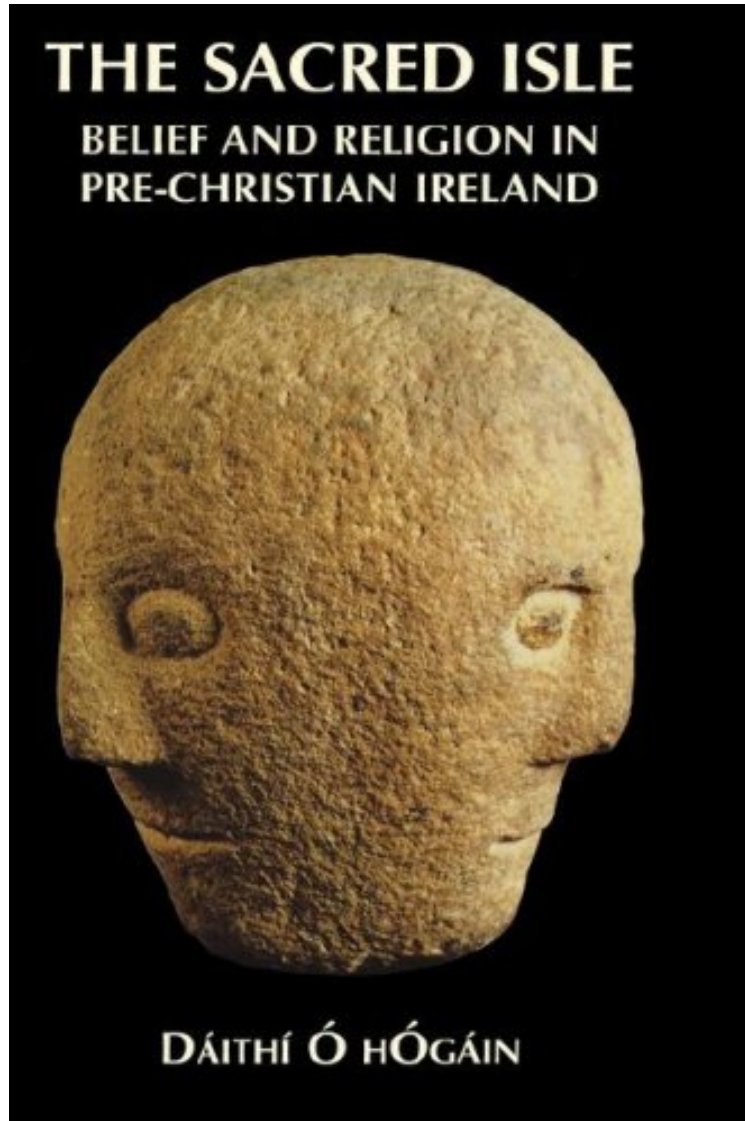


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## The Sacred Isle: Pre-Christian Religions in Ireland

*Dith O hOgain, Daithi O'Hogain*

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The myths and legends of prehistoric Ireland have inspired writers through the ages, down to W.B. Yeats and Seamus Heaney in our own century, but what do we know of the realities of ancient Irish belief? Daithi O hOgain's book approaches the question by studying archaeological remains such as tumuli, stone henges and circular enclosures and analysing the rich materials that have been handed down both in the great cycles of Irish heroic tales and the humble but significant survivals of modern folklore, for instance the traditions associated with wells and springs. Drawing evidence from these varied sources, he arrives at a balanced picture of a society and its beliefs which have all too often been the subject of conjecture and fancy.

An excellent book... a highly accessible and lively assessment of c ontinuity and change in belief and religion from pre-Celtic times through to the arrival of St Patrick. ...A fine book and to be recommended to a wide readership, especially to all those who think that Irish history started in 1601. --Irish Studies The focus of this book is the evidence for pagan cult systems in ancient Ireland, particularly the period 500BC to AD600...on the whole a thoroughly researched and rigorously referenced study... a useful reference work. --Zeitschrift Fur Celtische PhilologieAbout the AuthorDAITHI O HOGAIN is Associate Professor of Folklore at University College Dublin.