



# **Pseudo-Kodinos and the Constantinopolitan Court: Offices and Ceremonies (Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Studies)**

*Ruth Macrides, J.A. Munitiz, Dimiter Angelov*

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The work known as Pseudo-Kodinos, the fourteenth-century text which is one of two surviving ceremonial books from the Byzantine empire, is presented here for the first time in English translation. With facing page Greek text and the first in-depth analysis in the form of commentary and individual studies on the hierarchy, the ceremonies, court attire, the Blachernai palace, lighting, music, gestures and postures, this volume makes an important new contribution to the study of the Byzantine court, and to the history and culture of Byzantium more broadly. The unique traits of this ceremony book include the combination of hierarchical lists of court officials with protocols of ceremonies; a detailed description of the clothing used at court, in particular, hats and staffs; an account of the functions of the court title holders, a description of the ceremonies of the year which take place both inside the palace and outside; the service of the *mezas domestikos* in the army, protocols for the coronation of the emperor, the promotions of *despot*, *sebastokrator* and *caesar*, of the patriarch; a description of the mourning attire of the emperor; protocol for the reception of a foreign bride in Constantinople all these are analysed here. Developments in ceremonial since the tenth-century *Book of Ceremonies* are discussed, as is the space in which ceremonial was performed, along with a new interpretation of the 'other palace', the Blachernai. The text reveals the anonymous authors' interest in the past, in the origins of practices and items of clothing, but it is argued that Pseudo-Kodinos presents descriptions of actual practice at the Byzantine court, rather than prescriptions.

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