Preface

The present volume assembles a selection of studies, the majority of which emerged from three different gatherings organised within the framework of a project funded by the Fritz-Thyssen Foundation and located at the Freie Universität Berlin, which was directed by Laury Sarti and Stefan Esders. The aim of the project was to study ‘The militarisation of early medieval societies’ by analysing its ‘Nature, control and perception in a west-European comparison’ (January 2016–June 2020). It was conducted in cooperation with Ryan Lavelle from the University of Winchester and Philipp von Rummel from the German Archaeological Institute (DAI). A workshop on ‘Military organisation and society in the post-Roman world’ (August 2016) and a conference entitled ‘Reflections of a militarised world? Perceptions and conceptions of war and the military in the early Middle Ages (*c.* 500–1000)’ (September 2017) were both held at the Freie Universität Berlin, while a third gathering on ‘Early medieval militarisation. An archaeological perspective’ (November 2019) took place at the University of Freiburg (im-Breisgau). It was organised in cooperation with the Institute for the Archaeology of the Middle Ages at the University of Freiburg. We would like to thank Anna Gehler-Rachůnek, Maria-Elena Kammerlander, Jean-Michel Klopp, Pia Lucas and Alexander Schie for their assistance throughout these meetings. In addition, one series of sessions was organised within the framework of the Leeds International Medieval Congress 2017 entitled ‘The other look at early medieval societies – the phenomenon of militarisation’, followed in 2018 by a Round Table discussion on ‘The militarisation of early medieval societies’. We would like to thank all the speakers and attendants of these gatherings for their contributions to the subject. In addition, we would like to thank Meredith Carroll from Manchester University Press for bringing this volume to press and the external reviewers for their many useful suggestions for improvement.

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