Early Medieval Ireland, AD 400-1100

by Aidan O'Sullivan, Finbar McCormick, Thomas Kerr, Lorcan Harney
EARLY MEDIEVAL IRELAND AD 400–1100
THE EVIDENCE FROM ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS
Jalan O'Sullivan, Pinxar McCormick, Thomas R. Kerr and Lorcan Harrity

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How did people create and live in their own worlds in early medieval Ireland? What did they actually do? And to what end did they do it? This book investigates and reconstructs from archaeological evidence how early medieval Irish people lived together as social groups, worked the land as farmers, worshipped God, made and used objects and buried their dead around them. It uses evidence from excavations conducted between 1930 and 2012 to explore how people used their landscapes, dwellings and material culture to effect and negotiate social, ideological and economic continuities and changes during the period AD 400-1100.

This book is also available on JSTOR. For more information, institutions can visit Books at JSTOR or contact participation@jstor.org.

You can buy the e-book here.

About the authors

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Aidan O'Sullivan, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Archaeology, University College Dublin, and a Principal Investigator of the Early Medieval Archaeology Project. His research interests are in early medieval Britain and Ireland; experimental archaeology; and wetland archaeology and environments around the world. His recent books include Rethinking wetland archaeology (2006) and The Oxford handbook of wetland archaeology (2013).

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Finbar McCormick is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology at Queen’s University Belfast. His current research projects are concerned with Early Medieval settlement in economy and also include an investigation of environmental change in prehistoric Malta. He is joint author of Early Medieval Ireland, AD 400-1100. The evidence from
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Lorcan Harney

Lorcan Harney, MA, worked as a Research Archaeologist (2007-10) with the Early Medieval Archaeology Project at UCD School of Archaeology. His research interests explore the archaeology of the early church, and he is currently completing his Irish Research Council-funded PhD at UCD on the topic 'Living with the Church in early medieval Ireland, ad 400-1100: archaeological perspectives on the sacred and profane'.

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The early medieval settlement landscape of Ireland is one of the richest archaeological landscapes in the world. A long tradition of archaeological excavation of early medieval Irish settlements has produced a range of evidence relating to the daily lives and dwelling practices of the inhabitants of these settlements, as well as evidence for their use of the surrounding landscapes (see O'Sullivan, A. 2008; Edwards 2005). In the past, and for some scholars still today, the centuries from AD 400 to 1100 have traditionally been termed Ireland's 'early Christian period', reflecting the dominant role of Christianity in the ideology, belief systems, art and architecture of the Irish at this time, and nineteenth- and twentieth-century cultural nationalist views of the period (see, for example, Henry 1965; de Paor. Introduction: Early medieval settlement archaeology utterly dominates the record of excavations in Ireland, including settlement enclosures, complexes, landscapes and ecclesiastical sites. For this reason, the INSTAR-funded Early Medieval Archaeology Project (EMAP) focused its research in 2009-2010, on dwellings and settlements (having previously provided a review of all early medieval archaeological excavations in Ireland). In 2009, EMAP first prepared a gazetteer of what we would regard as Ireland's key early medieval settlements and dwelling excavations, largely based on a detailed review o