

Il-Mediterran fis-sekli 9 u 10

Sas-seklu 9 kienet għet stabbilita ordni dinjija ġdida fil-Mediterran; waħda li damet għal 500 sena oħra, sat-tmiem tal-Medju Evu.

F'dan ix-xenarju ġdid drammatiku, tliet setgħat dinjija kbar ikkompetew għad-dominanza politika u ekonomika tal-Mediterran:

● **L-Imperu Frank** kien il-qawwa ewlenija Kristjana. Wara l-konkwisti ta' Karlumanju, huwa ħakem ħafna mill-Ewropa tal-punent u ċentrali. Fis-seklu 9 l-Franki kienu għadhom ma setgħux jissfidaw l-Abbasidi u l-Bizantini fil-Mediterran ċentrali - minflok huma ffokaw fuq il-holqien ta' kuntatti kummerċjali ġodda, l-aktar permezz ta' intermedjarji kummerċjali Taljani, bħal Venezja u Amalfi.

● In-nofs tal-lvant tal-Imperu Ruman żviluppa fl-**Imperu Bizantin**, iċċentrat fil-Mediterran tal-lvant, li wiret is-sistema tad-dinja Rumana antika. Minkejja li kien sejjer lura b'mod gradwali, hu baqa' qawwa militari formidabbli sa nofs is-seklu 11. Il-Bizantini ħakmu lil Malta minn tmiem is-seklu 6 sat-870.

Is-Sitwazzjoni Politika: L-Ewropa u l-Mediterran fit-850 WK



● Il-Kalifat Abbasid, li kien jestendi mill-Persja sal-Alġerija, kien l-entità politika l-aktar qawwija u sinjura tal-perjodu. Fit-Tuneżija u t-Tripolitanja, dinastija lokali ta' emiri, l-Aghlabidi, iggvernat f'isem l-Abbasidi. Fl-827 huma bdew il-konkwista Għarbija ta' Sqallija, inkluż l-okkupazzjoni ta' Malta tat-870. Fis-seklu 10 l-Fatimidi bnew imperu Mediterranju li kien jinkludi ħafna mill-Afrika ta' fuq u b'influwenza fuq Sqallija.

Il-kompetizzjoni bejn dawn it-tliet imperi kienet espressa kemm fil-gwerra kif ukoll permezz ta' kuntatti kummerċjali fuq distanza twila.

Malta sabet ruhha fil-qalba ta' dawn l-iskambji militari u ekonomiċi kumplessi. Il-ġejjieni tagħha kien jiddependi fuq kif tisfrutta l-pożizzjoni ġeopolitika strateġika tagħha.

The Mediterranean in the 9th and 10th centuries

By the 9th century a new world order was established in the Mediterranean; one that lasted for another 500 years until the end of the Middle Ages.

In this dramatic new scenario, three great world powers vied for political and economic domination of the Mediterranean:

● The **Frankish Empire** was the main Christian power. Following the conquests of Charlemagne, it ruled over most of western and central Europe. In the 9th century the Franks could not yet challenge the Abbasids and the Byzantines in the central Mediterranean - they focused instead on creating new trade networks, mostly through Italian commercial intermediaries, such as Venice and Amalfi.

● The eastern half of the Roman Empire developed into the **Byzantine Empire** centred in the eastern Mediterranean, succeeding the old Roman world system. Although in gradual decline, it remained a formidable power until the mid-11th century. The Byzantines held Malta from the late 6th century up to 870.

Political Situation: Europe and the Mediterranean 850 AD

Political Map Europe and the Mediterranean AD 850

● The **Abbasid Caliphate** was the most powerful and wealthiest political entity of the period, extending from Persia to Algeria. In Tunisia and Tripolitania a local dynasty of emirs, the Aghlabids, ruled on behalf of the Abbasids. In 827 they launched the Arab conquest of Sicily, including the 870 occupation of Malta. In the 900s the Fatimids built a Mediterranean empire across much of North Africa, and extended their influence to Sicily.

The competition between these three empires was expressed both in warfare and through long distance trade networks.

Malta found itself at the heart of these complex military and economic exchanges. Its fortunes and success depended on how it exploited its strategic geo-political position.