

ATATÜRK KÜLTÜR, DİL VE TARİH YÜKSEK KURUMU
TÜRK TARİH KURUMU YAYINLARI
VIII. Dizi - Sayı: 3

Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi'nin Yazılı Kaynakları

HAZIRLAYANLAR
Hakan Karateke – Hatice Aynur

Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi'nin yazılı kaynakları /
hazırlayanlar Hakan Karateke – Hatice Aynur. – Ankara :
Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2012.
382 s. : res. (rnk.), hrt., tablo ; 24 cm. – (AKDTYK Türk
Tarih Kurumu yayınları ; VIII. Dizi-Sa. 3).

Bibliyografya ve indeks var.
ISBN 978 - 975 - 16 - 2481 - 9

1. Evliya Çelebi, 1611-1684? _ Seyahatnameler _
Kaynaklar
I. Karateke, Hakan. II. Aynur, Hatice. III. Dizi.

910.01
915.610415

Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu Yönetim
Kurulu'nun 09.02.2012 tarih ve 653/12 sayılı kararı gereği
2000 adet basılmıştır.

ISBN 978-975-16-2481-9
Ankara, 2012

hazırlayanlar
Hakan Karateke – Hatice Aynur
kitap tasarımı
Ersu Pekin
grafik ön hazırlık
Serap Şimşek
dizin
Abdullah Uğur

2012

baskı
Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi
Akhun Caddesi No: 1
Sincan Organize Sanayi Bölgesi / Ankara
Tel: (0312) 267 16 11

“Miğdisi”: an Armenian source for the Seyahatname

Robert Dankoff

At twenty or more places in the course of his voluminous work, Evliya Çelebi appeals to the authority of an Armenian historian whose name he usually spells Miğdisi, although at one point (SN, IV, 222a13)¹ he gives his full name as Miğdisi son of Bay Haki-i Yarmeni. The citations in volumes III, IV and V (see Table 1) all refer to the legendary history of places in Central and Eastern Anatolia (Sivas, Tokat, Harput, Chapakchur, Bitlis, Van), Western Iran (Qashan, Sava, Hamadan, Qum), and Mesopotamia (Mosul, Shatt al-'Arab). In other volumes Miğdisi is included in the litany of historians that Evliya recites in connection with a given region or people.² He undoubtedly has the same source in mind when he refers to "Armenian histories" in his entry on Sivas (SN, III, 73b, 78b).

By "legendary history" I mean the accounts of the founding of a city, which Evliya puts back to the time of Noah and the flood (Miyafariqin, Qum, Sava, Mosul) or Jonah (Mardin); or else to the time of an ancient Near Eastern monarch (Minuchahr at Qashan, Zur b. Dahhak at Şehrizer, Kayumarth and Ermen Kaysar at Sivas, Nebuchadnezzar at Harput); or to Alexander the Great (Bitlis, Chapakchur, Van, Qurna). As a typical example we may take the legend of the founding of Bitlis by Alexander's treasurer named Bedlis. Evliya recounts the story at length in several places. Where it is introduced at the beginning of his description of Bitlis (SN, IV, 222a) he appeals to "the true reports of, first of all, the chronicles of Rum and the Arabs and the Persians;" then to our Miğdisi (here as "the true historian Miğdisi son of Bay Haki-i Yarmeni"); then to the *Sharafname* of Sharafaddin Bitlisi. If we compare Evliya's account with the latter³ we find it to be a good deal fuller, richer in detail, and more longwinded, but otherwise essentially the same.

At three points Evliya states that Miğdisi is superior to other sources. Thus, on Qashan (SN, IV, 321b): "All the historians of the Arabs, the Persians, and the

1 For volumes I-VIII, references are to the autograph of the *Seyahatname*, Bağdat 304 (vols. I and II), Bağdat 305 (vols. III and IV), Bağdat 307 (vol. V), Revan 1457 (vol. VI), Bağdat 308 (vols. VII and VIII), all in the Topkapı Sarayı library. For volumes IX-X, references are to the Yıldız ms. (Y) = Bağdat 306 (vol. IX), İÜ-TY 5973 (vol. X).

2 Only in SN, X Miğdisi is the sole source for the information on the borders of Egypt (Y355a).

3 Ed. Muh. 'Abbasi (Tehran 1343/1964), 439-44; tr. F.B. Charmoy, *Chèref-nâme ou Fastes de la Nation Kourde*, vol. II.1 (St. Petersburg, 1873), 199-205. Evliya cites the *Sharafname* once again as an authority for the same legend in SN, X (Y10b).

Greeks have given various accounts and descriptions of this ancient city; but the historian Mığdisi Yarmeniyan, because of his great travels [*kesret-i seyâhati sebebiyle*] in these lands of Fars and Iraq, has recounted thus..." And on Van (SN, IV, 249a): "According to the former accounts of the historians of Rum and the Arabs and the Persians; and of the historian Mığdisi, who described these regions inch by inch [*bu bilâdları kırat be-kırat tahrîr eden*]..." And on Mosul (SN, IV, 399a): "The above-mentioned Mığdisi Yarmeni has described the city of Mosul in this land of Iraq, with its lofty mountains and builder and dimensions and talismans and wonders and buildings, in such detail that next to Mığdisi all the historians of the Arabs and Persians and Copts and Greeks are dumb." Also (SN, IV, 399a): "Even though he is a Christian, he has described these countries of Iraq and Azerbaijan and Shirvan and Shamaqi, as far as Transoxania and including the Holy Land."

The most elaborate characterization is in connection with the Euphrates' tributaries (SN, IV, 206a). Evliya first cites the *Khiṭaṭ* of al-Maqrizi (15th cent.), then goes on to say:

And the historian Mığdisi, who lived 300 years earlier, had already described this region. The history of Mığdisi covers the area from Greece (*arz-ı Yûnân*) to Arabia (*arz-ı Hâsân*), Ascalon Tiberias, Canaan and the Holy Land, Anatolia (*arz-ı Rûm*), Iraq and Azerbaijan; and from the Black Sea coasts to Georgia, Daghestan, Iraq-ı Dadyan, the Qipchaq Steppe (*arz-ı Heyhât*), Iran and Turan, Turkistan and Tataristan, Moghol and Boghol, and as far as Transoxania. Old Mığdisi travelled throughout this area and described it in detail, with all its villages and towns and cities, their climates and latitudes and meridians, which he experienced first-hand. That is why the history of Mığdisi is such a trustworthy account. He lived 190 years, 105 of which were spent travelling.

One curious detail is the name of the city of Hamadan "in the history of Mığdisi Yarmeni": Merz-cüvas.⁴

⁴ SN, IV 309b15: مَرْدُ جُوَاسِ Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 8 (Cairo, 1906), 16-7 mentions Marj al-Qal'a and Marj Qarābulīn as two places in the vicinity of Hamadhan. The passage in Evliya continues that in Mongolian it is called the city of Kalçak and in Greek Daranye.

In the secondary literature, the only discussion I have seen of this Miğdisi is in an article by R. Hartmann written in 1919.⁵ Hartmann, who cited the name as Maqdisi following the Istanbul printed text, could not determine his identity, except that it was not the famous tenth century Arab geographer Maqdisi (also known as Muqaddasi).

The name Miğdisi must come from Armenian *mahdesi* (variants: *mīdesi*, *mātesī*, etc.) derived from Arabic *maqdisi* and used of someone who has made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the holy city.⁶ However, there is no known Armenian historian of that name or title. Grigor Daranaċ'i (1576-1643), who was born in Kamah, wrote his well-known chronicle while residing in Jerusalem, and it is conceivable that he was known by such a title; but Evliya's source does not appear to be any of the extant works of Daranaċ'i or of any other known Armenian historian or geographer.⁷ It is very likely that some Armenian chronicles were translated into Turkish in the seventeenth century, since Müneccimbaşı (d. 1702) states that he made use of such translations,⁸ and Evliya may have had access to some such source. To be sure, Evliya was perfectly capable of fabricating a historical work; but the consistency in the way he cites this one rather indicates that he had some kind of genuine source before his eyes, or at least in his memory, and that this was a Turkish translation or version of an Armenian historical or geographical work. Another possibility is that it was a work written in Turkish, or in Arabic, by an Armenian.⁹

The two terms of the name, Miğdisi and Yarmeni, are found elsewhere in the *Seyahatname* in connection with Armenians. *Yârmeni* seems to be merely a punning nickname for *Ermeni* based on *yâr* ("beloved, sweetheart"). We cannot yet say whether this was Evliya's fabrication or whether he took it from somewhere

5 "Zu Ewlija Tschelebi's Reisen im oberen Euphrat und-Tigris-Gebiet," *Der Islam* 9 (1919): 235n.

6 H. Aċaryan, *Hayerēn Armatakan Baċaran*, vol. 3 (Erivan, [first print 1926]), 236; A. K. Sanjian, *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts: 1301-1480* (Cambridge, MA., 1969), 451. I owe these references to Robert Thomson.

7 S.T. Melik-Baxşyan, *Hayoc' Patmut'yan Albyuragitut'yun* (Erevan, 1979), 237-42; H.D. Andreasyan, "Türk Tarihine Aid Ermeni Kaynakları," *Tarih Dergisi* 1 (1949-50): 426-28.

8 B. Lewis, "The Use by Muslim Historians of Non-Muslim Sources," in *Historians of the Middle East*, eds. B. Lewis and P. M. Holt (London, 1962), 187.

9 Cf. the twelfth century Arabic historian Abu Şaliĥ al-Armani, *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*, tr. B.T.A. Evetts (Oxford, 1895). I owe this reference to Dickran Kouymjian.

else. He uses it (see Table 3) either in place of, or in apposition to, *Ermeni*. Thus in the title of the section containing his specimen of Armenian (SN, III, 79b) he calls the language by the jingly expression *lisan-i Ermeni, can-i yârmeni* (“tongue of Ermeni, soul of Yarmeni”).¹⁰

As for *mığdisi*, Evliya uses the term in two senses (see Table 2):

(1) The Armenians, or a subset of them. Thus at one point (III, 83b29) he refers to “all the Kurds and the Mığdisi people,” i.e., all the Kurds and Armenians. And in his discussion of Armenian language¹¹ Mığdisi is one of the seven dialectal groups: “Some words and phrases are close to Persian; it is the most elegant of their dialects.” It must therefore be the dialect of Sivas, since Evliya also says: “This language is spoken in its (most) elegant and refined form in Sivas.” He also mentions the Jacobite (*Ya’kubi*) dialect, spoken by Armenians in the Arab lands; the Anushirvani dialect which is close to Georgian; other dialects close to Kurdish and to Arabic; and finally one belonging to “the gypsies of the Armenians” which “does not resemble any other language.” Most or all of this is probably Evliya’s fabrication, in accordance with his characteristic systematizing of a given language into seven or twelve dialects.

(2) Armenian priest or monk. Evliya uses *mığdisi* whenever he refers to Armenian ecclesiastical organization, either by itself or in apposition to terms meaning “priest, patriarch, monk” (*papas, bitrik, rahib*). Thus the head of the church of Echmiadzin is called *baş mığdisi* (SN, II 293b); an Armenian painter and monk of Sivas “was a *mığdisi* who appears to have remained in the misguided rite” of Christianity (SN, III, 76a21); the inhabitants of Mosul “speak Armenian as well as the *mığdisi* monks”; and the Armenian nunnery in Jerusalem contains “three hundred *mığdisiyye* virgins” or nuns (*mığdisi* + Arabic feminine suffix).

Where did Evliya get this term? Since we do not know if it is found in any other source, it is premature to draw any conclusions. We have established only that

¹⁰ The association of Anushirvan with the Armenians is possibly based on a similar word play with Van, as at SN, IV, 281a21: “*Ermenistân-ı Enuşirvân vilâyetinde kal’e-i Van’a gönderüp...*”; cf. SN, II, 293b23; III 79b; IV, 249b11; IV, 310b21 etc.

¹¹ See R. Dankoff, “Evliya Chelebi on the Armenian Language of Sivas in 1650,” *Annual of Armenian Linguistics* 4 (1983): 47-56 [for “Mığdisi” read Mığdisi throughout]; repr. in *From Mahmud Kaşgari to Evliya Çelebi: Studies in Middle Turkic and Ottoman Literatures* (Istanbul, 2008), 291-8.

in Evliya's mind *miğdisi* is firmly associated with the Armenians, particularly as the title for a churchman and as the proper name of a historian. Curiously, there is a parallel in Evliya's use of the term *erşek* both for "Hungarian priest" and as the proper name of his chief source for Hungarian history, *Erşek Tarihi*. In this case the background is clear, Hung. *érsek* being an ecclesiastical title corresponding to "cardinal" and Evliya's source being the history of Cardinal Verancsics.¹² With regard to *Miğdisi*, we suggested above that it might be the name or title of an Armenian historian resident in Jerusalem; and it is pertinent to add here with regard to Grigor Daranac'i that he held the ecclesiastical office of Vardapet. Possibly he, or another historian who was also a priest and had a connection with Jerusalem, provided the link in Evliya's mind between the two usages of the term *miğdisi*; but other possibilities as well present themselves, and it would be fruitless to speculate further without more information.

Table 1: The historian *Miğdisi*

SN, III	73b	margın Sivas: <i>Ermeni târihleri</i>
	78b33	Sivas: <i>Ermeni tevârîhi</i>
	82b10	Harput: <i>târîh-i Miğdisi</i>
	85a22	Çapakçur: <i>târîh-i Miğdisi</i>
SN, IV	204b21, 32	Diyarbakir, Shattu'l-'Arab: <i>tevârîh-i Miğdisi Yarmeni, müverrih Miğdisi</i>
	210a17	Mardin: <i>târîh-şinâs Miğdisi</i>
	212a34	Mt. Sincar, on Noah: <i>Miğdisi târihi</i>
	218a34	Miyafariqin: <i>müverrih Miğdisi</i>
	222a13	Bitlis: <i>müverrih-i hakiki Miğdisi ibni Bay Hâki-i Yarmeni</i>
	226a3	Bitlis: <i>târîh-i Miğdisi</i>
	237b4	Lake Van: <i>sâhib-i târih-i Miğdisi</i>
	238a27	Lake Van: <i>Miğdisi târihi</i>
	243b9	Mt. Subhan: <i>târîh-i Miğdisi</i>
	244a5	St. George and the dragon in Miyafariqin: <i>Miğdisi tevârîhi</i>
	249a11, 31	Van: <i>müverrih Miğdissi, Miğdisi</i>
	295b11	Lake Urmiya: <i>müverrih Miğdisi</i>
	309b15	Hamadan: <i>Miğdisi Yarmeni târihi</i>

¹² Gustav Bayerle, "Hungarian History According to Evliya Çelebi," *Journal of Turkish Studies: Turks, Hungarians and Kipchaks: A Festschrift in Honor of Tibor Halasi-Kun* 8 (1984): 21-4.

	320a26	Qum: müverrih Yarmeni-i Miğdisi
	321b14	Qashan: müverrih Miğdisi Yarmeniyân
	324a33	Sava: müverrih Miğdisi Yarmeni
	332a28	Baghdad: Mikdisi Yarmeni
	332b23	Baghdad: Miğdisi Yarmeni
	346b9	Baghdad: Miğdisi Yarmeni
	359a21	Qurna: târih-i Yarmeni-i Miğdisi
	363a11	Basra, Asaf-ı Barhiya: Miğdisi Yarmeniyân
	372a13	Şehrîzor: müverrih Miğdisi
	375a11	'Aqra, on Jonah in Nineveh: tevârih-i Miğdisi
	376b35	'Imadiye: müverrih Miğdisi
	377a29	'Imadiye, on Darius: Yarmeni Miğdisi
	383b29, 30	Cezire-i ibn 'Umar: müverrihân Miğdisiyan-i Yarmeni, müverrih Miğdisi
	384a35	Cezire-i ibn 'Umar: müverrih Miğdisi
	399a3, 6, 8	Eski Mosul: müverrih Miğdisi Yarmeni, Miğdisi Yarmeni, Miğdisi
	399a32	Eski Mosul, Syriac poem: Miğdisi
	400a17	Mosul: târih-i Miğdisi Ermeni
	400b11	Mosul: müverrih Miğdisi Yarmeni
SN, V	19b8	Tokat: Yarmeni Miğdisi
SN, VII	107a33	Qıpchaq Steppe: Ermeni Miğdisi târihi
	148a9	Çerkes: müverrih-i âlemîn Yarmeni Miğdis
SN, VIII	222b34	Selanik: müverrihân... ve Miğdisi
SN, X	Y355a	Bilbeis: müverrih Miğdisi

Table 2: miğdisi = Armenian, Armenian priest or monk

SN, II	293b21	Üç Kilise (Echmiadzin): ...bitrik ve ruhbân ve kışs ve miğdisi ermeni papasları ve bitrikleri ... baş miğdisi olan papası...
SN, III	76a21	Sivas, description of a learned Armenian painter and monk named Nurdik: ... dalâlet-âyinde kalmış görünür bir Miğdisi idi
	78b35	Sivas: ziyâretgâh ve teferrücgâh-i Miğdisi Ermenileridir
	79b16	Sivas (seven Armenian dialects): ... ve kavm-i Miğdisi lisânı dahi başka lisândır kim ba'zı elfâzı ve niçe lugatleri Fârisiye yakındır, gâyet fasîh lisânları odur...

	83b29	Pertek: ... <i>cümle Ekrâd ve Miğdisi kavımı...</i>
	85b3	Harput: <i>Miğdisi lisânı üzre çapak cur cennet suyu demektir, hâlâ lisân-ı Ermeni-i Yarmenide cur suya derler</i>
SN, IV	403a24	Mosul: ... <i>ve lisân-ı Ermeni ruhân-i Miğdisi kadar bilirlir</i>
SN, V	23b31	Tokat: <i>cümle (---) aded-i deyr-i gamam-i râhibân-i bitrîkân-i Miğdisiyandır</i>
	171b7	Üsküp: <i>kenîse-i râhib-i Miğdisiyan</i>
SN, VII	137a32	Eski Kırım: <i>kenîse-i râhib-i Miğdisiyan</i>
SN, VIII	212b4	Aynaroz (Mt. Athos): ... <i>papas ve lâdika ve kissîs ve ruhân ve bitrîk ve râhib ve keşîş ve Miğdisi...</i>
SN, IX	(Y224b22)	Jerusalem, Armenian nunnery: <i>cümle üç yüz Miğdisiye bikirler vardır</i>

Table 3: yârmeni = Armenian

SN, II	326b18	Gürce Boğazı: <i>iki yüz hâneli ze'amet Yarmeni karyesidir</i>
	339a14	Ketur: <i>Erzerum hâkinde bir ma'mûr abadan Yarmeni köyüdür</i>
SN, III	73b11	Sivas: <i>nasara-i ermeni-i Yarmeniyan</i>
	79b9	Sivas: <i>lisân-ı ermeni cân-ı Yarmeni</i>
		[cf. 2a29 (Fihrist): <i>lisân-ı Ermeni-i Yarmeni</i>]
	85b4	Harput: <i>hâlâ lisân-ı Ermeni-i Yarmenide cur suya derler</i>
	87a32	Çağlı Kilise: <i>Çağlı Kenise-i Yarmeni</i>
SN, IV	217b30	Sa'di: <i>ma'mûr Yarmeni köyüdür</i>
	225b24	Bitlis: <i>cümle (---) aded Yarmeni deyridir</i>
	305a15	Ardabil: <i>muğpeçe Yarmeni mahbûb u mahbûbe</i>
SN, V	16a6	Kamber Baba Sultan: <i>Hınıs sancağı hâkinde beş yüz hâneli müselmân ve Yarmeni köyüdür</i>
	16b1	Alvar: <i>Pasin sancağı hâkinde ma'mûr Yarmeni köyüdür</i>
SN, VIII	220a26	Siroz: <i>kefere ve Yahudi ve Yarmeni ve Latin düyûrları</i>
	382a30	Tekirdağı: ... <i>Yarmeni keferelerinin düyûrları...</i>