

Abstract: Foreigners in the Early Middle Ages: notes on ch. 367 of the *Edictum Rothari*

The Longobardic legal term *waregang* has been studied since the 19th century from an anecdotic perspective only, and still waits to be analysed through an approach combining linguistic, juridical and historical analysis. This paper presents a brief systematic analysis of the historical features of the *waregang's* legal person. The paper aims to find a common denominator among a sparse set of sources scattered over space and time, beginning with the chapter 367 of the *Edictum Rothari*, still the keystone of the argument. In the last section, the traditions mentioning the *waregang* are compared to those of the Anglo-Saxon *wærgenga*, of the Old Norse *væring*, of the Old Slavic *varjag'* and of the medieval Greek *várangia*. The abnormal legal status of these foreigners in the Medieval juridical scene, and their spare presence in the Early and High Medieval sources, suggest that the Longobardic *waregang* – as attested in Italy – could be an offshoot of the Byzantine imperial guard (the *várangoi*).

Domenico Parducci, Dr.
Department of History, University of Pisa
domenico.parducc[at]gmail.com