

In 477 B.C. the Fabii famously led a retinue of 306 of their clansmen and dependents in a protracted campaign against the city of Veii. The campaign of the Fabii continues to excite discussion, especially since it reveals the permeability of the state and its traditionally understood army, since it shows that a powerful *gens* could operate independently from the city, even waging a private military campaign (or *bellum privatum*). This legendary episode serves as a primary example of an important phenomenon that pertains not only to the structure and conduct of military affairs, but also to the cultural and political makeup of the societies of central Italy. Indeed, evidence exists for three types of military forces in central Italy during this period: the citizen army of the city, private gentilician armies, and mercenary soldiers. This paper explores the nature of the latter two forces, the private armies of the archaic and classical periods, using evidence from Rome, Latium, and Etruria, with an aim of understanding better the forces that could operate within and around the traditional sphere of the city-state.

Recent material discoveries show that clan armies were not an aberrant occurrence in central Italy, but rather are attested at a number of sites across a broad area. The recently discovered *lapis Satricanus* may testify to the military brotherhood of one Publius Valerius. In addition, the discovery of inscribed helmets at Vetulonia testifies to a clan-based army there. These and other examples will be reviewed in order to understand better the characteristics of the clan-based army and the *bellum privatum*. While Momigliano called the Fabii's exploit "an obsolete military technique", the evidence indicates that these episodes should not be read as aberrations but as manifestations of the wide-ranging power of the *gens* as an intrinsic, although liminal, part of the state itself.

Recent scholarship demonstrates resurgence in the study of the *gens* in this transitional period. The evidence of these private armies shows further the ways that Rome and Etruscan city-states could function as a 'container of clans', in that the clans could operate either within the city or autonomously from it as needed. The present study aims to explore the structure of these armies in light of new understanding about the ways that the clan operated during the regal and early Republican period.

The clan-based armies and mercenaries of Latium and Etruria are similar in that both can operate autonomously, although perhaps with the tacit consent of the cities. Thus a single soldier could serve his city, when it was provoked, or his clan, when its interests or allies were threatened, or even offer his military service for a price in rare instances. While the ancient sources and some inscriptions establish the existence of mercenary forces in Italy, they remain little studied compared to their contemporaries in Greece. The function of mercenaries will be considered especially insofar as they intersect with citizen and clan-based armies. This line of inquiry provides a fascinating opportunity to probe two less-well understood components of archaic and classical military landscape. At the same time, it provides insight into the dual obligations of being both a citizen and a clan member.