



St. George

GILES MORGAN

new title

SALES POINTS:

- Very little contemporary material available on St. George
- The success of *The Holy Grail* Pocket Essential indicates the market available for works dealing with such historical/mythological crossover figures.
- St. George occupies a similar position between history and legend as King Arthur and interest in early Christianity is likely to increase with the *Da Vinci Code* film.
- There are increasing calls to officially celebrate Saint George's day

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MARKET:

history, religion, mythology

DESCRIPTION:

Saint George is a figure that bridges many worlds. At the heart of the myths and legends surrounding this English icon lies the story of an Early Christian Martyr persecuted by the Roman Empire around the third century AD. But England is only one country to have adopted this legendary soldier saint as their patron. Other countries including Germany, Armenia, Hungary, Portugal and Malta have all claimed him as their own. The cult of Saint George is astonishingly widespread with churches being dedicated to him in Ethiopia, Egypt, Greece and France.

His heroic struggle and victory against the dragon can be interpreted as representing the bravery of an individual Christian or as the eternal battle between good and evil. But closer examination of the cult of St George yields unexpected results. There are clear parallels between his legendary battle and that of earlier pre-Christian heroes such as Perseus and Beowulf. Saint George is also identified with the Islamic hero Al Khidr who is said to have discovered the fountain of youth. He has been associated with the coming of spring and has functioned as fertility symbol and been closely linked to the Green Man of Pre-Christian Myth. St George has also acted as a symbol of chastity and served as a healing saint. His flag has been appropriated by the far right but in recent times come to identify a multi-cultural England. David Beckham arguably embodies many of the contradictory aspects of St George as sex symbol, multi-racial icon and national hero.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY:

Giles Morgan is the author of the Pocket Essential *The Holy Grail*. He has written for magazines including *Fortean Times* and *Focus*. He reviews books for *Crime Time* and has had poetry published in various magazines