



The Effects of Historical Earthquakes on Cyzicus Ancient City

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Cyzicus is one of the most important ancient settlements of Mysia region on Marmara coasts in Turkey. It's located on Belkis Tombolo which connects Kapıdağ (Arkonnesos) Peninsula to the shore. It was established by the King Cyzicus Kyzikos in B.C. 749 as a Miletos colony during the colonization movements of Ions.

The main reason to determine the establishment place of Cyzicus was; a strong defense system formed by the natural conditions and the walls surrounding the city. In addition, from the documents, 3 natural harbor (one of them inner harbor) and one artificial canal in the ancient city has been designated. Because of these features, the ancient city had been developed by maritime trade and fisheries. And also, city's economy had grown due to its fertile soil. Works in marble that came from Marmara Island, were being effective in the artistic activities in the city.

Due to the capital city of East Roman Empire was being Constantine (AD 324), the chance of Cyzicus was affected badly. Since its location on the south branch of the North Anatolian Fault zone in the Marmara Sea, ancient city was being ruined by a series of earthquakes. There were fifteen (15) destructive earthquakes occurred between AD 29 - 1887. For example the region had become a swamp because of AD 740 earthquake. At that time, despite metropolitan center pass through to Erdek, the city was not fully abandoned. In the end, the earthquake of 1064 had completely demolished Cyzicus. At the present day, this ancient city has come to the point to be lost in swamps, bushes and shrubs.