

3.1.3. The reign of Michael III and the dawn of the New Era

1. Who was the emperor who began the development of the power of Byzantium? Michael III
2. How did the establishment of the Magnaura School work and what was its significance?
 - The Magnaura School was established on the initiative of Caesar Bardas, the uncle of the young Michael III.
 - It was an important center of education and culture.
 - It helped in the revival of ancient letters.
 - The school was headed by Leo the Philosopher or Mathematician, a famous scientist of his time.
 - The university included the schools of philosophy, geometry, astronomy, and grammar.
 - The activity that developed prepared the revival of ancient letters during the time of Constantine Porphyrogenitus.
3. Who was the most distinguished scholar of the time and what was his most important work?
 - Photius was a distinguished scholar of this time.
 - He wrote many works, the most important of which is the Myriobiblon, a collection of 300 philological essays on works that were little known to his contemporaries.
4. What were the goals of Emperor Theophilus?
 - By the mid-9th century, Byzantium was constantly on the defensive against the Arabs.
 - Emperor Theophilus tried to mobilize the Christians of the East and the West in a general alliance against Islam.
 - Shortly afterwards, the victorious Byzantine counterattack began.
5. Who were the akrites?
 - Akrites were soldiers who protected the eastern borders (akrai) of Byzantium.
6. How was Byzantine epic poetry shaped?
 - The constant wars on the borders with the Arabs provided material for the shaping of Byzantine epic poetry.
 - Anonymous bards composed songs that glorify their struggles, especially those of Digenes Akritas.
7. What are the most important examples of popular literature of the Byzantines?
 - The most important examples of popular literature of the Byzantines are these heroic songs that singers sang, wandering in the provinces of Asia Minor.

Exercise:

Correct the mistakes:

1. The emperor who began the development of the power of Byzantium was Michael IV.
2. The Magnaura School was an important center of education and culture.
3. Photius was the founder of the Magnaura.
4. Bardas was a distinguished scholar of this time.
5. The Magnaura prepared the revival of ancient letters during the time of Michael III.
6. The Myriobiblon was a collection of essays on works that were little known at that time.
7. Emperor Theophilus tried to mobilize the Christians of the East and the West in a general alliance against the Franks.
8. Akrites were soldiers who protected the western borders of Byzantium.
9. The akrites who dominates Byzantine epic poetry is Digenes.
10. The heroic songs that singers sang, wandering in the provinces of Asia Minor, are the most important examples of popular literature of the Byzantines.