



# The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona (Medieval Texts in Translation)

*Liudprand*

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## The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona (Medieval Texts in Translation) Liudprand

This modern English translation of all the surviving literary compositions ascribed to Liudprand, the bishop of Cremona from 962 to 972, offers unrivaled insight into society and culture in western Europe during the "iron century." Since Liudprand enjoyed the favor of the Saxon Roman emperor Otto the Great, and traveled to Constantinople more than once on official business, his narratives also reveal European attitudes toward the Byzantine Empire and the culture of its refined capital city. No other tenth-century writer had such privileged access to the high spheres of power, or such acerbic wit and willingness to articulate critiques of the doings of powerful people.

Liudprand's historical texts (the *Antapodosis* on European events in the first half of the 900s, and his *Historia Ottonis* on the rise to power of Otto the Great) provide a unique view of the recent past against a genuinely European backdrop, unusual in a time of localized cultural horizons. Liudprand's famous satirical description of his misadventures as Ottonian legate at the Byzantine court in 968 is a vital source of information on Byzantine ritual and diplomatic process, as well as a classic of medieval intercultural encounter. This collection of Liudprand's works also includes his recently discovered Easter sermon, a rare early document of Jewish-Christian intellectual polemic.

Readers interested in medieval European culture, the history of diplomacy, Italian and German medieval history, and the history of Byzantium will find this collection of translated texts rewarding. A full introduction and extensive notes help readers to place Liudprand's writings in context.

### ABOUT THE TRANSLATOR:

Paolo Squatriti, associate professor of history and Romance languages and literatures at the University of Michigan, is author of *Water and Society in Early Medieval Italy AD 400-1000* and editor of *Natures Past: The Environment and Human History*.

### PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:

"Few medieval chroniclers are more enjoyable to read than Liudprand of Cremona, the well-traveled Italian courtier, ecclesiastic, and ambassador. . . . Paolo Squatriti has done scholars and students an important service by offering fresh translations . . . plus the first rendering in English of a homily written by Liudprand. . . . The translator has carefully combed the scholarly literature on Liudprand in English, Italian, and German, with emphasis on work done in the last twenty years. A synthesis of sorts appears in a substantial introduction. . . . There follow four texts, in more or less chronological order, with extremely helpful

explanatory and bibliographic notes aimed 'to ease the task of students in unraveling Liudprand's culture' (viii). The translation is accurate and faithful, navigating with considerable success the often choppy structure and precious style of Liudprand. . . . Writer and translator seem to come fully into their own with 'Embassy,' a total treat to read here. . . . Students will find much to learn about and chew over in each of these texts and by looking at them as a group. . . . Squatriti has given students and scholars an English Liudprand for the twenty-first century that is an important resource for extending our understanding of the tenth." ? Bruce Venarde, *The Medieval Review*

"At last? a new, up-to-date translation of the *Works* of Liudprand (or Liutprand) of Cremona. Paolo Squatriti's version has much to commend it. It moves away from the "forsooth language" of the old translation by F.A. Wright and builds on the more recent work of Brian Scott; it captures Liudprand's chameleon-like changes of style in an eminently readable version, and it provides a useful introduction to recent scholarly work on the author and his times. . . . As befits a translator who is both historian and literary scholar, Squatriti's introduction has much of interest to say. . . . A vivi

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