considered to be referring to Ibn 'Arabi himself. Indeed, Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi may have composed the first part of the narrative, which is the *miraj* journey, by modelling on Ibn 'Arabi's works which describe his own *miraj*, and therefore, he may have chosen to use Muhyiddin as his penname to emphasize the links between his work and Ibn 'Arabi's. Or, likewise, he may have wanted to give a message to his disciples that like Ibn 'Arabi had done before, he too has experienced a visionary

³⁶³ 'Abd al-Karim Jili, "The Journey of the Stranger and Conversation with Khizr", p. 156-157.

journey. These are, of course, speculations which we can never answer for sure but the importance of Ibn ‘Arabi for Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi can be observed in the text clearly, not only through textual relations, but also because the text mentions Ibn ‘Arabi as a ‘true man’ (*girçek er*).

While the influence of Ibn ‘Arabi on Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi is obvious, the founder of the Zeyni order, Zeyn-i Hafi, whom Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi mentions in the *Hızırname* as his sheikh, portrays a totally different attitude towards Ibn ‘Arabi and his followers in Herat. In the *Manhaj al-rashad* (821/1428), which is considered to be a “detailed refutation of Ibn al-Arabi and those whom he considered his antecedents and followers”,³⁶⁴ Zeyn-i Hafi opposes the concept of the ‘unity of existence’ (*wahdat al-wujud*), by providing “an invaluable presentation of the followers of Ibn Arabi in the fifteenth century”.³⁶⁵ At this point, how should we read the contrasting portrayals of Ibn ‘Arabi in Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s and Zeyn-i Hafi’s works?

In his analysis on the the Nakshbandi sources focusing on the conflict between the Naqshbandi dervishes and others in Herat, Behzad Bashir points out the controversy surrounding Ibn ‘Arabi in different groups which is reflected in the description of the dervishes. According to this, the Naqshbandi figures like the influential Muhammad Parsa and Qasim-i Anvar, supported Ibn ‘Arabi’s ideas in their works and talked about Ibn ‘Arabi with great respect. Zeyn-i Hafi on the other hand, as it is portrayed in the Naqshbandi sources, had rejected Ibn ‘Arabi and his followers harshly. According to one anecdote for example, Zeyn-i Hafi gets highly upset with and angry at one of his foremost disciples, named Ahmad Samarqandi,

³⁶⁴ Bashir, *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam*, p. 99.

³⁶⁵ Binbaş, “Sharaf al-Din ‘Ali Yazdi (ca. 770s-858ca./1370s-1454): Prophecy, Politics, and Historiography in Late Medieval Islamic History”, p. 120-121; 128-129.

since he recites the verses of Qasim-i Anvar during his sermons in the mosque. Zeyn-i Hafi declares Ahmad Samarqandi a heretic.³⁶⁶

The conflict between the Zeynis and Naqshbandis reflected in the Naqshbandi sources, in fact, helps us to contextualize the contrasting reception of Ibn ‘Arabi in Herat and in Anatolia. The *Rashahat-i ‘ayn al-hayat (Dewdrops from the Source of Life)* by Ali b. Husayn Kashifi Safi for example, includes anecdotes about Khwaja Ahrar, who was an influential Naqshbandi figure in the region, and in some of those anecdotes we find different portrayals of Zeyn-i Hafi. One of the episodes in the *Rashahat* is about the initiation of Ahrar into the Naqshbandi order and includes information about how Ahrar decided to be a follower of the Naqshbandi path. According to the episode, before he had decided to be a Naqshbandi, Ahrar looked for a master for himself and spent some time with the influential sheikhs of the city, including Zeyn-i Hafi. However, at the end, he decided against being a disciple of Zeyn-i Hafi, because he lacked proper behaviour. As the text describes, while Ahrar is in Hafi’s place, Zeyn-i Hafi gets into a state of ecstasy. Then, some of his followers come and want him to come out of the ecstatic state in order to study on one of his works under his mastership. They are unsuccessful at first, but they do not give up and at the end Hafi comes out of the ecstatic state and works with him on the text. Ahrar finds this situation very inappropriate.³⁶⁷

As it is obvious in the Naqshbandi sources, there was a rivalry between the Naqshbandis and the Zeynis in Herat. Ibn ‘Arabi was one subject on which those groups had opposing arguments. In this case, since the Naqshbandi circles were the

³⁶⁶ Bashir, *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam*, p. 99.

³⁶⁷ Bashir, *ibid*, p. 97.

supporters of Ibn ‘Arabi in the region, the refutation of those people by Zeyn-i Hafî in fact reflects the Naqhsbandi-Zeyni rivalry in Herat at that time. When read within this context, the negative attitude of Zeyn-i Hafî towards Ibn ‘Arabi and his followers appear as not only resulting from a philosophical or doctrinal problem, but also resulting from the conflict between the Zeynis and the Naqshbandis.

In Eğirdir on the other hand, Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi wrote the *Hızırname* in a totally different context. Despite his polemical identity in the later periods of the Ottoman state,³⁶⁸ the first Ottoman scholars and ‘ulema, such as Davud el-Kayseri (d. 751/1350) and Molla Fenari (d. 834/1431), were known as the followers of Ibn ‘Arabi. The first Ottoman *müderris*, Davud el-Kayseri wrote one of the celebrated commentaries on Ibn ‘Arabi’s *Fusus al-Hikam*. Likewise, as the first Ottoman *şeyhülislam*, Molla Fenari also wrote a commentary on the *Fusus*. Clearly, Ibn ‘Arabi was a figure favoured by the early Ottomans.³⁶⁹ The influence of the works of Ibn ‘Arabi on the *Hızırname* therefore, in addition to the Konevi Library, was backed by the positive attitude towards Ibn ‘Arabi in early Ottoman Anatolia.

Although the works by Ibn ‘Arabi establish a link between the heavenly journey of the dervish Muhyiddin in the *Hızırname* and the Arabic texts circulating in the region at that time, the role of Khidr in the narrative, the connection between the travels to Mount Qaf, to the realm of the water of life, becoming a perfect man and having the company of Khidr needs further research. This connection, can,

³⁶⁸ On the reception of Ibn ‘Arabi in the Islamic world and the controversy on his ideas, see Alexander D. Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabi in the Later Islamic Tradition – The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam*. For the reception of Ibn ‘Arabi in Ottoman lands, see, Ahmed Zildzic, “Friend and foe: The early Ottoman reception of Ibn ‘Arabi”.

For information about the intellectual and religious landscape of thirteenth century Anatolia, see, “Introduction”, in *The Seljuks of Anatolia*, for a discussion about the spread of Ibn ‘Arabi’s ideas in Anatolia, also see, Yıldız and Şahin, “In the Proximity of Sultans”.

³⁶⁹ Tim Winter, “Ibn Kemal (d. 940/1534) on Ibn ‘Arabi’s Hagiology”, p. 138.

however be established through the Persian treatises of Suhrawardi (d. 1191), who is the founder of the *Ishraqi School*. In one of his treatises, which are also written by a first-person narrator, Suhrawardi openly states that the only way to become a perfect man is to reach the source of life which is beyond Mount Qaf, and the only way to reach this source is to be(come) Khidr.³⁷⁰ With the aim of identifying the sources of the *Hızırname* accurately, the last subject addressed in this chapter is the *ishraqi* literature with particular focus on the role and depiction of Khidr in the *Hızırname*.

c. *Ishraqi Literature and the Treatises of Suhrawardi (d. 1191)*

Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi is famous for the title ‘*sheikh al-ishraq*’ (*the master of illumination*), as he is the founder of the *ishraqi* philosophy based on ‘experiential’ (*nazari*) knowledge,³⁷¹ and he is also known as ‘Suhrawardi the Maqtul’ (*the executed*) since he was said to have been put to death in 1191. He studied theology, philosophy and logic and he spent his twenties traveling in northern Syria and Anatolia.³⁷² When he left Anatolia for Syria, the son of Saladin, al-Malik al-Zahir was governing Aleppo and became a disciple of Suhrawardi. Although the reason for his execution is controversial in the sources, according to widely accepted opinion, a group of ‘*ulema* attributed major crimes to him by stating that he claimed prophecy. Upon this, Saladin ordered his execution and conveyed it

³⁷⁰ See the treatise entitled *The Red Intellect* in *The Philosophical Allegories and Mystical Treatises*, p. 31-32.

³⁷¹ On the *Hikmat al-Ishraq* and its parallel English - Arabic translation by John Walbridge and Hossein Ziai, see Suhrawardi, *The Philosophy of Illumination*. For brief information about the *ishraqi* doctrine see Landolt, “Illuminationism”.

³⁷² He studied the *Basa’ir* (Insights) by al-Sawi (540/2245), whose logic differed from the Aristotelian logic and influenced Suhrawardi’s reorganization of the logical corpus. For more information about his education and travels see J. Walbridge and H. Ziai, “Translator’s Introduction” in *Suhrawardi The Philosophy of Illumination*, p. xv-xvii.

to his son Al-Zahir. According to some sources however, al-Zahir did not kill Suhrawardi as he loved his master. His death thus, remains mysterious.

In the *Hikmat al-Ishraq* (*The Philosophy of Illumination*), dated 1186, Suhrawardi explains his philosophical approach to the celestial spheres, to the vision, to the nature of existence and to the interaction between the souls and the angels. The book includes references to the writings of ancient philosophers, such as Plato and the Zoroastrian sages of Iran, and it explains the nature of creation based on light and darkness. How the lights, the barriers and the spheres were created is discussed in detail throughout the book. In addition, the book also explains the things and the states that a wayfarer will experience in his journey through the stations in the spheres and describes the divine forms which he will contemplate during his ascension, such as loud sounds, seas, mountains, and individuals. Besides the *Hikmat al-Ishraq*, Suhrawardi also wrote several treatises of a philosophic nature and some of those tell of visionary experiences with reference to the *ishraqi* doctrine and to the pre-Islamic Persian narratives, such as references to Simorgh and Mount Qaf. Some of his treatises are textually linked to Ibn Sina's (d. 428/1037) works.³⁷³ In his *Mirajname*, for example, referring to Sura of the Light (Nur) in the Koran, Ibn Sina explains the direction of the soul towards the East, which is a region of pure light.³⁷⁴

Likewise, the philosophical system of Suhrawardi is also based on light and darkness.

³⁷³ On Suhrawardi's life and works see Wheeler Thackston, "Introduction", p. ix-xxxiii; H. Ziai, "The Source and Nature of Authority: A Study of al-Suhrawardi's Illuminationist Political Doctrine"; Mehdi Aminrazavi, "The Significance of Suhrawardi's Persian Writings in the Philosophy of Illumination". As Aminrazavi notes Suhrawardi's works have generally been examined in five categories: 1. Four large treatises of a philosophical nature; 2. Shorter works which are further explanations of the larger doctrinal treatises; 3. A number of treatises of a purely esoteric nature in Persian; 4. A number of treatises of a philosophic and initiatic nature; 5. Liturgical writings, for more information see p. 261-263.

Also see Ian Netton, "The Neoplatonic Substrate of Suhrawardi's Philosophy of Illumination: Falsafa as Tasawwuf".

³⁷⁴ See Soraya M. Hajjaji-Jarrah, "Ayat al-Nur: A Metaphor for Where We Come from, What We are, and Where We are Going", p. 175.

In this system, “the lower light has love in relation to the higher light”³⁷⁵ and “continuing love and perpetual desire determines all individual motions”.³⁷⁶ Having described that “all existence is ordered on the basis of love and dominance”,³⁷⁷ Suhrawardi introduces Gabriel as “the dominating light” or “managing light”, who is the “bestower of knowledge and confirmation, the giver of life and virtue”.³⁷⁸ Intriguingly, the role and virtues of Khidr in the *Hizirname* somehow resemble the role and virtues of Gabriel in the *ishraqi* literature of Suhrawardi. In some Persian sources in fact, Gabriel and Khidr are mentioned in relation to each other. Obeyd-e Zakani (ca. 1300-72) for example, in the treatise entitled the *Rishname (Book of the Beard)*, describes Khidr as a feather on Gabriel’s wing and states that Khidr is from heaven.³⁷⁹

Suhrawardi explains in the *Hikmat al-Ishraq* that there is the world of angels, who are numberless and their rank is “in accordance with the levels of the spheres”. “The sanctified godly sages” however, who are described as “being the sage who gathers himself to equally the highest philosophical knowledge and mystical experience modelled on the visionary experience of the prophet, the night of the *mi’raj*”, by Henry Corbin,³⁸⁰ “may rise higher than the world of angels”.³⁸¹ But, for the ascension of the soul, “the inner sense must be weakened the soul must be free from the external senses”.³⁸² In relation to the ascension of the soul, Suhrawardi also notes some superhuman powers, such as, flying to the sky, walking on water and

³⁷⁵ Suhrawardi, *The Philosophy of Illumination*, p. 97-98.

³⁷⁶ Suhrawardi, *ibid*, p. 122.

³⁷⁷ Suhrawardi, *ibid*, p. 97-98.

³⁷⁸ Suhrawardi, *The Philosophy of Illumination*, p. 132.

³⁷⁹ Obeyd-e Zakani, “Book of the Beard”, p. 65.

³⁸⁰ Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth*, p. xi.

³⁸¹ Suhrawardi, *ibid*, p. 150.

³⁸² Suhrawardi, *ibid*, p. 151.

traversing distances.³⁸³ These are the features attributed to Khidr in the *Hizirname*, and, ‘the perfect man’, the *erenler* and ‘the friends of God’ are also described with the same features.

Also, in his several works, Suhrawardi addresses the nature of knowledge and how knowledge can be attained. According to him, the ‘experiential knowledge’ is superior to other types of knowledge, such as the knowledge gathered from the books. Since during the visions knowledge is actively experienced, the highest level of knowledge can only be attained in visionary experiences.³⁸⁴ In these works Suhrawardi explains the visionary experiences by using the key terms *dhawq*, vision and *kashf*.³⁸⁵ Narrating a non-prophetic ascension journey, the *Hizirname* follows the textual lineage of *ishraqi* literature, and through this journey, the dervish attains the knowledge of existence. Also, in terms of terminology too, the *Hizirname* is one of the works of *ishraqi* literature.

Other than the *Hikmat al-Ishraq*, two more works of Suhrawardi are of significance to put the journey of the dervish in the *Hizirname* into context. The first one is entitled *The Partawnameh (Book of Radiance)* and it is a work on logic, physics and metaphysics. The last chapter in this book is about the special conditions and acts appointed to the prophets which can also be experienced by some friends of God. As the text writes, if a person’s soul is “enlightened by the Light of Truth and High Heavens”, that person may control the realm of matter.³⁸⁶ The power that the *erenler* has in the *Hizirname*, through which they can change the essence of

³⁸³ Ziai, “The Source and Nature of Authority: A Study of al-Suhrawardi’s Illuminist Political Doctrine”, p. 312-313.

³⁸⁴ For more information, see Nile Green, *Sufism: A Global History*, p. 72-76.

³⁸⁵ Roxanne D. Marcotte, “Reason (‘aql) and Direct Intuition (mushahada) in the Works of Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi (d. 587/1191)”, p. 223.

³⁸⁶ Suhrawardi, *The Book of Radiance / Partawnameh*, p. 79-81.

something seems to follow the same idea explained by Suhrawardi in the *Partawnameh*.

The second work of Suhrawardi to be mentioned here with regard to the *Hizirname* is the treatise entitled the “Red Intellect” (*Akl-i sorkh*). Written by a first-person narrator, this treatise describes the place of Khidr at Mount Qaf and states that to be able to reach the realm of Khidr, one needs to become Khidr: “If you become Khizr you can easily cross Mount Qaf.”³⁸⁷ At the beginning of the treatise, the narrator first sees someone approaching. Since the person’s face and colour is red, the narrator thinks that he is young, and therefore, addresses him as ‘young man’. The man tells him that he is the first child of creation. Afterwards, addressing the man as ‘elder’, he begins to ask questions about the man’s life and experiences. The man, who is a traveller, has seen seven wonders in the world. The first of those wonders is Mount Qaf, and it is his realm. The seventh one, which is the last wonder, is the water of life. As the man explains to the narrator, to be able to get Mount Qaf, which surrounds the world, one has to pass two mountains, one hot and one cold and in terms of temperature, they are not easy to stand. However, if he becomes Khidr, he can easily cross Mount Qaf. The last wonder on the other hand, the water of life, is in the darkness. The man tells the narrator that if he can lace his shoes like Khidr, he can reach the land of darkness. As the man states, the ones who can reach the realm of the water of life are the ones who have discovered the meaning of reality.³⁸⁸ Similar to the “Red Intellect”, the *Hizirname* also describes the place of Khidr at Mount Qaf. Also, as already mentioned in the previous section, it includes the notion of ‘becoming Khidr’. With all these common features then, some peculiar and eccentric

³⁸⁷ Suhrawardi, “The Red Intellect” in *The Philosophical Allegories and Mystical Treatises*, p. 32.

³⁸⁸ Suhrawardi, *ibid*, p. 31-32.

features of the *Hızırname* are also seem to be related to the primary sources of *ishraqi literature*.

Did the author of the *Hızırname*, Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi, discover Suhrawardi's works? Did he read any of his treatises or any commentaries written on these works? While these questions are essential to be able to define the source texts of the *Hızırname* accurately, due to the lack of studies about the circulation and reception of the works of Suhrawardi in Anatolia, these questions have to wait for further studies.³⁸⁹ On the other hand, although there is a need for more research to be able establish concrete links between the works of Suhrawardi and early Anatolian Turkish works, the *Hızırname* is not the only example of Turkish literature which includes the notion of 'becoming Khidr'. A short *masnavi* work entitled the *Keramat-ı Ahi Evren* for example, introduces Ahi Evren to its audience with the well-known features of Khidr:

He knew the secrets of the heavens
He would walk on the seas
He used to walk with Khidr everyday
[and] did not let anybody drowned [into the sea])³⁹⁰

The identity of the poet who composed this *masnavi*, which consists of one hundred and sixty-seven couplets, is debatable. Although the poem is attributed to the late 13th-early 14th century poet Gülşehri (d. after 717/1317), who was from the

³⁸⁹ For a study which addresses the influence of Suhrawardi in Anatolia, by also pointing out the need for studies on this subject, see Suzan Yalman, "Ala al-Din Kayqubad Illuminated: A Rum Seljuq Sultan as Cosmic Ruler". Yalman examines the Artuqid coins left minted before Suhrawardi's death by focusing on the light symbolism in their iconography and argues that "it is not a coincidence that the emergence of unusual iconographic and artistic features with light symbolism, which embodied messages of royal grandeur with overtones of celestial references, occurred at the time of the illuminationist shaykh Suhrawardi's activity in Anatolia and the Jazira".

³⁹⁰ For different editions of the text see F. Taeschner, *Gülschehris Mesnevi auf Achi Evran* and Ahmet Kartal, "Keramat-ı Ahi Evran Mesnevisi Üzerine Notlar". The original text is as follows: Göklerün esrârını bilür-idi / Deñiz[ün]üstinde yügürür-idi Hızır-ile yürür-idi her gün bile / Kõmaz-idi ki kimesne ğarķ ola (Kartal, ibid, p. 234)

region of Kırşehir, according to Agah Sırrı Levend and Günay Kut, the author of this *masnavi* cannot be Gülşehri.³⁹¹ Despite this debate on the authorship of the text, the quoted couplets are of primary significance when examining the depictions of the figure of Khidr in the early period of Anatolian Turkish Literature. Similar to the features of the dervish in the *Hızırname*, in this *masnavi* too, the dervish, Ahi Evren, is described by the well-known features of Khidr, such as walking on the sea and helping those in need, suggesting the notion of ‘becoming Khidr’.

Ahi Evren himself is one of the figures who appear in the *Hızırname* where he is mentioned as one of the friends of God. He participates in the great gathering of the warriors and dervishes in Anatolia. The resemblances between the *Keramat-ı Ahi Evren* and *Hızırname* points to common sources and similar audience for these texts linking those to *ishraqi* literature in Anatolia. However, unlike the primary sources of *ishraqi* literature, the *Hızırname* contributes a different aspect in terms of the portrayal of a ‘friend of God’ or a ‘perfect man’: these people join a battle and support the Ottoman army. Therefore, unlike the primary sources of *ishraqi* literature, the portrayal of a ‘perfect man’ or a ‘friend of God’ includes both religious and chivalry aspects in Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s work. Intriguingly, the heroic or war-like features of these people are represented by another dervish in the *Hızırname*: Hacı Bektaş. The following chapter focuses on the relationship between Hacı Bektaş and the friends of God in Anatolia, who are called ‘*the erenler*’, and the battle at the Eastern border of the Ottomans.

³⁹¹ Günay Kut, “Osmanlı (Batı Oğuz) Sahası, Erken Dönem (1200-1512): Nazım, XIII-XIV. Yüzyıl”, p. 367.

Also see, Haluk Gökalp, “Ahi Evran-ı Velî’nin Menkıbevî Kişiliği”.

CHAPTER IV

HACI BEKTAŞ, THE *ERENLER* IN RUM AND THE *HIZIRNAME*

1. The Military Campaign in the *Hızırname*: Hacı Bektaş as the Guardian ('Gözcü') of the Ottoman Lands ('Osman illeri')

Out of eighty poems, the *Hızırname* mentions Hacı Bektaş only in three: poems twenty-eight (twenty-one couplets), forty-two (sixty-one couplets) and forty-three (twenty-three couplets). Compared to the rest of the text, these three poems may be considered as having a minor importance in the narrative. Representing the warrior identity of the poet, however, Hacı Bektaş is the figure in the text through whom the epic character and the political aspect of the text is constructed.

Poem twenty-eight³⁹² is entitled "The Arrival of Hacı Bektaş at Mount Bulgar and the Gathering and Despatching of the Troops of the Invisible Men" and the *radif* in the poem is '*hünkâr Hacı Bektaş gelür*' (*my lord Hacı Bektaş is coming*). Unlike the other two poems, this poem, which mentions Hacı Bektaş for the first time in the text, does not explicitly attribute heroic features to him, but rather introduces Hacı Bektaş with his dervish-persona as the head of the *erenler*.

The first couplet in the poem begins with the *himmet* (*blessing*) of Hacı Bektaş for the dervish Muhyiddin and describes Hacı Bektaş as having countless soldiers (*leşker*) under his command. The second couplet continues with the depiction of Mount Bulgar and introduces the mountain as the dwelling place of the '*strong erenler*' (*gürbüz erenler*). In the following couplets the soldiers are

³⁹² Bardakçı, p. 175-176.

mentioned again and referred to as ‘*erenler leşkeri*’ (the army of the *erenler*). Other than the words *leşker* and *gürbüz*, this poem does not include any vocabulary relating to heroism and the *erenler* are depicted in religious terms, such as going to Mecca every week for Friday prayers or visiting Moses at Mount Tur by traversing huge distances. The *erenler* are also portrayed as the servants of Hacı Bektaş: “*hünkara kuldur ser-te-ser*” (all of them are the servants of Hacı Bektaş).³⁹³ The poem focuses on Mount Bulgar, which is described as the place of the friends of God, who can journey into the heavens: “*Bulgara varandur veli arşa irer anın eli*” (The one who arrives at Bulgar is a friend of God and his hand can reach the highest heaven).³⁹⁴

By relating Mount Bulgar to the heavens and by emphasizing the dervish-persona of the *erenler*, as those traversing distances and visiting the holy lands, the poem seems to be linked to the heavenly journey of the dervish Muhyiddin in the narrative. Intriguingly however, the celebrated warrior of the frontier literature, Seyyid Gazi, who is also known as Battal Gazi or Seyyid Battal,³⁹⁵ is mentioned twice in different couplets. In the first couplet, Seyyid Gazi is depicted arriving at Mount Bulgar with Melik Gazi,³⁹⁶ another warrior in the frontier epic cycle of Anatolia, who is also known by the name Danişmend Gazi.³⁹⁷ Although there is no reference to the stories of Seyyid Gazi and Melik Danişmend in this couplet, just by citing their names the couplet includes implicit reference to their chivalrous deeds and changes the aspect of the poem from a spiritual journey to one of heroism.

³⁹³ Bardakçı, p. 75.

³⁹⁴ Bardakçı, p. 176.

³⁹⁵ See Dedes, *The Battalname, An Ottoman Turkish Frontier Epic Wondertale*.

³⁹⁶ Bardakçı, p. 175.

³⁹⁷ See Mélikoff, *La Geste de Melik Danişmend: étude critique du Dānişmendnāme*.

The second couplet which mentions Seyyid Gazi describes him traversing distances with the *erenler*, and the *erenler* visit Veysel (Uways el-) Karani in the company of Seyyid Gazi.³⁹⁸ This couplet has, therefore a distinct religious character compared to the previous one, as Veysel Karani is renowned for his love of the prophet Muhammad, and as it portrays Seyyid Gazi as flying into the sky and traversing great distances. The following poem continues with the travels of the dervish Muhyiddin to various places, such as to the origin of the Nile at Mount Qaf, to the Euphrates, to the deepest ocean, to the holy lands of Islam, and to Rum, Khitay, Khotan, to Mount Billur, to Ajamistan and to Russia and Crimea. With Poem Forty-two, the text returns to Hacı Bektaş again, but, this time in a political context. The poem talks about Hacı Bektaş as the guardian of the Ottoman lands: “*Ol Hacı Bektaş-ı güzün gözler bu Osman illerin*” (*The distinguished Hacı Bektaş watches over the Ottoman lands*).³⁹⁹

Poem forty-two⁴⁰⁰ is one of the longest poems in the text consisting of sixty-one couplets. Despite its rich content, however, the name of Hacı Bektaş is referred to only once in this poem but in a significant way by identifying him with the Ottomans. This poem cites the names of ninety people including Hacı Bektaş, and describes a gathering which is also attended by the angels, by Khidr, Ilyas, the *qutb* and the invisible men. Those joining the gathering come from different regions of Anatolia and the Balkans, and they also belong to different social groups, such as the well-educated and prolific writers Mevlana and Konevi, or local warriors and dervishes like Kartal Baba and Sabri Gazi. The gathering also includes those with different titles such as *gazi* or *dede* and people belonging to different historical

³⁹⁸ Bardakçı, p. 176.

³⁹⁹ Bardakçı, p. 216.

⁴⁰⁰ Bardakçı, p. 216-219.

periods. While Mevlana and Konevi are thirteenth century figures, for example, the Zeyni dervishes mentioned in the gathering are from the fifteenth century. Thus this great meeting, which takes place in Barla in the city of Eğirdir, gathers together the dervishes and the warriors from all over Anatolia and the Balkans, but they are distinguished from one another in various ways. The attendance of the heavenly figures, on the other hand, makes this meeting a visionary one. While the differences between the figures who join this meeting could prove a thought-provoking subject, what is of significance and relevance for this thesis are the common features that presumably led the author Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi to present them as attending the same gathering.

A first reading of this poem accords with the heavenly journey of the dervish Muhyiddin as it describes a spiritual state that befell the members of the meeting, of, their getting into a state of ecstasy, in the company of Khidr, Ilyas, the highest *qutb* and the angels. The poem begins with the arrival of the *erenler* and all the invisible men at the gathering (*meclis*).⁴⁰¹ Then the dervish Muhyiddin tells us that he is revealing the secret of this *meclis*, because God has willed it to be an open gathering. Afterwards, he begins to cite the names of the people who attended the *meclis* one by one. Calling them ‘*meczublar*’ (*the ecstasies*) and ‘*ricalullah*’ (*the men of God*), after the list ends he continues to describe what these people and the heavenly figures have done at the meeting.⁴⁰² Greeting each other outside Barla, they first go to the seaside, walk on the sea, and light their candles there. Then they go to Mount Oluk where they engage in a spiritual talk (*ruhani sohbet*).⁴⁰³ Afterwards, thousands of the invisible *erenler*, in the company of the highest *qutb*, and the prophet Khidr, in the

⁴⁰¹ Bardakçı, p. 216.

⁴⁰² Bardakçı, p. 220.

⁴⁰³ Bardakçı, p. 220.

company of Ilyas, join them. Together they form a circle, and the angels come down from heaven and join the circle.

Having described the meeting, towards the end of the poem the dervish Muhyiddin tells us that he saw an incomparably beautiful person there in a state of ecstasy (*meczub*), and whoever sees him cannot help but immediately fall in love with him. Before the poem closes, what the dervish has experienced in this gathering is expressed by the words '*tecilli*' (*manifestation*) and '*keşf*' (*unveiling*). By using the same vocabulary as that used to narrate the vision and the heavenly journey of the dervish, this poem is in character with the rest of the text. With the precise date of the meeting being given by the poet himself, the poem remarkably separates itself from the heavenly journey of the dervish which is said, three times in different poems, to have taken place on the Night of Glory. The date given for the great gathering is a Friday night in the month of Dhu'l-qa'dah in 880/1476.⁴⁰⁴

The next poem, poem forty-three,⁴⁰⁵ opens with the arrival of Hacı Bektaş on horseback amidst a large gathering of *erenler*, some on horseback and some on foot. The poem then mentions the arrival of Ibrahim Adhem, accompanied by thousands of his soldiers, and reminds the audience of the popular narratives about him by stating that although he was once a sultan, he abandoned his throne, and, thereby found the right path.⁴⁰⁶ Afterwards the poem mentions Hacı Bektaş again and continues with describing his features in two couplets: He is always ready to help when someone calls him and he has a dune-coloured horse. Crucially, he is depicted as arriving accompanied by ten thousand white banners.⁴⁰⁷ Then the dervish

⁴⁰⁴ Bardakçı, p. 220.

⁴⁰⁵ Bardakçı, p. 222-224.

⁴⁰⁶ Bardakçı, p. 222.

⁴⁰⁷ Bardakçı, p. 222.

Muhyiddin, repeatedly calling himself Dolu in this poem, walks in front of the horse of Hacı Bektaş. Hacı Bektaş lifts Dolu onto his horse, assigns soldiers to his command and orders him to protect the Ottoman lands by appointing him the head of the Ottoman army in a battle at the Eastern border:

Hünkar lifted me up onto his horse and put the soldiers under my command
He said to me 'go on, now you are in charge', this crazy soul has become happy
Go and watch over the Eastern borders and also the Ottoman lands
You know those regions by heart, this crazy soul has become happy [...]
He girded me with his own sword and lifted me up onto his own horse
He blessed me and prayed for me, this crazy soul has become happy⁴⁰⁸

Upon the order and with the blessing of Hacı Bektaş, Dolu heads off to the Eastern borders of the Ottoman periphery with the soldiers under his command. When they arrive in Konya, all the soldiers gather in the square at Konya and perform the evening prayer there. Hacı Bektaş then speaks to Dolu again and tells him to go to Erzincan immediately and to perform the morning prayer there. Upon this command, Dolu and his army head off to Erzincan which they reach before the break of dawn and perform the morning prayer there:

When all the soldiers gathered in the square at Konya
They performed the evening prayer there, this crazy soul has become happy
He ordered me to go to and arrive in Erzincan immediately
And to perform the morning prayer there, the crazy soul has become happy⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁸ Bardakçı, p. 223. The original text is as follows:

Bindirdi Hünkar atına hem virdi leşker katuma / Var yağı döndür didi şad oldu divane gönül
Var bekle şarkun yolların hem gözle Osman illerin / Sen hod bilürsin yolların şad oldu divane gönül
[....]

Kendü silahın kuşadub kendü atına bindirüb / Himmet dua yoldaş kılub şad oldu divane gönül

⁴⁰⁹ Bardakçı, p. 223. The original text is as follows:

Cem oldu leşker cümlesi heb Konya meydanında çün / Akşam namazın kıldılar şad oldu divane gönül

Emr eyleyüb dir yüri var görgil Erzincane tiz / Anda salat-ı subhı kıl şad oldu divane gönül

They then continue towards the East, towards the land of Ajam, and arrive at the border zone. With the soldiers under his command, and by reciting the name of Khidr Dolu, wins the battle.

As this detailed summary reveals, poem forty-three has a different theme and content than the visionary journey of the dervish in the narrative and this is the only poem amongst the other eighty poems in the text which narrates a battle. However, it significantly changes the nature of the larger composition in terms of the content and genre: without this poem the *Hızırname* appears as a visionary work following the textual lineage of *ishraqi* literature, making the narrator-protagonist a wanderer dervish only. With this poem however, the composition gains an unmistakable epic character and the narrator-protagonist becomes a warrior dervish.

This poem should be read together with the preceding one which introduces Hacı Bektaş as the guardian of the Ottoman lands. Without knowing that Hacı Bektaş is responsible for the Ottoman lands, his words to the dervish, which he utters in Poem Forty-three, would not make sense. In this poem he tells the dervish to participate in a battle at the Eastern border, he lifts the dervish up onto his horse, he puts thousands of soldiers under his command and he girds the dervish with his own sword. Poems forty-two and forty-three can thus, be read in sequence as they form a coherent text. With the following poems, forty-four and forty-five, the text turns back to the description of the *erenler* and begins to mention the virtues of the *erenler*, such as they help those in need, they can catch launched arrows and they can traverse great distances, all abilities which are associated with Khidr. The narrative then continues once again with the journey of the dervish in the heavenly realm, to Mount Qaf, to the realm of the water of life or to the Lote Tree, repeating for the third time

that this heavenly journey happens on the Night of Power. After poem forty-three Hacı Bektaş is not mentioned again in the text. At this point, the reading of poems forty-two and forty-three as one unit becomes essential to the correct understanding of the plot. This is because, in poem forty-two, the poet cites the names of the people who are accepted as belonging to the *erenler* and mentions, one-by-one, each of the friends of God while, in poem forty-three the dervish attends a war with the support of the *erenler*. In addition, these two poems are the only poems in the *Hızırname* which refer to the Ottomans.

The first name mentioned, amongst others, attending this great gathering is Dediği, and he orders Dolu to take the soldiers of the *erenler* and to guard the route towards Sivas.⁴¹⁰ The following couplet introduces Hacı Bektaş as the guardian of the Ottoman lands.⁴¹¹ The list then continues with Mahmud Hayrani, Mevlana, Konevi and Sultan Veled, all prominent figures in the region of Konya and its neighbourhood. The next two couplets also mention other celebrated figures of the region, such as Şems-i Tebrizi, Piri Esed, Fakih Ahmed and Seyyid Harun. These figures are found in both Mevlevi and Bektashi literature and also in frontier literature. The list then makes a shift and begins to mention the famous *gazis* in frontier literature, such as Seyyid Gazi, Sultan Şuca and Melik Gazi (Danişmend). The following couplets continue to cite warriors and dervishes who have varying titles, such as *baba* and *dede*. Sarı Saltuk is also mentioned among these names as being the *gazi* martyr (*gazi şehid*) of Rumili.⁴¹² In another couplet the names of Aşık Paşa, Tabduk and Yunus Emre are mentioned together, preceding Karaca Ahmed and Fatıma Bacı. Afterwards, the list continues with the Zeyni dervishes in Eğirdir.

⁴¹⁰ Bardakçı, p. 216.

⁴¹¹ Bardakçı, p. 216.

⁴¹² Bardakçı, p. 217.

The Şeyh-i İslam, who is the founder of the Zeyni tekke in Eğirdir, is mentioned first. Then comes Piri Halife, who is the father of Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi. Having mentioned the warrior dervishes from the region of Eğirdir, who have the title *gazi*, the dervish begins to cite people from the neighbouring regions, such as Manavgat and ‘Menteşe ili’ (*the province of Menteşe*). The last names mentioned in the list are Eynegöli Baba, Uryan Hüseyin and Şah Kulu Abdal.⁴¹³

What is significant in this list is the order of the names. Especially the first two names, Dediği and Hacı Bektaş, are revealing when considering the political aspect of the *Hızırname*. As we have seen, only in these two poems does the text talk about the Ottomans, first describing Hacı Bektaş as guarding the Ottoman lands, then portraying the dervish Muhyiddin appointed to the same position by Hacı Bektaş himself. Nonetheless, despite the decisive role of Hacı Bektaş in the plot of the text and in the portrayal of the poet, the list does not begin with his name but starts with Dediği. At this point, the intriguing relationship between Dediği and the poet poses a question concerning their relationship with Hacı Bektaş and with the Ottomans.

In the biography of the Zeyni sheikhs dating to the seventeenth century, the military campaign section in the *Hızırname* is referred to as part of the war between the Ottomans and Uzun Hasan.⁴¹⁴ This *menakıbnâme*, however, although it portrays Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi as the ‘guardian of the Ottoman lands’ (*‘Al-i Osman memleketinin gözcisi imiş’*),⁴¹⁵ echoing his words and clearly with reference to his *Divan*, it does not give a precise date for the battle which is identified as being

⁴¹³ For the names cited in this gathering see Bardakçı, p. 216-219, or Section Forty-two in ‘Appendix’.

⁴¹⁴ Yazar, *Eğirdirli Münevver Bir Ailenin Hikayesi: Şeyh Mehmed’in Menakıb-ı Şeyh Burhaneddin’i*, p. 194-200.

⁴¹⁵ Yazar, *ibid*, p. 200.

between the army of Uzun Hasan and the Ottomans. Instead, it is vague about date, stating that it was either in the time of Mehmed II or Bayezid II.⁴¹⁶ The *Hızırname* on the other hand, neither makes mention of Uzun Hasan, nor does it give a date for the military campaign of the dervish Muhyiddin at the eastern border of the Ottomans. The only date we have in the *Hızırname* is the month of Dhu'l-qa'dah in 880/1476, which is the date of the great gathering mentioned in the previous poem. Whether or not this date is related to the battle that the dervish Muhyiddin participates in as guardian (*gözcü*) of the Ottoman lands, it is obvious from the text that there is a relationship between Dediği, Hacı Bektaş and the Eastern problem of the Ottomans, which was at the centre of Ottoman politics in the last years of the reign of Mehmed II. In order to be able to contextualize the position of Dediği and Hacı Bektaş among the other warriors and dervishes at the meeting, the next section will look into three Anatolian Turkish works, namely the *Dediği Sultan Menakıbnamesi*, the *Makalat-ı Seyyid Harun* and the *Saltukname*, and will focus on the portrayals of Dediği and Hacı Bektaş in these texts. Although the *menakıb* works of Dediği Sultan and Seyyid Harun were written later than the *Hızırname*, they are of importance as being rare sources which provide information about the lives of these figures. They narrate a shared story but from different viewpoints and, therefore, they will be read together. The *Saltukname* on the other hand, being contemporaneous with the *Hızırname*, does not make mention of Dediği and it will be examined with regard to the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş only.

⁴¹⁶ Yazar, *ibid*, p. 194. The original text in the *menakıb* of Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi is as follows: “Ğalibā ol zamānda Uzun Hasan asker gönderüp memleket-i ‘Osmaniyeye kaşd eyleyüp berü cānibden dağı Sultān Mehmed Hān yāhūd Sultān Bāyezīd Hān leşker gönderdükde cenk olıcak ceddümüz Sultān Şeyh hazretleri Āl-i ‘Osmāna yardım itmişdür”.

2. Hacı Bektaş and the Erenler: Dediği, Seyyid Harun and Saltuk

a. Dediği Sultan Menakıbnamesi

The biography of Dediği Sultan, which survives in two copies dating only to the nineteenth century, was originally a translation from a Persian work. The edition of Ahmet Taşğın is based on the manuscript dated 1277/1861 and it consists of four hundred and eighty-three couplets. It is written in the *nasih* style with vowel-marks, and according to the note of the translator, Dediği Sultan died in 550/1155-56 and the original *menakıb* of Dediği Sultan on which his translation was based survived even after four hundred and sixty-seven years, albeit in a poor condition.⁴¹⁷ This translated work tells of the migration of Dediği from Khurasan to Anatolia and how he settled down in Ilgın, which is a city close to Beyşehir, in the province of Konya. The narrative is set in the time of the Seljukids and, Dediği is introduced as a descendent of Ahmed Yesevi and the first cousin of Hacı Bektaş.⁴¹⁸ He is also the *qutb* in Rum and he has two companions named Turgut and Bayburt.⁴¹⁹

The date when the manuscript was copied is very late and therefore this raises a question about the accuracy of the information when examining the figure of Dediği in the *Hızırname*, which is a text from the fifteenth century. Bearing in mind the time gap between the two texts, however, Dediği's *menakıb* provides important clues for putting the figure of Dediği in the *Hızırname* into context: (1) it portrays Dediği as a figure from Konya, as he settles down in Ilgın; (2) it portrays Dediği as the first cousin of Hacı Bektaş; (3) it makes mention of his two companions Turgut and Bayburt, who seem to have been prominent historical figures among the

⁴¹⁷ On the manuscript copies see Taşğın, *Dediği Sultan ve Menakıbı*. The references to the text will be mentioned as 'Taşğın' hereafter.

⁴¹⁸ Taşğın, p. 227.

⁴¹⁹ Taşğın, p. 228.

Turcoman groups in the region of Karaman, and (4) it includes stories about figures common to both Bektashi and frontier literature. The episodes about Dediği and Seyyid Harun in the text are especially telling, since a sixteenth century version of the same stories, but written by the followers of Seyyid Harun, have survived. A comparative reading of these two texts provides a better understanding of the shared stories in terms of their reception and audience.

Regarding the settlement of Dediği in Konya, the *menakıbnâme* is not the only source that we can refer to. There are six *tekkes*, in total, attributed to the name of Dediği.⁴²⁰ The two *tekkes* which are in the region of Konya, however, one in Ilgın and the other one in Doğanhisar, are especially important for the analysis of the *Hızırname* as they point to the fame of Dediği in the region, which is in the vicinity of Eğirdir. Of importance too is the fact that, the *tekkes* in Ilgın and Doğanhisar are registered in the archival records from the reign of Mehmed II and the *tekke* in Doğanhisar is said to have been built by Dediği himself. By referring to the archival records, Bakırer and Faroqhi claim that “while the exact period in which Dediği Dede lived is not known, he was possibly alive by 1407”.⁴²¹ On the other hand, the *menakıbnâme* tells us that Dediği lived in the Seljukid period, during the reign of Sultan Alaeddin. What is notable for the *Hızırname*, however, is that it is obvious that when it was written by Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi in 1476, there was a cult around a certain figure called Dediği, who was a warrior dervish, and who was a well-known and influential figure in the region of Konya and Eğirdir.

The second remarkable piece of information in the *menakıbnâme*, with regards to the *Hızırname*, is the close relationship between Dediği and Hacı Bektaş.

⁴²⁰ For more information about the zaviyes of Dediği Sultan, see Taşğın, *Dediği Sultan ve Menakıbı*, p. 39-48; Bakırer and Faroqhi, “Dediği Dede ve Tekkeleri”.

⁴²¹ Bakırer and Faroqhi, “Dediği Dede ve Tekkeleri”.

While the *menakıbnâme* portrays Dediği as the first cousin of Hacı Bektaş, since their fathers are brothers, the *Hızırname* does not attribute any kinship to these figures. In this case, the portrayal of Dediği and Hacı Bektaş as being close relatives might have resulted from the identification of the Dediği tekkes with the Bektashi order at a later period. In their analysis of the two Dediği tekkes in Konya, Bakırer and Faroqhi highlight that in the eighteenth century both tekkes were associated with the Bektashis”.⁴²² Thus it is not possible to propose a relationship between Dediği and Hacı Bektaş based on the *menakıbnâme*. However, as the *Hızırname* reveals by mentioning their names first in the great gathering, both Dediği and Hacı Bektaş were definitely two influential figures in the region in the fifteenth century.

The third notable subject in the *menakıbnâme*, concerning the *Hızırname*, is the information about the two companions of Dediği, Turgut and Bayburt. Although the *Hızırname* does not make mention of these figures, the setting of the *menakıbnâme* is in fact the region under the control of the communities of Turgut and Bayburt. In the last years of the Karamanids these communities, especially the Turgut group who supported the army of the Karamanoğulları during the wars between the Akkoyunlu and the Ottomans, created a host of problems for the Ottomans.⁴²³ When read within this context, the name of Dediği in the *Hızırname* appears to reflect the Ottoman-Karaman rivalry which affected Eğirdir directly since it had been a frontier zone between the Ottomans and the Karamanids for a sustained period of time.

The last issue about the *menakıbnâme* to be mentioned with regard to the *Hızırname* are the stories it includes about figures common to the *Hızırname* and to

⁴²² Bakırer and Faroqhi, “Dediği Dede ve Tekkeleri”.

⁴²³ Taşğın, *Dediği Sultan ve Menakıbı*, p. 54-58.

the frontier literature in Anatolia. Mevlana and Seyyid Harun, for example, are two significant figures that are mentioned both in the *Hızırname* and the *Saltukname*. The name of Mevlana is mentioned fourth in the list in the *Hızırname*, whereas Seyyid Harun is tenth among ninety names. Both Mevlana and Seyyid Harun are figures from the region of Konya.

Amongst others, the episode about Seyyid Harun in this work is especially notable for the *Hızırname* for two reasons: (1) we can read a shared story about Seyyid Harun and Dediği, which is narrated in a different way in the sixteenth century work of *Makalat-ı Seyyid Harun*, and by doing so we can see different portrayals of these figures, (2) the episodes based on the rivalry between Dediği and Seyyid Harun help us to understand one repeating motif in the *Hızırname*, which is interchangeably used in the portrayals of the *erenler* and Khidr: ‘he can catch the arrows that are launched’ (*atılmış okları tutar*).

According to the *Menakıb of Dediği Sultan*, during a fight between Seyyid Harun and Dediği, Seyyid Harun shoots an arrow with the aim of murdering Dediği. Dediği, however, catches the arrow and shoots it back to Seyyid Harun, saying: “whoever shoots an arrow targeting us, may that arrow return to him and injure him”. Seyyid Harun then gets wounded by the arrow and dies. Afterwards the episode continues with the funeral of Seyyid Harun. As the text narrates, Seyyid Harun has a daughter who is a friend of God and who can perform *karama*. By calling Dediği a murderer, she asks him what he has done to her father. Dediği however, rejects the claims about murdering Seyyid Harun and tells her that her father shot the arrow himself and thus killed himself. In the *menakıb* of Seyyid Harun on the other hand, we read a different story.

b. The *Makalat-ı Seyyid Harun*

Similar to the *menakıb* of Dediği Sultan, the *Makalat-ı Seyyid Harun* is also a migration and settlement story. Dated to 1554-5, it tells of the migration of Seyyid Harun from Khurasan to Anatolia and how he established the city of Seydişehir. It is a prose work and it is composed of two parts. The first part is about Seyyid Harun and his children. It tells of Seyyid Harun's journey from Khurasan to Rum, his relations with the other dervishes in Anatolia, and the establishment of the city of Seydişehir. This part also includes information about his disciples and tells of his death. Lastly, it also tells how the daughter of Seyyid Harun became a sheikh after her father's death. The second part, on the other hand, has a totally different content. It is about the creation of the universe, the soul of the prophet Muhammad, the story of Adam and Eve and the ways to protect the soul from the Devil ('*şeytan*').⁴²⁴ Although the *Makalat* is a sixteenth century work,⁴²⁵ it includes a different version of the same story told in the *menakıb* of Dediği Sultan, which makes it an important source for the figure of Dediği in the *Hızırname*.

Before the text describes the migration of Seyyid Harun to Anatolia, it tells us that the people of Konya were waiting for his arrival, since it was announced beforehand by two well-known dervishes from Konya. The first dervish is Mevlana and, just before he dies, he announces that Seyyid Harun will become the sheikh. The second dervish is Ahmed Fakih, who is called Hacı Fakî in the text. Again, like

⁴²⁴ Cemal Kurnaz, *Makalat-ı Seyyid Harûn*. In his edition Kurnaz compares all the three manuscript copies of the *Makalat*. Although the text was written in the sixteenth century, in terms of the linguistic features it belongs to the early period of Anatolian Turkish.

⁴²⁵ In his analysis on the *Makalat-ı Seyyid Harun*, F. Bayram notes that "the author of the *Makalat*, Abdülkerim bin Şeyh Musa, tried to paint an image of Seyyid Harun that conformed to the Ottoman campaign of Sunnitisation" and describes the text as it "can also be viewed as a defense of the followers of Seyyid Harun in the skeptical environment in which many Sufis found themselves in the mid-sixteenth century", see "A Sufi Saint as City Founder: An Analysis of *Makalat-ı Seyyid Harûn*".

Mevlana, when he is about to die, his community ask him to announce his replacement. Ahmed Fakih tells them that a friend of God will come from Ajam, whose name is Harun, and whoever seeks him will find Ahmed Fakih in that person.⁴²⁶

As in the *menakıb* of Dediği Sultan, the *Makalat* also includes stories about the conflict between Dediği and Seyyid Harun, and, of course, portrays Seyyid Harun as being superior in status to Dediği. However, unlike in the *menakıb* of Dediği, these two figures are not portrayed as enemies and do not try to kill each other. As the *Makalat* tells, one day some people come and tell Dediği Sultan that a friend of God from Ajam has settled in Rum and that he can perform lots of *karama*, such as riding a stone as if it were a sheep. Upon hearing this, Dediği takes his two disciples with him and sets off to visit Seyyid Harun. While Dediği Sultan is on his way, mounted on a bear, Seyyid Harun senses the situation and he steps up onto a stone to welcome him. Seyyid Harun and Dediği meet up half way and begin to perform various *karama* in front of the other people. Then Seyyid Harun asks Dediği Sultan to be the *imam* and lead the afternoon prayer. Dediği Sultan responds to this request by saying that he is illiterate and, thus, does not know about the *ilm-i zahir* (*obligations of Islam*).⁴²⁷ Afterwards Seyyid Harun and Dediği Sultan go to the city; Seyyid Harun enters first, and Dediği Sultan follows him. They retire alone to the residence of Seyyid Harun and stay there for three days. After Dediği has left, he sends his men to Seyyid Harun to ask for permission to marry his daughter. Seyyid Harun tells the men to go and see his daughter and says that if his daughter is not a man then they can take her (“*eger kızum er degülse alun*”). When they visit the

⁴²⁶ Kurnaz, *Makalat-ı Seyyid Harûn*, p. 25.

⁴²⁷ Kurnaz, *ibid*, p. 54-55.

daughter of Seyyid Harun they see that she has a moustache and is wearing a turban. They then go back and describe the situation to Dediği Sultan by stating that “we saw him like a man” (“*biz anı merdane gördük*”).⁴²⁸ Upon receiving this information, Dediği decides to leave the city since it is obvious that Seyyid Harun does not want to give his daughter to him. After some time Seyyid Harun learns that Dediği has died and when he hears this news it makes him very sad and he enters into the *çilehane*. He then dies too.⁴²⁹ As these episodes reveal, although the relationship between Seyyid Harun and Dediği is not as tragic as it is described in the *menakıb* of Dediği Sultan, there is still a tension between the two figures, which is expressed through the story of the daughter of Seyyid Harun.

Similar to the section of the gathering in the *Hızırname*, the *Makalat* also describes a visionary meeting attended by all the friends of God. In the episode about the building of Seydişehir, while Seyyid Harun is in a state of ecstasy, he sees a door at the side of the Kaba and he hears a voice which calls him to come towards the door. He approaches the door and sees that it is made of light (*nur*). Inside the door, there is a mosque covered in light (*nurdan*) and inside the mosque (*mescid*), the prophet Muhammad is sitting with his close companions (*ashab-ı güzin*). At that moment he passes out. The dervishes take his hand and make him stand up and, afterwards, a man from his northern side calls to through him. Seyyid Harun goes towards the man and he enters through another door made of light. When he enters the mosque he sees the prophet Khidr and the souls of all the prophets. He joins them and practices several *karama* there. Then another man, this time from his southern side, calls Seyyid Harun to come towards him. After passing the doors he sees

⁴²⁸ Kurnaz, *ibid*, p. 55-56.

⁴²⁹ Kurnaz, *ibid*, p. 56-58.

another mosque. In the mosque he sees Veysel Karani and the souls of all the friends of God (*cümle evliya ervahı*).⁴³⁰ The *Makalat* does not give any information about who are the friends of God, nor does it mention any names. However, by including a meeting of all the friends of God this sixteenth century text shares a similarity with the *Hızırname*, suggesting a later version of the same subject, possibly a popular one among the dervish circles in the same region. Intriguingly, another work, the *Saltukname*, with a similar audience to that of the *Hızırname*, also describes a meeting of all the dervishes in Anatolia.

c. The *Saltukname*

The *Saltukname* is another important source with which to contextualize the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in the *Hızırname* since it mentions Hacı Bektaş in a few episodes and is a concurrent piece of work. Unlike the *Hızırname* which was composed by a dervish from the Ottoman periphery and which consists of eighty poems, the voluminous *Saltukname*, which is a prose work, was commissioned by the Ottoman prince Cem. The stories about Saltuk were compiled over seven years by a member of Cem's court, Ebu'l-hayr Rumi, and came from the Balkans and some regions of Anatolia. As the text describes, one day the prince Cem goes hunting and visits a dervish lodge in Babadağ (Dobruja), where he listens to the stories of Sarı Saltuk. He then gives the order for the stories of Saltuk circulating in the region to be compiled and written down.

There is no agreement on whether Saltuk was a real person or a legendary character and the identification of certain Christian saints in the Balkans with Sarı

⁴³⁰ Kurnaz, *Makalat-ı Seyyid Harûn*, p. 38.

Saltuk makes the figure more interesting but problematic. According to some, Sarı Saltuk was a historical figure; he was one of the leading Turcoman gazi-dervishes who worked for the spread of Islam in the Balkans.⁴³¹ On the other hand, as H. T. Norris points out, Sarı Saltuk should be regarded as a “shamanistic figure”. However, those in regions like Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia, and those who are associated with the Bektashi order, believe Sarı Saltuk to be a “superhuman and peripatetic dervish who performed countless miracles and who attained the status of being one of the *abdal*”.⁴³² There are also several places in the Balkans, Anatolia or Crimea, which are associated with this legendary warrior dervish. The dervish lodges named after Sarı Saltuk in Babadağ (Dobruja), Varna (Bulgaria) and Crimea are famous among the others and these places have been the subject of discussion among scholars.⁴³³

The earliest surviving source today, which mentions Sarı Saltuk, is the account of Ibn al-Sarraj (703/1303-715/1315), who was a judge in the Mamluk state, who lived most of his life in and around Damascus, but who also worked in Anatolia for a period of time. His account consists of four main chapters in two volumes. The first chapter aims to defend the *karama* performed by the dervishes; the second one is about the political history of Islam, and the last one includes some poems. These

⁴³¹ On the identity and portrayals of Saltuk see A. Y. Ocak, *Sarı Saltık: Popüler İslam’ın Balkanlardaki Destanî Öncüsü (XIII. Yüzyıl)*, p. 1-15; H. T. Norris, *Popular Sufism of Eastern Europe*, p. 1-9.

⁴³² Norris, *Popular Sufism of Eastern Europe: Sufi brotherhoods and the dialogue with Christianity and ‘Heterodoxy’*, p. 1. The definition of ‘*abdal*’ given by Norris in this context is as follows: “That is, those ‘who, when they depart from a specific locality, have the power to leave behind them their dual, even multiple personality’ (*shakhs ruhani*). [...] The *abdal* also have the power to ‘wear’ the personalities, and adopt the identities, of others, and to be completely absorbed in their spiritual essence. They have the ability to fly from place to place and often to appear, simultaneously, in more than one locality”.

⁴³³ For more information about the lodges, shrines and places associated with Sarı Saltuk and the secondary literature on this subject, see, Ocak, *Sarı Saltık: Popüler İslam’ın Balkanlardaki Destanî Öncüsü (XIII. Yüzyıl)*, p. 91-109.

three chapters are saved within one volume. The third chapter, which is the longest one, forms a separate volume, and is mainly about the discussion on the *karama* which it is claimed was performed by the dervishes in the thirteenth century. According to Eyüp Öztürk, this volume is the most original part of the text since it contains information about the dervishes in circulation in the oral literature, but not found in other sources.⁴³⁴

As al-Sarraj writes, in 703/1304 he met a dervish called Behramşah el-Haydari, who was a companion of Saltuk⁴³⁵ and this dervish is the source of information about Sarı Saltuk in his account. Unlike other sources that make mention of Saltuk, the account of al-Sarraj does not refer to ‘Sarı’ as Saltuk’s title, rather he refers to him as ‘Saltuk al-Türki’, and describes him as “a person of medium height and with fair skin”, who “would often look at the sky”.⁴³⁶ The text also mentions the *karama* performed by Saltuk, such as curing illnesses, changing appearance, appearing as a bird and changing the chemistry of things so that the earth becomes gold, or gold becomes earth. He also tells us that Saltuk established a *zawiye* in Dobruja which had a capacity of three hundred dervishes.⁴³⁷ According to the note in the account by al-Sarraj, Sarı Saltuk died in 697/1297-8 when he was seventy-five years old and as Behramşah informs, his funeral was very crowded and splendid, and Saltuk’s coffin was cut into pieces and shared by the Muslims.⁴³⁸ The time difference between al-Sarraj’s work and the death of Saltuk given in the account is eighteen years and the information al-Sarraj gathered from Behremşah belongs to the period

⁴³⁴ On al-Sarraj’ work, see Eyüp Öztürk, *Velilik ile Delilik Arasında*.

⁴³⁵ Al-Sarraj notes that he met with Behremşah twice. Öztürk, *ibid*, p. 146. The first meeting took place in 703/1304 and the second one took place short time after the first one in Damascus.

⁴³⁶ Öztürk, *ibid*, p. 125.

⁴³⁷ On Saltuk’s miracles, see Öztürk, *ibid*, p. 130-134.

⁴³⁸ On Saltuk’s funeral, see Öztürk, *ibid*, p. 122-139.

only six years after Saltuk's death. What is remarkable for the *Hızırname* in al-Sarraj's work is that the depiction of Saltuk in the early fourteenth century parallels the depiction of the *erenler* in the *Hızırname*, such that both have the ability to change the chemistry of things or change appearances. Similar to al-Sarraj's account, the second early source about Saltuk, which is the travel account of Ibn Battuta dating to the fourteenth century, also describes Saltuk as an ecstatic mystic, and notes that the things which are told about him do not conform to the Shari'a.⁴³⁹ The resemblance between the depictions of Saltuk in al-Sarraj's and Ibn Battuta's works and the portrayal of the dervish Muhyiddin in the *Hızırname* suggests that the *eren* identity in the *Hızırname* is in fact part of the literature which was already established in Anatolia as early as in the thirteenth century.

In terms of content, the fifteenth century compilation of the *Saltukname* shows several parallels with the *Hızırname*. For example, Sarı Saltuk is also initiated into the realm of the friends of God by Khidr and he also travels to Mount Qaf, to Crimea and China and under the sea. Like the dervish Muhyiddin, he also visits the tomb of Abu Ishak Kazeruni and he also joins a meeting attended by Anatolian dervishes which is similar to the gathering section in the *Hızırname*. Unlike the *Hızırname* however, the *Saltukname* mentions only a few names from this gathering, such as Hacı Bektaş, Karaca Ahmed, Seyyid Harun, Mevlana and Tapduk Emre. In addition to these names, Şehid Baba, Kara Davud and Kemal Ata are noted as the

⁴³⁹ Norris, *Popular Sufism of Eastern Europe: Sufi brotherhoods and the dialogue with Christianity and 'Heterodoxy'*, p. 4.

followers of Saltuk who fight with him in the battles against the infidels, such as the one in Crimea.⁴⁴⁰

Regarding the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in the *Saltukname*, two episodes are of significance. One of them is about the origin of the friends of God (*walaya*) in Rum and tells of the migration of Hacı Bektaş from Khurasan to Anatolia. The other episode describes a meeting of the Anatolian dervishes, in other words the *erenler* in Rum. In the first episode, as the text narrates, one day the *pirs* of Khurasan gather in the city of Balkh and talk about Sarı Saltuk, his heroic deeds in Rum and his *karama*. Since, as far as they know, there is no friend of God in Rum, they wonder if the *karama* said to be performed by Saltuk is real or fake and they question whether or not he could be a friend of God. Hearing about this discussion, the *qutb* in Khurasan takes a wooden stick from the fire and throws it towards Rum saying that “if there is somebody from us in Rum, he should catch our wooden stick”. Meanwhile Ahmed Fakih is sitting in his *tekke* in Rum and catches the wooden stick. Sensing the situation the *qutb* in Khurasan sends Hacı Bektaş to Rum in order to investigate. Upon his arrival Hacı Bektaş meets with Ahmed Fakih and wherever Ahmed Fakih touches his eyes, Hacı Bektaş sees a friend of God (*er*). Then Ahmed Fakih touches his eyes again and sends Hacı Bektaş back to Khurasan to tell the *qutb* what he has seen in Rum. When he is back in Khurasan, the *qutb* appoints Hacı Bektaş as the guardian (*gözcü*) of Rum while Ahmed Fakih is given the position of the *qutb* in Rum.⁴⁴¹ In the second episode, all the friends of God in Rum gather in the dervish

⁴⁴⁰ For a general outline of Sarı Saltuk’s travels, see, Aydoğan, “An Analysis of the *Saltukname* in its Fifteenth Century Context”, p. 9-14.

⁴⁴¹ For the details of the episode, see Rıza Yıldırım, “Rumda Öksöğü Tutan Kimdi”, p. 597-598.

lodge of Ahmed Fakih, since he is the *qutb* in Rum at that time. At this meeting, Hacı Bektaş is portrayed as a cook.⁴⁴²

In his analysis of the portrayals of Saltuk, Hacı Bektaş and the *erenler* in the *Saltukname*, Rıza Yıldırım observes that the portrayal of Saltuk does not accord with the plot of the narrative, because, while the text describes Ahmed Fakih as the *qutb* in Rum and Hacı Bektaş as the guardian (*gözcü*) of Rum, Saltuk, the protagonist of the narrative does not have a prominent role in this story. According to Yıldırım's analysis this oddity is a result of this episode being inserted when the story was compiled.⁴⁴³ The significance of Yıldırım's analysis for the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in the *Hızırname* consists of two points: Firstly it points to a popular narrative of Hacı Bektaş circulating in the region in which Hacı Bektaş is portrayed as the guardian (*gözcü*) of Rum. This is remarkable for the *Hızırname* as he is also portrayed as a guardian in this text, however not as the guardian of Rum, but of the Ottoman lands. Secondly it reveals that, according to the popular story, Hacı Bektaş is not necessarily associated with military acts; he is one of the dervishes who migrated from Khurasan to Anatolia and he is the cook in the *eren* community. In the *Hızırname* however, with his sword and horse, he is depicted as a warrior. A comparative reading of the *Hızırname* and the *Saltukname* shows, therefore, that the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in the *Hızırname* as a warrior, and his political identity as the guardian of the Ottoman lands, are strictly related to the political context of Eğirdir in the fifteenth century.

⁴⁴² Yıldırım, *ibid*, p. 598.

⁴⁴³ For an analysis of these episodes, see, Yıldırım, *ibid*, p. 600-605.

d. The Great Gathering in the *Hızırname*

In terms of the contested notion of *gaza*, the fights between the Ottomans and the Karamanids, as well as the wars against the Akkoyunlu or Mamluks, seem to possess a different character from the Western campaigns of the Ottomans: unlike their Western neighbouring states, who were Christian, their Eastern neighbours were Muslims. In both cases, however, the Ottomans used the same terminology when describing their enemies and they blamed them for acting like, or, being infidels.⁴⁴⁴ Within this context, the reference to the *gazis* in the *Hızırname*, which distinguishes itself from the frontier epic chain of Anatolia in terms of its setting, - the fights of Battal Gazi, Melik Danişmend and Sarı Saltuk take place on the Christian-Muslim frontier, while the battle that Şeyh Muhyiddin joins with his army takes place on the Muslim frontier of the Ottomans - does not seem to be problematic or unusual among similar works of its kind.

Two works, one written from the Karamanid point of view, the *Karamanname* (*Book of Karaman*) (composed before 1584) by Şikari, and the other representing the Ottoman point of view, the *Fetihname* (*Book of Conquest*) (893/1487-88) by Kivami are significant examples when reading poems forty-two and forty-three, as they tell of the events that took place between the Ottomans and Karamanids with opposing descriptions. The *Fetihname* starts with the first military campaign of Mehmed II to the Karamanid lands, covers the whole reign of Mehmed II and includes the early years of Bayezid II. As a text praising the *gazas* of Mehmed II, it includes many exaggerations, such as the number of soldiers on both sides of the armies, when describing the Karamanid rulers and the victory of the Ottoman

⁴⁴⁴ İnalçık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ*, p. 20.

sultans.⁴⁴⁵ The rulers of the Karamanids are portrayed in a negative way and they are introduced as liars and tricksters. They are also blamed for the political tension existing between themselves and the Ottomans and it is claimed that they attacked the Ottomans with the support of neighbouring principalities such as Aydınoğlu and Menteşeoğlu. The following lines of the *Fetihname* may be considered typical: “Since the existence of the World, this saying is famous: The Karamanids have been enemies with the Ottomans and they are in a constant fight with them”.⁴⁴⁶

The *Karamanname* by Şikari, on the other hand, dating to the sixteenth century, is in fact partially based on a Persian *Shahnameh* by a certain Yarcani, which was commissioned by the Karamanid ruler Alaeddin Bey and dated to the end of the fourteenth century. The *Karamanname* does not follow a chronological order in its narration of the happenings, nor it does give any dates for the episodes it is describing, and since it lacks date and chronology, it has not been considered a reliable source by some scholars for the history of the region. Nonetheless, it includes several anecdotes about the Ottoman-Karaman conflict and also some episodes about the tension and battles between the Ottomans and Karamanids in Eğirdir.⁴⁴⁷ In addition, what is also of significance for the figure of Dedigi in the *Hızırname*, the text talks about the relationship between the communities of Turgud and the Karamanids.⁴⁴⁸ As can be guessed, the text portrays the governors of the Karamanoğulları as always being superior to the others and as being the victors in battle while describing the Ottoman sultans in a derogatory way. Osman Beg for

⁴⁴⁵ For example see pages 88-89.

⁴⁴⁶ Kıvamî, *Fetihname*, p. 86.

⁴⁴⁷ See for example p. 232-233. This part of the text narrates a battle in Eğirdir between the Ottomans and the Karamanoğulları which lasted for three days. At the end, the Ottomans flee from the city and Karamanoğlu Ibrahim gives the city back to the Hamidoğulları.

⁴⁴⁸ Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, p. 80.

example, is introduced as a shepherd, or simple nomad, whose ancestors are unknown (*aslı cinsi yok bir yörük oğlu iken beg oldu*).⁴⁴⁹ Also, unlike in the *Fetihname*, in the *Karamanname*, the rulers of the principalities of Aydınoğlu, Saruhanoğlu, Hamidoğlu and Menteşeoğlu complain about the attacks of the Ottoman sultan Bayezid I on the Karamanid ruler.⁴⁵⁰

What should the *Fetihname* and the *Karamanname*, which obviously aim to address different audiences, tell us when reading the *Hızırname*? First of all, they are of importance for contrasting the portrayals of the Ottoman-Karaman conflict in detail and for including anecdotes about the figures who were involved in this conflict, such as the Turcoman group of Turgud. As discussed in the previous sections, Turgud was one of the companions of Dediği in his *menakıbnâme* and in the fifteenth century Dediği, or the cult of Dediği, is considered to have been influential on the Turgud groups. By citing the name of Dediği first, the author Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi seems to address an audience who consider Dediği respectable and who attribute importance to him during a period of political unrest. In a similar vein, Mount Bulgar in the *Hızırname*, when it is associated with Hacı Bektaş and the *erenler*, can be considered as having a symbolic meaning for the same audience, since the members of the Turgud group in the region were said to have fled to Mount Bulgar at the start of the military campaign of the Ottomans.⁴⁵¹

Being the second name on the list, Hacı Bektaş should also be examined with regard to his influence on the same audience. However, there are only a few sources which survive from an earlier period and which include information about Hacı Bektaş, so it is not easy to trace any alterations in the cult of Hacı Bektaş in

⁴⁴⁹ Şikari, *Karamanname*, p. 212-213.

⁴⁵⁰ Şikari, *ibid*, p. 212-215.

⁴⁵¹ Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, p. 80.

Anatolia. One of the sources that does survive is an early fourteenth century Persian work the *Manaqib al-'Arefin* (*The Feats of the Knowers of God*) by Aflaki, who was a Mevlevi dervish. Hacı Bektaş is introduced as “the special vicegerent of Baba Rasul” in this work and is described as “a man with the heart of a knower of God and had an illuminated interior”.⁴⁵² However, the text also mentions that “he was not obedient [to the Prophet]” and tells its audience that he was such an influential sheikh that he could even change the minds of the disciples of Mevlana.⁴⁵³ The second surviving source is a Turkish work, the *Menakıbu'l-Kudsiyye* (1358) by Elvan Çelebi, who was the son of Aşık Paşa, and this work cites the name of Hacı Bektaş among the followers of Baba Ilyas.⁴⁵⁴ Other than these two sources, the *Hızırname* acts as the third source which includes unique information about the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş. Having been written almost at the same time as the *Saltukname*, and predating the *Velayetname*, the *Hızırname* associates Hacı Bektaş with the Ottomans and gives him a political identity. This portrayal of Hacı Bektaş seems to be a result of the Ottoman-Karamanid conflict, and symbolically carries the message that the region belongs to the Ottomans and also that Hacı Bektaş is not a supporter of the Karamanids, but of the Ottomans.

In his analysis of Şikari's text, Fatih Bayram points out the links between the spiritual heritage of the Seljukids and the Karamanids and he notes that “Şikari underscores the fact that the Karamanids were not only the political heirs to the Seljukids, but also the spiritual heirs. In the text, Mevlana is perceived to be the

⁴⁵² See Aflaki, *The Feats of the Knowers of God* (translated into English by John O'Kane), p. 263.

⁴⁵³ Aflaki, *ibid*, p. 263-264.

⁴⁵⁴ For the part that mentions Hacı Bektaş in Elvan Çelebi's text see Elvan Çelebi, *Menâkıbu'l-Kudsiyye fî Menâsibi'Ünsiyye*, ed. by Erünsal and Ocak, p. 169-171.

patron saint of the Karamanids”.⁴⁵⁵ Likewise, the third name in the list, in poem forty-two, is Mevlana, along with Konevi, and it continues with Mahmud Hayrani and Sultan Veled. When read together with the following and previous couplets, the first names in the list form a group in which figures from the region of Konya appear. These names at the top of the list also appear to be symbolic and emphasize, once again, that these people are not supporting the Karamanids, but the Ottomans. Otherwise, the names of the Zeyni dervishes in Eğirdir, including the author Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s father and grandfather, who were the founders of the Zeyni lodge in Eğirdir, might have been cited first. Again, opening a way for another symbolic reading, the dervish-poet mentions figures in the neighbouring regions, namely Menteşe and Manavgat. This also echoes the support of the people in those regions for either the Ottomans or the Karamanids, depending on the source wherein they are described. Having the support of all the important figures in the region then, the *Hızırname* provides a basis for reading the text with reference to the political unrest.

Futhermore, in the next poem, when the army of Şeyh Muhyiddin is on its way to the Eastern border of the Ottomans, they first stop by the square (*meydan*) in Konya and perform the evening prayer there. The text describes this gathering as,

Cem’ oldu leşker cümlesi heb Konya meydanında çün
Akşam namazın kıldılar şad oldu divane gönül”⁴⁵⁶

(When all the soldiers gathered in the square (*meydan*) at Konya they performed the evening prayer there, the crazy soul has become happy).

Although what ‘*leşker cümlesi*’ (*all the soldiers*) implies is not clear here, it suggests a huge community, possibly joined by the soldiers of other regions.

⁴⁵⁵ Fatih Bayram, “Zaviye-Khankahs and Religious Orders in the Province of Karaman: The Seljukid, Karamanoğlu and the Ottoman Periods, 1200-1512”, p. 152.

⁴⁵⁶ Bardakçı, p. 223.

Thus, when read within the context of the Ottoman-Karaman rivalry and the Eastern problem of the Ottomans, poems Forty-two and Forty-three, which include a gathering of all the warriors and dervishes in the region and the battle at the Eastern border of the Ottomans, appear to reflect the political undertones of the text by using a symbolic content and descriptions. These include citing the figures of Konya as the first names in the meeting, thus relating these figures to the Ottomans and, thereby, to the region, and describing the gathering of the Ottoman army and performing the evening prayer in the square in Konya. Dating to 1476 and having been composed in Eğirdir, not to mention its links to other textual lineages, the *Hızırname* should also be read as a product of the political unrest in the region.

3. Hacı Bektaş in Other Sources and His Identification with Khidr

The *Velayetname* portrays Hacı Bektaş as the *qutb* in Rum and also, unlike the story of Hacı Bektaş and Ahmed Fakih in the *Saltukname*, in the *Velayatname* Hacı Bektaş attains the position of *qutb* before he comes to Anatolia and he is still in Khurasan. While these features of the text amount to another version of the story of the origins of the friends of God in Rum, what makes the *Velayetname* more intriguing for the *Hızırname* are the episodes it includes about the relationship between Hacı Bektaş and Khidr. As already stated, the *Hızırname* makes a distinction between the roles of Khidr and Hacı Bektaş in terms of their spiritual and military nature. The *Velayetname*, on the other hand, remarkably identifies Hacı Bektaş with Khidr.

According to one of the episodes in the *Velayetname*, one day a dervish visits Hacı Bektaş, who has a beautiful face, wears green clothes and owns a dune-

coloured horse. Saru İsmail, one of the disciples of Hacı Bektaş, welcomes him outside the *tekke* and takes his horse, while the man directly goes to the room of Hacı Bektaş. Saru İsmail becomes curious about the identity of the man, since he has never seen such a strong and beautiful man before. When he goes to the door of the room that they are sitting in he finds them talking about something and hears Hacı Bektaş saying to the man, “what can we do my dear Khidr, God the Almighty has appointed you with this duty, you need to go and rescue His servants from this difficult situation. At this very moment a ship is about to sink into the Black Sea and they have called you; we always look forward to talking to you, but you have to go now, go quickly, help them and who knows, if God wills, we will get together again.”⁴⁵⁷ Immediately after these words Khidr leaves the room, jumps onto his horse, and with his first step he is in Karahöyük, and with his second step he reaches the Sun and then disappears out of sight. Saru İsmail tells Hacı Bektaş what he has just seen and asks who the man is. Hacı Bektaş responds by saying, “He is our brother, the prophet Khidr. A ship is about to sink in the Black Sea, so he left to help the ship; his walking style is like this.”⁴⁵⁸

As this episode reveals, the depiction of Khidr in the *Velayetname* is significantly different from that of the *Hızırname*. Although both texts mention the role of Khidr as a helper and describe him rescuing the people out at sea, in the *Velayetname* Hacı Bektaş is the one who informs Khidr about the danger and he tells Khidr to go and help those people. In fact, in all the meetings with Khidr in the

⁴⁵⁷ Gölpınarlı, *Vilayet-name – Manakıb-ı Hünkar Hacı Bektaş Veli*, p. 75. The edition of the text by Gölpınarlı is as follows: “Tam bu esnada da Hünkar, ne yapalım Hızır’ım diyordu, Ulu Tanrı, seni bu işe koşmuş. Tanrı kullarını zordan kurtarman gerek; şimdicek Karadeniz’de bir gemi batmak üzere, seni çağırdılar; sohbetine müştakız amma ne çare, tez dur, medetlerine eriş, Tanrı izin verirse gene müşerref oluruz”.

⁴⁵⁸ For this episode see Gölpınarlı, *ibid*, p. 75.

Velayetname, Hacı Bektaş is the one who speaks and directs events. A similar dialogue occurs concerning the fight of Sarı Saltuk with the dragon. In this episode, Hacı Bektaş tells Khidr to go and help Sarı Saltuk who is fighting with the dragon and addresses Khidr as such: “My dear Khidr, the dragon has been troubling Sarı Saltuk and he forgot his sword, go quickly and remind him about the sword”.⁴⁵⁹ Also, unlike the *Hızırname*, which portrays Khidr as superior to the dervish Muhyiddin, in the *Velayetname* Hacı Bektaş introduces Khidr as if a friend. In the *Hızırname* however, the dervish Muhyiddin constantly prays to God that he may see Khidr again.

Despite this portrayal of Khidr in the text, the last chapter of the *Velayetname* ends with a striking scene after telling of the death of Hacı Bektaş and of the subsequent building of his sanctuary following his death. When Hacı Bektaş understands he is going to pass away very soon, he calls Saru İsmail, who is one of his disciples. He appoints him as his caliph by telling him that he is about to die and he explains what he should do when he dies. He orders Saru İsmail to stand outside his room and wait for the man who has a dune-coloured horse and a green veil. He asks Saru İsmail to welcome him and to help him while the man is cleaning his corpse. He also warns Saru İsmail not to talk to the man at all. Upon these words, Saru İsmail feels very sad and while crying he begins to pray that such a day does not come. Hacı Bektaş comforts him by telling him that the dervishes in fact do not die, but only change their appearance. He then passes away. As he has predicted, the man comes with his dune-coloured horse and with a green cover on his face and washes the body of Hacı Bektaş. After he has led the funeral, he climbs up onto his

⁴⁵⁹ Gölpınarlı, *Vilayet-name – Manakıb-ı Hünkar Hacı Bektaş Veli*, p. 46. The original text is as follows: “Hacı Bektaş Saru Saltuk çağırınca, Hızır’ım dedi, Saru Saltuk’u ejderha bunalttı, kılıcını unuttu, tez imadanına yetiş, kılıcını hatırlat”.

horse and leaves. But Saru İsmail becomes curious about the identity of the man and he is suspicious that he could be Khidr. Since he has seen Khidr before, he thinks that he can recognize him if he sees him again. So, he goes after the man and begs to see his face. Upon the call of the dervish, the man shows his face and Saru İsmail starts worshipping him since the man turns out to be Hacı Bektaş himself.⁴⁶⁰

The identification of Hacı Bektaş with Khidr in the *Velayetname*, clearly takes us back to the notion of ‘becoming Khidr’, which was discussed in Chapter III. In this respect, both the *Hızırname* and the *Velayetname* can be linked to the works of Suhrawardi. In terms of content and genre however, the *Velayetname* has, of course, a different character to the *Hızırname* but this is beyond the scope of this thesis. What is noteworthy, however, is that by portraying Khidr only in the helper role and as if a friend of Hacı Bektaş, and by portraying Hacı Bektaş only with his dervish persona, the *Velayetname* highlights once again the peculiar depictions of Khidr and Hacı Bektaş in the *Hızırname*, suggesting the need for the *Hızırname* to be read within the historical context of Eğirdir. At this point, having revealed the political undertones of the text, when we focus on the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş as the designated ‘guardian’, responsible for the security of the Ottoman lands (*gözcü*), another text, composed in a different region, provides an intriguing example in terms of the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş and allows us to elaborate our assumptions concerning his role in the *Hızırname*. The Ottoman chronicler Aşıkpaşazade, who was also a Zeyni dervish himself, and the sheikh of the Zeyni dervish lodge in Istanbul, talks about Hacı Bektaş in a highly derogatory way in his chronicle, and he barely accepts him as a dervish.

⁴⁶⁰ Gölpınarlı, *Vilayet-name – Manakıb-ı Hüsnâ Hacı Bektaş Veli*, p. 88-89.

The contrasting portrayals of Hacı Bektaş by two Zeyni sheikhs, Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi, and Aşıkpaşazade, poses a question regarding the contrasting reception and description of Hacı Bektaş in Zeyni circles. Aşıkpaşazade was the grandson of Baba İlyas and he was born and grew up in the dervish lodge of Elvan Çelebi in Çorum.⁴⁶¹ What caused Aşıkpaşazade to be initiated into the Zeyni order was his visit to Konya, where he met with the celebrated Zeyni sheikh Abdüllatif Makdisi. During the stay of Makdisi in the Konevi *zawiye*, Aşıkpaşazade became one of his disciples while later on he became the sheikh of the Zeyni dervish lodge in Istanbul, which became to be known as ‘Aşıkpaşa Zaviyesi’.⁴⁶² As an important detail, Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi’s father, Piri Halife, was also a disciple of Makdisi in the Konevi *zawiye* for a while. So, the Konevi complex, consisting of a dervish lodge and a library, which contained books owned by both Konevi and Ibn ‘Arabi, and also others’, was a place to which the Zeyni lodges in Eğirdir and Istanbul were both linked.

In his chronicle, after he explains the history of the Ottoman dynasty, Aşıkpaşazade mentions the dervishes and the scholars/learned men he thinks worth-mentioning for the reign of each Ottoman sultan. He begins his canonical list with the time of Ertuğrul and cites Baba İlyas as the first name on the list. Then he continues with Koçum Seydi, who was the successor to Baba İlyas. For the time of Orhan, he cites Davud al-Kayseri, who was the first *müderris* in the Ottoman state. Then come the figures we find in the *Hızırname*, such as Aşık Paşa, Tabduk Emre, Ahi Evren and Karaca Ahmed. As the last two names, he cites Makdisi and Gümüšoğlu, introducing them as Zeynis and the followers of the sheikh Zeyn-i Hafi.

⁴⁶¹ İnalçık, “How to Read ‘Ashik Pasha-zade’s History”, p. 139-140.

⁴⁶² By 867/1471 there has been a change in its name, and it became known as the ‘Baba Saltuk Zaviyesi’, see, İnalçık, *ibid*, p. 142.

After having finished citing the names of the figures he deems to have played a significant role in the history of the Ottomans, a question is addressed to Aşıkpaşazade asking why he did not mention Hacı Bektaş at all despite having mentioned all the dervishes and religious men in Rum. In his answer, Aşıkpaşazade tells us that he did not mention Hacı Bektaş amongst those who were from the lands of the Ottomans, because Hacı Bektaş did not become a companion of anybody related to the Ottoman dynasty (*Bu Hacı Bektaş Al-i Osman neslinden hiç kimseyle musahabet itmedi*).⁴⁶³ Then the topic shifts to the genealogy of Hacı Bektaş, asking whether or not he had a family and also, as a master, whether or not he had any followers. In terms of his mastership, Aşıkpaşazade portrays Hacı Bektaş in a negative way: he refutes all the claims about Hacı Bektaş which describe him as a sheikh by stating that “Hacı Bektaş was a dervish in a state of ecstasy (*bir meczub aziz idi*), thus, he was incapable of being a sheikh or a master”.⁴⁶⁴

As this short passage on Hacı Bektaş, which comes at the end of the *Tevarih*, reveals, Aşıkpaşazade definitely had a negative attitude towards Hacı Bektaş. He not only introduces him without any connections to the Ottomans, but also describes him as a person who is not capable of acting reasonably, since he is in a constant state of ecstasy. Specifying the oral aspect of Aşıkpaşazade’s chronicle, Halil İnalçık describes this text as being one of the *menakıbnames* which were “designed to be read and listened to by groups during military campaigns, in bozahouses or in other meeting places”.⁴⁶⁵ Looking at the circulation of the *Tevarih* in both forms and at the link between the oral versus the written versions of the text and after having examined the structure of Aşıkpaşazade’s chronicle, Rıza Yıldırım argues that

⁴⁶³ Yavuz and Saraç, *Osmanoğullarının Tarihi: Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*, p. 484-487

⁴⁶⁴ Yavuz and Saraç, *ibid*, p. 484-487.

⁴⁶⁵ See İnalçık, “How to Read ‘Ashik Pasha-zade’s History’”, p. 143-144.

Aşıkpaşazade did not even want to cite the name of Hacı Bektaş in his text. According to Yıldırım, the *Tevarih* was first composed and circulated orally, and then its written form was shaped with reference to the oral text, and the episode on Hacı Bektaş, therefore, must be reflective of the questions posed by the audience about his identity while the text was being read. This suggests that the cult of Hacı Bektaş was popular in fifteenth century Ottoman society.⁴⁶⁶

As Yıldırım clarifies, the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in such a negative way by Aşıkpaşazade is not something that we find in other contemporary chronicles; in fact, it is peculiar to the work of Aşıkpaşazade.⁴⁶⁷ This aspect of the text highlights a question concerning its audience and authorship: why would Aşıkpaşazade wish to stamp out the popularity of Hacı Bektaş among his audience? Although Hacı Bektaş is not related to Baba İlyas, unlike Aşıkpaşazade who is his grandson, Hacı Bektaş is celebrated for being one of the prominent disciples of Baba İlyas. According to Yıldırım, the reason for the highly negative attitude of Aşıkpaşazade towards Hacı Bektaş could be because of the rivalry between Aşıkpaşazade and the Bektashi circles in terms of the origin of the Ottoman Empire. By linking himself to the Ottomans, Aşıkpaşazade wanted to give out the message to his audience that Hacı Bektaş did not have any role in the establishment of the Ottoman Empire. It is for this reason that the episode on Hacı Bektaş has been written in a polemical style; it aims to diminish the positive arguments about Hacı Bektaş.⁴⁶⁸ Regarding the audience of the text, Halil İnalcık argues that the immediate audience of the text

⁴⁶⁶ Yıldırım, “Hacı Bektaş Veli ve İlk Osmanlılar: Aşıkpaşazade’ye Eleştirel Bir Bakış.”, p. 137-139.

⁴⁶⁷ Yıldırım, *ibid*, p. 116-127.

⁴⁶⁸ Yıldırım, *ibid*, p. 135-136

must be the followers of the Vefai (Wafa'i) order,⁴⁶⁹ since one of the aims of the text is "to demonstrate how the Wafa'i khalifa Ede-bali and his own family played a crucial role in the establishment and rise of the Ottoman dynasty".⁴⁷⁰ By introducing Aşıkpaşazade as a Vefai sheikh, Halil İncılık establishes a relationship between the portrayal of Edebalı and the origin of the Ottomans in the text, through which Aşıkpaşazade can also be claimed to be one of the founding figures of the Ottoman Empire. The relationship between the Vefais and Aşıkpaşazade however, is debatable, since Aşıkpaşazade openly claims himself to be a Zeyni, and a follower of the Zeyni sheikh Abdülatif Makdisi. Furthermore, as pointed out by Yıldırım, we cannot even trace the existence of the Vefai order in the Ottoman lands beyond the second half of the fifteenth century, and, besides, the contemporary sources always talk about Aşıkpaşazade as a Zeyni sheikh and never make mention of his relationship with the Vefai order.⁴⁷¹

The Zeyni dervishes, therefore, must have been one of the groups in the audience of the *Tevarih*, which possibly included diverse communities. At this point, the contrasting portrayals of Hacı Bektaş in two texts addressing the Zeyni circles complicate the reception of Hacı Bektaş in fifteenth century Anatolia. In Eğirdir the Zeyni sheikh Mehmed Çelebi constructs the Ottoman identity of his text through the cult of Hacı Bektaş, suggesting that it was very influential in the dervish circles in the region and, in a highly symbolic narration, Hacı Bektaş, who is responsible for the Ottoman lands, gives the dervish Muhyiddin command over his soldiers in order to fight for the cause of the Ottomans. To read Aşıkpaşazade's portrayal of Hacı

⁴⁶⁹ İncılık, "How to Read 'Ashik Pasha-zade's History'", p. 143-144.

⁴⁷⁰ İncılık, *ibid*, p. 144.

⁴⁷¹ Yıldırım, "Hacı Bektaş Veli ve İlk Osmanlılar: Aşıkpaşazade'ye Eleştirel Bir Bakış", p. 132-134.

Bektaş within the context of Istanbul is beyond the scope of this research. However, it should be noted that, because it contains detailed information about Hacı Bektaş, Aşıkpaşazade's *Tevarih* has become the most influential source in shaping the reception and portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in secondary sources.⁴⁷² The portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in the *Hızırname*, on the other hand, has political connotations which reflect both the frontier context of Eğirdir and the fame of Hacı Bektaş among its immediate audience.

⁴⁷² Yıldırım, *ibid*, p. 108. For the survey of secondary sources with regard to the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş, see p. 110-114. As Yıldırım notes, the studies on the Bektashis were first pioneered by G. Jacob. According to Jacob, in his time Hacı Bektaş was not an important figure and could even question whether he ever existed. Then, unlike Jacob, based on Aflaki (d. 1360), Köprülü claimed Hacı Bektaş to be one of the most influential disciples of Baba İlyas. He rejected, however, the views that Hacı Bektaş met with Osman Bey and prayed for the Janissaries. In 1937, J. K. Birge published a monograph on the Bektashi order and like Köprülü, he described Hacı Bektaş as one of the disciples of Baba İlyas. Other studies however, such as by Melikoff, based on his portrayal by Aşıkpaşazade, proposed a different view about Hacı Bektaş than Köprülü and Birge. Similarly, Ocak also based his argument on Aşıkpaşazade's views, despite his attempt to provide a wider perspective. Yıldırım is surely right in considering the views put forth by Melikoff and Ocak as the dominant ones in the relevant literature.

CONCLUSION

As a composite text self-narrating the journey of a dervish figure together with Khidr – the enigmatic and celebrated figure of Islamic literature in a wide geographical region – the *Hızırname* provides intriguing material about frontier literature, epics, religious texts, mythology and philosophical treatises in the early Ottoman period. During the journey, the dervish figure visits various places, both in the heavens and on Earth, and meets warriors and dervishes in Anatolia, who support him in a battle at the Eastern frontiers of the Ottoman lands. The diversity of the places he visits, the companionship of Khidr during this journey and his leadership in the Ottoman army derive from different kinds of texts which are here compiled together in a single grand-narrative. On the one hand the ascension of the dervish into the seven heavens and his journey at Mount Qaf and to the realm of the water of life reflect the *mirajnames* and philosophical and mystical treatises of *ishraqi* literature and the Ekberi-Konevi School in Anatolia; on the other hand, the poem about the great meeting which mentions the names of warriors and dervishes in Anatolia and the Balkans one by one, and the poem which follows about the battle at the Eastern frontiers link this text to the frontier narratives in the region.

Existing studies of the *Hızırname* describe this text as an unusual work in Turkish literature, indeed as the only example of its genre among Ottoman texts, but without mentioning any reason for its uniqueness. This study argues that two particular characteristics in the *Hızırname* make this text unusual among other Anatolian Turkish works: (i) a detailed description of the non-prophetic ascension journey, and (ii) the first person narrator. To find out the possible textual sources for

these unusual characteristics, this thesis has focused on the plot and the portrayal of the protagonist. It has also aimed to investigate how the author designed the journey which consists of diverse destinations as one complete unit, based on several sources and enhanced with textual relations.

Besides the warrior dervish figure, who is the poet-narrator of this journey, there are two other prominent figures in the narrative: Khidr and Hacı Bektaş. In addition, Iskender, although not an actor in the narrative, he has an important role since the poet-narrator describes the route of his journey as “the route of Iskender”. While Khidr is the spiritual guide in the heavenly journey of the dervish as he has the special knowledge (*‘ilm-i ledun*) endowed by God, Hacı Bektaş appears as the guardian of the Ottoman lands and sends the dervish Muhyiddin to battle on the Eastern frontiers of the Ottoman lands. The distinction between the roles of Khidr and Hacı Bektaş, that is, the religious character of the former and the epic character of the latter, indicates that the *Hızırname* is based on two main stories which are linked to two different textual lineages: the first is the philosophical and mystical works of the Ekberi-Konevi school and *ishraqi* literature; the second is the frontier literature of the warrior dervishes in the region. Also, the connection between the *Hızırname* and *ishraqi* literature reveals a possible connection between the ‘route of Iskender’ and the heavenly journey of the dervish. As Michael Barry notes, the spiritual journey in the works of the *ishraqi* authors, for example as in the *Hayy bin Yaqzan* by Avicenna and in the *Qissat al-Ghurbat al-Gharbiya* by Suhrawardi, was modelled on the westward journey of Iskender, in which the human soul “must

finally come to terms with death on reaching the Earth's edge in the land of darkness".⁴⁷³

The diversity of the sources of the *Hızırname* is also paralleled by the use of two different pennames by the poet: Muhyiddin and Dolu. Muhyiddin, which echoes the celebrated sheikh Ibn 'Arabi, connects the identity of the poet to the Ekberî-Konevî school. Dolu on the other hand, connects the poet to the vernacular Turkish of Anatolia and to the Yunus-style poetry. The simultaneous use of the pennames Muhyiddin and Dolu represents the combination of different literary traditions within one narrative.

This thesis examined the *Hızırname* and its sources as follows:

The focus of Chapter I was the plot and structure of the *Hızırname* and the controversy about its content and genre. As the chapter observes, the confusion and ambiguous characterization of the *Hızırname* in secondary sources can be divided into two types: first, there are claims about the uniqueness of the text, but without mentioning any reason for it; second, there are unclear categorizations of the theme and content of the text, as for example defining it as a "religious-moral-mystical masnavî", but distinguishing it from the group "historical-epic-hagiographical masnavî". As this chapter argues, the controversy about the content and genre of the *Hızırname* mainly results from the lack of consensus in secondary sources about how to define the genre of a text in the Ottoman era. The term "*menakıbnâme*" appears at the centre of the discussion regarding the debates concerning the *Hızırname*, since literary studies and historical studies define this term in contradictory ways. This also reveals not only the methodological problems in defining the genre of a text but

⁴⁷³ See Michael Barry, "Alexander's Cave" in *Figurative Art in Medieval Islam and the Riddle of Bihzad of Herat (1465-1535)*, p. 258.

also the lack of studies of genres of early Ottoman texts. In literary studies, the genre of a text is mostly defined according to its content and themes. In historical studies on the other hand, the content of a text is still the main criteria, but this field approaches the content from a different perspective and analyses the text with reference to the fantastic elements and the facts. In other words, while the literary studies address the textual lineages in terms of content common to the texts under discussion, in historical studies the focus is the historical nature of the texts.

The focus of Chapter II was the figure of Khidr and his multi-faceted identity. Existing studies of the figure of Khidr generally describe him as a “syncretic figure”. This description fails to analyse the figure in particular contexts and thus, fails to explain the variety in the features of Khidr in specific text groups. This chapter argues that the roles and features of Khidr need to be put into context and examined on the basis of the textual lineages that were the most important for the development of Khidr’s image at different times. Another issue addressed in this chapter was the narratives about the journey of Khidr. The two main narratives that tell of the Khidr’s journey as a companion, the first being his journey with Iskender, and the second being his journey with Moses based on the Koran, formed the basis for the stories of Khidr in different literary traditions. The journey of the dervish in the *Hızırname* accompanied by Khidr was also inspired by these two narratives; the poet-narrator refers to the key motifs and episodes that we find in the journeys of Iskender and Moses, such as the realm of the water of life and the special knowledge endowed by God.

The focus of Chapter III was the ascension journey of the dervish Muhyiddin so as to reveal the possible sources of the intrinsic features of the text. The route of

the heavenly journey of the dervish seems to be unusual when compared to Anatolian Turkish works of a similar kind. In these the quest for the water of life for example is generally associated with Iskender's journey. However, these works do not explicitly place the water of life in the heavenly realm. Rather, the descriptions include the difficulties in the land of darkness, with reference to stormy weather, and afterwards, the water of life appears beyond the land of darkness. In the *Hızırname* the water of life is located on Mount Qaf, and also, in the heavens. In addition, the text describes the realm of the water of life as a place which has not only been visited by Khidr and the dervish Muhyiddin, but one constantly visited by the *erenler* who have reached the stage of 'perfect man' (*insan-ı kamil*). The location of the water of life is said to be the secret of Khidr and only the ones, who have the attribute *kamil* could see it: "Now you have become a *kamil*, so find out where Khidr khan is."⁴⁷⁴

The chapter, therefore, examined the links between the ascension journey of the dervish, his visit to the realm of the water of life, his visits to Mount Qaf, and the companionship of Khidr during these visits. The chapter argues that the journey of the dervish Muhyiddin to the realm of the water of life in the company of Khidr symbolizes 'becoming Khidr'. Likewise, the *erenler*, who are described as visiting the water of life, are the ones who had already become Khidr. This feature of the text links the *Hızırname* to the works of Suhrawardi, the *Sheikh al-ishraq*, as he writes that to be able to reach Mount Qaf, one has to be(come) Khidr. Also, in *ishraqi* literature, the ones who have found the water of life are those who have attained the knowledge of existence. At this point, the non-prophetic ascension journey in the

⁴⁷⁴ Bardakçı, p. 253.

Hızırname which is told by the first-person narrator is another feature of text which links it to the works of *ishraqi* literature.

Likewise, the non-prophetic journey and its description by the first-person narrator also indicate that the *Hızırname* should be considered as one of the work related to the Ekberi-Konevi school in Anatolia. Both in *ishraqi* works and in the primary sources of the Ekberi-Konevi school the only means to gain the knowledge of creation is visionary experiences, and, the vision of someone who attains this stage is explained with reference to the word ‘*kashf*’ (*unveiling*) in these texts. Similarly the visions of the dervish Muhyiddin in the *Hızırname* is repeatedly expressed through the word ‘*keşif*’ (*unveiling*) and ‘*keşf olundu*’ (*unveiled*). Also, ‘*zevk*’ (*tasting*) and ‘*Esma*’ (*the Names*) are other key terms in the *Hızırname* which link the text both to *ishraqi* sources and to the writings of the Ekberi-Konevi school.

This chapter also discussed the portrayal of Ibn ‘Arabi in the *Hızırname*, by comparing his reception in the Zeyni circles in Herat to his reception in Anatolia. While Zeyn-i Hafi, the founder of the Zeyniye order, rejects the ideas of Ibn ‘Arabi’s and his followers, in the *Hızırname* Ibn ‘Arabi is introduced as a ‘true man’. As this thesis argues, the major difference in the portrayals of Ibn ‘Arabi between the two Zeyni sheikhs results from the different regions in which the relevant works were written. While there was a conflict between the Naqhsbandi circles, which were the supports of Ibn ‘Arabi, and Zeyn-i Hafi’s followers in Herat, in the Anatolian context there was no such rivalry. Also, there was a positive attitude towards Ibn ‘Arabi in early Ottoman Anatolia and his ideas were followed by the early Ottoman ‘*ulema* and the statesmen. This also seems to be another factor that may have influenced the positive portrayal of Ibn ‘Arabi in the *Hızırname*.

The focus of Chapter IV was the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş and his relationship with the *erenler* in Rum and with Khidr. In this chapter, the three poems in the *Hızırname*, poems twenty-eight, forty-two and forty-three were examined in order to put the figure of Hacı Bektaş into context. These poems introduce Hacı Bektaş as the guardian (*gözcü*) of the Ottoman lands, describe a meeting of all the warriors and dervishes in Eğirdir, and tell of the leadership of the dervish Muhyiddin in the battle at the Eastern frontiers of the Ottomans in the company of the *erenler* and with the soldiers of Hacı Bektaş under his command. In poem forty-two, the poet-narrator cites the names of the people who join the gathering one by one and the long canonical list includes ninety names with different titles, such as *dede*, *baba* and *gazi*. The list combines both warriors and dervishes from different periods of history in a single encounter. The text does not refer to any distinction between these figures and mention them as being “the friends of God”, “the perfect men” and “the *erenler*”.

The first name cited in the list is Dediği, and the second one is Hacı Bektaş. Then comes the prominent figures of the Karamanid lands, especially its former capital, Konya. As this thesis argues, the fact that the poet starts the list with those names is symbolic and includes political connotations when the text is read within the context of the Ottoman-Karaman rivalry. Accordingly, the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş in the *Hızırname* also needs to be read within this context, since his portrayal as a warrior, mounted on horseback and girded with a sword, thus giving him a warrior identity in a military context, differs from his portrayals in other Anatolian Turkish works. Amongst these works, such as the *Saltukname*, the *Velayetname*, and the *Menakıb of Dediği Sultan* (though the copy date of its manuscript is very late),

the *Hızırname* seems to be the only text which directly associates Hacı Bektaş with the Ottomans, thus giving him a political identity.

Accordingly, in this chapter, the depiction of Hacı Bektaş in the *Hızırname* has also been compared to the portrayal of Hacı Bektaş by Aşıkpaşazade, who was also a Zeyni sheikh. Although Aşıkpaşazade was initiated into the Zeyni order in Konya by Şeyh Makdisi, in terms of the description of Hacı Bektaş, his chronicle presents a totally different character from that of the *Hızırname*: Aşıkpaşazade does not even consider Hacı Bektaş to be a dervish. As this chapter argues, although Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi and Aşıkpaşazade are linked to each other through the Zeyniye order, the regions where each wrote his work have shaped the different portrayals of Hacı Bektaş. While Aşıkpaşazade, writing in Istanbul, wants to eliminate the influence of Hacı Bektaş, Şeyh Mehmed Çelebi, writing in Eğirdir, propagates his image as a warrior leading the *erenler*.

Having examined the *Hızırname* by addressing its sources, relations with other texts, and by putting it within a historical context, when we return to the discussion about the uniqueness of the *Hızırname* among Ottoman works, the major issue appears to be the linguistic difference between the *Hızırname* and its sources. Here we are reminded of the words of Karla Mallette about the concept of Mediterranean literature: “The most significant obstacle to thinking a literary Mediterranean is, I believe, neither religious nor cultural. It is linguistic.”⁴⁷⁵ The non-Turkish sources of the *Hızırname* seem to have been as an obstacle for researchers when examining the text, and thus, led them to describe the *Hızırname* as an unusual work. Amongst the Anatolian Turkish works, the

⁴⁷⁵Karla Mallette, “Boustrophedon: Towards a Literary Theory of the Mediterranean”, p. 255-256.

Hızırname indeed presents unusual characteristics in some respects; however, when it is read in a broader context of Anatolian literature, which consists of works written in different languages, such as Arabic, Greek and Persian, as well as Turkish, the *Hızırname* is seen to resemble many works written in the Anatolian context.

This thesis aimed to address the sources of the *Hızırname* and has attempted to read it within its historical and literary context, by also pointing out the changes in its reception through the centuries. Since the *Hızırname* is a rich source for new research projects about the history of Anatolia, history of Sufism and in the field of literary studies, the following subjects can be suggested for further research:

The descriptions about the ecstatic states of the dervish Muhyiddin and the *erenler* which symbolize the *sama*‘ rituals in Sufi orders need to be examined with reference to other works circulating in Eğirdir and the rituals of the Zeyniye order. In the *Hızırname* the *sama*‘ takes place in visionary meetings. The attendees of these meetings are the community of the friends of God and the *erenler* and they all drink and dance in a state of ecstasy. The angels, the *qutb*, the *ghaws*, and Khidr and Ilyas also join them. What these descriptions could be symbolizing in the context of fifteenth century Eğirdir is one of the questions that needs to be addressed in future studies. Also, as a part of the *sama*‘ rituals, the tradition of ‘playing the witness’ (*shahid bazi*), which means to witness the divine creation by looking at a beautiful youth, is another subject that needs to be studied for an analysis of the incomparably beautiful *meczub* in the *Hızırname*, who was witnessed by the dervish Muhyiddin at the end of the great gathering.

Another subject is the territories visited by the poet-narrator in the *Hızırname*, such as his visit to Mecca and Medina and his descriptions about how he performed

the circumambulation.⁴⁷⁶ Besides the heavenly realm sources of which were pointed out in this study, one can search for the imaginary aspects of his visits with reference to other sources intertextually related to the *Hızırname*. Considering textual relations, the *Hızırname* can also be read in relation to the '*aja'ib* and *ghara'ib* literature about the wonders of creation. The works in the '*aja'ib* and *ghara'ib* literature include the descriptions of marvellous and strange objects, places, animals and other creatures on Earth and in the heavenly realm. They are linked to the travel narratives, and, although not a subject that has been dealt with in the present study, they form a remarkable corpus of literature which assists us to understand the descriptions by the dervish Muhyiddin of the wonders he witnesses during his travels.

As a last subject to be mentioned here, the links between *ishraqi* works and Ibn 'Arabi's writings in Anatolia await to be studied thoroughly so as better to define the relationship between the *Hızırname* and *ishraqi* literature. By stating that Ibn 'Arabi does not refer to the *Hikmat al-Ishraq* or other writings of Suhrawardi, Claude Addes suggests that "through his Iranian friends and disciples – especially Qunawi and Awhad al-Din Kirmani (d. 635/1238) – he could not possibly have remained unfamiliar with the works of Shaikh al-Ishraq".⁴⁷⁷ It should be noted that, Süleyman Uludağ argues, having pointed out the influence of *ishraqiyya* on Ottoman mysticism along with the concept of the 'unity of existence' attributed to Ibn 'Arabi, and having quoted Katip Çelebi's (d. 1657) statement in which he claims that the concepts *kashf* and ecstasy were taken from the *Hikmat al-Ishraq*, that the "followers of *Ishraqiyya* have always remained particularly attached to Ibn 'Arabi and have

⁴⁷⁶ See for example Erik Ohlander, "Mecca real and imagined: Texts, transregional networks, and the curious case of Baha' al-Din Zakariyya of Multan". By focusing on the "Mecca trope in medieval South Asian hagiographical literatures", Ohlander discusses the imaginal and miraculous aspects of the visits of the dervishes to Mecca and Hejaz in their works.

⁴⁷⁷ Addas, *The Quest for the Red Sulphur: The Life of Ibn 'Arabi*, p. 109-110.

received sustenance from his source”.⁴⁷⁸ The links between Ibn ‘Arabi’s works and *ishraqi* literature, therefore, is one significant subject which awaits examination in new research projects. In addition, there is also lack of studies on the influence of Suhrawardi in Anatolia, especially on early Anatolian Turkish works. Such research would no doubt greatly enhance our understanding of the sources of the *Hızırname*.



⁴⁷⁸ Süleyman Uludağ, “Basic Sources for Mystical Thought in the Ottoman Period”, p. 30-31.

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APPENDIX

SYNOPSIS OF THE TEXT

There is a great number of different sections in the text always identified by a heading in Persian. In the Bardakçı edition there are eighty such sections, though they are not numbered. The focus in this summary will be on the places visited by the warrior dervish and his experiences there.

The Arabic prose section:

This is a very short section with the heading ‘This is the *divan* of Şeyh Muhyiddin Çelebi, may God bless his secrets’. When God wishes to show the truth to one of His servants, He leads him to the right path. He opens the Realm of Power to his servant. Then, that servant can, as far as he is allowed, see and observe the great signs of God, the wonders of His creation and the angels and anything related to eternity. God leads his servant to higher stations and blesses him both in this world and in the afterlife.

Poem 1: “Introduction to the Definition of States Endowed by God”. Thirteen couplets: Dear God, one hundred thousand times praises be upon You that You put your gaze on us through the love in the *Feast of Alast* and that You first loved us. You led us to the right path, and with your love, we have passed through limitless realms. You endowed us with the *ilm-i ledünni* (*knowledge of existence*). We have reached the stage ‘*ayne’l- yakin* (*eye of certainty*) and learnt your essence. Oh dear God, let this Muhyiddin see You face-to-face.

Poem 2: “In Praise of the Prophet Muhammad”. Seventeen couplets: Oh the Prophet of the final age and the seal of the prophethood, you were privileged to do the *miraj* journey. God gave you the Koran, the greatest of all miracles. God said that “His sight never wavered” and because God also said “nor was it too bold”, the ones who followed you have found God. On that night, you placed your gaze upon one poor servant of Yours and stage by stage many wishes became true.

Poem 3: “The Reason for Telling The Secret of Perfection; the Revealing of the *Karama* (the miracle performed by the dervishes); the Stories of the Wonders Seen by the Dervish and Told at the Behest of God; the Embarking on the Journey” Sixty-six couplets (the longest poem): God is the one who leads His servants to find the essence of existence and the correct path. He chooses some of them as His beloveds. As He says in the Koran “people He loves and who love Him”. Thank you God for making us one of your chosen group. You showed us the path of love and made our souls intimate with the secret of love. We have discovered the truth, learnt the language of all nations and the logic and language of animals, according to your will. I have witnessed things in the heavens and on earth. I have watched the stars, the revolving of nine heavens and everything that has been created. I have journeyed and seen these wonders. I have found myself in euphoric states which cannot be comprehended through reason. I am telling here, according to your orders, what I have experienced. These words shall be said in Turkish so that everybody can benefit from them. Both essence and truth have been unveiled to me. I have experienced *tayy-ı cismani* and *bast-ı zaman* (traversing great distances). I have also experienced the secret of creation. It will do no harm to tell about the *zevk* (tasting) of this experience. My words tell the truth and should not be taken lightly, because the man

following the path (*yol eri*) is gifted with the truth. That path is the path of the invisible *erenler*. We first became seekers by following the teachings of Zeyn-i Hafi and, through them, we ended up on this path. Oh son, this path is the path of ecstasy (*cezbe*). The *erenler* are those in whose words there is the light of God and in whose eyes there is the ecstasy of God. Their hands have the power of God. When they place their gaze on something, its essence changes: if it is earth it becomes an elixir, if it is someone who is ignorant, he becomes a sage. Everything I am telling you here is about the power of God. Here Muhyiddin has been united with God and has learnt the secrets of the invisible world.

Poem 4: “A Description of the Unity of Existence” Seventeen couplets: I have reached the sea of love and rid myself of all earthly desire. The only way to reach the sea of love is through the *himmet* of Khidr and it is not possible to find it by piety alone. Oh Muhyiddin, be a *gavvas* (*deep diver*) in the sea of love and continually travel the world by reciting the name of Khidr.

Poem 5: “In Praise of the Prophet and the Blessing of Ali Murtaza”. Nine couplets: Oh master of the final age, the mirror of the entire universe, the head of the prophets and the guide of the friends of God, you are the reason for the existence of the universe. You made the journey by ascending into the heavens. When me, Dolu, strayed from my essence (*gurbet*), Haydar Ali came and blessed (*himmet*) me. This Muhyiddin is longing for that gathering and my face is always facing in your direction.

Poem 6: “The Journey of the Prophet, the Prophetic Symbols Surrounding the Throne of God and the Description of the Divine Congress and the Ascension”. Eleven couplets: Tonight, the prophet of the final age and the commander of the

Badr, has seen the banners marching in the highest heaven and told me to go quickly and do service. My wishes became true tonight. He told me to set off at the break of dawn and be a true man on this path. I kissed his hand and obeyed his order. Thanks to his *himmet*, I gained victory tonight. The soldiers of the Prophet, the jinns and angels have arrived and I too have joined them and journeyed; the secrets have been unveiled (*keşf*) and I have reached the stage of the *ayne'l-yakin*.

Poem 7: “The Initiation by the Prophet and His Assistance”. Seven couplets: Thanks to God’s mercy, Muhammad Mustafa came to the universe and, thanks to his *himmet*, the hidden source became visible. I was in a state of ecstasy in a very green sea, he blessed me by taking my hand and pulled me outside. He placed his gaze on me and I passed through many stages.

Poem 8: “The Meeting with the Prophet and His Companions”, nine couplets: God knows about my state, my place is Mecca and I am only telling here what I saw. The Name (*esma*) has appeared and the secret of God has been unveiled to me. Here Muhyiddin’s soul is so full of desire for God that, the bird of the heart flaps its wings rapidly and my direction is always towards You.

Poem 9: “The Journey into the Seven Heavens; Meeting with the Souls of the Prophets and the Angels and Encountering the Holy Souls; Being Informed about the Divine Tablet and the Pen”. Eleven couplets: I saw the prophet Adem (Adam), praying to God, and surrounded by thousands and thousands of angels. The prophet Isa (Jesus) took me and showed me the universes. I saw numerous angels and travelled through the realm from end to end. I stopped by a sea which had numerous white birds like a high mountain. In the middle there was one bird, bigger than all the others, who was master over the other birds. That realm was all in light. There was a

choppy white sea where Isa arrived and numerous angels welcomed him. I heard a voice coming from the invisible realm. Isa told me to stop and watch that realm. Then my way led me to a fish, who was repeating the name of God. I stopped by a light which was an angel. I greeted the angel and the angel greeted me back. The angels were constantly praying; some of them were standing (*kaim*), some were sitting (*kuud*) and some were prostrating themselves (*sücut*). Khidr khan placed his gaze upon Muhyiddin and thanks to his gaze, Muhyiddin ascended into the heavens and journeys from end to end.

Poem 10: “The Journey to the Greatest Tree (The Lote Tree) and Meeting with Some of the Prophets”. Nine couplets: The huge, heavy, ocean boiled and overflowed. My path led me to a huge tree whose shadow is endless. I saw the prophets Idris and Moses. Thousands and thousands of angels were praying there. I saw the prophet Yahya, accompanying Isa. Israfil (Raphael) is waiting in the highest heaven for the right time to sound the last trumpet. There is a light (*nur*) in the highest heaven and whoever sees that light becomes a *veli*. Here Muhyiddin is the servant of Khidr; I have travelled and watched from one end of the realm to the other.

Poem 11: “A Section about the World of Love”. Fifteen couplets: I saw the prophet Davud (David), who placed his face on the *beyt-i ma'mur*⁴⁷⁹. At the station of Ibrahim (Abraham), Ishak and Ismail (Ishmael) are looking at the tablet (*levh*). The prophet Ibrahim is repeating the supreme name of God (*ism-i a'zam*). I saw the prophet Nuh (Noah) and he told me his secrets. I saw the prophet Şuayb (Shuaib), who was reading a book; only the one who is a perfect man can see him. I also saw the prophets Salih, Idris and Şit (Shith). I saw the angels gather and the stage of

⁴⁷⁹ It is the Kaaba of the angels, which is in the seventh heaven and over the Kaabe in Mecca.

ayne'l-yakin (eye of certainty) came upon me. I am the companion of the invisible ones. All these states befell me thanks to the prophet Khidr. I am a wanderer who has journeyed into the seven heavens and reached the highest one.

Poem 12, “The Real Summoning Forth; the Revelation of the Secret; Seeing the Throne of God; the Words of Gabriel and Discovering the Names of God”. eleven couplets: I saw a sublime mirror in the highest heaven. The one who sees this mirror obtains the ‘eye of certainty’ (*ayne'l-yakin*). I saw a name written on the mirror and Gabriel told me that it is the supreme name of God. They gave me the key to the knowledge of the nature of existence (*ilm-i ledun*). The *himmet* of Khidr Ilyas has endowed me with victory. This Muhyiddin has been trained at the stage of Khidr.

Poem 13: “The Journey to Mount Qaf and Solomon’s Throne; Visiting Adam’s Grave”. Eleven couplets: I have travelled all over Mount Qaf with Khidr. I arrived in a city which was built of gold and silver. Its door was made of rubies. One hundred thousand angels serve this city. I saw a dome and also the throne of Solomon. The sun, the moon, the angels, and the sphere (*felek*) do not stop turning. I went to Mount Serendib in order to see the prophet Adam and the ocean appeared before my eyes. I saw all the wonders of Mount Qaf, the state of the lover and the beloved, and the secrets of humans and jinns. I fell into the ocean to swim like a *gavvas*, and the face of God (*Cemal*) appeared before me. Since the *himmet* of Khidr Ilyas has reached this Muhyiddin, all the doors of the invisible world have opened and I have travelled and watched the invisible world from end to end.

Poem 14: “Meeting the Invisible Men and the Highest *Qutb*; Witnessing the Beatific Vision”. Nine couplets: All long distances are near and the East and the West are the same for the *qutb*. The threes, the sevens and the fourties came and said

to me: “they gave you to us”. The true *erenler* accepted this Muhyiddin as being chosen and, by being the companion of Khidr khan, he was able to see the signs of the Beloved.

Poem 15: “A Description of the Highest *Qutb* and the Friends of God”. Nine couplets: The *qutbu’l-aqtab* (the highest *qutb*) is the head and guide of the *erenler* and the soldiers of the invisible men are under his rule. He is the powerful hand of God. He stays mostly on Mount Qaf. The people, the jinns and the entire world are under his rule. All the souls, angels and humans are in ecstasy in his presence. They call him “khan” when he is visible and the angels are at his service day and night. Here Muhyiddin has become *gavvas* again in the sea of love and has reached this station through love.

Poem 16: “The States of the Station; the Description of the Gathering upon My Arrival at Mount Qaf; Meeting the Angels and Reaching the State of Ecstasy”. Twenty-one couplets: When the morning wind was blowing I went to the place of the beloved and there I saw the community of lovers (*aşk ehli*). When I arrived in the region of Qaf, all the wonders appeared to me. I suddenly saw a white pavilion, where all the *erenler* were present and having a feast. They were drinking wine. The gathering was full of perfect men. The friends of God were sitting in a circle (*sohbet*). When I arrived at that gathering I lost my mind. All the strong men I saw were drinking and were in a state of ecstasy. All the *erenler* were in the same state as me. The people of Arab, Ajam and Rum, all of them were at the feast. It was such a gathering that all the angels were sitting and talking together. They gave me a ruby jug and I drank from it. The community of the friends of God, the two imams and the *qutb* were all at the feast. When the attendees attained a state of ecstasy, they stood

up and began to dance (*sema'a girüben raks urdı cümle*). Then all the disciples, sheiks and masters, everybody began to dance. Whatever I saw there is the secret of Khidr.

Poem 17: “The Signs of the Glory of God; Burning all Earthly Desires and Retaining the Divine Nature”. Nine couplets: I looked at the nature of God and the face of Khidr. As I have discovered the secret of Khidr, I can travel on the path of love. I saw that one of ‘the threes’ (*üçler biri*) came from Khurasan. The ascetic cannot understand this secret, since he does not find it reasonable; love and reason do not unite. Khidr knows about this Muhyiddin and that he stays in the region of Hamid and finds the invisible men.

Poem 18: “Meeting with the Great Being at the Lote Tree; Meeting with the Angels and in Praise of Khidr Khan”. Thirteen stanzas: Here Dolu has experienced a state of ecstasy and love and, thus, he has learnt the secret of the Name. He has dived into the sea of truth and learnt the supreme name of God. The *erenler* journey through the realm of the Lote Tree and the angels also gather there. Thanks to the *himmet* of Khidr, they can visit that realm. He is the khan of the universe and the head of the invisible men. He knows everything on earth and helps the ones in need. They say that the prophet Khidr is alive. The angles call him Ebu'l-Abbas and he is also known as Ebu'l-Abbas on Mount Qaf. He is the powerful hand of God. All far distances are near for him and the earth and the heavens are the same for him. He owns the knowledge of the nature of existence.

Poem 19: “Polishing the Mirror of the Heart and the Reflection of the Light of the Invisible World”. Twelve couplets: Acknowledge that the *erenler* are the powerful hand of God and that they travel in the realm of revelations. They have

many servants and in the glimpse of a moment they travel from East to West. Here Muhyiddin is the companion of Khidr and he is the servant of that sultan.

Poem 20: “The Ways of the Path of the People of God and the Companionship of the Prophet Khidr”. Thirteen stanzas: If you do not abandon your earthly desires, do not pass through the various stages, do not reach the stage of *ayne’l-yakin* and do not see the *Hakke’l-yakin* (truth of certainty), how can you be the companion of Khidr? If you do not see the two imams, if you are not in the service of the *qutb*, if you do not visit the land of Qaf and if you do not see the invisible men there, how can you be the companion of Khidr? If you do not reach the hidden treasure and if you do not know the supreme name of God, how can you be the companion of Khidr? If the Prophet does not open your way and God does not light your candle, how can you be the companion of Khidr? If once here Dolu does not know himself and does not reach the state of ecstasy when seeing God’s face, how can he be the companion of Khidr?

Poem 21: “Meeting with the Invisible Men on the Night of Glory; the Attendance of the Angels of the Heavens and the Journey to the Divine Tablet and Pen (*Levh u Kalem*)”. Nine stanzas: Tonight the invisible *erenler* gathered and came to this realm. The threes, the fives, the sevens, the nines, the twelves and the forties, all have arrived. I saw that trees and stones were walking altogether. I greeted them, and they greeted me back. At that moment, a path opened from here to the heavens and everywhere, both East and West became visible. Thousands and thousands of angels appeared. The invisible men and the *qutb* appeared. That night was the Night of Power. Here Muhyiddin is a seeker in the land of love, he is the loyal servant of Khidr along this path and he constantly repeats the Name.

Poem 22: “The Physical Journey in the Blink of an Eye (*Tayy-ı Cismani*) and God’s Dispensations”. Nine stanzas: Oh the lover, who is a wanderer! Oh the dervish! Acknowledge that all the travels are experienced by the body. The *erenler* come from Khurasan and they mostly go to Mecca to pray. When someone becomes a perfect man, his body can partake in the sublime journey (*kılur seyran cismiyle*).

Poem 23: “The Great Gathering at the Lote Tree, thirteen couplets: The sultan, Khidr, placed his gaze upon me and thanks to his *himmat*, the path of love was opened. I took his hand and entered onto this path. By ascending, I arrived at an exalted gathering. All the perfect men were there. Many servants (*saki*) were serving at that gathering and the wine (*bade*) was like an ocean. The *sakis* were serving the cups. They offered me a cup too; I took it and drank from it and then I had an understanding of that realm. The *erenler* gather at the Lote Tree and they circulate and chat together there. The threes and the sevens caught up with the forties and joined the gathering. The *qutbu’l-aqtab* too joined the gathering. See what the perfect man does: he rules over both East and West. All far distances are near for him. He knows about what is in the heart. He can reach the birds flying in the sky and can catch the arrows that are thrown. He helps the ones in need in the blink of an eye and rescues those drowning in the sea.

Poem 24: “The Arrival of the Lustrous Banner and the Journey to the Realm of the Angels and to the Divine Tablet and Pen”. Thirteen couplets: I learnt the secrets of the Truth. Here Muhyiddin is the poor servant of Khidr on the path of love and, thanks to the *erenler*, he is one of the chosen ones.

Poem 25: “On the Virtues of Khidr and the Journey to the Western Land”. Thirteen couplets: Khidr khan appears as if in a dream and I see him as a bird.

Whoever sees Khidr gains respect. He wears green and has a dune coloured horse. I see him sometimes as an old man and sometimes as a young one. He does not hide himself from his servant. He walks all over the world and reaches Mount Qaf. Khidr walks in the sky and Ilyas walks on the sea. The cities of the Magrib are along the sea coast. The people speak an unusual language there. There are lots of *velis* in the Magrib. Ebu Medyen is on the way to Africa. I journeyed on a ship, and passed the Sea of Magrib. There is a marvellous island in the sea, and on that island there is a high mountain. Ilyas Nebi stays on that mountain. I travelled to all regions in the Magrib. I saw a doe coming out of a mountain, and thousands of invisible men.

Poem 26: “The Journey to the First Heaven and the High Plenum (*mele-i a’la*)”. Thirteen stanzas: This soul saw the paths of heavens, has reached the centre of the spheres and has passed through the seven heavens. While I was travelling, they captured me. I stayed there for a while and watched the realm of the angels. I saw their marvellous, sublime faces. I saw the realm of Lahut. When it was the break of dawn, Khidr took me and the journey started. I ascended into the heavens sitting at the front of his horse. Khidr rules over everything. He knows all the languages and owns the knowledge of the nature of existence (*ilm-i ledun*). If he gazes upon a poor man, this man becomes someone respected. I saw him in the sky mounted on horseback and I prostrated myself. At that moment my wishes became true.

Poem 27: “The Companionship of the Community of the Friends of God, Imam Husayn and ‘Aliyyu’l-murteza”. Ten couplets: Because I was trained by Khidr, I have learnt the nature of existence (*ilm-i ledun*). I saw the community of the friends of God and I also saw Hüseyin and Ali. Ali journeys in the highest heaven, so do

Hüseyin and Hasan. I saw them there. The sevens, the threes, the fives and the *erenler*, they are my companions and they are all the servants of the *qutb*.

Poem 28: “The Arrival of Hacı Bektaş at Mount Bulgar; the Gathering and Despatching of the Troops of the Invisible Men”. Twenty-one couplets: Hünkar Hacım Bektaş (*my lord Hacı Bektaş*) is coming and nobody knows how many soldiers he has. Mount Bulgar is a high mountain and it is the dwelling place of the strong *erenler*. When I arrived at Mount Bulgar, the forties, the threes, the sevens, the *qutb*, the *afrad* and the *pir* of Khurasan were there too. I saw the doe and those present prostrated themselves before Hacı Bektaş. I saw Seyyid Gazi, Melik Gazi, Sultan Şuca. All the *erenler* had come to Mount Bulgar. Whoever reaches that mountain is a *veli*, and his hand can reach the highest heaven. The *erenler* flew from İpsahor and they then went to Damascus. They journeyed with Seyyid Gazi to visit Veysel Karani. They fled from İpsahor and went to Mount Tur, where they met there with Moses. Then they flew from Mount Bulgar and arrived in Madina. The *erenler* took us and showed us the universes. I am the poor servant of Khidr.

Poem 29: “The Origin of the Nile and a Description of the City of Euphrates; the Journey to Mount Qaf and to the Deepest Ocean (*bahr-i muhit*) and Other Wonders”. Seventeen couplets: I saw the origin of the Nile, it is at Mount Qaf and it is on the way to Khidr khan. The source of the Nile is a dome. Khidr was my companion and I journeyed and witnessed these realms. There are two huge doors, one is the Nile and the other is the Euphrates. The sea reaches a city; it is an island in a salty sea. Its name is Mirat. The name of the sea is Ümmü’l-buhur. The city is built of gold and silver and has twelve thousand doors. Angels live there. In that city, it takes forty days to go from one door to another. At every door there are thousands of

angels. I greeted them and they returned my greeting. I saw a huge pavilion made of green emeralds. That place was full of light.

Poem 30: “The Journey to God’s Land; Visiting the Holy Lands and the Circumambulation of the House of God”. Twenty-eight stanzas: I travelled to the Arabian lands. I travelled to the region of Harem, to Quds and to Damascus. Then I visited the tomb of the prophet Abraham. Then I went to Medina. After that, I arrived in Mecca and visited Mount Hira. When I arrived in Bab al-Salam, I prostrated my sinful self and entered the Harem. I saw the Kaabe and the place of Zemzem. In the Harem there is a place for Khidr and for the prophet Ilyas too. I stopped in front of the Black Stone and touched it with my wicked face. Afterwards I began my circumambulation, prostrated myself and then walked around the Kaba with tears in my eyes. At first, the Black Stone was very white but the sinful faces turned it black. Then I arrived in Altun Oluk and I saw that the *erenler* had gathered there. The *erenler* met up and performed the circumambulation, so did the *aqtab* and the *afrad*. After the circumambulation I went to the place of the Zamzam Well, I bathed there and then drank the waters. Then I went to the place of Gabriel. Mount Arafat is greater than other mountains and, on the way there, there is the bazaar of Mina. After I visited Mina, I did the last circumambulation. Here Muhyiddin follows the path of Khidr khan and constantly recites the Name (*esma*), as Khidr has ordered him to do.

Poem 31: “Going to Madina with the Invisible Men and Meeting with Khidr”. Twenty-two stanzas: The *erenler* decided to visit Medina, some traversed great distances and some flew there (*kimisi tayy idüb kimisi uçdı*). When they arrived in the city, the soldiers of the angels welcomed them. I entered the mosque of the

Prophet and there I saw the prophets. I saw that the angels were circumambulating before them. The stage I have reached is the place of Khidr khan and far and near, all distances are the same for me now. When I saw the garden of the Prophet, his tomb was wrapped in silk and at that moment, he made a sign from his tomb and numerous wonders were unveiled. I would frequently visit Madina and on Friday nights I would find the beloved of God there. Every Friday night, God manifests himself in the garden of the Prophet in Madina. The *erenler* travel to Medina in the blink of an eye. Oh Muhyiddin, Khidr khan opened this way for you and you have been accepted as one of the chosen.

Poem 32: “The Journey to Damascus, Jerusalem and the Dome of the Rock, to Mount Qaf and Its Wonders”. Fourteen stanzas: This heart has reached the stage of the *erenler*, learnt their secrets and is travelling day and night. I traversed great distances and arrived in Damascus. I performed the morning prayer there. I went to the Umayyah Mosque and saw the light of the prophets there. I went to the tomb of Sheikh Muhyiddin, thanked God and all my wishes came true. After my visit to Damascus, I went to Jerusalem. As soon as I arrived there, I entered into the Masjid al-Aqsa, and afterwards, I went to the Dome of the Rock. I placed my face on the trace of the Prophet and I saw the door of Paradise there. Then I flew and in the blink of an eye I reached the location of the prophet Abraham and witnessed several miracles. From there, I went to Mount Qaf and arrived in a beautiful place with golden trees and dark blue mountains. There were green birds on the trees, some of which were flying and some walking. They are the poor servants of Khidr. I also saw a huge sea there, which was surrounded by angels and its coasts are full of rubies.

They say that Muhyiddin has seen Khidr and has reached this place under the *himmet* of Khidr.

Poem 33: “Arrival at the Spiritual Station; the Journey of the People from the Sublime Mountain; Meeting with the *Afrad*, the *Ghawth* and the Angels; Uniting with God”. Eleven stanzas: They say that the heart has visited the lands of the beloved and left all bodily desires behind. I travelled in the blink of an eye. When I arrived in no man’s land (*gurbet*), I saw the invisible men who had gathered there. After that, I arrived in a sublime place. There were mountains in that land whose essence is light. I left that land and arrived at a white mountain. There were numerous angels there, whose light is green. There was one great angel amongst them, the others were his servants. The invisible men, the *afrad*, the *aqtab* and the *ghawth* came to this realm too. All the angels greeted them. Also, Khidr and Ilyas came too and at that moment numerous secrets became unveiled. Afterwards I arrived at a green sea and saw the angels along its coast. I heard “Hu” from the waves in the sea. They say that Muhyiddin went with Khidr and became a speck of dust in his presence.

Poem 34: “The Journey to Mount Qaf and to Mount Serendil; Witnessing the Signs of Adam and the Drowning of the Heart and Soul [Getting into a State of Ecstasy]”. Ten stanzas: They say that Dolu reached Mount Qaf on this night. They say that he went to Mount Serendil, stopped by the Serendil Castle and visited the trace of Adam. They say that he followed the path of Iskender, went down to the seashore, wandered around there and swam in the ocean. They say that he arrived in Rum, saw a large speaking bird and wandered around there for a while. They say that he saw the soldiers of that region, all mounted on horseback, and he also saw the

city of Çimse. I saw all the lands in the region of Hitay, then travelled to Mount Hoten and witnessed numerous wonders there. I arrived at a wide river, on whose shores there was a speaking bird. I also saw that the musk existed in that region. They say that Muhyiddin is in a state of ecstasy again since he has seen Khidr khan; he has become his companion and friend.

Poem 35: “The Journey to Mount Billur and Its Various Wonders; Birds and Astonishing Angels”. Thirty-two stanzas: I arrived at a high crystal mountain, which gives off light from a long way away. I reached the top of that mountain and admired it from that point; I saw the mysterious wonders of God. Humans and jinns do not exist there, but angels do. Afterwards I arrived at a huge sea, which was green, and there I witnessed lots of wonders. I saw seven people walking on that sea. I saw green and white birds, wandering in that realm, some flying over the sea and others swimming in it. At the break of dawn the birds gathered altogether and shouted “Hu”. Then they became separated from one another and returned to their own place. There was a high dome, made of red rubies and its light reaches to the horizon. In front of that dome, there is a sublime green bird. That bird sometimes prostrates itself, sometimes touches its face to the earth, and constantly recites the name of God. The angels surround that bird and all of them are in the service of the bird. It is not possible to get close to that dome. Because of its light, it cannot be seen fully. In front of the dome there is a flowing river and wherever it passes, it burns those places like a fire. It reaches a sea which is sad to be a very dark sea. There was a sublime fish swimming in that sea and I heard this fish say “Allah”. Afterwards I arrived at a magnificent desert ornamented with gems and surrounded by red golden mountains with a river flowing by made of white milk. When I drank from that river

all my wishes became true and all the secrets were unveiled to this poor servant. The river flowed to a golden mountain, which was governed by a sublime angel. Then I went to a realm where numerous boats were bobbing about on the sea and they were full of people. While I was wandering by that sea, I saw such a huge tree whose peak could not be seen. The name of God was written on its leaves. A river originates from that tree and there were green birds on it. Suddenly an earthquake occurred and at the same moment a flash of lightening appeared as well. Thanks to the *himmat* of Khidr khan, I have experienced all these marvels.

Poem 36: “The Enlightening of the World; the Appearance of the Divine Light; the Light of the Suns of the Secret of God; the Light of the Divine Tablet and Pen”. Fourteen stanzas: Tonight I had a marvellous experience and now this soul is wandering in the land of the Beloved. The entire world was surrounded by light. I went into a sea which was whiter than silver and there I witnessed thousands of wonders. While I was wandering by the shores of the sea and thinking about those wonders, I stopped by a community. There I saw a pavilion made of emeralds. Numerous angels were circumambulating the pavilion. I saw a red ruby tablet hanging there. On it was written the word “Bismillah”. At that moment the whole sky was lit up and everything shouted “Hu”. For a while the whole world remained in darkness but there were numerous stars at the edge of the earth. A sun appeared afterwards, which was the head of all other suns. The secret of the *erenler* is never unveiled and without the *himmet* of Khidr it is impossible to learn it. This Muhyiddin is on the path of love and is the loyal servant of Khidr. He always recites the Name that Khidr has told him to.

Poem 37: “The Journey to the Sunrise; to the Water of Life; to the Tree of Life; to the Minarat; to Mount Qaf and Its Various Marvels”. Thirty-eight couplets: I travelled with that khan [Khidr] on earth and into the heavens day and night. I arrived at a sea full of light. There is an island in that sea and on the island there is a green pavilion. It is made of gold and silver and is full of servants reciting the name of God. There is a great mountain in the East called Mount Sündüz. Sometimes it is in darkness and sometimes in light. It has golden doors, from whence the sun rises. The sides of the door from which the sun rises reach to the sky and the door is surrounded by gems. There is an angel at the door and thousands and thousands of angels are in the service of that angel. When it is morning, numerous soldiers, who are angels, come to this realm. The name of the angel who governs this realm is Kasım and he speaks in Arabic. From that door the sun both rises and sets. There is also a sublime mountain in that realm, made of either gold or silver. A river springs from that mountain and they call it ‘the source of life’. There are numerous birds there and the river is commanded by an angel called Ismail. I greeted him and he greeted me back. The water is not drinkable and nobody knows its secret. Then, my path led me to a tree, whose leaves are red and like a sail. On its leaves are written the names of people. They call it the tree of life and when a leaf falls, a person dies. Then I saw three very high minarets, made of gold and silver but they did not have any doors. This realm is the land of Qaf and everywhere is full of angels. There are fish in the sea and some of them fly like birds. Every night these fish fly and when the sun rises, they disappear. I also saw another region which is constantly on fire. The flames of the fire reach to the sky and it burns day and night. It is not possible to get close to this region and nobody knows its secret. Thanks to Khidr khan, I saw all

these wonders. This Muhyiddin is the poor servant of Khidr khan and I journeyed and watched these marvels with him.

Poem 38: “The Journey to Mount Qaf and to Mount Alborz; the Signs of Others; the Barrier of Gog and Magog; the Deepest Ocean”. Seventeen couplets: When I arrived at Mount Alborz, I saw many friends of God there. When I reached Derbend, I saw Seyyid. Then I heard the words of Gog (Ye’cüc). The barrier is made of bronze and copper. Its door is made of iron. My path led me to a dark sea. Everywhere was in darkness and it was not possible to see anything. In that realm, all the birds are green and they constantly recite the name of God. I got scared of that sea and I lost consciousness. I saw horrible angels. On the seashore I saw a minaret which reached to the sky and the Koran was being recited there. When I saw the sunrise, I performed the morning prayer. There was an angel holding a ball which lit up that realm. There was a golden mill and nobody knows where it comes from.

Poem 39: “The Source of the Red Sea; the Journey to Ajamistan; Meeting with the Friends of God from Ajamistan and with some from the Arabistan”. Sixteen couplets. I travelled to the lands of Ajam from Hamidili and I saw Şeyh Ibrahim there. Then I passed the Red Sea, stopped by to see Veysel Karani and saw the strong *erenler*. Mount Alborz is a very high mountain and it is on the route of the Khan. On my way, I saw Gazi Kumak and the friends of God. I arrived at the tomb of Nuh and saw Ahi Çoban whom I visited. I also saw Abdülkadir Gilani and Ebu Ishak Kazeruni. Then my path led me to Şiraz and there I visited twelve thousand *velis*. I travelled to the city of Yezd and afterwards I arrived in Hamadan. I saw ‘Ayn al-Kudat there. In Berda, I saw Ahmed Gazi. When I arrived in Baghdad, I saw the Imam-ı Azam and I kissed his blessed hands. Then I visited Şeyh Abbas, Şeyh Kerhi

and Zünnun-ı Mısri. When I arrived in Egypt, I saw Ahmed Bedevi and İmam-ı Şafi. Afterwards I saw Şeyh-i Ekber-i Muhyiddin, who is a true man (*girçek er*). This poor Muhyiddin witnessed the realm of Khidr.

Poem 40: “The Origin of the Euphrates, the Lands of the Deserts of Derhan, Harut and Marut; Samarqandi and the Station of the Mahdi, *sahib al-zaman*”. Twenty-one couplets: The river Euphrates originates from a desert. I journeyed on and saw many wonders. I travelled to the Red Sea, to the city of Şirvan and to the land of Gilan. The river Itil is magnificent and it is in the region of Kıpçak and Russia. I arrived in the city of Crimea, admired its beauty and afterwards I went to the city of Heşt Derhana. Then my path separated into two, one path went to Samarkand and the other to Beyaban. There were huge rivers on my way and the region is called Kuhistan; its people are Muslims. Then I saw the city of Hiri and Zeynüddin Hafi; we are his servants. I passed the river Amu and arrived in Samarkand. I met with Şeyh Yunus there. Afterwards I went to Bedahşan, where the *qutb* stays. My journey continued towards Tirmiz, the city of Muhammed Mehdi. Then I passed Hıtay-i Çin and went to Sind. There is a mountain there and there is a wheel on that mountain. Screams come from that mountain and Harut and Marut (Gog and Magog) live there. There is a boat in the sea which bobs around. I saw a huge dome in the sea without any doors. The Taha and Yasin suras were being recited there and the morning wind brought me the sound of the recitation.

Poem 41: “A Journey to the Depths of the Ocean; Its Marvels and Meeting with Its People”. Eleven couplets: The *erenler* have arrived and have shown me all over the realm. Tabdik, Saru Saltık and Yunus Emre came and took me to a realm where they threw me into a white sea. The rulers of the sea welcomed me. Some of

the people in the sea were reciting “Hu”, while others were reciting the Koran. One was reciting the sura of Yasin. Ahmed Bedevi is the one who rules over the depths of the sea and these people are under his authority. There is one community, who have human heads but animal bodies. The prophet Khidr showed me around that realm with Ilyas. This Muhyiddin travelled in the land of the Beloved, both on land and on sea, as Khidr khan took my hand and showed me everything from one end of the realm to the other.

Poem 42: “The Great Gathering and Meeting with all the Friends of God”. Sixty-one couplets: The *erenler* have arrived and all the invisible men have arrived too. Oh son, since God has willed that this be an open gathering, I shall tell its secret. Dediği, who has hazel eyes, says to, “take the soldiers of the *erenler* and guard the ways of Sivas”. The distinguished Hacı Bektaş guards the Ottoman lands and I kissed his blessed hands. A lion walks before Mahmud Hayran and all the servants admire him. Monla Hünkar and Sadruddin, who is the sheikh of the religion, and Sultan Veled are also present. Piri Esed, Şeyh Sadaka, Fakih Ahmed and Seyyid Harun have joined the gathering. Şems-i Tebrizi has arrived, as have Şeyh Resul and Zerkub Baba. Seydi Gazi is the greatest of the gazis and other gazis are his servants; Gazi Tavabil is his manservant. The followers of Sultan Şuca are walking before him and I saw that Melik Gazi is coming, and his dervishes are also walking before him. All the invisible men - Yeğen Gazi, Ahi Evran and Seydi Meczup, Samut Abdal, Hızır Abdal and Çeltük Dede, Mişker Baba, Sadık Baba and Geyüklü Baba, have arrived and have joined the gathering. Elhen Paşa, Abdal Baba and Deli Baba, all the souls of the friends of God have arrived. Sarı Saltuk is the gazi martyr of the Balkans and Baba Bayezid from Vardar has also arrived. Gazi Hünkar and Emir Seyyid are

coming too and Abdüllatif is also present at the meeting. Aşık Paşa, Tabdık Paşa, Kılıç Abdal and Yunus Emre have arrived. Karaca is coming and so are Fatıma Bacı, Tuğrul Baba and Turhal Baba. Abdal Ata, Seydi Murad, Abdal Çiçek, Sinabüd Ağa and Seydi Veli and also Gazi Melik Danişmend from Niksar, are coming. Melik Danişmend owns a sword. Şeyh-i Islam, who governs one hundred thousand soldiers, has arrived too and has placed his gaze upon me, a poor ignorant soul. Piri Halife comes with his numerous soldiers. Şeyh Evhad, Şeyh Murad, Sureti Baba, Kara Dede and Palas Abdal, Işık Ahmed, Gulfel Baba, Zeynel Baba, Gök Seydi and Burhan Baba, have all joined the gathering. There is an inscription at the gate of Barla for Mihter Gazi, the friend of Seyyid Gazi, who is buried there. He has two companions, one is Peyk Gazi and the other is Çırak Gazi. Every night their candles light up Barla. I saw that Süfyan Ece is coming and there is also a strong man on his way. Ali came from Manavgat. Nure Sufi is coming with his soldiers as is Kara Doğan Baba, who rules over the seas and who lives on an island. The land of Menteşe is very close by, just next to you and its sign is a white cloud. Hacı Dedem, Basri Dedem, Habib Hacı and Azbi Işık, Emir Ahmed, Ömer Seydi, Işık Menteş and Osman Baba, Hasan Baba and Ali Seydi, and Abdal Musa, have all arrived. When Ali Şir Baba arrived, Zekeriya Baba also joined the gathering, as did Halil Seydi. Halfe Sultan, Sav Doğan and Sünüsüyan, and Sabri Gazi, who is a young man, have arrived too. Then Kartal Baba and Devlet Gazi arrived, followed by Teslim Abdal and Ecem. Eynegli Baba is coming with Uryan Hüseyin and Şah Kulı is coming too. I saw that all the *meczub* (those in a state of ecstasy) and the men of God have joined the gathering. It was a Friday night, when the friends of God met at this great gathering, and the date was 880 of the Hijra. They met outside Barla, went into the

sea and their candles were all lit at that moment. They showed me wonders which I have not seen before. Then they went to Mount Oluk, lit their candles and had a spiritual talk there. Thousands and thousands of invisible *erenler* came to the gathering together with the *aqtab*, the prophet Khidr and Ilyas too. They all formed a circle and the angels came down from heaven. There I saw an incomparably beautiful *meczub*. He is the beloved of God, in a constant state of ecstasy and whoever sees him immediately falls in love with him. I have seen many gatherings, but not like this before. It was such a sublime gathering and the prophet Khidr opened the way.

Poem 43: “Becoming a Soldier in God’s Victorious Army; Travelling to the Land of Ajam; Repelling the Kurdish Problem and those from the Evil of the East from the Ottoman Lands”. Twenty-three couplets: My Hünkar, Hacı Bektaş has arrived and this crazy soul has become happy. Numerous *erenler*, some mounted on horseback and some not, have arrived with the Hünkar. Ibrahim Edhem has arrived with thousands of soldiers and with all the invisible men. He was once a sultan, but then abandoned his throne and crown and became a servant; he has found the right way to reach the Beloved. Hacı Bektaş came mounted on a dune horse with ten thousand white banners beside him. Me, Dolu, showed my respect and walked in front of his horse. He lifted me up onto his horse and put the soldiers under my command. He said to me “Go on, now you are in charge. Go and watch over the Eastern borders and also the Ottoman lands. You know those regions by heart. Recite this name, defeat the enemy and watch over the roads to Ajam. I am putting ten thousand soldiers under your command, if you need more tell me and I will give you thousands and thousands more”. He girded me with his own sword and lifted

me up onto his own horse. He blessed me and prayed for me. When all the soldiers gathered in the square (*meydan*) at Konya and they performed the evening prayer there. Hacı Bektaş ordered me to go and reach Erzincan as soon as possible and perform the morning prayer there. We departed for Erzincan. With numerous soldiers under my command and by reciting the name of Khidr we arrived at the border. What was ordered was performed there and the enemy was defeated.

Poem 44: “The Experiences in the Realm of the Angels”. Twenty-one couplets: Dolu is the poor servant of Khidr and travels in the sea of love. There I saw that the *erenler* travel great distances and can reach the birds flying in the sky. By reciting the Name they can catch the arrows that are thrown and they travel on earth like a wind. They travel on the seas and help those in need. They know about the feelings of the heart. If someone is about to drown in the sea and genuinely calls for help, they rescue him and take him safely to land. All these works are the work of Khidr and he is the companion of the invisible men. He has many servants working along this path and they travel the universe by traversing great distances, either on the seas or over lands.

Poem 45: “The Ranks of God’s Army and the Deeds of the Community of God’s Army”. Seventeen couplets: The *erenler* travel to the East and West; in Yemen, Hind and Aden. They are the sevens, the fours and the threes, and the fives are equal to them. The forties are their companions. There are also the twelves and the nines, the sixties and the three hundreds. Apart from these there are also the seven hundreds. They are the servants of the *qutb* and all of them are under the rule of the *qutb*. They are also the soldiers of the *qutb*. Every morning each of them comes from a different region and finds the *qutb*. They are the powerful hand of God;

they continually travel the world putting anything out of control in order. I reached that realm and saw all the invisible men and kissed the foot of the *qutb*. This Muhyiddin became the servant of the *qutb*.

Poem 46: “The Gathering of the Community of the People of God; the Invisibles; the Companionship of Aşık Paşa, the Disciple of Khidr Khan”. Thirteen couplets: The invisibles, who saw the beautiful face of Khidr, gathered in a circle. Aşık Paşa is the disciple, servant and caliph of Khidr. As Aşık Paşa arrived an ecstatic aura was felt. Aşık Paşa informs me about Khidr khan. The *abdals* of Rum stay in Hamid ili and they journey everywhere. I heard a voice and then I saw that Khidr khan had arrived. This Dolu is under the protection of Khidr and thus he does not have any worries at all.

Poem 47: “The Signs of the Companionship of the Friends of God and the Allegiance to the Prophet Muhammad”. Fifteen couplets: I am the servant of Khidr khan, singing in the garden of love and walking on the path of Khidr. Hacı Bektaş appeared to me and I paid my respects. The sublime gathering of the *erenler* is full of light. When I saw Seyyid Gazi, I found Mevlana and then I saw Hacı Fakî too. All the *erenler* traversed great distances, arrived in Jerusalem and met with the prophets there. The Masjid al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock came into view as did the prophets Abraham and Moses. Then in the blink of an eye they went to the city of Madina, visited the prophet Muhammad and all of them prostrated themselves before him. All the *erenler* have reached the state of ecstasy and have seen the realm of the Beloved.

Poem 48: “Traversing Distances with Khidr khan; Travelling on the River Nile; the Creatures of the Ocean”. Seventeen couplets: Dolu fell into the river Nile

and at that moment he met with Khidr. Khidr lifted him up onto his horseback and took him into the sea where Dolu saw many wonders and fell into a state of ecstasy. Khidr rules from Qaf to Qaf and all the peoples therein are obedient to him. I saw an Indian (Hindi), who governs the lands of the Arabs, walking in front of Khidr. I saw Khidr as if a bird and Dolu is the true servant of Khidr. Thanks to the *himmət* of Khidr, Dolu has reached the realm of revelation.

Poem 49: “The Journey on the Ocean and the Arrival of the Invisible Men and Khidr Khan”. Eleven couplets: The sea overflowed and Khidr appeared to us. When Khidr khan walked on the sea, the world became covered in light and many dead people returned to life. He arrived at the break of dawn and prayed. Khidr travels through the sky and when I witnessed this I entered into a state of ecstasy. When he landed on earth and walked, both the skies and lands became covered in light.

Poem 50: “The Journey to Mount Serendil and to the Realm of the Jinnis; To China and Cathay (Hitay) and to Some Other Lands”. Nine couplets: I went to Mount Serendil and entered the region of the jinns. I passed black coloured seas, saw lots of wonders and travelled throughout the region of the Name. I went to China and Hitay and ascended the throne of the *erenler*.

Poem 51: “A Description of the Ranks of the Invisibles and Visiting the Demons and Fairies”. Eleven couplets: Dolu follows the path of Khidr, reaches the flying bird and catches the arrows that are thrown. By reciting the Name, he travels over seas and sometimes he swims. He helps those in need and rescues those who are about to drown. Dolu also visited Mount Qaf and saw the demons and fairies there.

Poem 52: “The Time of Sun Rise; Meeting with the Prophet Khidr; the Manifestation of the Glory of God”. Seven stanzas: Khidr asked me to wait for him at the break of dawn and said I could recognize the footprints of his horse. The *karama* took place at the break of dawn and the Beloved appeared in my heart. For a long time many people looked for and longed for Khidr but could not find him. To see Khidr and to learn his whereabouts is destined to me by God.

Poem 53: “The Conditions of the Ranks; the Characteristics of the *Afrad*”. Twenty-three stanzas: The *erenler* rule over the world. Some of them traverse great distances and some of them sit and watch the others. Some of them travel throughout the universe. Some of them are in a state of ecstasy (*meczub*) and some are seekers (*salik*) of the truth. They walk and travel upon the orders of God. Near and far, all distances are the same for them. The *ghawth* is a powerful hand of God in the world. He constantly recites the supreme name of God and all the *erenler* are under his rule. Now, we shall talk about the *afrad*. They are the distinguished ones amongst the *erenler*. Some of them are hidden and some are famous, and they are constantly in a state of melancholy (*hüzün*). They appear to be human; no one knows who they really are. They perform many *karama*, but ordinary people think of them as a form of entertainment. Khidr khan knows their secrets well. This Muhyiddin follows the path of Khidr and constantly recites his name.

Poem 54: “The Sign of the Prophet Muhammad and ‘Ali Murtaza; the Happiness of the Gathering around the Throne of the *Ghawth*”. Five couplets: The *ghawth* sits on his throne and all the *erenler* are in his presence. I wish I could also sit on that throne. The path to this secret is narrow and only Solomon knows about it.

Oh Dolu, do not become attached to the others (*gayr*), as you are the servant of Khidr khan. Now you have a place at the righthand of God.

Poem 55: “Some Marvels of the Universe that Took Place in the Month of Ramadan”. Twenty-nine couplets: In the last days of this Ramadan I fell into a state of ecstasy and I experienced the *ayne’l-yakin*. It was the Night of Glory. I saw the fire of love which constantly burns on the sea. In that sea there are numerous birds, some wander, some fly, some perch, and some are turned into ash by burning. Different kinds of creatures wander into the sea, some fly like a bird and some speak like a human. I saw people in the sea and they were travelling with the angels. There are no mountains in that realm; everywhere is full of gems and pearls. Along its coasts, there are trees full of fruits on which numerous green birds come and go. Each of these birds recites a name and they constantly travel. There is something on the shore of that sea which looks like a mountain and a red light falls on it. There is one more thing which is even more unusual, and nobody knows whether it is a mountain or a dome or a city. A black light falls on it. A voice comes out of that light but nobody understands what it says. Another light comes out of that light, which is similar to the light of the sun, and is without colour. Only the *erenler* know what it is. I saw a tree on the shore of that sea which has strange leaves and reaches to the sky. Its leaves are red gold. The tree itself is silver, its fruits are green and its nodes are black. There is a green mattress under that tree. They say that one thousand people can rest under its shadow and whoever reaches that realm finds Khidr. There are many rivers flowing by that tree and they reach the sea. There are also many people and angels under that tree, coming and going, both on horseback and on foot. The angels circumambulate that tree by reciting the name of God.

Poem 56: “Meeting with the Heavenly Angels and Some Enlightened Souls; Attaining Ecstasy through Drowning the Body and Soul in the Glory of God”. Thirteen couplets: While I was journeying on this path my *nafs (self)* distracted me, but then I abandoned everything and entered into the realm of love again. Khidr khan is my companion and he opened the way for me. The community of the angels have arrived and I saw that Behlül, İbrahim, Cüneyd, Hasan Basri and Veysel Karani were there too sitting in a circle. Bayezid from Bestam and Ebu'l-hayr were also present.

Poem 57: “Going to the Land of Darkness and Seeing the Water of Life”. Fifteen couplets: I suddenly became sick, although I hardly ever feel ill. My soul journeyed to the Beloved and, that night, my affliction made me weak and brought me sorrow upon sorrow. All the *erenler* have gathered and Khidr khan has arrived. All the invisibles have come too and the angels, some mounted on horseback, some on foot, spoke to me. When the road led me to the land of darkness, Khidr khan took my hand. The water of life is flowing and sparkling like the light of the Sun. Whoever drinks from it never dies and nobody knows its secret. Although Iskender hoped to find it, he could not; it was not his destiny. There are many servants in this world who journey to the East and to the West and they reach there in the blink of an eye. So, go now and become a perfect man and find out where Khidr khan is, so that this path will be open for you too. Oh Dolu, abandon all gossip and empty words and search for the secret of Khidr khan.

Poem 58: “The Descending of the Power of Heaven and the *Himmet* of Seyyid Gazi”. Nine couplets: Tonight I set off on the path of love and sped to Damascus; I was destined to wear the sublime robe. Angels have come from the sky and many stages have become apparent. I said “You are the one I need” and God

made my wishes come true. Seyyid Gazi travels within a moment of time and always gives the blessing (*himmət*). Dolu is the servant of the *erenler*. He follows the path of Khidr and journeys throughout the universes.

Poem 59: “The Friends of God’s Bestowing of Grace and the Revealing of the Name”. Five couplets: The *erenler* turned their faces towards us and the wisdom and mysteries were unveiled. Only the perfect men can understand this secret. God blessed this Muhyiddin with mercy and Khidr informed him about God’s secret.

Poem 60: “The Journey to the Realm of Images (*alem-i misal*) and Witnessing God’s Face”. Seven stanzas: I sought the *‘ilme’l-yakin* (knowledge of certainty) and found it. I passed that stage and reached the stage of *ayne’l-yakin*. I then found the *hakke’l-yakin* (truth of certainty). Since Dolu is the servant of the prophet Khidr, he has journeyed throughout the universes and the ocean and has seen them all.

Poem 61: “The Passage of the Divine Light and Its Encompassing of the Universe”. Nine couplets: This heart and soul has complained about the separation and has made known, in detail, everything he saw in the land of love. I have travelled widely and have seen many wonders. There is someone mounted on horseback on the sea and he does not sink but walks on top of it. He protects us and guides us. He points out that if you want to learn about and keep the secret of the friends of God, you need to increase the goodness in your heart. Thus, Dolu has recited the name of Khidr and praised God.

Poem 62, “The Annihilation of God; Renouncing Fleeting Pleasures and Other Revelations”. Seven stanzas: Since I saw the face of Khidr khan, I have abandoned the pleasures of this world and have willingly become his servant. If you

want to see the shadow of Simorgh and reach the place of Anka, you should abandon bodily desires and the pleasures of this world.

Poem 63: “The Arrival of the Banner of the Prophet and the Manifestation of the Hidden World”. Seven couplets: The banner of the Prophet and the light of his face appeared before my eyes. That green realm, where the perfect men gather and Khidr is their *saqi*, appeared before my eyes. This Muhyiddin has been the servant of Khidr since the beginning of creation and the secret of Ali appeared before my eyes.

Poem 64: “The Signs of Divine Love and the Bounty of Union”. Nine stanzas: Since I gave my heart to Khidr khan, I have been traversing great distances and travelling throughout the world. They say that this Muhyiddin has completed the path to God through the *himmet* of Khidr khan.

Poem 65: “The Sorrow of Being Separated from God”. Eleven stanzas: Since I fell in love with you, my heart is full of fire and my liver full of blood. The sorrow of separation lasts until the day of judgement and even if I talk about it the sorrow never ends.

Poem 66: “Drinking the Wine of Love; Anguish; Seeing the Face of God; the Annihilation”. Seven couplets: I drank the wine of love and abandoned all desires. The one who reaches the station of Khidr and sees his face, who gets into and remains in a state of ecstasy will stay there forever from now on.

Poem 67: “The Marvels of the Realm of God’s Power; Angels and the Wonders of the Night of Glory; the Revelation of the Secret of the Realm of the Spirits of Invincibility (*Ceberut*)”. Twenty-nine couplets: At the end of this Ramadan a wonderful feeling came over me and the world was covered in light (*nur*). That night was the Night of Glory and it was Friday. I saw a station which was full

of light and there was a white mattress there. A red ruby tablet was placed in front of the mattress and it was surrounded by angels. The inscription on the tablet is in gold. Khidr stays there and looks at the plate. There are columns rising above the earth to the heavens and I have passed the heavens of light and looked into that heaven. I saw a white light and the *erenler* are the servants of the *ghawth* there. There is also a green sea which has waves as high as mountains. I saw another light; it looks like a mountain and gives light to the earth and the heavens. I saw a sublime black light and when it appeared the entire universe was covered in darkness and a fight started on earth. All the stars and suns fell to the earth. There are two suns; one is on land and the other is in the sky. I saw that a black light appeared, its light dominated all the others and the entire world began to shout and cry. I witnessed these wonders which are impossible to describe because reason does not comprehend the path of love. Khidr khan opened this gate and this Muhyiddin became a wanderer in this realm.

Poem 68: “Meeting Khidr Ilyas and the *Qutb* of the Universe; the Journey to the Lote Tree and to the Realm of the Angels”. Seven couplets: Today I visited the prophet Khidr. Since I visited the *ghawth* I am in a state of ecstasy. My heart questions how I can reach the edge of Heaven (*sidre*). The prophet Ilyas says “amen” to the prayer, and then I am able to get there.

Poem 69: “The Eulogy of the Glorious Beloved and Praising God”. Five couplets: Oh the sultan of all hearts, your lips are the water of life. The smell of your hair is like musk and your stature is like the Tuba tree. I say thousands of “ah”s day and night as you put my heart and soul on fire.

Poem 70, “The Signs of Being in a State Close to Ecstasy; the Characteristics of the ‘Perfect Man’; the Appearance of Khidr Khan from the Light of God’s Domain”. Nine couplets: Khidr khan told us the secrets of that realm and made the lovers feel sorrowful. This Muhyiddin travels to that realm and the prophet Khidr is the *saqi* of that station, who serves the wine of reunion.

Poem 71, “The Abandonment of the Self (*nafs*) and Freeing it From Its Chains and Fetters; Passing Through Stages on the Journey to God”. Seven couplets: Oh dervishes, listen to me as I am telling you about the places I have travelled. I have traversed great distances with the lovers and have reached Mount Qaf. The perfect men live there and I have found the cure for all my sorrows. I was hanged like Mansur and reached my goal as several secrets were unveiled to me. The supreme name of God has been unveiled to the friends of God. Oh the servant of this path, I am the servant of that khan. Oh Muhyiddin, go to that realm of love again, where you will see the ones who saw Khidr, and this secret will be unveiled.

Poem 72, “Establishing the Level of Liberation and Reaching the Highest State of Ecstasy”. Eleven couplets: Here Dolu is in a state of ecstasy (*mest*) again. He journeyed to a region where he witnessed the realm of power. He got burnt like the salamandar. All the *erenler* arrived, swept the burnt place and scattered my ashes in the sky. The wind took my ashes and carried them to the sea. The sea boiled over and overflowed. My ashes speak in the sea and many fish swim around them. This Muhyiddin knows the secret and the *erenler* know the sign. Since I have seen Khidr Ilyas, I have found the cure for my sorrows.

Poem 73: “The Arrival of Khidr Ilyas; the Invisibles and the *Qutb* of the Universe; Travelling in a Moment to Madina, the Place of the Prophets”. Fifteen

couplets: Oh the true man of the world, you are the one I need, you are the one I crave. You made me fall in love with you. The eye of the heart wishes to see and drink the water of life and to die before death. When I arrived they saw me and hanged me like Mansur. They scattered my ashes in the sky. They captured me like Yusuf and sold me at an auction. The strong *erenler* traversed great distances and arrived in Madina. They performed the morning prayer there. I saw Khidr khan and all my sins were forgiven. He prayed for us and many wishes came true. Dolu stays in Hamidili, constantly recites the name of God and always follows the path of Khidr.

Poem 74: “The States of Those Lost in God’s Love”. Seven couplets: I drank wine from the hand of the *saqi*, whose wine-house is highly exalted. The drinkers in that wine-house are like Ibrahim Edhem. The lovers at this gathering recite “Hu”.

Poem 75: “The Encompassing of the Ecstasy of God and the Witnessing of the Glory of God”. Seven stanzas: A state of ecstasy befell me and the secret of creation manifested itself to me upon the will of God. Whoever sets out on this path, if Khidr khan helps (*himmet*) and takes him to the lodge (*dergah*), he can see the face of the Beloved.

Poem 76: “Meeting Khidr Ilyas at the Waterside at the Break of Dawn and Attaining the Great Purpose”. Seven couplets: Oh Dolu, do not lose consciousness when you see Khidr. When Khidr and Ilyas, the two sultans, meet on the sea and come, they endow me with privileges. I did repent during the sunrise; God accepted my repentance and showed me many of His secrets.

Poem 77: “A Description of Khidr Khan, the Powerful Hand of God, and the Acceptance of This Poor Servant of His”. Nine couplets: The one who made me fall in love was the sultan Khidr khan. He rules over the land of love; he is the one who

gives the wine of reunion and shows the path to God. He travels on land and sea and governs on Earth and in the heavens.

Poem 78: “In Thanks for God’s Graciousness and the Gift of Becoming a Servant of Khidr Khan”. Seven couplets: Since God willed it, I have become the servant of Khidr. Khidr khan is the powerful hand of God and I am his servant. Tonight the whole universe was covered in light and the secrets were unveiled from Qaf to Qaf. Praise be to God that this Muhyiddin travels day and night and is the servant of Khidr.

Poem 79: “Spiritual Advice”. Twenty-five couplets: If God loves one of His servants, nothing can cause harm to that servant. Therefore, seek the love of God and be the servant of the *erenler*. Always be in love and be loyal, so that you can be the distinguished servant of God.

Poem 80: “Conclusion”, Nine couplets: When a drop reaches the ocean, it no longer cascades. Here ends the words and the speaking tongue is now sealed. God is the one who knows the truth of everything.