

# Between two continents queen of cities’ “Constantinopolis: new discoveries”

## Abstract

In the last 20 years, rescue excavations in modern Istanbul have revealed new discoveries about the past of Constantinople, the new capital of Ancient Rome. In 2004, the Istanbul Archaeological Museums Directorate carried out salvage excavations at the points where Istanbul’s underground transportation network metro stations were planned, and the surprising finds that started with the discovery of Theodosius harbor continued with 38 ancient shipwrecks.

The Istanbul Archaeological Survey in the west of Istanbul also uncovered the ancient harbors, ancient towns, castles, fortresses, dams and many other structures in 2007. The new finds shed light on the relationship of Constantinople, the Queen of Cities, with its immediate surroundings. In this part of the book, the harbours established on the western periphery of the capital.

**Keywords:** constantinopolis, theodosius port, bathonea harbours, athyra, angurina

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## Introduction

The waterway that passes through the middle of Istanbul, one of the rare cities that unite two continents, is called the Bosphorus. The Bosphorus is the easiest passage between Asia and Europe. Istanbul is at the crossroads of not only the east-west highway movement but also the north-south sea route. The Bosphorus, where the Marmara Sea meets the Black Sea, is also on an important geography where the waterways known to have been used since ancient times, which reach from the Baltic Sea coasts of Northern Europe to the interior of Europe with different rivers and to the Black Sea with the Danube River, open to the Aegean Sea. The mild climate created by different climate systems and the winds provided by two different seas increase the quality of life in the region. Considering the abundant water resources suitable for agriculture and farming, and the rich diversity of aquatic and terrestrial game, it is not surprising that Thrace, located to the west of Istanbul, has been a region chosen by mankind for hundreds of thousands of years. For this reason, the west of the city is home to the oldest settlements. The 400,000-year-old Yarımburgaz Cave, which contains human traces, is in this region. Many prehistoric settlements have been identified around the rivers flowing from the north of the city to the Marmara Sea in the south. Byzantium, the first city-state, was founded in 658 BC in the Thracian region of the Bosphorus. The city, which later came under Roman rule, became the capital of Rome (Constantinople) in 330 and dominated the entire region. New cities and districts were established in the hinterland of the capital.

Since its re-establishment as the capital of the Roman Empire in the 4th century AD, Istanbul has been one of the most important cities of the Mediterranean, the capital of three world empires and the most magnificent city of the Republic of Turkey. This city, which has also received the title of Queen of Cities, has witnessed the meeting of eastern and western civilizations, the clash and coexistence of different cultures.

## New discovered ancient harbours of Constantinopolis

### Theodosius port

Throughout its long history, Istanbul has transformed from the days when the city’s borders were defined by the walls of Theodosius to a cosmopolitan city with a population of nearly twenty million

spread over a huge area. As the old city transformed into a modern metropolis, one of the most important problems was transportation. For this reason, the city needed infrastructure transportation systems. Starting in the mid-2000s, these projects began, and prior to the construction of the stations of the Marmaray and Metro projects in Üsküdar, Sirkeci, Sultanahmet and Yenikapı, the Istanbul Archaeological Museums Directorate started rescue excavations at the station points. The Marmaray railway project, which will connect Asia and Europe under the Bosphorus for the first time in history, and the project for the largest transfer station in the Yenikapı area of the Metro lines that will provide urban transportation have turned into the most extensive archaeological excavations in Istanbul history. In Yenikapı, where a central station will be built, Theodosius Harbor, one of the largest known harbors of the ancient world and dating back to the Byzantine Period, was unearthed (Figures 1–3).



Figure 1 Theodosius port.



Figure 2 Theodosius port wooden scaffolding.



**Figure 3** Theodosius port shipwreck.

During the rescue excavations carried out by the Istanbul Archaeological Museums Directorate in the construction area of Yenikapı Marmaray and Metro Projects between 2004 and 2013, the Port of Theodosius (Portus Theodosiacus), one of the largest ports of Constantinople during the Byzantine period, was unearthed.<sup>1</sup> According to the limited number of historical sources about the harbor, the harbor was founded in the late 4th century AD, although it is not certain. Archaeological evidence shows that the harbor was actively used until the 12th century, after which it lost its function to a great extent due to the debris carried by the Lykos stream. Archaeological excavations in Theodosius Harbor yielded 37 shipwrecks dating between the 5th-11th centuries AD. The shipwrecks are better preserved than their underwater counterparts due to the relatively rapid burial caused by the alluvial fill. Generally, the wooden elements of the hulls can be identified by their original surfaces, edges, fasteners and joints. The wrecks were analyzed in two main groups according to their intended use; 6 of them were identified as towing or galley type vessels and 31 of them as commercial cargo ships.<sup>2,3</sup>

Excavations revealed that the harbor was the Port of Theodosius (Portus Theodosiacus), the second largest port built on the Marmara Sea coast. The harbor was built by Theodosius I (379-395) in a cove that makes a very deep indentation into the coast. As the capacity of the existing harbors was insufficient in the growing ancient city, it was necessary to build new harbors or enlarge the existing ones. The deep natural bay at the mouth of the Lykos Stream was probably enlarged during the reign of Emperor Theodosius, and a breakwater extending from west to east was built on the south side in accordance with the conditions of the day. The presence of warehouse buildings at the eastern end of Theodosius' harbor, such as the *horrea Alexandrina* (Alexandria granary) and the *horrea Theodosiana*, named after the emperor, indicates that this was a major commercial port where grain and other goods were unloaded by ships from Alexandria and elsewhere. Grain trade is known to have continued until the Arab conquest of Egypt in 641. At first, grain was transported directly to the city. Transportation by large tonnage open sea ships was interrupted by wind and current during the passage of the Dardanelles, and the ships had to wait in front of the strait for a long time. For this reason, it is known that Justinian had intermediate warehouses built in Bozcaada and transportation started to be carried out with smaller ships from this point on. In addition, the supply of Prokonnesos (Marmara Island) marble, bricks, tiles, timber and food and beverages used in the construction activities of the city shows that the port was quite lively.

The Port of Theodosius lost the most important part of its function towards the middle of the 7th century with the end of grain shipments from Egypt. However, the remains of ships unearthed during the excavations and dated between the 7th and 11th centuries indicate

that it continued to be used as a harbor. During these periods, it was mostly used as a harbor where cargo ships and fishing boats used at close distances were accommodated. The harbor was abandoned after the 12<sup>th</sup>.<sup>4</sup>

### Bathonea ancient harbours

Within the scope of the "Istanbul Prehistoric Studies" ITA project, archaeological studies have been ongoing in Avcılar and surrounding districts since 2007. With the inclusion of underwater archaeologists in these studies in 2008, the sea, lakes and ports were also included within the scope of the study. The region of the Yarımburgaz Cave, especially, is capable of shedding light on the early periods of the Istanbul area, with its hundreds of thousands of years of history. The shores of Küçükçekmece Lake have become the focal point of these studies. Within the scope of this project, the Küçükçekmece and Büyükçekmece Lakes, the connections of these lakes with the sea and the seabed in the Bosphorus were examined with advanced sonar methods and/or diving, and important archaeological results were obtained. In Küçükçekmece Lake, the discovery and excavation of large quantities of jetty and pier remains along the shore showed that this had once been an important port. Depending on the sea level rises during the Holocene Period, some underwater structures were identified both in the Marmara Sea and in Küçükçekmece Lake.

The streams, natural harbours and fertile soils around the Küçükçekmece and Büyükçekmece Lake Basins have attracted settlers for thousands of years. Located two km north of Küçükçekmece Lake, on the Shore of Sazlıdere River which feeds the lake, is Yarımburgaz Cave, which has been a shelter for hundreds of thousands of years and was occupied throughout succeeding Ice Ages. Caves, some of the only places of refuge for hunter gatherer groups during these periods, remained important throughout. The chapel at the entrance of Yarımburgaz Cave is proof of its continuing importance.

The invention of agriculture in and around Anatolia at around 12000 BP - the close of the last ice age - led to the emergence of the first settlements. Fresh water, as a key agricultural requirement, led to these settlements being established during this early period. The people living in the coastal area engaged in fishing and agriculture, and their settlements were established at the mouths of the rivers, affording shelter for their boats during stormy weather.

Within the scope of the ITA project, various such harbours were discovered. Apart from the natural harbours, thought to have been used in prehistoric times, the locations of many harbour settlements as mentioned by ancient writers were also discovered.

Küçükçekmece Lake Basin settlement (Bathonea - Bathynias?) is located on the European side of Istanbul, west of Küçükçekmece Lake, within the borders of Firuzköy, in the neighbourhood of Avcılar district. It is an archaeological site where evidence of human settlement has been identified from the Lower Paleolithic to the Late Ottoman period. Evidence of maritime trade since the Roman period has also been identified. According to the ancient writers, the name of the region was Bathynias/Bathonea taken from the ancient Bathynias (Sazlıdere) stream flowing into the lake from the north, and that it was a town connected to Byzantium. Anna Comnena refers to this place as,

*"The place called Bathys Rhyax, which has a church built in honour of Theodoros, a great martyr of religion"* and further adds that, *"many people pilgrimaged on foot to the church from Byzantium to pray to the saint. Every Sunday, the faithful would come to this church in*



droves, some around the church, some in the front yard, some in the basement, they would stay there day and night".<sup>5</sup>

Church ruins matching this description were found during the excavations. In particular, the presence of a Basilica type structure with an apse and martyrion strongly indicates that this area could be a sacred settlement. It is thought that the name of the region may have changed after the Roman period and was known as Rhegion throughout the Middle Ages.

In the excavation area, which is located on a peninsula in Küçükçekmece Lake, excavations have been carried out simultaneously in three different regions (the *Big Harbour Area*, *Small Harbour Area* and *Constructions, walled*). In these areas, mostly buildings from late antiquity were recorded. Epipalaeolithic, Pre-Pottery Neolithic and Pottery Neolithic, Bronze, Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods were also unearthed. Interesting additions were made to the history of the Istanbul region with the first discovery of Hittite, Mycenaean, Cypriot and Balkan artifacts dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC. Medical instruments found during the excavations, hundreds of terracotta medicine bottles, and pestles and mortars used to make medicine, point to this being the site of Daphnision, which was mentioned as a medicine production centre in this region during Late Antiquity. From its connection with the Sea of Marmara, the Küçükçekmece Lagoon Lake was used as an inner harbour, with multiple sheltered piers. Underwater surveys of the lake show that these jetties were of the block-stone-lined chest type or of wooden construction.<sup>6-8</sup>

Five different underwater detection methods were used in the survey of Küçükçekmece Lake within the scope of ITA Project since 2008. The first of these is the visual follow-up of the shaped blocks on the shores of the lake; second, the examination of the remains of the structures from the sea surface with a mask/palette/snorkel; the third one using *Side Scan Sonar*, *Dual Beam Sonar* and *Sub Bottom Profiler*. The fourth method is the detection of soil and underwater remains through observations made using satellite photographs. Aerial photographs of the region using an *Unmanned Aerial Vehicle* (Drone) were also used to examine the area. As a result of these studies, wall forms, quay walls, pier structures and a lighthouse structure were documented in the lake. Part of the quay walls remain in the water. Among the stone blocks used in the construction of this wall, there are also materials used as spolia. These materials are thought to belong to the Hellenistic and/or early Roman Imperial periods.

### The big harbour

Avclar part of the lake, the tip of the peninsula extending towards the sea also has the characteristics of a natural harbour. The lake fluctuates according to the strength of the winds blowing from the northeast or southwest; under these conditions, the west of the peninsula is a safe anchorage. Today, the depth of the water in this area averages 4m. It is thought that the depth in the ancient period was greater because of subsequent alluvial deposition. Visibility in the lake was very limited and did not change until the 2021 season. During the studies carried out over the past few years, five small stone jetties on the northwest coast and another five on the northeast coast, many wall forms, ceramic finds, and marble building materials were found. The box-like stone jetties were sufficient for boats of 5-8 m in length and 2-3 m in width. In the large harbour area, there is a wall structure along the coast, which has the characteristics of a quay or barrier to prevent landslides and continues almost uninterrupted for approximately 2500 m (Figures 4–6). Various excavations have been carried out on this structure and many artifacts unearthed.



Figure 4 Bathonea big harbour.



Figure 5 terrace walls.



Figure 6 Bathonea big harbour from air.

During the excavations, rows of stones were seen at the far end of the shallow underwater shelf, which, apparently belonged to a walled structure. Marble flooring, ceramic remains, and a large quantity of brick and tile pieces were also recorded. As a result of the drawings and plans made during the excavation, the foundations of two different structures were identified. Shallow water between this structure and the peninsula posed a risk to ancient shipping as it still does today, thus these are conjectured to be the remains of a lighthouse, built over two phases; The location would be well suited to give warning of the shallows and as a navigational guide to the port. There are probably man-made remains between this structure and the mainland. The plans and identification of these structures will come to light with further excavations in the future.

### Small harbour

During the works carried out in the northwest of the big harbour, a different and larger jetty than the previously identified jetty forms was uncovered. The cut and placed stone blocks here extended for ten meters in the easterly direction into the lake. In the studies carried out on the land part of this jetty, a road connected to the jetty was found

and excavated. Small boats would have carried passengers and cargo from this road and its jetty. Since a significant part of the jetty structure is still standing, it is possible that it was used until the Early Republican Period. These discoveries clearly reveal the relationship of Küçükçekmece Lake with the sea, showing that passengers and cargo were transported not only by medium-sized ships but also by smaller boats (7-14 m). The presence of many jetties similar to this structure may also indicate the existence of private enterprises (Figure 7) (Figure 8).



Figure 7 Bathonea small harbour.



Figure 8 Bathonea small harbour.

#### Athyra Harbour

*Athyra* is the first known name of the ancient settlement located on the seaward side of Büyükçekmece Lagoon Lake. The Graeco-Roman writers Strabo, Pliny and Ptolemy, call the great stream flowing into the lake from the north, the River Athyras (Strabo, VII: 54; Pliny, IV: xi; Ptolemy, 3: XI). Also known as the Melantiana/Melantias or as Athyras/Melantias since the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. Ancient and medieval writers and cartographers sometimes referred to the Büyükçekmece only as the Melantias or Athyras, and again, sometimes the two names are given side by side. Jirecek reports that the town of Melantiana/Melantias was the settlement and Athyra was the jetty.<sup>9</sup> The lake has been used by humans since the Neolithic. Its geographical location, river connections, and infrastructure were suited to fishing and agriculture, and some of their remains are likely submerged. These submerged ruins and structures built on the lake shore likely remain buried under the alluvial deposits of the lake basin (Figure 9) (Figure 10).

The extensive archaeological finds on the eastern shores of Büyükçekmece Lake attest to settlement in the region from the prehistoric period. On the seaward side of the lake, there is a harbour area used during the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods. According to Strabo, one of the ancient geographers:



Figure 9 Athyra.



Figure 10 Angurina.

"After Silivri (Selymbria), the Athyras river is encountered which reaches to Byzantion. A small Greek port colony named Athyra (*Ἀθύρα*) was established in the bay of Propontis (Sea of Marmara) where the Athyras river converges". Procopius, the famous historian of the reign of the emperor Justinian, states that "After Rhegion (the sea side of Küçükçekmece), there is a town called Athyra".

Simeon the Metaphrast, a medieval writer, mentions that a fortified trading port was built in the area called Athyrain the Early and Middle Byzantine Ages.<sup>10</sup> In the studies carried out by us in the region, archaeological traces thought to belong to the remains of Athyra were detected in the lake and on its shores. The most important of these remains are of the ancient harbour, located in the area of the present Kanuni Sultan Süleyman (Suleiman the Magnificent) Bridge.

The Büyükçekmece Bridge, described by Semavi Eyice as a leading monument of Ottoman period Turkish engineering, consists of four undulating sections and is 635.57 m long and 7.17 m wide. Its construction was started by order of Sultan Suleiman, and completed by Sultan Selim I in 1568 AD, near the location of this Bridge, there was another bridge called the Athyras Bridge, which was built during the Roman period and served throughout the Middle Ages, but had fallen into ruin by the later period of the Byzantine Empire. There was a guard tower at both ends of this bridge, the connecting roads passing through marshy ground. This bridge was also repaired by Fatih Sultan Mehmed, but due to both neglect and the ground conditions, it was re-built by Mimar Sinan as a single bridge to cross the entire marsh.<sup>11</sup> The above-mentioned harbour structure was likely located on the inside of the old bridge but became marsh as it was filled with alluvium. The stones of the 16<sup>th</sup> century bridge must have been taken from both the old bridge and possibly this harbour structure. The form of the harbour structure is not yet known.

Today, there is a structure known as Ahmediye Castle in the northwest of Büyükçekmece Lake, which has been turned into a



dammed lake. Remains of the walls to the southwest and northeast of the castle are still standing. The fortification wall of the castle continues in the lake to northeast and southeast. The extant land sections of the walls run in northwest and southwest directions. Most of the remains in this direction are underground or have been demolished. With side-scan sonar studies, the ruins of the castle were identified and its plan drawn up. These structures closely match Episkopeia castle as described by Procopius. The amount of water in the basin of Büyükçekmece Lake has decreased due to the extremely dry period between 2013 and 2014, the coast having receded by up to one kilometre. Consequently, part of the shoreline of the lake in front of the dam was exposed.

In the drone and sonar studies carried out by our team in the region, the remains of some modern buildings and an ancient wall (of unidentified purpose) were encountered, as well as the parts of the castle ruins in the northwest of the lake that remained underwater due to the rising waters of the dam. The part of this wall structure that continues along the lake shore, as seen from the lake floor, rises to a height of one metre. In Procopius's work titled *Buildings*, which describes the construction activities during the Justinian Period in the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, he writes:

*"Beyond Rhegion there is a city called Athyras, and its inhabitants are in extreme water shortage; he had a reservoir built there as a remedy for this problem. By storing the excess water in this reservoir at just the right time, it was presented to the residents at the time of need. He also rebuilt the destroyed places on the perimeter walls..."*<sup>12</sup>

According to the results documented first by sonar studies, and then confirmed by surface surveys, the building in question must have been a 6<sup>th</sup> century AD reservoir structure.<sup>13</sup>

### Angurina Harbour

During the surveys carried out within the scope of the ITA project, some building remains were found in the south of the peninsula between Büyükçekmece and Küçükçekmece Lakes, 6 km from Beylikdüzü district centre. Located on the *Via Egnatia*, this area is referred to as Angurina agricultural land in historical records and is the "famous Anguria farm" located within the borders of Beylikdüzü. Apart from the structures on the shore, there are remains of some buildings extending into the water and, according to aerial photographs, there are extant submerged remains of mole-like structures. Evaluation of these structures indicate a small settlement and a harbour in this region. The small group of finds from the coastal structure and in the water indicate its use between the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and the 10<sup>th</sup> century AD. Changes in materials and building type indicate this building was probably re-built twice. Unfortunately, the archaeological site in question is in danger of loss and damage from modern infrastructure works. Various notifications have been made for the protection of the area, so far unsuccessful against the planned infrastructure works. Landslides and marine erosion are having further detrimental effects. The area in question must be protected as soon as possible.

The general appearance of the ancient building on the coast of Beylikdüzü resembles both a granarium and a closed shipyard structure (Figure 9) (Figure 10). This structure awaits excavation and so cannot be identified at present. The large rooms next to each other (where the ratios of heat and humidity might be suitable for grain storage) are a distinctive feature of this structure.<sup>14</sup> A granarium was found in the Theodosian Harbour in Yenikapı, and it is known that this structure was used to store grain imported from Egypt and Crimea between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.<sup>15</sup>

Similar in form to these two structures, the structure in Beylikdüzü, if it is a granarium, may have been used for the storage of grain from Egypt during this period. However, the form of the building is also similar to the closed shipyard structures used from the Roman Imperial period to the Seljuk period. The Roman Imperial period shipyard structure, which was unearthed in 2011 in Portus, the harbour of Rome, has a similar form. A similar structure is also found in Alanya. Located in Alanya Harbour, on the shore of the sea, this structure was built during the Seljuk Period on the foundations of an earlier building.

The location of the shipyard in Beylikdüzü is one of the most suitable places on the shores around Istanbul to receive the supply of timber required for shipbuilding; it is possible to transport timber to the shipyard from the Longoz forests along the Western Black Sea coast or from the Belgrad Forests.<sup>16</sup>

Stone blocks, which may be the beginning of the breakwater, continue into the sea, and were identified 250 m from the west end of the aforementioned building. Five metres south of this are the remains of an amortared wall. There is shallow water about 100 m away from the structure and it is possible that this is connected to a mole structure. Located approximately 1400 m east of the building on the shore, the cape affords shelter from easterly winds; however, the seaward sides of the buildings are exposed to waves and winds coming from the south and west. The orientation of these structures to the sea would have required the shelter of a mole. This area would greatly benefit from more underwater research and excavation. Protection and restoration of this area will also be important going forward.

The harbours determined within the scope of the ITA project are not limited to those mentioned in this article. The geography of this area, with its streams and lakes, and its links to the Marmara Sea and the Black Sea, where people have lived for hundreds of thousands of years, must have hosted hundreds of natural or man-made harbours. Although many areas will remain buried underneath a major world city like Istanbul, many coastal structures and harbours may still be reached and await discovery and excavation.

### The research objectives

Istanbul is well known as being the capital of the three successive empires, namely, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman. While some researches and excavations were carried out inside the ancient city wall, the recent findings of the last two decades precisely show that even there, there are still too many archaeological sites waiting to be discovered. But beyond the city wall there are large swaths of archaeologically untouched lands in danger of being lost forever under the fast expansion of the urban area.

The original aim of the projects ITA (Istanbul Prehistoric Research) and Bathonea excavations was to salvage as much archaeological findings as possible before the ever expanding metropolis destroys all of them. That's why with a multidisciplinary team we concentrated on all we were able to find from as early as Early Paleolithic to late Ottoman period. This paper presents just a selection from our works.

### Methodology

The information presented in this paper is gathered using the all available research methods such as reading the ancient texts, following newly published papers from recent researches carried out in Istanbul, surveying of large areas by modern and classical survey methods, by aerial archaeology and also by newly available Google Earth possibilities. Also intensive excavations carried out in Bathonea ancient city brought a wealth of data to the day light. One additional

source was the proximity of the other excavations and researches carried out in Istanbul, some of them by our colleagues and friends. This provided the possibility of seeing firsthand the sites and talking to the excavators.

## Conclusion

From the 7th century BC, especially the triangular sail with the participation of ships in maritime transport A strong trade on the Mediterranean-Aegean-Black Sea line started. Previously, the Black Sea and a strong current with a flow of up to seven kilometres very sharp, jagged bends with sharp bumps and furrows the Bosphorus, which is difficult to cross with sailing ships overcome. Thus, the Black Sea and Mediterranean countries both a serious trade and cultural ties between liaison was ensured. This trade was especially important of city. It was made the capital of Rome as Constantinople and reached its peak in the 5th-6th centuries AD. City reached its peak in the 5th-6th centuries AD.

Excavations and research in Modern Istanbul will continue to uncover many unknown parts of ancient Constantinople that may or may not be included in the historical record. This chapter focuses on the ancient harbors on the western side of the Bosphorus. Theodosius port, Bathonea harbours (Big and Little), Athyra, Angurina Harbours are newly discovered places. In ancient times, sea routes were important due to the difficulty of building roads and the cost of transporting goods. Since transportation and trade were carried out by sea, it is normal that many ports were built near the capital of New Rome. It is understood that the international commercial activities of the Bathonea, Angurina and Athyra Ports peaked in the 5th century, but declined abruptly after the second half of the 7th century, and shared the same fate as the port of Theodosius. The sudden cutting of materials such as amphora and unguanarium, which are evidences of trade activities with Mediterranean countries, clarifies this situation. Natural events such as earthquakes experienced in this period caused the beginning of very difficult days in the Byzantine geography. In the same century, the head of the Byzantine state got into trouble with the Arab and Sassanid tribes in the south and the Bulgarian tribes in the west.<sup>17</sup> Especially in the entire Mediterranean, the domination of places such as Egypt, Cyprus and Rhodes by the Arabs created the most important commercial collapse in this period. Ships loaded from Egypt and other Mediterranean ports, where Istanbul basic grain needs and olive oil are met, stopped coming. In addition, the fact that the ships carrying precious fabrics, semi-precious stones, and ebony, ivory, ostrich eggs from Africa in the trade extending to Cyprus copper and the Far East no longer stop at the port. The distance between Bathonea Port and Istanbul Theodosius Port is 20 km. It is natural for them to experience the common commercial activity of the same period. Ships loaded from Egypt and other Mediterranean ports, where Istanbul's basic grain needs and olive oil were met, stopped arriving. In addition, ships carrying precious fabrics, semi-precious stones, ebony, ivory, ostrich eggs, and semi-precious stones from Africa in the trade extending to Cypriot copper and the Far East no longer stopped at the port, destroying the vitality of the ports. The distance between the Port of Bathonea and the Theodosius Port of Istanbul is 20 km. It is natural that they experienced the common commercial activity and fate of the same period. The collapse of these two main ports was to the detriment of other ports. They have now turned into small local ports engaged in inland trade instead of open sea.

Second 7th century AD natural phenomena and political events brought about the collapse of the Mediterranean world, hence the

developing trade relations with the Black Sea weakened. In this process, inland haulage in the Marmara Sea mobilisation has begun. East of the Bosphorus inland trade with the harbours in the Gulf of Izmit developed. The land road behind the Gulf of Izmit extended to Anatolia and Mesopotamia with its tradenan products from the line meet the needs of the capital met.<sup>18</sup> Between the 9th and 11th centuries AD, the North Scandinavian descending from Europe via the Danube (Vikings and Varangians) and the Black Seawith trade coming from it is once again intensively sea trade was experienced. After the 11th century AD harbours around the capital, Crusades and with the Latin conquest of Constantinople has been completely disabled.<sup>19-22</sup>

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## Conflicts of Interest

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