

Revisiting Lāmiī Çelebi's Biography

Abstract

Maḥmūd bin 'Osmān bin Naḳḳāş 'Alī bin İlyās (878/1472-938/1532) is an Ottoman literary figure from the sixteenth century known by the pseudonym of Lāmiī Çelebi. Cause of his prominence, he has been comparatively well-studied, and a lot of surveys on his life conducted; however, some biographical details still need to be revealed. By concentrating partially on the biographical works of Lāmiī Çelebi, I aim to question and re-visit one of the statements that “he chose not to venture to Istanbul solely due to his affection towards Bursa” which pertains to the lecture's argument.

Is it possible to comprehend Lāmiī Çelebi's passion for Bursa through *Şehr-engīz* literature, one of the trending genres at that time? Unfortunately, there is a propensity in contemporary studies on Ottoman literature to disregard narrative evidence, particularly literary ones, and to favor depersonalized narratives, such as archival sources. In addition to these factors, it is also severely limiting to have a reflexive mistrust of literary narratives or a fear of the metaphorical structures in these sources. The argument of this course will be primarily examined within the framework of *Şehr-engīz* literature in view of the challenges mentioned above. Secondly, the information gathered from the primary sources will be presented with a particular focus on the expectations of the time's political, social, and intellectual milieu. Finally, viewpoints regarding the authenticity of the revisited statement will be discussed.

In light of this argument, the revisited subject matter of this research is based on Lāmiī Çelebi's *Şehr-engīzs* (both *Şehr-engīz-i Mevāzi'-i Şerīfe-i Brusa* and *Nāme-i şehr-engīz-i Maḥābib-i Brusa*). Additionally, other works of *şehr-engīz* by other writers, created throughout the same period of time will be additional material for the revisitation.

Short-Bio

Aysu Akcan is a PhD candidate in Ottoman Studies at the University of Vienna. Her research interest focuses on 15th and 16th-century Ottoman literature. Accordingly, she is working on the biography of Lāmiī Çelebi (b. 1472-d.1532), who is primarily known as an important litterateur and as a şūfī, a member of Naḳşibendiyye order. She also has worked as one of the lecturers of “Digital Humanities und Osmanistik” at the University of Vienna, Department of Near Eastern Studies.