



Summary :

Member of the dynasty of the Grand Komnenoi. In 1222 he succeeded Alexios I Grand Komnenos to the throne of Trebizond. In 1223 he defeated the Seljuk army, temporarily freeing the Empire of Trebizond from the control of the Seljuk Turks. He died in 1235. Andronikos I Grand Komnenos can possibly be identified as Andronikos Komnenos Gidos, who had been *strategos* of Theodore I Laskaris of Nicaea.

Other Names

Andronikos Komnenos Gidos, Andronikos Grand Komnenos Gidon

Date and Place of Birth

Second half of the 12th century

Date and Place of Death

1235, Trebizond

Main Role

Emperor

1. Prosopography

Andronikos, the future Andronikos I Grand Komnenos (1222-1235), was the husband of the daughter of [Alexios I Grand Komnenos](#) (1204-1222). Some scholars identify him as Andronikos Gidon or Gidos, a *strategos* of the Nicaean Emperor [Theodore I Laskaris](#) (1205-1221), who in 1206 defeated the forces of [David Komnenos](#), brother of Alexios I, in the area of Tracheiai near [Nicomedia](#). It is not known when Andronikos Gidon allied himself by marriage to the house of the Grand Komnenoi, thus joining the [imperial court of Trebizond](#). In any case, Alexios I's son-in-law became emperor in 1222, succeeding him as Andronikos I Grand Komnenos, and remained to the throne until his death in 1235.

2. Andronikos I's reign

In 1222-1223 Andronikos I Grand Komnenos found himself in conflict with the [Seljuk](#) Sultan 'Melik',¹ after the Seljuk Turks attacked and plundered a ship carrying the yearly taxes of the provinces of [Cherson](#) and [Gotthia](#) to [Trebizond](#), and captured the ship's crew.² Andronikos successfully defended the city of Trebizond and captured the sultan,³ forcing him to sign a treaty, which declared that the Empire of Trebizond was no longer under the obligation of paying a tribute to the Sultanate.⁴ After Andronikos' victory against Melik, the Empire extended from the city of [Sinope](#) in the west to the borders with Iberia (Georgia) in the east, while to the south it included the areas up to the [Armenian](#) city Koloneia.

In 1231 Andronikos I was involved in the dispute between the Seljuk sultan Kaikobad I (1219-1236) and the ruler of the [Choresmian Turks](#) Jalaaladdin Magobirdi (1221-1235). This conflict ended with the victory of Kaikobad I and his ally the Ayyubid [Caliph](#) Kalim (1218-1238), ruler of Egypt and Palestine. The Empire of Trebizond once again found itself under the obligation to pay tribute to the Sultanate of Ikonion (Rum).

Andronikos I Grand Komnenos is the *donor* of the [palace](#) of the Grand Komnenoi in Trebizond and he is also considered the first emperor of Trebizond to issue a coin of valuable metal, with his name inscribed on it. He died in 1235 and was buried in the [temple of Thetokos Chrysokephalos](#).⁵



1. The word 'Melik', mentioned by the sources is not the name of the sultan of Ikonion, but one of his honorary titles. The identity of the sultan, who took part in the Seljuk campaign on 1222 – 1223, is not clearly known. On the different theories see Σαββίδης, Α., «Για την ταυτότητα του Μελίκ στην σελτζουκική εκστρατεία του 1222-3 κατά της Τραπεζούντας», στο *Βυζαντινή προσωπογραφία, τοπική ιστορία και βυζαντινοτουρκικές σχέσεις* (Athens 1994), off print from *Πρακτικά ΙΔ' Πανελληνίου Ιστορικού Συνεδρίου* 1993 (Thessaloniki 1994), pp. 79-88.
2. The Trapezuntine ship was forced to stop at Sinope due to a storm and its cargo was withheld by the Armenian governor, Etoum. See Γεωργιάδης, Θ.(ed.), *Εγκυκλοπαίδεια του Ποντιακού Ελληνισμού. Ο Πόντος. Ιστορία, Λαογραφία και Πολιτισμός* 1 (Thessaloniki 1991), p. 122.
3. The bishop of Trebizond Joseph Lazaropoulos, in his second version of the *Vita* of St Eugenios, stresses the contribution of the saint and of Panagia Chrysokephalos in bringing an end to the siege. See Χρυσανθος, μητροπολίτης Τραπεζούντος, «Η Εκκλησία της Τραπεζούντος», *Αρχείον Πόντου* 4-5 (Athens 1933), pp. 399-409.
4. The Empire of Trebizond became a subject of the Sultanate of Ikonion in 1214. After the fall of Sinope to the Seljuks (2 November 1214) and the capture of the Emperor of Trebizond Alexios I Grand Komnenos, the two parties signed a treaty which set the Emperor Alexios free but ordered that the Empire was obliged to pay a tribute to the Sultanate. See Arhweiler-Γλύκατζη, Ε., «Η αυτοκρατορία της Τραπεζούντας», *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους Θ': Υστεροβυζαντινοί χρόνοι (1204-1453)* (Athens 1980), pp. 325-336, 326.
5. Andronikos I, after his victory against the Seljuk armies, gave as a gift to the monastery of Panagia Chrysokephalos a column made of valuable stones, one of the spoils from his battles with the Seljuks. See Bryer, Α. – Winfield, D., "The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos I", *Dumbarton Oaks Studies* 20 (Washington D.C. 1985), p. 239.

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Glossary :

- caliph**
The supreme religious and political authority of Muslims, considered successor of Muhammad (Arabic: khalifa = deputy). He was the head of the Caliphate, the religious state of the Arabs.
- Choresmian hegemony**
The hegemony of the Choresmian Turks was established on Persian ground between 1077-1231 by Anush-Tegin Ghartschai. It was dissolved by the Mongols.
- donor**
Whoever subscribes, financially, to the erection of a certain structure (monument etc). In the case of the buildings, donors might lawfully relate to them via a special connection (usufruct or other).
- strategos ("general")**
During the Roman period his duties were mainly political. Office of the Byzantine state's provincial administration. At first the title was given to the military and political administrator of the themes, namely of the big geographic and administrative unities of the Byzantine empire. Gradually the title lost its power and, already in the 11th century, strategoi were turned to simple commanders of military units, responsible for the defence of a region.

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Chronological Table

Second half of 12th century: Birth of Andronikos

1204 onwards: Andronikos Gidon is in charge of the armies of Theodore I Laskaris against David Grand Komnenos.

1222: Andronikos I Grand Komnenos is proclaimed emperor in Trebizond

1223: Andronikos I confronts the army of Sultan Melik. The Empire of Trebizond is freed from the obligation to pay tribute to the Sultanate.



1231: Andronikos fruitlessly becomes involved in the conflict between the Seljuk Sultan Kaikobad I and the ruler of the Chorasman Turks Jalaleddin Magobirdi. The Empire once again becomes a subject of the Sultanate of Ikonion (Rum).

1235: Death of Andronikos. Beginning of the reign of John I (Axouch).

Auxiliary Catalogs

List of the emperors of Trebizond

Alexios I (1204 -1222)

Andronikos I (Gidon) (1222 - 1235)

John I (Axouchos) (1235 -1238)

Manuel II (1238 -1263)

Andronikos II (1263 -1266)

George (Planos) (1266 - 1280)

John II (1280 -1285)

Theodora (1285)

John II (again 1285 - 1297)

Alexios II (1297 -1230)

Andronikos III (1330 -1332)

Manuel II (1332)

Basil (1332 -1340)

Eirene Palaiologina (1340 - 1341)

Anna (Anachoutlou) (1341-1342)

John III (1342-1344)

Michael (1344 -1349)

Alexios III (1349 - 1390)

Manuel III (1390 -1417)

Alexios IV (1417 - 1429)

John IV (1429 - 1458)



Alexios V (1458)

David (1458-1461)