

4.3.1. Expansion of the Turks and last attempts to stop them

1282 – 1439: we are in the, theand the.....century.

1. What kind of collapse did the Byzantine Empire experience during the last years of its existence, what caused it, what were the consequences and what was the result of this?

[1] After the last revival of the Byzantine Empire, which lasted until the mid-14th century, civil wars followed.

[2] The civil wars caused the economic and military collapse of the Byzantine Empire.

[3] As a result, we have:

- The devaluation of the currency
- The imposition of heavy taxation that led to uprisings of the people and the middle class
- The reduction of the strength of the army and the domination of foreign mercenaries [4] The Byzantine Empire was reduced to the Empire of the Straits and was easily dissolved a few years later by the Ottomans.

2. What were the Ottomans and what was the organization of their action?

1. They were a Turkish tribe different from the Seljuks.
2. They were nomads who migrated to an area near Bursa.
3. They were organized by Sultan Osman or Osman, to whom they owe their name.
4. After many years of struggle, taking advantage of the abolition of the Byzantine akrites and exploiting the Islamic institution of gazis (= fanatical fighters in Islam), they gradually occupied all of Asia Minor.
5. To increase the number of the Ottoman army, Christian children (childrecruiting) were recruited, who formed the battalions of the janissaries (= new army).

3. What were the conquests of the Ottomans?

1. The Ottomans took advantage of the division of the Balkan peoples and thus in the mid-14th century, they crossed into Europe and conquered Gallipoli.
2. Subsequently, the Serbs were defeated and recognized Ottoman suzerainty.

4. What efforts were made to stop the advance of the Ottomans? What was the result?

- The victory of the Mongols in Ankara against the Ottomans gave a reprieve to the Byzantine state, as it caused a deep crisis in the Ottoman state.
 - The Byzantine emperors traveled the last century before the Fall for help in the West.
 - This led to the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-1439):
1. John VIII accepted the "union", that is, the submission of the Orthodox Church to the Roman Catholic Church.

2. This was not accepted by the people.
- The Byzantine Empire finally did not receive the required help and remained unprotected against the expansionist plans of the Ottomans.

Exercises:

A. Explain the terms:

- devaluation of currency
- the Straits
- mercenaries
- dissolution of the state
- Bursa
- nomads
- gazis
- janissaries
- childrecruiting
- Gallipoli
- Fall

B. Correct any errors, if any:

1. In the 14th century, civil wars brought the Byzantine Empire to the brink of collapse.
2. The need to strengthen the Ottoman army led to the recruitment of Christian children and the formation of the janissary battalion.
3. The victory of the Serbs temporarily stopped the advance of the Ottomans in the Balkans.
4. The decisions of the Council of Ferrara-Florence on the "union" of the Churches were accepted by the people of Constantinople.
5. The Byzantine Empire received the protection of the West against the Ottomans.