

## **Title**

Did Early Medieval Ireland save mathematics / astronomy?

## **Abstract**

The fall of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century fundamentally changed the landscape of learning. Secular institutions were soon replaced by the rapidly growing monasteries as the centres of learning and guardians of knowledge. Greek, the learned language of antiquity, was lost; interest in science and other areas received a decidedly Christian outlook. This only changed in the so-called Renaissance of 12th century, with the translation of key texts from Arabic or Greek into Latin, like Aristotle, Ptolemy, or Euclid. Therefore, the period between the 5th and the 12th century, when these fundamental works were not available, is generally considered a dark age in the history of science. This view is only slowly changing, with recent scholarship discovering the potential of analysing an age that had to work without the fundamentals. The results are astonishing, unfolding highly innovative and critical intellectual milieus which first reconstructed the basics on very limited information and then shaped minds thirsting for the introduction of more advanced theories through Arabic channels. This talk will focus on the role Irish scholars of mathematics and astronomy played in this process.