

= Domestic of the Schools =

The office of the Domestic of the Schools (Greek : ?????????? ??? ?????? , domestikos t?n schol?n) was a senior military post of the Byzantine Empire , extant from the 8th century until at least the early 14th century . Originally simply the commander of the Scholai , the senior of the elite tagmata regiments , the Domestic quickly rose in prominence : by the mid @-@ 9th century , its holders essentially occupied the position of commander @-@ in @-@ chief of the Byzantine army , next to the Emperor . The office was eclipsed in the 12th century by that of the Grand Domestic , and in the Palaiologan period (13th ? 15th centuries) , it was reduced to a purely honorary , mid @-@ level court dignity .

= = History = =

The first holder of the office of Domestic of the Schools first appears in the sources (the chronicle of Theophanes the Confessor) for the year 767 , shortly after the creation of the tagmata . These were elite cavalry regiments stationed in or around the capital Constantinople , commanded by officers titled " Domestics " (?????????? , domestikoi) and distinct from the provincial armies of the themes under their respective strat?goi . The Schools (Latin : scholae ; Greek : ?????? , scholai) was the senior tagma , tracing their origin to the Scholae Palatinae established by Constantine the Great (reigned (r .) 306 ? 337) and originally placed under the command of the magister officiorum . The historian J.B. Bury has traced a reference to a certain Anianos , " Domestic of the magister " , in the Chronicon Paschale for the year 624 , and considers this official to be the predecessor of the Domestic of the Schools . As the magister officiorum was gradually deprived of some of his functions in the 7th and 8th centuries , the Domestic apparently became an independent official . The Kletorologion of 899 lists his subordinate officials as comprising his deputy or topot?r?t?s (??????????) , the secretary or chartoularios (??????????) , the head messenger or proximos (?????????) and the other messengers (?????????? , mandatores) , as well as the various subordinate officers of the regiment (cf. the article on the Scholae Palatinae) .

In the 9th century , the office of the Domestic , or " Domesticate " (?????????? , domestikaton) , of the Schools rose in importance and its holder was often appointed as the head of the army in the absence of the emperor . However , this role was not yet enshrined : it depended rather on the abilities of the current Domestic , and other generals of inferior rank were sometimes entrusted with supreme command instead . The Domestic of the Schools nevertheless rose to such prominence that the sources frequently speak of the office as " the Domestic " without further qualification , and the power and influence of the post saw it frequently occupied by persons closely related to the emperor . From the time of Michael III (r . 842 ? 867) on , the Domestic ranked in the imperial hierarchy above all other military commanders except for the strat?gos of the Anatolic Theme . In practice , he quickly became senior even to the latter , as demonstrated by the fact that military leaders like Nikephoros Phokas and John Tzimiskes were promoted from the generalship of the Anatolics to the Domesticate .

In the reign of Romanos II (r . 959 ? 963) the post was split , with a " Domestic of the West " (?????????? ??? ?????? , domestikos t?s dyse?s) and a " Domestic of the East " (?????????? ??? ?????????? , domestikos t?s anatol?s) being created for operations in Europe and Asia respectively . The ceremony for the Domestic 's appointment is described in the De Ceremoniis (II.3) ; the same work describes his duties and role in court ceremonies .

With some exceptions , most notably the unparalleled 22 @-@ year tenure of John Kourkouas , or in times of domestic instability , Domestics were changed on the average every three to four years . During the 10th century , the Domesticate of the Schools was dominated by members of the Phokas family , which produced six holders of the office . Their attempts to monopolize the office led a series of emperors , concerned over the power of the military aristocracy , to entrust the potentially over @-@ powerful office to non @-@ military court officials , including ? especially in the first half of the 11th century , before the military aristocracy reasserted its authority ? to eunuchs , even though this was in theory forbidden , with the alternate office of stratopedarches having been created for this

purpose .

In the 10th and 11th centuries , the variant " Grand Domestic " (?????? ??????????? , megas domestikos) appears sporadically , used in parallel with other variants such as " Grand Domestic of the Schools " or " Grand Domestic of the East / West " for the same person . The Byzantinist Rodolphe Guiland considers most of these early references either as anachronistic references by 12th @-@ century writers , or simply cases where " megas " is used as an honorific prefix , as was the norm with other senior offices during this period , like the Drungary of the Watch or the Domestic of the Excubitors . Nevertheless , Guiland argues that from the time of Alexios I Komnenos (r . 1081 ? 1118) on , the " Grand Domestic " became a separate office , senior to the " plain " Domestics of the Schools and in effect the new commander @-@ in @-@ chief of the army beside the Emperor . However , the usage of the titles is not consistent , and the habitual division of command between East and West seems to have been sometimes applied to the Grand Domesticate as well during the 12th century , causing some confusion as to the nature of the office and its relation to the " plain " Domestic . In the 13th century however the two titles became clearly distinct : the Grand Domestic was the commander @-@ in @-@ chief of the entire army and one of the highest offices of state , while the Domestic of the Schools was relegated to a simple dignity without duties , awarded to provincial governors and other middle @-@ ranking officials . In the words of the mid @-@ 14th century Book of Offices of Pseudo @-@ Kodinos , " the Domestic of the Schools once had an office similar to that of the Grand Domestic currently , but he now holds none "

. In Pseudo @-@ Kodinos ' work , the Domestic of the Schools ranks 31st in the imperial hierarchy , between the mystikos and the Grand Drungary of the Fleet . The Domestic 's distinctive court dress , as reported by Pseudo @-@ Kodinos , consisted of a gold @-@ brocaded hat (skiadion) , a plain silk kabbadion tunic and a silver staff (dikanikion) with a knob on top and another in the middle . For ceremonies and festivities , he bore the domed skaranikon , of yellow 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 .

= = List of known holders = =

Note : the list does not include holders known only through their seals but otherwise unidentified .