JOURNAL OF MEDIEVAL MILITARY HISTORY

· XIII ·

Edited by JOHN FRANCE, KELLY DeVRIES
and CLIFFORD J. ROGERS

JOURNAL OF

Medieval Military History

Volume XIII

JOURNAL OF MEDIEVAL MILITARY HISTORY

ISSN 1477–545X

The Journal, an annual publication of **De re militari: The Society for Medieval Military History**, covers medieval warfare in the broadest possible terms, both chronologically and thematically. It aims to encompass topics ranging from traditional studies of the strategic and tactical conduct of war, to explorations of the martial aspects of chivalric culture and *mentalité*, examinations of the development of military technology, and prosopographical treatments of the composition of medieval armies. Editions of previously unpublished documents of significance to the field are included. The Journal also seeks to foster debate on key disputed aspects of medieval military history.

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THE BOYDELL PRESS

First published 2015
The Boydell Press, Woodbridge

ISBN 978–1–78327–057–6

The Boydell Press is an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Ltd
PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF, UK
and of Boydell & Brewer Inc.
668 Mt Hope Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620–2731, USA
website: www.boydellandbrewer.com

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library

This publication is printed on acid-free paper

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Feudalism, Romanticism, and Source Criticism: Writing the Military History of Salian Germany[1]

David Bachrach

The military history of the German kingdom in the eleventh century remains to be written. The most recent monographic treatment that considers the Salian kings at war, Bruno Scherff's 1985 dissertation "Studien zum Heer der Ottonen und der ersten Salier (919–1056)," ends with the death of King Henry III (1039–56) and is notable for the topics that it explicitly avoids, including military equipment, logistics, numbers, military levies, fortifications, and above all, sieges.[2] There are no monographic studies of the conquest of the Burgundian kingdom by King Conrad II of Germany (1024–39) in his two-year campaign of 1033–34.[3] Since the end of the nineteenth century, scholars have assiduously avoided investigating the wars of Conrad II, Henry III, and Henry IV (1056–1106) in Poland and Hungary.[4] Even the civil wars within Germany during the final quarter of the eleventh century and the first decade of the twelfth, which have received considerable attention from a political perspective, have inspired only limited commentary regarding military matters.[5] At an even more basic level,

1 This paper was originally delivered as the *De re militari* Lecture at the medieval studies conference at Western Michigan University in May 2014. I thank all of the participants for their helpful questions and insights.

2 Bruno Scherff, "Studien zum Heer der Ottonen und der ersten Salier (919–1056)" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Bonn, 1985), pp. 1–5.

3 The very dated dissertation by Otto Blümcke, "Burgund unter Rudolf III. und der Heimfall der burgundischen Krone an Kaiser Konrad III" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Greifswald, 1869) focuses on the transition in power between the last Burgundian ruler and the Salian Conrad II, but does not do so from a military perspective.

4 Julius Reinhard Dieterich, *Die Polenkriege Konrads II. und der Friede von Merseburg* (Giessen, 1895); and Emil Friedrich Kuemmel, *Die zwei letzten Heereszüge Kaiser Heinrichs III. nach Ungarn (1051 und 1052) mit Rücksichtsnahme auf die bairisch-kärtnische Empörung* (Strassnitz, 1879). A general treatment of German–Hungarian relations can be found in the studies by Friedrich Schuster, *Ungarns Beziehungen zu Deutschland von 1056–1108* (Hermannstadt, 1899); and Otto Rademacher, *Ungarn und das deutsche Reich unter Heinrich IV.* (Merseburg, 1885).

5 Two notable exceptions to the otherwise spare historiographical tradition are the articles by Leopold Auer, "Die Schlacht bei Mailberg am 12. Mai 1082," *Militärhistorische Schriftenreihe* 31 (1975), 1–31; and John Gillingham, "An Age of Expansion, c. 1020–1204," in *Medieval Warfare: A History*, ed. Maurice Keen (Oxford, 1999), pp. 59–88. Several of the major battles of the Saxon wars also were outlined by Hans Delbrück, *Geschichte der Kriegskunst in Rahmen*

the enormous volume of source materials pertaining to warfare in the Salian century, including narrative texts, letters, charters, and archaeological evidence, has not received the kind of detailed critical analysis that has become the norm in Anglo-Saxon, Carolingian, and increasingly Ottonian military history.[6]

The lack of scholarly attention to the military history of the German kingdom generally, and to the Salian period, in particular, is due to several factors. First, until very recently non-German-speaking scholars, including military historians, generally avoided the history of Germany altogether.[7] Second, German-speaking historians largely have avoided topics in military history, especially since the end of the Second World War.[8] Finally, the one consistent exception to this aversion to military matters, namely the focus on social and economic questions regarding the relationship among military service, nobility, and feudalism, has actually served to hinder a thorough investigation of the nature and conduct of war, and the concomitant examination of its institutional, material, and human elements.

Even before the 1940s, many topics that are currently understood as the province of military history were largely ignored in the German scholarly tradition. These include, but are not limited to, logistics, siege warfare, military technology, military organization, recruitment, military institutions such as local and expeditionary levies, pay, morale, education, and military training. Instead, scholars devoted their energies to explaining the supposed transition from a

der politischen Geschichte, vol. 3, third edition (Berlin, 1923, originally published 1907), trans. by Walter J. Renfroe as *History of the Art of War, Volume III: Medieval Warfare* (Lincoln, NE, 1982, repr. 1990), pp. 131–45.

6 David S. Bachrach, "*Milites* and Warfare in Pre-Crusade Germany," forthcoming in *War in History,* is an attempt to redress this imbalance, particularly in regard to narrative texts.

7 Fortunately, there has been a recent blossoming of English-language scholarship on the German kingdom. An early precursor of this tradition was John W. Bernhardt, *Itinerant Kingship and Royal Monasteries in Early Medieval Germany c. 936–1075* (Cambridge, 1993). Now also see, for example, Jonathan Lyon, *Princely Brothers and Sisters: The Sibling Bond in German Politics, 1100–1250* (Ithaca, NY, 2013); and John Eldevik, *Episcopal Power and Ecclesiastical Reform in the German Empire: Tithes, Lordship, and Community, 950–1150* (Cambridge, UK, 2012). From a military perspective, see Charles R. Bowlus, *The Battle of Lechfeld and its Aftermath, August 955: The End of the Age of Migrations in the West* (Aldershot, 2006).

8 Concerning the lack of scholarship on German military history in the period after the Second World War, see Hans-Hennig Kortüm, "Der Krieg im Mittelalter als Gegenstand der historischen Kultur-Wissenschaften: Einer Annäherung," in *Krieg im Mittelalter*, ed. idem (Berlin, 2001), pp. 13–43; and Scherff, *Studien zum Heer der Ottonen und der ersten Salier*, pp. 2–4. One notable exception has been the Austrian scholar Leopold Auer, whose numerous publications on military matters include "Der Kriegsdienst des Klerus unter den sächsischen Kaisern," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* part 1, 79 (1971), 316–407; and part 2 in ibid., 80 (1972), 48–70; "Zum Kriegswesen unter den früheren Babenbergern," *Jahrbuch für Landeskunde von Niederösterreich* 42 (1976), 9–25; "Formen des Krieges im abendländischen Mittelalter," in *Formen des Krieges: Vom Mittelalter zum "Low-Intensity-Conflict,"* ed. Manfried Rauchensteiner and Erwin A. Schmid (Graz, 1991), pp. 17–43; and "Mittelalterliches Kriegswesen im Zeichen des Rittertums," in *Krieg im mittelalterlichen Abendland*, ed. Andreas Obenau and Christoph Kaindel (Vienna, 2010), pp. 65–79.

putative "nation in arms" among the early Germanic peoples to small retinues of "feudal knights" who ostensibly dominated both warfare and politics through their monopolistic mastery of equestrian combat. A brief overview of this historiographical tradition will help to illuminate the current (limited) state of understanding of warfare in Germany in the pre-crusade period.

From Levies to Feudal Knights

In his classic study, first published in 1887, Heinrich Brunner made the case for Charles Martel's rapid transformation of Frankish military organization from large armies of men on foot to much smaller armies of mounted warriors.[9] Brunner argued that Charles Martel, having defeated an army of mounted Muslims with his infantry phalanx, now sought to develop a cavalry army that could face the Muslims in battle. The implicit paradox in this argument was never fully explained by Brunner. In order to achieve this new army, Charles is depicted as having "borrowed" large numbers of estates from the church, and granting these as *beneficia* to his loyal supporters so that they could purchase and maintain horses that were suitable for mounted combat. Brunner averred that because these mounted troops were so much more militarily effective than the foot soldiers whom they replaced Charles Martel simply stopped mobilizing the latter and relied on his new cavalry army. The ultimate consequence of this change in military organization of the Frankish kingdom was that only those men who could equip themselves and their dependents as mounted warriors remained militarily viable. The bulk of the population, which now was excluded from military service, declined in social, economic, and political status. The warrior aristocracy and their beneficed retainers thus took their place alongside the king as the major figures in the new "feudal" order.

Military historians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries generally did not accept Brunner's model of a rapid transition of Frankish military organization towards an army that was composed largely of mounted warriors – not least because Carolingian military legislation from the ninth century clearly indicated that foot soldiers continued to be mobilized for combat operations.[10]

[9] The information in the following paragraph is drawn from Heinrich Brunner, "Der Reiterdienst und die Anfänge des Lehnwesens," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Germanistische Abtheilung* 8 (1887), 1–38, reprinted in Brunner, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des deutschen und französischen Rechts* (Stuttgart, 1894), pp. 39–74.

[10] In this context, Delbrück, *History of the Art of War*, 3:16–18, took the view that the transition was very rapid, while numerous other scholars argued for a much more gradual approach. In his review essay of the third volume of Delbrück's massive study on the history of war, in which Delbrück argued in favor of Brunner's rapid transition to an army of mounted fighting men, W. Erben, "Zur Geschichte des karolingischen Kriegswesens," *Historische Zeitschrift* 101 (1908), 321–36, drew attention to a series of errors that Delbrück had made, and specifically noted Delbrück's failure to account for the capitulary evidence that discussed the continued mobilization of foot soldiers for campaign duty. Many other scholars called into question the rapid transition to a mounted army on the basis of references to foot soldiers in narrative

However, Brunner's argument that mounted military service provides the key to understanding both the establishment of a warrior nobility and the development of feudalism did win widespread approval from scholars in the early twentieth century. Thus, for example, in his study of the constitution of the state and the army in early medieval Europe, published in 1906, Otto Hintze started from the premise that there was a transition in Frankish military organization from large armies of foot soldiers to smaller armies of mounted troops. Hintze argued that this transformation was accompanied by a professionalization of the army, with the concomitant requirement that mounted fighting men should have sufficient wealth not only to equip themselves with horses and arms, but also the leisure time that was necessary to train to fight on horseback. The difference in wealth combined with the difference in status as warriors resulted, according to Hintze, in the development of a knightly class (*Ritterstand*). These knights were socially, as well as economically, superior to the bulk of the population that did not have sufficient wealth to participate in mounted combat.[11]

The distinction between those who fight and those who farm was given an ostensible legal foundation by Hans Fehr in his 1914 study.[12] Fehr compared the discussion of fighting men in Carolingian capitularies of the ninth century with the texts of royal commands for territorial peace (*Landfrieden*) issued by Salian and Staufen kings from the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries. Fehr observed that although the latter documents clearly permit all men to engage in self-defense, the *Landfrieden* do not make provisions for *Bauern* to participate in expeditionary campaigns. He concluded on this basis that farmers no longer had the right to bear arms (*Waffenrecht*) and consequently suffered a social decline as a class.[13] It is noteworthy that Fehr did not utilize any narrative sources in his study. Nor did he find an adequate solution to the problem that as late as 1179 the *Landfrieden* issued by Frederick Barbarossa banned farmers from carrying swords while in their home villages, but did not ban them from carrying swords while they went on journeys.[14]

In the interwar period, many scholars adopted the theme that men of the lower social orders, variously identified as farmers or simply as free men (*Freie*), were demilitarized, and that warfare came to be dominated by a knightly class of

sources. See, for example, Erich Sander, "Die Heeresorganisation Heinrichs I.," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 59 (1939), 1–26; Hans von Mangoldt-Gaudlitz, *Die Reiterei in den germanischen und fränkischen Heeren bis zum Ausgang der deutschen Karolinger* (Berlin, 1922); Franz Beyerle, "Zur Wehrverfassung des Hochmittelalters," in *Festschrift Ernst Mayer zum 70. Geburtstag* (Weimar, 1932); and Paul Schmitthenner, "Lehnskriegswesen und Söldnertum im abendländischen Imperium des Mittelalters," *Historische Zeitschrift* 150 (1934), 228–67.

11 Otto Hintze, *Staatsverfassung und Heeresverfassung* (Dresden, 1906); and reprinted in idem *Staat und Verfassung. Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur allgemeinen Verfassungsgeschichte*, ed. Gerhard Oestreich, 3rd ed. (Göttingen, 1970), pp. 52–83.

12 Hans Fehr, "Das Waffenrecht der Bauern im Mittelalter," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte. Germanistische Abteilung* 35 (1914), 111–211.

13 Ibid., pp. 158–61.

14 Ibid., p. 139.

mounted warriors. Franz Beyerle, for example, argued: "from the later Carolingian period, the army increasingly was dominated by vassalic contingents."[15] In support of this argument, Beyerle drew attention to Regino of Prüm's discussion of the defeat of the tenants of his monastery at the hands of the Vikings in the late ninth century, which Beyerle used as evidence of the poor fighting skills of local levies that resulted in their increasing exclusion from military affairs.[16] In this context, Beyerle did not draw attention to Regino's specific observation that the men in question were untrained, i.e. *disciplina militari nudatum*.[17] Eugen von Frauenholz also depicted the ninth century as a period of transition between armies of foot soldiers and smaller armies of mounted warriors. Like Hintze, von Frauenholz initially depicted this development as bringing about a concomitant professionalization of the army. However, this professional force quickly developed, in the view of von Frauenholz, into a new hereditary social class (*Geburtsstand*) with rules governing not only military life, but all aspects of newly developing knighthood (*Ritterschaft*).[18]

In the decades after the Second World War, scholars continued to adhere to the intertwined argument that there was a transition from armies of men on foot to armies composed predominantly of mounted warriors, and that this transition played a crucial role in the development of both a warrior aristocracy and feudalism. In his study of the participation of German ecclesiastical magnates in the wars of the Ottonian kings, published in 1971–72, the Austrian scholar Leopold Auer asserted: "Undoubtedly, vassalic contingents gained considerably in importance because of the efforts of the Carolingians, and the number of free men in the army, who had been quite numerous up to this point, now shrank."[19] A few years later, Auer returned to this idea in a study focused on the military organization of the early Babenberger in Austria, and argued with regard to vassalic contingents that: "we are dealing here with a fundamental issue of medieval military history, namely the central question of the relationship between war and social structure, or put another way, the relationship between status and the obligation to undertake military service."[20] He added that: "heavily armored mounted men increasingly comprised the core of the army from the time of

15 Franz Beyerle, "Zur Wehrverfassung des Hochmittelalters," in *Festschrift Ernst Mayer zum 70. Geburtstag* (Weimar, 1932), pp. 31–91, here 31.

16 Ibid., p. 40.

17 Regino of Prüm, *Regionis abbatis Prumensis chronicon cum continuatione Treverensi*, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG (Hanover, 1890), p. 118.

18 Eugen von Frauenholz, *Das Heerwesen der germanischen Frühzeit, des Frankenreiches und des ritterlichen Zeitalters* (Munich, 1935), p. 60.

19 Leopold Auer, "Der Kriegsdienst des Klerus unter den sächsischen Kaisern," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* part 1, 79 (1971), 316–407; and part 2 in ibid., 80 (1972), 48–70. Auer, "Kriegsdienst," part 1, 320; and idem, part 2, 50, "Zweifellos hat aber das vasallitische Aufgebot durch die Maßnahmen der Karolinger … stark an Bedeutung gewonnen und die Zahl der Freien im Heer, die in dieser Zeit noch recht zahlreich vertreten waren, eingeschränkt."

20 Leopold Auer, "Zum Kriegswesen unter den früheren Babenbergern," *Jahrbuch für Landeskunde von Niederösterreich* 42 (1976), 9–25, here 16.

Pippin III onwards, while foot soldiers retreated in importance. The material demands that resulted from this situation (above all the possession of a horse and a byrnie) were too high for the great mass of the free men, particularly in light of the increasing number of wars. The result was that participation in offensive campaigns, that is expeditionary duty, increasingly was limited to the wealthier strata of the population."[21] However, Auer did accept that members of the lower social orders continued to be mobilized for territorial defense (*Landfolge*) into the eleventh century in periods of emergency.[22] By contrast, Auer claimed, those members of the lower social orders found on campaign were there merely as servants or attendants in the baggage train.[23]

Auer's views regarding the changes in military organization under the Carolingians were echoed by Josef Fleckenstein in his study on the intertwined development of the nobility and the nature of military organization in the Frankish empire. Fleckenstein focused his attention on Carolingian capitularies, and identified a three-stage process in which the position of the free fighting man was weakened relative to the vassals of the great magnates. The first phase, Fleckenstein argued, came with Charlemagne's 808 capitulary that called for a mobilization of the entire army, with men coming to the host either with their *senior* or with the count. Fleckenstein interpreted this to mean that the army was now divided into two elements. The first consisted of vassals led by their feudal lords, and the second consisted of non-vassals who were led to war by the count in whose *pagus* they resided. Fleckenstein argued that the next stage of development was marked by the 847 capitulary of Meersen that summoned all men to come to the host with their *seniores*, without making any mention of men coming to the host with their counts. Fleckenstein interpreted this to mean that non-vassalic forces no longer participated on campaign. The third stage, Fleckenstein argued, came with the increasing number of nobles who appear as vassals and the concomitant numerical domination of vassalic contingents by men of high social status who held benefices from their superior lords.[24]

The arguments regarding the transformation of Frankish military organization and the concomitant domination of warfare by vassalic contingents of noble mounted warriors were further developed in the context of Ottonian history by Hagen Keller and Karl Leyser. The former observed in his study on the foundations of Ottonian royal rule that: "The transition from the Carolingian period, namely the accentuation of the personal character of the structure of lordship, had a particularly clear effect in the change in military organization. The Ottonians abandoned the territorially-based mobilization of the free – aside from

21 Ibid.
22 Ibid., p. 17.
23 Ibid., p. 21.
24 Josef Fleckenstein, "Adel und Kriegertum und ihre Wandlung im Karolingereich," *Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo* 27 (1987), 2 vols., 1:67–94, here 89–92.

territorial defense – and relied entirely on the vassals of the bishops and secular magnates."[25]

In a series of essays published from the 1960s to the 1980s, Karl Leyser also developed the theme that warfare in the Ottonian period was dominated by nobles, and their noble vassals, who were distinguished by their mastery of equestrian combat.[26] Unlike Keller, however, Leyser looked for this change in the tenth rather than the ninth century. He argued that the Saxons lagged behind their Frankish neighbors in military development, and so the first Saxon king, Henry I (919–936), was compelled to bring his people into modernity by developing a force of heavily armed mounted warriors in order to deal with the Magyar threat. Although he did not cite Heinrich Brunner's study on mounted military service and the origins of feudalism, Leyser's argument paralleled Brunner's model concerning Charles Martel, namely that the creation of an army of mounted vassals led to the creation of a knightly class.[27] The concomitant effect on military organization was to eliminate the need for foot soldiers, other than in support roles, such as maintaining the wagon train.[28] Leyser was willing to concede that, "The *ignobile vulgus* was by no means yet without weapons." However, he added that: "the honour of arms had become the hallmark and was already the hereditary possession primarily of nobles."[29]

The views of scholars such as Fleckenstein and Leyser have had an enormous influence on subsequent scholarship. With just a few notable exceptions, over the past forty years the transition to armies consisting of vassalic contingents of mounted knights with the concomitant disappearance of Carolingian-style expeditionary levies has been taken for granted by specialists in the history of Ottonian and Salian Germany.[30] I have argued elsewhere that this model is

25 Hagen Keller, "Grundlagen ottonischer Königsherrschaft," in *Reich und Kirche vor dem Investiturstreit: Vorträge beim wissenschaftlichen Kolloquium aus Anlaß des achtzigsten Geburtstag von Gerd Tellenbach*, ed. Karl Schmid (Sigmaringen, 1985), pp. 17–34, here 21, n. 14.

26 See, for example, Karl Leyser, "The Battle at the Lech, 955: A Study in Tenth-Century Warfare," *History* 50 (1965), 1–25 and reprinted in K. J. Leyser, *Medieval Germany and its Neighbours 900–1250* (London, 1982), pp. 43–67; idem, "Henry I and the Beginnings of the Saxon Empire," *The English Historical Review* 83 (1968), 1–32 and reprinted in Leyser, *Medieval Germany*, pp. 11–42; and idem, "Early Medieval Canon Law and the Beginnings of Knighthood," in *Instutionen, Kultur und Gesellschaft im Mittelalter: Festschrift für Josef Fleckenstein zum 65. Geburtstag* (Sigmaringen, 1984), pp. 549–66, repr. in *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe: The Carolingian and Ottonian Centuries*, ed. Timothy Reuter (London, 1994), pp. 51–71.

27 Leyser, "Henry I," pp. 40–41.

28 Leyser, "Henry I," p. 21.

29 Leyser, "Early Medieval Canon Law," pp. 70–71.

30 Numerous studies can be cited in this context. See, for example, Heinrich Koller, "Das mittelalterliche Stadtmauer als Grundlage städtischen Selbstbewußtseins," in *Stadt und Krieg*, ed. Bernhard Kirchgässner and Günter Scholz (Sigmaringen, 1989), 9–25, here 17; Charles R. Bowlus, "The Early Kaiserreich in Recent German Historiography," *Central European History* 23.4 (1990), 349–67, here 357; Franz-Reiner Erkens, "Militia und Ritterschaft: Reflexionen über die Entstehung des Rittertums," *Historische Zeitschrift* 258 (1994), 623–59, here 629; Otto

ill-suited to describe warfare under the Ottonians.[31] My focus in the remainder of this essay will be on ascertaining whether this consensus among scholars is justified with regard to the eleventh century. Was warfare in the Salian period truly dominated by small groups of knightly vassals who fought cavalry battles against other knightly vassals?[32] Was it really the case, as one scholar averred, that: "the grotesque situation was in force that the nobility built fortifications that could only be defended on foot, but continued to hold fast to the principle of only fighting on horseback"?[33] In sum, is it true that military forces, which might be characterized as non-noble levies, were not deployed for military operations in eleventh-century Germany?

In the remainder of this paper I will address two issues that have the potential to illuminate these questions, and the broader military organization of the German kingdom under the Salian dynasty. First, how does the *parti pris* of the narrative sources from the eleventh century affect their depiction of warfare? Second, what do these same authors have to say about the role played by non-*milites* in the conduct of war? Before turning to these questions, however, it is useful to make a few observations about the *milites* who populate the pages of eleventh-century narrative works.

In general, it is these *milites* who have been identified by many scholars either as feudal knights or as beneficed vassals of lords who dominated warfare through their monopoly on mounted combat.[34] However, the identification of *milites* as either knights or vassals cannot be sustained for eleventh-century Germany. First, the term *miles*/*milites* retained its traditional meaning as a

Ackermann, "Comites und Milites: Grafen und Krieger im Hochmittelalter," *Werdenberger Jahrbuch* 7 (1994), 11–20, here 11; Michael Toch, "The Medieval German City under Siege," *The Medieval City Under Siege*, ed. Ivy A. Corfis and Michael Wolf (Woodbridge, 1995), pp. 35–48, here 35–36; and Malte Prietzel, *Kriegführung im Mittelalter: Handlungen, Erinnerungen, Bedeutungen* (Paderborn, 2006) 21–23, and *passim*; and idem, *Krieg im Mittelalter* (Darmstadt, 2006), *passim*.

31 See, for example, David S. Bachrach, *Warfare in Tenth-Century Germany* (Woodbridge, 2012).

32 A number of scholars have called into question whether there was a knightly class in Germany during the eleventh century. See the discussion by Johann Johrendt, *Milites und Militia im 11. Jahrhundert. Untersuchung zur Frühgeschichte des Rittertums in Frankreich und Deutschland* (Nüremberg, 1971); idem, "'Milites' und 'Militia' im 11. Jahrhundert in Deutschland," *Das Rittertum im Mittelalter*, ed. Arno Borst (Darmstadt, 1976), pp. 419–36; and Joachim Bumke, *Studien zum Ritterbegriff im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert mit einem Anhang zum Stand der Ritterforschung 1976* (Heidelberg, 1977), and translated into English as *The Concept of Knighthood in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1982), who made the case that there is no evidence of a knightly class in Germany during the eleventh century, and the term *miles* cannot properly be translated as knight in this period. For a broader commentary on the problem of scholars using the term inappropriately before 1100, see the discussion by Jean Flori, "Knightly Society," in *The New Cambridge Medieval History: c. 1024–c. 1198*, vol. 4, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 148–84, particularly 149.

33 Koller, "Das mittelalterliche Stadtmauer," 17.

34 For a discussion of the historiography treating the meaning of the term *miles* in pre-crusade Germany and a fuller discussion of the points made in the remainder of this paragraph, see Bachrach, "*Milites* and Warfare," forthcoming.

fighting man, and more particularly as a professional soldier, throughout the eleventh century. Second, the sources for this period provide no basis for concluding that men denoted as *milites* possessed a legal or social status that differentiated them from other laymen on the basis of their identity as *milites*. The term designates a professional rather than a legal or social status. Nor is there any basis in the sources for concluding that most or even many *milites* were men with high social status. Rather the opposite is true. Most *milites* were men of low social status and could be killed with impunity in sieges and on the battlefield, as illuminated by the fact that contemporary observers felt no need to identify them by name. In addition, it is clear that although some *milites* did possess *beneficia*, many did not and instead received wages, i.e. *stipendia*, for their military service. Finally, although some *milites* can be shown to have possessed horses, and even to have ridden them in combat, most *milites* appear in the narrative sources of the eleventh century as garrison troops in fortifications, or in armies besieging fortifications where horses were of limited utility.

*Authorial Bias and Non-*Milites *at War in Salian Germany*

In turning back to problem of the non-*milites* who served in warfare, it must be emphasized that much of the argument for the transformation of the military organization of Frankish empire and its successor states, whether under the Carolingians or the Ottonians, depends upon the reading of legal texts, such as capitularies and *Landfrieden*, in isolation from narrative sources.[35] Those scholars who adduce evidence from narrative sources to support the contention that military levies gradually disappeared (whether in the ninth or the tenth century) tend to use examples that are not treated in context, particularly with regard to the role that these passages were intended to play in the author's overall account.[36]

From a methodological perspective, selecting isolated or unrepresentative passages from narrative works in order to suit a scholar's chosen conclusion is particularly problematic. It is well understood that medieval authors, in general, and eleventh-century authors, in particular, were not engaged in a transparent effort to reveal the past "as it really happened."[37] Rather, authors in the pre-

35 See above for the use of legal sources by scholars including Hans Fehr and Josef Fleckenstein.

36 With regard to the selective use of narrative texts that leads to a misrepresentation of the text as a whole, see the discussion by Bernard S. Bachrach and David S. Bachrach, "Saxon Military Revolution, 912–973? Myth and Reality," *Early Medieval Europe* 15(2007), 186–222.

37 The crucial observations by Walter Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History: Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton, 1988) with regard to the highly politicized approach to the past by early medieval writers certainly are apropos to the discussion of the authors of eleventh-century texts. For an overview of the main narrative sources for the Salian period and a discussion of their biases with a focus on what they have to say about warfare and violence, see Simon M. Karzel, *Nihil crudelius a barbaris perpeti potuissent: Die Darstellung von Krieg und Gewalt in den historiographischen Quellen zur Zeit Heinrichs IV.* (Marburg, 2008).

crusade period, most of whom were aristocratic clerics, were heavily biased not only in favor of their particular patrons, but also toward members of their own families, and more broadly toward individuals characterized by an elevated social and economic status.[38] In the context of writing military history these biases are manifested in the considerable attention given to relatively small numbers of aristocrats engaged in combat operations, but also, on occasion, in the denigration of members of the lower social orders for rhetorical purposes. As a consequence, when medieval writers note only the deaths of aristocrats in combat, this cannot be understood *ipso facto* as evidence that non-aristocrats were absent from the battlefield. Similarly, when these same authors write disparagingly about men with low social status on military campaign, it is incumbent upon the historian to determine whether this passage is reflective of reality, or whether the author is indulging his biases for rhetorical purposes. A couple of examples will help to illuminate this problem.

Bruno of Merseburg, a Saxon aristocrat and cleric who was employed by both the archbishop of Magdeburg and the bishop of Merseburg during the course of the 1070s and 1080s, devoted considerable attention throughout his history of the civil war in Germany, the *Saxonicum Bellum*, to lauding and highlighting the positive contribution of nobles and the crude, violent, and uncivilized behavior of peasants and others in the lower strata of society.[39] Bruno's hostility toward the lower social orders manifests itself on several occasions in military contexts. Bruno claims, for example, that during the siege of Würzburg in August 1077, the anti-king Rudolf of Rheinfelden was reluctant to capture the city by storm because he feared that he would not be able to keep the lower-class elements in the army in check, and stop them from looting churches and stealing clerical property once they overwhelmed the defenders.[40] Consequently, according to Bruno, Rudolf preferred to deploy his troops in a lengthy and expensive siege rather than risk the dishonor that would result from allowing a successful assault

[38] See, for example, David S. Bachrach, "The Military Organization of Ottonian Germany, c. 900–1018: The Views of Bishop Thietmar of Merseburg," *Journal of Military History* 72 (2008), 1061–88, here 1067–68. With regard to authorial focus on aristocrats in narrative texts so as to memorialize the author's own family and friends, see Lutz E. von Padberg, "Geschichtsschreibung und kulterelles Gedächtnis: Formen der Vergangenheitswahrnehmung in der hochmittelalterlichen Historiographie am Beispiel von Thietmar von Merseburg, Adam von Bremen und Helmold von Bosau," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 105 (1994), 156–77.

[39] The best edition of Bruno's *Saxonicum Bellum* is now to be found in *Quellen zur Geschichte Kaiser Heinrichs IV.: Die Briefe Heinrichs IV., Das Lied vom Sachsenkrieg, Brunos Sachsenkrieg, Das Leben Kaiser Heinrichs IV.*, ed. and trans. by Franz-Josef Schmale and Irene Schmale-Ott (Darmstadt, 1974), 192–405 with facing-page German translation, hereafter *Saxonicum Bellum*. See the discussion of Bruno's background and employment by David S. Bachrach and Bernard S. Bachrach, "Bruno of Merseburg and his Historical Method c. 1085," *Journal of Medieval History* 40 (2014), 381–98. With regard to Bruno's tendency to highlight the deaths of aristocrats and to downplay the deaths of members of the lower social orders in combat, see *Saxonicum Bellum*, chs. 46, 98, 102 and 117.

[40] Bruno, *Saxonicum Bellum*, ch. 94.

on the city by the "vulgar crowd," an assault that he believed would lead to the destruction of sacred sites.[41]

An evaluation of this passage suggests that it was unlikely that Rudolf refrained from launching an assault on Würzburg simply because he feared what the undisciplined *vulgus* would do once inside the walls. It is rather more probable that he feared to sustain the heavy casualties that would result from attempting to storm this well-defended fortress city. What is clear, however, is that Bruno wanted his audience to believe that the *vulgus* was responsible for Rudolf's failure to capture the city, and that he expected his readers to find it plausible not only that the *vulgus* was present as part of the besieging army, but that these lower-class men would play an important role in any assault against the city.

Another author who sometimes indulges in gratuitous attacks on those whom he viewed as social inferiors is Lampert of Hersfeld. For example, in his account of the rebellion by the citizens of Cologne against their archbishop in 1074, Lampert castigates the former for their soft manner of life and their inability to understand the true rigors of military life.[42] Lampert claims: "it is not difficult to move men of this kind in any way that you might wish, just like a leaf is seized by the wind, because they are raised from their youth with the delights of the city, and never have any experience in war. After selling their wares, they are accustomed to discuss military affairs over wine and food, and think that anything that might occur to them is no sooner said than done. They have no idea how this will end."[43]

Lampert was a strong partisan of the Thuringian and Saxon nobility, who were engaged in a lengthy rebellion against King Henry IV. In addition, he demonstrates throughout his *Annales* an acute sense of the rights of ecclesiastical magnates.[44] So it is hardly surprising that he chooses to denigrate townsmen who not only opposed their bishop, but also were strong supporters of Henry IV. Even when keeping these biases in mind, however, when one considers this passage in isolation, the reader is left with the image of fat burghers boasting around the dinner table about the great feats of military prowess that they planned to achieve. Certainly such men could be of little value on the battlefield. However, reading further, one finds that Lampert paints a very different picture of the actual military effectiveness of the population of Cologne. He presents the populace marching to the archiepiscopal palace, equipped with helmets and

41 Ibid.

42 *Lamperti Annales*, hereafter Lampert, *Annales*, in *Lamperti Monachi Herfeldensis Opera*, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger (Hanover, 1894, repr. 1956), p. 187.

43 Ibid., "Nec difficile fuit id hominum genus in omne quod velles tamquam folium quod vento rapitur transformare, quippe qui ab ineunte aetate inter urbanas delicias educati nullam in bellicis rebus experientiam habebant, quique post venditas merces inter vina et epulas de re militari disputari soliti omnia quae animo occurrissent tam facilia factu quam dictu putabant, exitus rerum metiri nesciebant."

44 See the discussion by Karzel, *Nihil crudelius*, pp. 41–44.

armor, as the light of flaming torches gleamed off the points of their swords.[45] After a brief fight, they drove the archbishop and his men from the city.[46]

As these examples suggest, the biases of the narrative sources are toward the depiction of the kind of aristocratic warrior nobility identified by scholars such as Auer, Fleckenstein, and Keller. In addition, the tendency of aristocratic authors to use images of their social inferiors to make rhetorical points often has been interpreted, as in the case of Beyerle and Leyser, as indicative of the lack of military effectiveness of non-noble combatants. However, these scholars have not taken into account the biases of the aristocratic authors of narrative sources, authors who were focused on the exploits of their aristocratic audiences and frequently used men of lower social and economic status to make rhetorical points. In light of these pervasive biases, it is clear that arguments from silence regarding the absence of men of low social status on campaign have a rather high hurdle to clear. It is methodologically unsound to conclude that such men were not on campaign simply because authors who were not interested in them did not mention them. Concomitantly, when authors do discuss the presence of fighting men from the lower orders on campaign, this must be understood as going against their natural tendencies, and therefore having rather more significance as a result. Similarly, when aristocratic authors mention the effective military performance of men with low social and economic status, this too must be taken seriously as going against their general tendencies and biases.

When the information presented in eleventh-century narrative sources is evaluated, several other factors also require attention. First, authors of the main narrative texts for eleventh-century Germany, such as Berthold of Reichenau, Lampert of Hersfeld, Bruno of Merseburg, Bernold of Constance, and the anonymous author of the *Vita Heinrici*, were very careful in their discussion of military matters to distinguish between *milites*, who were the members of the military households of secular and ecclesiastical magnates, and other types of fighting men.[47] Second, these authors also were inclined to see themselves as operating in the Isidorean tradition of history, in which the narrator was responsible for discussing events that actually happened in the past, in so far as this reality served the rhetorical objectives of the text.[48]

45 Lampert, *Annales*, p. 187, "galeatum, loricatum, igneo mucrone terribiliter fulgurantem …"

46 Ibid.

47 This point is treated in depth by Bachrach, "*Milites* and Warfare," forthcoming.

48 Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum sive originum libri xx*, ed. W. M. Lindsay (Oxford, 1911, repr. 1957), 1.40. "*Historiae est narratio rei gestae, per quam ea, quae I praeterito fact sunt, dinoscuntur*." Also see the translation of the work, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, trans. Stephen Barney, J. W. Lewis, J. A. Beach, and Oliver Berghof (Cambridge, 2006). Regarding the widespread acceptance of Isidore's dictum see Benoît Lacroix, *L'Historien au moyen âge* (Paris, 1971), particularly ch. 1, and the review article of this work by Robert W. Hanning, *History and Theory* 12 (1973), 419–34; A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1984), particularly pp. 1–20; D. H. Green, *Medieval Listening and Reading: The Primary Reception of German Literature 800–1300* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 246–48; Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *The Past as Text: The Theory*

Finally, these authors also appear to have accepted the imperatives of the Ciceronian tradition of historical writing that required the presentation of a plausible framework in which to tell a story to an audience that was familiar with the broader topic, but not necessarily with the details of particular events.[49] As a consequence, when the authors indicate that the men in a particular military force were not *milites*, the proper conclusions to draw are, first, that such troops were not members of the military households of magnates, and second, that the audiences for these narrative texts found it plausible that such non-professional fighting men served in military operations. In this context, the authors under discussion here tend to treat the participation of non-*milites* in offensive military operations in two ways: (1) the use of the presence of such men in order to make a rhetorical point; (2) the formal distinction between *milites* and other troops who are participating in a battle or siege.

Rhetorical Depiction of Non-Milites *on Campaign*

As I noted above, Bruno of Merseburg chose to blame the failure of Rudolf of Rheinfelden to capture Würzburg in 1077 on his ostensible fear that the *vulgus* in his army would get out of hand when the city was taken. This use of men from the lower social orders as a rhetorical foil in support of the author's *parti pris* is a common topos in the narrative texts of this period.[50] Bruno himself utilized this ploy again when discussing the outbreak of a widespread rebellion against Henry IV and the junction of rebel Saxon and Swabian armies in the Rhineland in the autumn of 1076. Although they were now allies, the Saxon and Swabian princes feared to bring their armies into a single camp, according to Bruno, because they were worried about the potential for violence between their men. The two armies had fought on opposite sides the previous year at the battle of the Unstrut (9 June 1075) and many men in both the Swabian and Saxon armies were nursing grievances. Bruno specifically comments that it was the men of the lower social orders (*viles personae*) who posed the greatest source of

and Practice of Medieval Historiography (Baltimore, 1997), pp. 88–90; Almut Sauerbaum, "Accessus ad auctores: Autorkonzeption in mittelalterlichen Kommentartexten," in *Autor und Autorschaft im Mittelalter*, ed. Elizabeth Andersen, Jens Haustein, Anne Simon, and Peter Strohschneider (Tübingen, 1998), pp. 29–37; and Sebastian Coxon, "Zur Form und Funktion einiger Modelle der Autorenselbstdarstellung, 'Wolfdietrich' und 'Dietrichs Flucht'," in ibid., pp. 148–62, particularly 151 and 162. A full study of the approach toward history by German writers in the Salian period is a desideratum. For an introduction to this issue and a discussion of the approach taken by Bruno of Merseburg, see Bachrach and Bachrach, "Bruno of Merseburg," 381–98.

49 With regard to the impact of Cicero's ideas about the role of the historian on the writing of historical works in the period after c. 1000, see Justin C. Lake, "Truth, Plausibility, and the Virtues of Narrative at the Millennium," *Journal of Medieval History* 35 (2009), 221–38; and Matthew Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History, 400–1500* (Manchester, 2011), here 255.

50 Concerning the depiction of violence by members of the lower social orders as well as city dwellers, see Karzel, *Nihil crudelius*, pp. 124–34.

concern for the commanders.[51] As it turned out, there was no violence between the Saxon and Swabian armies, and, as a result of their unity, Henry IV was forced to sue for peace and promise to seek absolution from Pope Gregory VII (1073–85) for his sins. However, Bruno was able to use this scene to pursue his agenda of demonstrating the moral superiority of aristocrats as contrasted with the *vulgus*.

Bruno again points to the difficulties of employing men of the lower social orders on campaign in his discussion of the battle between Rudolf of Rheinfelden and King Henry on the Elster river (14 October 1080). Before the battle began, the Saxon army was divided into two parts, with the intention of catching the royalist forces in a pincer. Mounted troops under the direct command of Rudolf approached the royal camp from the west, but were met and defeated by Henry IV's own mounted forces. The Saxon foot soldiers, under the command of Otto of Northeim, approached the royal camp from the north, cutting through a densely wooded area that Henry and his advisors had believed was impassable. When the Saxon foot soldiers launched their attack on Henry IV's camp, the surprise was complete and the Saxons drove the king's men into the waters of the White Elster river, where many of them are reported to have drowned.[52]

Clearly, the foot soldiers of the Saxon levy acquitted themselves quite well in this battle. However, Bruno again permitted his bias against men from the lower social orders to come to the fore when describing the aftermath of this victory. According to Bruno, once the royalists had been driven off, the entire focus of the Saxon foot soldiers was on looting King Henry's camp, so that they could satisfy their greed and keep all the booty for themselves. Bruno asserts that they were restrained from indulging their foolish desires only by the good sense of the nobleman Otto of Northeim, who warned the foot soldiers to stay away from the royal camp until it was clear that all of the enemy troops had been defeated.[53] The Saxon foot soldiers did obey Otto's commands, which indicates that they could follow orders even when these were contrary to their perceived interests.

Lampert of Hersfeld, despite his hostility toward the urban levy of Cologne, noted above, was less inclined than his contemporary Bruno to engage in the wholesale denigration of men from the lower social orders in military matters. This was particularly the case in regard to those who opposed King Henry IV, the anti-hero of Lampert's *Annales*. However, when discussing military matters Lampert did play on what would seem to have been the anti-peasant biases of

51 Bruno of Merseburg, *Saxonicum Bellum*, ch. 88.

52 Ibid., ch. 122.

53 Ibid. As a post-script to the battle on the Elster river, Bruno drew attention to the many calamities that were suffered by King Henry's troops. Among these were the subsequent deaths of many powerful men at the hands of peasants defending their own homes, who were armed with axes and clubs. Yet other magnates were captured and held for ransom by local inhabitants, whom Bruno denotes as low-born people (*personae viles*). By contrast, Bruno claimed: "if any of the enemy were brought to one of our upright men, they were healed if they were wounded, and were sent back to their fatherland free of charge, well outfitted with clothing and arms." See ch. 123.

many aristocrats. For example, in his account of the days leading up to the battle of the Unstrut, Lampert took pains to explain why King Henry and his advisors were so confident about engaging their Saxon opponents. Henry had dispatched scouts (*exploratores*) to determine the size and disposition of the Saxon army. The scouts reported back that although the Saxons equaled the royal army in numbers and were equipped with roughly the same armament, the king's troops were otherwise superior in every other way for battle.[54]

In discussing whether to advance against the Saxon camp, the king's advisors, according to Lampert, stressed that they had a picked force (*miles lectissimus*). By contrast, the majority of the Saxons were peasants (*rustici*) and comprised, therefore, an inept rabble (*ineptus vulgus*), who were more accustomed to agricultural labor than to military service.[55] The king's advisors added that the Saxons lacked the military spirit that was necessary for war, and had been mobilized because of their fear of their princes. Consequently, these peasants could not be expected to stand and fight once the battle began and sword was raised against sword. In fact, they would certainly flee before the battle even began, terrified by the noise as the two armies approached one another.[56]

In discussing the battle itself, Lampert takes considerable pains to show that this assumption by the king's advisors was ill-founded. The Saxon troops, including the *vulgus*, initially gave a very good account of themselves in the fighting, before ultimately being driven from the field.[57]

While not so subtly mocking the assumptions by Henry and his advisors about the lack of military skill of the Saxon peasantry, Lampert, himself, indulges in this very same rhetorical theme in his description of the aftermath of the battle with regard to the men of the lower social orders who were serving in the royal army. As Lampert makes clear, following a lengthy battle, the Saxon line was shattered by simultaneous attacks on both flanks by King Henry's troops.[58] In discussing the subsequent rout of the Saxons, Lampert, drawing upon Sallust's description of the retreat of an army in the Jugurthine war, observed "as is always the case when the enemy flees, the most cowardly and the most courageous are equally brave [in pursuit]."[59] Lampert then made the severe observation that all of the royal troops went off in pursuit of the fleeing Saxons, "even the plebeians and the peasants who usually hung around the camp doing servile work."[60] Lampert's contention here regarding the *plebei ac rustici* could, if taken

54 Lampert, *Annales*, p. 216.

55 Ibid., "Illinc vulgus esse ineptum, agriculturae pocius quam miliciae assuetum."

56 Ibid., "et ideo non expectaturum, ut commisso certamine comminus stricto ense feriret et feriretur, sed ante commissum prelium solo concurrentis exercitus strepitu et clamore terrendum, fugandum et fundendum esse."

57 Ibid., pp. 217–21.

58 Ibid., p. 220.

59 Ibid., "ut semper in fuga hostium ignavissimis et fortissimis par solet esse audacia." Here, Lampert draws on Sallust, *Jugurtha*, c. 53.

60 Lampert, *Annales*, p. 220, "omnes in exercitu regis legiones confusis ordinibus, omnes etiam plebei ac rustici, qui castrorum usibus servilem operam dependebant …"

out of context by scholars seeking "evidence" for the military marginalization of the *rustici*, be utilized to show that men of this status had only ancillary roles in military campaigns as servants, cooks, attendants for horses, and the like. However, as we will see below, this is not accurate.[61]

In addition to using the *rustici* and *plebei* as a rhetorical foil in his discussion of the pursuit of the Saxons at the battle of the Unstrut, Lampert also addresses Henry IV's mobilization of non-*milites* in an effort to show how little support the king had from the magnates for his war against the Saxons. In the context of the initial Saxon and Thuringian rebellion in July 1073, Henry tried to divert an army that he had mobilized for operations in Poland to suppress the widespread revolt against his rule in Saxony and Thuringia. However, Henry's secular and ecclesiastical magnates refused to consider this plan.[62] Consequently, Henry dismissed the army but sent messengers to all of the *principes* in the kingdom, announcing that he would be mobilizing a new army in early October that was to join him at the *villa* of Bredingen near Hersfeld. The specific purpose of this army was to undertake operations in Saxony.[63] Lampert takes pains to stress that on this occasion the royal messengers were dispatched not only to the princes but to the people as well (*non solum principibus sed et popularibus*). As Lampert makes clear, Henry's decision to mobilize the *populus* was inspired, in no small measure, by his fear that the magnates either would not come to the muster at Bredingen or would not fight if they did go on campaign.[64]

It turns out that King Henry was right to be worried. The German princes refused to fight, and instead compelled him to make a peace agreement with the Saxons and Thuringians at the *villa* of Gerstungen in the autumn of 1073.[65] With his options limited in regard to Saxony, Henry turned his attention to the potentially advantageous request by his brother-in-law Salomo to help him regain the Hungarian throne. In return for his aid, Henry would receive a series of frontier fortifications in Hungary that would help to ensure that the Hungarians would no longer be able to raid into Bavaria.[66] Henry therefore issued summonses in July 1074 to his *principes* ordering them to mobilize for a campaign in Hungary. But, according to Lampert, the princes refused, citing the costs that they had just undertaken for the expedition to Saxony the previous year that had led to the peace of Gerstungen. As a consequence, Lampert avers, Henry was forced to begin his Hungarian campaign with a very limited force comprising just

61 As noted above, both Leopold Auer and Karl Leyser presented men with lower social and economic status serving only menial tasks on campaign.

62 Lampert, *Annales*, p. 157.

63 Lampert, *Annales*, p. 158.

64 Ultimately, the German princes refused to fight the Saxons, and Henry IV was forced to make concessions to the Saxons in an agreement that is commonly known as the peace of Gerstungen. See Lampert, *Annales*, p. 163.

65 Ibid.

66 See the discussion by Lampert, *Annales*, pp. 197–98.

the royal military household (*miles privatus*) and a force of non-professional fighting men, whom Lampert denotes as the common herd (*gregarius*).[67]

Milites *and other Troops*

In addition to the mention of *rustici*, *plebei*, *viles personae*, *gregarii*, and the *vulgus* in military campaigns for the purpose of making a rhetorical point, the authors of narrative sources also routinely distinguish between *milites* and other types of troops when discussing the mobilization and deployment of fighting men for military operations. The Swabian author Berthold of Reichenau, for example, emphasized that when Henry IV returned to Germany from Canossa in June 1077, he immediately mobilized a large army in order to crush the rebels who were opposed to his rule.[68] Berthold distinguished among these various forces, noting the presence of Henry's own *milites* as well as the troops provided by the Swabian bishops of Basel and Strassburg and the secular magnate Count Palatine Hermann. These household troops are contrasted with a substantial auxiliary force (*non modica auxiliariorum militia*) of Bavarians and Carinthians, almost the entire strength (*virtus*) of Burgundy, and substantial force (*non modica pars*) of Franconians.[69] Berthold, who was very precise in his use of military terminology, reserved alternate terms to denote the Bavarians, Carinthians, Burgundians, and Franconians. This was his way of signaling to his audience that these forces included non-*milites* in their ranks. As we will see below, many of these men were, in fact, *rustici*.

Lampert of Hersfeld also frequently used the technique of distinguishing between *milites* and other types of troops and used a variety of terms to denote the latter, including *exercitus* and *copiae*.[70] In his discussion of the initial phases of the battle on the Unstrut, noted above, Lampert conspicuously does not draw the reader's attention to the *milites* in the royal army, but rather observes that the *exercitus* of the Swabians and the *exercitus* of the Bavarians retreated after suffering considerable losses at the hands of Otto of Northeim's Saxon troops.[71] As noted above, these Saxons included men of all social statuses, including *rustici*. Lampert then makes clear that the royal position on the battlefield was salvaged when the *milites* from the military households of the count of Gliesburg and the bishop of Bamberg struck the Saxon line on the two flanks.[72]

As noted earlier, Bruno of Merseburg, writing independently of Lampert, observed that the Swabian forces at the battle of the Unstrut included *viles*

67 Ibid., p. 198.

68 *Die Chroniken Bertholds von Reichenau und Bernolds von Konstanz*, ed. I. S. Robinson, MGH SS rerum germanicarum nova series 14 (Hanover, 2003), hereafter *Chronicon*, here p. 276.

69 Berthold, *Chronicon*, p. 276.

70 See, for example, Lampert, *Annales*, pp. 105, 107, 119, 123, 142, 148, 161, 188, and 214.

71 Lampert, *Annales*, p. 220.

72 Ibid. The successful assault by these *milites* was then followed up by the *copiae* of the Bohemians and the Lotharingians, including a substantial number of mounted troops (*equis*).

personae, who were still angry about the losses that they had suffered in battle at the hands of the Saxons. The presence of such men in the Swabian battle line certainly helps to explain Lampert's decision to denote the entire Swabian force as the *exercitus* of the duchy rather than as a congeries of military households of Swabian magnates, i.e. *milites*, since the Swabians included a mixed group of professional and non-professional fighting men.

Lampert similarly distinguished between the mobilization of a large force consisting of both non-*milites* and professional forces in his discussion of a campaign undertaken by Margrave Ekbert of Meissen against Henry IV's Bohemian allies in August 1076.[73] In the aftermath of his resounding victory at the battle on the Unstrut, Henry had handed over a series of fortifications in the march of Meissen to Duke Vratislav II of Bohemia (1061–92) as a reward for his aid in this campaign. Ekbert, joined by "the Saxons," as Lampert has it, recaptured all of these strongholds. After the Saxons withdrew and returned to their home, Ekbert installed garrisons of his own *milites*, to keep the region secure.[74]

In a similar manner, Lampert distinguishes between the Thuringians who besieged royal fortifications in the summer of 1073 and the royal *milites* who defended these strongholds.[75] Lampert observes that a multitude (*multitudo*) of Thuringians from the nearby area (*ex vicinis locis*) undertook a siege of the fortress of Heimenburg. Clearly this was not a small force of heavy cavalry. Rather than attempting to starve the garrison into submission, they assaulted the *castellum*, and captured it.[76] The Thuringians, whom Lampert now denotes as an *exercitus*, then began operations at the fortress of Asenburg. But the strong natural defenses of the fortress as well as the toughness of the garrison, whom Lampert denotes as *milites regis*, were sufficient to thwart the efforts of the Thuringians, who maintained their siege from August through December 1073.[77]

The anonymous author of the *Carmen de bello Saxonico*, a panegyric written on behalf of King Henry just after his victory on the Unstrut in June 1075, similarly distinguishes between *milites* and other types of troops in his discussion of the mobilization of the Saxons to defend their region in early 1074.[78] He claims that as word went throughout Saxony to prepare for war, the *rustici* cast aside their farming implements, the shepherds left their flocks, and the merchants abandoned their wares. These men, from every station and every profession, girded themselves for war. The poet then declared that this varied

73 Lampert, *Annales*, p. 273.

74 Ibid.

75 Lampert, *Annales*, p. 161.

76 Ibid. The author of the *Carmen de bello Saxonico* claims that some three thousand men participated in the attack on Heimenburg . See *Quellen zur Geschichte Kaiser Heinrichs IV.: Die Briefe Heinrichs IV., Das Lied vom Sachsenkrieg, Brunos Sachsenkrieg, Das Leben Kaiser Heinrichs IV.*, ed. and trans. by Franz-Josef Schmale and Irene Schmale-Ott (Darmstadt, 1974), hereafter *Carmen*, bk 1, lines 87–124.

77 Lampert, *Annales*, pp. 161 and 172.

78 *Carmen*, bk 2, lines 130–44.

force of farmers, shepherds and merchants, equipped with whatever arms they had available, joined with the *milites* and rushed to war.[79]

Many of the non-*milites* considered up to this point are identified in the sources as *rustici*, that is, men from the countryside. However, urban levies also played an important role in military operations. As I noted earlier, Lampert of Hersfeld drew attention to the urban levy of Cologne, and their successful effort to drive the archbishop's household troops from the city. The author of the *Carmen de bello Saxonico*, in the passage discussed above, mentions that *mercatores* were to be found in the Saxon host in early 1074. Earlier in the poem, he had observed that cobblers, smiths, bakers, and butchers had joined with *milites* from Goslar to participate in the Saxon siege of the royal fortress of Harzburg.[80] Bruno of Merseburg, for his part, scornfully observed that Henry IV's army in the summer of 1077 was exceptionally weak, and that most of his men were *mercatores*.[81]

The anonymous author the *Vita Heinrici*, which was written shortly after the emperor's death in 1106, presents a much more positive image of urban levies in his discussion of the conflict between Henry IV and his son Henry V.[82] After the elder Henry's escape from captivity in early 1106, he made his way to Liège, where he was warmly received by both Bishop Otbert (1091–19) and Duke Henry of Lower Lotharingia (1101–06). According to the *Vita*, when Henry V began making preparations to march against his father, the Lotharingian duke along with the citizens of Cologne and Liège prepared their arms, gathered their forces, and improved the defenses of their cities. In addition, they promised Henry IV their full support in the coming struggle.[83] The *Vita* goes on to make clear that the citizens of Cologne, Liège, and other cities did not intend simply to defend their walls against Henry V, they also planned to take action against his forces directly in the field. When Henry V began his siege of Cologne, his initial assaults were driven back by the citizens. At the same time, the citizens of other cities prepared a fleet and blockaded the Rhine river so that the younger Henry's army could not receive supplies by water. Then, when parties of foragers were sent out from Henry V's siege camp, the citizens of Cologne and others, who knew the local terrain, attacked the foraging parties.[84]

79 Ibid.

80 *Carmen*, bk 1, lines 198–99.

81 Bruno of Merseburg, *Saxonicum Bellum*, ch. 95, "nam maxima pars eius ex mercatoribus erat."

82 For the text of the *Vita Heinrici* see *Quellen zur Geschichte Kaiser Heinrichs IV.: Die Briefe Heinrichs IV., Das Lied vom Sachsenkrieg, Brunos Sachsenkrieg, Das Leben Kaiser Heinrichs IV.*, ed. and trans. by Franz-Josef Schmale and Irene Schmale-Ott (Darmstadt, 1974), hereafter *Vita Heinrici*, c. 13.

83 Ibid., "Cum igitur audisset H dux et Colonienses cum Leodicensibus, quod super se rex exercitum ducere vellet, arma parabant, copias colligebant, urbes firmabant et ad resistendum pari voto studioque se accingebant."

84 Ibid., 462–64.

Military Organization of Non-Milites

The examples treated thus far indicate that non-*milites*, that is, men outside of the military households of magnates, played a substantial role in combat operations. One important question, however, is the extent to which the mobilization of such men can be understood as routine rather than as *ad hoc*. Two authors working independently from each other and in different regions of the German kingdom, Berthold of Reichenau and Lampert of Hersfeld, give indications that the mobilization of such men was not an *ad hoc* response to the exigencies of a particular campaign. Rather, non-*milites* expected to serve on campaign when called upon to do so by leaders with the legal jurisdiction to summon them. Moreover, both authors indicate that this jurisdiction was territorially based.

For example, Berthold of Reichenau observes that in the summer of 1078, Henry IV dispatched bishops Burchard of Basel and Thiepald of Strassburg, noted above, to deploy their forces to ravage the lands of Duke Berthold of Carinthia.[85] The chronicler comments that the military forces of the two bishops were comprised of two separate elements. The first of these consisted of their household troops, that is, their *milites*. The second component consisted of *rustici*. These *rustici*, Berthold of Reichenau explains, were mobilized on the basis of the counties (*comitatus*) in which they lived. Moreover, these men were required to serve in this campaign because of the oaths that they had sworn to the bishops, i.e they were *adiurati*.[86]

The transfer of comital authority to German bishops, with the concomitant responsibility to mobilize the levies of the *comitatus* for military operations, dates back to the reign of Otto III (983–1002).[87] The bishops of Strassburg had enjoyed comital rights and undertaken comital obligations since the late tenth century.[88] The bishops of Basel had received specific comital authority in Augstgau and Sisgau in 1041 from King Henry III.[89] Consequently, the mobilization of these *rustici* is consistent with the ongoing practice of both Ottonian and Salian kings to utilize their bishops to undertake comital duties on their behalf.

Berthold again draws a clear connection between territorially based mobilization of non-*milites* and the taking of oaths in his discussion of the mobilization of Franconian *rustici*, who fought just a short time later against Swabian, Carin-

85 Berthold of Reichenau, *Chronicon*, p. 332.

86 Ibid.

87 See the discussion of the utilization of bishops to serve comital functions by Hartmut Hoffmann, "Grafschaften in Bischofshand," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 46 (1990): 375–480.

88 *Die Urkunden Otto des II und Otto des III.*, ed. Theodor Sickel (Hanover, 1888), DO II, nos. 72 and 73; *Die Urkunden Heinrichs II. und Arduins,* ed. Harry Bresslau Robert Holtzmann and Hermann Reincke-Bloch (Hanover, 1900–3), no. 367; and *Die Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaiser: Die Urkunden Heinrichs III.*, ed. Harry Bresslau and Paul Kehr (Berlin, 1931), no. 220.

89 *Die Urkunden Heinrichs III*, no. 77.

thian, and Bavarian forces under the command of Duke Welf of Bavaria and Duke Berthold of Carinthia.[90] The latter were marching to join the Saxon army under the command of Rudolf of Rheinfelden, who was advancing into eastern Franconia. Henry IV was attempting to keep his Saxon and southern opponents from joining their forces, with the plan of facing and defeating them seriatim. Henry therefore marched into eastern Franconia to face the Saxons, whom he faced at the battle of Mellrichstadt (7 August 1078).

Concomitant with his own military operations, the king ordered western Franconian *rustici* to mobilize in an effort to delay Duke Welf and Duke Berthold. According to Berthold of Reichenau, these Franconians, whom the author denotes as both *comprovinciales* and *rustici*, were mobilized from their *centenariae*, i.e. their local sub-comital districts. Moreover, he observes that they were bound together for military service by their oaths (*coniurati*). Not incidentally, Berthold also notes that these *rustici* were equipped with weapons of war (*arma militaria*), likely in contrast to farm implements such as scythes and pitchforks.[91] This final observation permits the inference that these were wealthier *rustici*, who could afford specifically military equipment. The purchase and possession of *arma militaria*, moreover, would seem to be *prima facie* evidence of the expectation on the part of these men that they could be called upon to do military service.

Lampert of Hersfeld, for his part, illuminates the legal and jurisdictional basis for the mobilization of men in Lotharingia and in Saxony for military service. In discussing the army that King Henry mobilized for operations in Saxony in the autumn of 1075, Lampert notes that Duke Theoderic II of Upper Lotharingia (1075–1115) and Duke Godfrey IV of Lower Lotharingia (1069–76) brought enormous forces to join the royal army. In fact, Lampert mocks the dukes for attempting to show off by standing out among the other princes on the basis of the size of their armies.[92]

In commenting on these troops, Lampert observed that the Lotharingians were very well equipped. The parallel with the Franconian *rustici* is quite clear. Lampert then explains that the two dukes had insured the high quality of their military forces by imposing very strict selection criteria on the men whom they mobilized, that is, they picked only the best men for campaign duty. Lampert explicitly states, moreover, that these men were mobilized from the regions over which the two dukes had jurisdiction.[93] Lampert's comments in this regard illustrate that Theoderic and Godfrey had the authority to mobilize troops because of their ducal offices. In addition to being territorially based, this authority to mobilize fighting men had an intrinsic selection mechanism that allowed the two dukes to mobilize the men who were best equipped and best suited for

90 Berthold of Reichenau, *Chronicon*, pp. 332–33.

91 Ibid.

92 Lampert, *Annales*, p. 234.

93 Ibid., "ita militaribus armis instructas, ita de tota cui preerat regione severissimo delectu habito exquisitas …"

service on military campaign. In light of Lampert's consistent effort to mention when particular magnates and *milites* were mobilized for service, his failure to do so in this case indicates that the *copiae* in question included large numbers of non-*milites*.

In one final example, Lampert describes the mobilization of a vast Saxon army in January 1074 to repel what the Saxons feared would be an invasion of their region by King Henry.[94] Almost certainly exaggerating, Lampert claims that as many as 40,000 Saxons, of all ranks, came to Werra river.[95] This is the same force regarding which the author of the *Carmen de bello Saxonico*, noted above, had claimed the mobilization of farmers, shepherds, and merchants alongside the *milites*. As it became clear that there would be no immediate invasion, the Saxons sent a substantial part of their army home. In discussing the demobilization of part of the Saxon force, Lampert specifies that 12,000 of the men of lower social and economic status (*plebei*) were released. Lampert explains that these men, in particular, had been summoned with so little notice that they had not brought food with them, and had to go home.[96] The clear implication of Lampert's comment is that even men of "plebian" status not only had the expectation of going on campaign outside their home districts to fight, but under normal circumstances would bring sufficient supplies with them to be able to remain in the field for a substantial period of time.

Conclusions

As the many examples of *plebei*, *rustici*, *vulgus*, *gregarii*, *viles personae*, *mercatores*, and just plain *cives* treated here make clear, warfare in the eleventh century, including combat operations, was not monopolized by *milites*, whether or not one wishes to construe such men as mounted knights. In fact, non-*milites* played a central role both in battles in the field and in sieges. In fact, they likely were the numerically preponderant element in any large army.

It is notable that all of the combat operations that I have discussed took place during Henry IV's reign, and most of these in the context of the civil wars of the 1070s and 1080s. One might conjecture on this basis that the mobilization of the *vulgus* was the consequence of the enormous demands of the lengthy military conflict, and therefore a return to the type of military organization that typified the Frankish empire before the ostensible disappearance of military levies. However, such a conjecture would be incorrect. First, none of the authors discussed here gives any indication that the mobilization of non-*milites* for combat operations marked a new or surprising turn of events. Rather the

94 Lampert, *Annnales*, p. 176.

95 The vast size of the Saxon army is confirmed by both the anti-Henry Bruno of Merseburg, and the pro-Henry author of the *Carmen de bello Saxonico* . See Bruno of Merseburg, *Saxonicum bellum*, c. 32; and *Carmen*, bk 2, lines 130–60.

96 Lampert, *Annales*, pp. 176–77, "quoniam subito clamore in expeditionem evocata cibos secum non sumpsissent, in domos suas, tamquam minus sibi necessaria remitterent."

opposite is the case, in that the mobilization of *rustici* is depicted as normal and well-developed practice. Second, the *vulgus* and *rustici* as well as *mercatores* appear in both Saxon and royal armies right from the beginning of the civil wars in 1073, long before there could have been any question of the exhaustion and depletion of magnate military forces. The weight of the evidence for the deployment of non-*milites* during Henry IV's reign is largely an artifact of the production of a large number of lengthy historical works, which devoted enormous attention to military matters because they were inspired by the dramatic events during the final three decades of the eleventh century.

Finally, it should be observed that the main basis for the explanation of the elimination of levies as an important element in early medieval military organization is the claim that battles in the field, and moreover battles between mounted forces, came to dominate warfare. As virtually all specialists in military history are well aware, this was never true. Sieges dominated warfare both in the Carolingian empire and in its various successor states.[97] Henry IV's reign was actually quite conspicuous for the relatively large number of battles that were fought, with at least five and perhaps six between 1075 and 1086.[98] Nevertheless, these battles were outnumbered by a factor of at least four to one by sieges, including operations against fortress cities such as Würzburg and powerful fortresses such as the Harzburg. In order to undertake these numerous siege operations, military commanders required far more troops than could be mobilized from among the *milites* employed by magnates. Thus, the *rustici* and other non-*milites* of the eleventh century continued to play the same role as their forbears had under the Ottonian kings, and before them the Carolingians and Merovingians as well.

97 The scholarship in this area is too vast to summarize here. However, for valuable entry points, see Jim Bradbury, *The Medieval Siege* (Woodbridge, 1992); and Peter Purton, *A History of the Early Medieval Siege, c. 450–1200* (Woodbridge, 2010), and the enormous literature cited there. Cf. Guy Halsall, *Warfare and Society in the Barbarian West 450–900* (London, 2003), pp. 215–27.

98 For the relatively large number of battles fought during Henry IV's reign in the context of the Saxon wars, see Gillingham, "An Age of Expansion, c. 1020–1204," pp. 73–76. By comparison, there were at least twenty-seven significant sieges during this same period. See the appendix below.