

4.1.2. The Comneni and the Partial Reorganization of the Empire (1081-1176)

1081 – 1176: What centuries are we examining? _____ and _____ies.

A. Who is the founder of the Comnenus Dynasty and what threats did he face?

1. Alexios I Komnenos
2. faced great external threats: ⚡ The Normans threaten the coasts of Epirus. ⚡ The Cumans and Paezinakes plunder the Balkans. ⚡ The Seljuk Turks conquer part of Asia Minor.

B. How was the internal policy of the Empire shaped during that period and what was its main consequence?

1. The Komneni applied the institution of Pronoia, strengthening the nobility.
2. These nobles were called Pronoiaroi or soldiers.
3. Pronoia = they granted the nobles farms and tax revenues in exchange for military service. □ The ordinary farmers sank into poverty.

C. What were the most important external successes of Alexios I, John Komnenos and Manuel I Komnenos?

I. Alexios I:

1. Recaptured cities in Asia Minor (Smyrna, Nicaea, etc.) by skilfully exploiting the agreements he signed with the leaders of the Crusaders.
2. In the Balkans, he managed with diplomacy and war to get rid of the raids of the Paezinakes and Cumans.

II. John Komnenos:

1. Conquered various foreign principalities in Asia Minor.
2. Reached Antioch.
3. He imposed the Byzantine rule on the Serbs and tried to put the Hungarian Kingdom under Byzantine tutelage, which was an emerging power.

III. Manuel I Komnenos:

1. Followed a pro-Western internal policy and relied on the services of the Latins.
2. He continued the campaigns against the Seljuks in Asia Minor.
3. He signed a peace treaty with the Hungarians and humiliated the Serbs.

D. What were the stages of the military collapse that followed and what were the consequences (=>) it caused?

1. Manuel I made daring campaigns in Italy. => This fact encouraged the Seljuks to attack the territories of Byzantium.
2. The Byzantine army was crushed at the Battle of Myriokephalon in Phrygia (1176). => This defeat solidified the presence of the Seljuk Turks in Asia Minor. Manuel himself compared this defeat to the destruction that Byzantium had suffered 105 years earlier at Manzikert.
3. => The Christian population gradually decreased due to hunger, diseases and the flight of Christians to neighboring areas.
4. => The provinces of Asia Minor were gradually Islamized (became Muslims).

Exercises: A. Correct the mistakes, where they exist:

1. Alexios I Komnenos was the founder of the Comnenus Dynasty. Correct
2. The Komneni faced great external threats from the Normans, the Cumans, the Paezinakes and the Seljuk Turks.
3. The Komneni applied the institution of Pronoia, which gave the nobles farms and tax revenues in exchange for military service.
4. The ordinary peasants benefited from the application of the institution of Pronoia.
5. Alexios I stopped the raids of the Paezinakes and Cumans.
6. John Komnenos imposed the Byzantine rule on the Serbs.
7. The Seljuk Turks were defeated at the Battle of Myriokephalon.
8. Manuel I Komnenos followed a pro-Western internal policy and relied on the services of the Latins.
9. The defeat of the Byzantine army at the Battle of Myriokephalon in Phrygia had the following consequences:
10. After the defeat of the Byzantine army at Myriokephalon, the Islamization of Asia Minor gradually took place.

B. Select the correct one or the correct ones

Who was the founder of the Comnenus Dynasty?

1. Alexios I
2. John I
3. Manuel I
4. Manuel II
5. Uranus

What were the external threats that the Comneni faced?

1. Normans
2. Cumans
3. Paezinakes
4. Seljuk Turks
5. All of the above

What was Pronoia?

1. An institution that gave the nobles farms and tax revenues in exchange for military service.
2. An institution that gave the ordinary farmers farms and tax revenues in exchange for military service.
3. An institution that gave the nobles farms and tax revenues in exchange for administrative service.
4. An institution that gave the ordinary farmers farms and tax revenues in exchange for administrative service.
5. None of the above

What were the consequences of the implementation of the Pronoia institution?

1. The ordinary farmers benefited.
2. The nobles benefited.
3. Byzantium benefited.
4. Imperial power weakened.
5. All of the above.

C. Fill in the blanks:

1. The Dynasty of..... ruled Byzantium during the period we are examining.
2. The most important enemies of Byzantium during this period are the.....and the..... in the Balkans, the in Asia Minor and the on the coasts of Epirus.
3. The Byzantine army was almost wiped out in the battle at..... of..... in.....
4. John Comnenus captured various foreign principalities in
5. Manuel Comnenus signed a peace treaty with the and humiliated the
6. Hunger, disease and migration reduced the populations.
7. The Turks emerged strengthened in Asia Minor.
8. Asia Minor gradually changed religion and
9. Manuel I followed internal policy and relied on the services of the
10. John Comnenus reached the city of