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| **Byzantine bureaucracy and aristocracy** |
| **Imperial titles** |
| These were the highest titles, usually limited to members of the imperial family or to a few very select foreign rulers whose friendship the Emperor desired. |
| **Titles used by the emperors** |
| https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/3f/Hyperpyron-Manuel_I-sb1965.jpg/220px-Hyperpyron-Manuel_I-sb1965.jpg |
| The back of this coin by Manuel I Comnenus bears his title, *porphyrogennetos*. |
| ***Basileus*** (βασιλεύς), the Greek word for "sovereign" — Originally referred to any king in the Hellenistic period or in any Greek-speaking area of the Roman Empire. It also referred to the Shahs of Persia. Heraclius adopted it in 629, and it became the Greek word for "emperor." Heraclius also used the titles *autokrator* (αὐτοκράτωρ – "autocrat," "self-ruler") and *kyrios* (κύριος – "Lord"). The Byzantines reserved the term "*basileus*" among Christian rulers exclusively for the emperor in Constantinople, and referred to Western European kings as *rēgas*, a Hellenized form of the Latin word *rex* ("king"). The feminine form *basilissa* referred to an empress. Empresses were addressed as *eusebestatē avgousta* ("Most Pious Augusta"), and were also called *kyria* ("Lady") or *despoina* (the female form of "despotes", see below). Primogeniture, or even heredity, were not legally established in Byzantine imperial succession, because in principle the Roman Emperor was selected by common acclamation of the Senate, the People and the Army. This was rooted firmly in the Roman "republican" tradition, whereby hereditary kingship was rejected and the Emperor was nominally the convergence of several offices of the Republic onto one person. Many emperors, anxious to safeguard their firstborn son's right to the throne, had them crowned as co-emperors when they were still children, thus assuring that upon their own death the throne would not be even momentarily vacant. In such a case the need for an imperial selection never arose. In several cases, the new Emperor ascended the throne after marrying the previous Emperor's widow, or indeed after forcing the previous Emperor to abdicate and become a [monk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monk). Several emperors were also deposed because of perceived inadequacy, for example after a military defeat, and some were murdered. |
| ***Porphyrogennētos*** (πορφυρογέννητος), "born in the purple" — Derived from Hellenistic bureaucracy, emperors wanting to emphasize the legitimacy of their ascent to the throne appended this title to their names, meaning they were born to a reigning emperor in the delivery room of the imperial palace (called the *Porphyra* because it was paneled with slabs of the reddish-purple stone porphyry), and were therefore legitimate beyond any claim to the contrary. |
| ***Autokratōr*** (αὐτοκράτωρ), "self-ruler" — Originally equivalent to *imperator*, and was used by the emperors. |
| ***Basileus Autokratōr*** (βασιλεύς αὐτοκράτωρ) – A combination of titles reserved for the senior of several ruling co-emperors (συμβασιλεῖς, *symbasileis*), and denoted the person who held substantive political power. |
| **Titles used by the imperial family** |
| https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/1d/Manuel_II_Helena_sons.JPG/250px-Manuel_II_Helena_sons.JPG |
| Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos with his family: empress Helena Dragaš (right), and three of their sons, John, Andronikos and Theodore. John, as his father's heir and co-emperor, wears an exact replica of his imperial costume. |
| ***Despotēs*** (δεσπότης), "Lord" — Used by the emperors themselves since the time of Justinian I, and was an honorific address for the sons of reigning emperors. Hellenistic rulers had used it extensively, and during Byzantine times often featured in coins, in lieu of *Basileus*. In the 12th century, Manuel I Komnenos made it a separate title, the highest "awarded" title after the emperor. The first such *despotēs* was actually a foreigner, Bela III of Hungary, signifying that Hungary was considered a Byzantine tributary state. In later times, a despot could be the holder of a despotate; for example, the Despotate of Morea, centred at Mistra, was held by the heir to the Byzantine throne after 1261. The feminine form, *despoina*, referred to a female despot or the wife of a despot, but it was also used to address the Empress. |
| ***Sebastokratōr*** (σεβαστοκράτωρ), "Venerable Ruler" — Created by Alexios I Komnenos as a combination of *autokratōr* and *sebastos* (see below). The first *sebastokratōr* was Alexios' brother Isaakios. It was essentially a meaningless title, which signified only a close relationship with the Emperor, but ranked immediately after the *despotēs*. The feminine form was *sebastokratorissa*. The first foreigner to be called *sebastokratōr* was Stefan Nemanjić of Serbia, who was given the title in 1191. A Bulgarian aristocrat by the name Kaloyan also used the title. |
| ***Kaisar*** (καῖσαρ), "Caesar" — Originally, as in the late Roman Empire, it was used for a subordinate co-emperor or the heir apparent, and was first among the "awarded" dignities. The office enjoyed extensive privileges, great prestige and power. When Alexios I created *sebastokratōr*, *kaisar* became third in importance, and fourth after Manuel I created *despotēs*. The feminine form was *kaisarissa*. However, it remained an office of great importance, and was awarded to a few high-ranking and distinguished officials, and was only rarely awarded to foreigners. Justinian II named Tervel, khan of the Bulgars, *kaisar* in 705; the title then developed into the Slavic term tsar or czar (from Latin through Bulgarian and then into Russian, Serbian etc.). Title was also awarded to George II of Georgia. Andronikos II Palaiologos also named Roger de Flor, leader of the Catalan Grand Company, *kaisar* in 1304. |
| ***Nobelissimos*** (νωβελίσσιμος), from the Latin *Nobilissimus* ("most noble") — Originally a title given to close relatives of the Emperor, subordinate only to the *kaisar*. During the Komnenian period, the title was awarded to officials and foreign dignitaries, diluting its status. The title *Prōtonobelissimos* was created in its stead, until it too started to decline, only to be replaced by a further augmented form: *Prōtonobelissimohypertatos*. By the late Palaiologan era, the former had vanished, while the latter was a provincial official. |
| ***Kouropalatēs*** (κουροπαλάτης), from the Latin *cura palatii*, "charge of the palace" — First attested in the time of Justinian I, it was the official in charge of running the imperial palace. However, the great authority and wealth deriving from this position, as well as the close proximity to the Emperor, meant that it accumulated great prestige. It was awarded to important members of the imperial family, but from the 11th century onwards, it declined, and was usually awarded to the vassal rulers of Armenia and Georgia. |
| ***Sebastos*** (σεβαστός), "August One" — This title is the literal Greek translation of the Latin term *Augustus* or *Augoustos*, which was sometimes used by the emperors. As a separate title, it appeared in the latter half of the 11th century, and was extensively awarded by Alexios I Komnenos to his brothers and relations. The female version of the title was *sebastē*. The special title Protosebastos ("First Venerable One") was created for Hadrianos, Alexios' second brother, and awarded also to the Doge of Venice and the Sultan of Iconium. During the 12th century, it remained in use for the Emperor's and the *sebastokratōr'*s children, and senior foreign dignitaries. However, the parallel processes of proliferation and devaluation of titles during the 12th century resulted in the creation of a bewildering array of often ridiculously large variations, by using the prefixes *pan* ("all"), *hyper* ("above"), *prōto* ("first"): examples include Pansebastos and Panhypersebastos. Few of them actually survived past the 12th century, and all of them rapidly declined in importance. |
| **Court titles from the 8th to 11th centuries** |
| https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/20/Jean_Chrysostome_Hom%C3%A9lies_btv1b8470047d.jpg/250px-Jean_Chrysostome_Hom%C3%A9lies_btv1b8470047d.jpg |
| Emperor Nikephoros III with an aura flanked by personifications of Truth and Justice, and by his senior court dignitaries, from an illuminated manuscript dating to the 1070s. From left: the *proedros* and *epi tou kanikleiou*, the *prōtoproedros* and *prōtovestiarios* (a eunuch, since he is beardless), the emperor, the *proedros* and *dekanos*, and the *proedros* and *megas primikērios*. |
| In the 8th–11th centuries, according to information provided by the *Taktikon Uspensky*, the *Klētorologion* of Philotheos (899) and the writings of Constantine Porphyrogennetos, below the imperial titles, the Byzantines distinguished two distinct categories of dignities (ἀξίαι): the "dignities by award" (διὰ βραβείων ἀξίαι), which were purely honorific court titles and were conferred by the award of a symbol of rank, and the "dignities by proclamation" (διὰ λόγου ἀξίαι), which were offices of the state and were conferred by imperial pronouncement. The former were further divided into three subcategories, depending on who was eligible for them: different sets of titles existed for the "Bearded Ones" (*βαρβάτοι* from Latin *barbati*, i.e. not eunuchs), the eunuchs (ἐκτομίαι) and women. State officials usually combined titles from both main categories, so that a high official would be both *magistros* (an "awarded" title) and *logothetēs tou dromou* (a "proclaimed" office). |
| **Titles for the "bearded ones"** |
| The "by award" titles for the "Bearded Ones" (non-eunuchs) were, in descending order of precedence: |
| ***Proedros*** (πρόεδρος), "president" — Originally reserved for eunuchs (see below), it was opened up in the mid-11th century to "Bearded Ones" as well, especially military officials. |
| ***Magistros*** (μάγιστρος) – In the early Byzantine state, the *magister officiorum* was one of the most senior officials, but as his duties were gradually relegated to other officials, by the 8th century, only the title was left. It remained a high honour, and only rarely awarded until the 10th century. By the early 10th century, there were 12, the first in precedence among them bearing the title of *prōtomagistros*. Thereafter the number of its holders was inflated, and the office vanished sometime in the 12th century. |
| ***Vestarches*** (βεστάρχης), "head of the vestai" — Adopted in the latter half of the 10th century for high-ranking eunuchs, it began being awarded to "bearded" senior military officers and judicial officials of Constantinople around 1050, before disappearing in the early 12th century. |
| [***Vestes***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vestes) (βέστης) – A senior honorific title, first attested under John I Tzimiskes. Awarded to both eunuchs and non-eunuchs, it survived until the early 12th century. The term is etymologically connected to the vestiarion, the imperial wardrobe, but despite earlier attempts to connect the vestai and the related title of vestarchēs, the head of the class of the vestai (see above), with the officials of the vestiarion (see below), no such relation appears to have existed. |
| ***Anthypatos*** (ἀνθύπατος), "proconsul" — Originally the highest rank for provincial governors, it survived the creation of the Theme system, until, in the 9th century, it too became a purely honorific title. The variant ***prōtanthypatos*** was created in the 11th century to counter its decline in importance, but both disappeared by the end of the 12th century. |
| ***Patrikios*** (πατρίκιος), "patrician" — Established as the highest title of nobility by Constantine the Great, it remained one of the highest dignities until its disappearance in the Komnenian period, awarded to high-ranking officials, including eunuchs, and foreign rulers. The spouses of patricians bore the title *patrikia* (not to be confused with *zōstē patrikia*, see below). |
| ***Prōtospatharios*** (πρωτοσπαθάριος), "first *spatharios*" — As its name signifies, it originally was the title borne by the leader of the *spatharioi* ("swordbearers," the Emperor's bodyguards). For instance, in the 6th century Narses bore this title. It later became one of the most common high court titles, awarded to senior officials such as the *logothetai*, the commanders of the imperial *tagmata*, or the *strategoi* in charge of a theme. The title of *prōtospatharios* also signified admittance to the Senate. The office survived until the Palaiologan period, but had declined to the 35th place of the hierarchy. |
| ***Dishypatos*** (δισύπατος), "twice consul" — A very rare dignity, which originated possibly in the 8th century. |
| ***Spatharokandidatos*** (σπαθαροκανδιδᾶτος) – a blend word of the titles spatharios and kandidatos, both of which were types of palace guards in the 4th–6th centuries. The earliest references to the title occur in early 8th century and the title is clearly attested only from the early 9th century on. Its distinctive badge (brabeion) was a golden chain (maniakion) worn around the chest.[ |
| ***Spatharios*** (σπαθάριος), "spatha-bearer" — As their name signifies, the *spatharioi* were initially a special corps of imperial guards (a *spatha* is a kind of sword). They performed specific duties inside the imperial palace. The title survived until the early 12th century. |
| ***Hypatos*** (ὕπατος), "consul" or "The supreme one" — As in the Roman Republic and Empire, the title was initially given each year to two distinguished citizens (the "ordinary consuls"), until Justinian I halted the practice due to the extraordinary expenditure it involved. It too became a purely honorific title. The title continued to be occasionally assumed by emperors on accession until the end of the 7th century. Honorary consuls however continued to be named, as attested by seals bearing the titles *hypatos* or *apo hypatōn* ("former consul").The title was often conferred to the rulers of south Italian city-states. |
| ***Stratōr*** (στράτωρ), "Groom (horses)". |
| ***Kandidatos*** (κανδιδᾶτος) – From the Latin *candidatus*, so named because of their white tunics. They were originally a select group of guards, drawn from the *Scholae Palatinae*. The title disappeared in the Komnenian period. |
| ***Basilikos mandatōr*** (βασιλικὸς μανδάτωρ), "imperial or royal messenger". |
| ***Vestētōr*** (βεστήτωρ) — Officers of the imperial wardrobe (Latin *vestiarium*). |
| ***Silentiarios*** (σιλεντιάριος) — Originally a group of courtiers responsible for the maintenance of order (including respectful silence) in the palace. |
| ***Stratēlatēs*** (στρατηλάτης), Greek equivalent of the Latin *magister militum*, and ***apoeparchōn*** (ἀποεπάρχων or *ἀπὸ ἐπάρχων*), equivalent of the Latin *ex praefectis* — These two titles are listed as equal by Philotheos. Both were still high dignities in the 6th century, but were devalued afterward. |
| **Titles for eunuchs** |
| By descending order of precedence, the "by award" titles for the eunuchs were: |
| ***Proedros*** (πρόεδρος), "president" — This was an entirely new rank introduced in the 960s by Nikephoros II Phokas and first awarded to Basil Lekapenos, the eunuch *parakoimōmenos*. The holder of this dignity was also the president of the Senate, and the term *proedros* was often used to denote precedence, e.g. *proedros* of the *notarioi* for the *prōtonotarios*. The title was widely awarded in the 11th century, when it was opened up to non-eunuchs, prompting the creation of the *prōtoproedros* to distinguish the most senior amongst its holders. It disappeared in the latter 12th century.[[25]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_bureaucracy_and_aristocracy#cite_note-proedros-25) |
| ***Vestarches*** (βεστάρχης) – Adopted in the latter half of the 10th century for high-ranking eunuchs, it was awarded to "bearded" senior military officers and judicial officials of Constantinople from ca. 1050 on. It disappeared in the early 12th century. |
| ***Patrikios*** – Same as for the "Bearded Ones". |
| ***Vestes*** (βέστης) – Same as for the "Bearded Ones". |
| ***Praipositos*** (πραιπόσιτος) – From the Latin *praepositus*, "placed before". |
| ***Prōtospatharios*** – Same as for the "Bearded Ones". |
| ***Primikērios*** (πριμικήριος) – From the Latin *primicerius*, "first in the list". |
| ***Ostiarios*** (*ὀστιάριος*) – From the Latin *ostiarius*, "doorkeeper, usher". |
| ***Spatharokoubikoularios*** (σπαθαροκουβικουλάριος), "sword-chamberlain" — A ceremonial sword-carrier assigned to the personal guard of the emperor.[[34]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_bureaucracy_and_aristocracy#cite_note-34) It later became a simple court rank. |
| ***Koubikoularios*** (κουβικουλάριος) – From the Latin *cubicularius*, "chamberlain". |
| ***Nipsistiarios*** (νιψιστιάριος), from Greek νίπτειν, "to wash hands") — The *nipsistiarios* was tasked with holding a gold, gem-encrusted water basin and assisting the emperor in performing the ritual [ablutions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ritual_purification) before he exited the imperial palace or performed ceremonies. |
| **Titles for women** |
| ***Zōstē patrikia*** (ζωστὴ πατρικία), "Girded *patrikia*" — This title, reserved for women, was given to the empress' ladies of honour, and, according to Philotheos, ranked very high in hierarchy, above even the *magistros* and *proedros* and just below the *kouropalates*. The title is known from the early 9th century, and disappeared in the 11th century. Otherwise women bore the female forms of their husbands' titles. |
| **Titles for foreigners** |
| [***Exousiastes***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exousiastes) (εξουσιαστής), "one who executes authority" — It was a style applied in the empire to some sovereign foreign rulers. |
| 14th–15th century |
| *Book of Offices* ranks the order of command below the emperor: |
| Despot |
| Sebastokrator |
| Caesar |
| Megas domestikos |
| Megas doux |
| Protostrator, deputy of *megas domestikos* |
| *Megas stratopedarches* |
| Megas primmikerios |
| Megas konostablos |
| Megas droungarios |
| Megas hetairearches |
| Epi tou stratou |
| Domestic of the Scholae |
| Megas droungarios, deputy of *megas doux* |
| Protospatharios |
| Megas arkhon, deputy of *megas primmikerios* |
| Megas tzaousios |
| Skouterios |
| Amyriales, deputy of *megas droungarios* |
| Megas akolouthos |
| Arkhon tou Allagion, deputy of *megas arkhon* |
| Protallagator |
| Domestic of the Walls |
| Vestiarios, deputy of *amyriales* |
| Hetaireiarches, deputy of *megas hetairearches* |
| Stratopedarches of the Mourtatoi |
| Stratopedarches of the Tzakones |
| Stratopedarches of *one-horse cavalry men* |
| Stratopedarches of the crossbowmen |
| Protokomes |
| **Palace offices** |
| ***Parakoimomenos*** (literally, "one who sleeps nearby") — The High Chamberlain who slept in the Emperor's bedchamber. Usually a eunuch, during the 9th–10th centuries the holders of this office often functioned as *de facto* chief ministers of the Empire. |
| ***Protovestiarios*** – Usually a minor relative of the emperor who took care of the emperor's personal wardrobe, especially on military campaigns. He was also sometimes responsible for other members of the imperial household, and the emperor's personal finances. The older term, from before the time of Justinian I, was *curopalata* (or *kouropalates* in Greek). This was derived from *kourator* (curator), an earlier official responsible for financial matters. The *vestiarios* was a subordinate official. The *protovestiaria* and *vestiaria* performed the same functions for the empress. |
| ***Papias*** – Concierge of the imperial palaces, responsible for opening and closing the palace gates each day. |
| ***Pinkernes*** – Originally the emperor's cupbearer, later a senior honorific title. |
| ***Kanikleios*** – The keeper of the imperial inkstand, one of the senior officials of the imperial chancery. In the Komnenian and Palaiologan period, some of its holders were *de facto* chief ministers of the Empire. |
| ***Epi tes trapezes*** (ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς τραπέζης), "the one in charge of the table" — Official responsible for attending to the imperial table during banquets. |
| **Military offices** |
| **Army** |
| ***Exarchos*** – The exarchs were governors of remote parts of the empire such as Italy or Africa. They enjoyed a greater degree of independence than other provincial governors, combining both civil and military authority, practically acting as viceroys. |
| ***Domestikos*** – The *domestikoi* were originally imperial guards, who later functioned as senior staff officers in the Late Roman army. In the Byzantine period, they were among the highest military offices, and included: |
| ***Megas domestikos***, Grand Domestic – The overall commander of the army. |
| ***Domestikos tōn scholōn***, Domestic of the Schools – The commander of the *Scholai*, originally a number of guards units, later a Tagma. This was a very prestigious title, and by the late 9th century, its holder functioned as commander in chief of the army. In ca. 959, the post was divided, with one domestic for the East and one for the West. |
| ***Domestikos tōn thematōn***, Domestic of the Themes – The commander and organizer of the military themes; there was one for the European themes and one for Asian themes. |
| ***Katepanō*** – The governor of a greater area combining two or more themes, such as the Catepan of Italy, a title developed in the 9th century. |
| ***Stratēgos*** – A military and later also civil commander of a theme, who often also had the title of *doux*. The term is basically equivalent to "general" or "admiral", as it was used in both branches of service. |
| ***Tourmarchēs*** – The commander of a *tourma*, a military unit of battalion size. |
| ***Prōtostratōr*** – Initially the Emperor's stable master, under the Komnenian and Palaiologan emperors the term was used for the second-ranking commander of the army. |
| ***Stratopedarchēs***, Master of the Camp – In charge of making sure the army was stocked with food and arms. |
| ***Hoplitarchēs*** or ***archēgētēs*** – Commander of all infantry in a large army. The title first appeared in the mid-10th century, when the infantry was reorganized and gained in importance. |
| ***Prōtokentarchos*** and ***kentarchos*** – Commanders of a smaller division of the army in the field. The name was derived from the Latin centurion. |
| ***Merarchēs*** – Commander of a division *(meros)* of the army. Usually, each army was divided into two to three such commands. |
| ***Taxiarchēs*** or ***chiliarchēs*** – Commander of an infantry regiment (*taxiarchia* or *chiliarchia*) in the army. |
| ***Kavallarios*** – A title borrowed from the Latin *caballarius*, it originally meant a cavalry soldier. During the Palaiologan period, it became a minor court title. |
| **Navy** |
| *Further information: Byzantine navy § Organization* |
| ***Megas doux***, Megaduke or Grand Duke — The basic equivalent of the modern Lord High Admiral. The office was created by Alexios I Komnenos, when he combined the remnants of the imperial and thematic fleets into a single imperial fleet. By the end of the Palaiologos dynasty the megaduke was head of the government and bureaucracy, not just the navy. |
| ***Amirales*** — Greek version of "Admiral", introduced via Sicilian practice; an office founded in the late Palaiologan era for Western mercenary leaders and rarely held, the *amirales* was the deputy of the *megas doux*. |
| ***Megas droungarios*** — Initially the commander-in-chief of the Byzantine navy; after the creation of the *megas doux* his lieutenant, in charge of the naval officers. |
| ***Droungarios*** – The title existed both in the army and the navy. In the navy of the 8th–11th centuries, a *droungarios* headed a fleet, either the central imperial fleet or one of the thematic fleets; in the army he headed a Droungos, a roughly battalion-sized grouping. |
| ***Komēs*** or ***droungarokomēs*** – The commander of a squadron of dromons. |
| ***Kentarchos*** or ***nauarchos*** – The captain of a ship. |
| **Other military titles** |
| ***Ethnarchēs*** — The *ethnarch*, commander of foreign troops. |
| ***Konostaulos*** — Greek form of Latin Comes stabuli "count of the stable" and various European feudal titles such as English "constable"; the chief of the Frankish [mercenaries](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mercenary). |
| ***Hetaireiarchēs*** — The chief of the barbarian mercenaries, the *Hetaireia*, successor to the *Foederati*. Initially subdivided into Greater (*Megalē*), Middle (*Mesē*) and Little (*Mikra*) *Hetaireia*. |
| ***Akolouthos***, "Acolyte" — The chief of the Varangian Guard from the Komnenian era onwards. |
| ***Manglavitai*** — A category of palace guards, armed with sword and cudgel (*manglavion*). Under the command of a *Prōtomanglavitēs*. |
| ***Topotērētēs***, "place-holder" or "lieutenant" — Found at various levels of the hierarchy, as deputies to commanders of the imperial *tagmata*, deputy to a *drungarios*. |
| Administrative offices |
| https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/4e/Emperor_Theophilos_Chronicle_of_John_Skylitzes.jpg/220px-Emperor_Theophilos_Chronicle_of_John_Skylitzes.jpg |
| Emperor Theophilos flanked by courtiers. From the Skylitzes Chronicle. |
| Byzantine administrative nature was characterized by its versatility and unfixed duties in constant role change depending on a specific situation. The vast Byzantine bureaucracy had many titles, more varied than aristocratic and military titles. In Constantinople there were normally hundreds, if not thousands, of bureaucrats at any time. Like members of the Church and the military, they wore elaborately differentiated dress, often including huge hats. These are some of the more common ones, including non-nobles who also directly served the emperor. |
| ***Praetorian prefect*** — The Praetorian prefecture was set up by Augustus as the command of the imperial Guard in Rome. It was developed by Diocletian into a civil office, whereby a handful of Prefects each acted for the Emperor with responsibility for a cluster of dioceses and provinces. Each received regular reports on administration from the provincial governors, had treasuries of his own, and paid and supplied the army with food. He was also a supreme judge of appeal; in cases which were brought before his court from a lower tribunal there was no further appeal to the Emperor. He could issue, on his own authority, praetorian edicts, but they concerned only matters of detail. The office was abolished in the 7th century as part of wide-ranging civil and military reforms, and evolved into that of the *domestikos*. |
| ***Basileopatōr*** (βασιλεοπάτωρ), "Father of the Emperor" — An exceptional title, granted only twice in Byzantine history. Although a *basileopatōr* was not the emperor's actual father, and the title did not necessarily denote any familial relationship at all, both awardees were the father-in-law of the emperor: Stylianos Zaoutzes under Leo VI the Wise and Romanos I Lekapenos briefly as regent for Constantine VII, before he raised himself to co-emperor. It ranked first among the "decreed" offices, and entailed wide-ranging administrative duties. |
| ***Protasekretis***, "First Secretary" — an earlier title for the head of the chancery, responsible for keeping official government records and head of the class of senior secretaries known as *asekretis*. Other subordinates included the *chartoularios,* in charge of imperial documents; the *kastrensios,* a chamberlain in the palace; the *mystikos,* a private secretary; and the *eidikos,* a treasury official. |
| ***Protonotarios*** — Mainly used during the middle Byzantium (8th to 10th c.), also "First Secretary" but chiefly employed as chief financial and executive officer of either each thema/province, directly under its governor-general, or as imperial secretary in various government ministries in the capital. Charged with the provisioning of the thematic troops ahead of a campaign, the Protonotarios at times resembled a Commissar of the USSR, answering only to the emperor. During the late Byzantine era, the title was only encountered at the Palaiologan court, as the emperor's private secretary. In post-imperial times the title was linked to a higher administrative position with the Orthodox Church authorities. |
| ***Chartoularios tou vestiariou***, literally "keeper of documents for the Public Wardrobe" (see Vestiarion) — Responsible for minting gold and silver coins and equipping the fleet. |
| ***Logothetēs***, "one who accounts, calculates or ratiocinates" (literally "one who sets the word") — A secretary in the extensive bureaucracy, who did various jobs depending on the exact position. In the middle and late Byzantine Empire, it rose to become a senior administrative title, equivalent to a modern minister or secretary of state. Different offices of Logothetes included: |
| ***Megas logothetēs***, Grand Logothete — the head of the logothetes, personally responsible for the legal system and treasury, somewhat like a chancellor in western Europe. |
| ***Logothetēs tou dromou***, Drome Logothete — the head of diplomacy and the postal service. |
| ***Logothetēs tōn oikeiakōn***, Logothete of the *oikeiakoi* — the exact functions of this office are unclear. |
| [***Logothetēs tou genikou***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Logothetes_tou_genikou), General Logothete — responsible for taxation. Also acted as a secretary in later cases. |
| ***Logothetēs tou stratiotikou***, Military Logothete — a civilian, in charge of distributing pay to the army. |
| Logothetes originally had some influence on the emperor, but the posts eventually became honorary. In the later empire the Grand Logothete was replaced by the *mesazōn* ("mediator"). |
| Other administrators included: |
| **Eparch of Constantinople** — The urban prefect of Constantinople. |
| **Quaestor** — Originally an accountant or auditor, the office eventually became a judicial one for Constantinople. |
| ***Tribounos***, translation of Latin tribune — Responsible for maintenance of roads, monuments, and buildings in Constantinople (which were the responsibility of the Aedile, not the Tribunes in earlier Latin speaking times.) |
| ***Magister*** (*magister officiorum*, *magister militum*, "maistor" in Greek) — An old Roman term, master of offices and master of the army; by the time of Leo III, these had become honorary titles and were eventually discarded. |
| ***Sakellarios***, "treasurer; purse-bearer" — Under Heraclius, an honorary supervisor of the other palace administrators, logothetes, etc. Later, the chief financial comptroller of the Empire. |
| **Praetor**, Latin for "Man who goes before; first man." — One of the oldest of Roman titles, predating the Roman Republic, the title's use morphed considerably through the years. By the time of Theodosius I (379-395) it meant the leading municipal magistrate (like a modern Mayor) but from late 10th century until 1204, a civil governor of a theme. |
| ***Kephale***, "head" — The governor of a small province, usually a town and its surrounding territory, in the Palaiologan period |
| ***Horeiarios*** — In charge of distributing food from the state granaries. |
| ***Archon*** |
| The *protasekretis*, *logothetes*, prefect, praetor, quaestor, *magister*, and *sakellarios*, among others, were members of the [senate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_senate). |
| **Court life** |
| At the peaceful height of Middle Byzantium, court life "passed in a sort of ballet", with precise ceremonies prescribed for every occasion, to show that "Imperial power could be exercised in harmony and order", and "the Empire could thus reflect the motion of the Universe as it was made by the Creator", according to the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who wrote a *Book of Ceremonies* describing in enormous detail the annual round of the Court. Special forms of dress for many classes of people on particular occasions are set down; at the name-day dinner for the Emperor or Empress various groups of high officials performed ceremonial "dances", one group wearing "a blue and white garment, with short sleeves, and gold bands, and rings on their ankles. In their hands they hold what are called *phengia*". The second group do just the same, but wearing "a garment of green and red, split, with gold bands". These colours were the marks of the old chariot-racing factions, the four now merged to just the Blues and the Greens, and incorporated into the official hierarchy. As in the Versailles of Louis XIV, elaborate dress and court ritual probably were at least partly an attempt to smother and distract from political tensions. |
| Eunuchs also participated in court life, typically serving as attendants to noble women or assisting the emperor when he took part in religious ceremonies or removed his crown. Eunuchs in the early Byzantine Empire were usually foreigners, and they were often seen as having a low status. This changed in the 10th century, when the social status of eunuchs increased and members of the educated Byzantine upper class began to become eunuchs. |
| However, even by the time of Anna Comnena, with the Emperor away on military campaigns for much of the time, this way of life had changed considerably, and after the Crusader occupation it virtually vanished. A French visitor[was shocked to see the Empress going to church far less well attended than the Queen of France would have been. The Imperial family largely abandoned the Great Palace for the relatively compact Palace of Blachernae. |



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