St Edmund, King and Martyr

Changing Images of a Medieval Saint

The cult of St Edmund was one of the most important in medieval England, and further afield, as the pieces here show. St Edmund, king and martyr, supposedly killed by Danes (or "Vikings") in 869, was one of the pre-eminent saints of the middle ages; his cult was favoured and patronised by several English kings and spawned a rich array of visual, literary, musical and political artefacts. Celebrated throughout England, especially at the abbey of Bury St Edmunds, it also inspired separate cults in France, Iceland and Italy. The essays in this collection offer a range of readings from a variety of disciplines literature, history, music, art history - and of sources - chronicles, poems, theological material - providing an overview of the multi-faceted nature of St Edmund's cult, from the ninthcentury to the early modern period. They demonstrate the openness and dynamism of a medieval saint's cult, showing how the saint's image could be used in many and changing contexts: Edmund's image was bent to various political andpropagandistic ends, often articulating conflicting messages and ideals, negotiating identity, politics and belief. CONTRIBUTORS: ANTHONY BALE, CARL PHELPSTEAD, ALISON FINLAY, PAUL ANTONY HAYWARD, LISA COLTON, REBECCA PINNER, A.S.G. EDWARDS, ALEXANDRA GILLESPIE

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