The 12th and 13th centuries were very prolific in the development of royal saints’ cults throughout Europe. In central regions where Christendom was firmly established, the cult of royal saints aimed at strengthening the legitimacy of ruling dynasties. In peripheral regions where the Christian religion was expanding, the development of royal saints’ cults accompanied the political consolidation of emerging monarchies and the development of religious fervour among the population.

The symposium aims at exploring the role of saint-kings in their political context as well as in the conversion to the new faith. What functions had royal saints in the development of royal power in general and in the relationship between kings and clergy in particular? How were royal saints integrated in the policies and legitimization of royal power? What role and places had royal saints as popular cults in Scandinavian society and culture?
Day 1. Thursday 29. November

10:00–11:00 Visit to the collection of church artefacts NTNU University Museum (registration required)
Margrete Syrstad Andås, Objects from Nidaros Birgit Maixner, Enamels of Limoges

13:00–14:30 Session 1: Saint Kings and Royal Power (Nordic perspective)
Roman Hankeln, King and martyr: representing ideal rulership in St. Olaf’s office.
David Brégaint, The missing saint: St Olaf and King Hákon Hákonsson
Øystein Ekroll, Rex perpetuus Norwegie – the cult of St Olaf and the new Nidaros Archbishopric

14:30-15:00 Coffee break

15:00 – 16:30 Session 2: Saint Kings and Royal Power (European perspective)
Sebastian Salvado, St Marcus and the Doge of Venice
Nora Berend, Legitimizing strategies: Holy kingship as legitimizing strategy
Manuela Beer, The three Magi and their ritual veneration in Cologne

Day 2. Friday 30. November

09:30–12:00 Session 3: Saint-Kings as a popular cult (Nordic perspective)
Steffen Hope, The reshaping of Saint Knud Rex – popular cult or institutional competition?

10:00-10:30 Coffee break
Sara Ellis Nilsson, ‘We Three Kings’. Scandinavian royal saints from local cults to symbols for the Kalmar Union
Randi B. Wardahl, The cult of St Olaf in Iceland

13:00 – 14:30 Session 4 Saint-Kings as a popular cult (European perspective)
Rebecca Pinner, The Restless Relics of St Edmund, King and Martyr
Martin Wangelsgaard Jürgensen, Local and Universal: St. Olav between devotion and symbolic identity
Rakel Igland Diesen, Children at the shrine of royal saints

Practical information
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