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**THE LOST REMAINS OF DÚN AILINNE: ANALYSIS OF RE-DISCOVERED
FAUNAL REMAINS FROM THE IRISH IRON AGE SITE**

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Abstract

Dún Ailinne is an Irish Iron Age royal site that has been of archaeological interest for over 40 years. Positioned on the summit of Knockaulin Hill, 30 miles southwest of Dublin (Crabtree 1986), Dún Ailinne has provided a wealth of insight into pre-Christian Iron Age life and ritual practice in Ireland. Multiple structures, neither residential nor funerary (Crabtree et al 2010), have been uncovered during the eight excavation seasons headed by Professor Bernard Wailes of University of Pennsylvania between 1968 and 1975 (Johnston et al 2009). Wailes and his team identified several phases of occupation at Dún Ailinne culminating in a final phase that yielded one of the largest faunal assemblages ever recovered from a pre-Christian Iron Age site in Ireland (Crabtree et al 2010). In the early 1980s, Pam Crabtree conducted the first comprehensive analysis of the faunal remains from Dún Ailinne (Crabtree 2007) and postulated that the site was used for ritual feasting associated with the surplus produced by a dairying economy (Crabtree 1986).

In 2015, long after the original, and assumed final, analysis of the faunal remains from Dún Ailinne had been completed, several hundred, possibly thousands, of faunal remains associated with the site were recovered. Here, I analyze over 500 additional faunal skeletal remains from Dún Ailinne. My findings correlate and substantiate Crabtree's hypothesis regarding ritual feasting of a dairying economy.