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“From the Mother of God to the Mother of Mary”

Mary was the most important saint in European Middle Ages. Texts and images from all over Europe are depicting her in different positions indicating that people have perceived her differently in various contexts and periods of time. In this talk I would like to ask how a development in Mary's positions can reflect societal and church political strategies in medieval Scandinavia. Examples from the rich Norwegian collection of medieval wooden sculptures and textual examples from homilies and *Maríu saga* (based on the apocryphal stories about Mary) will demonstrate that Mary was introduced as the mother of God when the church first organized, and later she obtained other positions. In the 14th century the sources express an interest in the larger divine family, and thus the origins of Mary herself. This development will be investigated due to prioritizations and strategies of the church.

