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“I first encountered the Rhodes manuscripts through my elder in the craft, Ali b. Ahmed, who, originally from Homs, was in Rhodes between 22 May and 29 December 1551. During this time, he copied a mecmua containing twelve works. As I leafed through its pages, I began to hear sighs — ah u enin — rising from every corner. I leaned closer, and realized they came from Ali b. Ahmed himself: in the margins and between the lines, he had woven, stitch by stitch, his own story into the istinsah records.

At times in a raised voice, at times in silence, he gave expression to his outrage over the injustice he had endured. He believed he had been sent to the island through a plot, and his heart ached for his homeland, Homs. He wished only to return. To beautiful Rhodes he bestowed a sorrowful name — dârü'l-firâk, ‘the land of partings.’ In his istinsah notes, his loved ones pass before us in solemn procession: his father, his grandfather, his grandfather’s father, his wife, his children, his friends, his allies, and even those he despised.

It was this deep, human tenderness that led me to gaze more closely — and with greater ardor — at those sections of manuscripts once dismissed as mere hurde, the marginal traces, the manuscript’s so-called odds and ends. And so, across five centuries, I offer my thanks to my master and pray for mercy upon him. Whether he was ever reunited with his children, his wife, and his beloveds, we cannot know — but I hope that now they dwell together in some corner of paradise.

I am grateful for my encounter and engagement with this Rhodian mecmua of Ali b. Ahmed, grateful that these manuscripts still endure, and grateful for the good souls who guard them...”

Sami Arslan

An Exile’s Discreet Cry in Rhodes *İstinsah Kayıtları* - Copying Records, as a Reflection of the Soul

Abstract

A manuscript is a cumulative medium of knowledge in the triad of the author or *müellif*, the scribe or *müstensih*, and the reader, where the main component is the text, yet it encompasses numerous elements beyond the primary text. These elements are enriched with new inputs as they travel through centuries and geographies. One group of the elements of manuscripts are the *istinsah kayıtları*, notes and colophons made by the scribe. *İstinsah* notes not only convey the imprints of the book and copy itself to the reader but also encompass (external) information that illuminates and serves as a valuable source for understanding social and cultural contexts. In the mid-16th century (1551), the *istinsah* notes in the *mecmua*, a manuscript that contains multiple texts, compiled by Ali b. Ahmed of Homs also contain the external information mentioned earlier. This *mecmua*, copied by Ali b. Ahmed in Rhodes, a place he could never fully adapt to, contain twelve works. In this article, the *istinsah* notes of the mentioned works in the *mecmua* will be analyzed chronologically, with the aim of analyzing the biography of Ali b. Ahmed based exclusively on these *istinsah* notes. Indeed, Ali b. Ahmed provides examples that demonstrate how such notes can serve as a valuable source for historiography, as he shares his personal story with the readers rather than merely providing bibliographic details of the work.

Introduction

Manuscripts may not possess the mythical allure of Aladdin’s lamp, but they hold a wealth of elements that can astonish, excite, and invite readers into worlds of mystery. These manuscripts encompass numerous elements extending over centuries, including the author’s text, useful and external information (typically related to humans, nature, and the manuscripts). Through these elements, a variety of information pertaining to humanity, time, and place has been preserved across centuries within copies. Each leaf of a copy may provide a glimpse into a specific moment in life, capturing a fleeting intersection of time, place, and experience. Systematic and patient research on copies can reveal overlooked historical and cultural dimensions, offering new perspectives for historiography. The study, edited by Berat Açı1, notes on the marginal notes kept by the 18th-century Ottoman scholar and bibliophile Carullah Efendi (d. 1718) throughout his life, the article written by Fikret Turan2 based on the reader’s notes in the Süleymaniye Library, Esat Efendi Department, MS No. 3463, ff. 82v-84r, and, more generally, the work edited by Konrad Hirschler and Andreas Görke3, which concludes that the documents outside the main text can directly be a subject of research, are proficient examples showing how certain biographies can be written, improved, or proofread

1 Berat Açı, ed., *Osmanlı Kitap Kültürü, Carullah Efendi Kütüphanesi ve Derkenar Notları* (Ankara: Nobel yayınları, 2015).
2 Fikret Turan, “Elyazması Mecmualarda Gündelik Hayat, Güncel Sorunlar ve Günlük Dil: 18. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Edebiyatında Mahallileşmenin Kapsamı,” *FSM İlmî Araştırmalar İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Dergisi* 2 (2013): 343-365.
3 Andreas Görke, Konrad Hirschler, ed., *Manuscripts notes as a documentary sources* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, Beirut, 2001).

through these extra-textual elements. These are competent examples that demonstrate how the gaps in reading and writing practices can be filled and how miscellanies can be transformed into a social medium. One of the elements of the manuscript is *istinsah* notes. *İstinsah* notes are not merely a part that provides information about the time and place of the copying process, nor is it a part where the imprint of the manuscript and copy are included. *İstinsah* note is a text in which vivid depictions are made, interlinear notes are provided, ideological debates are occasionally presented indirectly, and subtexts are included. These works should also be used systematically as a secondary source in historiography.

Today, archival materials, *Şeriiyye* registers, chronicles, and memoirs-journals are commonly used as sources in Ottoman exile literature.⁴ In addition to these sources, one of the elements that should be used as a resource in exile literature is these manuscripts. For instance, the information regarding Carullah Efendi's exile to Edirne has been identified through two margin notes written by him.⁵ One of the manuscript elements, the marginal notes, will reveal Ali b. Ahmed, a *müstensih* from Homs, who, in the mid-16th century, eagerly awaited in Rhodes the day he could return to his homeland and constantly praised God for the opportunity. In this context, it is possible to suggest that the mentioned works not only offer insights into the copying process but can also be considered indirect examples of the *firakname* genre.

Ali b. Ahmed can be described as a *müstensih* or a copyist, an author, and a reader. He copied all the works in the *mecmua* discussed below, personally authored some of them, at least as evidenced by the reading notes he left, and carefully studied certain texts. This study, however, will not focus on his literacy. The article, which focuses exclusively on Ali b. Ahmed's role as a *müstensih*, is divided into two parts. In the first part, the notes/records from twelve manuscripts, copied by Ali b. Ahmed to form a single manuscript, a *mecmua*, will be analyzed. Based on these works, an analysis of Ali b. Ahmed will be conducted. In the second part, it will be demonstrated that certain words used by the *müstensih* in both the marginal notes and various parts of the *mecmua*, implicitly or explicitly indicate the difficult and sorrowful situation he was in.

Ali b. Ahmed from Homs is both the author and the *müstensih* of four of the twelve works in the *mecmua* numbered 2705, held in the Şehid Ali Pasha Collection of the Suleymaniye Library. For the other eight works, he is solely the *müstensih*.⁶ Ali b. Ahmed, in the mentioned *mecmua*, wrote four works using the *iltikât* method. In dictionaries, the term '*iltikât*' refers to a form of collection that is a

type of authorship created from selected portions of different parts of a book.⁷ Who did Ali b. Ahmed have these copies copied for in Rhodes? In Ali b. Ahmed's *istinsah* notes, as is common in the general tendency of such works, there is no explicit information regarding this matter. The *müstensih* Ali b. Ahmed bestowed a specific title to the *mecmua* and collated some copies, adding collation notes to them. More significantly, he centered⁸ his own life story, along with his entire social circle, in the *istinsah* notes. These actions suggest that he prepared this *mecmua* for personal use. The works in the *mecmua* are generally not madrasa books. Therefore, if the *müstensih* prepared these copies for himself, it must have been for his own reading notes rather than for the purpose of sharing them with someone else. Moreover, the fact that these works are compiled into a single *mecmua* raises the possibility that the *müstensih* copied them at the request of an individual. Alternatively, they may have been intended as a gift for a resident of Rhodes. An additional factor that strengthens this possibility is Ali b. Ahmed's mention of the copy owner (*malik*) in the *zahriye* of the twelfth work (241a) in the *mecmua*. On this folio, Ali b. Ahmed mentions God and Abdullah b. Es'ad Yâfiî (d. 768/1367), the author of the copied work and the founder of the Yâfi'iyye branch of the Qadiriyya Sufi Order, to which he had also belonged. He prays that all Muslims may gain insight from Yâfiî's wisdom. Additionally, through this occasion, he includes four more groups in his prayer: the scribe of the copy, the owner of the copy, its future readers, and those who review or closely examine it. It is clear that the scribe of the copy is the same person. If we consider that the owner of the copy is also him, it follows naturally that he would also be the future reader and the one who reviews or closely examines the copy. In other words, he included himself in the prayer in four different roles. This possibility is weaker than the one where "*malik*" refers to someone else.⁹ Later in the prayer, the *müstensih* again mentions the *malik*. At the end of the prayer, he also prays for those who offer prayers for both the scribe and the *malik*. It is evident from the context that Ali b. Ahmed likely distinguishes between *malik* and *scribe*. His making of the *mecmua* for someone else could suggest that he intertwines his personal narrative through these copies. By doing so, he presents his life story to the influential figures on the island and indirectly requests assistance from them. Indeed, the intellectual history of the Ottoman Empire provides several similar examples. For instance, Ahmet Pasha (d. 1497), a century before Ali b. Ahmed, presented an eulogy on "*Kerem*" to Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, who was the reigning sultan at the time. This eulogy, presented from the Yedikule Dungeons, led to his amnesty.¹⁰

7 In this context, the dictionary definition of *iltikât*, like many terms, has been narrowed down once it became a technical term. While the dictionary meaning refers to gathering from different places, here it specifically means collection from different parts of a single book, rather than from different books. It is not clear from Ali b. Ahmed's statements whether he perceives a difference between *iltikât* and *muhtârât*. Abdulmuhsin b. Muhammed indicates that, in *Al-Futûhâtü'l-Mekkiye*, he selects passages based on his heart's desire to construct a new work. It appears that he does not distinguish between *iltikât* and *intihâb*. Abdulmuhsin b. Muhammed, in his authorship note, requests readers to approach potential errors in the work with leniency. He refers to his own discretion in the text as *iltikât* ve *intihâb* (as intihabe), indicating that the selections and arrangements within the work are based on his personal discretion. (Abdulmuhsin b. Muhammed, *Muntehab mine'l-Futûhâtü'l-Mekkiye*, Süleymaniye, Ayasofya, 2099, 181a)

8 Indeed, in these manuscripts, the objects of the prayers are not, as with hundreds of other *müstensih*s, other Muslims, scholars, cities, or places. Rather, they focus solely on himself along with his parents, children, relatives, loved ones, and even his enemies.

9 The *malik* mentioned by the *müstensih* could refer to either the current owner or future owners of the *mecmua*. In a close sense, *malik* denotes the present owner, while in a broader sense, it includes anyone who may possess the manuscript in the future. In this case, who is the current *malik* of the *mecmua*? It could be either the *müstensih* himself or another individual. Assuming that the scribe is the *müstensih* himself, we must reconsider a complicated situation. This would imply that the *müstensih* identifies himself in four different roles: the scribe, the *malik*, the reader, and the reviewer.

10 Zehra Göre, "Kerem Kasidelerine Dair," *Ankara Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi* 39 (2009): 921.

4 See also. M. Çağatay Uluçay, "Sürgünler-Yeni ve Yakın Çağlarda Manisa'ya ve Manisa'dan Sürülenler," *Belleten* 15 (1951); Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bir İskan ve Kolonizasyon Metodu Olarak Sürgünler," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 13/1-4 (1951-1952): 56-78; Osman Köksal, "Osmanlı Hukukunda Bir Ceza Olarak Sürgün ve İki Osmanlı Sultanının Sürgünle ilgili Hattı-ı Hümayunları," *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi (OTAM)* 19 (2006); Kemal Daşcıoğlu, *Osmanlı'da Sürgün Osmanlı Devleti'nin Sürgün Siyaseti (XVIII. Yüzyıl)* (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınları, 2007); Suha Oğuz Baytimur, "Osmanlı Devletinde Hapis ve Sürgün Cezaları 1791-1808," (Doktora Tezi, Fırat Üniversitesi, 2011.); Mehmet Güneş, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Sürgün Cezası ve Karahisâr-ı Sâhib'e Yapılan Sürgünler (1815-1839)," *History Studies, International Journal of Histroy* 8/1 (2016).

5 Sami Arslan, "Eserden Müessire Seyr u Sefer: Carullah Efendi'nin Derkenar Notlarının Biyografisine Katkıları," *Fatih Sultan Mehmet Üniversitesi İlmî Araştırmalar İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Dergisi* 5 (2015) :78.

6 Two of the original manuscripts (menkûlun minh) used by him during the *istinsah* process are author's copies.

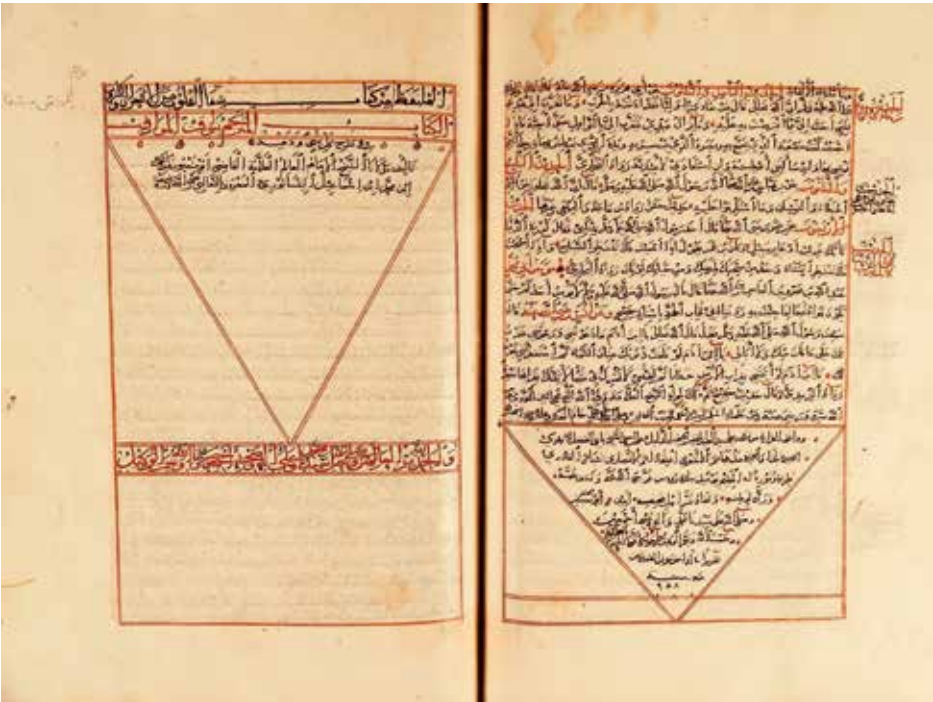
It is possible that the exile in Rhodes, being somehow aware of the aforementioned situation, believed that amnesty could be attained through the copies and the *istinsah* notes contained within them.

Who owned the originals that he copied? If the new copies were made at the request of someone else or intended as a gift, it can be said that the original manuscripts belonged to Ali b. Ahmed. If this assumption is accurate, it implies that Ali b. Ahmed must have used the copies he brought with him to Rhodes for copying, in addition to reading and reviewing them as the original text. If the new copies were copied for his own use, it can be argued that the original copies do not belong to him. This is because, considering he likely expected or hoped to stay on the island for a short period, it would make little sense for him to copy for himself from the ones he already possessed. If Ali b. Ahmed did not bring these original copies with him from Homs, how should we interpret the presence of twelve copies on this island? These include the author's copy of Nevewi's (d. 1278) *al-Erba'î'n* and *Imâdî's Mizânu's-sharî'a'*. The island had come under Muslim (Ottoman) rule only thirty years earlier, in 1522. It seems improbable that these copies were associated with the madrasa established by Suleiman I (the Magnificent) following the island's recent incorporation into Ottoman control. As noted earlier, these works do not possess the attributes of standard educational materials. These copies might have belonged to an Islamic monastery on the island, a resident, or perhaps a kadi, a soldier who ended up there after the island's conquest, and were likely borrowed by Ali b. Ahmed for *istinsah*. It is difficult to draw definitive conclusions based solely on the existing *istinsah* notes. It is likely that more precise answers to these questions can likely be obtained through further research, particularly by examining archive documents and sharia registries related to the intellectual history of Rhodes.

Ali b. Ahmed does not mention any reason for his presence in Rhodes in these *istinsah* notes. His persistent desire to return to his homeland and reunite with his family, children, relatives, and friends in Homs, his bitter criticism of the instigators of discord, and his seeking refuge in God from their malicious schemes suggest that his exile in Rhodes was due to these reasons. Indeed, Rhodes was one of the places used for exile during the Ottoman Empire, and a century later, the renowned Sufi Niyazi Mısri (d. 1694) would also find himself exiled to this island. The island would continue to be used as a place of exile until the 19th century.

There is no explicit information regarding Ali b. Ahmed's activities while in Homs. In light of this, his engagement in writing and copying, along with comparing the copies he made, indicates that he was likely a scholar. The title '*Ezherîan*' (Al-Azhar) he used in various works confirms this situation. Nevertheless, it is also possible to think that one of the titles he used in the *istinsah* notes may reflect his profession. Accordingly, Ali b. Ahmed refers to himself as '*al-Khalidî in service*' in three different works. In the first work, he identifies himself as 'al-Qadirî in the Sufi order, al-Khalidî in service'¹¹; in the second work, 'al-Hanafî in Hanafî madhhab, al-Khalidî in service'¹²; and in the third work, 'al-Ansarî in lineage, al-Khalidî in service'.¹³ The meaning of the first parts of these works is quite clear: he is affiliated with the Qadiriyya Sufi Order and follows the Hanafî madhhab in legal matters. His family origins trace back to the Ansar among the Prophet's companions (sahaba). Could 'al-Khalidi in service' be related to this? It is unlikely that 'al-Khalidi' refers to affiliation with the Khalidi Sufi order, as the works date back to the mid-16th century. Another indication that the term does not imply

a Sufic connotation is that in the first work, he states that he is already affiliated with the Qadiriyya before mentioning the Khalidi affiliation. This expression may be a reference to his profession. It could also be connected to Halid b. Velid, whose grave is located in Homs, and the *müstensih* might be alluding to his role as the tomb caretaker.¹⁴ Yet, it is difficult to draw any conclusions based on the limited available information. The *müstensih*, who integrates the consequences into the *istinsah* notes, uses two methods for this. The first method is explicitness, while the second is allegory. Let us first focus on the direct account of the story as told by the *müstensih*, Ali b. Ahmed.



Ali b. Ahmed, Süleymaniye Library, Şehit Ali Paşa Collection 2705, 153b

The language of the *istinsah* notes: A tense *müstensih* condemned to Rhodes

The first copy made by Ali b. Ahmed, listed in the existing catalog, is the *Mecma'u'l Âmâk*, registered under the name of Ibnu'n-Nehhâs (d. 1411).¹⁵ In the *istinsah* notes dated May 25, 1551, he first asks God to forgive him and his parents and then to relieve him of his sadness and grief.¹⁶ He states that he is from Homs, although he was in Rhodes at the time, using the word *nezîl*, which means 'guest' in the dictionary. Thus, the *müstensih* seems to indicate that he was temporarily residing on this island. Indeed, his use of the word *yevmeizin*, meaning 'for the time being' or 'currently,' further

11 Ali b. Ahmed, Süleymaniye, Şehid Pasha Ali, 02705/001, 108a.
12 Ali b. Ahmed, Süleymaniye, Şehid Pasha Ali, 02705/004, 144b.
13 Ali b. Ahmed, Süleymaniye, Şehid Pasha Ali, 02705/011, 240a.

14 This possibility was raised by Mr. Ahmet Turan Arslan during our discussion on these works.
15 The title of the work is *Mecma'u'l Âmâk*, but the author is not Ibnu'n-Nehhâs, as will be discussed later.
16 Süleymaniye Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/1, 108a.

supports this suggestion (*Vehuve nezîlun bi-Beldet-i Rodos yevmeizin*). Therefore, we have a sorrowful *müstensih*-author who is either temporarily in Rhodes, or believes he is, or hopes to be. It is difficult to understand what caused his sadness in this first manuscript. Exactly thirty-three days after the first *müstensih*-author statement (June 28, 1551), he appears once again in Rhodes, expressing a sorrowful condition. In this entry, the *müstensih* employs different verbs to convey his wish to be relieved from grief and sorrow. In this work, he implores God for a return to his homeland. Although the *müstensih* does not specify which place he refers to as his homeland, his earlier mention of being from Homs suggests that this is where he wishes to return. Ali b. Ahmed’s desire is not only to return to his homeland but also to reunite with his two children, whom he longs to embrace.¹⁷

Is Ali b. Ahmed in Rhodes due to a task while being away from his homeland? The curses (malediction/ bad wishes) he uses in the same record prevent us from providing a favourable reply to this question. In this *istinsah* note, he refers to those he calls instigators of discord and wishes for them to be a bit shell-shocked. By using the pronoun referring to those who are returning to Homs, he indicates that these instigators of discord are not from Rhodes, but rather from his own homeland, Homs. Based on these two records, it can be concluded that the *müstensih* perceived his exile to Rhodes in May and June of 1551 as a result of the scheming of certain instigators of discord from his homeland. This suggests that his exile was likely a consequence of their actions. On the other hand, Ali b. Ahmed initially believed that this compulsory residence would come to an end in a very short period, yet he gradually seems to have abandoned this expectation. In this second work, the Ali b. Ahmed who was a guest (*nezîl*) in Rhodes has become a resident (*mukîm*) there (*el-mukîm yevmeizin bi-beldeti Rodos*).¹⁸ In the third manuscript dated July 3, 1551, found in the same *mecmua*, he again prays for the end of his grief and sorrow and for his return to his homeland. The instigators of discord mentioned in this work are also described as people who endure hardship, and he seeks refuge in God from their evilness. On the other hand, by implying that he does not fear their evilness, he differs from the previous work. He expresses his trust in God after the Hamdalah and Salwalah, saying “Allah alone is sufficient as an aid for us, and He is the best Protector”.¹⁹

In this work, when mentioning those he longs for, he refers to his children in the plural form, unlike in the other two works, where he used the *tesniye* (dual) form. Possibly, while on the island where he arrived just three months prior, he received news of the birth of another child in Homs or recalled a child he had previously forgotten to mention. This possibility indicates that letters were exchanged between Homs and Rhodes. In this manuscript by Ali b. Ahmed, two additional groups of people come into focus alongside his children: those who love the unhappy *müstensih* in Rhodes (Muhibbihi) and his friends (Ve asdikâihî). He shows particular importance to those who love him, as he includes them again in his prayers, using a different term after mentioning his friends (Muveddihî). It is clear that the term ‘loved ones’ does not refer to his friends, as they are already mentioned separately in the same work. The term likely does not refer to relatives either, as the author explicitly mentions them when necessary, as seen in the copy note of work number eleven in this *mecmua*. Could there be a specific reason why the author mentions those who loved him in three different ways within the copy note? Perhaps he was an opinion leader with the ability of representation in Homs, indicating that his followers remained a priority for him even during his exile.

17 Süleymaniye, Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/2, 122a.

18 Ali b. Ahmed will use the term “*mukim*” instead of “*nezîl*” in all works from this point onward, except for one.

19 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/003, 124a.

Ali b. Ahmed, who indicates in the *istinsah* notes that he is a Sufi, seems not to have been involved in transcribing during the Sacred Months. This is suggested by the fact that the date of the next ‘nusha-i mubârek’ (blessed copy) of the manuscript is November 1, 1551 (2 Dhu’l-Qi’dah 958).²⁰ In contrast, there is no change in the copywork. In this entry, the author continues to speak at length about himself, expressing his wish for the bliss of his heart and his anticipation of returning to his homeland. He seeks refuge in God from the evilness of the instigators of discord: May Allah give him inner peace, relieve him from grief, forgive his mistakes, return him to his homeland, protect him from the evil of those who endure hardship, and reward him with paradise.²¹ Yet, this time, we can say that the author begins to distract himself from the monotony and perhaps the tedium of the work by writing two different rubais around the manuscript. The first of these rubais is about showing tolerance to the *müstensih* in case a flaw is found in the copy. The second rubai, as would be expected from the reluctant resident of Rhodes, addresses the plea of a weak and helpless person seeking refuge in God. He expresses, almost implying solitude, his longing for God’s closeness: “I came weak and helpless, O God, make me close to You, O God!” On the same day (November 1, 1551), in another copy he made from the author’s original, he once again bemoans his condition. He seeks refuge in God from the instigators of discord and those enduring hardship and expresses his longing to return to his homeland.²²

The *müstensih* continues to describe his situation in the subsequent *istinsah* note and, here again, speaks at length about the recitations intended to remove difficulties and hardships. Unlike the previous works, Ali b. Ahmed, who copied Imam Nawawi’s (d. 1278) *al-Arba’in*, does not provide a specific date of copying in this entry (*late Dhu al-Qa’dah 958* / November 20-29, 1551).²³ The more important point is that the copy he primarily used for *istinsah*, as mentioned above, was the original (author’s) copy. Ten days later (November 30 – December 9, 1551), in the seventh manuscript written by Ali b. Ahmed, he again seeks refuge in God from the instigators of discord and those enduring hardship. This time, while mentioning himself, he writes the name of his grandfather as well as his father: Ali b. Ahmed b. Zuhra.²⁴

The *müstensih* Ali b. Ahmed’s longing for his homeland and family seems to be unending. Approximately twenty days after the previous work (December 25, 1551), in the eighth manuscript he wrote, he repeats his longing for the relief of his sorrow and his desire to return to his homeland. It is important to note that in this instance, we understand that the person named Zuhra, mentioned in the previous manuscript, is not the *müstensih*’s grandfather, but his father’s grandfather. As a result, the *müstensih*’s grandfather’s name is also Ali: Ali b. Ahmed b. Ali b. Zuhra.²⁵

The ninth copy lacks an entry, and thus the date of copy is not provided.²⁶ The copies in the *mecmua* are arranged chronologically. Based on this order, it is likely that this particular copy was penned between December 25-28, 1551. This is because the date of the copy for the previous manuscript (22705/008) is December 25, while the date of the next copy (2705/010) is December 28 or earlier. Thus, the *müstensih* may have made this copy on December 25, the same day he completed

20 The previous work is from the Dhu’l-Hijjah of the same year. There are no copies written in the *mecmua* for the months of Rajab, Sha’ban, Ramadan, or Shawwal.

21 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/004, 144b.

22 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/005, 149b.

23 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/006, 153b.

24 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/007, 167a.

25 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/008, 170a.

26 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/009, 176b-177a.

the previous one, or on December 28, the date of the next copy. Furthermore, it is possible that the next copy (2705/10) was made on the same day. Along with these possibilities, the probability that the copy was made on one of the dates, December 26-27, 1551, is higher.

The tenth work is one of Ali b. Ahmed’s compilations (*mültekat*). When the copy²⁷ was made on one of the days between December 26, 27, or 28 in 1551, other individuals also attracted the attention of the *müstensih*, Ali b. Ahmed.²⁸ In the *istinsah* notes he previously wrote (for example, on July 3, 1551), he sought refuge in God from the evilness of the instigators of discord; in this work, they have now become his enemies (*e’dâ’ihi*). Perhaps even while in exile, the *müstensih* continued to face those he referred to as ‘my enemies,’ or it is possible that Ali b. Ahmed became convinced that those he had previously considered mere instigators of discord had now become his enemies. His preference for the plural form (enemies instead of enemy) can be inferred from the fact that he was involved in a conflict with a group in Homs. Regardless of the circumstances, these instigators of discord have not been able to discourage Ali b. Ahmed, as he repeats the hardships he previously endured and even adds to it: ‘There is no power and no strength other than by Allah’. The figure of the ‘enemy’ must be a common motif for those who have been exiled. Indeed, a century after Ali b. Ahmed, Niyazi Mısri (d. 1694), another enlightened figure at Al-Azhar (*Ezherian*), who was exiled to the same island, mentions enemies in his journals. Similarly, Carullah Efendi, who was exiled to Gevgelija, refers to his enemies in the mentioned margin notes.²⁹ On the other hand, Ali b. Ahmed’s mention of enemies in Homs suggests that he may have been a victim of a local power struggle in the region. Indeed, the rivalry among the ulema, of which Ali b. Ahmed was likely a part, was a common situation in the Ottoman territories for a century. eş-Şakâiku’n-Nu’mâniye and its appendages include dozens of stories that focus on such struggles. For instance, Mullah Lutfi (d. 1495), one of the 15th-century Ottoman scholars sentenced to death as a victim of ulema rivalry, cited those who envied him as the *sebeb-i telif* (reason for the compiling) of his Hajj pamphlet. Accordingly, Sultan Bayezid II ordered Mullah Lutfi to review the tafsir (interpretation) of the verses of Hajj for discussion in his presence on a religious holiday. After reviewing the tafsirs, he entered into a dispute with certain individuals, whose names he did not mention, regarding these verses in front of the sultan. According to Mullah Lutfi, those who debated were shallow-minded, bigoted, and instigators of discord. It remains unclear who ultimately prevailed in the debate. Therefore, Mullah Lutfi wrote this book to distinguish between right and wrong. In Mullah Lutfi’s view, the individuals with whom he disputed in the presence of the sultan were those who could not tolerate what God had granted him.³⁰ Ali b. Ahmed, who identifies himself as an Ezherian, refers to these individuals as ‘my enemies’ in Homs. They may indeed be his adversaries.

Ali b. Ahmed worked another copy by 29 December 1551, just four days after his previous work. We observe that his sadness and sorrow have not diminished but rather intensified. This time, the longing extends not only to the children, loved ones, and friends who were previously mentioned but also to relatives, with a strong desire to reunite and embrace them as soon as possible. In the

same work, there is someone we do not typically see in the records, namely his mother. In this work, he expresses his desire to reunite and embrace her as soon as possible.³¹ One of the notable aspects of this work is the information provided about the number of his children. Ali b. Ahmed refers to his children in the tesniye (dual) form in May-June 1551, in the plural form on 3 July 1551, and again in the dual form after a period of six months in this work. Perhaps this time, he received the news of the death of one of his children in Homs, or it is possible that, despite actually having two children, he mistakenly referred to them in the plural form in the previous work.

Ali b. Ahmed does not include a copy of the work in the twelfth manuscript, similar to the ninth copy. Nevertheless, in the Zahriye (241a), as previously mentioned, he provides the imprints of the work and prays for some individuals at this time. Among those, he prays for himself as well (*kâtibihî*). In the same passage, he indirectly prays for himself again by referring to those who will pray for the scribe of the copy, meaning himself.³² Ali b. Ahmed does not add an *istinsah* note in the twelfth manuscript. As noted, he alludes to himself both directly and indirectly, suggesting that he at least did not want to be forgotten in the prayers.

Rhodes has now become an unbearable place for him, a place he needs to leave and return to his homeland as soon as possible. Here, he feels troubled, anxious, and is overwhelmed by grief and sorrow. As seen in the manuscript, he constantly prays to God to return him to his homeland. He remains in Rhodes grudgingly and by force, making his presence known while constructing a detailed self-portrait, as though he does not wish to be forgotten. In the *istinsah* notes, he uses two types of adjectives for himself. The first group consists of anonymous adjectives such as ‘Abd,’ ‘fakîr,’ ‘hakîr,’ ‘zelîl,’ ‘efkari ‘ibâdillâh (the poorest servant of God),’ ‘ahvecihim ilâ rahmetillâh (the servant most in need of God’s mercy),’ ‘efkari’l-verâ (the weakest being in the universe),’ and ‘el-mu’terif bi’l-‘aczi ve’t-taksîr’ (the one who confesses his feebleness and deficiency). Yet, these adjectives neither remove the mystery surrounding him nor do they help us recognize him. Moreover, they are common adjectives used by other *müstensihs* as well. Therefore, it is not possible to conduct any analysis about Ali b. Ahmed based on these works. The adjectives in the second group are specifically intended to describe Ali b. Ahmed. He is named Ali; his father’s name is Ahmet, his grandfather’s name is also Ali, and his great-grandfather’s name is Zuhre. He is known by the title Ebu’l-Fazl, with origins tracing back to the Sahaba, specifically the Ansar. His scholarly background is from Al-Azhar, and his homeland is Homs. Theologically, he adheres to the Ash’ari madhhab, adheres to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence in practice, is initiated into the Qadiri Sufi Order, and is affiliated with the Khalidi Order in service. The *müstensih* repeats this lengthy introduction in many of the copies within the *mecmua*. In the eleventh copy, found within the same manuscript, he presents himself almost as a series of adjectives in this *istinsah* notes. This time, we are presented with eleven adjectives, a byname, and a proper noun. His children, relatives, and even his grief and sorrow are related to him, but they are not included in the mentioned count. Refusing to be a resident of the island, he centers himself, expressing his desire not to fade into oblivion.

Furthermore, Ali b. Ahmed conveys his response not merely through writing but at times, through silence. In the *istinsah* notes of Ottoman *müstensihs*, when mentioning the town or city where they copied, it is customary to add a positive adjective or pray for that place. For instance, three *müstensihs* who copied in three different locations in the same year as Ali b. Ahmed would

27 He has written the date of copy as the end of Dhu’l-Hijjah 958, which could be any day between December 20 and 28. Yet, the date given by Ali b. Ahmet for the eighth copy is 26 Dhu’l-Hijjah 958. The *mecmua* follows a chronological order. This must be at least a day after 26 Dhu’l-Hijjah. The month of Dhu’l-Hijjah in the year 958 had 29 days. This date must be one of the days between the 27th, 28th, or 29th (December 26, 27, or 28, 1551).

28 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/10, 235a.

29 According to Carullah Efendi, just as with the enemies of Ali b. Ahmed, Kethüda Melun is evil and the vizier is cruel.

30 Mullah Lutfi, *Risâletü’l-Hacc*, Süleymaniye Ktp. Şehid Ali Pasha, 2844, 42b.

31 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/11, 240a. “...*Ve cema’a şemlehû bi-veledeyhi ve ekâribehû ve men yelûdu fîhi...*”

32 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/12, 241a. “...*Nefe’allahu bi-bereketihî ve bereketi ‘ulûmihî el-müslîmine ecma’in ve kâtibihî ve kâri’ihî ve mâlikihî ve’n-nâziri fîhi ve men nazara fîhi ve de’â li-kâtibi ve mağfîrihî bi’l-mağfireti ve’r-rahmeti...*”

exercise such discretion. In the first manuscript, Abid b. Hajj Sinan, who copied in Mecca, refers to Constantinople as *al-mahmiyaa* (June-July 1551).³³ In the second, Muhammed b. Isa Bosnevi, in his work, refers to Mecca as al-musharafa and al-mu’azzama (April 1551).³⁴ Meanwhile, in the third manuscript, Mustafa b. Abdullah b. Mustafa, in his text of the city of Akkerman, prays, ‘Oh Allah, protect the people of this city from all calamities in both this world and the Hereafter!’ (July 1551).³⁵ Although Ali b. Ahmed mentions the name of Rhodes ten times in his works, he never assigns a single positive adjective to the island. Each time, he merely invokes the name of the island, as if suggesting it oppressed his spirit: Rhodes. It is not uncommon for *müstensih*s to refrain from praying for the places where they worked, and Ali b. Ahmed’s approach can be attributed to this custom. The fact that he mentions the name of Rhodes ten times in the same *mecmua* without offering anything positive about it suggests the island represents a place he did not wish to be at.

Words imploring for amnesty

Ali b. Ahmed’s headings for both the manuscript and the original works are noteworthy, as they reflect his state of mind and soul. Indeed, in the headings he gave to this manuscript, he uses the word ‘Rhodes’ in the zahriye (1a), but more importantly, it is the adjective he employs for Rhodes that stands out. Ali b. Ahmed deems it appropriate to give the *mecmua* the title *Mecmû’u’l-âmâki’l-multekat fî beldeti Rodos dâri’l-firâk*, as mentioned above. The adjective “*dâru’l-firâk*” (land of exile) used for Rhodes accurately reflects the situation of the *müstensih* sent from Homs to Rhodes. Furthermore, it is highly likely that the *müstensih*’s use of “*firâk*” also alludes to the literary genre of *firâkname*. The term *firâkname* refers to a genre used for works that express the author’s separation from their homeland or a beloved person.³⁶ What is even more intriguing than the *müstensih*’s wordplay is the prayer after giving these headings to the manuscript. In the zahriye (1a), the prayerful passage written immediately beneath the title of the work is as follows: *Mecmû’u’l-âmâki’l-multekat fî beldeti Rodos dâri’l-firâk, Allahumme munne bi’t-telâki ve’l-ıtlâk. “Telâk”* is defined in the dictionary as ‘aspiration,’ and its choice is clear: the *müstensih* aspires to reunite with his loved ones. The next work, “ıtlak,” is undoubtedly used with a specific purpose, as it refers to setting free or the release of an exiled person in the dictionary. In the relevant documents, the issues of exile and amnesty are discussed under the ‘*nefy u ıtlâk orders*’,³⁷ while his amnesty request is referred to as ‘*af u ıtlak*’.³⁸ Thus, the *müstensih* Ali b. Ahmed, on the very first page of the *mecmua*, indirectly conveys that Rhodes is a land of exile/farewell (*dâru’l-firâk*) for him. He prays to God to set him free (ıtlak) and return him to his homeland. Furthermore, he asks to be reunited with his loved ones (*Telâk*). Similar prayer/hope will be expressed a century later by another exile on the island of Lemnos (Niyazi Mısri):

Haps içün geldi gelür ıtlâk içün fermân bana

*Evveli kahr, âhiri ihsân ider sultân bana.*³⁹

At the end of the same prayer in the zahriye, Ali b. Ahmed finishes it by invoking the names of God: al-Fattah, al-‘Alim, ar-Rahim, and ar-Razzaq: *Mecmû’u’l-âmâki’l-multekat fî beldeti Rodos dâri’l-firâk, Allahumme munne bi’t-telâki ve’l-ıtlâk, Yâ Fettâh Ya ‘Alim Yâ Rezzâk*. Undoubtedly, the *müstensih* pays attention to the harmony of the words when constructing each of the three groups: the heading of the work, the prayer passage, and God’s attributes (...Dâru’l-firâk, ... İtlâk... Rezzâk), since what is truly significant is that the chosen names of God are deeply related to his situation. The *müstensih* invokes the name al-Fattah (the Opener, who unlocks doors and offers assistance) to plead with God to open the gates of freedom, seeking release from the prison-like island of Rhodes and a return to Homs. He seems to use the name al-Alim (the All-knowing) to convey that, although the authorities in both Homs and Rhodes fail to recognize or appreciate his innocence, God is fully aware of his true circumstances. Through these names, the *müstensih* calls upon divine justice and mercy. The doors he wishes to open might be the gates of the Rhodes Fortress. In that case, there might also be a possibility of his defenses failing. Indeed, in later documents, there will be references to individuals who were to serve as fortress defenders in the Rhodes Castle. For example, in a late hatt-ı humayun, Sultan Mahmud II orders that a Moralism zimmi/non-Muslim named İstimaki be assigned as a fortress defender in Rhodes. “I was pleased to hear of the capture of this infidel. Let a decree be issued for his improvement in the Fortress of Rhodes, and may a designated envoy depart from here to execute the order, binding him in chains and delivering him to the Fortress of Rhodes.”⁴⁰ The name er-Rahim used in the prayer by Ali b. Ahmed is a plea for mercy, asking God to alleviate his situation, as God is aware of his plight. In these pleas, Ali b. Ahmed likely considers not only himself but also the family he left behind in Homs. This is reflected in his invocation of the name er-Rezzak, calling upon God as the Provider. Thus, he seeks God’s assistance for both himself, believing that his arrival on this island was due to a conspiracy, and for the family he left behind in Homs.

On the other hand, the titles of the works copied by this unwilling guest seeking his freedom are intriguingly related to his own situation within the *mecmua*. This may be nothing more than an innocent synchronicity. Yet, considering the *müstensih*’s wordplay, which subtly reflects his own situation, it seems likely that there is more at work than mere coincidence. As mentioned above, Ali b. Ahmed is the *müstensih* of eight out of the twelve works in the mentioned *mecmua*, while he is both the *müstensih* and the author of the remaining four works. He is the author of these works, which he created by selecting from other works. In this process, he preferred the term ‘multekât’ (affiliation) over ‘muhtârât,’ which carries a similar meaning. The title of the first work from which he compiled selections is *Meşâru’leşvâk ilâ mesâri’l-‘uşşâk ve musîri’l-garâmi ilâ dâri’s-selâm*. The words used in this title are not at all foreign to the situation he is in, such as ‘şevk’ (plural: eşvâk), meaning longing, yearning, or nostalgia; ‘aşk’ (plural: uşşâk), meaning love; ‘garâm,’ which also refers to a type of love; and ‘dâru’s-selâm,’ meaning the land of peace. All these words seem to represent another expression of his desire to move from Rhodes, the ‘dâru’l-firâk’ (the land of separation), to Homs, the ‘dâru’s-selâm’ (the land of peace). The titles of the works included in Ali b. Ahmed’s *mecmua* is not limited to these allusions to his own situation. In fact, another work he includes is ‘*Shifâu’l-kulûb mine’l-ahzuni ve’lkurûb’d*,’ which he attributes to Abu Mansur al-Sa’alabi (d. 1038) as the author. The meaning of the title, ‘The One That Leads Hearts from Grief and Sorrow to Bliss,’ seems to have been specifically chosen for the purpose of compiling selections (iltikât). It is well known that in nearly all of the manuscripts in Ali b. Ahmed’s *mecmua*, he implores God to free him from this grief and sorrow as soon as possible. His final work, from which he compiled selections, is titled *Muhtasaru’l-kelâm fî tekallubâtı havâdisi’l-eyyâm*, meaning ‘The essence of the constant change of events in time.’ From

33 Âbid b. Hâcc Sinan, Süleymaniye, Şehzade Mehmet, 29, 77a

34 Muhammed b. İsa Bosnevî, Süleymaniye, Yazma Bağışlar, 431, 110b

35 Mustafa b. Abdullah b. Mustafa, Manisa İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 2574, 15b

36 Orhan Kemal Tavukçu, “Türk Edebiyatında Firâk-nâme Adlı Eserler,” *Türk Kültürü İncelemeleri Dergisi* 10 (2004): 90.

37 Güneş, “Osmanlı Devleti’nde Sürgün Cezası,” 50.

38 Güneş, “Osmanlı Devleti’nde Sürgün Cezası,” 51.

39 Hasan Kavruk, “Hatıraları Işığında Niyâzî-i Mısırî,” *Ankara Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi* 39 (2009): 406.

40 Köksal, “Osmanlı Hukukunda Bir Ceza Olarak Sürgün,” 330

another perspective, this title conveys the following: Yesterday, the *müstensih*, who likely enjoyed a prestigious life in Homs, is today a prisoner in Rhodes. Yet, the way tomorrow will unfold remains unpredictable. Another work that Ali b. Ahmed meticulously compiled is *Reyâhînu'l-murtâhîn*, where the first word (Reyâhîn) means basil, and the second word (Murtahîn) refers to a person with inner peace. Peace is a constant theme in all his manuscripts. The word basil was likely chosen deliberately as the basil flower, much like the *müstensih* Ali b. Ahmed, does not thrive in solitude. It is sensitive and requires constant care. In this way, the *müstensih* seems to subtly express his desire not to be forgotten and abandoned in isolation on this island.

As a result of being kept out of view in Rhodes, Ali b. Ahmed is deprived of the attention he seeks in the catalog of manuscripts. His works, much like him, have been subjected to the same neglect in the catalogs. None of the works authored by him in this manuscript are attributed to him in the Süleymaniye Şehid Ali Pasha Catalog, and the catalogs reflect his obscurity on this island. For example, the title of the first work in the manuscript is recorded in the catalog as *Mecma'ul-'amâk*, with the author listed as Ibn al-Nahhas. It should be noted that the actual title of this work, which discusses the virtues of jihad, is neither *Mecma'u'l-Âmâk* nor is the author Ibn al-Nahhas. In the zahriye of the copy, the name Ibn al-Nahhas is written by the *müstensih*, Ali b. Ahmed. He does not write this to indicate that Ibn al-Nahhas is the author of this work; rather, he writes it to show that he has compiled selections from Ibn al-Nahhas's work *Meşâri'ul-'eşvâk ilâ mesâri'l-'uşşâk*. Ali b. Ahmed explicitly highlights this by referring to it as *el-Multekat min kitâbi Meşâri'l-'eşvâk ilâ mesâri'l-'uşşâk*. Consequently, the title of the work should be *el-Multekat min kitâbi Meşâri'l-'eşvâk ilâ mesâri'l-'uşşâk*, not *Mecma'ul-âmâk*, as it is written in the catalog. Indeed, as if anticipating that a mistake would be made, Ali b. Ahmed reiterates in the authorship note that the title of the work is exactly as stated. The work written in the catalog as *Mecmû'ul-âmâk* (not *Mecma'ul-âmâk* as written in the catalog) and mentioned in the zahriye of the copy (1a) is a rare example of a proper noun given to the *mecmua* by the *müstensih*, Ali b. Ahmed. The complete title of the manuscript is, as mentioned above, *Mecmû'u'l-âmâk el-Multekat fî Beldet-i Rodos dâri'l-firâk*. In this instance, Ali b. Ahmed is not only the *müstensih* of this *mecmua* but also its author. This implies that we are encountering a new work, about which we have no information in the catalog, and that it exists in the author's manuscript.

The circumstances surrounding the first work in the *mecmua* is similarly applicable to the second work. This work, too, was compiled by Ali b. Ahmed through *iltikât*, and, like the first work, it has been attributed to the author (Rakkî İbrahim b. Ahmed) from whom selections were compiled. Ali b. Ahmed, on the other hand, states in the zahriye (109a) that the work is a compilation (multekat): “*el-Multekat min kitâbi Reyâhini'l-Murtâhîn...*” This, like the previous copy, indicates that we are confronted with a new work written in the author's (Ali b. Ahmed's) handwriting. The author of the seventh copy of the *mecmua* is also Ali b. Ahmed, and the method remains the same, *iltikât*. Here, he compiles selections from the work Şifâu'l-Kulûb *mine'l-ehzuni ve'l-kurûb* by Ebu Mansûr es-Se'âlebî, but in the catalog, the work is attributed to Se'âlebî. Thus, it is a work written in the handwriting of a third author, though it is not written as a manuscript in the same *mecmua*.⁴¹ The tenth work in the *mecmua* was also created by Ali b. Ahmed, but again, his name does not appear in the *istinsah* notes. Indeed, like the other “*el-mültekat*” in the *mecmua*, this work is attributed not to Ali b. Ahmed, but to the author (Zeynuddin Halid b. Abdullah Ezherî, d. 1499) of the work from which the selections were compiled. As evidenced, even the catalogs prepared five centuries later remain indifferent to his exile in Rhodes, and despite all his anguish, it could not be forgotten. They miswrite the titles

41 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/007, 167a

of works and attribute their own authorship to others. Moreover, the indifference is not confined to these inaccuracies. As mentioned above, Ali b. Ahmed is the *müstensih* of all the works in the *mecmua*, naturally including the four works written in the author's handwriting, as they are his own compositions, yet the catalog lists him as the *müstensih* of only seven of them.⁴²

All the data regarding the personal narrative of the *müstensih* Ali b. Ahmed is found solely in the work he copied. His *istinsah* notes contribute to our understanding of his biography, even if we know nothing else about him. Based solely on these copies, we can summarize the information we have about him as follows: His name is Ali. His father's name is Ahmed, his grandfather's name is Ali, and his great-grandfather's name is Zuhre. His hometown is Homs. He must have stayed in Homs for many years, as in addition to the Humsi nisbah, he also indicates in seven separate works that Homs is his homeland. His scholarly background is from Al-Azhar. The family's origins trace back to the Sahaba, specifically the Ansar. In belief, he follows the Ash'ari madhhab, and in practice, the Hannafi madhhab. He is a Sufi, with a temperament aligned with the Qadiri order. In service, he is referred to as Khalidi, a title likely related to his profession. It is certain that he is well-educated, with at least four of his own authorship (works authored through affiliation in the *mecmua*), and he is prolific, having copied at least twelve copies in one year, four of which are his own authorship. He possesses a literary taste, as he carefully selects the words he uses. He has been married at least once and is likely still married. He has at least three children. Currently, he is in Rhodes, most likely in exile. We have no information about whom he is in contact with there, but he must have led a prestigious life in Homs. This is evident as he mentions missing his children, relatives, friends, and especially those who love him. Additionally, in seven of his manuscripts, he states that he is identified as Ebu'l-Fazl. In Islamic literature, patronymics are generally attributed to children. It should be noted that in some cases authors also use a patronymic to signify a personal trait. Thus, the title Ebu'l-Fazl might mean ‘father of Fazl,’ but it could also be used to signify ‘a virtuous person’.⁴³ He is likely referring to the second meaning of Ebu'l-Fazl. Ali b. Ahmed introduces himself as ‘Ali b. Ahmed’ and not as ‘the one whose patronymic is Ebu'l-Fazl,’ but rather as ‘the one titled Ebu'l-Fazl.’ This indicates that he is a well-respected and esteemed character in the town where he resides. Another group around Ali b. Ahmed consists of his enemies. It is difficult to determine the nature of their enmity, but it is certain that as a result of their efforts (or as Ali b. Ahmed believed), he was exiled to Rhodes. He refers to these people as instigators of discord. He was in Rhodes between May 22 and December 29, 1551⁴⁴, but there is no information in the available copies about when he arrived there. It is possible to infer that he arrived on the island around the date of this copy, May 22, 1551, based on the use of the word ‘nezil’ (guest) in the first copy of the *mecmua*. Given that he had the ability to author works and considering his social status and the enemies he had made, he could not have been very young. Additionally, it should be noted that he had at least three children. It is unlikely that he is very old, as it is probable that a new child was born in Homs three months after his arrival on the island. He is not an indifferent person; he constantly and longingly remembers his friends, relatives, children, and loved ones, misses them, and wishes to embrace them. His mood is tense; he is not happy to be in Rhodes, feels suffocated there, and longs to return to Homs as soon

42 Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/4/5/6/7/8/9/11. As for the place of copying, only eight of them are stated as being in Rhodes (Şehid Ali Pasha, 02705/1/2/4/6/8/10/11/12), there is no mention of copying location for the others.

43 There are other individuals known as Ebu'l-Fazl. For instance, Abbas, the son of Ali b. Abi Talib, is referred to as Ebu'l-Fazl due to his virtues. Similarly, during the reign of Akbar Shah, the scholar and statesman Ibn Mubarak al-'Allami was known as Ebu'l-Fazl, while his brother was known as Ebu'l-Feyz. Enver Korukçu, “Ebü'l-Fazl el-Allâmî,” *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi (DİA)*, 10: 313

44 The earliest and latest dates of telif-istinsah in the *mecmua*.

as possible. There is no information on how long he has been here or when his sentence will end, but it is very clear from the *istinsah* notes that he is in a state of expectation, as the works do not depict a profile resigned to his fate or waiting for his sentence to end. This allows us to speculate on the duration of the exile sentence. Tuğba Akıllı Acar, who studied the Exile and Release Book in the Ottoman Archives of the Prime Minister’s Office, reports that out of 164 exile sentences recorded, 54 did not specify any duration.⁴⁵ Thus, it seems that no definite duration was specified for Ali b. Ahmed’s exile in Rhodes, as he expresses his anticipation for release in each of the copies he wrote, approximately every fifteen days.

We currently have no information on whether Ali b. Ahmed, who bemoans his condition, has formally submitted his amnesty request. As noted in the relevant literature, there are instances where exiles have received a favourable reply to their amnesty requests. Such requests can be initiated by the exiles themselves or by their families or loved ones. For instance, the scribe of Haram al-Sharif, Hafız Ibrahim, who was exiled to Rhodes, had an amnesty request submitted on his behalf by his mother, wife, and two daughters residing in Medina.⁴⁶ Another exile, like Ali b. Ahmed, who tirelessly awaits the path of amnesty, is Mehmet Nuri. Mehmet Nuri, in his petition to the Sultan, states that his sick mother and children remaining in Âsitâne are in a dire situation. Therefore, he requests his amnesty for the grace of God, the spiritual well-being of the Prophet, and the buying of trouble of the Sultan and the Shehzadi: “This is the petition of your servant in the presence of your serene highness, seeking your compassion... That this rebellious, guilty, and sinful servant of yours, appealing for mercy for his faults, be granted release from the mentioned town and rejoiced by the decree granting freedom, which I have been awaiting day and night, through your showing of mercy...”⁴⁷

It is unknown whether Ali b. Ahmed’s relatives, like those of Mehmet Nuri, made any attempts to secure his amnesty. Nevertheless, it is certain that even if such attempts were made, they did not yield any results over the course of seven months.

Conclusion

It is evident that marginal notes are not merely gray areas that provide the imprints of the copy and the name of the *müstensih*. These works appear to be based on personal stories. Ali b. Ahmed also utilizes the manuscripts he made in Rhodes to convey aspects of his inner world to the reader, thus using these works and devoting them to a different purpose. The manuscripts he wrote here could serve as a source for researchers studying the history of emotions in Ottoman history. The words used or omitted by Ali b. Ahmed in these *istinsah* notes (and in some other parts of the *mecmua*) occasionally form part of his style. These works are longer and more subjective compared to other *istinsah* notes. In these works, he uses the copies he made in Rhodes as a means to bemoan his condition and complain to the readers. Based on the available information, we do not know whether Ali b. Ahmed escaped from Rhodes or, if he did, when he returned to his beloved city of Homs. It is possible that he never escaped from Rhodes and lies beneath one of the unnamed tombstones at the Murad Reis Tekke in Rhodes today. Nevertheless, these works highlight the necessity of utilizing manuscript elements more extensively in historical research. This undoubtedly begins with the preparation of a treasure trove catalog for tens of thousands of works.

45 There are five registers with this name. Acar has prepared a master’s thesis on the first hundred pages of the third register. Tuğba Akıllı Acar, “3 Nolu Nefy İtlâk Defteri’nin (S. 1-100) Transkripsiyonu ve Değerlendirilmesi,” (Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Gaziosmanpasha Üniversitesi, 2006), 338.

46 Köksal, “Osmanlı Hukukunda Bir Ceza Olarak Sürgün,” 314.

47 Köksal, “Osmanlı Hukukunda Bir Ceza Olarak Sürgün,” 304.

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48 In the catalog, it is written under the name of İbnu’n-Nehhâs, Muhyiddin Ahmed b. İbrahim Dîmeşkî; yet, the correct attribution should be as stated above.

49 In the catalog, it is written under the name of Rakkî, İbrahim b. Ahmet; yet, the correct attribution should be as stated above.

50 In the catalog, it is written under the name of Sa’âlebî, Abdulmelik b. Muhammed b. İsmail Nîsâbüri; yet the correct attribution should be as stated above.

51 In the catalog, it is written under the name of al-Azhari (Ezherî), Zeynuddîn Halid b. Abdullah Cercâvî.