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Doç. Dr. Derya İLİÇ
Doç. Dr. İlknur AYDOĞDU KARAASLAN

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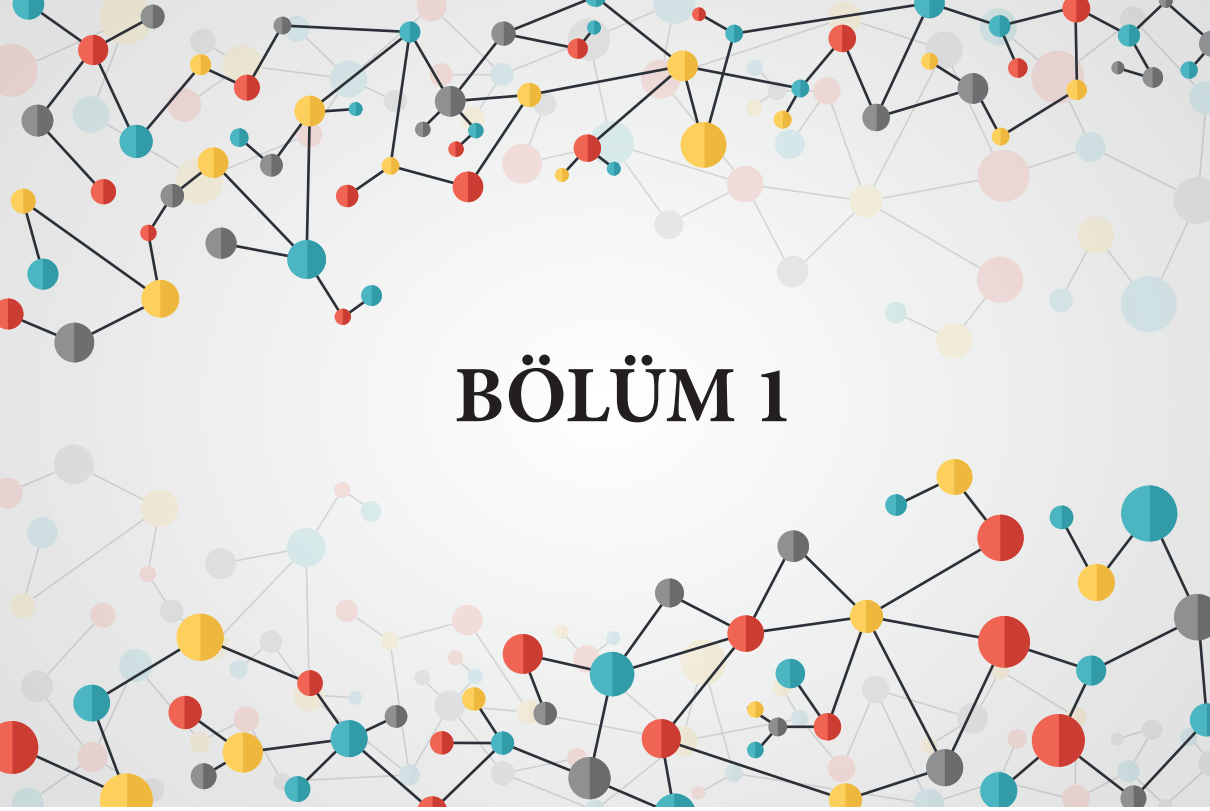

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Yavuz Selim ALTINOK[1]

1 Lecturer-Doktorant, Akdeniz University, Social Sciences Institute, Depatment of History, Antalya. 0000-0002-8060-4909 | yselimaltinok@akdeniz.edu.tr

Introduction

The Mediterranean has the characteristic of being a sea where various cultures meet with each other through ports and sea routes (Yılmaz 2016, 134). The part of this sea, which is on the west side and extends from Phaselis in the east to Fethiye in the west, is called the ancient Lycian region (İşler 2021, 205). The Lycian region is divided into three geographical parts that are named as Eastern, Central and Western Lycia. This geographical distinction, due to the effect of living conditions on culture, also shows causes a cultural difference. The geography between the Bey Mountains and the sea forms the border of Eastern Lycia and extends to the Limyros Stream with its western border. The border of Central Lycia starts from Limyros Stream and reaches Eşen Stream in the west. The border of Western Lycia is the geography stretching from Eşen Stream to Fethiye (Akşit 1967, 28; Çevik 2015, 19). (Map.1)



Map 1. The map of Likya Region (Jacobek, 1994.)

The region enetered to rising period during the Byzantium[1] dominance especially after the Vth century. In addition, Lycia has managed to become an important place in Mediterranean trade and sea transportation due to its location (İşler 2021, 205). Besde this, the fact that the Lycian coast is located on the important routes of the Eastern Mediterranean that reaches the ports of Cyprus, Syria, Palestine and Egypt has made it a compulsory stop for people and trade ships traveling from Europe to Jerusalem (Zimmermann 1992, 206; Foss 1994, 1-39; Jacobek 1999, 111). Sheltered ports such as Andriake, Tristomon, and Phoenix in the Lycian region have always been places of migration for people fleeing from severe weather events and pirates. The people who migrated in these ports benefited from various trade opportunities in this region, and they also handled the maintenance and repair works of their ships here (Pryor 2004, 69). The routes

1 Byzantium is one of the names used to express the region remaining in the eastern lands of the Roman Empire after the division of the Roman Empire into two in 395. According to the description of the subject in the study, the terms Byzantine Empire or Byzantine State were used instead of the word Byzantine in some places.

of the above-mentioned ships start from Alexandria to Sur or Beirut, then either heading north towards Antakya and west along the Lycian coast, or following the southern coast of Cyprus through Rhodos, Karpathos and south of Crete towards to the West (Pryor 2004, 24).

The reasons such as piracy activities, epidemics, natural disasters, which started to increase in the VIth century on the coasts of Lycia, caused results that destroyed the coastal settlements and caused a decrease in the population. The earthquakes that took place in the VIth and VIIIth centuries were especially effective in coastal settlements such as Myra, Kekova, Simena and Aperlai, and the coastal part collapsed into the sea for this reason. In addition to these disasters, the Great plague[2] epidemic that occurred in 542 and started in the Sassanid lands, especially in Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, and in the port cities of Lycia and Pamphylia in the Mediterranean, caused the population decrease in the port settlements (Duggan 2004, 137-140; İşler 2013, 286). After the epidemic, St. Nicolaos, the Bishop of Myra, proposed not to trade from Alacadağ and Myra to coastal settlements in order to prevent this epidemic from reaching the inner regions from the coastal areas, and as a result, the flow of goods from the mountainous areas to the coastal areas came to a halt, and economic problems were experienced in the region (Foss,1996, 307).

The dominance of the Byzantine Empire in the Eastern Mediterranean, hence in the Lycia region, began when Emperor Constantine founded the city of Constantinople in 330 AD and built a new center of power in the eastern lands of the Roman Empire. This new center of power, which emerged, also managed to become the owner of the naval power created by the Roman Empire, especially in the Eastern Mediterranean (Rankov 2002, 101). After this development, the Sassanids also struggled for the Mediterranean, which came under Byzantine rule. Especially in the VIth century, the Sassanid ruler Khosrow I tried to create a great naval power. The Sassanids chose the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea as their first target in the seas. Since the beginning of the VIIth century, the Sassanids, who were the rivals of the Byzantine Empire in the Mediterranean, captured many Mediterranean islands and port cities in the wars between 602-628 (Dmitriev 2017, 727, 735-736). The Lycian region was naturally affected

2 The disease known as the bubonic plague epidemic, which occurred in 542, caused an unprecedented disaster in every respect. The epidemic, which emerged in Ethiopia, showed its effect in the whole Mediterranean, from Iran in the east to Spain in the west. The epidemic, which manifested itself in the spring of 542 in Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, ravaged the capital for four months. So much so that, although it was estimated that the population of Constantinople might have reached five hundred thousand in the 530s before this epidemic, it is estimated that the population of the capital may have decreased to around thirty-forty thousand in the middle of the VIIIth century with the local epidemics that continued until the 750s after the epidemic in 542. (These population figures are controversial). see: Abû'l Farac 1999, 153-154; Mango 2008, 77; Haldon 2007, 73.

by these wars. Xanthos and Limyra were mainly the affected areas (Hellenkemper 1993, 99-106).

Although the pressure of the Sassanids on the Byzantine Empire decreased after 628, the Arabs[3] started to attack the Byzantine Empire in the Mediterranean right after the Sassanids. During the Arab raids, when the Lycian coasts gained strategic importance, the region was devastated. In particular, the attack carried out by the Arab navy in 655 and recorded as the Battle of Zatu's-savari brought even greater destruction to the Lycian region than the Sassanid attacks. As a result of this war, Egypt, which had a very important position in the domination of the Mediterranean for the Byzantine Empire, passed into the hands of the Arabs (Küçükaşçı 2006, 378; Ostrogorsky 2006, 108-109). Although the attacks of the Arabs occur every year, they especially took place in the summer months and lasted for about two months. Apart from these attacks, the Mediterranean coast was also exposed to pressure from Arab pirates. During these struggles, especially the fact that Rhodes came out of the Byzantine Empire's dominance caused the region to be open to attacks (Foss 1994, 3; Küçükaşçı 2006, 377-378; Çevik 2015, 46). The struggle for Arab-Byzantine domination throughout the Mediterranean and in the Lycian coasts began in the second half of the VIIth century and continued until the end of the 11th century. In this process, as it is explained in the following sections, very important wars were occured between the two great states in the region, and according to the results of these wars, the sovereignty in the Mediterranean constantly changed between different powers.

In this study, firstly, commercial relations and the strategic importance of the region were tried to be revealed through the maritime activities on the Lycian coast during the Middle Ages. It is a fact that the Lycian coasts, which are the subject of the study, were in the interest of the states that were advanced in maritime and wanted to advance in terms of commercial relations during a long period of the Middle Ages. Starting from this point, the effects of the Mediterranean trade on the Lycian region will be emphasized. Secondly, the struggle for dominance of various states in the Mediterranean throughout the Middle Ages and in the Lycian coasts in particular will be discussed. While this struggle was being put forward, the reflections of the interstate competition in the Mediterranean to the Lycian region were tried to be determined by examining the sources.

During this examination, the period was examined by dividing into sub-titles, especially on the basis of Archibald R. Lewis's division of the

3 In this study, the words of Arab is used for the peoples who accepted Islam after Islam and formed a state organization. In addition, in the study, the terms "Muslims" or "Islamic State" were used instead of Arabs in some places, according to the narrative of the subject.

events in the Mediterranean into five periods, stating that Islamic maritime began in the Middle Ages after the Arab conquest of Cyprus.[4]

1. Maritime Activities and Trade on the Lycian Coasts

After the division of the Roman Empire into East and West, the region covering the east of the Mediterranean Sea and the Adriatic Sea became a region under the control of the Byzantine Empire. After this period, the Byzantine Empire succeeded in expanding its sovereignty to the Aegean Sea and the Black Sea, as well as the Mediterranean. In the same period, domestic and foreign trade activities started to increase in the Mediterranean (Yılmaz 2016, 138).

During the reign of Emperor Justinian, first Carthage in 533, then Sicily in 535, and finally the Byzantine Empire in the southeast of Spain in 554, ensured the in the Mediterranean (Haldon 2007, 46; Berktay 2019, 77-79). However, these achievements did not continue in the following periods and soil losses started. Especially after the capture of Egypt by the Islamic armies in 640, the dominance and commercial activities of the Byzantine Empire in the Mediterranean were interrupted (Ostrogorsky 2006, 103; Haldon 2007, 168; Berktay 2019, 86). As a result of this situation, the annual grain products coming from Egypt for the capital Constantinople started to fail and the ports of Patara and Andriake, which were intermediate stations in this grain trade, became ineffective. These Lycian port cities have suffered a great deal of economic damage due to the decrease in their trade volume with Constantinople (Hild 2004, 4; Hellenkemper & Hild 2004, 115). In addition to this situation, the Islamic State seized control of the western and southern coasts of Anatolia as a result of their attacks on the capital of the Byzantine Empire between 622-677. Especially the Arabs, who spent the winter of 672 on the coasts of Lycia and Cilicia, probably seized the products of the people of the region (Foss 1994, 3). These developments in the Mediterranean caused the Byzantine Empire to experience great difficulties both politically and economically.

In the VIIth century, when the Sassanid and Arab attacks increased their intensity, the road transportation network of the Byzantine Empire

4 Archibald R. Lewis, Naval Power and Trade in the Mediterranean AD 500-1100, Princeton 1951. Lewis, Medieval divided events in the Mediterranean into five periods and these periods are 1- 641-752: Muslim Incursions 2- 752-827: Byzantine Empire Domination, 3- 827-960: Islamic Domination, 4- 960-1043: Age of Transformation, 5- 1043-1100: Dominance of the West.. Apart from Lewis, there are other historians who divide the events that took place in the Mediterranean during the Middle Ages into periods. For example; John H. Pryor-Elizabeth M. Jeffreys, Age of the dromon: The Byzantine Navy, ca. 500-1204, Leiden 2011. divides the events that took place in the Mediterranean in the Middle Ages into five periods. These periods are; 1- 400-560: German attacks and the power of the Empire, 2- 560-750: Muslim attacks and great development, 3- 750-875: The balance of confusion, 4-: 875-1025: Byzantine strengthening, 1025-1204: It is the empowerment of the Latin West.

was interrupted. This situation has led to the preference of sea transportation in other regions except Anatolia. Although the Arab attacks caused great political problems in terms of their effects, the people living in the coastal areas continued to trade the products they produced (Lopez 1978, 71-72). It is known that starting from the VIIth century, the interest of Arab traders in Lycia increased and they traveled to the region. However, although the interest of Arab traders in the region increased, the Arabs began to move freely on the Lycian coast after the Zâtü's-savârî war, which will be described in the second part of the study, on the shores of Phoenix, forced the people living in the coastal areas of the Lycian region to migrate to the interior. In addition, Lycia suffered from commercial losses and security problems arose in the region (Çevik 2015, 46). It can be understood from the coins that the region's population decreased in this period and that there were losses in terms of commercial activities, thanks to the archaeological researches. The insecurity caused by the Arab raids in the region can be shown as the reason why no coins 150 years after the Constans II reign in Andriake could be found during the excavations of St. Nicholas (Bulut & Şengül 2010, 121). Based on this information, it can be said that in the VIIth century, trade in the Mediterranean, especially on the Lycian coast, was interrupted during the Arab attacks, but continued, albeit slightly, by sea.

The dominance of the Byzantine Empire in the Mediterranean trade began to decline gradually in the VIIIth century. In this period, commercial activities in the Eastern Mediterranean were under the control of the Arabs. While this was the case in the Mediterranean, the Byzantine Empire organized various fairs on the Aegean and northern Anatolian coasts to keep trade alive. Thanks to these fairs, port cities such as Ephesos, Klazomenai, Smyrna, Miletos, Phocaea became trade centers (Yılmaz 2016, 139). Between the VIIIth and 12th centuries, Lycia and its environs succeeded to become one of the important ways of transportation from Baghdad, Damascus and Egypt to Constantinople. It also became an important market for Anatolia in the same period (Vryonis 1971, 14; Küçükaşçı 2006, 376.). After the Byzantine Empire lost control of the Mediterranean in the VIIIth century, its desire to shift commercial activities to Aegean and coastal Anatolian port cities and the organization of fairs for this shows that it gave importance to maritime trade.

The conquest of Sicily and Crete by the Islamic State in the first quarter of the IXth century (in the 820s) and the Arab attacks intensified in the Lycia region in the period until 961. As a result of the attacks, the people of the region living in coastal areas, rural areas and mountainous regions sought ways to protect themselves from these attacks by building defensive walls and watchtowers (Ostrogorsky 2006, 192; Erdem 2006, 244;

168; Haldon 2007, 108; Berktay 2019, 93). By the end of this century, the maritime trade route expanded. The trade route that started from Greece extended to Ephesos and Smyrna in Western Anatolia, Sinope and Trapezus in the Black Sea, and Attalia, the city of Pamphylia region adjacent to Lycia in the Mediterranean (Lewis 1978, 501).

As a result of archaeological research, it was seen that the people living on the Lycian coast in the 10th century retreated to the hills. The transfer of control of Crete in 961 and Cyprus in 964 to the Byzantine Empire ensured the re-establishment of the environment of trust in the region (Ostrogorsky 2006, 269; Erdem 2006, 244; Küçükaşçı 2006, 381). The conquest of Sicily and Carthage by the Emir of Cairo in this century caused the Byzantine Empire to continue its maritime trade with Naples, Genoa and Pisa by using the Strait of Messina. The Arabs seized the Strait of Messina upon this situation. The Byzantine Empire, on the other hand, started to use the Bari Port in Southern Italy this time for the continuation of trade (Rice 1998, 168). In this period, it can be said that the control of Mediterranean trade was in the Byzantine Empire.

The control of maritime trade between Arab, Byzantine Empire and European countries passed into the hands of Western countries by the 11th century. It is known that western merchant ships organized more expeditions to Byzantine and Arab ports. In addition, ships belonging to the Byzantine Empire in the 11th and 12th centuries were engaged in commercial activities in both Egyptian and Levant ports (Pryor 1992, 136, 139, 149; Yılmaz, 2016, 140). Towards the end of the 11th century, with the effects of the Battle of Manzikert, the Turkmens began to settle in the regions under the rule of the Byzantine Empire in Anatolia, resulting in an atmosphere of turmoil. The Lycian region was also affected by this turmoil. Taking advantage of this situation, the Venetian pirates started to come to the Lycian shores. However, even though the Crusader army, which came to the region in 1097, regained the control of the region and left the administration of the region to the Byzantine Empire, Turkmen groups continued to settle in the region (Erdem 2006, 244).

In the Byzantine Empire, during the reign of the Komnenos Dynasty (1081-1185), commercial activities were reactivated in coastal settlements such as Patara, Myra, Telmessos, Xanthos in the Lycian region. During this period, places of worship and defensive structures were built especially in coastal settlements. In addition, although the prosperity and population status of late antiquity has not been reached, the Lycian region has succeeded in being a desired place for both the Byzantine Empire and Venice due to the advances in maritime trade (Erdem 2006, 245).

From the beginning of the 12th century, the progress of the Turks in Anatolia accelerated and their sovereignty areas expanded.. After the Second Crusade in 1148, the northern parts of the Mediterranean coast were under the control of the Turks, and Phaselis, one of the important Lycian cities, was again captured by the Turks in 1158. The Byzantine Empire, on the other hand, managed to hold Antalya where was one of the most important cities of the Mediterranean, in this period (Harrison 1963, 121-122; Güçlü 2007, 224). After the capture of Phaselis, the Turks entered the eastern parts of Lycia. After the Turks won the Battle of Myriokephalon, which took place in 1176 between the Anatolian Seljuk State and the Byzantine Empire, both Anatolia proved to be a definite Turkish homeland and the gates of the Lycian region were opened to the Turks until the end. Before this war, the Byzantine Empire provided various concessions to Italian sailors on the Lycian coast with the agreements it made with Genoa in 1169 and Pisa in 1170. However, after the Battle of Myriokephalon, the interest of the Turks in the Lycian coasts increased while the relations between the Byzantine Emperor Andronikos I and Pisans was deteriorated, therefore, the Pisans began to piracy in Lycia. The most important naval base of the pirates in the region is the settlement of Finike (Phoenix), known as the Bay of Pisa. During returning from the Third Crusade in 1191, the King of France, Philippe Augustus II, destroyed four pirate ships in the Bay of Pisa. In these years, the western side of the Xanthos valley was determined as the southwestern border between the Byzantine Empire and the Turks. Starting from the Fourth Crusade until 1261, the Lycian region has been a place where Turks mostly established sovereignty and lived (Foss 1994, 3, 34-36; Erdem 2006, 246; Güçlü 2007, 224).

2. Muslim Raids to Mediterranean (641-752)

Beside being one of the most active regions of the world throughout history, the Mediterranean is also one of the regions that caused the most struggle for dominance between civilizations. The region has always attracted the attention of the great states due to its location on the sea and land trade routes. Due to this important economic reason, many wars were fought for the Mediterranean. From a political point of view, the region was under the control of various states, especially during the Middle Ages. It would not be wrong to say that great and powerful civilizations were established and strengthened in and around the Mediterranean. Before discussing the Muslim incursions into the Mediterranean, it is necessary to briefly discuss the Mediterranean struggle of the Sassanids, who were in a race for dominance with the Byzantine Empire for the region. The Sassanid dynasty started to rule Iran from 224 and managed to rule for 416 years until the Muslims ended this dynasty in 640 (Abû'l Farac 1999, 130). The Sassanids considered themselves the successors of the Achaemenids and

claimed all the territories that had previously belonged to the Persian Empire. This situation caused the Byzantine Empire and the Sassanids to come face to face politically and militarily (Ostrogorsky 2006, 40). The struggle, which started with the entry of the Sassanid ruler Ardashir I into Anatolia in 231, spread to the Mediterranean shores in 540, when the Sassanid ruler I. Khosrau broke the eternal peace agreement with Emperor Justinian and attacked Syria, then raided and captured Antakya (Abû'l Farac 1999, 152-153; Ostrogorsky 2006, 65-66; Haldon 2007, 108; Cheynet 2008, 48-49).

After the Sassanids captured Antakya, the Byzantine Empire had to make peace and the peace treaty was made permanent in 562. However, Justin II, who ascended the Byzantine throne upon the death of Emperor Justinian, did not accept this agreement in 565. Thereupon, the Byzantine-Sassanid wars started again. The wars that started during the reign of Justin II continued during the reigns of Emperor Tiberios (578-82) and Emperor Maurice (582-602). As a result of these wars, the Byzantine Empire took advantage of the internal turmoil in the Sassanid Empire. Emperor Mavrikios supported Sassanid Prince Khosrau II and signed a peace treaty in 591 in which the interests of the Byzantine Empire were at the forefront (Ostrogorsky 2006, 74; Haldon 2007, 55; Bahadır 2011, 716).

The peace treaty was annihilated in 602, when Emperor Mavrikios was deposed as a result of a rebellion in the Byzantine army and Phokas became the Byzantine Emperor instead. Upon this change of throne, Sassanid Ruler II. Khosrow attacked Byzantine territory. In the wars that started in 605, the Sassanid armies advanced as far as Kayseri in Anatolia (Abû'l Farac 1999, 167; Ostrogorsky 2006, 78). By 614, Jerusalem, Mesopotamia in 615, and Egypt, which was one of the most important places for Mediterranean domination, passed under Sasanian control in 619 (Ostrogorsky 2006, 88-89; Haldon 2007, 55.; Bahadır 2011, 717-718). In addition, as mentioned above, these successes of the Sassanids showed themselves in the Mediterranean, and as a result of the wars between 602-628, many Mediterranean islands and Mediterranean port cities came under the control of this state.

Upon these developments, Byzantine Emperor Heraclius set out on a campaign against the Sassanids in 627 with the support he received from the Khazar Khan. The Byzantine Empire won the war at Nineveh. After the war, Khosrow II was deposed from the Sassanid throne. Emperor Heraclius continued to advance in 628 and dominated the Sassanids. After these successes, a peace treaty was signed between the two states in 629. According to the agreement, the Sassanids withdrew from the regions in the Mediterranean, especially Anatolia. After the withdrawal, the Byzantine Empire re-established dominance in these regions (Vasiliev 1943, 252;

Hitti 1989, 122; Abû'l Farac 1999, 171; Ostrogorsky 2006, 96; Bamyacı & Güçlüay, 2017, 390).

The wars between the Byzantine Empire and the Sassanids caused the power of both states to decrease. Undoubtedly, the biggest gain from this struggle was the newly established Islamic State. The reason for this is that in the regions where the Sassanids retreated, the religion of Islam spread through conquest movements and made rapid progress.

The first military conflict between the Muslims and the Byzantine Empire. It happened in 629 when Muhammad (pbuh) was alive. The Byzantine Empire won this first battle, which was recorded as the Battle of Mu'te (İbnü'l-Esîr 1991a, 217-221; İbn Kesîr 1995, 405-420; Apak, 2009, 99). In the following years, the conflicts increased gradually and by 635, the Islamic armies first captured Damascus, then won the Yarmuk war in 636 and took Syria under control. As a result of this war, the Byzantine Empire had to retreat to Anatolia. The Islamic armies, who managed to break the resistance of Byzantium, first conquered Jerusalem in 637, Palestine in 638 and Egypt in 640. Thanks to these conquests, Muslims met the Mediterranean for the first time (Vasiliev 1943, 269; Bostan 1989, 232; Ostrogorsky 2006, 103.; Pirenne 2006, 172; Cheynet 2008, 51; Bamyacı & Güçlüay 2017, 392-293).

The Byzantine Empire was looking for various solutions to stop the rapid progress of the Arabs, to prevent the conquest of other cities by the Arabs, especially the Lycia region in Western Anatolia, and to take back the lost cities.[5] One of these solutions is the naval thema[6] called Caravisionorum, which was created during the reign of Emperor Heraclius to protect the Mediterranean coast from Arab attacks (Vasiliev 1943, 288; Demirkent 1992, 233).

Although some cities on the Mediterranean coast were captured during the caliphate of Hz. Omar, maritime could not develop.[7] The real interest of the Islamic State in the Mediterranean coincides with the period after

5 The Korakesyon, Alara castles and six castles near Alanya, which were captured during the conquest of Alanya, which is located in the east of Antalya, by the Anatolian Seljuk Sultan Alaeddin Keykubad I, were the Byzantine Emperor IV. It was built by Constantine to protect the Mediterranean from Arab raids. See: Konyalı 1946, 38.

6 Thema: It is the name given to the military, administrative and socio-economic form of administration under the command of the commander or commanders who held the military and administrative power in the Byzantine Empire between the 7th and 11th centuries. see: Kaegi 1967, 52; Ragia 2009, 195; Keçiş & Güneş, 2018, 96.

7 The reason why maritime could not develop in the Umar period: As the Syrian governor of the period, Muawiya, wrote a letter to Umar to start his maritime studies, he requested a report on maritime affairs from the governor of Egypt, another coastal region of the Islamic caliph's period, Amr bin al-Ass. Upon Amr bin al-Ass's report stating that the seas are frightening and that it would be right to stay away, Omar accepted the opinion of Amr b al-Ass from these two views and did not carry out any studies on maritime. In addition to this situation, the fact that no maritime initiatives were taken during the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and Abu Bakr periods

Hz. Osman became the caliph. The biggest reason for this interest was the Byzantine Empire's attack with a large navy to take back Egypt, which has a very important strategic and economic position for the Mediterranean, from the Arabs, and its advance in the regions up to Damietta. The Arabs, who could not defend against this advance of the Byzantine navy, started to build ships in Egypt and Syria as a solution. Cyprus, which has a very important position for the Mediterranean with the ships produced, was besieged in 648-649 under the command of Muawiya and as a result of the siege, Cyprus was taxed. This achievement was recorded as the first naval victory of the Islamic State. In addition, Cyprus is very important as it is the first island to be conquered (Rodgers 1967, 33-35; Hill 1972, 257-258; Hitti 1989, 23.; Bostan 1989, 232; İbnü'l-Esîr 1991b, 101-104; İbn Kesîr 1995, 251-252; Taberi 1998, 544; El-Belâzurî 2013, 178-183).

With the conquest of the island of Cyprus by the Muslims, the dominance of the Byzantine Empire, which had been going on for centuries in the Mediterranean, disappeared and the Mediterranean's characteristic of being the Mare Nostrum-Mare Internum (Our Sea-Inland Sea), which existed in the Byzantine period, came to an end. The progress of the Arabs in the seas did not remain only in the Eastern Mediterranean, but continued to grow by including the Western Mediterranean in the following years (Vasiliev 1943, 270; Pirenne 2006, 176).

Just one year after the conquest of Cyprus by the Islamic navies, Arvad Island, which was located on the Syrian coast and was the stronghold of the Byzantine Empire, was captured. Between 652 and 654, this time the island of Rhodes became the target of Muslims. In this attack on the island of Rhodes, the ruined bronze pieces of the famous Rhodes statue Helios (Colossus)[8] were taken as trophy and sold to a Jewish merchant from Edessa (Hitti 1989, 253; Norwich 1990, 315; Demirkent 1992, 233; Ostrogorsky 2006, 108; Kiel 2008, 155). The Islamic navy continued its attacks in the Mediterranean by landing in Cyprus for the second time in 653-654. The reason for this removal was that the people living on the island united against the Muslims with the help of Byzantium. After this landing, a garrison of 12 thousand people was established in Cyprus by the Muslims (Hill 1972, 257-268; İbnü'l-Esîr 1991b, 142; Adıgüzel 2019, 1190).

These successes of the Islamic navies in the Mediterranean caused the Byzantine Empire to gradually decrease the area of action in this important

caused Omar to keep his distance from maritime. see: Hourani 1995, 54-55; İbn Haldun 1997, 645; El-Belâzürî 2013, 178.

8 The Helios statue is a 32-33 meter long work made by using bronze and iron between 294-282 BC by Khares, a student of Lysippos, who was the sculptor of Alexander the Great and is one of the famous artists of the fourth century BC. The statue survived for 56 years, was destroyed as a result of an earthquake that occurred on the island of Rhodes in 227-226 BC, the remains of the statue remained. see: Suttard 2016, 240.

region. In addition, the Byzantine Empire wanted to re-dominate the Mediterranean by taking back the lands captured by the Arabs. For this purpose, Emperor II. Konstans started preparations by forming a large fleet of 500-600 ships. Upon this situation, Muaviye Egyptian Governor Abdullah b. Sa'd b. Together with Abu Serh, he made counter-preparations. Abdullah b. The Islamic navy, consisting of 200 ships under the command of Sa'd, set out for the Anatolian coast in 655, departing from Akka. On the way, the Syrian navy sent by Muawiya also joined this navy. These two great navies met in Phoenix (Phoenicia) in the Lycian region.[9] The Byzantine navy was personally commanded by the Emperor Konstans II. The Islamic navy was commanded by Abdullah bin Sa'd. The war known in history as Zâtü's-Savâri-Zu's-Savari (savari: ship's masts) lasted for a few days. The Muslims won the war in which both armies suffered great losses. The Emperor escaped wearing the clothes of one of the soldiers of Constans II and escaped from being a prisoner. This war is very important both in terms of being recorded as the first great naval victory of the Muslims and in terms of the complete end of the Byzantine Empire's dominance in the Eastern Mediterranean (Lewis 1951, 57; Rodgers 1967, 35; Hitti 1989, 253; Bostan 1989, 232; Norwich 2006, 316; İbnü'l-Esîr 1991b, 121-124; Demirkent 1992, 233; Hourani 1995, 59; İbn Kesîr 1995, 259-260; Abû'l Farac 1999, 181-182; Taberi 1998, 549-550; Ostrogorsky 2006, 108-109; Küçükaşçı 2006, 378; Öztürk 2013, 152-153; Adıgüzel 2019, 1191-1192).

As a result of the internal turmoil in the Islamic world after the Zâtü's-Savari War, Caliph Osman was martyred in 656. After this event, the struggles between Hazrat Ali and Muawiya for the caliphate continued until Hazrat Ali was martyred in 661. In this process, the conquest movements of the Muslims came to a standstill. Undoubtedly, these internal turmoils benefited the Byzantine Empire the most (Demirkent 1992, 233; Ostrogorsky 2006, 109; Apak 2009, 102-103).

During the Umayyad period, which started with the caliphate of Muawiya, political unity was established in the Islamic world and the conquest movements were resumed both on land and at sea. The Islamic navy resumed its struggle in the Mediterranean and in 673 Rhodes was captured. After this conquest, the islands of Kos and Chios in the Mediterranean and Arvad Island in Marmara were also captured by the Muslims. In addition to these conquests, the Islamic navy carried out expeditions to Sicily and Crete Islands (Vasiliev 1943, 270; İbnü'l-Esîr 1991b, 494; Bozkurt 1991, 497; Pirenne 2006, 176; Apak 2009, 106). It is seen that the naval conquests of the Muawiya period tended towards the Marmara and the Aegean.

9 There are different opinions that the place of the battle of Zatussavari, in which two great armies came face to face in the Mediterranean, was Alexandria, not Phoenix.. see: Bozkurt 1991, 497.

The biggest reason for this is the desire to conquer Constantinople. As a result, in 677,[10] the capital of the Byzantine Empire was besieged by land and sea, but this siege failed and the Muslims retreated by making a peace treaty (Lewis 1951, 61; Rodgers 1967, 35; Bozkurt 1991, 497; Demirkent 1992, 234; Ostrogorsky 2006, 115-116; Norwich 2006, 323-32). After Muawiya died in 680 just after the siege of Constantinople, Yazid, who succeeded him as the caliph, disbanded the Cyprus Garrison and withdrew the Muslim forces settled in the Aegean islands (İbnü'l-Esîr 1991b, 494; El-Belâzurî 2013, 178-183; Utku 2005, 187).

Despite Yazid's withdrawal from the Eastern Mediterranean, the activities of the Umayyads in the Western Mediterranean continued. The Umayyad governor, Hassan Ibn al-Nu'man, initiated the Islamic maritime business in the region thanks to the Coptic shipyard personnel he brought to North Africa from Egypt (Lewis 1951, 64; Pryor & Jeffreys 2011, 28). Although the naval and naval activities of the Umayyads in the Western Mediterranean were important, the retreats in the Eastern Mediterranean created opportunities for the Byzantine Empire to regain power in the Mediterranean.

Byzantine Empire forces succeeded in capturing the city of Kayrevan in North Africa in 683. Thereupon, the Muslims set out from Berka[11] to North Africa with a large army to avenge this defeat in 689, but they suffered a great defeat against the Byzantine navy (Lewis 1951, 61-63; Fayda 1993, 389; Demirkent 2002, 372). Despite this defeat, Muslims managed to establish dominance in North Africa between 693-700. This success was achieved by the two captures of Carthage, the important city of the Byzantine Empire in Africa, in 695 and 700 (Lewis 1951, 63-64, 80; Bozkurt 1991, 497; Demirkent 1992, 234; Ostrogorsky 2006, 131; Haldon 2007, 101). After these successes, the Islamic navies launched an attack on Sicily in 703. In 704, the islands of Sicily and Sardinia were again targeted. Balearic and Majorca were struck in 708. By 710, Sardinia was captured and the conquest of Africa and Andalusia was completed for Muslims (Lewis 1951, 64-65; Bozkurt 1991, 497; Demirkent 1992, 234).

The target of the Islamic navy in 713 was Crete. The island was captured but this was not permanent (Pryor & Jeffreys 2011, 33; El-Belâzurî 2013, 270). In 717, Constantinople was once again besieged by the Muslims. Preparations for this siege were made on the shores of Lycia. Although the Byzantine Empire, who was aware of this situation, wanted to prevent the preparations, the Muslims prevented this situation thanks to the

10 There are sources that indicate the year 674 instead of 677 regarding the date of the siege of Constantinople by the Muslims.. see: Ostrogorsky 2006, 115.

11 Berka is a peninsula starting from the Cebeliahdar mountains and descending towards the Mediterranean with steep slopes. In the west of the peninsula is the Great Sirte Bay. see: Bilge 1992, 504-505.

measures they took (Küçükaşçı 2006, 378). Rhodos and Marmara Islands were captured by the Muslims in order to serve as a base during the siege. However, he withdrew from the captured islands when the siege failed (Rodgers 1967, 37-39; Martran 1981, 160; İbnü'l-Esîr 1986, 34; İbn Kesîr 1995, 282-284; Taberi 1998, 301-304; Ostrogorsky 2006, 145-146; Diehl 2006, 64). The Byzantine-Arab naval wars in the Mediterranean continued mutually until 747. The Umayyads, who set out by preparing a large navy of 1000 ships in 747, encountered the Byzantine Empire navy off the coast of Cyprus. The Muslims suffered a great defeat in the war (Lewis 1951, 69; Bozkurt 1991, 497; Ostrogorsky 2006, 155; Pryor & Jeffreys 2011, 33; Öztürk 2012, 34). As a result of this war, the Muslims lost their Mediterranean supremacy, which they had captured with the Zâtü's-Savari war, to the Byzantine Empire

3. Byzantine Empire Domination in the Mediterranean (752-827)

The Umayyad State was collapsed in 750 after the internal turmoil in the Islamic world, with the effect of the defeat in Cyprus in 747, and the Abbasid State was established in its place. When the Abbasids' interest in the Mediterranean shifted from this region to Asia, especially Iran, with the establishment of the Andalusian Umayyad State in the Mediterranean until the reign of Harunürreşid (786-809), the Byzantine Empire took advantage of this situation and became one of the most important parts of the Mediterranean for about half a century. Has succeeded in being a powerful force (Lewis 1951, 99; Bozkurt 1991, 497; Utku 2005, 191). During this period, the Byzantine Empire had a navy in Sicily, Cyprus, Crete, Sardinia, and the Balearic Islands. Protecting these islands was as important as protecting the straits at important trading posts. There were also regions where the Byzantine navy was absent, these were Syria and Andalusia (Lewis 1951, 99-100).

Although the Byzantine Empire took power in the Mediterranean, one of its biggest rivals in the region was the Islamic navies. The navies of the Andalusian Umayyad State organized expeditions to Marseille in 768, to Italy in 778, and to Narbon in 793. The Islamic navy in Syria, on the other hand, organized an expedition to the island of Cyprus, which was defeated in 747, and as a result of the expedition, the governor of Cyprus was captured by the Muslims (Lewis 1951, 100; Bozkurt 1991, 497; Öztürk 2012, 36). The Islamic navy, which started to gain strength in the Eastern Mediterranean, attacked Crete and Cyprus again in 790, and the Byzantine navy was defeated off the coast of Antalya (Bozkurt 1991, 497; Küçükaşçı 2006, 380). In 802, Lycia and Caria region were captured by the Abbasids. The regions that remained under the rule of the Abbasids until 862 were dominated by the Byzantine Empire (Mete 2020, 376). During the reign of the

Byzantine Emperor Nikephoros I (802-811), Myra, one of the important cities of Lycia, was captured by the Muslims. These expeditions, which coincided with the period of the Abbasid ruler Harunürreşid, are important in terms of showing that Lycia was a region that was given importance by the Muslims (Küçükaşçı 2006, 380).

Andalusian Umayyad navies attacked Corsica and Mediterranean coasts belonging to Carolingians between 806 and 810. In 813 they sacked the islands of Sardinia, Nice, Corsica and Civitavecchia. In 815, they fought the Carolingians on the Balearic island (Lewis 1951, 103-104; Bozkurt 1991, 497; Pirenne 2006, 184-185; Öztürk 2012, 37). The Islamic navy in Syria attacked Cyprus in 806, which was the scene of a constant Byzantine-Arab struggle. In 807, they organized an expedition to Rhodes. The navies of the Islamic State of Aglebi, established in Tunisia, attacked the Peloponnese in 805 to aid the Slavs who besieged Patras. This navy then launched unsuccessful attacks on Sardinia in 812-813. In these attacks, which were unsuccessful for the Ağlebis, the Muslims lost 100 of their ships. However, the Ağlebis[12] continued their attacks in the Mediterranean. In 820 Sicily was attacked and in 821 Sardinia fell into the hands of the Muslims. Although the Carolingian navies wanted to respond to these attacks, they could not succeed (Lewis 1951, 105. Özaydın 1988, 476; Bozkurt 1991, 498; Demirkent 2002, 372; Pirenne 2006, 283; Pryor & Jeffreys 2011, 45).

The Byzantine Empire's supremacy in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean began to decline as of the beginning of the IXth century, with the effect of internal turmoil and religious conflicts within the Empire. In particular, Byzantine naval power in Sicily and the Aegean islands was seriously weakened (Lewis 1987, 159; Ostrogorsky 2006, 192; Diehl 2006, 75). In this process, important developments took place in the Mediterranean that would benefit Muslims. One of these developments was the capture of an important place like Alexandria by a group of about 10 thousand sailors who had been removed from Andalusia during the uprisings in Kurutuba in 814. When the Andalusian group, who lived here for about 12 years, was expelled from Alexandria by the Abbasids, in 827, this time by taking advantage of the weak situation of the Byzantine Empire in the region, they captured Crete and established the city of Heraklion (Rabaz el-Hendek) on the island and started the construction of the shipyard (Vasiliev 1943, 349; Bozkurt 1991, 498; Demirkent 1992, 235; Ostrogorsky 2006, 192-193; Diehl 2006, 75).

After the capture of Crete by the Islamic navies, the rule of the Byzantine Empire, which lasted for about 75 years in the Mediterranean, changed

12 Ağlebiler is an Islamic state founded by İbrahim bin Ağleb and ruled in İfrikiye, Algeria and Sicily between (800-909). see: Özaydın 1988, 475-478.

hands again and passed to the Muslims. After this event, there was not only a power change in the Mediterranean, but also the influence of the Byzantine Empire in the Adriatic. In addition to this situation, Muslims became the dominant power in the Mediterranean and kept the Aegean coasts under control for about 150 years after 827.

4. Islamic Domination in the Mediterranean (827-960)

The beginning of the conquest movements of the Abbasid ruler Hârûnürreşîd by changing the Mediterranean policy and the seizure of many islands by the attacks of the Islamic navies after the Byzantine Empire lost control of Crete in this process, caused the beginning of a new era in the Mediterranean. During this period, Islamic domination in the Mediterranean did not take place under a single flag, and the newly established Islamic States in Crete, North Africa, Egypt and Spain tried to maintain this superiority with their own navies. This new period of Muslim supremacy lasted until the Age of Transformation, which would begin in 960.

The Ağlebis, who were established in the geography of North Africa, set out on an expedition to Sicily, which was considered the lock of the Mediterranean, in 827, when Crete was captured. During the expedition, Mazer, located in the south of the island, was captured first, then Syracuse, the capital city of Sicily, was targeted, and thus the conquest of the island began. However, the Byzantine Empire's struggle for the island delayed the Muslim conquest of Sicily until 902 (Lewis 1951, 132; Özaydın 1988, 476; Bozkurt 1991, 498; İbn Haldun 1997, 646; Berktay 2019, 93,97; Ostrogorsky 2006, 239; Diehl 2006, 89). The capture of these two important islands by the Muslims can be shown as revenge for the defeat of Cyprus in 747.

In addition to these successes of the Ağlebis, they captured the island of Kavsara in 835 and the island of Malta in 869. On the other hand, the Andalusian Umayyads managed to take control of the Balearic Islands in 848 with the help of pirates. In 860 they succeeded in establishing a permanent base at Arles, in southern France. By 902 they had definitively captured the Balearic Islands (Lewis 1951, 145-146; Özaydın 1988, 476-477; Bostan 1989, 232; Demirkent 1992, 235; Öztürk 2012, 39-40).

The superiority of the Islamic navies in the west of the Mediterranean was also evident in the east of the Mediterranean. Fazl bin Karin, who was the navy commander of Abbasid Caliph Mutawakkil in 860, succeeded in seizing the port of Antalya with a navy consisting of 20 pieces (Darkot 1978, 460; Emecen 1991, 233; Küçükaşçı 2006, 380). Ibn al-Athir states that as a result of this expedition, the Islamic navy conquered Antakya, not Antalya (İbnü'l-Esîr 1991b, 83).

Basileos I, who was the Byzantine Empire between the years (867-886) in the face of the success and progress of the Muslims in the Mediterranean, gave importance to maritime and tried to make the Byzantine naval power felt both in the Mediterranean and the Adriatic. In 879, a navy under the command of Admiral Niketas Ooryphas defeated the Muslims in the Gulf of Corinth and ensured the security of the region until 901 (Lewis 1951, 142; Demirkent 1992, 235-236; Ostrogorsky 2006, 220; Pirenne 2006, 186-187). Although some successes were achieved by the Byzantine navy in the Mediterranean during the Basileos period, with the beginning of the 10th century, the Muslims regained their supremacy in the seas and attacked the cities on the coasts of Thessaly and the Peloponnese, and captured Demetrias in 902 and Thessaloniki in 904 (Lewis 1951, 142-143; Ostrogorsky 2006, 240).

After the examination of these developments in the Mediterranean in the IXth century, we can say that the Islamic States established a clear superiority over the Byzantine Empire. This superiority continued with the establishment of the Fatimid State at the beginning of the Xth century. However, the fact that the Fatimids were Shiites caused them to compete with the Sunni Islamic States operating in the Mediterranean. During this struggle, the Fatimids first eliminated the Ağlebis and started to struggle with the Muslim fleets in the Eastern Mediterranean. They attacked Sicily from 917 and coastal settlements in Italy, including Genoa and Naples, in 918-935 (Bozkurt 1991, 498; Öztürk 2012, 65-70).

The Byzantine Empire, which wanted to take advantage of this rivalry between the Islamic States, took action and achieved some success in Limnos in 907 and 924. After these successes, the Byzantine Empire organized expeditions to capture Crete in 911 and 949. As a result of these expeditions, great defeats were received for Byzantine. However, In 960, Byzantine forces under the command of Nicephoros Phokas besieged Crete and after several months of siege, the island was captured by the Byzantine Empire (Vasiliev 1943, 383, 390; Bozkurt 1991, 498; Demirkent 1992, 236; Ostrogorsky 2006, 240, 265; Diehl 2006, 84; Erdem 2006, 244).

The re-entry of the island of Crete, one of the bases of the Muslim navies in the Eastern Mediterranean, under the rule of the Byzantine Empire, caused the end of the 150-year-long Muslim supremacy in the Mediterranean and started the Age of Transformation, which would last until 1043.

5. The Age of Transformation in the Mediterranean (960-1043)

The Byzantine Empire continued its naval expeditions in order to make the Mediterranean superiority, that it had captured by taking Crete, permanent. Nicephoros Phokas, who became Emperor in 963, went on

expeditions to Tarsus and Cyprus in the same year, and as a result of these expeditions, Tarsus and Cyprus were captured in 965. This success is also important in terms of ensuring the conclusiveness of Byzantine supremacy in the Mediterranean. The Byzantine Empire also managed to capture Gibele, Antakya and Latakia, which were strategically important for the Eastern Mediterranean, between 960-969 (Demirkent 1992, 236; Ostrogorsky 2006, 269; Diehl 2006, 85). The Byzantine Empire also took some measures against the Muslims in the places captured by war. For example, in order to eliminate the Arab influence in and around Lycia in the 10th century, the city of Antalya was fortified against attacks and the navy power was increased. Thanks to the measures taken, especially the Lycian coasts were protected from Arab attacks and pirates for a certain period of time (Ostrogorsky 2006, 240; Küçükaşçı 2006, 381).

The superiority of the Byzantine Empire established in the Eastern Mediterranean could not be achieved against the Muslims in the Western Mediterranean, namely the Fatimids. The Byzantine navy suffered a great defeat in the Sicilian campaign, which was carried out in 964 and known as the Hufre War (İbnü'l-Esîr 1991b, 479-480; Çapan 2020, 288). The defeat of the Byzantine Empire did not end there, in 965 another defeat was taken against the Fatimids in the naval battle, this time in Messina, known as the Battle of the Straits. In 969, with the Fatimid domination of Egypt, a balance was achieved by the Muslims in the Mediterranean against the Byzantine Empire (Lewis 1951, 187; İbnü'l-Esîr 1991b, 481; Bozkurt 1991, 498; Öztürk 2012, 102).

The Byzantine Empire and the Fatimids met this time in Tripoli in 975, and as a result of the war, the Fatimids were the victor. With the effect of this success, the ports in the Eastern Mediterranean, with the exception of Antakya, passed under Fatimid control. In addition to their success in naval warfare, the Fatimids also attached importance to shipyards and shipbuilding. For this purpose, the construction of a 600-ship navy was started in Cairo by the order of the Fatimid Caliph Aziz-Billah. However, this attempt was inconclusive as the shipyard was burned by the Byzantine Empire. The Fatimids succeeded in building new ships about three months after the shipyard fire, and in 998 they defeated the Byzantine Empire's navy at the port of Sur (Lewis 1951, 192; Bostan 1989, 232; İbnü'l-Esîr 1991c, 101-102; Utku 2005, 201-202; Öztürk 2012, 117-119). The Fatimids, who won this war, created a balance of power and gained control against the Byzantine Empire in the Eastern Mediterranean.

While these developments were taking place in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Sicilian navy of the Fatimids in the west of the Mediterranean managed to defeat the navy of the Byzantine Empire in 998. Afterwards, Muslim sailors in the Sicilian region began to be influential in the Tyr-

rhenian Sea. In the same period, the navy belonging to the Andalusian Umayyads attacked Pisa for the second time. By 1016, the Normans began to be influential in Italy. In 1017, some groups affiliated with the Normans started to struggle with the Muslims who wanted to seize Salerno (Bozkurt 1991, 498; Haldon 2007, 226). In 1025, the Byzantine Emperor Basileios II prepared a large navy and sent it to Southern Italy to fight the Fatimids. The Byzantine navy, which came to Calabria, managed to reach the Sicily region in a short time. Upon this situation, the Zîrîs, who lived under the Fatimids, wanted to help the Sicilians. For this purpose, Muiz bin Badis, the ruler of the Zîrîs, sent his fleet to help Sicily. However, this navy was devastated by the storm (Lewis 1951, 194; İbnü'l-Esîr 1991c, 269-270; Ostrogorsky 2006, 292; Haldon 2007, 226; Öztürk 2012, 121-122).

In 1035, clashes occurred between the Muslims and Berbers in Sicily. Upon these events, the Emir of Sicily, who was from the Kelbs, accepted the dominance of the Byzantine Empire. Those who did not accept this situation revolted with the support of the Zîrîs. Upon these turmoil in Sicily, the Byzantine Empire prepared a large army and navy in 1038 and sent it to the island. Byzantine forces succeeded in capturing Syracuse and its surroundings. However, the Byzantine advance on the island was slowed by the impact of the Norman revolt that broke out in Italy in 1040 (Lewis 1951, 195; Ostrogorsky 2006, 308; Öztürk 2012, 123).

It can be said that the superiority of the Byzantine Empire in the Mediterranean by taking Crete in 961 continued in the west of the Mediterranean until 1043, but its superiority in the east of the Mediterranean began to decline after the defeat against the Fatimids in the port of Sur in 998. After 1043, with the weakening of the Andalusian Umayyad navy, it is seen that the maritime city-states, especially in Western Europe, began to be active in the Mediterranean.

6. Western Domination in the Mediterranean (1043-1100)

From the beginning of the 10th century, Italian city-states such as Pisa, Venice, Genoa and Amalfi began to gain strength in the Mediterranean thanks to their navies. Especially just before the Crusades, these states were influential in the political and economic issues of the Mediterranean. They mostly developed relations with the Byzantine Empire, and engaged in commercial activities with Muslims in Africa and the Mediterranean (Turan 2001, 448; Demirkent 2007, 221; Pirenne 2012, 93; Güngörmez 2014, 43).

In the western Mediterranean, the Normans captured the island of Sicily between 1061 and 1091, ending the Fatimid domination in the region. The Normans later captured important islands such as Pantellaria (Kav-

sara), Djerba, Malta, located between Sicily and the Mahdia. In this way, they advanced as far as Ifrîkiye in North Africa. The loss of Sicily, one of the important islands of the Mediterranean, caused the end of the domination of the Fatimids in the Western Mediterranean. In addition, the fact that the materials used for shipbuilding were also supplied from Sicily came to the Fatimids as another problem (Hitti 1980, 998; İbnü'l-Esîr 1991c, 172-173; Öztürk 2012, 27-128).

It is seen that the Normans and Italian city-states dominated most of the western Mediterranean towards the end of the 11th century. In this process, the islands of Sicily, Corsica, Malta and Sardinia came under the domination of these states and a permanent settlement was established in the Southern Italy region. The navies of the city-states attacked North Africa and Spain, causing the Muslims to suffer great losses (Bozkurt 1991, 499). In this period, the control of two important islands such as Crete and Cyprus was under the Byzantine Empire. The loss of these important islands has left the Muslims in a very weak situation both in the east and west of the Mediterranean (Pryor 2004, 116; Demirkent 2005, 49).

With the start of the First Crusade in 1096, Western European sailors gained an important position in the east of the Mediterranean by being effective on the coasts of Syria and Palestine as well as in the west of the Mediterranean. Western Europeans, who captured the strategic points of the Mediterranean, captured important routes in this way, and in this way, they became the owners of trade routes that Islamic states and the Byzantine Empire controlled for a long time (Lewis 1951, 225; Öztürk 2012, 130).

It can be said that from the beginning of the 12th century, Western European maritime city-states took full control of both sides of the Mediterranean. Various factors played a role in their success. The first of these factors is the start of the Crusades, which helped the Crusaders in these campaigns and especially the success of the First Crusade. The second factor was the loss of power of the Fatimids, which facilitated the work of Western European sailors in the Mediterranean. The third factor is that the Byzantine Empire fought simultaneously with the Seljuks in the east and the Normans in the west in this period. The maritime city-states, which made good use of these reasons, kept the dominance in the Mediterranean until the 16th century.

Conclusion

Due to its geographical location, the Mediterranean has been one of the most active regions where many states struggled for dominance in the Middle Ages, as it was throughout history. The Lycian region, located in Southwest Anatolia, has attracted the attention of many states in this stru-

ggle for dominance, as it is an important part of the Mediterranean. In the Lycian region, especially the coastal settlements were important in terms of sea transportation and trade thanks to their ports. Lycia lived its strongest period in the Middle Ages under the rule of the Byzantine Empire in the Vth century. However, this power has decreased due to various reasons such as piracy, epidemics and natural disasters between the VIth and VIIIth centuries.

After the division of the Roman Empire into East and West in the struggle for dominance throughout the Mediterranean and the Lycian region, first the eastern Mediterranean and the western part of the Mediterranean were under the control of the Byzantine Empire in the middle of the VIth century. After this period, the Sassanids, who knew the importance of the Mediterranean, started to struggle with Byzantium for the region, and as a result of the wars between the two states in 602-628, many Mediterranean islands and Mediterranean port cities were under the control of the Sassanids, albeit for a short time. The real danger in the Mediterranean for the Byzantine Empire was the Arabs' interest in the Mediterranean from early times, with the emergence of the religion of Islam. In this process, naval battles took place between the Muslim Arabs and the Byzantine Empire in various parts of the Mediterranean, among which the Battle of Zatu's-Savari, which took place in Phoenix (Finike) on the Lycian coast, is very important in terms of being recorded as the first great naval victory of the Muslims.

Although the Byzantine Empire established a naval theme called Caravisionorum to prevent the Arabs from advancing in the Mediterranean and especially in the Lycian region in Western Anatolia, the balance of power in the Mediterranean changed in favor of the Arabs with the effect of the Battle of Zatu's-Savari and this situation continued for about 100 years. has done. In this process, the siege of Constantinople by the Arabs in 677 was due to the control of the Mediterranean and the Lycian coasts. Again, since the middle of the 7th century, Arab traders, especially on the coasts of Lycia and its surroundings, have been engaged in commercial activities, which are indicators of domination. With the establishment of the Umayyad State, the Arabs gave more importance to maritime activities, as a result, in order to expand their dominance in the Mediterranean, by increasing the dose of the struggle with the Byzantine Empire, by seizing the strategically important islands such as Cyprus, Rhodes, Chios, they once again conquered Constantinople in 717. they besieged.

When the Byzantine Empire lost its Mediterranean dominance, it experienced problems in other parts of the Empire, even in its capital. For this reason, he gave more importance to maritime activities and strengthened the navy in order to regain the dominance of the Mediterranean, which is

of great strategic importance. In 747, the Byzantine Empire, which succeeded in taking back the island of Cyprus from the Arabs, reached a strong position again for 70 years both in the east and west of the Mediterranean. The collapse of the Umayyads also played a role in this success. Although the Arabs lost control of the Mediterranean, they continued to struggle for the region. So much so that during this period, new Islamic States emerged in the west of the Mediterranean and rivaled the Byzantine Empire in the region. In the east of the Mediterranean, the Abbasids struggled to be effective.

The Islamic navies, which started to gain strength in the Eastern Mediterranean, launched attacks on Crete and Cyprus. They defeated the Byzantine navy off the coast of Antalya. Immediately afterwards, the Lycia and Caria regions were captured by the Abbasids. At the beginning of the IXth century, Myra, one of the important cities of Lycia, was captured by the Muslims. These expeditions are important in terms of showing that Lycia is a region that is given importance by Muslims.

With the capture of the island of Crete by the Arabs in 827, the power in the Mediterranean passed back to the Muslims. During this period, which will last for approximately 150 years, Islamic States achieved various successes in both the eastern and western Mediterranean and consolidated their dominance. In particular, the capture of Antalya by the Arabs in this period enabled Muslims to gain a foothold in Western Anatolia as well as in the Mediterranean. The Muslim domination, which started in the Mediterranean with the capture of the Island of Crete, changed hands when the island of Crete came under the rule of the Byzantine Empire again and started the Age of Transformation in the Mediterranean that would last until 1043.

The Byzantine Empire took some precautions in order to maintain the superiority it gained in this period. Perhaps the most important of these measures was to fortify the city of Antalya against attacks and to increase the navy power in order to eliminate the Arab influence in Lycia and its surroundings. Thanks to the measures taken, especially the Lycian coasts were protected from Arab attacks and pirates for a certain period of time. However, the Arabs did not hold back from the struggle for the Mediterranean and achieved some success in the east of the Mediterranean. The fact that the Byzantine Empire had to deal with the Norman revolt that broke out in 1040, despite the capture of an important Mediterranean island such as Sicily, caused the balance of power in the Mediterranean to change again.

Italian city-states such as Pisa, Venice, Genoa and Amalfi started to gain strength in the Mediterranean thanks to their navy, and with the inf-

luence of the First Crusade, they managed to become the new dominant power in the Mediterranean. The fact that the Islamic States in the Mediterranean were in a very weak state in this period and the Byzantine Empire's struggle against the Turks in the east and the Normans in the west were effective in this success. While this success of the western city-states continued in the east of the Mediterranean until the conquest of Antalya and Alanya by the Turks, this effect continued until the 16th century, when the Ottoman Empire reached a strong position in the seas.

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