

= Manuel Erotikos Komnenos =

Manuel Erotikos Komnenos ( Greek : ??????? ??????? ??????? ; 955 / 960 ? ca . 1020 ) was a Byzantine military leader under Basil II , and the first fully documented ancestor of the Komnenos dynasty . His origin and parentage is obscure . He is only mentioned in the sources as leading the defence of Nicaea in 978 against the rebel Bardas Skleros , and as an imperial envoy to him 11 years later . He had three children , late in life . The eldest , Isaac , became emperor in 1057 ? 1059 , and the youngest , John , was the progenitor of the Komnenian dynasty as the father of Alexios I Komnenos .

= = Biography = =

Nothing is known of Manuel 's early life . From the fact that he was militarily active in 978 , and given that he was able to have children as late as ca . 1015 , a date of birth of ca . 955 / 960 has been suggested and generally accepted by modern scholars . His parents ' identity is obscure : as Manuel 's own firstborn son was named Isaac ( Isaakios ) , the Greek scholar Konstantinos Varzos considered it likely that his father had the same name , since according to Greek custom the eldest male child is named after its paternal grandfather . Nothing is known otherwise about his life and career . According to Varzos , Manuel inherited his surname of " Komnenos " from his father , while his equally obscure mother was an unnamed lady of the Erotikos family , possibly related to the 11th @-@ century rebel Theophilos Erotikos . The French scholar Jean @-@ Claude Cheynet , on the other hand , proposed that Manuel was a member of the Erotikos family , and that he was the first to have changed the surname to Komnenos . Modern scholarship commonly accepts Michael Psellos ' comment that the family originated from the village of Komne in Thrace . Varzos also considers Manuel a brother of the protospatharios Nikephoros Komnenos , who was named governor of the Armenian region of Vaspurakan soon after its annexation in 1021 , but although possible , such a relationship cannot be proven .

Manuel is mentioned for the first time in 978 , when he led the defence of Nicaea against the rebel general Bardas Skleros , who had risen up against Emperor Basil II ( reigned 976 ? 1025 ) . Although his great @-@ granddaughter , the princess Anna Komnene , claims in her Alexiad that he had been named strategos autokrator ( commander @-@ in @-@ chief ) of the East and sent with full powers to deal with the revolt , it is far more likely that he was merely a local commander . Manuel maintained the city 's defence with some success , even though the besiegers managed to undermine and collapse one of its towers , until the lack of food became acute . At that point Manuel was able to fool Skleros , by pretending that he had mountains of wheat and was considering joining him , into allowing him and the inhabitants to depart freely for Constantinople . Manuel re @-@ appears in 989 , when he was sent as an envoy to Skleros , who had once more risen in revolt against Basil II , to persuade him to surrender . Manuel was successful in his task , and the elderly rebel ended his revolt and gave himself up on 11 October . The titles by which he is recorded were patrikios , anthypatos , and vestes .

Manuel owned lands in the region of modern Kastamonu in Paphlagonia , inherited after his death by his eldest son , and which became the stronghold of the family in the 11th century . Manuel Erotikos Komnenos died probably around 1020 . At that time , his children were still young , so he entrusted them to the care of Emperor Basil II .

= = Family = =

Manuel 's wife is virtually unknown . She was likely named Maria , as were two of her granddaughters , and probably died ca . 1015 . They had two sons and one daughter :

Isaac I Komnenos ( ca . 1007 ? 1061 ) , married Catherine of Bulgaria , daughter of the last Bulgarian Tsar , and a distinguished general . He became emperor in 1057 at the head of a cabal of Anatolian generals , but resigned in 1059 and retired to a monastery .

an unnamed daughter ( born ca . 1012 ) , married Michael Dokeianos , who served as Catepan of

Italy and was killed by the Pechenegs in 1050 .

John Komnenos ( ca . 1015 ? 12 July 1067 ) , married Anna Dalassene , and served during his brother 's reign as Domestic of the Schools . He fathered several children who also became senior military leaders . His third son , Alexios I Komnenos , became emperor in 1081 , founding the Komnenian dynasty .