

Famagusta in Namık Kemal's Letters and Writings During his Exile

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The city of Famagusta surrendered after a prolonged siege during the Ottoman conquest of the island in 1571. The city was damaged severely because of the military struggle but in time Ottoman Famagusta became a renowned place of exile, like Accra and Taif elsewhere in the empire. One of the exiles sent to the city was Namık Kemal, who has since become known as the poet of the fatherland and liberty. The excitement shown by the people when his play *Vatan Yahut Silistre* was staged angered the sultan, and he was expelled to Famagusta. He recounted Famagusta profusely in his letters written to his friends and in his other writings during the thirty-eight months he spent there. These letters and writings are vitally important documents in our attempt to arrive at a greater understanding of nineteenth-century Famagusta.