

*Intra-Writer variation in Ottoman Turkish: The case of Evliya Çelebi*

Ottoman traveler and travel writer Evliya Çelebi (Istanbul, 1611 – Egypt, 1685?) spent most of his life traveling throughout the Ottoman Empire in the service of Ottoman dignitaries, and towards the end of his life he described his travels in a comprehensive ten-volume travelogue (*Seyahatname*) (Dankoff 2004, Hagen 2009). The contents of the *Seyahatname* can be divided into place descriptions, the historiographic section (chronicle) and the autobiographical section. The *Seyahatname* is a representative source for the 17th-century Ottoman language, but for the time being has been mostly used as a historiographical source (Boeschoten 1988, Dankoff 1991).

Ottoman Turkish was the official and literary language of the Ottoman Empire. It is a variety of West Oghuz Turkic that developed in Anatolia after the area was settled by the Oghuz Turks in the 11th to 13th centuries. In the following centuries, with the development of the Ottoman elite, an elite Ottoman Turkish language developed, with a large share of elements from Arabic and Persian, the languages of Islamic high culture. The syntax was mainly Turkic with important Persian elements, and the vocabulary was largely based on Arabic and Persian. At the same time as the elite Ottoman there was a spoken, vernacular language dominated by elements from the Turkish language, as well as all possible variants between the two linguistic layers (Kerslake 1998, Römer 2009, Woodhead).

Evliya had an excellent education which enabled him to consciously and knowingly use the opportunities which the elite Ottoman language offered him, but at the same time used colloquial, everyday speech. His language and style could be analyzed from many aspects, and in this presentation two fundamental questions will be asked:

1. How did Evliya shape his language with respect to the aforementioned trilingual structure of Ottoman Turkish?
2. What is the relationship between elite and colloquial Ottoman Turkish in Evliya's idiolect?

## **References**

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