

# SAINTS, SHRINES AND LOCAL SOCIETY IN THE MEDIEVAL WEST MIDLANDS.



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## **Saints, Shrines and Local Society in the medieval west midlands.**

**Tutor:** Dr John Hunt, BA, PhD, FSA, FRHistS, PGCE.

The cult of saints, and the shrines with which they were associated, was an integral feature of medieval religious devotion across Christendom. The western midlands, as elsewhere in Europe, was served by a network of local cults of varying size and standing that gave rise to a regional 'sacred landscape' of some diversity. This network was an essential part of religious devotion and practice in local society, readily accessible to the bulk of the population.

This study day will introduce the west midlands' 'sacred landscape' by focussing on two themes –

- The making of the west midlands' 'sacred landscape'
- Miracles and pilgrims: west midlands' saints' shrines in action

Discussion will embrace both the pre-Conquest and post-Conquest periods. After examining the basic concepts that underpinned the cult of saints, we will explore how the network of saints' shrines emerged, initially in Anglo-Saxon England, their function and distribution, and the impact of the Norman Conquest upon them. We will discuss the pattern that developed after the eleventh century, the changes that affected 'saint making', the management and promotion of local cults and their part in the lives and concerns of local society. The material culture of pilgrimage and the character of saints' shrines will be considered. Case studies will include Wulfstan at Worcester, Thomas at Hereford, Winifred at Shrewsbury, Modwenna at Burton-on-Trent and Milburge at Much Wenlock, but with passing reference to many others,

**10.00am till 2.30pm**  
**FEES: £30.00 (Payable in advance)**  
**Inclusive of light lunch & morning  
coffee or tea**