

2023 Adjectivally Byzantine

Excessively Complicated, and Typically Involving a Great Deal of Administrative Detail

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20 tossups on the history of the Eastern Roman Empire. There is no real attempt at difficulty control.

1. **One ruler of this name dismissed their *parakoimomenos* Damian, and would eventually be assassinated by his replacement. After a coup in the chapel of St. Stephen against their predecessor, another ruler of this name was hastily crowned still in chains. An earlier ruler with this name abdicated after losing the Battle of Versinikia, which paved the way for the first Bulgarian siege of Constantinople. The Muslim conquests of Crete and Sicily began during the reign of an emperor with this name, who faced the revolt of (*) Thomas the Slav and founded the Amorian dynasty. A later emperor with this name blinded John IV Laskaris, their co-ruler of the Empire of Nicaea, and captured Constantinople from Baldwin II, the last Latin Emperor. For 10 points, the eighth emperor of what name established the ruling Palaiologos dynasty in 1261?**
ANSWER: **Michael** [accept **Michael** III the Drunkard or **Michael** II the Amorian or **Michael** I Rangabe or **Michael** VIII Palaiologos] (Basil I had Michael III assassinated; the second line refers to Michael II.) <AT>

Note to players: description acceptable.

2. **One side in this campaign reported having seen a people who “prefer death to life and humility to pride” after their opponents offered them a choice between three courses of action. During this campaign, one side infiltrated a fortress via its underdefended Gate of Iron, leading to a general’s flight to the Isle of Rauda. One source records how during this campaign, a general declared his intention to fight to the death at a feast where the invited enemy soldiers refused to eat camel meat. This campaign saw a one-month siege of the stronghold of (*) Bilbeis. The patriarch and prefect Cyrus led one side during this campaign, in which Roman forces were defeated at Babylon Fortress and Heliopolis after Amr ibn al-As conquered Pelusium. For 10 points, give this campaign during which the Rashidun Caliphate conquered Alexandria.**

ANSWER: the **Arab conquest** of **Egypt** [or equivalents such as the **Muslim conquest** of **Egypt** or the **conquest** of **Egypt** by the **Rashidun** Caliphate; prompt on partial answer] (The three choices in the first line refer to conversion to Islam, payment of the jizya, or war to the death.) <AT>

3. **One theologian from this city wrote of how during one series of events, prisoners were thrown from the walls of its citadel and described how at the time “the peasant struck the strategos and the labourer beat the soldier”. Political prisoners in this city lynched Alexios Apokaukos, who had earlier appointed his son as its governor. The property of so-called “Kantakouzenists” was confiscated by an anti-aristocratic movement who effectively ruled this city as an independent commune, known as its namesake (*) “Zealots”. During the Hesychast schism, Barlaam of Seminara opposed this city’s archbishop Gregory Palamas. This city, briefly home to a namesake “Empire” in northeastern Greece from 1224 to 1246, hosted the fair of Saint Demetrios. For 10 points, name this city on the Thermaic Gulf, the second city of the medieval Roman Empire.**

ANSWER: **Thessalonica** [accept Zealots of **Thessalonica** or Empire of **Thessalonica**; accept **Thessalonikē**, **Thessaloniki**, **Saloniki** or **Salonica** in place of “Thessalonica”] (The theologian is Demetrios Kydones.) <AT>

4. **One holder of this position received bribes from the archdeacon Paschal in opposition to a rival named Theodore. Forces controlled by that holder of this position, John Platinus, marched south to prevent Zacharias from arresting a leader who had refused to sign canons from the Quinisext Council. Holders of this position appointed the rulers of a five-city territory known as the Duchy of the Pentapolis. A holder of this position petitioned Pope Zachary for assistance against (*) Liutprand’s invasions. This position, last held by Euty chius, ceased to exist in the mid-eighth century after its capital was conquered by Aistulf, king of the Lombards. For 10 points, name this Eastern Roman lordship centred in Italy, which ruled an exarchate named for the former fifth-century capital of the Western Roman Empire.**

ANSWER: **Exarch** of **Ravenna** [accept **Exarch** of **Italy** before “Italy” is read; accept **Exarchate** of **Ravenna** (or of **Italy** before read); prompt on **exarch** or **exarchate** alone before “exarchate” is read] <AT>

5. One early agreement dating to 992 declared the affairs of these people to be under the jurisdiction only of the *logothetēs tōn oikeiakōn*, stating that this was the “ancient custom”. An official title held by some of these people styled them as “Lord of a Quarter and Half a Quarter of the Roman Empire”, which emphasised the influence they held. In exchange for nominal assistance against the Normans, these people were granted concessions in the (*) Golden Bull of 1082. An 1171 mass arrest of these people in Constantinople, which provoked a brief conflict with Vitale II Michiel, occurred after they were accused of attacking the rival Genoese quarter. For 10 points, name these inhabitants of a maritime republic led during the Fourth Crusade by Doge Enrico Dandolo.

ANSWER: Venetians [accept Venetian merchants; accept people from the Republic of Venice or clear equivalents; prompt on merchants or traders or equivalent which applies to some of the clues; prompt on Podestà of Constantinople; prompt on Doges (of Venice) before read, who used the half-a-quarter title after 1207; prompt on Latins] (The first line refers to a chrysobull during the reign of Basil II and Constantine VIII from 992.) <AT>

6. The father of a person with this name, Stylianos Zaoutzes, was the first to receive the powerful title of *basileopatōr* after an imperial marriage. Another person with this name assumed the regency after ousting the patriarch Nicholas Mystikos, who had unpopularly crowned Simeon I as emperor of the Bulgarians. Leo VI was forced to perform penance after his (*) fourth marriage, which was to a person with this name known as “Karbonopsina”. The *Chronographia* of Michael Psellos describes how a person with this name prepared cosmetics in the imperial palace. That person of this name, who was married in turn to Romanos III and Michael IV, strove to continue the Macedonian dynasty. For 10 points, give this name of an empress known as “Porphyrogenita”, who married Constantine IX and co-ruled with her sister Theodora.

ANSWER: Zoe [accept Zoe Zaoutzaina or Zoe Karbonopsina or Zoe Porphyrogenita] <AT>

7. Archaeological excavations at this location have revealed inscriptions of the names of Hecuba and a misspelling of Aeschines, indicative of the size of certain objects found there. An ekphrastic hexameter poem inspired by this location was written by Christodorus of Coptus. The sixth-century monk Leontius described standing between this location and the “swift course” of the “famed Hippodrome”. This location, adorned by Constantine I with “columns and varied marbles and works of bronze”, was refurbished after its destruction in the (*) Nika riots. This public location, adjacent to the Great Palace, was home to over eighty statues of figures such as Homer and Hesiod, possibly located in the frigidarium. For 10 points, name these public baths in Constantinople, named for their location on the site of a former temple to the Greek king of the gods.

ANSWER: Baths of Zeuxippus [accept Gymnasium of Zeuxippus; generously prompt on baths of Constantinople before read] <AT>

8. This ruler obligated wealthy landowners to pay their poorer neighbours’ tax debts by establishing the *allegnyon*. Both a military defeat experienced by this ruler, who was “[routed] at Stipon where gold was taken”, and a later military victory are recorded in the Bitola inscription, which records the renewal of a fortress. The epitaph on the tomb of this ruler, who requested to be buried in the (*) Hebdomon, declares “nobody saw my spear at rest”. John Geometres wrote of how the “arrows of the Moesians broke the spears of the Avzonians” in describing this ruler’s loss at the Battle of the Gates of Trajan. After a battle won by this ruler, Tsar Samuel apocryphally suffered a heart attack on seeing his blinded soldiers. For 10 points, name this emperor whose victory at the Battle of Kleidion gained him the epithet “the Bulgar-Slayer”.

ANSWER: Basil II [or Basil (II) Porphyrogenitus, or Basileios Porphyrogenetos, or Basil the Bulgar-Slayer, or Basileios ho Boulgaroktōnos; prompt on Basil or Basileios before “Bulgar-Slayer” is read and accept thereafter] <AT>

Note to players: description acceptable.

9. **George the Monk records how some of these things, possibly modelled on similar ones in Baghdad, were destroyed by Michael III. One account, which mentions some of these things that were made “either of bronze or wood covered with gold”, describes being “moved neither by fear nor astonishment”. The *Book of Ceremonies* of Constantine VII describes one of these things in the hall of the Magnaura palace often compared to one named for (*) Solomon. An account by the diplomat Liutprand of Cremona describes how one of these types of objects allowed the emperor to go from sitting at a “moderate height” to sitting as high as the ceiling of the hall. For 10 points, name or describe these things found at the emperor’s court, exemplified by a throne that could rise into the air, as well as by roaring lions and singing metallic birds.**
ANSWER: **automata** [or **automaton**; accept any description of **automated machinery** or obvious equivalents; accept **mechanical birds** or **lion** or **thrones**; accept descriptions of a **throne** that can be **raised** before read; prompt on examples such as the golden **tree** or metallic **birds** or **lions** or the “**throne** of Solomon” or just a **throne** (all before read) that do not specify that the objects were automated/mechanical, by asking “specifically with what property?”] <AT>

10. **A rooftile in one city was inscribed with the prayer “Christ, our Lord, help our city halt [these people]. Protect the Roman Empire, and he who has written this. Amen.”. Archaeological finds from these people’s late period commonly feature the “griffin and tendril” motif, possibly as a symbol of power. These people are described as “scoundrels, devious, and very experienced in military matters” in the *Strategikon*, which states that their (*) tents “combine practicality with good appearance”. The defeat of these people at the three Battles of Viminacium temporarily halted their incursions. With the Sassanids and Slavs, these people mounted a failed siege of Constantinople in 626. The conquerors of Sirmium in 582, for 10 points, name this nomadic confederation ruled by Bayan I, that established a khaganate in the Pannonian Basin.**
ANSWER: Pannonian **Avars** [or **Avar** Khaganate, or **Obri**, or **Abaroi**, or **Varchonitai**, or **Varchonites**, or Pseudo-**Avars**, or **Apar**] (The rooftile in the first line dates to the siege of Sirmium of 580-582.) <AT>

11. **A usurper who led an unsuccessful revolt against two holders of this position had himself and his wife take the names “Ghin” and “Cuchia” in an attempt to please his supporters. Holders of this position were urged to pursue sociopolitical reform and return to older systems of governance by the philosopher Gemistos Plethon. An early holder of this position was defeated by a much smaller army led by the sons of Centurione I Zaccaria at (*) Gardiki, which Francis of San Severino besieged. While serving in this position, Theodore Palaiologos restored the Hexamilion Wall, and to defend against Ottoman incursions, temporarily handed the Knights Hospitaller control over Corinth and his capital of Mystras. For 10 points, name this position held by governors of an Eastern Roman province centred in the Peloponnese.**
ANSWER: **Despot** of the **Morea** [accept **Despotate** of the **Morea**; accept **Despot**(ate) of **Mystras** before read and prompt thereafter; prompt on **despot** or **despotes** alone] (The first line refers to a usurper named Manuel Kantakouzenos, who was supported by many Albanians in a revolt against Thomas and Demetrios.) <AT>

12. **This event saw the involvement of four Dalmatian officials, which may indicate that certain new official posts had been established since their cities were no longer under Roman rule. This event’s participants were called “foolish” and “arrogant” in the preface of a four-book response likely written by Theodulf of Orléans in the name of one ruler. At this event, whose outcome was attacked in the *Libri Carolini*, a distinction was made between “*alēthinē* (*) *latreia*” and a less exclusive practice. This event, presided over by the patriarch Tarasios, condemned a policy promulgated by Constantine V at the earlier Council of Hieria and begun by his father Leo III. Convoled in 787 by Irene of Athens to restore the veneration of icons, for 10 points, name this seventh ecumenical council, the second to be held at the site of the first ecumenical council.**
ANSWER: **Second** Council of **Nicaea** [prompt on descriptions of the **restoration** of **icons** before read or the **end** of the first period of **iconoclasm** or equivalent; do not accept or prompt on answers referring to the First Council of Nicaea or anything to do with the second period of iconoclasm or “triumph of Orthodoxy”] <AT>

13. According to one source, in a diplomatic exchange before this battle, one side asked the other which of two cities was more beautiful, then insultingly declared that they would rest in one city in the winter and their horses would rest in the other. Before this battle, one leader reportedly tied the tail of his horse, put on a robe and declared “if I am killed, let this white dress be my shroud [...] if we win, the future is ours”. The rearguard at this battle deserted after Andronikos (*) Doukas falsely announced that the emperor had been killed. Michael Attaleiates wrote of how at this battle “it was like an earthquake [...] not least the hordes of Turks riding all around us”. Preceding the establishment of the Sultanate of Rûm, for 10 points, name this 1071 battle at which Romanos IV was defeated and taken prisoner by the Seljuk sultan Alp Arslan.

ANSWER: Battle of Manzikert [or Battle of Malazgirt] (The cities referenced in the first line are Isfahan and Hamedan.) <AT>

14. These locations are described as suffering from a so-called “obvious disease” by one emperor in a disapproving excerpt from a tenth-century novella. In the late eleventh century, some newly constructed examples of these locations were conferred with the status of *autodespota* via several imperial chrysobulls. Captives were buried alive at Ephesus after one of these locations known as “hewn with an axe” or “Peleketē” was attacked by Michael (*) Lachanodrakon, who burnt it down. Several of these locations, such as one at Sakkoudion, fell under the control of Theodore of Stoudios. Nikephoros Phokas commissioned Athanasios the Athonite to establish one of these locations on a mountain in northeastern Greece. For 10 points, name these religious locations exemplified by the Great Lavra of Mount Athos.

ANSWER: monasteries [or monastery; accept lavra before read; accept monastic communities; accept convents; accept obvious equivalents] (The first sentence refers to a statement made by Nikephoros Phokas in 964 disapproving of monastic communities seeking to acquire more land.) <AT>

15. An inscription on a monument honouring this ruler records its dedication by Smaragdus, whom this ruler had recalled from exile. Theophanes the Confessor records how late in their reign, this ruler was mocked with the chant “you are drunk again, and long ago lost your mind” by the Greens in the Hippodrome. After appointing Boniface III as pope, this ruler declared Rome to be the “head of all churches” and had a namesake (*) column erected there. This ruler apocryphally responded “will you govern it better?” after being asked “is it thus that you have governed the Empire?” by their successor, who had sailed from the Exarchate of Africa in revolt against their widely considered tyrannical rule. Raised on a shield during a rebellion against Maurice, for 10 points, name this emperor who was executed in 610 after the revolt of Heraclius.

ANSWER: Phocas [or Phōkás, or Focas; accept Column of Phocas] <AT>

16. One participant in this event sought the assistance of the physician Ibn Butlan, whom he invited from Baghdad to Constantinople. During this event, a participant recounted how they had received correspondence from Skleros of Antioch that another participant had sent to an official in Aquileia, and claimed it contained several omissions. This event was precipitated by a letter written by the former *chartophylax* (*) Leo of Ohrid to John of Trani which criticised the use of *azyma*. During this event, a charter was placed on the altar of the Hagia Sophia by Humbert of Silva Candida levelling several accusations against Michael Cerularius, who in turn excommunicated the papal legates of Leo IX. For 10 points, give this event of 1054 that saw the separation of two churches.

ANSWER: the Great Schism of 1054 [or the East-West Schism, or the Schism of 1054; accept descriptions of the split between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches (in 1054); accept the excommunication of Michael Cerularius and/or the papal legates before read; prompt on the schism or incomplete answers] <AT>

17. In a funeral oration to this person, George Tornikes asked “To whom shall I compare the one who is entirely unsurpassable?”, eventually resolving to compare them to a phoenix. In mourning, this person lamented their misfortune by stating “now I live and have died a thousand deaths”. Niketas Choniates claimed that this person was “stimulated by ambition and revenge” to attempt a coup against their brother with the encouragement of (*) Irene Doukaina, aiming to replace him with Nikephoros Bryennios. Incursions by Bohemond of Antioch are described in a text written by this person from exile in the Kecharitomene Monastery, which provides the only direct Eastern Roman account of the First Crusade. For 10 points, name this princess and historian who chronicled her father’s reign in the *Alexiad*.

ANSWER: Anna Komnene [or Anna Comnena; prompt on Anna] <AT>

18. A ruined church overlooking the probable site of this battle, located at Ambar, may have been built as a monument to one side’s victory. One source claims that on the first day of this battle, a soldier who challenged the opposing general to single combat was instead defeated by the bath-slave Andreas. Before this battle, one side prepared by digging a trench with right-angle turns marking out a shorter section in the middle. Sunicas the Hun killed the second-in-command (*) Baresmanas at this battle. The “vast [clouds]” of arrows at this battle were described in a detailed account by Procopius, who recorded later engagements at Satala and Callinicum during Justinian I’s Iberian War. Named for the site of a Roman border fortress near Nisibis, for 10 points, name this 530 CE battle where Sassanid forces were defeated by Belisarius.

ANSWER: Battle of Dara [accept Battle of Daras] <AT>

19. The Primary Chronicle records a tenth-century stipulation in which the purchase of this commodity by the Rus’ from Constantinople was limited to the value of “fifty bezants”. More than any other, the production of this commodity is the subject of five chapters of the commercial manual *The Book of the Prefect*. A restriction described in the *Secret History* limited the sale price of one pound of this commodity to eight gold pieces, creating an effective (*) monopoly. Roger II of Sicily deported producers to Palermo after he captured Thebes, the empire’s largest producer of this commodity. This commodity was supposedly introduced to the Eastern Roman Empire after two Nestorian monks smuggled its means of production into the empire from China. For 10 points, give this fabric which names a network of Eurasian trade routes.

ANSWER: silk [accept Silk Road; prompt on cloth or textiles or fabric (before read)] <AT>

20. A leader of this group swore fealty to Thibaut de Cepoy and created a royal seal depicting Saint Demetrios to indicate his intention to rule one city. George Pachymeres claims that this group intended to summarily execute soldiers who had surrendered fortresses at Germe and Kula. One chronicle describes the early life of a leader of this group who was granted a Genoese ship called the *Falcon* from the Templars. After this group defeated Walter V of (*) Brienne at the Battle of Halmyros, it conquered the Duchy of Athens. This group, whose campaigns were recorded in the *Crònica* of Ramon Muntaner, pillaged Thrace after Michael IX assassinated its leader at a banquet in Adrianople. Hired by Andronikos II to fight Anatolian beyliks, for 10 points, name this mercenary force of *almogavars* commanded by Roger de Flor.

ANSWER: Catalan Company [or Great Catalan Company, or Gran Companyia Catalana, or Exercitus Francorum, or Societas Exercitus Catalanorum, or (Magna) Societas Cathalanorum; prompt on almogavars before read] (The first line refers to Bernat de Rocafort who planned to become king of Thessalonica.) <AT>