Violet Willis

HIST 100-50

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Bernard Bachrach, “Charlemagne and the Carolingian General Staff,” *The Journal of Military History.* LX (April 2002), 313-357.

**Thesis:** In this chapter Bachrach addresses Charlemagne’s time as king and explains why his military was the first to start the evolution, per say, of strengthening and building future militaries to further expand his empire economically.

**Supporting:** Bernard S. Bachrach wrote a chapter “Charlemagne and the Carolingian General Staff” in his book *The Journal of Military History.* In the beginning of his chapter, Bachrach explains how militaries did not become strong until the generals stopped relying inly on themselves to make all the decisions for their troops. When they had a partner to, in a sense, bounce idea off of, the military became much more successful. Bachrach writes: “J. D. Hittle, who takes an evolutionary or developmental approach to these matters, focuses on the practical realization that no commander can do everything himself and thus must have assistants upon whom to lean. Literally a human staff.” He knew in order to be successful, his military had to be the best they could possibly be, and that meant his generals needed someone to confide in. Charlemagne longed for his armies to be successful and for his people to be protected, so he was determined to educate his generals and troops on all aspects of being in the military. Charlemagne created opportunities for his military to be trained and educated on roads, geography, mapping, security, resources, and countless other important fields. Bachrach wrote: “Charlemagne commanded a planning staff and resources,” Charlemagne pulled out all the stops in order to create a successful army. His army went on to conquer many territories and bring great success to Charlemagne’s rule.

**Contrast:** Honestly, I am not a huge fan of war. I understand it is necessary is some circumstances, but I feel as though our country has gone into war many more times than necessary. Charlemagne made the right decision about how to better equip his army and was very successful in the end. I may not be able to fully appreciate Charlemagne’s motives for his military, but I am impressed with his ability to use his resources to better his army and expand his kingdom.