



The Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles: Their Nature and Legacy

Ronald Hutton

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This is a survey of religious beliefs in the British Isles from the Old Stone Age to the coming of Christianity, one of the least familiar but most extensive periods in Britain's history. Ronald Hutton draws upon new data, much of it archaeological, that has transformed interpretation over the past decade. Giving more or less equal weight to all periods, from the Neolithic to the Middle Ages, he considers a range of evidence for Celtic and Romano-British paganism: from burial sites, cairns, megaliths and causeways, to carvings, figurines, jewellery, weapons, votive objects, literary texts and folklore. The author reveals the important rethinking that has taken place over Christianization and the decline of paganism, and reviews the progress that has been made in tracing the survival of pre-Christian beliefs and imagery into the Middle Ages. Dr Hutton shows how a host of received ideas have been demolished, and how the pagans of ancient Britain were far more creative, complex, enigmatic and dynamic than has previously been supposed.

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