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| **Droungarios of the Watch** |
| **List of known holders** |
| Note: the list does not include holders known only through their seals but otherwise unidentified, or anonymous holders. |
| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Name | Tenure | Appointed by | Notes | | Alexios Mosele | c. 791 | Irene of Athens | Participated in a revolt against Irene, which ended her regency over Constantine VI, but was imprisoned and blinded soon after. | | Ooryphas | late 820s | Michael II | Appointed admiral and sent to check the depredations of the Cretan Saracens, he instituted a new corps of marines and managed to recover several Aegean islands from the Saracens. | | Petronas | c. 830s | Theophilos | The exact dates of his tenure are unknown. Under Theophilos' son and successor, Michael III, he held several senior military commands and achieved the great victory at the Battle of Lalakaon. | | Aetios | c. 830s | Theophilos | Known as the strategos of the Anatolics who was captured by the Abbasids during the Sack of Amorium in 838 and became one of the 42 Martyrs of Amorium. Some modern scholars identify him with a droungarios of the same name, attested in a 9th/10th century signet ring. | | Constantine Baboutzikos | until 838 | Theophilos | A brother-in-law of Empress Theodora, he too was captured at Amorium and became one of the 42 Martyrs of Amorium. | | Ooryphas | early 840s | Theophilos | The exact date of his tenure is unknown, as is his identification with one of the other figures bearing this surname at this time. Kedrenos reports that he was charged with the execution of Theophobos. | | Constantine Maniakes | 842–unknown | Michael III | An Armenian who had come to the Byzantine court as a hostage, he served as droungarios in the early years of Michael III's reign, during the regency of Theodora. He later rose to become Logothete of the Drome. | | John Androsalites | 867–unknown | Basil I the Macedonian | Brother of the abbot Nicholas, who had sheltered the young Basil on his first arrival to Constantinople, he and his brothers were all given high offices on Basil's accession. | | Leo Katakalon | c. 877 | [Basil I the Macedonian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basil_I_the_Macedonian) | Variously named Katakylas, Katakoilas and Katakalos in the sources. According to the hagiography of the Patriarch Ignatios, he was a son-in-law of Ignatios' great rival, Photios, and persecuted with brutality Ignatios' adherents at the start of Photios' second patriarchate (877–886). In 896 promoted to Domestic of the Schools and led the Byzantines in the disastrous Battle of Boulgarophygon. | | John | c. 897 | Leo VI the Wise | He was dismissed due to negligence in uncovering a plot against Leo, who appointed Pardos in his stead. | | Pardos | c. 897–898 | Leo VI the Wise | The son of the hetaeriarch Nicholas Zaoutzes, he was absolutely trusted by Leo, but was in turn arrested for the failed plot of his brother Basil and the members of the family of Stylianos Zaoutzes. | | John | before 914 | Leo VI the Wise | One of the brothers of Patriarch Nicholas Mystikos, he is only known by a letter of his wife from 914/5. | | Eustathios Argyros | c. 908–910 | Leo VI the Wise | A distinguished general of aristocratic descent, he was named droungarios in late 908. He too was dismissed and sent to exile in his native Charsianon when he fell under Leo's suspicion. He died of poison en route. | | Damianos | 913–unknown | Constantine VII (nominally) | Appointed by Empress-regent Zoe Karbonopsina | | John Kourkouas | c. 918–922 | Constantine VII (nominally) | Appointed through the machinations of Romanos Lekapenos, Kourkouas supported the latter in his rise to the throne. In 922 he was rewarded with the high command in the East, which he held for 22 years in which he scored major victories against the Arabs. | | Manuel Kourtikes | 944/5–unknown | Constantine VII | Kourtikes was among the conspirators who overthrew Romanos Lekapenos in December 944, leading to the restoration of sole imperial power to Constantine VII a month later. He was named droungarios of the Watch, and died soon after either in a shipwreck or was executed for lèse-majesté. | | Symeon | 1025–1028 | [Constantine VIII](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_VIII) | Third chamberlain and one of Constantine VIII's favourite eunuchs, he was named droungarios and [proedros](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proedros) on his becoming sole emperor. Symeon later became Domestic of the Schools before retiring as a monk. | |
| **Judicial office** |
| In c. 1030, the office changed from military to purely judicial, and was further distinguished by acquiring the epithet "Grand" (megas) in the 1070s. It seems that the droungarios took over the Court of the Hippodrome, extant since the mid-9th century and so known after its location in the Covered Hippodrome (or, according to an alternative interpretation, in the substructures of the main Hippodrome of Constantinople). This was followed by the creation of new courts and the restructuring of the Byzantine judicial system, so that in the Komnenian period (1081–1185), the Court of the Hippodrome or "Court of the Droungarios" (τὸ δρουγγαρικὸν δικαστήριον, to droungarikon dikastērion) was one of the seven superior civil courts, alongside those of the Eparch of the City, the dikaiodotēs, the koiaistōr, the epi tōn kriseōn, the prōtasēkrētis and the katholikos, who headed the court for fiscal affairs (dēmosiaka pragmata). The droungarios also served as an appellate court for the decisions of the epi tōn kriseōn. The holders of the post belonged to some of the most distinguished families of the civil aristocracy, including such men as Eustathios Rhomaios, John Skylitzes and Andronikos Kamateros |
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| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Name | Tenure | Appointed by | Notes | | Eustathios Rhomaios | shortly after May 1030 | Romanos III Argyros | Possibly the very first holder of the office who presided over the Court of the Hippodrome. He was named droungarios some time after May 1030, and before April 1034. The magistros Eustathios Rhomaios is more famous for his collection of fiscal case law, published as the Peira. | | Anastasios | c. 1030s | unknown | Mentioned only in a document of Patriarch Alexios Stoudites (1025–1043). | | Manuel | 1054–unknown | Theodora | He was rewarded with the post for having helped Theodora gain supreme power for herself. | | Machetarios | 3rd quarter of the 11th century | unknown | A correspondent of Michael Psellos, nothing further is known of him. | | John Xiphilinos | early 1060s | Constantine X Doukas (?) | Patriarch of Constantinople in 1064–1075. According to Theodore Skoutariotes, he was a magistros and droungarios of the Watch prior to his nomination as patriarch. | | Constantine Xiphilinos | c. 1070 | Romanos IV Diogenes (?) | Another addressee of Michael Psellos, nothing further is known of him. | | Constantine Keroularios | 1060s/1070s | Constantine X Doukas or Michael VII Doukas | A nephew of Patriarch Michael Keroularios and cousin of empress Eudokia Makrembolitissa. He was a very influential figure under the Doukas emperors, and is the first known holder of the title of "Grand Droungarios". | | Stephen | 1078–1081 | Nikephoros III Botaneiates | He was dismissed after the deposition of Botaneiates and became a monk and abbot of Xenophontos monastery on Mount Athos. Better known as Symeon the Sanctified. | | Michael Keroularios | 1081–unknown | Alexios I Komnenos | Son of Constantine Keroularios, an eminent expert on judicial and financial matters; he rose to become logothetes ton sekreton for most of Alexios I's reign. | | John Thrakesios | c. 1092 | Alexios I Komnenos | Possibly the same as the proedros, Eparch and Grand Droungarios John who is mentioned in an act variously dated to 1083, 1098 or 1113, but more usually identified with the historian John Skylitzes. | | Nicholas Mermentoulos | c. 1094 | Alexios I Komnenos | Attended the Council of Blachernae (1094), later nobilissimus and Eparch of Constantinople. | | John Zonaras | early 12th century | Alexios I Komnenos | Better known as a historian, Zonaras held high court positions under Alexios I before retiring as a monk. | | Niketas or Nicholas Skleros | 1084, 1099, or 1114 | Alexios I Komnenos | Mentioned only in a law promulgated by Alexios I on a January, on the 7th indiction, i.e. in 1084, 1099, or 1114. | | Constantine Komnenos | c. 1143 | John II Komnenos or Manuel I Komnenos | Referred to simply as a "Grand Droungarios", he was probably an admiral (megas droungarios tou ploimou) rather than a Grand Droungarios of the Watch. | | Stephen Komnenos | c. 1147/51–c. 1156 | Manuel I Komnenos |  | | John Makrembolites | c. 1158 | Manuel I Komnenos |  | | Andronikos Kamateros | c. 1166–c. 1170 | Manuel I Komnenos | A leading official and distinguished author, Kamateros was related to the imperial family on his mother's side. | | Gregory Antiochos | 1187–c. 1196 | Isaac II Angelos | A very well-educated man and distinguished author. By the time he was named Grand Droungarios, he had enjoyed a long career in public service stretching back to the 1150s. | |
| **Palaiologan era** |
| Following the sack of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade in 1204, the office's continuity was broken, and when it reappears in the sources of the Palaiologan period, it had lost any judicial functions and resembled more its original military character: according to the mid-14th century Book of Offices of Pseudo-Kodinos, the Grand Droungarios of the Watch was a subordinate of the Grand Domestic, charged with the night watch and with supervising the army's scouts.[[51]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Droungarios_of_the_Watch#cite_note-FOOTNOTEGuilland1967574%E2%80%93575-51) In reality, however, it had become more of a sinecure and was essentially a court dignity devoid of any but ceremonial duties. |
| In Pseudo-Kodinos' work, the Grand Droungarios of the Watch ranks 24th in the imperial hierarchy, between the Eparch and the megas hetaireiarches.The Grand Droungarios's distinctive court dress, as reported by Pseudo-Kodinos, consisted of a gold-brocaded hat (skiadion), a plain silk kabbadion tunic and a staff (dikanikion) with a gilded knob on top, and covered with golden-red braid below. For ceremonies and festivities, he bore the domed skaranikon, of yellow and golden silk and decorated with gold wire embroidery, and with a portrait of the emperor seated on a throne in front and another with the emperor on horseback on the rear.[[43]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Droungarios_of_the_Watch#cite_note-FOOTNOTEGuilland1967575-43)[[53]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Droungarios_of_the_Watch#cite_note-FOOTNOTEVerpeaux1966158-53) |
| The dignity survived until the end of the Byzantine Empire. The historian Sphrantzes equated the Ottoman post of Agha of the Janissaries to the Grand Droungarios of the Watch. |
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| **Compiler FLN** |