

Book X.
Title LXVI.

Concerning exemptions of mechanics.
(De excusationibus artificum.)

10.66.1. Emperor Constantine to Maximus, Praetorian Prefect.

We direct that mechanics of trades mentioned in the subjoined list, living in the various cities, shall be exempt from all (personal) municipal liturgies, since leisure must be given them for learning their trades, so that they may strive to become experts themselves and to instruct their sons.

Given August 2 (337).

Said list is as follows: Architects, physicians, mule-doctors, painters, statuaries, workers in marble, bed-makers, paneled-ceiling workers, locksmiths, makers of four wheeled wagons, stone-cutters, called lithothyktac by the Greeks, constructors, that is to say builders, sculptors, wood-workers, workers in mosaic, plasterers, called koniatai by the Greeks, silversmiths, gilders of weapons, perforators of pearls, coppersmiths, founders of metals, engravers (signarii), metal-workers (fabri), trouser-makers (brocarii), water-inspectors (aquae libratores), potters, called kerameis in Greek, goldsmiths, glass-makers, plumbers (plumbarii), mirror-makers, ivory-workers, furriers, fullers, wheelwrights, fresco-workers (deabatores), coiners, linen-weavers (linarii), beam-workers, gold-beaters, that is to say, petalourgai.

C. Th. 13.4.2.

10.66.2. The same Emperors to Leontius, Praetorian Prefect.

We urge mechanics, geometricians, and architects, who preserve divisions and segments of all the parts, and carry on their work according to measure and plan, and persons who show the discovered courses of water, and its behavior by skillful leveling, to an equal zeal to teach and to learn. Hence, they shall enjoy exemption (from personal liturgies), so that those who can may teach others.

Given July 6 (344).

C. Th. 13.4.3.

Note.

We may add here others who were exempt from liturgies. D. 50.6.3 mentions merchants and shipmasters (navicularii) who shipped grain to Rome, and those that shipped grain to Constantinople were also included. C. Th. 13.5.7. So, too, farmers of revenue and lessees of the imperial domain were exempt. D. 50.6.10 and 11. In D. 50.6.6, the following, among others, are mentioned, as exempt from the more burdensome liturgies: Surveyors, army paymasters, physicians, attendants at baths, architects, grave-diggers, veterinarians, master-builders, shipwrights, mirror-makers, metal-workers, arrow-smiths, coppersmiths wheelwrights, shinglers, water-inspectors, makers of trumpets, horns and bows, plumbers, blacksmiths, butchers, stone-cutters, lime-burners, wood-cutters, charcoal-burners, hunters (for the army), superintendents of armorers, attendants of the sick, certain book-keepers, equerries, cleaners and watchers of arms, heralds, trumpeteers. By D. 50.6.5.12, skilled workmen belonging to guilds were made exempt.

It is probable that these trades or professions were grouped in guilds, and that the membership was ordinarily hereditary and could not be resigned at will. Abbott & Johnson, Munic. Adm. 109.