Friday   Conference Program

9:30 – 10:00	**Registration and welcome**
10:00 – 11:00	**Session 1: Anglo-Saxons**
	Chair: TBA
	Chris Bishop (Australian National University)
	Beowulf: The Monsters and the Comics
	Susan Raich (Trinity College, University of Cambridge)
	Sailing with Saints in the Anglo-Norman World, *c.* 1020–1100
11:00 – 11:30	**Morning Tea**
11:30 – 12:30	**Session 2: Vikings**
	Chair: TBA
	John Kennedy (Charles Sturt University)
	Who First Settled Iceland, and When?
	Roderick McDonald (Swansea University)
	Mariners. Traders. Fishers. Vikings. Irish. Scandinavian. Both. Neither.
12:30 – 2:00	**Lunch**
2:00 – 3:30	**Session 3: Irish, British and Franks**
	Chair: TBA
	Carol Williams (Monash University)
	Geoffrey of Monmouth on 5th Century Arthurian Travel
	Pamela O'Neill (University of Sydney)
	Territorial waters in Early Irish Law
	Sarah Greer (University of Auckland)
	A Foreign Exchange: The Role of Irish Pilgrim Monks in Frankish Female Monasteries
3:30 – 4:00	**Afternoon Tea**
4:00 – 5:00	**Practical Session**
	Medieval artifacts in the University of QueenslandAntiquities Museum
	Level 2, Michie Building
5:00 – 6:00	**Plenary Session**
	Chair: TBA
	John Pryor (University of Sydney)
	Limitations of Maritime Traffic and Naval Warfare in the Early Medieval Mediterranean, *c.* 500–1100
7:00	**Conference dinner**
	Travel by CityCat to a Brisbane restaurant

Conference Program   Saturday

9:30 – 11:00	**Session 4: Central Mediterranean**
	Marlena Whiting (Lincoln College, Oxford University)
	By Land or By Sea: Attitudes Towards Travel by Water in Late Antiquity
	Caillan Davenport (University of Queensland)
	From Sailor to Emperor: The Public Image of Carausius,
	Geoffrey Dunn (Australian Catholic University)
	The Appeal of Apiarius to the Transmarine Church of Rome
11:00 – 11:30	**Morning Tea**
11:30 – 12:30	**Plenary Session**
	Chair: TBA
	Calvin Normore (University of California, Los Angeles)
	From Barlaam to Bec: The Transmission and Development of a Concept of Free Will in the 11th Century
12:30 – 2:00	**Lunch**
	AEMA AGM, Michie 5th floor tea-room.
	(Lunch provided for AEMA members)
1:30 – 3:00	**Session 5: The East**
	Chair: TBA
	Nigel Westbrook (University of Western Australia)
	Topographical Reconstruction of the Location of Streets Leading to the Forum of Strategion and the Neorian and Prosphorian harbours in Early Byzantine Constantinople
	John D'Alton (Monash University)
	Aphrahat's "Resurrection Asceticism" and its Journey across the Mediterranean
3:00 – 3:30	**Afternoon Tea**
3:30 – 5:00	**Session 6: Piracy**
	Chair: TBA
	Jeroen Wijnendaele (University of Melbourne)
	Desperadoes, Freebooters and Soldiers of Fortune: The Odyssey of Sebastian (431–441)
	Julian Barr (University of Queensland)
	Pirates in Heliodorus' Aethiopika
	Wesley Theobald (University of Queensland)
	The Attractive Seaborne Bounty from Late Roman Britain
5:00 – 5:15	**Closing remarks**

AEMA8

Keynote Address

Emeritus Professor John Moorhead

University of Queensland

Roman Origins of Some Western Churches

This paper discusses stories that were told in the early middle ages of churches in various places having been founded by evangelists dispatched by St Peter. There is very little reason to believe these tales, but we may ask whose interests they served. This paper will attempt to place the agendas of those who invented such stories against the background of papal history, and suggest how they may fit into a pattern of relationships between centre and peripheries.

Plenary

Professor Calvin Normore

University of California, Los Angeles

From Barlaam to Bec: The Transmission and Development of a Concept of Free Will in the 11th Century

Trade by both land and sea in and around the Mediterranean basin during the early medieval period was as much in ideas and cultural influences as in goods and services. This paper attempts to trace the path taken by some conceptions of freedom and free choice from late antiquity to a particularly striking picture developed by Anselm of Aosta/Bec/Canterbury (1033–1109) during his period as a monk at Bec. The paper attempts to characterise that development and focuses on the role played in it by the transmission of the story of Barlaam and Ioasaph (attributed to John of Damascus at least in its mid-eleventh century Latin translation and those made from that) as it made its way from what appear to be its origins in legends of the Buddha westward through its many adaptations to its Latin and vernacular forms.

Plenary

Emeritus Professor John Pryor

University of Sydney

Limitations of Maritime Traffic and Naval Warfare in the Early Medieval Mediterranean, c. 500–1100

Because of the limitations of the maritime technology available to them, seamen and governments around the Mediterranean in the Early Middle Ages had severe limitations imposed upon them as to what they could actually achieve by sea viz-a-viz their ambitions. The transportation of horses for war, for example, was very difficult for more than short distances. In fact the only known naval expedition that transported horses for more than short distances, before the Venetians in 1123, was Belisarios's expedition to Vandal Africa in 533, and the number of horses he took was most probably quite small. Similarly, because of their limitations in terms of sea-keeping abilities and water-carrying capacity, war galleys of the type based on the Byzantine dromon were fundamentally limited to coastal navigation. All naval battles during the period took place within sight of land.

The paper argues that because of the limitations of maritime technology in the period, so-called sea power was of limited use and that it is no wonder that only two Byzantine 'admirals' ever became emperor, as opposed to the dozens of 'generals' who did, and that the maritime themes ranked very low in the Byzantine Taktika.

Julian Barr

University of Queensland

Pirates in Heliodorus' Aethiopika

Piracy is rife throughout the worlds of Greek prose fiction composed under the Roman Empire. Simultaneously, imperial rhetoric held that Roman protectionism had forever exterminated piracy within the borders of the Empire. This dissonance between fiction and rhetoric leads Philip de Souza to suggest that piracy was "very common in the Principate" in his book *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World* (1999: p. 199) He does not examine any fictional text in detail, but immediately goes on to argue that Rome's state rhetoric creates a misleading impression of the extent to which piracy flourished under the *Pax Romana*.

This paper argues that greater caution is necessary when using fictional sources to reconstruct the extent of piracy in Late Antiquity, using Heliodorus' *Aethiopika* as a case study. Granted, the composition of the *Aethiopika* may be dated to the fourth century AD. Yet Heliodorus' depiction of piracy was heavily drawn from literary antecedents. This is unsurprising, as Heliodorus did not aim to reflect contemporary reality in his setting. Rather, he likely included pirate characters to lend a sense of historicism to his narrative, since the *Aethiopika* is set in the heyday of the Achaemenid Empire. Moreover, Heliodorus' adventures involving pirates are more strongly influenced by the narrative demands of Romance than reality. His portrayal of piracy was never intended to be taken seriously. After all, his genre primarily served to explore romantic love through narrative and to entertain. The historical veracity of Heliodorus' portrayal of piracy is also undermined by *non sequiturs* in the development of his pirate characters. However, it will also be suggested that Heliodorus' presentation of piracy is not without historical value, as it can be used to extrapolate his anxieties about contemporary nautical raiders.

Chris Bishop

Australian National University

Beowulf: The Monsters and the Comics

At first glance, the mid-70s comic-book series *Beowulf Dragon Slayer* bears little resemblance to its West-Saxon antecedent. The story starts off conventionally enough with the Geat champion making his way to Castle Hrothgar in 'Daneland' to fight the monster Grendel, but a detour to the Underworld sees Beowulf rescue a Scylfing Amazon (Nan-Zee), before being sucked through a dimensional gateway that leads to adventures with a mysterious "Lost Tribe of Israel"; Ulysses and his Achaean warriors; some human-hunting aliens that look like Egyptian deities; and the lost city of Atlantis. To complicate matters further, a secondary plot sees Grendel embroiled in a dynastic conflict for control of Hell—originally enthroned as Satan's heir, Grendel is forced to battle Dracula for control of the Fiery Realm. Small wonder, then, that the series never made it past issue number six…

A more detailed comparison, however, illuminates a number of surprising resonances. Trans-temporal considerations of honour, loyalty, and masculinity abound. Cultural ownership is contested and defined. Relative values of popular literature are underscored and heteronormative sexuality is reinforced. Most importantly though, a few awesome heroes get to waste some totally sick monsters…

John D'Alton

Monash University

Aphrahat's "Resurrection Asceticism" and its Journey across the Mediterranean

When John Cassian traveled to Marseille in 415 he brought from the Orient a perspective on monasticism as being an "angelic life" which emphasised virginity. These concepts, along with a "resurrection asceticism" had been enunciated by Syriac bishop Aphrahat in 337 as the foundation for spirituality. Cassian may also have built on the views of Chrysostom and similar ideas already known in the West in Augustine's De Virginitate. Yet in

their journey West, key elements of Aphrahat's asceticism did not translate or were lost, especially his "resurrection asceticism." Aphrahat's emphasis on a realized eschatology as a motivation for virginity has not been explored and his focus on the "sons of the resurrection" has been either misunderstood or ignored. The differences between Aphrahat visavis Cassian and Augustine on these points has also not been treated. This paper explores these themes in Aphrahat through an analysis of the structure and central arguments of his "Demonstrations," and compares his emphases with the related views of Cassian, Augustine, Chrysostom, and Gaudentius of Brescia. Whereas Augustine and Chrysostom emphasise Mary as a model of virginity and Paul's focus on marriage as a distraction from pure devotion, Aphrahat concentrates on a present experience of the resurrection life, a life like the angels. His use of Luke 20:36 is unique and his approach is more nuanced and hope-oriented than Augustine. This paper also demonstrates that the usual rendering of Aphrahat's "sons of the covenant" is incorrect and should be translated as "sons of the resurrection."

Caillan Davenport
University of Queensland

From Sailor to Emperor: The Public Image of Carausius

M. Aurelius Mausaeus Carausius was a helmsman from Menapia (modern-day Belgium), who entered the Roman army and become the commander of an expeditionary naval force on the Gallic coast in the late third century AD. In 286, he staged a revolt and set himself up as emperor in Britain in opposition to the existing rulers of the Roman empire, Diocletian and Maximian, both officers who had risen from the ranks of the army. In this paper, I will examine the public image of Carausius as reflected in his coinage, which constitutes the main source of evidence for his regime.

The images and legends on Carausius' coins allude to his maritime supremacy through references to Neptune and Oceanus, Carausius' fleet, and possibly even his early life as a helmsman. These coins and their images of naval power were designed to serve as a counterpoint to the public image cultivated by Diocletian and Maximian, whoclaimed that their martial prowess made them the most qualified men to rule the Roman world. Yet Carausius did not seek to overthrow Diocletian and Maximian, but to gain legitimacy in the hope that he would be invited to share in their power. This was something that Diocletian and Maximian were unwilling to grant, and the evidence of panegyrics delivered in their honour shows how Carausius' origin as a sailor was later used to undermine his claim to the purple. The conflict between Carausius and Diocletian and Maximian offers important insights into the development of late Roman imperial ideology, as former soldiers sought to establish their legitimacy as emperors.

Geoffrey Dunn
Australian Catholic University

The Appeal of Apiarius to the Transmarine Church of Rome

In 418 Apiarius, a presbyter of Le Kef (ancient Sicca Veneria) in Africa Proconsularis deposed by Urban, his local bishop, appealed to Zosimus, bishop of Rome, for reinstatement. Over the two previous decades the African bishops had legislated in their frequent episcopal synods presided over by Aurelius of Carthage about judicial appeals to bishops across the seas (*ad transmarinos episcopos*). Throughout the fourth century African Christians had sought the intervention of imperial and ecclesiastical authorities in dealing with Donatism. In 393 African bishops were required to consult their metropolitan before going overseas on appeal. A non-extant letter from Innocent I of Rome in 405 indicates that there were still too many bishops travelling over the seas for frivolous reasons. In 407 another African synod required that bishops heading to the imperial court at Ravenna should have a testimonial letter from Africa to present to the Roman bishop would then furnish the petitioner with another one to present to Ravenna. In May 418 lower clergy were forbidden from appealing over the seas against sentences imposed upon them by their local bishops. Evidently that did not stop Apiarius. Zosimus sent delegates with instructions (*commonitorium*) to a preparatory synod in Africa late in 418. The full synod met in May

the next year, by which time Zosimus was dead. Jane Merdinger provides a fresh reading of the troubles caused by Apiarius. In this paper I wish to consider the African sense of Rome (and everywhere else) as being *trans mare* and how that influenced the African perception of Rome's authority and how Zosimus understood his own authority in Africa as revealed in what we can reconstruct of the *commonitorium*. The argument here is that the Mediterranean magnified the African sense of self-determination, which did not, however, amount to a rejection of appropriate Roman authority.

Sarah Greer
University of Auckland

A Foreign Exchange: The Role of Irish Pilgrim Monks in Frankish Female Monasteries

In the volatile context of early medieval Francia, monastic women sought to secure their own foundations from attacks both external and internal. Convents were constantly under threat of violent intervention from hostile forces, and consequently needed to reaffirm their own religious and political authority. The adoption of Irish monastic practice, personified by the Irish pilgrim monks that appear in the vitae of this period, was the result of this need. Irish monasticism, with its focus on the authority of the individual monastery, was particularly suitable for the rural double monasteries of early medieval Francia. Irish ascetic practice spread quickly throughout Frankish convents, heightening the aura of sanctity that surrounded female monasteries.

However, the presence of Irish monastic practice in Frankish convents is not evidence of passive female communities being dominated by the new ideas of Saint Columbanus and his powerful male monastery at Luxeuil. Rather, this period saw the women of female monasteries actively choosing different forms of Irish practice that benefited their own individual foundations. The extant female *regulae* demonstrate a variety of adaptations of insular monastic practice, which disproves the idea of a standard form of Irish rule imposed on convents from above. Indeed, a close study of the sources from this period reveals a number of different Irish pilgrim monks associated with rival convents, instead of the single group under Columbanus. Evidently, Irish monasticism was part of a more complex environment of patronage and factional politics than has previously been acknowledged.

My paper will illustrate the implications of these different groups of Irish monks present at the heart of Frankish female monasteries. The plurality of foreign monks indicates strong interconnectivity between Frankish convents and the British isles in the early medieval period, and the permeability of boundaries between Francia and Britain more widely. The presence of Irish monks in our sources reveals the ability of female monastic communities to extend their patronage to monks from across the sea in order to reaffirm their own positions in the turbulent early medieval world.

John Kennedy
Charles Sturt University

Who First Settled Iceland, and When?

A relatively inhospitable island in the North Atlantic, several hundred kilometres of challenging sea from any landfall in Continental Europe or the British Isles, Iceland, unlike most of Europe, was not first colonised by Palaeolithic hunter-gathers or Neolithic farmers long before the dawn of history. Icelandic written sources from as early as the twelfth century, notable the *Libellus Islandorum* of Ari Þorgilsson and *Landnámabók*, clearly indicate that the island was basically uninhabited when the first Norse settlers arrived in 870 (or 874), notwithstanding some Irish religious hermits, the *papar*, who rapidly and conveniently departed, leaving few traces of their presence. Some at least of the written sources appear to present a remarkably detailed and factual account of how the island was settled in a period of about sixty years, culminating in the establishment of a general assembly for the entire country, the *Alþingi*, in 930; and until quite recently scholars believed that though saga claims about aristocratic ancestors choosing exile over submission to a tyrannical Norwegian king needed to be treated with caution, the basic history of how Iceland was first settled was firmly based on good evidence. In recent years this

view has been increasingly challenged, chiefly but not exclusively by archaeologists who believe they have unearthed evidence of earlier settlement. Much of this work is not at present available in English. This paper will attempt to assess the current state of play regarding the colonisation of Iceland, and will aim to consider possible implications for the study of the society and the literature than emerged on the island.

Roderick McDonald

Swansea University

Mariners. Traders. Fishers. Vikings. Irish. Scandinavian. Both. Neither.

This paper discusses maritime loanwords in the Gaelic languages from Old Norse as a source of evidence for the social, cultural and economic conditions from the Viking Age onwards. The paper touches on methodological issues for the use of historical language evidence for advancing our understanding of the varied influences of Scandinavians. In particular, loanwords that relate to the maritime equipment, activities and sailing conditions are considered, and these help to paint a picture of the mariners, their expertise, their activities and the maritime economy that grew due to the presence of Vikings in the West.

Pamela O'Neill

University of Sydney

Territorial waters in Early Irish Law

This paper proposes that the Irish of around the seventh and eighth centuries observed a system of territorial waters, or in other words that political entities claimed and exercised sovereignty over certain waters adjacent to their land territories. The paper argues that waters within recognised boundaries were viewed as belonging to a political entity in the same way as areas of land within recognised boundaries were viewed as belonging to political entities. Central to this argument is the compound noun *muirchrech* (literally 'sea-boundary'), which occurs in various literary and legal texts. The paper examines the term *muirchrech*, its two elements and its contexts to reveal its probable meaning as both the boundary defining territorial waters and the waters so defined. The paper also surveys various terms used of the sea and some compounds formed from them, and considers material evidence including the prevalence of early medieval sculptured stones located at water's edge, and texts which record legal processes involving the sea.

Susan Raich

Trinity College, University of Cambridge

Sailing with Saints in the Anglo-Norman World, c. 1020–1100

The English Channel, as the interface between the British Isles and the rest of the known medieval world, presented (in medieval times as now) a marine boundary between England and the Continent that inhabitants of both did not hesitate to cross. This paper will explore a brief period in the Channel's history, *c.* 1020–1100, in order to gain a better understanding of how dwellers along this narrow strait responded to maritime concerns. This period, which witnessed the Norman Conquest of England and the subsequent joint rule of the kingdom and duchy under one lord, illuminates the challenges and opportunties posed by living in a realm bisected by the sea. Kings had to find a means to cross the Channel regularly and safely. The Anglo-Norman nobility transfretated to accompany the royal court and also to oversee their own cross-Channel estates, as did the heads of religious houses and their deputies. Aristocratic travel occurred against a backdrop of expanding trade and pilgrimage abroad. The sea, however, continued to pose its age-old challenges; storms could arise unexpectedly as prone ships sailed mid-Channel, and piracy, too, threatened unprotected vessels. How did medieval travellers react to these difficulties of sailing? In addition to relying on mariners' skills, Anglo-Norman passengers turned to divine aid for protection at sea, as this paper will explore by examining late eleventh-century historical writing and miracle collections. Cults of saints particularly adept at providing nautical rescue emerged at this time, often in directly-stated competition with each other. Regional and national saints thus seem to have served as the

patrons of communities with decidedly maritime interests. In addition to providing insight into the nautical activities in which these communities were engaged, the miracles suggest the outlooks with which Anglo-Normans encountered the ocean. The stories of assistance saints rendered, dutifully recorded at their shrines at Bury St Edmunds, Canterbury, and elsewhere, show that sefaring forced English and Norman travellers to take stock of who they were and who they answered to in a world as vast as the ocean is wide. Exploring Anglo-Norman maritime hagiography will thus provide a way to begin to investigate how the successors to the vikings fared as they faced the fierce but profitable sea.

Wesley Theobald
University of Queensland

The Attractive Seaborne Bounty from Late Roman Britain

Late Roman Britain had become a strong and self-sustaining economy, as well as an exporter of goods to Roman and non-Roman areas of Northern Europe. This was facilitated in part through the economic infrastructure which had been developed, including the so-called "Saxon shore forts" of the Southeast. These structures were very beneficial in many aspects of both Imperial and private economic cross-channel activity. The economic wealth moving over the water was also a drawcard for Germanic tribes further along the coastline, whose efforts to secure booty in the locality of the English Channel were noted in the literary record from the Third Century. While such activities are usually regarded to have been acts of piracy, it might demonstrate a mounting problem in the supply of basic goods to Northern Europe, whose residents had lost the benefit of more reliable trade routes from the South since the coming of the Goths. The economic bounty shipped from Britain to the continent had become a great new opportunity for regular supply, and was perhaps depended on by populations on both sides of the Roman frontier. The collapse of this regulated outpour during the late Fourth Century, followed by Roman withdrawal from the island in the early Fifth Century, would have been a great supply loss to all continental beneficiaries. For tribes such as the Saxons and Angles who were already under pressure from other migrating tribes, a loss in the availability of goods originating in Britain could have been a cause of great desperation and a mitigating factor in their readiness to leave their lands for the bountiful shores of Britain after the Romans left.

Nigel Westbrook
University of Western Australia

Topographical Reconstruction of the Location of Streets Leading to the Forum of Strategion and the Neorian and Prosphorian harbours in Early Byzantine Constantinople

Byzantine Constantinople was structured upon arcaded streets of shops, or 'emboloi,' and formal public fora, which usually served the purpose of housing various kinds of markets. The largest and perhaps oldest of these was the Strategion, which consisted of two courts that were adjacent to the inlet of the Golden Horn, and the Neorian and Prosphorian harbours giving access to the Bosphorus, and thus to the Mediterranean and Black Seas, in the period up to the seventh century. However, the exact location and scale of the Strateghion has not yet been determined, and the location of the streets connecting from the central street of Mese to the Strategion has been the matter of debate. In this paper, I will examine field drawings executed by the Belgian archaeologist Ernest Mamboury in the 1920s of building foundations uncovered during council canalization works for the new sewer system in Istanbul, in order to propose a new layout of the street system in the north-eastern sector of Byzantine Constantinople leading to the Strateghion. The paper is based upon analysis of digital maps that place the found remains in relation to site contours, modern and existing Byzantine buildings, and current streets. Notably, the study locates what appear to be two major streets, with what appear to be shops and courtyards aligned along them. These streets will be reconciled with known buildings and structures, such as the Milion, and churches of St. Sophia and St. Mary Chalkoprateia. I will argue that locating the streets has enabled determination of the entrance to the forum, and thus adds to knowledge of the topographical layout of this district of Constantinople.

Marlena Whiting
Lincoln College, Oxford University

By Land or By Sea: Attitudes Towards Travel by Water in Late Antiquity

It is a truth universally acknowledged among students of the ancient economy that the transport of goods by sea was quicker, cheaper, and therefore preferable to transport by land. A.H.M. Jones quipped, in his Economy of the Later Roman Empire, that it was cheaper to send cargo from one end of the Mediterranean to the other by ship than it was to haul it 75 miles over land. Greater efficiency and advantage was therefore to be had by making use of waterways and the sea rather than using the roads.

But to what extent would these economic considerations have influenced people entrusting their person, rather than their property, to the vagaries of sea travel? Was the advantage of speed gained from the sea enough to outweigh considerations of personal safety? And what of the cost of booking passage – was travel by ship limited to those social classes who could afford it? Could the waterways truly rival the great network of highways that criss-crossed the Roman Empire?

This paper aims to examine these questions by examining first-hand accounts of pilgrims and other travellers from the 4th-7th centuries, focusing particularly on the Eastern Mediterranean. Supplemented by hagiographical and historical works and archaeological evidence, I will use these accounts to weigh the advantages and detractions of sea travel, as expressed by sea-goers themselves, in order to assess the popularity of water travel among the ordinary wayfarers who surged about the Empire during the period, and to determine whether boarding a ship was considered a luxury, or a last resort.

Jeroen Wijnendaele
University of Melbourne

Desperadoes, Freebooters and Soldiers of Fortune: The Odyssey of Sebastian 431–441

The first half of the fifth century witnessed an unprecedented erosion of imperial power in the Late Roman West. Child-emperors reigned as palace recluses, while a never ceasing power struggle raged behind their throne between various commanders and court factions. Barbarian tribes, settled as imperial armies, detached vast areas in Gaul, Spain and North Africa from central authority. Meanwhile the Mediterranean ceased to be a safe "Roman lake" for trade and travel.

This paper will focus on the extraordinary wanderings of Sebastian. As the legitimate supreme commander of the Western Roman Army (*magister utriusque militiae*), Sebastian lost the struggle for power in Italy against Flavius Aëtius and was exiled in 433. Ten long years he was forced to reinvent himself in various guises as mercenary, pirate and warlord, on an epic journey that took him from Africa to Italy, Constantinople, Sicily, Gaul, Spain, and back to Africa. Indeed, when imperial service was no longer an option in East nor West, Sebastian had to make his way across the Mediterranean, hiring out his services to the Visigoths, the local aristocracy of Tarraconensis, and the Vandal king Gaiseric.

Special consideration will be given to the private retainers - the notorious *buccellarii* - who provided Sebastian with significant military independence vis-à-vis the state but also formed a source of social instability. His exceptional odyssey, that took his men all over the Mediterranean, will be investigated to illustrate issues of contemporary naval power and piracy. Finally, Sebastian's career will be used as a case study to clarify political allegiances and international relations between the various powers of the Late Roman World.

Carol Williams
Monash University

Geoffrey of Monmouth on 5th Century Arthurian Travel

Geoffrey of Monmouth (*c.* 1100–*c.* 1155), in his *Historia Regum Britanniae* created the main framework of Arthurian legend and presented Arthur's reign as the climax. First, he deals with the Saxon barbarian menace and after achieving victory and marrying Guinevere, he rules over a peaceful and prosperous Britain. He founds his order of knighthood in these peaceful conditions then moves to conquer Gaul. Another war is provoked by tribute demands from Rome and it is while Arthur is leading his army against Rome that he is betrayed by his nephew (or son) Mordred who has been left in charge. Arthur is forced to return home and confront the traitor. In the struggle, though Arthur vanquishes Mordred, he himself is mortally wounded and borne away to the Isle of Avalon.

Though Geoffrey does use some known sources, the mainstay of the story was almost entirely unique to the *Historia* and he named the major players and placed their adventures within a recognisable framework. This is the work of a skilful story teller rather than a historian and the air of authenticity he created has captured popular imaginations ever since. One of the devices that he uses to promote this sense of authenticity is to do with movement from one place to another, over land and sea. His descriptions of travel for whatever purpose, whether it be for conquest or defence, noble quest or more mundane domestic communication, are always convincing. He does this by paying careful attention to plausible travel durations and providing details of actual places which would have been known to his 12th century readership.

This paper will examine a set of Geoffrey's travel descriptions to see whether we can uncover potential 5th century origins to them.