

The Role of Latin and Romanism

The Latin Middle Ages

Why was Latin so important in the Middle Ages? Cillian O'Hogan examines the development of medieval Latin and how it survived the collapse of the Roman Empire. The Latin language originated in Latium (a region that partially maps onto modern-day Lazio in Italy) early in the first millennium BC. As the language spoken by the inhabitants of Rome, it spread with the growth of the Roman Empire, and was written, read, and understood by millions of people in Antiquity across Europe, North Africa, and the Near East. But Latin did not die out when the Roman Empire collapsed in the West in the fifth century. Rather, it continued to be used as a learned language for the entirety of the Middle Ages: not only in the regions that had formed part of the Roman Empire, but also in places the Romans had never conquered, such as Ireland. [More](#)

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