Scottish saints' cults and pilgrimage from the Black Death to the Reformation, c.1349-1560

Abstract
This thesis is an examination of the most important Scottish saints' cults and pilgrimage centres in the period c.1349-1560. Specifically, this project locates the role of this group within the wider devotional practices of the late medieval kingdom. Through analysis of liturgical calendars, ecclesiastical dedications, contemporary literature and naming and pilgrimage patterns, it identifies and explains the distinctive features of the veneration of national saints in late medieval Scotland in the two centuries from the first appearance of the Black Death in 1349 to the Reformation in 1560. The key theme of this thesis is the consideration of the manner in which external factors, such as general Western European social and religious developments, and distinctly local phenomena such as the intermittent warfare with England and the varied agendas of interest groups like shrine custodians, the national church and the crown, impacted upon the saintly landscape of the late medieval kingdom and the popular piety of its people. The medieval cult of the saints is a subject of considerable value for historians because it was a movement in a constant state of flux. It adapted to the socio-religious context of the societies in which it operated. Although never neglected as an area of study, the cult of the saints in Scotland has received further attention in recent years through the influence of the Survey of Dedications to Saints in Medieval Scotland project carried out at the University of Edinburgh from 2004-7. However, studies on the role and function of national and local saints, those believed by contemporaries to have had a Scottish provenance or a hagiographical connection to the medieval kingdom, have tended to focus on two specific periods. These were the so called 'age of the saints', the period between the fourth and eighth centuries in which the majority of these men and women were thought to have been active, or the twelfth and thirteenth centuries from when the main Latin hagiographical sources originate. The role and function of this group in the later middle ages has been either neglected or subject to the pervasive influence of a 1968 article by David McRoberts which argued that church- and crown-sponsored patriotism was the main factor in shaping popular piety in this period. This thesis will question this premise and provide the first indepth study of the cults of St Andrew, Columba of Iona/Dunkeld, Kentigern of Glasgow and Ninian of Whithorn in a late medieval Scottish context, as well as the lesser known northern saint, Duthac of Tain.

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chapels) began to spread in use from not just the nobility, but to among the well to do. The Black Death also affected arts and culture significantly. It was inevitable that a catastrophe of such proportions would affect some of the greater building projects, as the amount of available labour fell sharply.