

Life and cult of Canute the Holy – The first royal saint of Denmark

Interdisciplinary research seminar in Odense

November 6th to 7th 2017

In 1986, to mark the 900th anniversary of the murder of King Canute IV in the Church of Saint Alban in Odense, the Book of Canute (*Knuds-bogen*) was published. The volume brought together specialists from several disciplines and shed light on different aspects on the life and cult of Canute as king and saint. Since then, archaeological excavations in Odense as well as recent national and international research on the cult of Saint Canute have provided scholars with new information about the life and times of Canute. Furthermore, recent scholarship within medieval studies has resulted in a range of studies which allow for innovative comparisons with the Canute material.

This recent academic output – both at home and abroad – has coincided with an increased interest from local public institutions. The Church of Saint Canute and the Odense City Archive recently initiated a collaboration with the purpose of communicating the story of the crypt beneath the church to a broader audience. In addition, the department of research and communication in Odense City Museums is aiming to shed light on the early history of Odense with the current exhibition “Canute’s Odense – the Viking city”.

With this interdisciplinary seminar – arranged in cooperation between the research centre CENTRUM at Odense City Museums and Centre for Medieval Studies at University of Southern Denmark – we intend to bring together both national and international experts. The aim is to bring forth new aspects of Canute’s life and afterlife and to put these in a wider, international context. By doing so we aim to lay the groundwork for future research about Canute, and to form the basis for further dissemination of the latest discoveries pertaining to Canute and his time.

The seminar will be held in the beautiful location of the Odense Convent of Noble Maidens (<https://realdania.dk/samlet-projektliste/odense-adelige-jomfrukloster>). During the seminar there will be a guided tour in the special exhibition “Canute’s Odense – the Viking city” at the Odense City Museums. In the exhibition a range of objects related to Canute the Holy are displayed, among others the newly discovered bishop’s grave from Albany Church. Also some of the new archaeological findings from Odense’s early medieval period can be contemplated.

Price: 300 DKK, including lunch and coffee/tea both days, entrance to Odense City Museums, but excluding accommodation. It is also possible to sign up for dinner in the evening at restaurant in the city centre at the same time. The price for dinner including two glasses of wine is 500 DKK.

Register by payment of either 300 DKK (participation in seminar) or 800 DKK (participation in seminar and evening dinner) to Odense City Museums (reg.number: 2206; accountnumber: 6275396212. Write: name, institution and mark it “Canute the holy”).

Deadline for registration: October 23th 2017

Program:

Day 1: Life and being of Canute the Holy

10-10.30: Welcome, coffee/tea & rolls

- 10.30-11: Jakob Tue Christensen, Odense City Museums: *Odense before and after the canonization of Canute*
- 11-11.30: Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard, Odense City Museums: *The archaeological Sources on the killing of Canute.*
- 11.30-12: Anne Hedeager Krag, University of Copenhagen: *The silks from Canute's and Benedict's Shrines.*

12-14.30: Lunch and guided tour in the special exhibition (incl. the walk to/from the Convent to Møntergården).

- 14.30-15: Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen, Museum Østjylland: *The minting system during Canute's reign.*
- 15-15.30: Jesper Hansen, Odense City Museums: *King Canute's deed of gift and settlement structure in 1085.*

15.30-16: Coffee

- 16-16.30: Paul Gazzoli, University of Cambridge: *Erik Ejegod, foreign connections and the cult of Canute.*
- 16.30-17: Marie Bønløkke Missuno, University of Aarhus: *From Canute the Great to Canute the Holy: England and Denmark in the 11th century.*

18-: Banquet.



Day 2: Saint literature, relics and urban development

9-9.30: Coffee/tea & bread

The hagiography from the time of king Canute

- 9.30-10: Fiona Fritz, Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel: *Gesta Swenomagni and the early Canute-hagiography*.
- 10-10.30: Steffen Hope, University of Southern Denmark: *Canute seen in the light of the contemporary hagiography*.
- 10.30-11: Nils Holger Petersen, University of Copenhagen: *Comparison of cult and literature between Canute Rex and Canute Lavard*.

Relics from from the time of king Canute

- 11-11.30: Gale Owen-Chrocker, University of Manchester: *Textiles in Christian graves*.
- 11.30-12: Thomas Higham & George Kazan, University of Oxford: *New methods, strontium; AMS-dating of relics*.
- 12-12.30: Philippe George, University of Liege: *Relics – The fourth power*.

12.30-14: Lunch (incl. walking to/from the Convent to Møntergården).

Saint kings and their influence on later urban development

- 14-14.30: Axel Christoffersen, NTNU, Trondheim: *Olav the Holy (Trondheim, king 1015-1028)*.
- 14.30-15: Henrik Ågren, University of Uppsala: *Eric the Holy – Father of the Nation or idol? (Uppsala, king 1150-1160)*.

15-15.30: Coffee

- 15.30-16: Karsten Fledelius, University of Copenhagen: *From the first to the second holy Canute and the connections to the east*.
- 16-16.30: Lars Bisgaard, University of Southern Denmark: *Canute the Holy as patron saint*.