Abstract
Study of early Irish and Hiberno-Latin sources reveals a sustained imagery of Ireland as a place on the ‘world’s edge’ and amongst the ‘last nations’. Writers of Irish origin such as Virgilius of Salzburg and the Carolingian geographer Dicuil provide unique statements on the antipodes and the Atlantic islands, respectively. Irish authors also created widely-read apocalyptic narratives. This paper will consider how the belief that the Irish had a unique knowledge of the ends of the Earth – both physical and temporal – contributed to wider perceptions of the Irish in the Middle Ages. We will also see how these medieval motifs contribute to imagery of the Irish diaspora of the modern era.

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